3. EDITIONS AND TEXTUAL STUDIES

reviewed by EMMA DEPLEDGE

Few editions were released this year as several Shakespeare series recently published their final instalments, and work on new ones, such as Arden 4, is in progress. Those that did appear in 2021–2022 provide exciting new ways of imagining Shakespeare's plays in performance, be it on the stages of the Royal Shakespeare Company or as part of the repertory that travelled to central Europe in the early seventeenth century. The year 2023 marks the 400th anniversary of the Shakespeare First Folio, and the year's work raises important questions about the authority of Folio texts whilst providing fresh ways of thinking about its status as a material book and the various agents who helped to produce it. Significant attention was also paid to vectors of influence, with new analysis of the relationship between versions of the Titus Andronicus story and the Ur-*Titus*, and the direction of travel between Q and F *Merry Wives* and *Henry V*.

EDITIONS

A second edition of the *RSC William Shakespeare: Complete Works*, edited by Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen, was published this year. It retains the editorial stance of the first edition, released in 2007 and produced under the patronage of the RSC. In other words, it prints Folio-based playtexts and continues to argue that the 1623 collection remains 'the text nearest to Shakespeare's stage, to Shakespeare's ownership, to Shakespeare's authority' (2:14). The editors say that they were forced to cut material before the first edition was printed due to last-minute print-house issues (2:13). These cuts included the extended account of the rationale behind their choice of copy-text and editorial procedures, which was published on a companion website as an essay entitled 'The case for the Folio'. In the second edition, thanks to 'different paper size and binding' (2:14), the editors have been able to include more material, including an updated preface that cites Taylor Swift and reasserts Shakespeare's status as our continuing contemporary in relation to 'ten of the most pressing issues facing human society exactly 400 years on from the publication of the First Folio'. These issues range from 'Autocracy and Democracy' through 'Race and Religion, Sexual Abuse and Misogyny' to 'Pandemic and Climate Change', 'Conspiracy Theories and "Fake News"' and 'Family Life' (7–12). The revised edition also includes *The Passionate Pilgrim* texts, 'A Lover's Complaint', and marginal glosses that record the staging choices made in key RSC productions, but the longer textual essay is still conspicuously absent, presumably because of the editors' assumption that 'only the most diligent users' of their edition care about textual matters (*I'm the problem, it's me*). Regrettably, the online essay, to which readers of the revised edition are still directed, has not been updated since 2007, so it does not engage with recent developments in editorial theory or the wealth of scholarship produced in the last fifteen years that questions the theatrical provenance of the Folio. Neither edition includes a list of works cited but both feature excellent 'Key Facts' sections – expanded to include performance notes in the second edition – that contain fascinating information such as prose-to-verse ratios and the division of lines and scenes in which different characters appear.

The first edition of the *Complete Works* had two claims to originality, but a Folio-only text for the RSC is impracticable. It was billed as the first modern edition of the 1623 Folio, a collection the editors termed 'the original *Complete Works*', 'The King's Men edition' and 'the actors' Shakespeare' (2:52). However, the RSC *Works* was not based solely on F1. A 'complete' works based on the Folio alone would, of course, result in an incomplete product when compared both with other Shakespeare collections on the market and the history of Shakespeare plays performed by the RSC. The edition's stance was accordingly undermined by the (necessary) inclusion of non-First-Folio plays, such as *Pericles* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, which have been performed by the RSC. In both editions of the volume, these two plays are listed under the heading 'Plays not in the First Folio', positioned ahead of the poems, and distinguished from other plays via the use of double columns – 'a deliberate inversion of the original printing practice of the double-column Folio and single-column quartos' (2:14). Poems such as *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Venus and Adonis*, the *Sonnets* and 'The Phoenix and the Turtle' are also included.

The first edition also claimed to provide scripts for a specific acting company. As the first complete works of Shakespeare commissioned by and for the RSC, it promised to offer sustained attention to issues of performance, but these details were thin on the ground. Further, the rationale for using the Folio as copy-text for an RSC edition was not clear, despite the editors' claim that the Folio texts were intended to offer 'the most theatrically-inflected versions of Shakespeare' (1:41). RSC productions are not limited to Folio-only readings. Lines spoken on RSC stages do, for example, include references to 'God' that are not found in the 1623 Folio because they were expunged from playtexts in the wake of the 1606 Act to Restrain Abuses of Players. The mock-trial of Goneril in *King Lear* and *Hamlet*'s 'How all occasions do inform against me' soliloquy also feature in many RSC productions, despite not being included in the F1 texts. The first edition omitted profanities and, whilst it did print significant passages from the Quarto tradition, it did so at the end of individual play-texts, meaning they were not read in sequence. Thus, in practice, it was neither an edition of 'a real book (the first Folio)', nor a fitting script for, or a true reflection of, the staging practices of a specific company (the RSC) (lvii). Instead, it read as an obvious marketing ploy to present the RSC as direct descendants of Shakespeare's King's Company.[1] This remains true of the second edition, though concessions have been made.

In both instalments, the editors are at times as unfaithful to individual Folio texts as they are to its original contents. They attempt to fashion their Folio 'restoration' project as a departure from an editorial tradition that, for them, takes a 'pick and mix' approach; the General Introduction to both editions includes the rather disparaging claim that 'all existing Shakespeare editions are Quarto–Folio hybrids whose readings draw on both the Quarto and Folio tradition' (2:49). Bate states that they have not 'edited the Folio as if the Quartos did not exist' but only deferred to Quarto texts when it was necessary to do so in order to correct 'printing errors' (2:50). However, regarding the text of *Troilus and Cressida*, to take one example, we are told that 'in accordance with [their] editorial policy, [they] follow Folio where it is viable, but, in the light of the demonstrable presence of Quarto in the editing or printing of the Folio, [they] adopt Quarto readings where Folio cannot be defended' (1:1460, 2:441), but a number of the Folio readings they chose to emend have been defended, and plausibly too, by editors who did not claim to be producing an 'authentic' edition of F1 (51).

There are also moments where Quarto readings or completely new readings have been adopted within play-texts where the Folio reading does not seem to derive from what most would consider a printing error. Bate informs readers that their 'textual notes record emendations adopted from quartos or later folios, but for those from subsequent tradition, [they] do not specify an originating edition' (52). Their brief collation notes appear at the end of each play (only explanatory glosses appear beneath the text of the plays), so only readers who wish to stop and check will gain an idea of how faithfully Bate and Rasmussen have reproduced Folio readings. Further, their definition of 'printing errors' is more expansive than one might expect. The online essay's explanation of the policy they followed is illuminating in this respect, but readers of the print editions have to do without it. The editors emend F1's line where Horatio refers to Old Hamlet having 'smot the sledded Pollax on the Ice' (TLN 79), a famous textual crux, into 'steelèd pole-axe' (1.1.72), a reading that does not come from the Quarto tradition. Bate explains that a word's absence from Early English Books Online (EEBO), Literature Online (LION) or Lexicons of Early Modern English (LEME) is for them 'strongly suggestive of a printing error' (59):

---

[1] In his essay, 'The case for the Folio', published online but intended for inclusion in the first edition, Bate states: 'In asking what would be the best text for the RSC today, the obvious answer was the text of the original royal Shakespeare company – his own company, the King's Men' (42).

> Problem with retaining 'sledded pole-axe': search of databases reveals no other usage of the word 'sledded' or 'sleaded' in the period.
>
> Inference: surely the problem is with 'sledded', not 'pollax'.
>
> Action: search early modern databases for occurrences of 'pollax' (and its variant spellings), to see what adjectives customarily qualify it ... Conclusion: the absence of other occurrences of 'sledded' strongly suggests compositorial error; the occurrence of 'steeled' with pole-axe suggests the emendation 'steeled pole-axe'. During a parley with the Norwegians, angry Old Hamlet grabs the steel-headed pole-axe from the Switzer who stands guard beside him and bangs it emphatically on the ice. (60–1)

The robotic prose perhaps reflects the extent to which Bate was influenced by EEBO, LION and LEME, described in the 2007 essay as 'new tools' for the task of editing, but this logic arguably forces him to deny Shakespeare the kind of lexical originality for which he is (rightly) celebrated in the edition's General Introduction. Again, previous 'pick and mix' editors have adopted the F1 reading, so it is surprising not to see it retained in the first 'authentic and modern' edition of the 1623 volume. The edited texts appear unaltered in the revised edition, and the editors have not toned down claims that this is a faithful edition of F1, but they have at least rescinded their insistence – based on another methodology with which they were taken in the early 2000s – that stylometric analysis has 'devastated the claim to Shakespearian authenticity' of *A Lover's Complaint*. Thus, as mentioned above, the poem is included in the second edition.

The preface to the updated edition describes it as 'The "Second Folio" of the RSC Shakespeare', which risks confusion as there is no link with the Second Shakespeare Folio of 1632. Bate here recognizes 'legitimate criticism' (2:12) that may be levelled at the first edition, noting that it did not make clear how it 'is possible to be simultaneously a modern-spelling reconstruction of "The King's Men Edition," that is to say the collection of Shakespeare's plays authorized by his fellow-actors, and a template for the staging of the plays in the twenty-first century by the acting company that maintains his name and his royal warrant' (2:12). The editors may have included Quarto-only passages at the end of plays where substantive omissions exist, but he fears they 'did not find a way of reflecting particular RSC staging choices within the first edition' (12). The first edition distinguished typographically between stage directions (entrances, exits, musical cues, etc.) from the Folio, which were positioned in the text, and implied staging that can be 'extrapolated from the text and that editors have traditionally mingled with Quarto and Folio directions' (2:12–13), which appeared in the right-hand margin. The latter, which tended to be permissive and were produced, we are told, in the hope of enabling readers to 'construct an imaginary performance in their head' (2:13), no longer appear in the second edition. To 'reflect the staging practice of a specific theatre company' (13), a key claim of the second edition, these have been replaced with production notes designed to record the 'stage business, interpretation and significant cuts' made in two or three specific 21st-century productions. Associate editors, Ian de Jong and Molly G. Yarn, watched 100 recorded performances, using 'the digital preservation of productions over the decade and a half' since the first edition was published to produce glosses which will 'allow readers' access to 'actual' performances (12–13). In the revised edition, lines expunged by the 1606 Act (i.e. Quarto lines) thus now frequently appear in the right-hand margins.

As one might expect, the new performance glosses, like the inclusion of Q-passages at the end of many F-based play-texts, further undermine the volume's purported editorial stance by repeatedly reminding readers that it is just not practicable to adhere to Folio readings alone when preparing a performance text. For example, all three of the selected *Lear* productions included the mock-trial, which does not feature in F1. Ironically, a gloss in *Troilus and Cressida* does the opposite, telling us that a 1998 production followed the Folio by including 'brooch' where the editors opted for 'brach', a reading from an unidentified 'later editor', in Thersites's 'I will hold my peace when Achilles' brach bids me, shall I?' (2.1.87, 1461). I can see why one would prefer 'brach' (i. e. 'bitch') but they *could* 'defend' F1's 'brooch' if they wanted to do so, and the RSC clearly saw fit to use the F1 reading on stage, so why is it not retained in the edition?

The performance notes are nonetheless an innovation to be celebrated. Most editions provide stage history in their General Introduction, and it makes a big difference to have it in the margins as you can visualize the choices described as you read. Many readers' comprehension of the play-texts will be significantly augmented as a result of them, and it is particularly helpful to be told, as you read, when different productions positioned the interval. The glosses also help to bring to life female characters who have an important stage presence without delivering lines, such as Lavinia, who endures a violent glossectomy in the second act of *Titus* and risks being overlooked by readers, despite remaining onstage for much of the remaining action. This is also true of Isabella, who is silent during the Duke's marriage proposal in *Measure for Measure* (e.g., we read that in one production, 'Isabella ignored him').

The staging notes offer an ideal starting point for those interested in the RSC's production history. In the F1-only fly-killing scene of *Titus Andronicus*, the lines of the text indicate that Marcus kills the fly so it is interesting to learn that 'the Boy' (Young Lucius) struck the fly in one performance before delivering Marcus's lines. It is similarly helpful to know that, in the same play, Marcus's line about a kiss being 'comfortless / As frozen water to a starvèd snake' (3.1.251–2) – a line that clearly implies a stage direction which is absent from early editions of Shakespeare and George Peele's text – was accompanied by Lavinia kissing Titus in one production, and Lavinia kissing 'the heads' of her dead brothers in another. The use of sigla 'P1', 'P2' and 'P3' to distinguish between productions that are identified in the 'Key Facts' sections that head each play is also easy to follow. Those who compare the glossed stage action for the comfortless kiss in *Titus* with directions proposed in Bate's excellent Arden edition of the play will be forgiven for asking where the circle of influence between the editorial tradition and the performance tradition begins and ends, so it is a shame that neither edition addresses the complex relationship between drama's dual media.

It is also a shame that the staging notes are under-explained and under-theorized. They raise methodological concerns, and this time we do not have an online essay to fall back on. For instance, it is not clear whether the 'staging details' offered in the right-hand margin come from recordings made 'for public' or 'for archive' productions. This matters because the viewer's gaze is shaped differently by different modes of delivery and because screen production can necessitate secondary direction, so it would be helpful to have a clearer idea of which versions of RSC productions the edition seeks to preserve. Much illuminating scholarship has been published on precisely these issues, particularly since the publication of the first edition, so it is a shame not to see it addressed or recognized. The staging choices offered to readers are predominantly based on 21st-century productions, but some date from the late 1980s and 1990s. The number of productions referenced per play ranges from two to three, with the exception of the *Henry VI* plays. This decision demonstrates a clear attempt at consistency, but one wonders if the decision to cap at three was the right choice, and it would be nice to have an explanation of their rationale. For some plays, three productions do suggest 'a range of possible choices', but for others it might instead be all of the company's 21st-century productions of this play. These differences in performance history need to be made clear for the reader.

More explanation of descriptive terms used in the glosses would also prove helpful. When we are told that, in the 2009 production of *The Tempest*, directed by Janice Honeyman, 'Caliban added curses in a non-English language . . . whenever he cursed' (14), we are left wondering if 'non-English' means that Caliban used a made-up language, or if he used a specific 'non-English' language and, if so, which, especially as the 'Key Facts' section notes that the production was 'set in colonial era Africa' (4). Finally, the way cuts are recorded would benefit from explanatory notes as there are references to *Tempest* productions 'cutting' or else 'cutting differently but judiciously', 'eliminating parentheticals' (by which they mean digressions and not wrylies) and 'eliminating plot-irrelevant details' (see 1.2.80–92; 94–102 and 155–60), but these statements assume knowledge on the part of the reader. They ask them to theorize what one might omit to fit such descriptors (and in text that is not typographically marked with parentheses) in a way that returns us to the hypothetical stage practices recorded in the first edition. It is, of course, hard to achieve the right balance between description and analysis when communicating production choices, and the omission of words, as opposed to full lines, is very hard to convey in a marginal gloss. Nonetheless, these kinds of issues could have been avoided if more attention had been given to the glosses in the second edition's 'User's Guide' (53–4).

The volume's General Introduction continues to offer expertly written overviews of early modern staging practices and companies, though in this updated second edition it seems particularly strange not to read discussion of the stages and staging practices of the RSC – the company the edition promises to document. While famous productions are cited, we are not told how many times the RSC have staged individual plays in recent years. Equally, it is helpful to be informed (in the 'Key Facts' sections) of the RSC theatres in which the referenced productions took place, but one wonders how useful this information is – in the absence of accompanying photos and descriptors – for those who have never attended a production in that space.

In sum, despite the impressive work of the new associate editors, the second edition is undermined by the same contradiction that plagued the first: between the F-based editorial policy it seeks to defend, and its attempts to act as script and record for a modern theatre company. The edition is, however, very handsome, its text legible, generously spaced and well presented, and the colour images are sumptuous. Its main strength perhaps lies in its ability to act as a time capsule; the forewords from successive artistic directors (Michael Boyd and Greg Doran), photographs of RSC productions, presentist reflections in the new preface, and the performance glosses from the late 1980s to the second decade of the twenty-first century provide a valuable record of key moments in the history of the Royal Shakespeare Company.

New insights into stage directions and performance history are also provided in the second and final volume of the Arden Shakespeare: Early Modern German Shakespeare. Edited by Lukas Erne, Florence Hazrat and Maria Shmygol, this instalment contains fully edited English translations of *Tito Andronico* (*Titus Andronicus*) and *Kunst über alle Künste, ein bös Weib gut zu machen* ('An Art beyond All Arts, to Make a Bad Wife Good', i.e. *The Taming of the Shrew*). Volume 1, which contained English translations of early German versions of *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* (reviewed in *Shakespeare Survey 74*, 2021), included introductions to the history of English actors in Continental Europe and Shakespeare's impact on the repertories of early modern German acting companies. These are not repeated in the Introduction to the present volume, but the same important point is again made about the need to adhere to 'the international traffic of early modern theatre companies and their plays' and recognize the fact that 'Shakespeare's plays have always also been European, and that we have much to gain from recovering the life they led on the Continent' (xvi).

The volume provides those who do not read in German greater access to plays that hold significance for the history of Shakespeare in performance and print. This is particularly so for *Künst* as this is not just the first translation of the play into English, but the first translation into any language.

Both translations are of very high quality, the texts modern and accessible, unlike Albert Cohn's dated and Ernest Brennecke's awkward translation of *Tito*, published in the nineteenth century and 1960s, respectively. Those wishing to consult the edited German texts will not find them in the published volumes but are invited by the editors to consult them via the website of the University of Geneva, where they are accompanied by textual notes and short introductions.

A prose play in eight acts, *Tito*, the earliest of the extant early modern German texts, is less than half the length of Shakespeare and Peele's *Titus*. It was first published in 1620 in a German-language octavo collection entitled *Engelische Comedien vnd Tragedien* ('English Comedies and Tragedies') and its authorship, the editors inform us, is linked to Friedrich Menius, 'a colourful figure who was prosecuted and condemned for both bigamy and heresy' (xviii). *Kunst über alle Künste*, an anonymous five-act prose play preserved in two duodecimo editions published in 1672, is the only of the early modern German versions of Shakespeare that is longer than its source play (by around 40 per cent), with many asides and new soliloquies added.

The editors outline how popular Titus and Shrew plays were on the stages of Continental Europe. Although it is the earliest extant version of a Shrew play, there are no recorded performances of *Kunst über alle Künste*. It was preceded by a Dutch 'translation (and partial adaptation)' that translates as *The Mad Wedding* (1654), and a German version entitled *The Wonderful Wedding of Petruvio with bad Catherine* of *c.*1658 (83). The section introducing *Kunst* is thus primarily concerned with the relationship between these texts, whereas the section on *Tito*, a play for which we do have early performance records and an early seventeenth-century printed witness, has more to say about stage history and the relationship of the play-text to early versions of the Titus story, as well as to Shakespeare and Peele's play.

The General Introduction offers a detailed, act-by-act comparison of the two plays (treated separately) and the Shakespeare versions. The *Tito* section provides thought-provoking analysis of the play's relationship to *Titus* and the impact that cuts and alterations have on principal characters. The versions of Aaron, Titus, Tamora and Lavinia are most impacted, with Morian devoid of 'Aaron's boundless maliciousness' (12); Tito is less of a rash father than his Shakespearian counterpart (he does not kill Mutius); Aetiopissa, 'the chief villain in the German play', is haughty (the full title of the play is *The Very Lamentable Tragedy of Tito Andronico and the Haughty Empress*) and less sexually lascivious than Tamora; and Lavinia, though now the main impetus for the Andronici revenge plot, is robbed of much of the agency and classical learning she displays in *Titus* (the book of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* is cut, as are references to Philomela and her lines mocking Tamora).

The plot of *Tito* is more streamlined and fast-paced than *Titus* but, as the editors' close comparison demonstrates, this is not a simple case of trimming for performance. Character motivation differs quite significantly, and things happen in *Tito* that have no foundation in *Titus*. It thus makes sense to call *Tito* an 'alternative version of *Titus*' (19), as opposed to an adaptation – though definitions and discussion of the boundaries between the two are lacking from the volume – making this German play distinct from *Kunst* and the alterations of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* described in the first volume.

Kunst represents a 'sophisticated early dramatic response' to social issues in Shakespeare's play and this makes it particularly worthy of scholarly attention, even if it lacks the kind of insights plays such as *Tito*, *Der Bestrafte Brudermord* and *Romio und Julieta* offer into Shakespeare's textual history (85). The roles and significance of servant characters are increased in the German version of *Shrew*, which adds a new female servant character, Sybilla, who falls pregnant to the Grumio figure, and Veit, who is servant to Theobald/Baptista (85). These characters comment on and 'act as foils for their social betters', particularly as the romantic relationship between Sybilla and Wormfire offers direct contrast with that of Catharina and Hardman/Petruchio (84). The play ends not on the wager on wifely obedience that it copies from *Shrew*, but instead with the serving characters and a bawdy song about sex and monogamy sung by Fabian/Biondello. The German play is also full of proverbial language, something which is notoriously hard to translate, and a helpful section of the Introduction clarifies how the different proverbs function and the ways in which they amplify the play's sexual allusions, which are 'often channelled through outspoken servants' (117). Like John Fletcher's and John Lacy's English adaptations, *Kunst* therefore also has much to say about how Shakespeare's play's treatment of gender was interpreted and modified for new audiences.

Tito attracts scholarly interest not just for its handling of plot and characters but also for the important clues it offers into the staging history of *Titus* and the relationship between early versions of Titus, such as the chapbook and a possible Ur-*Titus*. Fascinating parallels are suggested between the lines and implied action of *Titus* and the stage directions printed in *Tito*. The aforementioned (RSC) example of Lavinia kissing the severed heads of her brothers, Quintus and Marius, is first found in *Tito*. Bate used a modified version of the stage direction, which is also cited by the editors of *The New Oxford Shakespeare*, in his Arden edition, but the most illuminating *Tito* direction does not seem to have found its way into modern editions. It relates to Aaron's 'Away with slavish weeds and servile thoughts' soliloquy in the play's opening act. The line is explained by an onstage costume change in the German play when Morian enters in 1.1 wearing something suggestive of 'slavish weeds': 'a humble cloak' that is 'pulled over his magnificent clothes'. Once the other characters have exited, he removes the cloak to reveal an outfit that fits the speech's reference to him being 'bright, and shin[ing] in pearl and gold' (1.1). Other directions in *Tito* also help audiences to make more sense of spoken dialogue, such as Aaron's fraught response when his baby is first brought onstage. This can be explained by the direction in *Tito* that tells us that Saphonus (Chiron) takes the baby 'from the midwife, draws his sword and is about to kill the child' (6.1.47). Although (as outlined below) it is unlikely to be directly based on Shakespeare and Peele's play, *Tito* may well act as 'a key witness to the early history of Shakespeare's play', offering indications of how *Titus* was initially performed (xviii). These reasons make this publication worthy of the attention of Shakespeare editors and directors.

Yet more exciting is the new contribution to critical conversations about the relationship between the three extant versions of the Titus Andronicus story. The scholarly consensus is that *Titus* is based on the prose history and that a ballad was then based on *Titus* but, as the editors state, most accounts of the likely correspondence between texts do not consider the German play. To support their claim that *Tito* and *Titus* are based on a now lost Ur-*Titus* that was itself based on the Elizabethan prose chapbook, entitled *The History of Titus Andronicus, the Renowned Roman General, Newly Translated from the Italian Copy Printed at Rome*, Erne and Shmygol emphasize multiple points of convergence between the chapbook and *Tito* that have no equivalent in *Titus*. These include references to the Titus character planning to sell his belongings to fund an army to defend Rome against invasion, and the way that the Aaron figure functions less independently and more as a tool of the revenge plot of the Tamora/Aetiopissa figure: in *Tito*, Aetiopissa is said to be behind Morian tricking Tito out of his hand just as 'Attava' is said to have 'sent the Moor . . . to trick Titus out of his hand' in the prose history (42). The editors also cite numerous other echoes between the two versions of the Moor character that are not found in *Titus* (43–5). They do not, however, find it plausible to suggest that the travelling players based their plays on the chapbook or on a mixture of *Titus* and the chapbook. They instead assume that 'the prose history served as the source for a now lost Titus play that was taken to the Continent by travelling players but also served as the basis for Shakespeare and Peele's *Titus*' (46–7).

Concerning the identity of the lost Titus play, they again offer a compelling conclusion. They cite Cohn's earlier theory that the Ur-*Titus* is *Titus and Vespasian*, a lost play recorded in

Henslowe's diary, and observe how *Tito*'s Lucius character is called Vespasianus. The editors add to this the observation that Vespasianus plays an important role in *Tito*, 'perhaps more prominent than his equivalent in *Titus*', and heads the characters listed in *Tito*'s dramatis personae (40). As they state, these details, coupled with the correspondences between *Tito* and the chapbook that are not found in *Titus*, 'may indeed be evidence' that *Titus and Vespasian* was the Ur-*Titus* that travelled to Germany and that Shakespeare and Peele reworked in England.

The General Introduction further includes an account of performances of German Titus plays in the seventeenth century, and a particularly strong section on 'Issues of race in *Tito Andronico*' that presents the play as having 'much to contribute to the study of race in the early modern period' (19). The non-Roman characters in this version of the play are of African descent and, the editors argue, the play makes clear that Aetiopissa and Morian 'do not belong to the same racial category' (20). The play is said to both problematize whiteness 'through the presence of a white African queen' (23), and, thanks to the new backstory Morian is given, invite us to consider him in the context of 'popular cultural associations of black Africans with martial skill' (25). Textual matters and bibliographical evidence sometimes get relegated to footnotes when they would have been better placed in the main body of the General Introduction, but the introductions, translations and paratexts are otherwise clear throughout. Overall, there is much in the two volumes to assist and invigorate future editions, productions and critical studies of *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, *Shrew* and *Titus*.

TEXTUAL STUDIES

Ben Higgins's painstakingly researched monograph *Shakespeare's Syndicate: The First Folio, Its Publishers, and the Early Modern Book Trade* provides an engaging new account of how the First Folio was made. It deserves particular praise for the way it uses the example of F1 to offer detailed insight into the workings of the London book trade, types of collaborations that took place, and how and why individual early modern books were made. Importantly, it also encourages scholars to recognize agents who remain conspicuously absent from most accounts of literary history, the 'large cadre of absent or invisible labour on which the early modern book trade relied: the wives, widows, and apprentices, the type founders and paper merchants, the pressmen and the compositors whose nimble skill with metal type is registered only through the absence of any human trace' (8).

Much has been written on the printing of the Folio but Higgins is instead interested in the four book trade businesses – those of William Jaggard, Edward Blount, John Smethwick and William Aspley – that bore shared financial responsibility for the creation of F1, i.e. the 'syndicate' of his title, and the various different roles they assumed in the making of the Folio. Equally, while he builds on work by Zachary Lesser and others who analyse how a publisher's specialization may have shaped a title's early reception, he rightly insists that Shakespeare's Folio 'and all collaboratively published books . . . wonderfully frustrate' that approach, because they 'do not allow for the recovery of just one stationer's agenda' (30). He accordingly focuses both on the careers of individual stationers within the syndicate, and on a 'networked model of literary production' (31).

Higgins's Introduction analyses the Folio's paratexts to highlight the kinds of new readings that await scholars willing to read material books in dialogue with the texts they contain. He suggests, for example, that the colophon's position at the bottom of the final leaf of the Folio and its closing play, *Cymbeline*, invites alternative readings of lines in the playtext that suggest that the characters may comment on the material book that contains them. These examples show how 'boundaries of the playworld become porous . . . and open to the material in which that world is housed' (11). There is also thought-provoking analysis of how the initial circulation of the Folio's frontispiece, in isolation as part of a title-page advertisement posted on the walls of London, enacted materially the figurative separation of Shakespeare's 'Picture' and 'Booke' that is evoked in the Ben Jonson poem which sits adjacent to the frontispiece in bound copies of the Folio (11).

The Introduction also outlines the different steps the syndicate had to complete before publishing F1, and the amount each step might cost them, from acquiring copy from other stationers and the acting company, to negotiating a 'one-off right to include . . . in a single edition of the Folio' fourteen titles (owned by eight stationers) which 'had already been printed or claimed' (23). The latter negotiations may, Higgins suggests, help to explain the publication of certain Shakespeare titles in the build-up to, and the immediate aftermath of, the Folio: stationers may have been 'capitalizing on [their] property before leasing an impression to the syndicate' (24). In the case of Smethwick's (undated) *Romeo and Juliet* and *Hamlet*, which immediately followed the Folio into print (in 1623 and 1624),[2] he points to Smethwick's usual practice of dating his publications to posit that 'these two less forthcoming title pages may record Smethwick's attempt to evade any restrictions agreed during the Folio negotiations about the printing of individual plays' (24). Other steps in the process will have ranged from proofreading to dispersal, and Higgins uses contextual examples from the contemporary book trade to illuminate our understanding of what each might have entailed. Members of the syndicate would then, he writes, 'stock their own shelves, exchange copies with other booksellers, and offer the book for sale to customers' (27). The ways in which this movement from 'production to reception was shaped' by different members of the syndicate, in their different premises, with their varying aims and print reputations, 'held rich potential to influence the book's success' (27).

Higgins also draws on material and biographical evidence to suggest ways in which the careers of the stationers were linked – how they functioned as part of a wider network – even if the whole group did not collaborate on a publishing venture before the 1623 Folio. He outlines how the men's careers enjoyed similar trajectories that can be seen to correspond with Shakespeare's career. They began to trade in the 1590s, the same decade when Shakespeare's print career began, and 'came of age' through promotion to the 'ranks of liverymen' in 1611, at around the time when Shakespeare's writing career 'moved towards its close' (14). Some of the group worked together on other publications or else sold copies of texts the others published. This suggestion, that the men likely traded in copies of each other's stock, is supported by a gripping account of extant copies of their publications that are wrapped in, or else bound using, waste sheets for each other's publications, such as the British Library copy of a Smethwick title that is wrapped in waste sheets taken from a Blount publication (15). Higgins also reminds us of the different uses, from boarding houses to post offices, to which bookshops like Blount's were put, and that 'publishing and bookselling businesses also relied on a range of other social and commercial practices' (18). The wide range of Blount's activities, commercial partnerships and epistolary networks are helpfully recorded in the well-curated collection of his correspondence appended to the study.

The monograph is divided into two parts to reflect the 'two-tier management' of the Folio (26), with the first dedicated to the most prominent figures, Blount and Jaggard, and the second to Smithwick and Aspley. Chapter 1 explores the prefaces Blount appended to his publications, a professional approach that, like his investment tactics, distinguishes him from the other three stationers. It also explores the ways in which Blount's paratextual addresses, like his decision to evoke the classical tradition by advertising copies of the book as Shakespeare's oeuvre ('Master William Shakesperes workes'), may have contributed to the perceived 'literariness' of the Folio. The chapter on Jaggard that follows focuses on his bookshop in the Barbican, textual legitimacy and the authoritative ('destined for libraries') publications on which his seventeenth-century reputation was built (these are helpfully listed in Appendix 2). Higgins thus does an excellent job of rescuing Jaggard from accusations of piracy levelled at him by the New Bibliography.

---

[2] R. Carter Hailey dated these playbooks using paper and watermark evidence (see 'The dating game: new evidence for the dates of Q4 *Romeo and Juliet* and Q4 *Hamlet*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 58 (2007), 367–87).

The latter chapters focus on the problems inherent when gathering dispersed playtexts together for publication, and the significance of place, respectively. Chapter 3 pulls together disparate information from the Stationers' Register to produce tables recording 'Entries of Shakespeare's work, 1593–1622', organized by chronology and by stationers, and these will be of invaluable use to future scholars. Chapter 4, which is richly illustrated with maps, charts in detail the movement of F1 across London as Shakespeare's collected plays were sold from bookshops located at addresses ranging from the centre of the book trade in St Paul's to as far away as Smethwick's shop in Fleet Street. Higgins's analysis, backed by exemplary knowledge, and a magisterial appendix of 'The wholesale locations of Shakespeare's books, 1593–1640' (240–50), illustrate important ways in which space and place helped to shape the volume's meaning, the consumers to whom it was offered for sale, and its perceived value. In sum, Higgins's answer to the question of whether or not there is anything left to say about the most studied book in English literary history is a resounding yes. *Shakespeare's Syndicate* is packed full of new discoveries that can help to nuance our understanding of the making of the First Folio, its print fortunes and the wider careers of the publishers who financed it.

Emma Smith and Laurie Maguire's thoughtful reconsideration of 'Theatre, revision and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*' and Gary Taylor's careful analysis of *Henry V* offer scintillating reappraisals of individual Folio texts and their relationship to Quarto versions. In doing so, they join book-length studies that appeared in 2020–2021 in arguing for the need to free ourselves from the limitations the legacy of twentieth-century bibliography imposed upon us concerning so-called 'bad quartos', foul papers and theories of memorial reconstruction. In particular, these two articles both revisit narratives, first set up by A. W. Pollard and the New Bibliography, which dictate that 'where there is a longer and a shorter text', as with F and Q *Henry V* and *Merry Wives*, the longer text must come before the shorter text. This direction of travel encourages us to think in terms of 'degenerative loss rather than creative expansion' and implies that shorter texts must be lacking – they must be in want of material that has been 'cut, omitted, mangled, or forgotten' (Smith and Maguire, 202, 180). But, as both articles demonstrate, these assumptions do not always reflect what the material witnesses have to say and, in returning to old conclusions with fresh eyes, the authors expose deep-seeded preferences and biases that persist within the field of Shakespeare editing.

As Smith and Maguire note, 'the current editorial consensus is that F *Merry Wives* became Q by some combination of theatrical, memorial, and print depredations and sometimes via a lost intermediary or Ur-text' (177). Building on challenges to the consensus articulated by Peter Grav, who focused on the way the theme of cash and economics is handled in the two versions (2006), Richard Dutton, who argued that Shakespeare expanded the play for court performance (2016), and Alan Farmer, who used title-page evidence and bibliometrics to characterize Shakespeare's longer plays, more generally, as products of revision (2015), Smith and Maguire focus on comedy to argue that the Folio text ought to be seen as a revision of the Quarto. The article seeks to problematize the assumed binary definitions of revisor/adaptor and their association with the other binary depiction of poet / practical playwright, with the revisor being attuned to specific lexical and local detail, and the adaptor more interested in dramatic structure and characterization.

Willing to see Shakespeare as a theatrical revisor and practical playwright, and thus free of the dominant anti-theatrical and anti-comic bias they identify in most revisionist accounts, Smith and Maguire present a case for augmentation – and comic augmentation at that – which turns out to be far more convincing than the theory that has dominated accounts of the play for well over a hundred years. To do this, they do not return to the texts so much as to W. W. Greg's reading of textual variants.[3] Remarkably, they demonstrate just how hard Greg had to work at times to make the evidence fit his theory of 'reconstruction and omission', compellingly using Greg's own evidence as proof that revision of the Folio text is a 'much more straightforward and convincing' conclusion than his own suggestion of the Quarto text being a corrupted memorial reconstruction (185). In doing so, they also draw our attention to the way in which the theatre has been marginalized and disparaged in studies of revision, and how tragedy has overshadowed comedy in this regard because of scholarly assumptions that it is more significant and therefore worthy of reworking. Thus, whilst their conclusions are certainly exciting, they also provide a sobering reminder of how much else has likely been overlooked as a result of the 'unexamined editorial preference for the streamlined, the essential, and the scripted over the mobile, improvised, and expansive' (202).

Taylor's article 'Play manuscripts, vectors of transmission, and Shakespeare's *Henry the fifth*' proposes another revelatory thesis, whereby the widely accepted relationship between the Quarto and Folio texts of *Henry V* – again inherited from New Bibliographers and generally upheld by recent editors – gets flipped on its head. Focusing on textual evidence, he demonstrates why we need to revisit old conclusions, examine material witnesses afresh, and stop repeating accounts of a binary opposition between an 'early authorial manuscript (the printer's copy for 1623)' and a 'defective non-authorial manuscript representing early theatrical performances (the printer's copy for 1600)' (344–5).

Taylor's essay takes as its main subject the way Princess Katherine and the female character who accompanies her are presented in *The Chronical history of Henry the fifth* (Q1, 1600) and *The Life of Henry the Fifth* (F1). He identifies an overlooked bibliographical similarity in the supposed 'bad quarto' of 1600 and the Folio text. Katherine appears in only two scenes. While in Q1, F1 and the source play, *The Famous Victories of Henrie the Fifth* (1598), speech prefixes identify the female character accompanying Princess Katherine in the final scene as 'Lady', in the language lesson scene, which is found only in the two Shakespeare texts, the speech prefixes instead name her Alice ('Allice', 1600 / 'Alice', 1623). This observation prompts Taylor to systematically re-examine variants to find patterns of repetition and variation in speech prefixes, stage directions and speeches in the Shakespeare texts, before surmising that these must come 'from both underlying manuscripts', meaning that the two early versions of the play 'must have some sort of physical connection' (349). This connection cannot come from memorial reconstruction because speech prefixes, like stage directions, are part of the secondary text, they are not spoken aloud (355), nor can the patterns be explained by other theories of New Bibliography.

Instead, Taylor's evidence suggests that 'the manuscript containing *The Life* derives from an earlier manuscript containing *The Chronicle History*' – in other words, the manuscript on which the Folio text is based is indebted to the manuscript on which the printed text of Q1 is based. Further, 'the folio text contains the most evidence of playhouse edits', and *The Chronicle History* 'resembles other Shakespearean play texts printed in his lifetime ... that are generally regarded as authoritative and reliable' (377–8). Of course, the evidence presented cannot ever hope to answer all questions surrounding the relationship between these two texts and the history of the manuscripts on which they are based, but the argument is important both because it challenges received thinking about the texts of *Henry V* and because it acts as another reminder of the need to continue re-examining the material evidence on which long-dominant theories are based.

Smith and Maguire note that 'seeing F Merry Wives as a revision of Q' exposes how 'aristocratic masculinity [usually] takes center stage in textual stemma', at the expense of 'a comedy celebrating strong, mature, middling-sort women' (202). Making a similar point, Taylor suggests that the bibliographical features he discusses have probably been overlooked by earlier critics because they concern women / female characters in a play whose editorial history has 'been dominated for so long by men working in bibliography's male homosocial environment' (347–8). It is thus encouraging to see the burgeoning field of feminist book history and the work of historical female bibliographers showcased in a brilliant article by Eve Houghton, entitled 'Private owners, public books: Henrietta Bartlett's feminist bibliography'. She presents an illuminating account of the ground-breaking bibliographer Henrietta Bartlett, and the *Shakespeare Census* she produced with Pollard's help in 1916, and alone in 1939, and, in doing so, raises important questions about who gets to count as a Shakespearian 'expert' (582).

---

[3] In *Shakespeare's Merry Wives of Windsor, 1602*, ed. W. W. Greg (Oxford, 1910).

Houghton outlines ways in which the *Census*, a valuable resource for Shakespearians that is now available as an online open-access resource (see *Shakespeare Survey 74*, 2021), initially 'served booksellers, collectors, and auction houses as an index of rarity and hence of commercial value' (568). She also provides a detailed and sensitive biographical sketch of Bartlett, a contemporary of Greg, Pollard and McKerrow, who likewise pioneered empirical approaches to bibliography, but who examined material texts to make a living, and refused to accept unpaid work. Bartlett was allowed to serve, but not join, bibliographical clubs and societies that refused to admit women and, as the evidence surveyed suggests, she was often subjected to the disparaging, sexist mindsets of the private collectors with whom she corresponded. Further, Houghton draws attention to the important network of female bibliographers, collectors and librarians that Bartlett – who lived with a fellow female librarian – sought to foster in early twentieth-century New York, be it through her 'teaching and mentorship work' (574), or through her successful attempt to persuade the Grolier Club to make an exception and allow one of her female students access to their holdings (580). Houghton's study thus provides an important reminder that much of what we now know about individual copies of Shakespeare's texts is thanks to Bartlett and the owners – be it of single, inexpensive books or of vast, expensive collections – who, by completing her Census questionnaires and responding to her letters, also acted as 'collaborators in the founding of modern Shakespeare bibliography' (578).

In sum, this year's editions and textual studies illustrate a need to reflect on assumptions of hierarchy and precedence, whilst re-centring marginalized voices, the material processes of book production and the workings of the theatre.

WORKS REVIEWED

Bate, Jonathan, and Eric Rasmussen, eds., with Ian De Jong and Molly G. Yarn, *RSC William Shakespeare: Complete Works*, 2nd edn (London, 2022)

Erne, Lukas, Florence Hazrat and Maria Shmygol, *Titus Andronicus and The Taming of the Shrew: Tito Andronico and Kunst über alle Künste, ein bös Weib gut zu machen in Translation* (London, 2022)

Higgins, Ben, *Shakespeare's Syndicate: The First Folio, Its Publishers, and the Early Modern Book Trade* (Oxford, 2022)

Houghton, Eve, 'Private owners, public books: Henrietta Bartlett's feminist bibliography', *PBSA* 116 (2022), 568–87

Smith, Emma, and Laurie Maguire, 'Theatre, revision and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 72 (2021), 177–202

Taylor, Gary, 'Play manuscripts, vectors of transmission, and Shakespeare's *Henry the Fifth*', *PBSA* 116 (2022), 343–78