

## 2. EDITIONS AND TEXTUAL STUDIES

reviewed by EMMA DEPLEDGE

2023 saw the release of an updated edition of the New Cambridge *Romeo and Juliet*, featuring a new Introduction by Hester Lees-Jeffries; engaging mini-graphs on *Shakespeare, Malone and the Problems of Chronology* and *Facsimiles and the History of Shakespeare Editing*, written by Tiffany Stern and Paul Salzman, respectively; and Heidi Craig's and Sarah Ledwidge's studies which offered exciting new evidence to revise our understanding of the status of Shakespeare's works in the book trade between the 1640s and early 1660s. 2023 was, of course, the quatercentenary of the Shakespeare 'First Folio', a milestone marked by an 'Anniversary' special issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly* entitled 'On Shakespeare's First Folio and Early Modern Critical Race Studies', guest edited by Noémie Ndiaye. The special issue called for scholars to reflect on 'the kinds of shifts and destabilizations that we want the quatercentenary celebrations to orchestrate' (185), and this was responded to in book-historical terms by contributors Brandi K. Adams and Emily Weissbourd, and by Emma Smith in the new preface added to the second ('400th anniversary') edition of her *First Folio: Four Centuries of an Iconic Book*.

The third edition of the New Cambridge Shakespeare *Romeo and Juliet* retains G. Blakemore Evans's text – based on the second quarto – but adds a brand new Introduction and other fresh paratexts by Lees-Jeffries. The second edition, published twenty years ago, still featured Blakemore Evans's Introduction, with an updated performance history provided by Thomas Moisan. The new Introduction supersedes Moisan's work, analysing productions and adaptations from the Restoration period through to screenings taking place during COVID-19 lockdowns. It also offers numerous fresh ways of thinking about one of Shakespeare's most popular plays. An updated 'Reading list' features works from as recent as 2023, and a new 'Note' has been added to frame Blakemore Evans's discussion of textual matters. The note provides a (very necessary) nod to the most relevant work by textual scholars, particularly that

which moved us beyond notions of 'bad' quartos, and studies that undermined arguments based on 'memorial reconstruction', but it does so whilst trying not to overly emphasize the fact that Blakemore Evans's work is now over forty years old, a fact which is impossible to overlook. The text and its collational notes remain products of the period in and for which they were first produced, but Lees-Jeffries's additions do a good job of bringing the rest of the edition up to date in terms of both performance history and scholarly debates.

She presents the case for reading *Romeo and Juliet* as part of a 'cluster of Shakespeare's works' which were 'part of the same extended, mutually informative creative process as Shakespeare read and wrote both poetry and drama' (2). Drawing on new findings in dramatic history, she argues that the theatre closures of 1592–1594 should be read not simply as a moment when Shakespeare turned his attention to writing narrative poems but also as a time that may have helped to bring about the significant increase in new writing recorded in the years that followed. Throughout the Introduction, *Romeo and Juliet* is placed in the rich context of Shakespeare's other writings and the wider world of Elizabethan poetry and theatre as Lees-Jeffries draws attention to allusions, in addition to the sources usually discussed in introductions to the play, but rightly refrains from trying to push arguments about directions of influence. She specifically analyses echoes between lines of *Romeo and Juliet* and contemporary sonnets and epithalamiums, and between the play's scenes and spatial dynamics and those found in plays thought to have been performed around the same time. A key example given is the so-called 'balcony scene' of *Romeo and Juliet* and the deposition scene of *Richard II*. A section entitled 'Body Language' features skilful close readings of Romeo and Juliet's shared sonnet and Juliet's 'Gallop apace' soliloquy.

In her reflections on the 'practical, theatrical considerations that shaped Shakespeare's writing'

of the play, Lees-Jeffries sets out the evidence on which ‘best guesses’ can be made about the actors who may have performed the play’s different roles and then offers responses to scholarly debates about famous staging cruxes. It has long been assumed, thanks to Capulet referring to his serving-man as ‘Will’ in Q1 and the presence of his full name in a stage direction of Q2, that Will Kemp played Peter, but Lees-Jeffries adds to this the perceptive suggestion that Alexander Cooke or Robert Gough probably embodied Juliet in early productions, and the hypothesis that, rather than playing Romeo, Richard Burbage might have played Mercutio. Her logic – that a company’s leading actor cannot have always played the lead as he would need to balance major roles with lesser roles, or at least less physically demanding ones, in order to cope with the workload – seems sound in itself, but Lees-Jeffries also reminds us that Mercutio is a bigger speaking part than one might assume. He only appears in four scenes but nonetheless has ‘the sixth largest speaking part’ and ‘the largest share of the text of any sixth-largest role in a surviving 1590s play’ (13).

The answers Lees-Jeffries provides to staging questions that ‘may have been overthought’ by her predecessors – such as the question of what happens to Juliet’s bed in 4.4 – are delivered with the aplomb and common sense of an editor well versed in theatre history and dramaturgy. The idea of Romeo and Paris fighting with rapiers seems to her ‘hideously dangerous for tired actors’, and the overall take-home point is that most things become straightforward once we let go of expectations of spatial coherency and anything else that is ‘unduly realist’; ‘it might be assumed that what Quince and his amateurs regarded as essential (a real wall; some representation of the moon) is the opposite to the conventions of the professional stage’ (17).

The Introduction also provides new thinking about the play’s relationship to Italy and Italian(s), its portrayal of ‘Dancing and Duelling’, and its treatment of relations between men. However, the most notable strength is Lees-Jeffries’s meticulous exploration of the play’s enduring legacy, spanning from the seventeenth century to recent

productions for different media. Her comprehensive analysis updates the play for a new generation through insightful examinations of film versions ‘Beyond Zeffirelli’ – including *Gnomio and Juliet* (directed by Kelly Asbury, 2011), which features star-crossed garden gnomes from Stratford-upon-Avon – and observations about the late twentieth-century tendency to present the lovers in productions and adaptations as divided along lines of class, race, religion and nationality (70–1). The survey of productions and adaptations, which takes a Global approach, illustrates this observation with examples such as francophone Capulets and anglophone Montagues in a Canadian production (1989–1990); an Iraqi Theatre Company production (in Stratford and London, 2012), entitled *Romeo and Juliet in Baghdad*, in which Capulet is Sunni and Montague Shia; and examples of the play’s appropriation within young adult fiction, such as Pamela Laskin’s verse novel *Ronit and Jamil* (2017), which depicts Israeli Ronit and Palestinian Jamil. Also discussed is the popular recent musical *£ Juliet* (London 2019, Broadway 2022) which features Max Martin pop songs such as Britney Spears’s ‘Baby one more time’, a Juliet who does not die but instead goes to Paris with her friends (the Nurse, Anne Hathaway and best friend May), and production merchandise with the slogan ‘Romeo Who?’.

A final section entitled ‘Love in the Time of Coronavirus’ then takes us through the ‘rush’ of productions of *Romeo and Juliet* that appeared in the UK in 2021 – some postponed, some born-digital, others adapted for new platforms as a result of theatre closures – each responding in different ways to the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and the theatres/platforms in and for which they were (and were not) envisioned. This is a fantastic aspect of the play’s afterlife with which to end as it enables Lees-Jeffries to demonstrate the crucial role the play continues to play as theatre and Shakespeare performances are reinvented across different media.

Discussion of Juliet’s age is a necessary and expected inclusion in an introduction to the play

and the contextual analysis of how the age of 13–14 was treated in contemporary epitaphs / poetry of mourning is sensitive and insightful, but the conversation gains nothing from the words of John Sutherland (one of the authors of *Henry V, War Criminal? And Other Shakespeare Puzzles*), whom Lees-Jeffries cites even as she reflects herself that it is ‘hard to know what to say in response’ to both his ‘tone and opinion’ (33). It is a shame his misogynist remarks were given such a platform and it is out of keeping with what is otherwise a work of scholarship that is as sensitive to the poetry of the play and the moment in and for which it was produced as it is to the needs and interests of a great variety of readers. Indeed, the Introduction is followed by a page entitled ‘Advice and support’, a wonderful inclusion that provides phone numbers for and links to services offering assistance for those struggling with their mental health, suicidal thoughts, or faced with the threat of forced marriage. Many of us provide trigger warnings before teaching some of Shakespeare’s plays and it would be great to see versions of this page added to more editions of the plays, and not simply to plays renowned for their use in high schools, as the issues raised in Shakespeare’s plays can impact readers at any point in their lives.

Lees-Jeffries is less concerned with ‘tying the play to a specific date’, which she ‘broadly’ assumes to be 1595, than she is with mapping out the kinds of conversations ‘Shakespeare’s play might be having with other texts around that moment’ (3). The methods used to discuss chronology in single volumes and complete works of Shakespeare is the subject of Stern’s new study, *Shakespeare, Malone and the Problems of Chronology*, which also traces the legacy of Edmund Malone (1741–1812) – an Irish lawyer cum literary scholar – and the development of his quest to date Shakespeare’s plays in *An Attempt to Ascertain the order in Which the Plays Attributed to Shakespeare Were Written* (1778) and the subsequent versions of *An Attempt* published in 1790 and (posthumously, completed by James Boswell the Younger) in 1821. Malone, whose notes were originally produced to accompany George Steevens’s edition of 1778 (known as the Johnson–Steevens Shakespeare because it updated

Samuel Johnson’s edition of Shakespeare’s works), pioneered the fields of theatre history and literary chronology and, as Stern notes, his legacy is felt in the chronological methodology we continue to use.

By ordering plays chronologically, we risk, Stern reminds us, contributing to the fallacy that it is possible to accurately date when a play was written or the order in which Shakespeare’s plays were written, whilst also reinforcing the canonization of Shakespeare and belief in the supposed development and progress of his ‘genius’.<sup>1</sup> Stern’s mini-graph joins a string of recent revisionist readings of the work and impact of early scholars whose names and claims have dominated the world of Shakespeare editing and textual studies, but it is neither an attack on nor a defence of Malone. Stern questions Malone’s correctness and methods but does so while paying homage to his perceptiveness, perseverance and achievements, especially at a time when access to early editions of Shakespeare’s plays was so restricted, even for a man of Malone’s wealth and connections. She suggests that Malone suffers from unfair representation in modern scholarship, particularly because it is his findings in the first version of the *Account* that tend to be cited and not his revised ideas. She thus outlines developments in Malone’s thinking across time and reminds us of the fact that he called his work an *Attempt* (i.e. he never claimed to be offering the final word on chronology), but also highlights the many times when he simply rejected or ignored ‘evidence’ that did not fit the chronologies he wished to propose.

Stern’s study is full of common-sense observations and prompts for us to reflect on why it is that we think we know what we think we know about when different Shakespeare plays were written. First and foremost, she notes that Malone, and a number of editors who followed him, ask the

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<sup>1</sup> One notable exception, that Stern rightly praises, is the New Oxford Shakespeare, which replaced an order based on (supposed) times of composition with one based on the order in which plays were published, distinguishing between those published during and those published after Shakespeare’s lifetime.

wrong question as it simply is not possible to pin the composition of a play down to one moment in time: ‘most plays are palimpsests containing additions and revisions from different periods of time’ (86). The second and third sections of her study are dedicated to the problems of using external and internal information, respectively, to try to produce chronologies or date plays. External evidence draws on information found on title pages and in Stationers’ Register entries and documents recording performances. External evidence can only really provide a date by when something existed, and recorded performances do not necessarily record premieres. *Au contraire*, Stern suggests that the presence of lists of court or other performances that Malone uncovered make it more likely that these plays were modified for special events, thus further undermining his quest to pinpoint a single moment of writing. She also posits that it could be that Shakespeare’s plays were revised not only for court performances, as Richard Dutton has argued, but also to make amphitheatre plays fit the staging requirements of the indoor Blackfriars theatre.

Internal evidence is that which is found within playtexts, be it references to other texts, topical allusions, the use of what might be deemed time-specific words and phrases, or patterns in the ways in which Shakespeare used verse, to take one formal feature, across groups of plays. Although particularly appealing when there is nothing else to guide us, internal evidence requires a ‘higher level of interpretation than external information’ and ‘on further consideration, [often] proves to be slight and untrustworthy’ (39). Stern illustrates the latter point by drawing attention to examples where Malone ‘force[d], and invent[ed] dates for lexical or historical habits’ and proposed far-fetched contemporary allusions instead of simply assuming that Shakespeare, as a writer of fiction, might have made things up.

As she notes, even when not repeating Malone’s proposed allusions, modern editors often suggest their own readings of newly identified topical allusions. Further, Stern implies that, like Malone, modern critics tend to ignore how texts in the Folio – especially those first published within the

1623 collection – ‘tend to have a date range that extends from during to beyond Shakespeare’s life-time’ and probably date ‘at least in certain aspects from the 1620s’ (11). Especially misleading, Stern suggests, are chronological lists that merge dates based on external with dating based on internal evidence, and misguided assumptions that Shakespeare finished one play before beginning the next. Indeed, there may ‘be a great deal of overlap, not just between plays that – in our chronologies – are placed side by side but also between plays that are far apart; an earlier play may be being revised while a later one is being written’ (84). It is important to return to the questions of what we mean when we speak of a play’s date of composition and to pause to reflect on the validity of such approaches because the ‘single chronology that has dictated our method of thinking about Shakespeare for so long has brought about conclusions and sequences that may not be there’ (86). This may be true, but the oft-repeated single chronologies are so crisp and have become so entrenched in the collective consciousness that it will be hard to dislodge them. It should also be remembered that arguments over a play’s supposed date of composition, like new claims about internal evidence, are part and parcel of the rhetoric used to promote and sell Shakespeare editions within a saturated market.

Having identified a problem in our handling of Shakespeare chronology, Stern ends with a proposed solution. Labels used could be ‘The Work, to make clear that it is about the play of that name, not about the surviving text’ and ‘The Text’, which would refer to ‘the extant text(s), considering issues of lateness and revision as well as adaptation’, and could include all surviving texts, listed more than once if there are multiple versions in different formats. She further suggests that all dates on the list would potentially be date ranges, reflecting the different (somewhat) datable passages found in the text (with the heavy proviso that dating from a vague word or historical event is itself contentious, and that all the dates on the list are therefore open to question). A further proposal is that “‘early” information be separated from “late”

information, and “external” from “internal” (86). As the description and the sample table containing only two plays (provided in the closing pages) suggests, Stern’s idea is wonderfully liberating in theory but would likely be unwieldy in practice, not to mention hard to compile, and potentially undermined by its reliance on stylometric information from sources (Gary Taylor’s and Rory Loughnane’s work) which are by no means without detractors. The solution may not be perfect, but it is a start and, like Malone in the different versions of *An Account*, one imagines that Stern will continue to reflect on the best way to represent chronological uncertainty when presenting different types of evidence.

That this study is a generous contribution to human knowledge is in no doubt: Stern has read Malone across three editions, meaning that future editors can write with greater accuracy about his findings without having to re-read Malone’s (pedantic) prose themselves.<sup>2</sup> Stern’s account of the ‘story that brought Shakespeare’s chronology into being’ is a thoroughly enjoyable read and it will appeal to scholars who find the idea of chronological instability liberating. In its questioning of the methodologies we use, and its sobering reminders about just ‘how hard chronological certainty is to come by’ (86), it ought to be required reading for anyone with an interest or investment in the question of when ‘Shakespeare’s plays were written’ and what that question really means (1).

In *Facsimiles and the History of Shakespeare Editing* – another exciting study published this year as part of the Cambridge Elements in Shakespeare and Text series,<sup>3</sup> overseen by Claire M. L. Bourne and Rory Loughnane – Salzman considers the history of facsimiles produced using different techniques, ranging from what he terms ‘artisanal facsimiles’ – those that are drawn or traced by hand (‘pen-facsimiles’) or printed using either old type or ‘pseudo-old type’ – through to facsimiles made using photographic and digital technologies. His study covers various developments, not just in the techniques used to produce facsimiles but also in their perceived use for textual studies, as reflected in the debates of New Bibliographers and

New Textualists, as well as in contemporary discussions about the attractions and detractors of digital facsimiles and websites offering users the opportunity to read specific copies of plays alongside one another, such as the British Library’s Shakespeare in Quarto site and the new First Folios Compared website.<sup>4</sup>

The story told by his study is that of the mutual rise and intertwined history of scholarly editing and facsimiles, an important chapter that has until now been largely overlooked in accounts of Shakespeare’s afterlife. It is argued that eighteenth-century editions of Shakespeare and other early modern writers, such as Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher and John Milton, helped to prepare the ground for the production of an increasing number of facsimile books. As Salzman explains, ‘this is because the editions became further removed from the physical appearance of the original texts, while at the same time, the textually sensitive approach of editors made more people aware of how significant the early editions were’ (33). This was coupled with an antiquarian ‘interest in, and at times obsession with, collecting old and often rare volumes’ and, when such volumes were hard to come by, ‘or were imperfect, facsimiles stepped in to make up the gap’, either by providing substitute copies or else by supplying missing leaves needed to complete or ‘perfect’ individual copies (33).

It is a riveting read, particularly the section on type-facsimiles, such as Joseph Smeaton’s 1805 reproduction of Thomas Kyd’s *Soliman and*

<sup>2</sup> There is even a helpful summary in the form of a table recording ‘Malone’s dates per *Attempt*’, which are presented alongside dates proposed by the second edition of the 2022 RSC Complete Works because it is ‘the most recent complete works to come out’, but this is slightly misleading as it is really a 2007 edition in this respect because, like much of the second edition of Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen’s RSC *Works*, the ‘Conjectural chronology’ has not been revisited since the publication of the first edition.

<sup>3</sup> At c.30,000 words, ‘Elements’ fall between the scope of a long essay and that of a full monograph.

<sup>4</sup> See [www.bl.uk/treasures](http://www.bl.uk/treasures) and <https://firstfolios.com>, respectively.

*Perseda*, which was made by setting pieces of type ‘that closely resemble’ the original type used (6). Smeaton’s facsimile resembles material copies of the 1599 edition of Kyd’s play so well that it has fooled many into thinking it is a genuine early modern edition. Smeaton signed his work, but did so in the bottom corner of the verso of the title page. Lukas Erne, who edited a facsimile of the British Library copy of the play for the Malone Society Reprints, argued that the presence of the signature suggests that Smeaton ‘intended no deception’, i.e. he was not trying to pass his work off as genuine copies of the 1599 edition (8), but Salzman counters that the placement of Smeaton’s signature ‘allows for plausible deniability’ (9). He explains that the signature placement may have been chosen with the aim of enabling owners to simply cut it out, should they so wish, as is the case in the British Library copy. I find Salzman’s argument persuasive and thought-provoking and, whilst I appreciate his detailed analysis of a wide range of examples from the eighteenth century to the present day, it is a shame he did not offer more sustained discussion of how facsimiles were marketed and sold to consumers, and their status (as facsimiles) in the contemporary rare book market.

The example of the Smeaton signature and its removability, like other examples Salzman brings to light, reflects the delicate balance that existed between a desire for access and demands for authenticity, or else just a desire to learn more about Renaissance texts and the early modern book trade. R. B. McKerrow, A. W. Pollard and W. W. Greg drew extensively on facsimiles and founded the Malone Society editions (1907), which continue to be of great value to students and scholars of early modern drama. Students and scholars were their target audience from the outset and, rather than the material verisimilitude of Smeaton’s work, the Malone editions aimed to be ‘truer to content than form’. As Salzman notes, facsimile techniques developed across the time covered by his study, but newer was not always seen as better. Greg and his colleagues saw facsimiles as valuable, we are told, for both access and textual studies, particularly collation work, and

Charlton Hinman took the learning value a step further when he produced his print facsimile, the Norton Facsimile of the First Folio of Shakespeare, in 1968. Hinman’s is arguably the best-known example of a Shakespeare facsimile and, yet, it is not really a facsimile. Hinman reproduced pages from numerous Folger copies of the First Folio in a bid to produce – and thereby better understand – what might be considered ‘an “ideal” [printer’s] copy’ of the First Folio (69–70). The examples discussed in these sections, like the (re) setting of old or pseudo-old type in type facsimiles, indeed raise important questions about whether or not a facsimile can be thought of as an edition.

The latter part of Salzman’s study offers clear, sensitive histories of well-known (but often misunderstood) projects to produce microfilm and digital facsimiles in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, and makes a strong case for the vital role they played both in widening access to the field of early modern studies and in broadening the focus of early modern scholarship. He details the history of the ‘microfilm revolution’, the aims of Eugene Power (founder of University Microfilms), and the relationship between microfilm facsimiles, the Short Title Catalogue (STC), Wing and the development of Early English Books Online (EEBO). As he rightly states, facsimiles based on the contents of the STC and Wing did not just give more people access to the works of canonical writers of literary texts but also encouraged the study of lesser-known writers, especially female authors, and of non-fiction texts and genres seldom found in the kinds of curated anthologies offered for sale in contemporary bookshops.

He draws attention to concerns over preservation at the heart of Power’s microfilm project, which was awarded funding so as to enable his team to work faster at a time when wartime bombings threatened to destroy rare books held in institutions like the British Museum. Equally, in debating the pros and cons of the increasing number of digital facsimiles ‘that can be added to EEBO as resources not just for scholarship, but also for teaching and as windows for the general public into the rich diversity of early modern books and

manuscripts' (95), Salzman again reflects on issues of preservation and the often limited lifespans of digital platforms, like that which used to allow users to compare and contrast digital copies of quarto playbooks held at different libraries, a platform that does not appear to have been maintained.

Salzman ends with a Coda dedicated to issues of access and scholarship during the COVID-19 pandemic, the time when his study was produced, and issues of access remain incredibly relevant in late 2023. One cannot help but wonder if the cyber-attack on the British Library, which (as I write in December 2023) continues to make most of its collections of rare books inaccessible to readers, has helped to drive sales for their '400th Anniversary Facsimile', which is said to 'reproduce one of the finest copies' of the First Folio 'held in the British Library collections', and which retails for £85. In sum, Salzman convincingly demonstrates how facsimiles can be used to gauge both 'reverence accorded to an authentic Shakespeare text' and demand for copies of his texts across time, be they in 'original' form or in the form of convincing reproductions. It is a vital addition to our knowledge of the history of Shakespeare editing and it also demonstrates the importance of facsimiles to the wider history of early modern literary studies.

This minigraph, which has so much to say about the importance of widening access, practises what it preaches: Salzman invites readers to consult images of facsimiles alongside images of the copies the facsimiles were designed to reproduce. *Facsimiles and the History of Shakespeare Editing* is richly illustrated with images of books predominantly housed in different institutions across the world, thereby allowing readers to admire the handiwork of a range of artisans across time but with the caveat that differences are only easy to spot when you have both copies side by side. In other words, we are given privileged access that was not available to most owners of facsimiles. It is to be hoped that this charming, easily digestible study will help to inspire additional work on the different, fascinating facsimile projects introduced by Salzman.

Ledwidge provides fascinating new insight into an earlier period of Shakespeare's print afterlife, that of the second half of the seventeenth century, in 'From boards to books: the circulation of Shakespearean songs in manuscript and print during the Interregnum', the opening chapter of *Performing Restoration Shakespeare*, a volume which, as its title suggests, predominantly focuses on performance. Ledwidge provides important data on one of the least-studied aspects of Shakespeare's print history: the circulation of Shakespeare's songs in manuscript and print. The essay details occasions when 'any song performed in part or full in a Shakespeare play' circulated in manuscript or print, and records whether the song's music, text or both were included in the publication. Ledwidge delivers a learned account of musical practice and the status of music during the theatre closures of 1642–1659, arguing that 'the manuscript and printed sources which have survived from this period indicate that certain theatrical and musical practices survived the suppression of public performances and that dramatic song remained popular, though it may have found alternative contexts for performance' (15). She further contends that the continued circulation of Shakespearean song may have contributed to his plays remaining 'fresh in public memory throughout the years of theatrical curtailment' (16); she identifies among the most popular songs in circulation across the period surveyed 'Take, o take those lips away' from *Measure for Measure*, and 'Full fathom five' and 'Where the bee sucks' from *The Tempest*. She also notes that music to the plays is more often found published in manuscript form and that song lyrics are most often found preserved in printed form.

Ledwidge offers a publication history for Shakespeare's songs and an account of their appearance, omission or modification in Restoration adaptations of Shakespeare and in plays by other pre-1642 writers. The examples of Shakespeare songs in manuscript and print from the 1630s to the 1660s are organized into a helpful table with individual songs listed under the title of the play in

which they appear. Shakespeare's poems were almost completely absent from the print market of the period 1640–1700, with only John Benson's *Poems* (1640), John Stafford's *Lucrece* (1655) and an edition of *Venus and Adonis* (1675) published in this sixty-year period, but this short list grows if, as some have suggested we ought, we include songs in our lists of Shakespeare's poetic output. Ledwidge's table includes the imprints of printed texts and it is illuminating to note that, alongside John Playford, a publisher one would expect to see as he dominated the publication of music at the time, one also finds the names of stationers associated with the publication of Shakespeare's poems. The names in the 1675 *Adonis* imprint also crop up in Ledwidge's table, as does John Benson – the stationer behind the 1640 edition of Shakespeare's *Poems* – who (with Playford) published both the music and the text of 'What shall he have that killed the deer' from *As You Like It* in 1652. Ledwidge's table thus suggests that some of the stationers behind the limited number of poetry books also published Shakespeare songs, making it a wonderful resource for those interested in stationers' engagement with different types of Shakespeare texts and alternate ways of charting Shakespeare's print afterlife in the second half of the seventeenth century.

Craig's monograph, *Theatre Closure and the Paradoxical Rise of English Renaissance Drama in the Civil Wars* focuses on the same period of history and argues that the Civil War and Interregnum marked a crucial turning point in English dramatic history. The closure of the theatres, Craig argues, was described by contemporaries as a form of cultural death and offered an opportunity for reflection, 'enabl[ing] them to take stock of their own theatrical past', and resulting, she suggests, in pre-1642 drama being viewed as a 'distinct genre' (3). Major developments explored in the study – firsts which for Craig mark these years as the watershed moment in English dramatic history – include the 'surge in first editions of professional plays' which reversed publication trends observed in the previous four decades; the increased frequency with

which paratexts offering commentary appeared in printed drama (a development linked to the stationer Humphrey Moseley); the first dramatic anthology (John Cotgrave's *English Treasury of Wit and Language* of 1655); and the first serialized play collection and first 'comprehensive bibliography of English plays in print' (3). Craig does not, therefore, just offer an account of the afterlife of English Renaissance theatre during the ban on acting in place between 1642 and 1659, but also argues that the posthumous history of pre-1642 drama was both shaped by and made possible as a result of theatre closure.

Craig's chapters skilfully balance theatre history with book history and cover a range of authors, including Shakespeare (discussed below) and Beaumont and Fletcher, as well as the way in which 'English drama as a whole acquired a comparable literary status only after the theatres closed' (38). She offers a corrective to studies that see the origins of English dramatic criticism as beginning during the Restoration, with figures such as Dryden (chapter 5), and instead locates its origins earlier, arguing that 'theatre history begins after 1642 because that is when theatre became history' before defining different strands of criticism that emerged in the 1640s and 1650s: 'theatre history, dramatic criticism, and bibliography' (40).

Other notable contributions of Craig's monograph include the important (and too often missed) point she makes about how 'the effects of theatrical prohibition continued to shape dramatic afterlives and discourse even after the theatres reopened' (40). As Craig rightly insists, through a sensitive and detailed discussion of the plight of 'theatre professionals who continued to be marginalised from the industry' when Charles II imposed a theatre duopoly and prohibited performance without a licence, 1660 did not mark a 'fresh start'. The kinds of dramatic conditions enjoyed by performers and audiences before the theatre ban in 1642 were by no means 'restored' either, and it is hoped that Craig's study will help to inspire more revisionist histories of the understudied decades of the 1640s and 1650s and the (often) misrepresented decades of the 1660s, 1670s and 1680s.

Craig's first chapter explores playbooks as "relics" of the dead theatre' and notes a transition in the ways in which playbooks were marketed at the start of the acting ban and later on, when 'the ban dragged on' (38). Whereas early publications sought to distance plays from their theatrical origins to 'assert their cultural value' (in the same way theatre flops tended to be marketed in print prior to the ban), later playbooks instead stressed theatrical origins as a way of garnering respectability for their contents. One of the most exciting and original chapters (chapter 3) considers Beaumont and Fletcher and the reasons why they were so popular in (surreptitious) performance during the theatre ban and in print during the Civil Wars and Interregnum. Craig here offers a fresh appraisal of *A King and No King* and argues against readings that suggest that the playwrights' popularity at this time was merely down to the political valances of their plays.

Craig posits that Shakespeare's popularity in the middle of the seventeenth century was more theoretical than practical as, despite the (mis)attribution of a number of works to him, only a few of his plays were reprinted during the 1640s and 1650s. As she puts it, his 'name and image had considerable cachet in this period', but 'the publication of texts by Shakespeare plunged' (79). What is strikingly original about Craig's approach to Shakespeare's print afterlife is that she does not only focus on occasions when Shakespeare's texts and characters and name circulated, but also offers deep reflection as to why it might be that more of Shakespeare's plays were not published in these decades.

In charting the presence of Shakespeare's works and characters in commonplace books, anthologies, collections of abbreviated plays known as 'drolls', and the titles of his plays in book-list catalogues, Craig surmises that Shakespeare had acquired 'flexible cultural associations'; he was 'an emblem of royalism and republicanism, classical high culture and working-class English entertainments' and 'celebrated as the author of indelible dramatic characters at the same time that his plays were mined for decontextualised fragments' (80). Craig also observes how 'various play titles were

misassigned to him because they sounded "Shakespearean," an increasingly stable category of dramatic organisation' (80).

Craig does a particularly good job of illuminating the complicated history of rights in copy to Shakespeare's plays at the time and offers possible reasons why those who owned the rights to his plays did not publish new Shakespeare editions. She has painstakingly detangled decades' worth of transfers in the rights to Shakespeare's plays, be they due to sales or to inheritance and, in doing so, returns to the question of disputes over ownership potentially delaying the publication of the third folio. She also ponders whether a desire to avoid rocking the boat politically accounts for why Richard Coates – who inherited from his brother Shakespeare titles once owned by Jaggard and Pavier – published republican closet plays but no Shakespeare plays.

The most illuminating and convincing of her arguments relates to Moseley's relationship to Shakespeare. In 1653 Moseley entered into the Stationers' Register four plays that he attributed to Shakespeare. These were: '*The merry Devill of Edmonton*'; '*Henry ye. First & Hen: ye 2nd*', which was co-attributed to 'Davenport'; and '*The History of Cardenio. By Mr Fletcher. And Mr Shakespeare*'. In 1660, Moseley registered another three plays that he again assigned to Shakespeare: '*The History of King Stephen*', '*Duke Humphrey*' and '*Iphis & Iantha, a marriage without a man*'. That he went to the expense of entering these plays suggests that he had considered publishing them, but he did not do so and this fact has continued to puzzle critics. None of the plays are part of the Shakespeare canon but, according to Craig's line of argument, this may have been precisely what appealed to Moseley, who is the stationer who was 'largely responsible for the Interregnum playbook market's reorientation towards first editions' (80). It could be, she posits, that demand for dramatic novelty accounts for why plays that are now established parts of the Shakespeare canon were not published alongside others in Moseley's New Plays series – because they were already available in print. Paratextual notes within Moseley's publications,

as she states, highlighted his desire to not reprint that which had already been released onto the print market, so Moseley's 'inaction with the 1653 entries, and his acquisition of more Shakespeare titles in 1660, might reflect his desire to acquire more titles before going to press . . . but Moseley died in 1661, thwarting yet another potential Shakespeare publication' (96). It is a very plausible thesis and the study as a whole is field reshaping in its suggestions about the posthumous histories of canonical playwrights such as Shakespeare and Beaumont and Fletcher, and in the alternate accounts of theatre history it provides for both the 1640s and 1650s and the post-1660 period. Craig's account of Shakespeare's posthumous reputation and its links to the book trade is a topic also taken up by Adams in an essay published in *Shakespeare Quarterly*.

Adams's essay, "'Whither are you bound": the publication and shaping of Shakespeare in 1623 and 1923', published in the journal's Folio anniversary issue, analyses 'structures of silent whiteness in the early modern English book trade' and how 'John Heminge and Henry Condell (in conjunction with the publishing syndicate) helped establish the 1623 Shakespeare Folio as a part of white English racial formation' (192, 193). The essay opens with an eye-opening discussion of how members of the Stationers' Company sought to alienate the poet George Wither 'from the larger English community through sustained dehumanization' as a way to justify their exclusion of his *Psalms, Hymns and Songs of the Church* (1623) from the English Psalter. Concerned that physical changes to the publication would impact their profit margins, the stationers (and an anonymous defender of their conduct) used 'calculated and rhetorical moves', undermining both his qualifications and his Englishness, whilst labelling some of his hymns 'popish' (191). Adams sees the example as 'a sharp analogue to what Margo Hendricks, Patricia Parker, and Kim F. Hall have each identified as the expanding and contracting notions of whiteness in early modern England through careful race-making strategies that are tied to and dependent upon various rhetorical, political, and economic situations' (191).

In his response to what he (understandably) considered his unjust treatment at the hands of the publisher-booksellers, Wither wrote a rebuke which, as Adams demonstrates, shows his awareness of just how much power publisher-booksellers wielded over the book trade, 'discourses of reading' and the wider community by extension (192). He used metaphors of slavery and bondage to describe the treatment of tradespeople and authors by bookseller-publishers. 'And instead of invoking metaphors of Blackness in early modern England in his use of slavery and bondage, he maps out discourses of whiteness in what Karen E. Fields and Barbara J. Fields term "racecraft" – a system of thinking that Ayanna Thompson summarizes . . . as "the underlying imaginative horizon, belief system, or individual and collective mental landscape that seeks to divide humans along unequal lines"' (193). The example – of Wither's treatment and the language used by him, and against him to dismiss his claims for inclusion in the volume – offers a useful backdrop for reflections on the figures and the industry that 'memorialized Shakespeare, through the publication of the First Folio, and that helped to create the most formidable representation of white Englishness across history and throughout the world' (193).

Adams's essay, like that by Weissbourd, which follows it in the same volume, urges us to think afresh about the Folio's well-known paratexts. She argues that Heminge and Condell played an important role in the 'longue durée of white English racial formation and Shakespeare' (194), citing their Epistle Dedicatorie imploring the earls of Pembroke and Montgomery to act as guardians to Shakespeare's 'orphan' plays as 'a declaration of their ambition for the volume to become a relative and property belonging to the earls' (195). Further, she suggests it should be considered a move that helped to associate the volume, and Shakespeare by extension, with 'the aristocracy, which comprised individuals belonging to a distinct kind of English whiteness that did not necessarily engage with a multiracial London that Imtiaz Habib' has recovered in historical archives of the early modern period (195).

Weissbourd, in 'Shakespeare from the bottom: transnationalism, unfounded whiteness, and the First Folio', concurs that 'the editorial apparatus that frames Shakespeare's First Folio . . . emphasizes Shakespeare's English whiteness, erecting a fantasy of singular native genius belied by the texts' foundation in a transnational literary and cultural tradition' (205). She provides thought-provoking analysis of the construction of Shakespeare found in the volume's paratexts. Shakespeare, she writes, is in the dedication 'linked not only with nature and the native but [also] with milk, cream, and swans – all terms associated with racialized whiteness' (208). In Ben Jonson's exclamation in 'To the memory of my beloved, the Avthor, Mr. William Shakespeare: And what he hath left vs', Jonson tells 'Britaine' to triumph in having 'one to shoue, / To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe', a form of jingoism which is carried yet further, Weissbourd argues, by Hugh Holland who, in the following poem, urges 'Britaines braue' to emphatically mourn Shakespeare's death (208). Together, the paratexts 'reveal a persistent rhetoric of English triumphalism specifically at the expense of other European countries' (210). The Folio paratexts' contribution to the damaging and long-lasting portrayal of Shakespeare and the first collected edition of his plays as white, British property is made abundantly clear in these excellent essays.

Adams goes on to trace the same kind of rhetoric and troping of Shakespeare and the Folio in the vocabulary 'of capture, prize-winning, and conquest' used on both sides of the Atlantic at around the time of the Folio's tercentenary, be it to lament or to celebrate the large-scale purchase by wealthy American businessmen of copies of the Shakespeare First Folio. She notes how such investment both underlined and undermined notions of Shakespeare as English cultural property and argues that the extraction of the Folio from 'its historical home' and its insertion 'into a country that was simultaneously erasing and shaping its own history' resulted in 'readership and curiosity about the material book becoming a topic of interest for traditionally marginalized readers', such as Black Americans whose 'connection to Shakespeare, his writing, and the material

book' is reflected in his 'persistent cultural imprint' in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Black newspapers, 'which also occasionally featured stories concerning the sales of 1623 Shakespeare Folios' (202). She rightly insists that it is high time we recognize such legacies and make concerted efforts to consider 'the relevance that Shakespeare had to circles outside of white, wealthy English and American people' because 'the First Folio should not just be for all time, but should also be a part of as many histories of people, however complicated, as possible' (203).

In the new preface added to the second edition of *First Folio: Four Centuries of an Iconic Book* (first published in 2016), Emma Smith also reflects on legacies of white ownership of the Folio. She considers the title she gave to her study and the moment when the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays stopped being merely *Mr. William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies* (1623) and instead became the 'First Folio', 'a newly hyperbolic consumer object'. The Folio achieved its status as a luxury item in large part, Smith tells us, due to the increased money circulating in late eighteenth-century England as a result of 'slave-produced goods, especially sugar' (xi, xiv). Describing the discovery of two new copies and the infamous resale of the Mills College copy of F1 (for \$20 million) in the years since the publication of the first edition of her study, Smith draws attention to the biographies of early recorded owners of F1, men who made the fortunes that enabled them to buy and drive up the price of the collection through the ownership of enslaved people. These same figures, she reveals, were also intimately linked with elite societies of bibliophiles, such as the Roxbourgh Club. The new preface added to this 'anniversary' issue thus ends on the sobering point that slave ownership did not simply accompany but also 'enabled the rising value of the First Folio copies in the decades before abolition', and urges us to recognize the fact that the rare book libraries we visit and the field in which we work have yet to make 'a proper reckoning with their complex economic histories . . . and foundational legacies' (xix).

As the Folio moves into a new era, it is important that we embrace Adams's and Weissbourd's

encouragement to recognize the legacy of the Folio paratexts and the book trade more generally in shaping structures of whiteness, and to look beyond the hold of the white and the wealthy on Shakespeare and the First Folio to explore alternate archives and engagements. It is also vital for scholars of book history and bibliography to respond to Smith's call to formulate ways to acknowledge in 'contemporary academic practice and citation' the histories and legacies of the institutions on which much of our research relies (xix).

## WORKS REVIEWED

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- Craig, Heidi, *Theatre Closure and the Paradoxical Rise of English Renaissance Drama in the Civil Wars* (Cambridge, 2023)
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- Weissbourd, Emily, 'Shakespeare from the bottom: transnationalism, unfounded whiteness, and the First Folio', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 74 (2023), 204–16