A Cultural History of the Arden Shakespeare series

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ABSTRACT

The focus of this thesis is on editorial activity. The thesis aims to investigate the origins and development of the Arden series of Shakespeare editions (1899-2020). Each series, I argue, comprises multivocal editions that expose specific critical investments. Such critical priorities illustrate particular cultural, intellectual, and institutional pressures of their moment of production. A central argument is that many of the critical commitments in the Arden series are recursive, continuing to resurface, often in unexpected ways, in today's critical climate. The three series as a whole provide a rich storehouse of editorial activity for future Shakespearean editors, and the recent completion of the third Arden series offers a timely moment in which to tell the story of how the series began, how editorial thinking developed, and how a return to the foundations of the early Arden series offers a pathway to a richer understanding of the nature of editorial thinking in the current moment.

In its concern with both a series of important book-historical projects and their dominant critical assumptions, this approach takes inspiration from the emergence of the interdisciplinary field of Book History and particularly the concern with editorial ideologies developed by Margreta de Grazia and Leah S. Marcus in the 1990s. Key research questions include: how did each project come into being? What were their operating assumptions? What was their impact on the general readership? What were the commercial and intellectual pressures existing on those editions? As recent decades have made increasingly clear, the practice of editing remains far from a straightforward science. As this thesis argues, scholarly editing is an historically contingent activity shaped by a complex vectoring of cultural, intellectual, and institutional pressures that are inscribed within editions as products of their times.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

AEB	*Analytical and Enumerative Bibliography*
Arden 1	The first Arden Shakespeare series (1899-1924)
Arden 2	The second Arden Shakespeare series (1951-1982)
Arden 3	The third Arden Shakespeare series (1995-2020)
ELR	*English Literary Renaissance*
F	The First Folio (1623)
LRB	*London Review of Books*
MLA	Modern Language Association of America
Q, Q1, Q2	Quarto, First Quarto, Second Quarto
RES	*The Review of English Studies*
SQ	*Shakespeare Quarterly*
SS	*Shakespeare Survey*
TLN	Through Line Numbering
TLS	*Times Literary Supplement*

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INTRODUCTION

Editing in Arden

To set out the subject matter of this thesis, this introduction begins with a brief sketch of the history of editing in the Arden Shakespeare series. In the second part, I explain the objectives of the thesis, which focus on a series of book-historical projects that provide extended case-studies of editorial activity in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. The third section will discuss the critical methodology used to investigate the origins and development of the Arden series of Shakespeare editions. In the final section, I set out the overall structure of the thesis.

1. Editing in Arden

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, amidst the growth of a national education system, the schoolteacher-turned-publisher Algernon Marshall Methuen Stedman (1856-1924) began planning an ambitious series of Shakespeare editions. To set the wheels in motion, he reached out to the Anglo-Irish literary critic Edward Dowden (1843-1913). During the initial discussions, Methuen decided to structure the series as a cooperative project under the guidance of a team of general editors, which was likely influenced by his own teaching background. As Andrew Murphy has noted, the collaborative structure of individual editors working on individual editions under the guidance of a team of general editors had been a prominent feature of schools editions.[1] The decision may also have been prompted by H.H. Furness's titanic

[1] See Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print: A History and Chronology of Shakespeare Publishing* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 207.

Variorum project, started in 1871, far from complete at his death. The first Arden series, however, fully embraced this cooperative model with a central disseminating node that aimed to provide a state of the art sense of scholarly insight into individual Shakespearean plays and poems.

The work of the first Arden editors left an aspiration for their successors who recognised the value of the lines laid down by their predecessors. In 1946, Una Ellis-Fermor (1894-1958), at the time a Reader in English Literature at Bedford College, London, was commissioned as the general editor for a new and revised series. The publishers Methuen hoped to launch the first volumes of the second series in 1949, exactly half a century after Dowden's *Hamlet* (1899).[2] Looking back at the first series, Ellis-Fermor initially suggested that the new series required 'little more […] than a limited revision', although this policy would soon change 'as the conditions of the years immediately after the war began to allow of it'.[3]

Her view that the second series required 'limited revision' was perhaps based more on the publisher's intention of using the retained stereotype plates from the first series, a restriction that Harold Jenkins described in 1977 as having become something of a 'wry joke'.[4] If Ellis-Fermor's proviso was impractical, it nevertheless serves as a useful reminder of how non-intellectual contexts can shape editorial projects. An appreciation for the work of her predecessors is clearly acknowledged in the series' first volume: 'the policy of the original edition in terms of introductions, commentary and appendices remains what it has always been;

[2] Harold Jenkins, 'Introductory Talk to Colloquium at University of Münster', file number HJ/2/22, Queen Mary archives, University of London, 21 November 1977.
[3] 'General Editor's Preface', 1949, in William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (Methuen, 1951), p. vi.
[4] 'Introductory Talk'.

the lines laid down by those scholars who first designed its forms have proved their worth throughout the past half-century'.[5]

Ellis-Fermor also believed, however, that a revised series was required to 'present in brief and intelligible form […] the immense body of scholarship which the first half of the twentieth century has contributed to the field of Shakespeare studies'.[6] As the second series gained momentum, much of that scholarship would be guided by the twin pillars of New Bibliography and New Criticism. Together these two movements forged an intellectual alliance that was sustained throughout the series' course, as the work of the second Arden editors bears witness.

It was within this critical climate that Ellis-Fermor was commissioned as the founding general editor for a second series. After accepting the role following World War II, she gathered a team of editors and produced a set of guidelines so that 'the general principles and form of the edition may be clear'.[7] Following the earlier series, she judged that a 'conservative text' was desirable, acknowledging that the editions would be 'primarily for the use of undergraduates in English universities and for teachers of senior forms in schools'. A 'conservative' text meant that editors were advised to establish texts that avoided, as far as possible, 'disturbing the existing text as it is set'. This guidance suggests the influence of R.B. McKerrow, whose *Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare* (1939) topped the list of Ellis-Fermor's list of works for consultation.[8]

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[5] Ellis-Fermor, 'General Editor's Preface', p. vi.
[6] 'General Editor's Preface', 1949, in William Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, ed. by Richard David (Methuen, 1951), p. ix.
[7] Una Ellis-Fermor, *Notes for the Revised Edition of the Arden Shakespeare*, Cadbury Research Library, University of Birmingham, [n.d.].
[8] For an example of McKerrow's early conservatism, see his *Works of Thomas Nashe*, 5 vols (Sidgwick & Jackson, 1910). See also Fredson Bowers, *On Editing Shakespeare* (Published for the Philip H. and A.S.W. Rosenbach Foundation by the University of Pennsylvania Library, 1955), pp. pp. 78-82.

The second Arden series encompassed over thirty years of editorial activity based on an editorial tradition stretching back to the eighteenth century. The series was never finally completed, as Winifred Nowottny's commissioned Arden 2 *Sonnets* did not reach publication. Following its conclusion, the sense of an editorial tradition having reached its culmination point has been neatly expressed by Richard Proudfoot. Reflecting on Jenkins's *Hamlet* (1982), Proudfoot has described Jenkins's edition as the logical endpoint of a tradition of editing. Indeed, the feeling that all Shakespearean puzzles were close to being solved was shared by many editors during the course of the second Arden series. In a private communication, Proudfoot has observed that in 1960, his thesis supervisor John Crow claimed that only the textual puzzles in *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet* remained to be solved, and that he and Jenkins would solve them in their Arden 2 editions.[9]

In many ways, it is a tribute to the second Arden series that few editors after its conclusion saw reason to go on producing editions based on its thinking and methods. A clear example of its influence on the Arden 3 series can be found in Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's Arden 3 Q2 *Hamlet* (2006), supplemented by a second volume, *Hamlet: The Texts of 1603 and 1623* (2006). In their Q2 *Hamlet* Preface, the editors remarked that '[o]ur immediate predecessor in the Arden Shakespeare series, Harold Jenkins, did his job so well that we felt there was no need to do it again in the same way'.[10] This compliment to Jenkins suggests that a culmination of editorial tradition in the second series encouraged editors to bring fresh energies and explore alternative ways of editing Shakespearean texts.

[9] Email, 27 January 2022.
[10] 'Preface', in William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (Cengage Learning, 2006), p. xix.

A feeling that the second Arden series had reached a logical endpoint is also evident in Wells and Taylor's Oxford *Complete Works* (1986-87) edition. Stanley Wells has spoken of his desire that the edition would be new, and 'wouldn't just be duplicating other editions'.[11] Wells's comment attests to the way that editors were seeking to explore alternative ways of thinking and explore new editorial methodologies in the wake of the second Arden series' conclusion. When commissioned by Oxford University Press (OUP) in the late 1970s to produce a long-awaited OUP edition, few would have predicted how robustly the edition would throw down the gauntlet to an entire editorial tradition.

If some editors were congratulating themselves on their mighty monuments, Wells and Taylor were ready to accuse editors of a lethargic subservience to the editorial tradition. In Wells's monograph *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader* (1984), for instance, he observed that a 'recurrent theme' of his book was the 'effort to identify and counteract' the 'lethargic impulses' within himself that he saw reflected in Shakespearean editors' 'lazy-minded reluctance to disturb the status quo'.[12] The bold interventions that would soon follow in the *Complete Works* means that no history of editing Shakespeare in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries concerned with cultural, intellectual, and institutional pressures can afford to leave out Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor's *Complete Works* (1986-87). Wells and Taylor's edition is crucial to any story that seeks to illuminate the sea changes in editorial thinking that occurred in the interim between the second and third Arden series. Indeed, it might be said that after the second Arden series, a new kind of pressure was placed on editors, one

[11] Stanley Wells, 2008, interviewed by Neil Aitchison, "Editing Shakespeare", Will@Warwick <https://warwick.ac.uk/newsandevents/podcasts/media/more/will/?podcastItem=editingshakespeare.mp3> [accessed 10 October 2023].
[12] *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader: Based on Lectures Given at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC*. (Clarendon Press, 1984), p. 4.

which challenged editors to find new ways of going about their task within a rapidly shifting intellectual climate.

As the second Arden series was concluded, there were also wider developments within English studies that were of major significance to Shakespearean editors. These developments related to the role of the literary critic, and the nature of the discipline as a whole. In March 1981, Raymond Williams diagnosed a 'Crisis in English Studies', which served as the title of his Cambridge lecture that aimed to explore some 'currently controversial positions' within literary studies, some of which he saw as incompatible with an 'existing dominant paradigm of literary studies'.[13]

For Williams, the 'controversial positions' arose from a critical investment in Marxism and Structuralism. As they had evolved within English studies, both embraced diverse tendencies that resisted reductive labelling. While some Marxist and Structuralist approaches were compatible with the 'dominant paradigm', others had 'for some years been challenging the dominant paradigm – and thus its profession'. For Williams, those challenges had the potential to replace an orthodox paradigm, a circumstance that provided evidence of a moment of crisis in the discipline.

In the following year, Peter Widdowson published an edited collection of essays on *Re-Reading English*. The book included an introductory essay by Widdowson that referred to an alleged 'crisis in English studies'.[14] For Widdowson, this 'crisis' stemmed from the

[13] 'Crisis in English Studies', in *Writing and Society* (Verso, 1983), pp. 192-211 (p. 192). But see Joseph North's argument for a split between two competing paradigms up until the 1970s in his *Literary Criticism: A Concise Political History* (Harvard University Press, 2017), pp. 1-2.
[14] 'Introduction: The Crisis in English studies', in *Re-Reading English*, ed. by Peter Widdowson (Routledge, 1982), pp. 1-14.

uninterrogated assumption that there was a *given* literature of inherent value and that it was the critic's role to illustrate a work's 'true meanings'. Arguing that many teachers and students of English were aware that their discipline was in some sort of crisis, Widdowson claimed that '[t]he focus [...] has been on the ideological space which literature as a specific category occupies (whether it has a "relative autonomy", and what, by virtue of this, its value may be), and on the exposure of Criticism as an ideological practice'.

In his concern with the larger issues of English studies, Widdowson's analysis reached beyond the debates surrounding the most appropriate methodology for the discipline, to a concern with the nature of the discipline itself: 'it is a question, posed from within, as to what English *is*, where it has got to go, whether it has a future, whether it *should* have a future as a discrete discipline, and if it does, in what ways it might be reconstituted'.

A few years later, John Drakakis wrote that it had 'become commonplace to speak of a "crisis in English Studies"'.[15] Following Widdowson, Drakakis saw the crisis arising from a challenge to established critical practice, which resulted in a series of shifts of emphasis within the discipline, many of which were confronting what Williams described as the discipline's 'dominant paradigm'. Four years after Williams's lecture, Drakakis argued that critical practice was now an 'openly pluralist activity'. Where Williams had tentatively acknowledged the existence of tendencies within Marxism and structuralism that were at odds with the dominant paradigm, Drakakis now saw 'proponents of particular positions contesting vigorously the intellectual space which it has occupied'.

[15] 'Introduction', in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. by John Drakakis (Methuen, 1985), pp. 1-25 (p. 1).

It is worth remembering, however, that there was no general consensus on a 'crisis' in the discipline. Whether or not the fracturing of the discipline's 'dominant paradigm' into alternative discourses constituted a 'crisis' would depend on the critic's positionality. As G. Thomas Tanselle noted in 1986 when reflecting on an alleged 'crisis' in editing: 'the fact that different people hold different opinions about basic issues is not a sign of crisis; it points to the perennial situation in any challenging and lively field'.[16] Indeed, what was a 'crisis' for some, was to others a timely moment in which to embrace new methodologies and scholarly interests. As Jean Howard reflected in 1986, if the discipline was to tighten its grip on the dominant paradigm, then 'what we lose is the ability to ask new questions of Renaissance texts, with the result that we find ourselves answering old questions in ever more ingenious and sterile ways'.[17] Following Tanselle and Howard, this thesis' story of editing Shakespeare views these moments less in terms of a 'crisis' in English studies than as a timely opportunity to reframe the questions asked and create new analytical coordinates in sync with shifting scholarly interests.

A few years before the tide began to turn, Harold Jenkins delivered a paper on the Arden Shakespeare series at Oslo in 1974. In this paper, Jenkins observed that the 'matter of textual transmission, the history of what happened to the text between Shakespeare's writing it down and its emergence in print, has been the most important subject of Shakespearean research in our century'.[18] For Jenkins, the prominence of textual scholarship in the twentieth century meant that an Arden editor 'must describe his textual authorities, the Folio text & the quarto if

[16] G. Thomas Tanselle, 'Historicism and Critical Editing,' *Studies in Bibliography*, 39 (1986), pp. 1-46 (p. 45).
[17] 'Scholarship, Theory, and More New Readings: Shakespeare for the 1990s', in *Shakespeare Studies Today: The Horace Howard Furness Memorial Lectures*, ed. by Georgianna Ziegler (AMS Press, 1986), pp. 127-52 (p. 128).
[18] 'The Arden Shakespeare', file number HJ/2/22, Queen Mary archives, University of London.

there is one and formulate a theory of the transmission of the play from Shakespeare's manuscript into print'.

In the context of a disciplinary crisis outlined above, Jenkins's observation raises several important questions. If critical practice was becoming an openly plural activity in the 1980s, how would this affect a traditional emphasis on textual matters that Jenkins emphasised? What would be the Arden 3 editor's critical priorities within this plural critical climate? How might this embrace of multiplicity define a series that had historically relied on a general consensus to ensure a series logic and coherence across its range of individual volumes? How would editors rise to the challenge of providing comprehensive Introductions within a climate of plurality and ideological suspicion, in which established and emerging critical practices were colliding and jostling for attention? These are some of the central questions that will be explored in the final chapter of this thesis.

2. Objectives

This thesis is about editing Shakespeare in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries. Its central argument is that the practice of editing Shakespeare takes place under certain cultural, intellectual, and institutional pressures. In putting forward this argument, the thesis will look at a series of important editorial projects within the specified timeframe (1899-2020): each will be interrogated within the wider editorial and intellectual paradigms of their time. In doing so, I aim to provide a reassessment of editorial postures that have been under scrutiny since the 1980s and 1990s in English studies.

The boundaries of discussion in the following editorial history are thus set by a concern with Shakespearean texts. In setting this boundary, it is worth remembering that the world of scholarly editing extends far beyond Shakespeare, although a focus on Shakespearean and early modern dramatic texts has been a subject of enormous scholarly interest in the late twentieth century, and still maintains its critical currency in the present moment. The work of the central spokesman for the New Bibliography, W.W. Greg (1875-1959) and his productive disciple Fredson Bowers (1905-1991), for instance, grew out of a Shakespearean and early modern context to influence, among others, the course of scholarly editing in nineteenth-century literature.[19]

The thesis' parameters are further narrowed by a focus on the Arden Shakespeare series as a strategy of containment. From its humble beginnings, the Arden series has defined itself as a project that appeals to a largely secondary school and university based readership. As Margaret Bartley has observed, in a private communication: 'Arden editions straddle different parts of the market – school, HE, practitioner and the general Trade – where people who are serious about their Shakespeare buy our editions as they trust and respect them'.[20] 'Most of our play editions', Bartley further observed, 'sell at pretty much the same level year on year', so that '[t]his steady sales pattern tells us that the majority of our sales are broadly Academic or educational'.

Since the growth of alternative editorial methodologies in the 1980s, this focus has arguably shaped the variety of textual approaches in the Arden Shakespeare series. As Paul Eggert has argued, 'editorial adjudication of textual authority doesn't ignore the readership, even when

[19] See D.C. Greetham, ed., *Scholarly Editing: A Guide to Research* (MLA, 1995).
[20] Email, 18 December 2023.

appealing to authorial preferences, aesthetic considerations or historical witnesses'.[21] An Arden-centric history of editing Shakespeare thus does not focus on alternative approaches such as 'genealogical' or 'genetic' methods, which are invested in displaying the evolution of texts rather than a specific moment or occasion. This is not because these methodologies are not crucial or viable within certain contexts, but simply that they are not considered the most suitable method for an Arden Shakespeare series.

To paint a picture of editorial thinking in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, the thesis seeks to interrogate the origins and development of the Arden series of Shakespeare editions. There are many reasons why the Arden series provides an excellent resource for tracking the contours of Shakespeare editorial thinking across the previous and current century. The first and perhaps most obvious is that after A.R. Braunmuller and Robert N. Watson's Arden 3 *Measure for Measure* (2020) completed the Arden 3 series, it also created a substantial record of editorial activity – three generation-spanning editorial projects cohering under the Arden imprint – that makes it ripe for reassessment. The second reason is that the 'Arden' name now arguably sets the gold standard for editorial practice, although this scholarly repute applies more to the UK than to the US. This reputation is acknowledged, for instance, in a speech given by Terence Hawkes at the Arden 3 launch party in 1995:

> The Arden edition of Shakespeare's plays ranks in my view as simply the best we have at the present time. Indeed, its long-standing place in the affections of every critic, teacher and actor is surely confirmed by the fact that we continue, comfortably, to refer to it as "The Arden", often without recognizing what an astonishing achievement that simple, pastoral phrase conceals.[22]

[21] Email, 7 August 2022. See *The Work and the Reader in Literary Studies: Scholarly Editing and Book History* (Cambridge University Press, 2019).
[22] 'Launching Arden Three', *The Shakespeare Newsletter*, XLV, 2.224 (Spring 1995), p. 7.

Although some critics would dispute the claim that Arden editions are or indeed were 'simply the best we have at the present time', most would concur with Hawkes that the Arden's rise to prominence since the twentieth century has been an 'astonishing achievement'. Indeed, Brian Morris memorably refers to this achievement in his Arden 2 *Taming of the Shrew* (1981). In his Preface, Morris dedicated the series to his two co-General Editors, Harold F. Brooks (1952-82) and Harold Jenkins (1958-82): 'it is their mighty monument'.[23] However one judges the editorial thinking and method of the second Arden series, Morris's words suggest that the series achieved its overall aims with considerable success.

It would provide an incomplete picture, however, to attribute the success of the second Arden series merely to Brooks and Jenkins. In the first place, Morris's tribute modestly elides his own contribution as a fellow Arden 2 General Editor (1974-82). Moreover, if the two Harolds had produced a 'mighty monument', then this was of course based not solely on their own work, but on the work of their predecessors in establishing the foundations for such 'monuments' to be constructed. To be sure, if the simple, pastoral phrase 'Arden' still encapsulates the 'astonishing achievement' of the Arden Shakespeare series, then this offers a compelling reason to return to its foundations and tell the story of how it came into being.

All of the editorial projects assessed in this thesis have their own particular characteristics. To consider them on their own terms, the thesis prioritises four central research questions. For each editorial project, I ask: how did the editions come into being? What were the operating assumptions? What was the impact on the general readership? What were the intellectual, institutional, and cultural pressures on those editions? These questions point to a central contention of this thesis: that a focus on the specific pressures that shape editorial projects can

[23] 'Preface', in William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew* (Methuen, 1981), p. ix.

tell us a great deal about the development of editorial thinking in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries.

3. Methodology and Critical Influences

To reassess the three Arden Shakespeare series, this thesis in indebted to the ground-breaking work of critics who turned attention to editors and their ideological assumptions in the 1980s and 1990s. Margreta de Grazia's *Shakespeare Verbatim* (1991) was the first book-length study to interrogate the editorial thinking and method of the modern editorial tradition. To challenge its dominant assumptions, de Grazia argued that modern editors remained in thrall to Edmond Malone's Enlightenment apparatus. For de Grazia, though a product of a specific moment in history, Malone's cultural imperatives – authenticity, periodization, chronology, interpretation – were taken for granted as 'timeless necessities' by modern editors.[24]

A few years later, Leah S. Marcus's *Unediting the Renaissance* (1996), written from within the New Textualism movement, urged editors to temporarily abandon modern editions in favour of returning to the early material witnesses that had not absorbed centuries of cultural accretions. In Marcus's use of the term, to 'unedit' texts was to temporarily cut across the accretions of the editorial tradition and return to the material record.[25] This would allow editors a timely opportunity to question 'the origins of even the most standard glosses and emendations'.[26] Moreover, a return to the material records also provided a timely opportunity

[24] Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 1.
[25] The term 'unediting' was coined by Randall McLeod in opposition to editorial mediation. For a more radical definition than Marcus's, see his 'Un "Editing" Shak-speare', *SubStance,* 10/11 (1981/82), pp. 26-55.
[26] Leah S. Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (Routledge, 1996), p. 5.

for readers and editors to explore the material peculiarities of early modern texts. With a critical investment in textual materialism, Marcus encouraged readers and editors to turn their attention from the idealistic tendencies of the editorial tradition to the 'uncouth, maladapt, confusing, maddeningly or delightfully unstable' nature of the early modern material record.

Inspired by their contributions, this thesis seeks to extend de Grazia and Marcus's methodology to track developments in editorial thinking across the three Arden Shakespeare series. In doing so, I seek to address a gap in research on editorial thinking and method since de Grazia and Marcus's work in the 1990s. While both critics have gone on to produce further work on editorial theory and practice, no one has yet written a sustained account of editorial assumptions since their work. Their criticism provided a welcome scrutiny of editorial procedures that had for too long been accepted as standard. But how has editorial activity proceeded since their own investigations? While there have been many studies concerned with Shakespearean editorial theory and practice (see, for example, Jarvis (1995), Greetham (1999), Murphy (2006), Egan (2010), Massai and Kidnie (2015), Massai (2016), Loffman and Phillips (2017), Bourne (2021), Erne (2021), Gossett (2022), and Yarn 2022)), there has yet to appear a sustained exploration of editorial activity as it is shaped by wider cultural and intellectual paradigms.[27]

[27] Simon Jarvis, *Scholars and Gentlemen: Shakespearian Textual Criticism and Representations of Scholarly Labour*, *1725-1765* (Clarendon, 1995); D.C. Greetham, *Theories of the Text* (Oxford University Press, 1999); Gabriel Egan, *The Struggle for Shakespeare's Text*: *Twentieth-Century Editorial Theory and Practice* (Cambridge University Press, 2010); Sonia Massai and Margaret Jane Kidnie, eds, *Shakespeare and Textual Studies* (Cambridge University Press, 2015); Claire Loffman and Harriet Phillips, eds, *A Handbook of Early Modern Editing* (Routledge, 2017); Claire M.L. Bourne, ed., *Shakespeare / Text: Contemporary Readings in Textual Studies, Editing and Performance* (Arden Shakespeare, 2021); Lukas Erne, ed., *The Arden Research Handbook of Shakespeare and Textual Studies* (Arden Shakespeare, 2021); Suzanne Gossett, *Shakespeare and Textual Theory* (Bloomsbury, 2022); Molly G. Yarn, *Shakespeare's 'Lady Editors': A New History of the Shakespearean Text* (Cambridge University Press, 2022).

This thesis thus takes inspiration from the debates of the 1980s and 1990s between those who challenged the editorial tradition and those who mounted staunch defences. They can help to focalize many of the reasons for returning to the first and second Arden series, particularly as they are able to contextualise how editors have responded to the challenges set down by these debates. What emerges from this reassessment is that editorial activity is always subject to specific cultural, intellectual, and institutional pressures. These pressures, I argue, provide substantial pushback against the traditional view of bibliography and editing as a straightforward science, a view proposed by W.W. Greg in 1930:

> [a]s the organon of research into the transmission of literary and historical documents – that is, at once into their original form and subsequent adventures – bibliography should take rank as a mature science in the world of scholarship.[28]

It is now possible, however, to see certain critical investments in Greg's method that detract from the New Bibliography's position as a 'mature science'.[29] As Laurie Maguire has illustrated, serious challenges to the New Bibliography first arose in the 1970s, with an emphasis on the critical prejudices and assumptions underwriting its renowned scientific method.[30] In an essay that challenged the movement's claims to a straightforward science, for instance, de Grazia argued in 1988 that 'the purpose of the investigation is not primarily to learn more about the mechanics of printing the book; it is to differentiate the non-Shakespearian

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[28] 'The Present Position of Bibliography', *The Collected Papers* (Clarendon Press, 1966 [1930]), pp. 207-25 (p. 222).

[29] For an extended analysis of W.W. Greg's career and how New Bibliography's influence was developed and maintained, see Laurie Maguire, 'The Rise of the New Bibliography', pp. 21-72, in her monograph *Shakespearean Suspect Texts: The 'Bad' Quartos and their Contexts* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

[30] See, for example, Constance Brown Kuriyama, 'Dr Greg and *Dr Faustus*: The Supposed Originality of the 1616 Text', *ELR*, 5 (1975), pp. 171-97; Michael Warren, 'The Old Man and the Text', *ELR*, 11 (1981), pp. 111-47; Randall McLeod, 'The Psychopathology of Everyday Art', *The Elizabethan Theatre*, 9 (1981), pp. 100-168; William B. Long, '"A bed for woodstock": A Warning for the Unwary', *Medieval and Renaissance Drama in England*, 2 (1985), pp. 91-118; Paul Werstine, 'McKerrow's "Suggestion" and Twentieth-Century Shakespeare Textual Criticism', *Renaissance Drama*, n.s. 19 (1988), pp. 149-73; Scott McMillin, *The Elizabethan Theatre and 'The Book of Sir Thomas More'* (Cornell University Press, 1987); David Bradley, *From Text to Performance in the Elizabethan Theatre* (Cambridge University Press, 1992).

from the Shakespearian'.[31] Beneath the veil of science, according to de Grazia, the New Bibliography movement was committed to idealistic values that celebrated the 'treasured immanent manuscript' composed by an 'elusive authorial spectre'.

For de Grazia, the New Bibliography thus did not entirely fulfil its promise of being based on sound scientific principles. The movement's metaphysical concerns kept it adrift of its scientific moorings, which jeopardised the study of the material book as a physical object. De Grazia went on to elaborate this critique in her later work, which would be situated more broadly in her contention that recent work on printing, theatre studies, and editing had projected a range of post-Enlightenment categories onto Shakespeare.[32] In an influential article co-authored with Peter Stallybrass, 'The Materiality of the Shakespearean Text', the authors argued that certain categories of literary criticism post-date the first appearance of the texts – word, work, character and author – and tend to smooth over the material peculiarities of those early printed texts. The 'task of criticism' now, they urged, was to 'work those material remains back into what it is we continue so irresistibly to be drawn to there'.[33]

The same commitment to interrogating editorial assumptions based on a critique of the New Bibliography's systematic method is evident in Leah Marcus's monograph *Unediting the Renaissance* (1996). Acknowledging her indebtedness to such studies in the 1980s and 1990s, Marcus observed in her introduction that her study was 'dependent on recent critiques of scientific method that demonstrate the rhetorical and socio-political nature of scientific explanation'.[34] As she went on:

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[31] 'The Essential Shakespeare and the Material Book', *Textual Practice*, 2 (1988), pp. 69-86 (p. 70).
[32] See Margreta de Grazia and Peter Stallybrass, 'Love Among the Ruins: Response to Pechter', *Textual Practice*, 11.1 (Spring 1997), pp. 69-79; Margreta de Grazia, *Four Shakespearean Period Pieces* (University of Chicago Press, 2021).
[33] 'The Essential Shakespeare', p. 72.
[34] *Unediting*, pp. 4, 27.

> [w]hat we consider the factual basis for our conclusions may well alter its truth-bearing status over time: the human power to elucidate or otherwise account for a phenomenon is always limited by the local parameters of the man or woman doing the elucidation.

For Marcus, this insight offered a timely opportunity to explore how editorial activity might look in an age of ideological critique and textual materialism. Marcus was always cautious to observe that her investigation into previous editorial practice did not seek to 'throw its achievements out the window', but rather to propose that editors 'unedit' standard modern editions to gain an insight into how the tradition might reflect assumptions they no longer wished to uphold. As Marcus acknowledged, the provisional practice of 'unediting' texts also required a rethinking of an edition's readership. 'For an older generation of scholars and informed lay readers', she argued, 'the idea of textual instability was profoundly disquieting: one of the functions of the standard edition was to calm that unease and convince readers that they were being offered a text that could be counted on'.

In place of the editorial tradition's reassuring but ultimately synthetic parameters, Marcus proposed a reading experience for students that was more attuned to the instabilities of the early material witnesses. This was, she argued, a recipe for greater student engagement with early modern texts: 'students now tend to be awed and charmed by the discovery of textual difference – the realization that early manuscripts and printed editions of a given author may offer them an array of different texts, rather than a single textual "authority"'. However much one agrees with Marcus's premise, however, finding the right level of 'textual difference' in the classroom to keep students 'awed' and 'charmed' has proved far from straightforward.

Margreta de Grazia made the point more robustly in her 1995 essay 'The Question of the One and the Many'. In this essay, de Grazia argued that the editorial tradition had been in thrall

for too long to an ideational Shakespeare, expressed through the production of singular, composite texts. In a poststructuralist age, de Grazia argued, '[t]he reproduction of such Shakespeare texts over the centuries has come to look like bad faith, a grand editorial hoax that has duped generations of readers into taking editorial composites for authorial work'.[35]

Just as Marcus emphasised that editorial practice is always conditioned by local parameters, de Grazia also made the crucial point that editorial activity always takes place within specific cultural, intellectual, and institutional conditions:

> [i]n the late twentieth century, as in the mid-nineteenth, textual imperatives seem to be strangely in sync not only with available technologies but also with political claims: gender difference, ethnic difference, identity politics generally. Shakespeare, then, is under both technological and ideological pressure to be multiform.

For Marcus and de Grazia, this insight freed up intellectual space in which to put forward their arguments for a multiform Shakespeare. Editorial activity was *not* a science that led to concrete, stable texts and that could reach a logical endpoint. Time moves on, and editorial activity is shaped by a vectoring of social and political forces that were sealed off from than the time-honoured editorial tradition.

This thesis is considerably indebted to this insight: it argues that editorial activity takes place under specific cultural, intellectual, and institutional pressures. Unlike Marcus and de Grazia, however, I am not seeking to promote any particular approach, but adopting their critical methodology to reassess the three Arden Shakespeare series as book-historical projects on their own terms. In doing so, this thesis aims to tell a story of editorial activity in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries.

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[35] 'The Question of the One and the Many: The Globe Shakespeare, The Complete King Lear, and the New Folger Library Shakespeare', *SQ*, 46.2 (1995), pp. 245-51 (pp. 247-48).

4. Structure of the Thesis

The thesis begins by returning to the first Arden series as a remarkable editorial project that has provided a successful model for large-scale coordinated editorial efforts since its completion in 1924. As Mary Ann Kernan observed in 2016, the 'series affords an unusually stable and consistent case study of publishing history, and one that is timely'.[36] Where Kernan's focus is on publishing history, however, my interest is in providing a reassessment of editorial activity within the first Arden series. Chapter one begins by setting out the wider context in which the first Arden series took shape. The focus will be on how editorial thinking was evolving, particularly in relation to the canon of principles established by an eighteenth-century tradition of literary editing. The central argument of this chapter is that editorial thinking in the first Arden series is Janus-faced: editorial activity is both informed by preceding models, but it also guides and controls an impulse to innovate in the first Arden series. In arguing thus, I provide some pushback against a tendency to see the first Arden editors as slavishly following their predecessors, particularly the authoritative Cambridge edition which was published in 1863-66, and had been recently revised in 1893-96.

Chapter two then turns to the second Arden series. It begins with an account of the wider cultural context in which the second series can be placed. Through an initial focus on the planning work for the series carried out by Una Ellis-Fermor as the second series' founding general editor, the chapter moves on to analyse Kenneth Muir's editorial thinking and method

[36] 'The Launch of the First Series of the Arden Shakespeare in 1899: An Exploration of Bourdieu's Concept of Consecration', *LOGOS: Journal of the World Publishing Community*, 27.2 (September 2016), pp. 32-47 (p. 33).

in his Arden 2 *Macbeth* (1951). Muir's broad critical scope, which draws on the various branches of criticism of his time, is useful as representative of the editorial methods followed by the multivocal team of Arden 2 editors. The chapter's chief interest will be to interrogate Muir's critical mindset and method through a focus on the tools and resources at his disposal. Above all, I seek to consider Muir's editorial practice on its own terms.

Wells and Taylor's Oxford Complete Works (1986-87) is the focus of Chapter three. This edition has a central place in this thesis' narrative because of the way it put forward an editorial argument that absorbed the ideas of a rapidly shifting editorial climate. Wells and Taylor's robust challenge to the editorial tradition, I argue, was most powerfully authorised and augmented through the edition's physical dressing. Through a focus on the edition's paratextual features and material interface, the chapter seeks to interrogate the critical and interpretative consequences of an editorial approach invested in opening up fresh, alternative ways of thinking about Shakespearean texts.

Having considered the nature of the challenges to conventional editorial practice, Chapters four and five are dedicated to exploring how those challenges have landed in a post-revisionist editorial climate. Chapter four places the concept of unity in dialogue with a variety of challenges to that concept in order to interrogate how these two central categories affect and influence editorial activity. In doing so, I consider R.A. Foakes's Arden 3 *King Lear* (1997) and Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's two-volume, three-text *Hamlets* (2007) as occupying two extremes of a range of possibilities for the Arden 3 editors.

Comparing the two contrasting editions as demonstration texts for unity and New Textualism, I focus on the impact that the two procedures have on the edition's targeted

readership. The central questions thus include: how does the reader experience Foakes's conflated *King Lear* text and its interruptive apparatus? And how does that experience differ in Thompson and Neil Taylor's *Hamlets*, shaped by the philosophies of the New Textualism? Are readers more interested in exploring the differences between the three texts of *Hamlet*, or are they better able to cope with a single text?

In doing so, I explore the tensions that exist between a textual materialist approach and an Arden edition's readership. These tensions operate at different levels, but one of the most significant is the voice of the publisher. Richard Proudfoot acknowledges this tension in his book *Text, Stage and Canon* (2001). Considering two-text, or even three-text editions, Proudfoot notes that '[p]ublishers I have consulted don't like the idea of such an edition, mainly because of its expense'.[37] To be sure, Paul Eggert has also reinforced this point in a private communication: 'editions have to sell; academics sometimes forget that, but publishers don't, not even venerable university presses'.[38]

With a lack of methodological consensus now the norm in editorial practice, a shift of interest from unity towards a more materially oriented approach points to the way that editions have become acts of criticism. In 1950, Fredson Bowers argued that bibliography was concerned with editing 'not as a usurper of the functions of legitimate criticism, but instead as the necessary foundation on which […] textual criticism must be based and to which criticism must constantly refer for more or less definitive judgements'.[39] In a post-revisionist climate, however, and as I argue in Chapter four, editors are now actively interventionist. As the third

[37] *Text, Stage and Canon* (Arden Shakespeare, 2001), p. 30.
[38] Email, 7 August 2021.
[39] 'Some Relations of Bibliography to Editorial Problems', *Studies in Bibliography*, 3 (1950), pp. 37-62.

Arden series ran its course, editing was arguably approximating ever more closely to the functions of a 'legitimate criticism'.

Chapter five looks back at the supposed 'crisis' in English studies outlined above. How has a plural critical climate affected the nature of the discipline? What might an exploration of critical practice in the third Arden series reveal about just what English studies *is* in the present moment? To begin exploring these questions, I argue that the Arden 3 Introductions, when placed in sequence, provide a way to track the critical developments within twenty-first-century English studies, as each editor aimed to provide a comprehensive state of editorial and critical play.

The chapter isolates three critical frameworks that provide an insight into the critical climate of the third Arden series: performance criticism, gender and sexuality, and source studies. For each critical mode, I compare three editorial approaches that point to the plurality of critical practice in the present moment. For performance criticism, I focus on Claire McEachern's *Much Ado* (2005), Barbara Hodgdon's *The Shrew* (2010), and Ayanna Thompson's revised Introduction to Ernst Honigmann's *Othello* (1997; rev. 2016). Turning to feminism, gender and sexuality, I explore Juliet Dusinberre's *As You Like It* (2006), Valerie Wayne's *Cymbeline* (2017), and Suzanne Gossett and Helen Wilcox's *All's Well* (2018). To consider source studies, I consider Jonathan Bate's *Titus* (1995; rev. 2018), John Drakakis's *Merchant of Venice* (2011), and Sukanta Chaudhuri's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (2017).

In exploring the variety of critical practice within each of the three critical frameworks, I argue for a plurality of critical practice that now characterises the field of English studies. The plurality of critical practice is evident in the Arden 3 Introductions, which act as paratextual

spaces which offer a barometer of the critical state of play in the discipline. Returning to Widdowson's question 'What *is* English studies?', I argue that the Arden 3 Introductions are able to contribute an answer. Considered as a whole, these paratextual spaces suggest that the momentous events of the 1980s and 1990s within English studies have made the field more capacious, more exciting, and opened up new and ever expanding questions within the discipline. With less of a hard fence now separating literature and history, literary criticism has become more elastic, and the third Arden volumes parade some of the rewards.

This thesis has been written during the intervening years between the third and fourth Arden series, which is now close to publishing its first editions. In conclusion, therefore, I consider the emerging directions of the fourth Arden series. In doing so, the coda draws on a zoom interview with the Arden 4 General Editors, Professors Peter Holland, Tiffany Stern, and Zachary Lesser (for a transcript of the full interview, see Appendix 2). This thesis has considered the impact of Wells and Taylor's Oxford edition on the third Arden series, yet what might be the impact of the New Oxford Shakespeare (2016-17) on the fourth Arden series? How do its General Editors look back at the interventions of their predecessors, and what are the series' guiding editorial procedures? To explore such questions, and bring the history up-to-date with the time of writing, the conclusion will take stock of the past, present, and future of editing Shakespeare with the fourth Arden series now firmly on the horizon.

CHAPTER ONE

The Design of a Shakespeare series: A Case-Study of the First Arden Shakespeare series (1899-1924)

In October 1899, the London publisher Methuen and Co., included an unassuming entry as part of the latest publication of its substantial book catalogue and list of forthcoming titles:

> MESSRS. METHUEN have in preparation an Edition of Shakespeare in single Plays. Each play will be edited with a full Introduction, Textual Notes, and a Commentary at the foot of the page. The first volume will be: HAMLET. Edited by EDWARD DOWDEN. *Demy 8vo.* 3*s*. *6*.[1]

Within the same month the unprepossessing volume of *Hamlet* began to appear in British bookshops. It was, as its hardcover binding alerted the buying public, the first volume in a new series that would introduce a range of innovative features and procedures that have continued to shape expectations surrounding the design and layout of a scholarly edition of Shakespeare. There are several features that would have looked new to its early readers. The first is its demy octavo format dedicated to a single play, which provided a convenient 216x138mm size for the growing student market and educated lay reader.

Moreover, a legible mise-en-page included spacious margins with an uncluttered centered text, described in the company's early marketing material as 'printed in a type which imposes

[1] Methuen, *Methuen's Gazette and Literary Notes* (1899), p. 25.

little fatigue on the eye'.[2] The large font of the centered text was set within a page organized into three vertically divided spaces: dialogue, collation, and double-columned annotations at the page's foot; the explanatory notes and collation often serving to illustrate the matters dealt with in the scholarly Introduction. The Introduction was essential to aid the accessibility of the plays and poems, written by a dedicated scholar giving individual attention to a single work and who often, as one contemporary reviewer described Dowden, could 'speak with an authority that can be claimed by few of his critics'.[3]

From its early promise, Dowden's *Hamlet* would eventually take its place within a generation-spanning twenty-five-year project that has provided a model for large-scale coordinated editorial efforts since its completion in 1924. From Algernon Methuen's (1856-1924) first contact with Edward Dowden in 1898, to the thirty-seven single-volume plays and two non-dramatic poetry editions later, the work undertaken to produce the first series resulted in a significant prestige for the Arden name.[4]

Through the process of gathering a team of editors, the first series supported not only the work of individual scholars but also made a substantial contribution to the establishment of English studies as a serious field of scholarship.[5] The structural cohesion and collaborative nature of the series owed much to what has been described as 'the ruling spirit and constructive force' of Algernon Methuen.[6] The first Arden's collaborative structure, in which a dedicated team of scholars and editors were gathered to work under the guidance of experienced general editors, provided a successful formula that responded effectively to a burgeoning national

[2] Methuen, bound with William Shakespeare, *Anthony & Cleopatra*, ed. by R.H. Case (Methuen, 1930).
[3] J. Comyns Carr, 'Professor Dowden on *Hamlet*', *The Speaker: The Liberal Review*, 1.5 (November 1899), p. 121.
[4] See Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 206.
[5] See Kernan, 'The Launch of the First Series', p. 45.
[6] Anon, *Sir Algernon Methuen, Baronet: A Memoir* (Methuen, 1925), p. 9.

education system. To be sure, during the last three decades of the nineteenth century, the UK experienced a rapid expansion of educational provision, a growth inspired by the government's 1870 Education Act. As Andrew Murphy has observed

> [i]n the first decade following the 1870 Education Act, the size of the school population rose from roughly 1,500,000 to almost 4,000,000, with the average length of school life increasing year on year as well, from 2.55 years in 1870 to 5.19 in 1880, 6.13 in 1890 and 7.05 in 1897. By the end of the century, then, from humble beginnings in dame schools, Sunday schools and the voluntary agencies of the churches, a genuine nationwide system of mass education had been forged and universal literacy had, in essence, been achieved.[7]

The way the first Arden editions were shaped against this background remains relevant in the modern day. While it is difficult to provide evidence for school-level sales of Arden editions today, Margaret Bartley has attested to the way that 'sales spike and fall over the lifetime of a play such as *Othello* or *The Tempest*, which mirror when those texts are set at A level and when they come off the syllabus'.[8] In 2001, Richard Proudfoot observed that 'it was the first Arden series that developed many of the features of design and layout best known to us today, when a second and third Arden series have been joined by editions under the imprints of the Oxford and Cambridge University presses whose design owes much to the Arden model'.[9] Even Stanley Wells, one of the General Editors of the rival Oxford Shakespeare (1986-87), has acknowledged the Arden influence on his own editorial approach:

> The Oxford edition [...] was indeed intended to rival the Arden. In establishing its editorial principles I was much influenced by my work on the Penguin, but also – perhaps excessively – by the Arden itself.[10]

[7] *Shakespeare for the People: Working-Class Readers, 1800-1900* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 45.
[8] Email, 18 December 2023.
[9] *Shakespeare: Text, Stage and Canon*, p. 4.
[10] 'On Being a General Editor', *SS*, vol. 59 (2006), pp. 39-48 (p. 47).

Wells was of course speaking after the first and second Arden series had concluded. But even after the first series was complete, there was a feeling that the project had been a success. This can be seen, for instance, in the 1946 proposal to re-issue the series with what Una Ellis-Fermor (1894-1958) described as 'little more [...] than a limited revision'; a policy which would however soon change so that each editor had the responsibility for establishing the text of his or her own play, 'as the conditions of the years immediately after the war began to allow of it'.[11] The post-war years were to be a golden age for student texts and monographs, and the solid foundations of the first Arden series, effectively laid at the door of the second Arden editors, would provide major ballast to a revised series for a new generation.[12] As Ellis-Fermor further acknowledged in launching the series: 'the policy of the original edition in respect of introductions, commentary and appendices remains what it has always been; the lines laid down by those scholars who first designed its forms have proved their worth throughout the past half-century'. It is easy to feel, then, that Brian Morris's praise of the second series (1951-82) as his fellow General Editors' 'mighty monument' misses out many of those who deserve recognition for their part in a collaborative scholarly project.[13]

One of the founding figures who deserves much of that recognition is Algernon Methuen Marshall Stedman (1856-1924). Stedman was born in Southwark, and attended Berkhamsted School in 1869 before moving to Wadham College, Oxford, where he obtained a degree in Classics in 1878. After his first job working as a tutor in a coaching establishment, he began his own prep school, known as 'Highcroft', in 1880 in Milford, Surrey.[14] As a teacher during

[11] 'General Editor's Preface', in William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (Methuen, 1951), p. vi.
[12] See Andrew Schuller, 'Academic Publishing', in *The History of Oxford University Press: Volume IV: 1970 to 2004*, ed. by Keith Robbins (Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 269-339 (p. 278).
[13] Morris is here referring to Harold F. Brooks and Harold Jenkins (1909-2000). Brian Morris, 'Preface', in William Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, ed. by Brian Morris (Methuen, 1981), p. ix.
[14] For many details surrounding Methuen's early biography I am indebted to Maureen Duffy's valuable study, *A Thousand Capricious Chances: A History of the Methuen List 1889-1989* (Methuen, 1989).

the later nineteenth century, Stedman would have witnessed first-hand the rapid expansion of state education throughout the country as the government began to embrace the socio-economic advantages of compulsory education. Stedman's decision to begin writing his own user-friendly school textbooks during his time as a schoolteacher both confirmed his own educational values, and indicated an astute commercial awareness in the response to a growing demand for high-quality textbooks.

His own textbooks were initially published at his own expense and sold from his school grounds, before being handed over to the publisher George Bell and Sons. Stedman also had literary ambitions of his own which extended beyond the school gates. He had written a book on Oxford, published by Trüber and Co. in 1878, and later returned to the book to solicit one of its contributors, Herbert Hensley Henson, to expand on a chapter to be published by Stedman's own press. This was the beginning of his own successful ambition to expand his business through the careful selection of authors to produce books for the company.

The reason for naming his new publishing company 'Methuen' is given in his memoir, which stated that 'he wished his activities as a schoolmaster and as a publisher to be kept distinct.[15] Stedman had written a considerable number of school textbooks under his original surname, but his ambitions were soon directed towards publishing rather than authorship. In the early years, his company operated from a small back room rented in Bloomsbury, run by the company's new trade manager W.W. Gibbons. This allowed Stedman to maintain his teaching responsibilities as well as providing him with the time necessary to commission potential authors.

[15] *Sir Algernon Methuen, Baronet: A Memoir*, p. 7.

As the company was established, it took back the responsibility for publishing Stedman's textbooks, as well as his book on Oxford, from George Bell & Sons, meaning he had (in Duffy's words), 'the twin pillars of fiction and educational publishing to prop up his enterprise'. The company's foundational emphasis on fiction and education is significant in identifying some of the core values that would shape the development of the first Arden series. In addition, Duffy observes that 'from the first [...] the list shows a strong bias towards liberal humanist thinking', in books such as A.F. Robbins' *Early Public Life of William Edward Gladstone*, and the series entitled 'Social Questions of Today'. This liberal humanist background is also significant in indicating the intellectual tradition in which work on the first Arden series would begin.

After five years of continued growth, the Methuen company was able to move to new offices at 36 Essex Street, London, and appoint a new manager, G.E. Webster from the publisher Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner. To build on this early success, Methuen's thoughts soon turned to Shakespeare. The particular advantages of Shakespeare for a publisher are usefully suggested by Stanley Wells, who has claimed that

> Shakespeare can be a status symbol. Publishing houses may feel that their lists are incomplete if they do not include an edition of his works.[16]

Wells's valuable insight suggests that adding a prominent Shakespeare series to their lists allowed the Methuen Company to make a statement of its intent and build further on its reputation as a leading publisher of high-quality literature. In addition, as well as providing a commercial stability to the company, a successful series promised the gradual accumulation of status, as each edition in the line added a further marker of prestige to the Arden name.

[16] 'On Being a General Editor', p. 39.

Shakespeare's place in the emerging nationwide education system at this time was being promoted by a range of major institutions and societies. One of the most influential was the 'New Shakspere Society' (1873), founded by the scholar and lexicographer Frederick Furnivall (1825-1910) to encourage and promote a scientific study of Shakespeare. Around the same time, James Murray's (1837-1915) *New English Dictionary* (1884-1928) project was compiling an exhaustive record of English language use from the eighth century onwards, a gigantic effort that required the gathering of quotations -- often volunteered through classified slips -- to illustrate the use of words and phrases.

The two most influential editions of recent times, which receive regular references throughout the first Arden series, were the Cambridge-Macmillan Shakespeare (1863-66; rev. 1891-93), and H.H. Furness's New Variorum Shakespeare (1871-) editions. The Cambridge edition is now well-known for being the first edition produced by professional scholars working within a university setting. Its companion edition, however, the 'Globe Shakespeare' (1864), was effectively the same Cambridge text without the scholarly apparatuses. This design left only the centred text of the plays and poems, giving the unfortunate impression that Shakespeare's texts had been finally settled.

At the opposite end of the scale is the 'heavyweight bulk' of H.H. Furness Sr. and his son's New Variorum editions, which Richard Proudfoot has described as 'academic overkill' in their use of extensive commentary notes that can often overwhelm the text of the play.[17] Furness and his son were both amateur scholars who aimed to 'provide a detailed history of critical commentary together with an exhaustive study of the text'.[18] Beginning with *Romeo and Juliet*

[17] *Shakespeare: Text, Stage & Canon*, p. 1.
[18] Richard Knowles, *Shakespeare Variorum Handbook*, 2nd edn (MLA, 2003), p. 1.

in 1871, they issued 19 volumes by 1928, after which the responsibility for publication was handed on to the Modern Language Association, who remain the publisher of the editions.[19]

In conceiving a new Shakespeare edition for the public, the Methuen company would thus have had to give considerable thought to how their texts would be differentiated in an already crowded market. One of the ways they achieved this was through an appeal to the widest possible audience. In an early advertisement for the series, its targeted readers were separated into three classes:

> There are those who care only to enjoy the play without the retardation or the disturbance of notes; for them a text [...] is printed in a type which imposes little fatigue on the eye [...] There are, secondly, readers who recognise the fact that many difficulties exist in what Shakespeare has written [...] for these readers a body of explanatory notes [...] has been provided. Thirdly, there are scholarly readers, who have a legitimate desire themselves to check or control the work of the editor in the formation of his text.[20]

The tripartite division of readers connects significantly with the three major Shakespeare editions of recent times: those who were interested only in the text (Globe); those who wanted clarification on some points (Cambridge); and those who might wish to consider the textual arguments for themselves (Variorum). By straddling the needs of all three groups, the Arden texts presented an economically arranged mise-en-page which restricted the use of notes to what was felt appropriate for those who required it and would not interrupt the reading experience for those who were not concerned with such matters.

The appeal to general readers is reflected in the choice of serialisation. Rather than providing a more expensive and bulky Complete Works edition that would result in a one-off payment to

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[19] See Paul Werstine, 'The Science of Editing', in *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare and the Text*, ed. by Andrew Murphy (Blackwell Publishing, 2007), pp. 109-27 (p. 111).
[20] Methuen, bound with William Shakespeare, 1930.

the publishers, Arden offered a Shakespeare in instalments, with Dowden's *Hamlet* being sold for the price of 3s. 6*d*. From the publisher's perspective, serialisation could be a lucrative long-term investment, as Algernon Methuen indicated in his letter of encouragement to Dowden following the initial poor sales of *Hamlet*: 'each volume of the series that appears will give a fillip to the preceding volumes; the greater the merit, the greater the fillip'.[21] Further, as Stuart Sillars has observed, single-volume editions would be particularly useful for those studying a play for the examinations of the Board Schools, universities or the Home or Foreign Civil Service'.[22] Each edition aimed to respond to the shifting educational culture by providing a user-friendly guide to the texts which included an Introduction setting out the editor's textual choices along with a critical background to the play.

A further way that the Arden first series would be distinguished from its competitors was in the decision to gather a team of editors to work under the guidance of a general editor. Algernon Methuen's own background as a schoolteacher likely influenced this decision as the arrangement of individual editors working under a general editor's supervision had been a predominant feature of schools editions.[23] This may also have been prompted by seeing H.H. Furness's titanic project, a complete Variorum edition started in 1871, far from complete at his death. By allocating an editor the responsibility for a single play at any one time, this relieved many of the time pressures on editors faced with substantial work commitments alongside their editorial role. Reflecting on his own experience of gathering a team as a General Editor, Stanley Wells remarks that

[21] Letter to Edward Dowden, 13 June 1900, Trinity College, Dublin (TCD) mss. 3147-3154a (1110).
[22] *Shakespeare and the Victorians* (Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 28. See also Adrian Poole, *Shakespeare and the Victorians* (Arden Shakespeare, 2004).
[23] See Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 207.

> The efficient completion of a series is dependent upon the General Editor's selection of editors who can respect deadlines and, if they know they are not going to be able to meet them, can be honest and realistic in their estimates of when they may be able to do so.[24]

Such scenarios are not uncommon in the Arden first series. R.H. Case, for example, had written to Edward Dowden in 1908 explaining that he was unable to complete his edition of *Macbeth* due to his university duties at Liverpool.[25] In a similar way, J.W. Holme complains from Calcutta of 'the difficulties due to a distance of seventeen days by post from London' in his edition of *As You Like It* (1914) for the series.[26] In such moments of adversity, the general editor's role becomes essential in providing a stability and coherence to an editorial project. The supervisory role of general editor seeks to provide consistency across editions, and in the process provides a further layer of stabilisation which brings into view the 'complete-picture', as each editor creates their own edition under their supervision.

In turning to the editorial practice of the first Arden editors, this chapter will argue for the Janus-faced nature of editing in the first Arden series. An investigation into the editorial thinking across the series is able to illustrate an impulse to innovate that is a keynote of the series' hybrid genesis. In an essay on editorial thinking within the first Arden series, Gabriel Egan has remarked that when it came to textual matters, the first Arden editors were 'in the shadow of the Cambridge editors' for at least the first couple of decades of the twentieth century.[27] This chapter seeks to provide some pushback against this claim, and to show how many of the first Arden editors were invested in breaking new ground.

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[24] 'On Being a General Editor', p. 46.
[25] Autograph letter signed from R.H. Case, Liverpool, to Professor Dowden [manuscript], 1908 April 1, Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC. A useful summary of the letter is given on the Folger website: 'Case writes about his editing of *Anthony & Cleopatra* and *Macbeth*, explaining that his duties at the university will prevent him from completing the Arden Shakespeare edition of *Macbeth*'.
[26] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. by J.W. Holme (Methuen, 1914), p. xxii.
[27] Gabriel Egan, 'A complicated and unpleasant investigation': The Arden Shakespeare 1899-1924': A paper delivered on 12 July at the conference 'Open the Book, Open the Mind: The 2007 meeting of the Society for History of Authorship, Reading, and Publishing (SHARP)' at the University of Minnesota, Minneapolis, 11-15 July 2007.

The first section will sketch out some of the early critical priorities of the series from the perspective of Edward Dowden's scholarship as the series' founding general editor. I will then go on to situate the editors within their cultural and intellectual milieu, illustrating how their approach was informed and shaped by their predecessors, but also how that practice guides and controls an impulse to innovate. In arguing thus, I claim that the Arden editors were not restricted to working in the shadow of their predecessors, but were in fact actively contributing to an exciting, lively, and far from settled debate on the nature of Shakespearean texts.

Edward Dowden (1843-1913) and the launch of the first Arden series

In many ways, Edward Dowden was an appropriate candidate for the role of general editor for a new series of Shakespeare editions. At the age of twenty-four, Dowden had taken up a position as Professor of English Literature at Trinity College, Dublin (in July 1867), a position he would occupy for forty-six years.[28] Methuen had hoped that Dowden would agree to take on the role of General Editor for the new series, which was accepted.[29] The liberal humanism of his scholarship, his occupancy of a university chair, and his reputation as a Shakespeare scholar all offer firm reasons why Methuen would favour Dowden as the series' General Editor.

A glance at his personal correspondence at the time, however, reveals a lack of enthusiasm for the role. In a letter to his friend Thomas Hutchinson written in June 1898, Dowden wrote that 'I have been tearing away [...] at "Seventeenth Century Writers"; now a publisher is trying

[28] For a study of Dowden's literary criticism, see Kathryn R. Ludwigson, *Edward Dowden* (Twayne Publishers, 1973).
[29] See Andrew Murphy, *Shakespeare in Print*, p. 206.

to beguile me into becoming general editor of a proposed edition of Shakespeare, but I mean to slip out of it'.[30] A further indication of Dowden's lack of enthusiasm for textual editing is suggested in a remarkable passage on the history of literary criticism:

> While the subject of criticism was the relation of certain works to certain rules grown rigid and lifeless through long neglect of their sources, or supposed sources, in the mind, its sphere was incapable of enlargement, and its results were arbitrary judgements. But when criticism came to regard every work as the product of a mind, and an appeal to other minds, its play extended itself over the scale of all the thoughts and emotions of mankind, and its judgements lost their factitious value, and acquired a significance as deep as the nature of man.[31]

Dowden here endorses an alternative model to the 'rigid' and 'lifeless' rules of criticism, which are replaced in his approach by a critical investment in the proximities between life and art. The work of art is regarded as 'the product of a mind', which has the capacity to 'extend [...] itself over the scale of all the thoughts and emotions of mankind', and thus 'acquire [...] a significance as deep as the nature of man'. The passage expresses much of the Arnoldian humanism and arch-Romantic tradition that was a keynote of English at the turn of the century, and it provides a fertile staging post for considering the evolution of English studies in the twentieth century.

Dowden's teaching responsibilities in English bear witness to the subject's nascent state at the close of the nineteenth century. At Trinity College, Dublin, the most prominent subjects at the time were Classics and Mathematics, while English occupied a secondary position as a voluntary subject to be studied alongside French or German.[32] In a letter to his friend 'Prof. Martin Sampson' at Cornell University, dated November 1900, Dowden indicated the lightness

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[30] *Letters of Edward Dowden and his Correspondents*, ed. by E.D. and H.M. Dowden (Dent & Sons, 1914), p. 279.
[31] *Considerations on the Criticism of Literature: An Address Delivered at the Opening of the Session, 1863-64 of the Undergraduate Philosophical Society of The University of Dublin* (William McGee, 1864), pp. 1-31 (pp. 11-12).
[32] *Letters of Edward Dowden*, pp. 303-34.

of his timetable as an English specialist: 'I lecture to a few students in English during three terms, each term of six weeks, and my lectures are three in each week'. The nature of his lectures and his ideal classroom are described in a letter written in 1911:

> I am afraid we in college lectures give too much of the history of literature, and too little of literature itself. I should like to have a small class, sitting round a table, and go through chosen poems from such a book as the "Golden Treasury" – trying to deepen the feeling for what is beautiful in literature, rather than the talk about books and authors; which may tend certainly to broaden, but does not do much to deepen, one's sense of what is best in poetry.[33]

It is worth noting here how Dowden's emphasis on 'literature itself' can be seen as a precursor to the schools of formalism that would succeed him. Cleanth Brooks later emphasised that various readings led critics into biography, psychology, and history, but that 'the formalist critic is concerned primarily with the work itself'.[34] Bringing Dowden's own thinking into dialogue with a succeeding formalism offers a picture of evolution in critical and editorial thinking as scholars strove to embed literature firmly within the academy. Indeed, this way of thinking might also be seen in R.A. Foakes's later complaint of 1993 about the displacement of literature within English studies:

> [i]n universities, criticism has displaced literature as the source of power in English studies, for the critical processing of literature can be taught more easily than literature itself, and through the creation of journals and schools of criticism provides professional enhancement and prestige.[35]

Both Dowden and Foakes, speaking from a pedagogical perspective, were concerned with the apparently secondary position of literature within English studies, toppled by a concern with 'the history of literature' or a shift towards critical pluralism. Dowden's description of his ideal classroom thus serves to indicate his critical priorities, perhaps the most dominant of

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[33] *Letters of Edward Dowden*, p. 372.
[34] 'The Formalist Critics', *The Kenyon Review*, 13.1 (Winter 1951), pp. 72-81 (p. 74).
[35] *Hamlet Versus Lear*, p. 7.

which was to situate 'Shakespeare the man' against the background of his art, and form a semblance of his emotional and spiritual maturity. Dowden's investment in the artist behind the work – the life that informs the fiction – is also mirrored in his studies of individual characters. Influenced by the Victorian age of the novel, the thoughts, feelings and emotions of characters were explored and analysed in great depth. But Dowden also recognised that Shakespeare was no novelist:

> It is not proposed here to notice the stage-history of *Hamlet*, the interpretations by eminent actors, nor the vast critical library that has grown around the play. Critics, I think, have sometimes erred in not keeping vividly before their imagination the nature of Shakespeare's task [...] I prefer to think of Shakespeare as setting to work with the intention of handling an old play, so as to give it fresh interest on the stage; as following the subject given to him, and as following the instinctive leadings of his genius.[36]

Dowden explicitly separated himself from critics such as Goethe and Coleridge who 'speak as if the poet started with some central idea of which Hamlet was to be the exponent', by recognising Shakespeare as working under the social and cultural pressures of producing plays to satisfy the shifting tastes of an early modern audience. While his Introduction included such comments as, 'Occasionally [...] I have tried to explain Hamlet's thoughts rather than verbal difficulties', Dowden's criticism is notable for the way it acknowledges the plays as both works of art and scripts for performance.[37]

While Dowden would produce three texts for the Arden series, following *Hamlet* (1899) with *Romeo & Juliet* (1900), and *Cymbeline* (1903), he was happy to give up his General Editor role in 1901 to the more experienced William James Craig (1843-1906). Soon after Craig had completed his edition of *King Lear* (1901), Dowden remarked in a letter of 1902 that 'Craig is

[36] 'Introduction', *Hamlet*, pp. xxiii-xxiv.
[37] For a persuasive argument that Shakespeare wrote his plays to be read, see Lukas Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (Cambridge University Press, 2003; rev. 2013).

[...] I think, away at Portland, but will be soon back. After his sins in corrections of "Lear", he has been appointed by Methuen general editor of the Shakespeare – a happy mode of punishment!'[38]

Dowden and Craig were the same age, and had met while undergraduates at Trinity College, Dublin. While they shared an academic interest in Shakespeare, their widely different approach is indicated in their roles as members of the New Shakspere Society. Inspired by the boundless enthusiasm of the society's founder, Frederick James Furnivall, Craig was drawn to the group's scientific optimism, which enthusiastically promoted and encouraged new scientific methodologies and analytic tools which were to be applied to Shakespearean texts. Following his membership, Craig soon began work on collating the folio texts of *Cymbeline* to produce his edition for the Society published in 1883. This was followed by his single-volume Oxford Shakespeare, published by Clarendon Press in 1891.

By introducing innovative scientific methodologies, including metrical tests, the broad aim of the New Shakspere Society was to provide further evidence for a chronological arrangement of Shakespeare's works. The motivation underwriting this task was that a chronological order would support an understanding of Shakespeare's artistic and emotional maturity. This goal evidently appealed to Dowden, a Shakespeare scholar who was critically invested in Shakespeare's mental and artistic growth. As Dowden remarked in a letter to Elizabeth Dickinson West in 1873:

> I am glad this Shakespeare Society is started. It will do a great deal to illustrate his works, probably determine, as far as can be, the order in which he wrote his plays, and provide material of one kind

[38] *Letters of Edward Dowden*, p. 315.

> or another for at length getting at the man himself, who is certainly the biggest problem in modern literature.[39]

As it relates to his editorial practice in the first Arden series, Dowden's desire to 'get [...] at the man himself' provides a keynote of the criticism in his Introductions and commentary notes. As part of his goal of exposing the figure in the carpet, Dowden was further committed to exploring the perceived thoughts and emotions of Shakespearean characters. He argued that the major characters in the plays often acted as potential signposts that opened up a space in which to trace Shakespeare's emotional development. As early as 1875, however, he had emphasised in his monograph *Shakspere: His Mind and Art* (1875) that it was a mistake to identify Shakespeare himself with any specific one of his dramatic characters.[40] Rather, such dramatic characters reflect certain emotional and spiritual states along Shakespeare's path to full maturity. Taking Romeo, Hamlet, and Prospero as characters that represent significant stages of Shakespeare's spiritual growth, for instance, Dowden argued that 'a potential Romeo, and a potential Hamlet, taking these names as representative of certain spiritual tendencies or habits, existed in Shakspere [and] Shakspere's temper in the plays of the last period is the temper of Prospero'.

If Dowden's investment in Shakespeare's spiritual growth and state of mind provided the first series' early readership a sense of its domineering critical practice, a critical tension would soon rise to the surface as W.J. Craig took over the mantle as the series' general editor. This tension can be seen, for instance, in Craig's edition of *King Lear* (1903), which was published four years after Dowden's *Hamlet* had launched the series. In his Introduction, Craig felt compelled to distance himself from '[s]ome modern critics' who attributed the play to 'the state

[39] Elizabeth Dickinson West, ed., *Fragments from Old Letters E.D. to E.D.W. 1869-1892*, 2 vols (Dent, 1914), I, p. 82.
[40] *Shakspere: A Critical Study of his Mind and Art* (Henry S. King ,1875), pp. xiii-xiv.

of mind which – as part of his personal experience – our poet was in when he composed it'.[41] Convinced that the attempts to recover Shakespeare's state of mind from his plays and poems was misguided, Craig argued that

> as in support of theories of this kind there is rarely, if ever, vouchsafed to us one grain of evidence, perhaps I may be permitted to record my personal belief that such an origin for this or any other tragedy of our poet is most improbable [...] Some modern critics seem to think themselves called upon to manufacture details concerning it brand-new from the mint of their own prolific imagination.

Idealistic critics, Craig believed, had strayed too far from the textual and documentary evidence. Craig's 'personal belief' is useful here in pointing to the variety of investments in Shakespeare the man across the series. Only a year before Craig's edition of *King Lear* was published, for instance, Morton Luce had argued for the legitimacy of biographical readings in the Introduction to his edition of *The Tempest* (1902):

> if such a play was written without any personal feeling or personal interest on the part of its author, then it is false, wrong, mischievous; it is a dramatic imposture; it is an example of the most subtle and despicable hypocrisy; we must feel great truths before we can tell them.[42]

Luce here followed Dowden in suggesting that the playwright's personal feelings might be deduced from a close analysis of Shakespeare's dramatic characters. '[T]he man' he repeatedly claims, 'such as he was at the time of writing – will be present, consciously or unconsciously, in his work', so that '[u]ltimately [...] *style is a revelation of soul*' (emphasis added).[43] The striking notion that a playwright's nature could be illustrated through personal style is, however, destabilised in Luce's Preface to his second edition in 1919. In the new Preface, Luce significantly challenged idealistic interpretations that connected Shakespeare's settings or characters with real-life correspondences:

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[41] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. by W.J. Craig (Methuen, 1903), p. lx.
[42] 'Introduction', in, William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, ed. by Morton Luce (Methuen, 1902), p. l.
[43] 'Preface to New Edition' in *The Tempest*, ed. by Morton Luce, 2nd edn (Methuen, 1919), p. vi.

> with regard to any reproduction or identification of the scene of *The Tempest*, we might as well draw a map of Utopia or Atlantis; and as to any definite conception of Caliban (or indeed of Ariel), as to any attempt to reduce him to precise form or mental being, it would be as easy to erect a statue to Proteus.[44]

Stating his case more generally, Luce argued that 'as metre is to rhythm, so is the real to the ideal; so also is the detail of the analyst to the poet's totality of impression'. In other words, Luce's earlier investment in Shakespeare's 'personal feeling or personal interest' being woven into the fabric of his texts is displaced by the view expressed here of the nebulous relation between the 'real' and the 'ideal'. In this shift of interest, it is possible to see a critical shift in Luce's thinking, one which arguably mirrors a shift from Dowden's idealistic criticism towards Craig's way of thinking as the general editorship passed into his hands.

Editing for the First Arden series: W.J. Craig (1843-1906) and H.C. Hart (1847-1908)

When work began on the first Arden series, the editors could look back at a long eighteenth-century tradition of editing Shakespeare that aimed to establish and evolve coherent editorial methods based on rational criteria. The long list of eighteenth-century complete-works editions might read as an extended dialogue between editors as each edition formed a response to its predecessor, most prominent among which are: Nicholas Rowe (1709), Alexander Pope (1723-25), Lewis Theobald (1733), Thomas Hanmer (1744), William Warburton (1747), Samuel Johnson (1765), Edward Capell (1768), George Steevens (1773), and Edmond Malone (1790).

[44] p. vi.

The work of the eighteenth-century editors shares several characteristics that are helpful to an understanding of the editorial thinking in the first Arden series. The most central of their shared tenets is a humanist commitment to Shakespeare as a literary genius. This critical investment had interpretative consequences for the way editors approached their texts. If the early printed texts that have come down to us were regrettably garbled by their theatrical provenance – and textual pessimism was no doubt a keynote of the eighteenth century -- it was the editor's duty to restore as far as possible the 'scriptural' status of the underlying copies. As Marcus Walsh has argued, speaking generally about the eighteenth-century editors: 'they more or less universally located that sacred text not in the surviving physical textual witnesses, but in an original authorial text or texts, now lost, that lay behind the first printed texts, and which embodied what Shakespeare intended to write and what Shakespeare intended to mean'.[45]

Moreover, in tracing the evolution of editorial thinking across the eighteenth century, Walsh has argued convincingly for a gradual shift in editorial strategy from an aesthetic to an authorial orientation.[46] In Pope's edition, for instance, which appeared relatively early in the century, his aesthetic conception of the editor's role left little space for validating his own decisions against a rational criteria. As editorial thinking developed, however, editors began contributing towards a growing canon of editorial precepts and principles. The three editors who are generally agreed to have done most to advance the field of Shakespearean textual criticism along these lines are Lewis Theobald (1688-1744), Edward Capell (1773-1781), and Edmond Malone (1741-1812).

Theobald is often credited as the first to establish a systematic approach to editing Shakespeare. In Peter Seary's landmark study, for example, he acknowledges Theobald as the

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[45] *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 117.

[46] For Peter Shillingsburg's influential taxonomy of editorial 'orientations', see his book *Scholarly Editing in the Computer Age* (University of Georgia Press, 1986).

first ‘to edit Shakespeare systematically’, and also credits him as ‘the founder of modern scholarship devoted to Renaissance English literature’.[47] For Theobald, the process of editing Shakespeare demanded principles of rational argument and interpretative procedures that could be validated against an established criteria. His view of editorial activity as a ‘Science of Criticism’ was put forward in his influential book *Shakespeare Restored* (1726), which formed an extended review of Alexander Pope’s complete-works edition. In the first place, Theobald followed a humanist principle in seeking to restore Shakespeare’s original intentions from the betraying early printed texts. His rationale for emendation was thus to restore the readings of the author’s lost manuscript using the derived material record as the only remaining authority of what the author wrote.

Discussing his policy of emendation in *Shakespeare Restored*, Theobald observed that ‘[t]he Want of *Originals* reduces us to a Necessity of *guessing* in order to amend him; but these Guesses change into Something of a more *substantial* Nature, when they are tolerably supported by *Reason* or *Authorities*’.[48] Thus seeking to ground his editorial decisions within a rational and coherent methodology, Theobald’s innovative approach can be seen in his own statement of editorial purpose that followed. In the Preface to his Complete Works edition (1733), Theobald proposed that

> [t]he Science of Criticism, as far as it affects an Editor, seems to be reduced to these three Classes; the Emendation of corrupt Passages; the Explanation of obscure and difficult ones; and an Inquiry into the Beauties and Defects of Composition. This Work is principally confin’d to the two former Parts.[49]

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[47] *Lewis Theobald and the Editing of Shakespeare* (Clarendon Press, 1990), p. vii.
[48] *Shakespeare Restored: Or, a Specimen of the Many Errors, as well Committed as Unamended, by Mr. Pope in his Late Edition of the Poet* (R. Francklin & others, 1726), p. 133. See Carly Watson, ‘From Restorer to Editor: The Evolution of Lewis Theobald’s Textual Critical Practice’, *Library*, 20.2 (2019), pp. 147-71.
[49] *The Works of Shakespeare in Seven Volumes: Collated with the Oldest Copies, and Corrected; with Notes, Explanatory and Critical*, 7 vols, i (Printed for A. Bettesworth and C. Hitch, 1733), pp. xl-xli.

In seeking to emend corrupt passages, Theobald thus argued that every emendation should be based, as far as possible, on rational and verifiable criteria. By appealing to '*Reason* or *Authorities*', Theobald thus claimed that emendations were made more convincing when informed by a knowledge of the larger cultural and linguistic horizons of Shakespeare's day. The way this precept informs Theobald's practice can be illustrated in his innovative and highly influential use of parallel passages in Shakespeare and other early modern playwrights. This practice, which is still of benefit to modern-day editors, provided an historical and lexicographical knowledge to support emendations in moving beyond mere guesswork. It is of course no fault of Theobald's that in his day a lack of lexicographical information made his task of explaining Shakespeare's obsolete vocabulary more difficult than it would become for later editors.[50]

Later in the century, Edward Capell (1733-1781) followed Theobald's lead in seeking to establish and evolve coherent editorial principles and procedures for the editing of Shakespeare. Capell is perhaps most well-known for starting the process of collating texts from scratch. Like Theobald, Capell was also invested in advancing knowledge of Shakespeare's cultural and linguistic horizons as a means to ground and authorise his interpretative choices. His commitment to this scholarly project of validation is illustrated in his three-volume *Notes and Various Readings of Shakespeare* (1779, 1780, 1781), which appeared as supplementary to his ten-volume Complete Works edition (1768).

In the first two volumes of his *Notes*, Capell included his Notes to the individual plays, as well as a substantial Glossary to explain Shakespeare's language. In the third volume, Capell drew on his personal library, providing a collection of passages from early modern literature

[50] See Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton, and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing*, pp. 126-49.

he entitled *The School of Shakespeare: or, authentic Extracts from divers English Books, that were in Print in that Author's Time* (1781). From the materials provided in his *Notes and Various Readings of Shakespeare*, Capell sought to evolve informed and coherent editorial principles and procedures. Such materials helped to contextualise Shakespeare within his cultural and linguistic horizons, a contextualisation that points to the critical continuities between Theobald and Capell. For both editors, an investment in contextualisation provided sources of validation that moved beyond the subjective criteria of many of their predecessors.

Following Theobald and Capell, Edmond Malone (1741-1812) produced an edition that synthesised the work of his predecessors in establishing coherent editorial procedures for the editing of Shakespeare. In Malone as in his predecessors, an early text was chosen as the base, that text was collated with other surviving witnesses where they exist, the editor then selected variants from the other texts deemed authoritative, carrying out conjectural emendation in cases of scribal error or compositor malfeasance. The general rationale underwriting these procedures was set out by Malone in his 1790 edition. In his Preface, Malone observed that an editor's 'first and immediate object' was to 'ascertain [Shakespeare's] genuine text, to fix what is to be explained [...] and till it be established which of the ancient copies is entitled to preference, we have no criterion by which the text can be ascertained'.[51]

Malone's influential 1790 edition in many ways marked the culmination point of the eighteenth-century tradition of editing Shakespeare. Moreover, as Andrew Murphy has noted, the edition also pointed forward to the normative editorial practice of the nineteenth century.[52] This can be seen, for example, when comparing Malone's editorial practice with that of the

[51] *The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare*, 10 vols (J. Rivington and Sons et al., 1790) i, p. xii.
[52] See his essay on 'The Birth of the Editor', in *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare and the Text*, ed. by Andrew Murphy (Blackwell Publishing, 2007), pp. 93-108.

first edition produced by professional academics: J. Glover (who worked on only one of the nine editions), W.G. Clark and W.A. Wright's Cambridge edition (1863-66; rev. 1893-96). In Malone's judgement, the 'ancient copies [...] entitled to preference' were in general the early quartos, which he regarded as 'preferable to the exhibition of the same plays in the folio'. The only two plays published in quarto he regarded as corrupt were *Merry Wives* and *Henry V*. Explaining his rationale, Malone observed that

> instead of printing these plays from a manuscript, the editors of the folio [...] printed the greater part of them from the very copies which they represented as maimed and imperfect, and frequently from a later, instead of the earliest edition [...] Thus therefore the first folio, as far as respects the plays above enumerated, labours under the disadvantage of being at least a second, and in some cases a third, edition of these quartos.[53]

Malone's general principle that the most authoritative texts were the earliest -- untouched by the preconceived ideas or interpretations of later times -- can be seen as a shaping influence on the editorial procedures that underwrite the Cambridge edition. In 1860, as part of the Cambridge project's first steps, W.G. Clark and H.R. Luard (1825-1891) set out the fundamental principles on which the edition would be based.[54] Providing a specimen to illustrate their editing of Act I of *Richard II*, the editors announced that

> [t]he plan we have adopted in our specimen is as follows: The text is generally formed on that of the first quarto, *every* variation in the second, third, and fourth quarto, and the first two folios being given. If the reading in the first quarto seemed satisfactory, and not in need of alteration, it has been always retained; when this text appeared faulty, it has been altered from the subsequent editions, the reading which has the greatest weight of authority being chosen. When none of the early editions gives a reading that can stand, recourse has been had to the later ones; conjectural emendations have been rarely mentioned, and never admitted into the text except when they appeared in our judgement to carry certain convictions of their truth with them.[55]

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[53] *The Plays and Poems*, i, pp. xii-xiii.

[54] The medieval historian H.R. Luard was one of the founding editors for the project, but, as Clark and Glover remark in the Preface to the first volume, 'election to the office of Registrary compelled him to relinquish his part'.

[55] *The First Act of Shakespeare's "King Richard II." Intended as a Specimen of A New Edition of Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press, 1860), p. 3.

For the Cambridge editors, the quartos of *Richard II*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *Love's Labour's Lost* preserved readings that were 'almost always preferable to that of the Folio'.[56] In the cases where 'none of the early editions gives a reading that can stand', however, the editors were thus willing to print variants from later surviving witnesses. From their own close acquaintance with the three substantive texts of *Hamlet* (Q1 1603, Q2 1604, and F 1623), for instance, the Cambridge editors judged that the Folio differed 'for the worse' in forty-seven places to the Quartos, while 'it differs for the better in twenty at most'. While the editors rarely speculated on the underlying copies behind the quartos and Folios, Glover and Clark remarked in their Preface that the Folio appeared to be 'of very varied excellence, differing from time to time according to the state of the MS. from which it was printed, the skill of the compositor, and the diligence of the corrector'.

A few years before W.J. Craig was commissioned as general editor of the first Arden series, he put forward his own views of the problems of Shakespearean texts in the Preface to his Oxford Shakespeare (1891). In his Preface, Craig acknowledged the work of his predecessors Lewis Theobald and Edward Capell as having 'proved most helpful' to his own editorial practice. Among more recent editors, Craig also acknowledged the work of Nicolaus Delius (1813-1888), Alexander Dyce (1798-1869), and the Cambridge editors. Craig's Preface further provided a summative statement of Shakespeare and the early printed texts: 'The text alike of the first folio and the quartos', Craig argued, 'was doubtless supplied by playhouse copies which often embodied the ill-conditioned interpolations and alterations of actors and theatrical managers'.[57] However much the theatre was to blame for corrupting Shakespeare's original

[56] 'Preface', in *The Cambridge Shakespeare*, ed. by J. Glover, W.G. Clark, and W.A. Wright, 9 vols (Cambridge University Press, 1863-66; rev. 1893-96), i (1863), p. xxix.
[57] W.J. Craig, 'Preface', in *The Oxford Shakespeare*, ed. by W.J. Craig (Oxford University Press, 1891), p. v.

manuscripts, Craig reasoned that 'despite defect of copyist and printer', the early printed texts comprise 'the sole authorized version of the Shakespearean text'.

For some of the first Arden editors, as I will argue, the 'interpolations and alterations' of various textual transmitters woven into the surviving witnesses provided a stimulus for bold interventions so that Shakespeare could be recovered, as far as possible, from the imperfect material record. Just as the Cambridge editors had done, however, Craig backed away from conjectural emendation unless he judged it absolutely necessary. This conservative posture is evident in his principle, again taken from the Preface to his Oxford edition, that he would 'only venture […] to deviate where it seemed to me that the carelessness of either copyist or printer deprived a word or sentence wholly of meaning'. As he went on:

> [e]ditors of Shakespeare have sometimes denounced as corrupt and have partially altered passages which owe their difficulty of interpretation to the presence of some word or phrase rare in Shakespeare's day and long since obsolete. It has been my endeavour to avoid this danger. I have only adopted a change after convincing myself that the characteristics of Shakespeare's vocabulary or literary style failed to justify the original reading.

Craig's conservatism was thus based on a principle that emendation was a last resort, only made necessary when words or phrases in the early printed texts did not provide a satisfactory correlate with his knowledge of Shakespeare's 'vocabulary or literary style'. In following this approach, Craig was conscious of the work of his predecessors in the tradition of eighteenth-century literary editing of Shakespeare. 'In seeking to emend corrupt passages', Craig reasoned, 'I have carefully considered the suggestions of my many predecessors, and from few of those who have already laboured in the field of textual criticism have I failed to derive some enlightenment'.

Craig's method of seeking to respect the fabric of the original texts as far as possible by explaining 'the presence of some word[s] or phrase[s] rare in Shakespeare's day and long since obsolete' has clear continuities with Theobald's emphasis on an historically and lexicographically informed approach to conjectural emendation. If Craig was less inclined to disturb the original fabric, then this suggests how far knowledge of Shakespeare's historical and lexicographical circumstances had advanced since Theobald's day. As Marcus Walsh has argued, in relation to the history of eighteenth-century editing: 'as knowledge of all kinds increased, it became more possible to explain apparent difficulties in the terms of the text, its language, and its culture, rather than to seek conjectural correction in terms of the editor's own subjective criteria'.[58]

Craig's conservatism also informs his editorial practice in the first Arden series. For his early contribution to the series, Craig chose to edit *King Lear*, a play that exists in three surviving witnesses – Q1 1608, Q2 1619, and F1 1623 – and which has been called the 'Mount Everest' of bibliographical studies. The quartos are known to include almost three-hundred lines absent from the Folio, whereas the Folio includes one-hundred-and-ten additional lines not found in the quartos. Richard Knowles has recently observed that '[d]efining the nature and interrelationships of the texts in the first three printed editions of *King Lear* [...] has proved as difficult for Shakespearean editors as defining the nature and interrelationships of the three Synoptic Gospels has been for Biblical scholars'.[59]

Setting out his own editorial procedures in his Introduction, Craig observed that he had carefully collated the Q1 'Pide-Bull Quarto' (so called because of the publisher Nathaniel

[58] p. 148.
[59] *A New Variorum Edition of King Lear*, 2 vols (MLA, 2020), i, p. 1042.

Butter's sign in the imprint) with Q2, and again collated the two Quartos independently against the First Folio. It is worth noting here that Craig, following his predecessors, believed that the second Quarto was published in 1608, the same year as the first Quarto. Only a few years later, between 1908 and 1910, A.W. Pollard (1859-1944), W.W. Greg (1875-1959), and the American scholar William J. Neidig (1870-1955) would demonstrate, from a study of watermarks and the typography of title-pages, that the quartos were actually printed in 1619 among the 'Pavier' quartos, so called after the stationer responsible for their publication. Paul Werstine has suggested that this discovery 'may well have inspired in Pollard and Greg, and in their friends McKerrow and J. Dover Wilson, the confidence that they could discover much more about the nature of the texts in early printings of Shakespeare'.[60]

In the process of collating the early printed texts, Craig was openly sceptical about the nature of the underlying copies. The 'chief virtue' of the first Quarto was that it preserved nearly three hundred lines absent from the Folio that were 'undoubtedly the work of Shakespeare's hand'. Whether they constituted additions, however, or whether purposely omitted from the First Folio remained for Craig a matter of open debate. In his discussion of the second Quarto, Craig referred his readers to P.A. Daniel's theory that stop-press corrections were responsible for the considerable variations in the six extant copies of Q1, and that Q2 was 'merely a reprint' of the first Quarto, with its variations accounting for one moment along the line of the process of stop-press correction.[61] Daniel's theory was enough for Craig to conclude that the second Quarto's 'position as second in the race, and of inferior authority, may therefore be considered as now definitely established'.

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[60] 'The Science of Editing', in *A Concise Companion to Shakespeare and the Text*, pp. 109-27 (p. 112). For a summary of the discovery, see W.W. Greg, 'Bibliography – A Retrospect', in *The Bibliographical Society 1892-1942*, ed. by F.C. Francis (Bibliographical Society, 1949), pp. 23-31.

[61] See P.A. Daniel, 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *King Lear: The First Quarto 1608*, *Shakspere-Quarto Facsimiles*, 43 vols, xxxiii (W. Griggs and C. Praetorius, 1885).

As the second Quarto was considered 'merely a reprint' of the first, Craig argued that '[i]n relation to the text of the Folio version, the two Quarto editions may for all practical purposes be considered as one text'. After weighing the evidence of the quarto fabric against that of the Folio, Craig reached no definitive conclusions. Considering the 'large number of small verbal alterations' in the quartos, he reflected that 'whether they are to be considered as representing the author's original draft, or a revision of it by the author himself, or by others, it is impossible to say with any certainty'. Only on one point did Craig find reassurance when faced with the textual problematics of *Lear*, and that was the Folio's primary authority: 'of the superiority of the Folio text there can be no doubt'.

It is worth noting here Richard Knowles's observation that the 'general quality' of the first quarto 'has long suffered from invidious comparison with that in the First Folio, whose superior printing and authorized publication by Sh.'s fellow actors have long led to the easy conclusion that the F text of *Lr*. was in all ways superior and that its readings should generally be preferred to those in Q1 unless there was strong reason to do otherwise'.[62] It would be unfair to Craig, however, to suggest that, on the whole, his preference for the Folio readings provided an 'easy conclusion'. His scepticism was a result of a painstaking study of the early material witnesses, from which he concluded that Shakespeare was unlikely to be responsible for their differences, and that there was no clinching evidence to prove that Shakespeare took any further care of the play once he handed it over to his company.

For Craig, authority was most likely distributed across the three surviving witnesses, so that an eclectic text was the necessary course for an editor following the principle of authorial

[62] *A New Variorum Edition of King Lear*, i, p. 1062.

intention. In choosing to produce an 'eclectic' text, Craig was following a time-honoured tradition of seeking a rapprochement between the author's lost manuscript and the early printed texts. As Craig saw no ultimate authority in one of the early printed texts, he was thus operating on the logic that a recovery of the author's lost manuscript was best achieved through comparing variants across the three surviving witnesses. As Fredson Bowers put it: '[t]he moment that an editor emends a single reading in his document, he is attempting this modification of the only physical evidence in the belief that because of the intermediary scribal or compositorial process the reading of his document is not that of the lost manuscript, and hence it is incumbent on him to restore the conjectured true original in his edited text'.[63]

When selecting variants from the early printed texts, Craig observed that the only guides he had followed were 'fitness and superiority, or what in my judgement I deem to be such'. In doing so, Craig acknowledged that he was simply following the editorial practice of his predecessors, so that his readers 'must therefore not expect to find in my text any very noticeable differences from that generally received; the ground has been too exhaustively worked by preceding editors to admit of any new discoveries of importance'.

While Craig brought his substantial experience of textual editing to the first Arden series, he was aware that other Arden 1 editors would bring their own critical investments to bear in their own editions. In commissioning his friend H.C. Hart for the series, for instance, Craig was aware of Hart's background in the natural sciences, a subject that he had studied at Trinity College, Dublin, where his father was vice-provost, and where Hart, Craig and Dowden would meet.[64] Hart was responsible for seven play in the first series, a number that now seems

[63] Fredson Bowers, *On Editing Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Dramatists* (Published for the Philip H. and A.S.W. Rosenbach Foundation by the University of Pennsylvania Library, 1955), p. 70.
[64] J. Akeroyd, 'Henry Chichester Hart (1847-1908), Botanist and Polymath', *Sherkin Comment*, 38 (2004), p. 2.

surprising given the significant demands of producing a scholarly edition of Shakespeare. Hart's first contribution was his edition of *Othello* (1903), one of the most textually problematic plays in the Shakespearean canon. As Richard Proudfoot has noted, six of Shakespeare's plays are the focus of the textual problems in Shakespeare and have been most variably edited in the twentieth century: *Richard III* (Q 1597 and F), *King Henry IV*, *part 2* (Q 1600 and F), *King Lear* (Q 1608 and F), *Troilus and Cressida* (Q1609 and F), *Othello* (Q 1622 and F), and *Hamlet* (Q1 1603, Q2 1604/5, and F).[65]

Hart opened his Introduction to *Othello* with the assertion that '[t]he best text we have of *Othello* is that of the Folio of 1623'.[66] In doing so, Hart was following the common practice of his predecessors in accepting the authority of the Folio, with occasional readings taken from the two quartos (Q1 1622 and Q2 1630), at the editor's discretion. Hart saw no reason to interrogate this Folio-fidelity, and so was content to follow the Cambridge edition 'and other modern and reliable versions' in accepting the Folio as the most reliable witness to Shakespeare's original intentions.

Hart's traditional reliance on the Folio's authority left little room for independent speculation on the kind of manuscripts that lie directly beneath the early printed texts of *Othello*. In his discussion of the first Quarto (1622), Hart proposed that it was likely printed from an independent manuscript marked up for performance. In Hart's view, evidence for Q1's theatrical provenance could be found in its more than fifty oaths that were purged in accordance with the 1606 Act of Abuses, which prohibited profanity and swearing on the early modern stage. It is worth noting here, however, that, as is now known, scribal transcripts could also be

[65] *Text, Stage and Canon*, p. 21.
[66] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by H.C. Hart (Methuen, 1903), p. ix.

diluted for 'literary' reasons, so that it was not only prompt-books but also private transcripts that were modified.[67]

In his discussion of the second Quarto (1630), Hart argued that Q2 was a more reliable witness to Shakespeare's original intentions than the first, for the reason that it benefitted from 'the assistance obtained from the text of the intervening Folio'. This is perhaps most obvious in Q2's restoration of some 160 Folio lines that were omitted from the first Quarto. Hart also claimed that where Q1's readings were superior to the Folio, these were for the most part also common to the second Quarto. Hart was in little doubt, however, about the Folio's superiority. Making the case for the Folio as 'on the whole, an excellent text', Hart argued that

> [t]here is no reason to assert in any place that the reading is either certainly corrupt, or undoubtedly spurious, as there is in many of Shakespeare's other plays. There are assuredly several passages which are of exceeding difficulty, and where we can be by no means satisfied that we have arrived at the author's meaning, or in some cases at any certain sense at all. This may be because we have still to learn the force of language used at that time in a growing state – words whose budding meaning it is almost impossible to be certain of. They may have rendered an obvious sense to Shakespeare, and even if he did on any occasion revise his work, it does not seem to have ever occurred to him to illuminate passages to us obscure – since to the writer no doubt they presented no such obscurity.

Hart's doubt about having 'arrived at the author's meaning' here recalls Craig's caution in only seeking to emend his text when 'the characteristics of Shakespeare's vocabulary or literary style failed to justify the original reading'. The potential danger both Craig and Hart see here is that original Shakespearean readings might be lost through a lack of understanding of Shakespeare's vocabulary. To avoid this danger, Hart suggested that the Folio text's difficult passages (by which he means those which are of uncertain authorial origin) might perhaps be explained through a greater knowledge of 'the force of language used at that time in a growing state'. Hart's emphasis on language thus follows Craig's investment in seeking to develop a

[67] See E.A.J. Honigmann, *The Texts of Othello and Shakespearian Revision* (Routledge, 1996), p. 3.

knowledge of Shakespeare's vocabulary and literary style in order to explain passages that were otherwise obscure to a modern lexicon. This emphasis points to some of the critical continuities between an eighteenth-century project of contextualisation and the editorial practice of the first Arden editors at the dawn of the twentieth century.

Hart's editorial practice was thus coherent with Craig's as the series' general editor, and can be situated within the eighteenth-century tradition of contextualisation. One striking aspect of Hart's approach that distinguishes his practice from others, however, is his Folio fundamentalism. As discussed above, Hart was happy to follow a conventional view of the Folio's superiority in the textual editing of his Arden 1 *Othello*. In his later contributions to the series, however, his Folio-fidelity emerges as the central keynote of his editorial practice. To be sure, his general preference for the Folio becomes strikingly clear in his edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1906), a play which survives in three early witnesses: Q1 1598, F1 1623, and Q2 1631. In his Introduction, Hart asserted that the Folio 'is the most carefully printed', and is 'also the most authoritative'.[68] In doing so, he was aware that he was challenging a general consensus that the first Quarto (1598) was the most authoritative historical witness.

The consensus view of the first Quarto's superiority was put forward two years earlier in H.H. Furness's New Variorum edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1904). Following Malone's general principle that the most authoritative texts were the earliest, Furness argued in his Preface that there was 'in reality but one original text'.[69] In doing so, he was also following the Cambridge editors, who had argued that the reading of the Quarto 'is almost always preferable to that of the Folio'.[70] For Furness, Q1's superiority was suggested from its being the first in

[68] *Love's Labour's Lost*, ed. by H.C. Hart (Methuen, 1906), p. vii.
[69] *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare*, ed. by H.H. Furness, vol. xiv (J.B. Lippincott Company, 1904), p. v.
[70] Preface, *The Cambridge Shakespeare*, i, p. xxiv.

the line of descent, a fact established through the Folio printers' evident close following of, 'if indeed they did not use as "copy"', the early Quarto. Furness was not committed, however, to interrogating the provenance of the early printed texts, and just as some of the first Arden editors would, Furness credits the Cambridge editors with having created an environment of 'restful repose' for Shakespearean editors:

> [e]ver since the appearance, forty years ago, of *The Cambridge Edition of* SHAKESPEARE [...] this whole question of Texts, with their varying degrees of excellence, which had endlessly vexed the Shakespearian world, has gradually subsided, until now it is fairly lulled to a sleep as grateful as it is deep. We no longer hear the claim of a superior text put forth by editors. It is rare that nowadays, on the title page of any edition, the quality of the Text is conspicuously set forth.[71]

Furness's remarks are useful in emphasising the high regard for the Cambridge edition -- the first to be produced by professional academics -- in the years following its publication. To a certain degree, Furness's point that the work of the Cambridge editors had put the vexed issue of Shakespearean texts to bed is borne out in the first Arden series. Hart, for instance, had referred in his *Othello* Introduction to 'this period of restful acceptance of the Globe text'. In many cases, however, Furness's remark appears an overstatement. As a Variorum editor, Furness was arguably more invested in providing a full collation of textual and commentary notes -- from the earliest editions to the present -- rather than interrogating the nature of the early printed copies. As he put it in his Preface to *Romeo and Juliet*: 'in such an edition as the present, it makes very little difference what text is printed *in extenso*, since every other text is also printed with it on the same page'.[72]

For the first Arden editors, however, the primary focus was on establishing a reliable text for their readership, with less extensive collation and commentary notes. This perhaps goes

[71] *A New Variorum Edition*, pp. vi-vii.
[72] *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare*, ed. by H.H. Furness, vol. i (J.B. Lippincott Company, 1871), p. viii.

some way to explain why some of the Arden editors did not go so far as Furness in considering that the textual problems of Shakespeare had been lulled to sleep by the Cambridge editors. From his own reflection on the texts of *Love's Labour's Lost* (Q1, F1, and Q2), Hart remarked in his Introduction that he was 'not inclined to accept absolutely the statement of Furness and others that there is but one original text – that of the 1598 Quarto'. Challenging this consensus view, Hart referred his readers to Heminges and Condell's well-known statement that they were in possession of the most authoritative copies when printing the Folio. Hart was of course all too aware of Heminges and Condell's sales pitch, but this did not detract from his argument:

> the debt due to them is incalculable, and as a rule, where there is a choice of reading and where opinion is about equally divided as to their merits, or even where it is not obviously in favour of the Quarto, my vote would be for the Folio version.

Not content to restfully repose in the coalface work of the Cambridge editors, Hart carried out an independent collation of the first Quarto with the Folio. As part of this work, he provided his readers with a list of fifty-three instances where he followed the Folio where the Cambridge editors had followed the first Quarto. To confirm his hypothesis of the Folio as the 'more carefully printed' text, Hart added a further list of instances where the Folio corrected the first Quarto and vice versa. From his study of Q1 and F, he found fifty-four instances where the Folio corrected the Quarto, and thirty-one instances where the Quarto corrects the Folio. For Hart, this was enough to prove that the Folio was more carefully printed.

Moreover, Hart's results gave him the confidence to offer a new hypothesis on the relationship between Q1 and F: 'I conclude that the two texts were independently printed, and that the Folio edition was not a reprint of the Quarto'. Both texts appeared to have been printed from prompter's or actor's copy, in which 'authentic alterations and corrections' were likely added. If few would accept this hypothesis today, it should of course be remembered that Hart

was working in the years immediately preceding the rise of the New Bibliography.[73] Perhaps more than anything else, what his approach illustrates is how some of the first Arden editors were determined to innovate, even during a period of 'restful repose' following the Cambridge edition.

Hart's Janus-faced approach to editing, both following his predecessors and seeking to innovate, can be further illustrated in his edition of *Merry Wives* (1904). This play survives in four early texts: Q1 1602, F1 1623, Q2 1619, and Q3 1630. Only Q1 and F1 have independent authority; the remainder, Q2, Q3 and F2-4 are all derivative texts that include minor alterations. In editing *Merry Wives* for the first Arden series, Hart faced the considerable challenge of presenting the differences between the first Quarto and the Folio text (almost twice as long) to his readership. In the Cambridge edition, one of the rules stipulated from the outset was that they would print a Quarto text *literatim* for plays 'of which there is a Quarto edition differing from the received text to such a degree that the variations cannot be shown in foot-notes'.[74]

Following this rule, the Cambridge editors printed a text of Q1 *Merry Wives* (collated with Q2) immediately after their 'received' text based on F1 (collated with Q3). In his own edition, however, Hart was conscious that following a similar procedure might compromise the edition's accessibility. In other words, readers might be put off by having to deal with multiple texts of the play within a single, compact edition. Wrestling with the difficulties that the two independent texts presented, Hart reflected in his Introduction that

> [i]t is difficult sometimes to piece the two texts into any harmony side by side. It is difficult to grasp the events in one version, and then to turn to the other and unwind them there. Owing to the faultiness of the Quarto, it is in that case sometimes well-nigh impossible, but only in minor matters, however.

[73] See H.R. Woudhuysen's discussion of the Folio text in his Arden 3 edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* (Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson, 1998), pp. 327-38.
[74] 'Preface', (1863), i, p. ix.

> How much more difficult is it to lay these discrepancies in any intelligible form before the reader who has only one text before him![75]

It is significant here that Hart is visualising a reader 'who has only one text before him'. This usefully places emphasis on the first Arden series as a project that targeted the widest readership, including inexperienced readers who would be coming to Shakespearean plays for the first time. Here it is tempting to ask the question: how does that emphasis on a single text relate to the messier picture of the play's surviving material record, and what are the interpretive consequences of a singular and multiple presentation of the text(s)? If Hart's priority was to present the original Q1 and F1 fabrics as clearly as possible, then this risked cutting the size of his readership. What was a satisfactory rule for the Cambridge editors, was for Hart's Arden edition a 'cumbrous method'. The solution he eventually came to was to insert 'the more important passages' of the first Quarto within his commentary notes, which would allow the reader to compare them with the alternative Folio passages.

While it is perhaps no surprise that Hart's edited *Merry Wives* text was based on the Folio, even here his Folio fundamentalism is evident from his commitment to 'follow the Folio more closely [...] than any previous editor has done'.[76] His reasons for doing so were that 'after mature consideration', he concluded that 'the Folio was right', and 'the supposed emendations of the early commentators were wrong'. His scrutiny of the Folio against the 'supposed emendations' of later commentators, he hoped, might provide no small contribution to Shakespeare scholarship: '[f]or this I take credit, and hope to convince other Shakespearian scholars'.

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[75] *Merry Wives of Windsor*, ed. by H.C. Hart (Methuen, 1904), p. xvii.
[76] *Merry Wives*, p. xxv.

Hart's investment in challenging his predecessor's emendations of the Folio's authoritative readings was part of the eighteenth-century tradition of seeking to contextualise the early printed texts through Shakespeare's cultural and linguistic horizons: the more that was known about Shakespeare's world, the more it would be possible to explain the obscurities and peculiarities of the material record. Hart's awareness of following in this tradition goes some way to explaining his pride in suggesting that he has illustrated parts of the Folio that were obscure to his predecessors.

A good example of his attempts to pare back the readings of the Folio from the emendations of later editors can be found in IV.ii of *Merry Wives.* In this scene, the two housewives Falstaff pursues, Mistresses Ford and Page, disguise Falstaff as an old woman while Master Ford approaches. In the Folio's reading, during an early exchange between Mistress Page and Mistress Ford, Page complains to Ford that 'your husband is in his old lines again'.[77] At the time Hart was preparing his *Merry Wives* text, some editors -- including Malone and the Cambridge editors -- had followed Theobald in emending F's 'lines' to 'lunes'. Theobald had suggested this emendation in a note to Claudius's words about Hamlet, expressed shortly after the play of Gonzago. In the Folio, Claudius warns that 'The termes of our estate, may not endure | Hazard so dangerous as doth hourely grow | Out of his Lunacies'.[78] The corresponding lines in Q2 1604-05 (omitted in Q1 1603) read: 'The terms of our estate may not endure | Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow | Out of his brows'.[79]

[77] Hinman, *First Folio*, TLN 1917-18, 72.
[78] Hinman, *First Folio*, TLN 2276-78, 777.
[79] *Hamlet*, ed. by Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (Cengage Learning, 2006), p. 356. For a detailed discussion of the crux, see Seary, *Lewis Theobald*, pp. 164-66.

For Theobald, the Folio's 'Out of his Lunacies' resulted from the corruption of theatrical personnel, just as Q2's reading 'Out of his Brows' resulted 'from the Ignorance of the first Editors'.[80] Theobald was persuaded that Shakespeare had originally written 'lunes' in his manuscript, which he defined as 'Madness, Frenzy'. Theobald supported this emendation by referring to Shakespeare's use of the word in *The Winter's Tale*. Concerned about Leontes's behaviour once he suspects his wife's infidelity in II.ii., Paulina refers to 'These dangerous, unsafe Lunes i'the King'.[81] This reading was further supported by citing Randle Cotgrave's *Dictionarie of the French and English Tongues* (1611), which included the entry 'lune', and significantly for Theobald, 'Il y a de la lune: *He is a foolish, humorous, hare-braind, giddie-headed fellow*'.[82]

In Hart's *Merry Wives* Introduction, he argued that while Theobald's emendation of F's 'lines' to 'lunes' had become 'firmly established' it was nevertheless 'wholly unauthorised'. His decision to restore the Folio reading 'lines' was accompanied by an annotation which defined F's 'lines' as 'condition, state of mind, "tantrums"'. In providing this gloss, Hart hoped to convince other editors that work was not yet complete on the nature of the Folio's authority, which would be improved as knowledge of Shakespeare's cultural and linguistic horizon advanced: '[o]ne by one, those old Theobaldian "lunes" are bound to disappear and become ghosts, in this as in others of Shakespeare's plays'. If the early twentieth century was an age of restful repose in the work of the Cambridge editors, the work of the first Arden editors who were willing to challenge their predecessors thus provides considerable pushback against this view.

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[80] Lewis Theobald, *The Works of Shakespeare*, 7 vols (Printed for A. Bettesworth and C. Hitch, 1733), vii, 306 n., p. 306.
[81] Hinman, *First Folio*, TLN 856, 301.
[82] Theobald, *Works of Shakespeare*, iii, 90 n., p. 90.

Robert Hope Case (1857-1944) and Henry Cuningham

Following W.J. Craig's death in 1906, the general editorship of the series passed to Robert Hope Case. Case took on the role in 1909, and guided the series to its completion in 1924, seeing through a number of revised editions up until his death in 1944. At the time of his appointment, Case was a Lecturer in English Literature and Associate Professor at the University of Liverpool, where he had been educated. He had also established a reputation as a scholar of early modern literature through his *English Epithalamies* (1896), an edited anthology of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century English marriage songs.[83] From a letter held by the Folger Library in Washington, DC, it is known that Case was first commissioned to edit *Macbeth* for the series, but withdrew because of his work commitments. [84]

Case's university duties, however, did not prevent him from accepting a commission to edit *Anthony and Cleopatra* for the series, which was carried out under Craig's supervision, and which was published in September 1906. The play survives as one of the eighteen Folio-only plays in the Shakespearean canon, so that Case was presented with a simpler textual situation than those of plays with both quarto and Folio versions. The Folio text does nevertheless have its fair share of textual peculiarities, as Marvin Spevack has noted: '[t]o a certain extent it is simpler, yet although the existence of only one text limits the evidence, it has not restricted the speculations and conclusions, for uncertainty remains about the printer's copy as well as about the accuracy of the printed text in some details'.[85]

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[83] *English Epithalamies* (John Lane, 1896).
[84] Autograph letter signed from R.H. Case, Liverpool, to Professor Dowden.
[85] *Anthony and Cleopatra*, ed. by Marvin Spevack; associate editors Michael Steppat and Marga Munkelt, *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare* (MLA, 1990), p. 372.

Case's response to the Folio inaccuracies provide useful fixing points to illustrate his editorial approach as the first Arden series' longest serving general editor. The Folio text includes several cruces that have been variously emended throughout editorial history. These include 'Arme-gaunt Steede' (TLN 578, 852); 'ribaudred Nagge of Egypt' (TLN 1989, 863); 'An *Anthony* were Natures peece' (TLN 3319, 873). As a general statement on his strategy of emendation, Case noted that his edition of *Anthony and Cleopatra* 'presents the first folio text with the majority of those emendations which in course of time have secured almost universal assent, no others, whether accepted in one or more editions or merely suggested, possessing, in the editor's judgement, that probability only short of certainty which alone justifies adoption'.

The relatively simple case of editing a Folio-only text and following emendations that had gained 'almost universal assent' suggests that Case's task as an editor of Shakespeare was a relatively simple one. Indeed, it would have been easy for Case to follow the attitude of Furness, whose New Variorum *Anthony and Cleopatra* (1907) was published a year later:

> It must be a source of gratification to all lovers of SHAKESPEARE that the discussion in regard to the superiority of this or that Text is gradually declining, and that what, in the time of our forebears, was a furious ebullition, is now subsiding into a gentle simmer, whereof the murmur is soothing rather than exciting.[86]

If, as Furness diagnosed, the discussion of Shakespeare and text in the early twentieth century was 'subsiding into a gentle simmer', Case was nevertheless committed to reconsidering the practice of his predecessors in light of the most recent scholarship. In his treatment of the well-known crux 'Arme-gaunt Steede' (TLN 578, 852), for example, Case

[86] *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare*, ed. by H.H. Furness (J.B. Lippincott Company, 1907), p. v.

followed the Folio's reading, but referred his readers to an extended discussion of the crux in his edition's first appendix. In this discussion, as well as summarising earlier proposed emendations, Case also drew on more recent scholarship, including Alfred Edward Thiselton's (1857-1904) *Some Textual Notes on the Tragedie of Anthony and Cleopatra* (1899), as well as James Murray's *New English Dictionary*.[87]

In his concluding remarks, Case also proposed his own emendation, which was based on references to 'gowned beast[s]' in Edmund Spenser's poem 'Mother Hubbard's Tale', and 'gowned troops' in Michael Hughes's Elizabethan play *The Misfortunes of Arthur* (1598). Such references suggested to Case that the original Folio spelling might have been 'gownd' or 'gound': 'if Spencer could call the horse of a luxurious courtier, with its trappings, "a gowned beast", Alexas might conceivably call that of Anthony turned warrior, an *arm-gowned* steed'. Case's suggestion points to the way that he did not see textual matters gradually 'subsiding into a gentle simmer' as Furness diagnosed. Indeed, while Case acknowledged that his debt to the eighteenth-century editors was 'incalculable', his editorial approach was nevertheless Janus-faced: drawing on the work of his predecessors while also drawing on the latest scholarship in his efforts to contribute an innovative edition to the first Arden series.

In a 2007 paper that surveys editorial thinking within the first Arden series, Gabriel Egan remarked that '[o]ne gets a sense from their introductions that in general the Arden editors either didn't feel they had the competence, or indeed don't feel that there was the need, to do fresh textual work'.[88] This sense picks up on the mood articulated by Furness and some of the first Arden editors that they were working in an editorial climate which accepted that most

[87] *Some Textual Notes on the Tragedie of Anthony and Cleopatra, with other Shakespeare Memoranda* (Clement S. Palmer, 1899).
[88] Gabriel Egan, 'A complicated and unpleasant investigation'.

textual puzzles had subsided into ‘a gentle simmer’. However, it would be unfair to the first Arden editors to regard their hybrid practice as atavistically following in the footsteps of their predecessors.

While Egan is of course right to emphasise a general mood of restful repose, this sense can nevertheless occlude the way that the first Arden editors sought to innovate. Without doubt, this impulse to innovate receives its strongest expression in Henry Cuningham’s three contributions to the series. This impulse is perhaps most startlingly expressed in a prefatory note to his edition of *Comedy of Errors* (1907):

> [a]n Editor who is incapable of advancing our knowledge either in the critical or exegetical department of Shakespearian study had better hold his peace. He has no justification for adding yet another “edition” to the never-ending stream.[89]

Just what Cuningham meant by ‘advancing our knowledge’ can be illustrated in his first contribution to the series, his edition of *Midsummer Night’s Dream* (1905). In his Introduction, Cuningham set out his own manifesto on editing Shakespeare that risked destabilising the collaborative nature and coordinated effort of the first Arden series. The drive to innovate is made clear in the aims he sets out for the editon. Firstly, he aimed to ‘produce a text in advance of anything which has hitherto been published’, and secondly, to ‘elucidate some of the long-standing difficulties connected with the interpretation of well-known passages in the play’.[90]

Underwriting Cuningham’s drive to innovate was a conviction that while his predecessors recognised the imperfections of the surviving material record, they did not have the courage of

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[89] ‘Prefatory Note’, in *Comedy of Errors*, ed. by Henry Cuningham (Methuen, 1907), pp. v-vii (p. v).
[90] ‘Introduction’, in *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, ed. by Henry Cuningham (Methuen, 1905), p. ix.

their convictions in seeking to cut away the accretions and restore the 'true' and 'authentic' texts of Shakespeare's plays and poems. For Cuningham, the 'ideal standard of textual criticism' was only to be attained through an informed judgement and knowledge which Furness described as an

> exquisite nicety demanded at the present day in emending Shakespeare's text, --- a nicety of judgement, a nicety of knowledge of Elizabethan literature, a nicety of ear, which alone bars all foreigners from the task, and, beyond all, a thorough mastery of Shakespeare's style and ways of thinking, which alone should bar all the rest of us.[91]

Furness was, however, referring to how this standard of judgement and knowledge was part of a modern-day 'strange oblivion' that followed after the rich harvests of the eighteenth-century editors. 'Never again', Furness remarked, 'can there be such harvests as were richly garnered by ROWE, THEOBALD, and CAPELL, and when to these we add STEEVENS and MALONE of more recent times, we may rest assured that the gleanings for us is of the very scantiest, and reserved only for the keenest and most skilful eyesight'.

While Cuningham applauded Furness's evocation of the niceties of judgement and knowledge possessed by the eighteenth-century editors, he did not share Furness's sentiment that the eighteenth-century tradition had been consigned to a 'strange oblivion'. Indeed, where Furness saw a gradual simmering of heated debates about Shakespearean texts, Cuningham saw a 'despairing attitude of rigid conservatism'.[92] 'The true course for an editor of Shakespeare', Cuningham wrote, was not to follow Furness's position of despairing conservatism, but rather to exercise a 'sober boldness and spirit of inquiry commingled of blood and judgement'.

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[91] 'Preface', in *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare*, ed. by H.H. Furness, vol. x (J.B. Lippincott Company, 1895), pp. v-xxxiv, p. xxi.
[92] 'Introduction', in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. xi.

Commenting on Cuningham's edition in 2007, Gabriel Egan asked, '[i]s the textual condition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* so bad that Cuningham felt he had to intervene? No, quite the reverse [...] If anything, it seems the relative ease of his task emboldened Cuningham'.[93] Based on the manifesto set out in his Introduction, however, it seems clear that Cuningham was emboldened not by the 'relative ease of his task', but rather by the goal of recovering, as far as possible, what the author originally wrote. To put this more precisely, Cuningham was unhappy with the 'despairing' attitude of his predecessors, who recognised the textual peculiarities of the surviving witnesses, but were nevertheless reluctant to disturb the original fabric. This attitude of despair, he argued, was also held by the Cambridge editors who observed that

> we are convinced that there are many passages, still easily scanned and construed, and therefore not generally suspected of corruption, which nevertheless have not been printed exactly as they were first written. Some ruder hand has effaced the touch of the master.[94]

For Cuningham, the Cambridge editors showed a 'want of courage' in not acting on their convictions, settling in despair for a text that 'effaced the touch of the master'.[95] For many editors of the time, including Dowden, Craig, and Hart, the ground had been covered too exhaustively to admit of any new textual discoveries of major significance. Cuningham, however, was boldly innovative, to the extent that he labelled the Cambridge edition as 'a solemn warning of what is to be avoided in textual criticism'.[96] If this was an alleged age of gentle repose in the work of the Cambridge editors, then there was at least one editor that remained restless.

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[93] 'A complicated and unpleasant investigation'.
[94] *Cambridge Shakespeare*, vol. ix, p. xxi.
[95] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Macbeth* (Methuen, 1912), p. vii.
[96] 'Introduction', in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. lxii.

Cuningham's approach also usefully serves to mark the further extreme from the conservative approaches of Craig, Hart, and Case in the first series. Indeed, where Hart saw the Folio as an authoritative text whose obscurities would be explained as knowledge developed of Shakespeare's linguistic and cultural horizons, Cuningham was convinced that through well-informed judgement and breadth of knowledge it was possible to arrive, 'as nearly as may be, at the goal of a true text'.[97] This meant for Cuningham that the Folio was inherently corrupt, a view that was strikingly at odds with Hart's Folio-fidelity. As Cuningham argued in his edition of *Macbeth* (1912): '[s]lavish admiration for the Folio cannot go much further; and it makes one almost despair of ever seeing an authentic and unadulterated text of the plays'.[98]

When Cuningham turned to edit his third play for the series, *Macbeth*, his views on the editor's role and what they can claim to be editing would lead to a meltdown with the general editor, R.H. Case. In his earlier contributions, Cuningham had worked on plays that are by general consensus considered to be non-collaborative. In *Macbeth*, however, Cuningham was faced with a text that is known to include the revisions and additions of Thomas Middleton. If his previous work was any indication, then it was likely that -- following the editorial logic of establishing a 'true' text -- Cuningham would seek to remove the passages he considered to be the work of Middleton from his edited text, based on the Folio.

As Kenneth Muir noted in his Arden 2 *Macbeth* (1951), Cuningham had major disagreements with R.H. Case and was prevented from printing his own text.[99] Cuningham had argued that the play's 'spurious passages' amounted to 'about 167 lines', which revealed the

[97] 'Prefatory Note', in *Comedy of Errors*, p. v.
[98] 'Introduction', in *Macbeth*, ed. by Henry Cuningham (Methuen, 1912), p. vii.
[99] 'Introduction', in *Macbeth*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (Methuen, 1951), p. ix.

extent to which *Macbeth* had been 'rehandled' by others 'after the MS. left Shakespeare's hand'.[100] Cuningham gave two reasons why it was important to segregate the 'spurious passages' from the 'authentic' text. Firstly, segregation was necessary because of 'the enormous output of editions during the past twenty years'; and secondly, there was 'no subject of Shakespearian study more important or more difficult than the ascertainment and settlement, so far as this is, humanly speaking, possible, of his text'.

On the whole, Cuningham's thinking and method illustrate the furthest extreme of a general impulse to innovate in the first Arden series. If a generally held ideal of recovering 'true' Shakespearean texts is no longer a consensus position, and editors now have a clearer sense of what they are editing, it is worth noting that Cuningham's ambition – put forward at a time when no one was arguing against authorial intention – was not inherently absurd. It might even be argued that Cuningham's goal of seeking to recover the ingredients of Shakespeare's original manuscripts was taken on and developed through the tools and methodologies of the New Bibliography, which will be discussed in the next chapter.

Conclusion

This chapter has argued for the Janus-faced nature of editing in the first Arden Shakespeare series. In doing so, it has sought to provide some push back against the common perception that the first Arden editors were working in the shadow of the Cambridge edition. The Cambridge edition was the first edition produced by professional scholars in a university setting, and following its publication in the 1860s, it had been recently revised a few years

[100] 'Introduction', in *Macbeth*, ed. by Henry Cuningham, pp. xviii, vii.

before the first Arden series was launched. In several of his Prefaces to his New Variorum editions, H.H. Furness had attested to a climate of ease that followed from the work of the Cambridge editors: their investigation into Shakespeare and the problems of the text had resulted in a climate of restful repose, a critical climate which is also voiced by several of the first Arden editors.

A general repose is further suggested by the first Arden editors' awareness that their work followed the eighteenth-century tradition of literary editing Shakespeare. Most of the first Arden editors explicitly acknowledge a considerable debt to their eighteenth-century predecessors, and an awareness of the eighteenth-century tradition is crucial to an understanding of the editorial approach in the first series. This chapter has looked back at the eighteenth-century tradition and aimed to tease out several of the critical continuities between that tradition and the first Arden series.

The work of the eighteenth-century editors crucially illustrates how the first Arden editors were following a long tradition of literary editing of Shakespeare that had sought to establish a canon of rational and verifiable principles and procedures. In Lewis Theobald's work, for instance, he had sought to establish a coherent methodology for editors which would take much of the guesswork out of basic editorial duties. One of the most influential strategies that he founded was the use of parallel passages to illustrate and authorise Shakespearean words and phrases, a strategy that still has currency in modern-day editing.

Theobald's use of parallel passages was part of a broader investment in advancing knowledge of Shakespeare's cultural and linguistic horizon: as further knowledge was acquired, the more it would be possible to explain the material peculiarities of Shakespearean

texts. This commitment to expanding knowledge of Shakespeare's vocabulary would be taken up by Theobald's successors, Edward Capell and Edmond Malone. For all three editors, a critical priority was to contextualise Shakespeare. This process of contextualisation would provide sources of validation that addressed the problems of a subjective criteria used by many of their predecessors.

The eighteenth-century investment in advancing knowledge of Shakespeare's cultural and linguistic horizons also permeates editorial practice within the first Arden series. In W.J. Craig's *Oxford Shakespeare* (1891), for example, he set out his view that Shakespearean editors were often at fault for altering obscure passages which might be better explained through a greater knowledge of obsolete words and phrases. To avoid this danger, Craig argued that he would only emend his base text if his knowledge of Shakespeare's vocabulary or literary style could not support the original reading.

Craig's conservatism in his Oxford Shakespeare also extended to his Arden 1 edition of *King Lear* (1902). In his Introduction, Craig argued that none of the three surviving witnesses to the play, Q1, Q2, and F, possess a clear proximity to Shakespeare's original manuscript, so that an eclectic approach was necessary. For Craig, eclecticism was necessary in order to establish a text as close to Shakespeare's original intentions as possible. In comparing the three surviving witnesses and selecting variants based on a 'fitness and superiority' logic, Craig was aware of following in an eighteenth-century tradition, to the point that he felt it necessary to inform his readers that the editorial ground had been worked too exhaustively in the past to admit of any new discoveries of significance.

Craig's view here comes close to echoing Furness's position -- expressed passim in the Prefaces to his New Variorum editions -- that the textual problems of the Shakespearean canon were receding into a gentle repose. While Craig's approach usefully illustrates the way that some of the first Arden editors saw themselves as following the eighteenth-century tradition, other editors were determined to open up new ways of looking at those texts. This can be seen, for instance, in the editorial practice of Craig's colleague, H.C. Hart. In his Arden 1 edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1906), for instance, Hart argued against the Cambridge editors' position that the first Quarto was the most authoritative text of the play. In his Introduction, he printed a list of instances where he followed the Folio where the Cambridge editors followed the Quarto. In his second list, Hart noted fifty-four instances where he believed the Folio corrected the Quarto, and thirty-one instances where the Quarto corrects the Folio. Using the tools and methodologies of his day, Hart's position illustrates the way that many of the first Arden editors were seeking to contribute to textual debates they saw as far from settled.

The impulse to innovate, evident in Hart's practice, receives its strongest expression in Henry Cuningham's three editions produced for the first Arden series. In his first contribution, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1905), Cuningham took inspiration from Furness's view that a knowledge of Elizabethan literature and a sound judgement were the necessary analytical coordinates for Shakespearean editors. Furness had described knowledge and judgement as attributes of the eighteenth-century editors who had all but fixed and settled the textual puzzles of the Shakespearean canon. Cuningham, however, saw these attributes as providing the necessary tools for a boldly innovative approach, allowing him to strive towards achieving the goal of a 'true' or 'authentic' text in his editions.

In taking this bold line, Cuningham was looking both back and forth, working in the tradition of his predecessors, but also looking at ways to innovate. As part of that tradition, preceding editors had referred to how the early printed texts had not been printed verbatim from Shakespeare's holographs. For many editors, this was a cause of unease, but they still respected the material record as providing the sole authority of what Shakespeare originally wrote. For Cuningham, however, this position signalled a want of courage, and he saw no reason to go on editing if editors were not willing to strive to achieve a commonly held ideal of the time.

Cuningham's goal of separating the 'spurious' from the 'authentic' was by no means logically absurd. Although his approach to the texts was not in agreement with the general editor R.H. Case, who did not print Cuningham's Arden 1 text of *Macbeth*, Cuningham's goal in many ways anticipates the New Bibliography's goal of establishing 'definitive' texts, as far as possible, through an investigation into the physical processes of printing books. However one judges Cuningham's approach, his example serves as the most striking illustration of the Janus-faced nature of editing in the first Arden series.

CHAPTER TWO

The Culmination of an Editorial Tradition:

A Case-Study of the Second Arden series (1951-82)

Shortly after her appointment in 1946 as the General Editor of a proposed new and critically updated Arden Shakespeare series, Una Ellis-Fermor (1894-1958) was appointed as the Hildred Carlisle Professor of English at Bedford College, London. After accepting the role, she delivered her inaugural lecture at the College on 'The Study of Shakespeare', which, in view of the launch of a new series, set out her reflections on the current editorial state of play in Shakespeare textual scholarship.[101] Reflecting on the three surviving texts of *Hamlet*, she observed that

> The shocking story of *Hamlet* (I refer to the history of the text, and not to the content) shows us that, of three surviving versions, no single one is superior at all points to both the others or consistently nearest to what Shakespeare must have written (for even the black sheep of the group has moments of grace) and leaves us face to face with the horrifying truth that, even in the carefully collated *Hamlet* we read in our classrooms, we have not got all that Shakespeare wrote or necessarily only what Shakespeare wrote himself. So with *Lear*; so with *Macbeth*.

For Ellis-Fermor, it was a 'horrifying truth' that none of the three surviving witnesses to the author's holograph could claim superior authority over the others as bearing testimony to 'what Shakespeare wrote himself'. The best that could be hoped, was to 'carefully collate' the extant texts in order to recover as much of the author as possible from the distortions of the printed record. This observation usefully encapsulates a way of thinking about texts that was central to the second Arden editors. To recover 'all that Shakespeare wrote or necessarily only what

[101] 'The Study of Shakespeare', an inaugural lecture delivered at Bedford College, London, 28 October 1947 (Methuen, 1948), pp. 1-16.

Shakespeare wrote himself', the second Arden editors attempted to recover the 'lost original' from the evidence provided by the single or multiple texts of the plays in question.

Ellis-Fermor's thinking is also more broadly informed by the New Bibliography, a movement of major significance to the Arden 2 editors and one which would guide and shape editorial practice in the second series. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the movement was likely inspired by W.W. Greg, A.W. Pollard, and William J. Neidig's bibliographical discovery that some erroneously dated Shakespeare quartos, including one of *King Lear*, belonged among the 1619 "Pavier" quartos. The New Bibliography movement defies easy categorisation, and throughout his writings W.W. Greg -- always at the forefront of debates -- often referred to his work as provisional. As Ernst Honigmann has observed, the movement is often described today as a 'clearly defined programme', yet it may be more accurate to describe it as a 'journey of discovery' by a multivocal group of scholars who could not be sure of their final goal.[102] Honigmann's observation usefully illustrates that tidiness is always a retrospective construction.

As well as the discovery of the "Pavier" quartos (so called after the stationer responsible for their publication), the movement's early impetus gained further traction following Pollard's distinction between 'good' and 'bad' texts, an intervention which rejected Sidney Lee's pessimistic conclusion that all the quartos (and thus at least some of the Folio texts) were corrupt, and so opened the way for the New Bibliographers to reassess the underlying 'copies' used by compositors when setting type.[103] As part of their investigation into those underlying

[102] 'The New Bibliography and its Critics', in *Textual Performances: The Modern Reproduction of Shakespeare's Drama*, ed. by Margaret Jane Kidnie and Lukas Erne (Cambridge University Press (2004), pp. 77-93 (p. 77).
[103] See A.W. Pollard, *Shakespeare Folios and Quartos*; Sidney Lee, *A Life of William Shakespeare* (Cambridge University Press, 1898).

copies, the New Bibliography's focus of interest became the material transmission of texts. This is made clear in Greg's remark that the movement's ultimate aim was 'to solve the problem of origin, history, and text, in so far as this can be achieved through minute investigation of the material means of transmission'.[104] He further set out a provisional working method for the practicing editor confronted with the problem of transmission:

> [h]e starts with the examination of a number of manuscripts, collating their texts and collecting their differences of reading, and his object is the reconstruction of the work as the author wrote it. This means, as is now generally recognized, the reconstruction of the steps or stages by which the text has come down to us. The evidence for this reconstruction is, in the main, the textual variants in the manuscripts.[105]

Greg's outline of the editor's role in reconstructing 'the work as the author wrote it' by following a range of editorial stages (examining manuscripts, collating extant texts, collecting different readings) usefully emphasises what was a New Bibliographical ambition: establishing authoritative texts that recovered the author's intentions (as far as possible) from an imperfect material record.[106] Moreover, Greg's reference to the 'textual variants in the manuscripts' as the basis on which to cleanse the text of error acknowledged the often confusing testimony of early printed texts from which they sought to recover Shakespeare. Indeed, for the New Bibliographers, dramatic texts were imagined to be messy, a fact that followed from an awareness of the errors such as compositorial eye-skip that were often committed by the most dedicated compositors in setting type.

The way that the New Bibliography set out to learn what was possible about printing practice can be illustrated through an awareness of the two prominent bibliographical societies founded

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[104] 'The Present Position of Bibliography', p. 215.
[105] 'Bibliography – An Apologia', in *The Collected Papers*, 1966 [1932]), pp. 239-66 (pp. 250-51).
[106] See Fredson Bowers, *On Editing Shakespeare and the Elizabethan Dramatists* (Published for the Philip H. and A.S.W. Rosenbach Foundation by the University of Pennsylvania Library, 1955).

in the late nineteenth century: the Bibliographical Society and the Malone Society. The Bibliographical Society was jointly founded by W.A. Copinger (1847-1910) and J.Y.W. MacAlister (1856-1925). The Society's inaugural meeting was held in London on 15 July 1892, encouraged by Copinger's paper read the previous year on 'The Necessity for a Bibliographical Society and suggestions for its operations'.[107] In his paper, Copinger argued that the Society would 'bring together individuals who have one common study and pursuit at heart', and would

> become the medium of communication of their discoveries, labours and opinions to the public, and give stimulus to the study of bibliography, which would result in a higher tone of literary taste – a bringing to light of many long-hidden gems of classic merit, and an infusion of the sounder parts of antique learning, with the lighter touches which characterise our modern literature.[108]

As part of the 'stimulus to the study of bibliography', the Society founded a periodical journal of the Society's *Transactions*, which was published until 1920 when the Society took over *The Library*, a journal which had been founded by J.Y.W. MacAlister in 1888. A.W. Pollard would become associated with editorship of the journal in December 1899. Based at the British Museum, Pollard was asked to join the Bibliographical Society in 1893 to provide direction during a difficult period. In the ensuing years, W.W. Greg and McKerrow would establish reputations as Elizabethan scholars and bibliographers, and their work at Cambridge would soon come to Pollard's attention.

When the Pavier quartos were brought to Pollard's desk at the British Museum in 1906, his attention was turned to the study of Shakespeare's folios and quartos. In the same year, Pollard also suggested the foundation of the Malone Society, the rationale of which is indicated in his observation that 'every generation will need to make its own critical editions to suit its own

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[107] F.C. Francis, 'The Bibliographical Society: A Sketch of the First Fifty Years', in *The Bibliographical Society, 1892-1942: Studies in Retrospect*, ed. by F.C. Francis (The Society, 1949), pp. 1-22 (p. 1).
[108] Quoted in F.C. Francis, 'The Bibliographical Society', p. 2.

critical taste, but that work of permanent utility can be done by placing in the hands of students at large such reproductions of the original textual authorities as may make constant and continuous reference to those originals themselves unnecessary'.[109] Following Pollard's suggestion, the Malone Society held its first inaugural meeting at University College, London, on 30 July 1906, with the aim of 'producing accurate copies of the best editions of early plays, without prejudice to any further development of its scope which should be found advisable'. Its six semi-diplomatic transcriptions that appeared in the following year included George Peele's *The Battle of Alcazar* (1594), Robert Greene's *Orlando Furioso* (1594), and the anonymous play *The History of King Leir* (1605).[110]

My own starting point in this chapter is to situate the second Arden series within its cultural milieu. As the project encompassed over thirty years of editorial practice, it lies beyond the scope of this chapter to provide more than a broad brush-stroke overview of the various critical models and theoretical movements that influenced each Arden editor's practice. The framing narrative is therefore deliberately restricted to a sustained attention to the first appointed editor of the second series, Kenneth Muir (1907-96) and his edition of *Macbeth* (1951). Muir's edition was the first publication of the new and revised series and his broad critical scope, drawing on the various branches of criticism of his time, is useful as representative of the principles which would be followed by the later Arden 2 editors as the series ran its course.

My chief interest will be to recover a sense of Muir's critical mindset by isolating the dominant methodological principles he followed while working on his edition. This will also

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[109] Quoted in F.P. Wilson, 'The Malone Society, The First Fifty Years: 1906-56', in *Collections, Volume IV* (Malone Society, 1956), pp. 1-16 (p. 2).
[110] George Peele, *The Battle of Alcazar*, ed. by W.W. Greg (Malone Society, 1907); Robert Greene, *Orlando Furioso*, ed. by W.W. Greg (Malone Society, 1907); Anon, *The History of King Leir*, ed. by W.W. Greg (Malone Society, 1907).

require an awareness of the tools and resources at his disposal, as well as sensitivity to the wider cultural pressures of the time and how they shape Muir's editorial approach. The final section will ask how far the second series might be said to be intellectually coherent. To frame the analysis, I aim to expose the contours of Muir's editorial thinking and method, which will also require an awareness of the tensions between the various critical movements of his time.

There are several reasons why Ellis-Fermor was considered a suitable candidate for the general editorship of the new series, a position which had become vacant following the death of R.H. Case (1857-1944). She had some editorial experience, having produced an edition of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* for Methuen in 1927. But the two works that perhaps most of all indicated her suitability for the role were her pamphlet on Shakespeare's Imagery (1937), and the Shakespeare chapters in her book *Frontiers of Drama* (1945). Both provided evidence of her expertise in Shakespeare studies, and betoken the nature of the criticism that would influence the editions produced during the early years of the second series' generation spanning course.

Ellis-Fermor's pamphlet on Shakespeare's Imagery, entitled 'Some Recent Research in Shakespeare's Imagery' (1937), was first delivered as a paper read before the Shakespeare Association in 1937.[111] Her criticism was heavily influenced by her colleague and intellectual mentor Caroline Spurgeon (1869-1942), who had recently published a number of essays on Shakespeare's use of imagery, culminating in her influential book *Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us* (1935).[112] It is worth noting here that Spurgeon's commitment to imagistic

[111] *Some Recent Research in Shakespeare's Imagery: A Paper Read Before the Shakespeare Association on March 19th, 1937* (H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1937).
[112] *Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us* (Cambridge University Press, 1935).

studies was likely influenced by the Imagist movement and the fashion for Metaphysical poetry during the inter-war years. In an earlier 1930 essay, Spurgeon revealed that

> I have been working for some years on Shakespeare's images, and in the course of my study I have listed, classified and card-indexed every image in each play thrice over. This has given me great familiarity with the types of images Shakespeare uses, and the headings they naturally fall under; a familiarity which almost now approaches a sixth sense.[113]

Spurgeon argued that by applying a range of systematic methods to a study of Shakespeare's imagery, she would be able to recover a sense of Shakespeare's mind and imagination at work in the heat of composition. Furthermore, by introducing taxonomic and systematic principles into her research she aimed to supplement an earlier biographical tradition with an innovative formalist approach. By the time she came to write *Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us*, Spurgeon's intuition that images could shed light on the author's personality had become a firm conviction:

> I believe it to be profoundly true that the real revelation of the writer's personality, temperament and quality of mind is to be found in his works, whether he be dramatist or novelist, describing other people's thoughts or putting down his own directly.[114]

Spurgeon's interest in the 'writer's personality, temperament and quality of mind' is significant for the way it presents an evolution of the nineteenth-century biographical tradition. Where Dowden's evidence was mostly limited to personal assertions (phrases occurring passim such as 'we cannot doubt that', 'we have good reason to believe', and 'it is clearly ascertainable' are common), Spurgeon aimed to develop Dowden's method through her 'new method of approach to Shakespeare' that 'enables us to get nearer to Shakespeare himself, to his mind, his tastes, his experiences, and his deeper thought than does any other single way I

[113] 'Imagery in the *Sir Thomas More* Fragment', *RES*, 6 (1 January 1930), pp. 257-70 (p. 257).
[114] *Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us*, p. 4.

know of studying him'.[115] 'The novelty of the procedure I am describing', Spurgeon observed, 'is that *all* his images are assembled, sorted, and examined on a systematic basis'. It is worth noting here that Spurgeon's procedure still has critical currency today. While no one would quite phrase her conviction in the same way, few would dispute a proximity between the individual and the work.

Discussing recent imagist studies in her 1937 pamphlet, Ellis-Fermor praised the 'novelty and paramount importance' of Spurgeon's work, which offered the 'first attempt at systematic investigation on a large scale' of Shakespeare's use of imagery. Such was the impact of Spurgeon's research that Ellis-Fermor proposed that it

> may be the forerunner of an era in Shakespeare criticism as important as the new bibliographical and textual science which was the peculiar gift of the first three decades of this century to Shakespeare scholarship.

As well as her interest in imagist studies, Ellis-Fermor's investment in the New Bibliography is clearly illustrated in the editorial guidelines she produced during planning work for the second series. To support the work of her editors, she recommended several studies for consultation: R.B. McKerrow's *Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare* (1939), W.W. Greg's *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* (1942), and F.P. Wilson's 'Shakespeare and the 'New Bibliography', a survey of fifty years' work, written from within the New Bibliography movement.[116] Recommendations were also made for references to E.K. Chambers's *William Shakespeare* (1930), C.H. Herford's *A Sketch of Recent Shakespearean Investigation* (1923), and to W. Ebisch and L.L. Schücking's *A Shakespeare Bibliography* (1931).[117]

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[115] *Shakespeare's Imagery and What it Tells Us*, p. x.
[116] *Notes for the Revised Edition of the Arden Shakespeare*.
[117] E.K. Chambers, *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (Clarendon Press, 1930); C.H. Herford, *A Sketch of Recent Shakespearean Investigation* (Blackie, 1923); W. Ebisch and L.L. Schücking, *A Shakespeare Bibliography* (Clarendon Press, 1931).

Ellis-Fermor's evident high regard for the twin pillars of formalist criticism and New Bibliography illustrates that the two movements had become intellectual allies that would provide crucial parameters for editors of the second Arden series. What was 'new' in both movements, however, could be misleading. Greg had early on defined the field of critical bibliography as 'the science of the material transmission of literary texts', but recognised that this was 'no new science: editors have been forced to solve the problems as they went along, and in doing so they have necessarily evolved a method of their own'.[118] What was 'new' for the New Bibliographers was the attempt to systematize the knowledge base that existed, and to 'perfect the method, in order that it may be acquired with the least possible trouble and applied with the greatest possible certainty'. In this way, the 'newness' of the New Bibliography was in large part a matter of systematizing a way of thinking that was already in voyage.

The 'New' Criticism, however, emerged as a reaction against historically focused research: what mattered were the literary details of the text in which form and context enclosed the work within a self-sufficient system of intrinsic verbal meaning. One of the potential conflicts for an editor working to establish a text between the two systems concerned the notion of authorial intent.[119] The New Bibliography had inherited an authorially oriented model that became a fixing point of the eighteenth-century editors. Such a model, however, appeared to contradict the New Critical rejection of authorial intention as extrinsic to the formal self-sufficiency of the text. What rescued their status to some degree as happy bedfellows was the unacknowledged assumption of a unifying consciousness, which was responsible for a Coleridgean reconcilement of the text's multiple oppositions and tensions.[120] Along with the

[118] 'What is Bibliography?', in *The Collected Papers*, 1966 [1914], pp. 75-88 (pp. 83-84).
[119] See W.K. Wimsatt Jr. and Monroe Beardsley, 'The Intentional Fallacy', *The Sewanee Review*, 54.3 (1946), pp. 468-88.
[120] See D.C. Greetham, *Theories of the Text*, pp. 52-53, 127-28.

fundamental disciplinary separation between them, the two movements were thus able to exist in apparent harmony throughout the early stages of the second series.[121]

In the same year that Ellis-Fermor received her proposal to oversee a revised Arden series from Methuen, Kenneth Muir (1907-96), the first editor to contribute an edition to the new series, published an article offering his own predictions on 'The Future of Shakespeare'.[122] Reflecting on modern developments in Shakespeare criticism, Muir acknowledged the influence of A.C. Bradley's character criticism, a criticism it is worth noting that still remains central to critical history in the present day. Reflecting on Bradley's work in the 1940s, Muir remarked that Bradley's method of character criticism was no longer at the forefront of critical debate, and that there now existed 'several schools of criticism, though there is some overlapping'. These 'several schools' he usefully divided into three groups:

> [f]irst, there is the bibliographical school which has proved that the good Quartos are nearer than the First Folio to what Shakespeare actually wrote [...] Secondly, there is the heterogenous school of critics who insist that Shakespeare can only be understood in relation to his age and to the conventions of the Elizabethan stage [...] Thirdly, there is a group of critics who have been largely concerned with the study of Shakespeare's poetry.

Muir's aim in referring to the 'infinite variety' of the period's Shakespeare criticism was not to state his preference for a particular school, but rather to express his 'plea for the integration of the different branches of criticism'. He thus believed that while there were distinctions to be made in the various fields, the best course for the future was an inclusive and co-operative model of research. It is also worth noting that Muir expressed his personal reservations over Caroline Spurgeon's work in imagery, which he believed was in danger of 'remov[ing] the plays further and further away from the theatre, where they have their intensest life'. Muir was

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[121] For a polemical history of literary studies, including the New Criticism in the twentieth century, see Joseph North's *Literary Criticism: A Concise Political History* (Harvard University Press, 2017).
[122] 'The Future of Shakespeare', *Penguin New Writing*, 28 (Summer 1946), pp. 101-21.

also struck by Spurgeon's claims to have revealed something of the man through a study of Shakespeare's imagery, observing that

> [w]e did not need Miss Spurgeon's evidence to be assured that Shakespeare was highly sensitive, that he disliked noise and bad smells, that all his five senses were of unsurpassed keenness, and that he had an intimate acquaintance with nature and a remarkable power of observation.

Muir would no doubt have been aware of Ellis-Fermor's association with Spurgeon when he accepted the offer of a contract to edit *Macbeth* for the second series, and it seems likely that he dialled back on his criticism in producing his text under her general editorship. But Muir also brought his own critical assumptions, as he was at the time the colleague of G. Wilson Knight (1897-1985) in the English department at Leeds University. Indeed, in the same article, Muir praised Wilson Knight for avoiding Spurgeon's 'mistake' of 'consider[ing] the imagery of [*Macbeth*] in isolation', by analysing the poetic 'symbolism alongside the imagery'. Again, Muir's emphasis is on inclusive research, for which he chose the potent symbol of the Cavendish Laboratory in Cambridge, the success of which had 'led some scholars to hope for comparable successes in literary criticism by methods of co-operative research'.

One of Ellis-Fermor's first tasks as General Editor of the revised series was to gather a team of editors and produce a set of guidelines so that 'the general principles and form of the edition may be clear'.[123] Taking the first series as her starting point, she advised her editors that a 'conservative text' was desirable, particularly as the editions would be 'primarily for the use of undergraduates in English universities and for teachers of senior forms in schools'. A 'conservative' text meant that editors were to avoid, as far as possible, disturbing the original fabric of their base text. In cases where authority was distributed across two or more surviving witnesses, this would require editors to establish a text that drew its readings from different

[123] Una Ellis-Fermor, *Notes for the Revised Edition of the Arden Shakespeare*.

preserved manuscripts where they exist, and to attempt to recover the 'lost original' from the evidence provided by the material record. At the time Ellis-Fermor was writing, no one had argued that it was reductive to recover Shakespeare's intentions.

Ellis-Fermor's guidance notes also encouraged a co-operative model of editing which included annotations at the foot of the page engaging with an eighteenth-century tradition of conjectural emendation. In cases where plays had more than one substantive version, the reader of a conservative text could expect a conflated text produced after the editor had sifted through all the existing evidence surrounding what the author may have originally written. Thus in her 'General Editor's Preface' to Richard David's *Love's Labour's Lost* (1951), Ellis-Fermor announced that her team of editors had agreed to

> follow the substantive text (if that was easily determined, as in the case of "Folio only" plays, except for obvious and agreed errors, spelling variants, mispunctuation and mislineations [and] to follow, in cases where there was divergence between a F. and a good Q. text (or between a F., good Q. and a bad Q.), the generally accepted blend of the two which had been used by the Cambridge editors.[124]

In the same year that Ellis-Fermor wrote these words, W.W. Greg's influential essay 'The Rationale of Copy-Text' was read before the English Institute by James Osborn, and it is likely that she would have been in attendance.[125] Greg's paper traced the semantic drift of McKerrow's term 'copy-text', which McKerrow had originally used to refer to the choice of text on which an editor based their own edition. 'It is [...] the modern editorial practice' Greg observed, 'to choose whatever extant text may be supposed to represent most nearly what the author wrote and to follow it with the least possible alteration'. The principle Greg described was straightforward: an editor chooses a base text, and then compares it step by step with other

[124] 'General Editor's Preface', London, 1949, in William Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, ed. by Richard David (Methuen, 1951), pp. ix-xi (p. x).
[125] 'The Rationale of Copy-Text', *Studies in Bibliography*, vol. 3 (1950/51), pp. 19-36. Read before the English Institute on 8 September 1949, by Dr. J.M. Osborn for W.W. Greg.

versions, using her judgement to make emendations when required. For Greg, however, editors were guilty of an 'undue deference to the copy-text', which he believed 'has, in my opinion, vitiated much of the best editorial work of the past generation'.

Greg thus sought to grant editors greater licence to emend through his much-cited distinction between 'substantives' ('those namely that affect the author's meaning or the essence of his expression') and 'accidentals' ('spelling, punctuation, word-division, and the like, affecting mainly its formal presentation'). In doing so, he suggested that editors should follow their selected copy-text as far as reasonably possible 'only in the matter of accidentals', leaving them the freedom to exercise their own judgement in the choice of substantive readings. Individual judgement was thus to be grounded on a knowledge of the process of textual transmission, and would explain alterations of copy-text on the basis of such factors including eye-skip, dittography, and haplography. Defending the exercise of individual judgement in textual matters, Greg observed that

> It is impossible to exclude individual judgement from editorial procedure: it operates of necessity in the all-important matter of the choice of copy-text and in the minor one of deciding what readings are possible and what not; why, therefore, should the choice between possible readings be withdrawn from its competence?[126]

Before editorial work had begun on the first two editions for the new series, Kenneth Muir and Richard David had been restricted for economic reasons to reusing the original stereotype plates that had been used for the first series. It is worth noting here how this restriction illustrates the non-intellectual contexts that could crucially shape the editorial work of the Arden 2 series. As the post-war conditions improved, however, Ellis-Fermor described a 'major change of policy' which gave each editor the freedom and responsibility to 'establish [...] the

[126] Greg, p. 26.

text of each play in place of a text which had hitherto been prescribed'.[127] As she further remarked:

> each editor's text must now be his individual concern, since each play presents its own group of problems. Some of us may prove to have solved these in a way which posterity will repudiate. But an attempt will be made in every case to present the evidence for the editor's decisions fairly and to give at the same time representation to solutions other than that editor's own.

The emphasis on the editor's own choice of text and individual decisions here echoed Greg's own concern to preserve the editor's right to exercise his or her own judgement. In doing so, Ellis-Fermor opened up for scrutiny each editorial decision, which she encouraged 'in every case' to include 'representation to solutions other than that editor's own'. Those decisions were, however, influenced by wider developments in twentieth-century scholarship, as each editor of the revised series was faced with the considerable task of 'present[ing] in brief and intelligible form [...] the immense body of scholarship which the first half of the twentieth century has contributed to the field of Shakespeare studies'.[128]

Kenneth Muir's Arden 2 *Macbeth* (1951)

One of the first editors who would have received a copy of Ellis-Fermor's preparatory guidance notes was Kenneth Muir. Ellis-Fermor had sought out Muir on the strength of his two recent publications in Shakespeare studies: his co-authored book *The Voyage to Illyria* (1937), and his article on 'The Future of Shakespeare' (1946), which set out a road map for future research in Shakespeare scholarship.[129] Muir's academic career had begun at St John's College, York, an

[127] 'General Editor's Preface', London, 1952, p. vi.
[128] Una Ellis-Fermor, 'General Editor's Preface', London, 1949, p. ix.
[129] See Inga Stina-Ewbank, 'Kenneth Arthur Muir 1907-1996', <http://publications.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/pubs/proc/files/97p393.pdf > [accessed 22/10/20]

Anglican Training College for Teachers, before moving to the English department at the University of Leeds in 1937. Along with other early key figures in the Arden series, Muir was thus part of a dispersed sociology of Arden that was not predictably associated with Oxford or Cambridge.

At Leeds he joined a small department headed by Bonamy Dobrée (1891-1974), with just two other lecturers, Wilfred Childe (1890-1952) and Douglas Jefferson (1912-2001). Following the war, however, the department grew to include the Marxist Arnold Kettle (1916-86), the British-Israeli Harold Fisch (1923-2001), and, as noted above, the Christian mystic G. Wilson Knight.

Muir's wide-ranging critical scope made him a suitable candidate as an editor for the new Arden series, and in a later interview he reflected that editing *Macbeth* and *King Lear* (1952) for the series allowed him to 'bring together my interest in the theatre and my interest in the sources and in imagery – all of which contributed to the introduction and to the notes'.[130] In the same interview, he also notably observed that A.C. Bradley (1851-1935) 'had more influence than anybody in the critical line' on his scholarship, a reflection which offers one reason why he chose to edit the two tragedies for the second series. Indeed, while working on the two editions, Muir transferred to the post of King Alfred Professor of English Literature at Liverpool University in 1951 (1951-74), a position occupied by his 'great predecessor' at Liverpool.[131]

[130] Gareth Lloyd Evans, 'Kenneth Muir in Conversation with Gareth Lloyd Evans', *SQ*, 30.1 (Winter 1979), pp. 7-14 (p. 8).
[131] Kenneth Muir, 'Shakespeare and the Tragic Pattern', *Proceedings of the British Academy* (1959), pp. 1-18 (p. 1).

Once he accepted the task of editing *Macbeth* as the series' opener, one of Muir's first duties would have been to familiarise himself with the nature of the textual issues facing an editor of the play. In choosing *Macbeth*, Muir was editing a Folio-only play, which precluded the need to sift and conflate readings from various extant texts.[132] The date of the play's first composition, supported by 'various metrical tests', was given by Muir as 1606, a date which continues to form a consensus in more recent editions. There remains, however, a lack of consensus over the issue of revision.

The presence of the opening phrases to two songs also found in Middleton's play *The Witch* (*c*. 1613-16) as well as the disputed Hecate scenes have drawn editors to differing conclusions regarding the evidence for the play's adaptation. Nicholas Brooke, for example, has suggested a Shakespeare and Middleton collaboration.[133] The play is printed in the Folio between *Julius Caesar* and *Hamlet*, and is less than two-thirds the average length of the other tragedies at just under 2,500 lines, occupying just twenty pages of text (131-51). The famous brevity of *Macbeth* has often been cited as evidence that the F1 text is a revised version, or alternatively that brevity is integral to Shakespeare's dramatic purpose in the play, mirroring its compressed and fragmented language.[134]

Muir was also confronted by the problem of the play's lineation, which includes the highest percentage of irregular lines in all of Shakespeare's texts. The irregular metre of many of the Folio lines indicate possible errors or material constraints in dividing lines which can be made to scan correctly through editorial intervention. This meant that Muir had to decide whether to

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[132] W.G. Clark and W. Aldis-Wright, 'Preface', in *The Cambridge Shakespeare*, 9 vols (Cambridge University Press, 1865), vii, p. xii.
[133] Nicholas Brooke, 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Nicholas Brooke (Oxford World's Classics, 1990), p. 55.
[134] See W.W. Greg, *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare: A Survey of the Foundations of the Text* (Clarendon, 1942), p. 147.

preserve the recurrent part-lines, often on the basis of a defence on artistic grounds, or to regularise the normally iambic pentameter metre. Muir was aware that the Folio's lineation is believed to have obscured the Shakespearean metrical practice of sharing pentameter lines between two or more speakers. When regularising lines, he thus followed what had been the standard editorial practice since Steevens of indicating this through the indentation of words or part-lines within the same syntactic or thematic unit.

The presence of the cue-lines to two songs from Middleton's *The Witch* in 3.5 and 4.1 has also encouraged editors to find evidence for possible interpolations in the play. In their Cambridge edition (1863-66; rev. 1891-93), Clark and Wright had assigned 300 lines of *Macbeth* to Middleton, including passages from the porter scene of II.iii, and the Hecate scenes in III.v and IV.i. In addition to the Porter and Hecate scenes, further key passages where interpolation has been suspected include the bleeding Captain/Sergeant's speech in 1.2, and the 'King's Evil' passage of 4.3. It is worth remembering here that Muir's Arden predecessor, Henry Cuningham, was so emboldened by the Cambridge editors' views of such episodes that he confidently excised what he considered to be the 'adulterating trash' from his text, but was prevented from publishing his edited version by R.H. Case (see Chapter one).[135]

In approaching the Folio text Muir was evidently influenced by the New Critical tradition of regarding poems as autonomous verbal artefacts. His Shakespeare was a playwright 'not so much concerned with the creation of real human beings, but with theatrical or poetical, effect'.[136] Even the characters, in a post-Bradley critical climate, were 'subordinated to the poetry, rather than (as in much nineteenth-century criticism) the poetry to the characters'. It is

[135] Henry Cuningham, 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Henry Cuningham (Methuen, 1912), pp. vii, viii.
[136] Kenneth Muir, 'Introduction', p. xlviii.

tempting to suggest here that the view of the play as an 'organic whole' led Muir to a more than usual defence of the integrity of the Folio text, but this view has to be balanced with a knowledge of Muir's work as a bibliographer, which through the sifting of material evidence for corruptions often complicated notions of organic unity.

One example of the way that 'Shakespeare's intentions' are pulled towards a New Critical interpretation appears in III.vi. At the beginning of the scene, Lenox expresses his suspicion of Macbeth as the true murderer of Banquo, which includes the lines:

> Who cannot want the thought, how monstrous
> It was for *Malcolme*, and for *Donalbane*
> To kill their gracious Father?
> (TLN 1480-82, 751)[137]

While retaining the Folio reading, Muir interpreted the awkward phrasing of 'Who cannot want the thought' as, who cannot 'help thinking'. He explained that 'Shakespeare must have meant "can" and not "cannot"', but further suggested that 'perhaps an ambiguity was intended'. For his authority, he cited William Empson's interpretation of the phrase from *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (1930):

> Who *can* avoid thinking, is the meaning; but the *not* breaks through the irony into 'Who must not feel that they have not done anything monstrous at all?' 'Who must not avoid thinking altogether about so touchy a state matter?' This is not heard as the meaning, however, the normal construction is too strong, and the negative acts as a sly touch of disorder.[138]

Muir's emphasis on a New Critical interpretation here is striking for its emphasis on an aesthetic logic. The critical value placed on the reconciliation of opposed linguistic forces to achieve a poetic integrity concentrated much of Muir's attention onto the play's verbal

[137] Hinman, *The First Folio*, p. 751.
[138] William Empson, *Seven Types of Ambiguity* (Cambridge University Press, 1930), p. 90.

meanings and interactions. A 'great poem' for the New Critics suggested a verbal balance between diverse impulses, and Muir's edition was sensitive to the linguistic tensions in the play, which were manifested through a range of literary tropes such as ambiguity, irony, and paradox. In his discussion of the disputed Porter scene in II.iii, for example, in which Macbeth's Porter imagines himself as hell's gatekeeper, Muir observed that his words

> are written in an antithetical form: *provokes—unprovokes; provokes—takes away; desire—performance; makes—mars; sets on—takes off; persuades—disheartens; stand to—not stand to*.

The verbal oppositions of the speech were significant not only as confirmation of a New Critical ideal of reconciliation to achieve a self-sufficient poetic unity, but also for their telescoping a 'predominant characteristic' of the play considered as a whole, which allowed Muir to move with relative ease from the particular to the general:

> Here concentrated in half a dozen lines we find one of the predominant characteristics of the general style of the play—it consists of multitudinous antitheses. The reader has only to glance at any page of the play.

The emphasis on the play's 'multitudinous antitheses' was part of a New Critical idiom that aimed to introduce a more systematic investigation into literary texts. His general analysis of the Porter scene, however, serves to illustrate the way that editors operate between the twin poles of scientism and subjectivism. 'A great dramatist', Muir remarked, 'does not laboriously create feelings of tension and intensity to dissipate them in laughter [...] [the scene] is there [...] in order to increase the horror of the situation'.[139] While Muir's New Critical approach illustrates the way that editorial thinking was evolving, it also serves to illustrate the way that editing involves -- no matter how developed the method -- the inescapability of bringing individual judgements to bear on the details of the text.

[139] 'Introduction', p. xxvii.

One occasion where his readers would be drawn to the play's 'multitudinous antitheses' appeared in Muir's gloss to Angus's words of disdain against Macbeth as he marches to war in V.ii:

> Now do's he feele his Title
> Hang loose about him, like a Giants Robe
> Vpon a dwarfish Theefe.
> (TLN 2198-20, 757)[140]

> Now does he feel his title
> Hang loose about him, like a giant's robe
> Upon a dwarfish thief.
> (V.ii, 20-22)[141]

Muir's annotation to the passage cited Derek Traversi's (1912-2005) remark that '[b]efore the advancing powers of healing good, evil has shrunk into insignificance'.[142] Traversi's remark would likely have reminded readers of the thematic abstractions set out in Muir's Introduction, which included Wilson Knight's identification of a Grace/Evil; Life/Death; Night/Day opposition, as well as F.C. Kolbe's (1854-1926) recognition of a Darkness/Light; Discord/Concord opposition. In this way, the annotations often confirmed the general observations in Muir's Introduction which moved the critical emphasis towards the play considered as a freestanding poetic unity.

In the same passage, Muir also isolated the clothing imagery of the 'giant's robe', cross-referencing the image with both 'borrow'd robes' (I.iii, 108), and 'strange garments' (I.iii, 145). The gloss drew on a 1930 paper by Caroline Spurgeon, which had argued that the image of a

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[140] Hinman, *The First Folio*, p. 757.
[141] Muir, ed., *Macbeth*, p. 148.
[142] *Approach to Shakespeare* (The Paladin Press, 1938), p. 100.

man in ill-fitting garments was the dominant 'iterative image' of *Macbeth*.[143] While Muir had argued in an earlier essay against considering the imagery of the play in isolation, he was willing to use imagery as reinforcing evidence to establish Shakespeare's authorship.[144] Indeed, he had already integrated imagistic studies into his literary biography of Shakespeare in *The Voyage to Illyria* (1937), and would draw on the method again in his later work *Shakespeare as Collaborator* (1960).

One example of his use of imagery as evidence of Shakespeare's authorship occurs in a commentary note to one of Macbeth's two asides in I.iv, which includes the lines:

> The Prince of Cumberland:that is a step,
> On which I must fall downe, or else o're-leape,
> For in my way it lyes, Starres hide your fires,
> Let not Light see my black and deepe desires:
> The Eye winke at the Hand; yet let that bee,
> Which the Eye feares, when it is done to See.
> (TLN 336-41, 741-42)[145]

> The Prince of Cumberland! – That is a step
> On which I must fall down, or else o'erleap,
> For in my way it lies. Stars, hide your fires!
> Let not light see my black and deep desires;
> The eye wink at the hand; yet let that be,
> Which the eye fears, when it is done, to see.
> (I.vi, 48-53)[146]

Muir countered suspicions expressed by critics such as F.D. Fleay and Granville Barker that the passage was unShakesperean by cross-referencing the use of imagery to other occurrences in the play. Thus the 'o'erleap' of line 49 was compared with the same usage in I.vii, 27; 'Stars,

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[143] *Leading Motives in the Imagery of Shakespeare's Tragedies* (Published for the Shakespeare Association by H. Milford, Oxford University Press, 1930). See Kenneth Muir, 'Image and Symbol in *Macbeth*', *SS*, 19 (1967), pp. 45-54.
[144] See Muir, 'The Future of Shakespeare', p. 108; Kenneth Muir, 'Shakespeare's Imagery and the Critics', in *Shakespeare the Professional and Related Studies*, ed. by Kenneth Muir (Heinemann, 1973), pp. 54-69.
[145] Hinman, *The First Folio*, pp. 741-42.
[146] Muir, ed., *Macbeth*, p. 26.

hide your fires!' was compared with 'Come, thick Night' of I.v, 50, and 'Their candles are all out' in II.i, 5; and Muir also noted the 'several passages' where the hand and eye are opposed. Muir's imagistic cross-referencing thus points to the close parallels between the weaving of the play's imagery into a uniform textual pattern and the assumption of an author-generated text composed in a single moment of intention.

In contrast to what were considered the impressionistic studies of the past, imagistic research could be card-indexed, cross-referenced, and tabulated. In his editorial role, Muir's use of recurring patterns of imagery throughout the play sought to evolve verifiable criteria against which Shakespeare's sole authorship of the play could be confirmed. For Muir, the play's repeated binaries: 'hand/eye', 'star/night' provided evidence for Shakespeare's sole authorship of the play. In isolating such binaries, Muir was arguably guided by an evaluative model, in which superior passages are assumed to be Shakespearean, while poor passages are likely to be the work of others. It is worth emphasising here, however, that Muir's hierarchical thinking was not inherently absurd. Indeed, while there was no doubt some hierarchical thinking in his judgements, Muir was also breaking new ground and seeking out new directions in his attempts to establish more rigorous and systematic procedures for the editing of Shakespeare.

Imagery was however just one of the branches of criticism that Muir adopted in approaching questions of the play's adaptation and interpolation. His Introduction gave ten passages traditionally regarded as 'spurious'. 'Most of these', he remarked, 'do not require further discussion'. The two he believed were worthy of further consideration were the porter's scene in II.iii, and the Hecate scenes of III.v and IV.i. In his discussion of the Porter scene, Muir referred to contrasting images such as 'natural growth and harvest which are scattered

throughout the play', carrying out close readings of passages which were representative of the whole:

> The style of the Porter's speech is not alien to that of the rest of the play. It possesses the antithetical characteristics of the verse, suitably "transprosed" for semi-comic purposes. The whole scene is linked so closely with the rest of the play, in content as well as style, that it is impossible to regard it as a barbarous interpolation of the actors.

In Muir's formalist readings, individual scenes were again closely linked to the play considered as a whole, so that correspondence of part with whole constituted evidence of the play's integrity. Not all scenes, however, could be correlated with the whole. After considering the Hecate scenes, he was led to believe that they

> were all written by an anonymous writer, not without poetic ability, who was instructed to explain and introduce the two songs and the dance which had been interpolated from *The Witch*. It was then found necessary to make certain other alterations in the play. Perhaps some cuts were made in I. ii. iii. and iv.; and apparently there was some re-arrangement of scenes later in the play.

For many of his convictions he relied on work by J.M. Nosworthy, who had argued in a 1948 article against Middleton as the author of the Hecate scenes.[147] One of the main issues surrounding the re-arrangement of scenes was referred back to a hypothesis by Gordon Crosse that before its adaptation, scene III.vi in the play originally followed IV.i.[148] This conjecture was based on the inconsistency in Macbeth's knowledge of Macduff's flight to England in III.vi, and his surprise at hearing the news in IV.i. An unnamed lord tells Lenox that Macbeth is aware of Macduff's flight to England in III.vi, yet when Lenox gives Macbeth the news later in IV.i, Macbeth reacts with surprise and anger. To explain this apparent inconsistency, Crosse suggested that scene III.vi was shifted to its position in the Folio in order to prevent the two

[147] 'The Hecate Scenes in *Macbeth*: III. V; IV.i', *RES*, 1948, pp. 138-39.
[148] G. Crosse, 'Spurious Passages in 'Macbeth'', *Notes & Queries*, vol. 9 (1898), pp. 321-22 (p. 322).

Hecate scenes from coming together, 'a necessary precaution when there were no changes of scene, and no intervals between the scenes'.

Muir was willing to admit a Shakespeare 'cheerfully violat[ing] a unity of impression for his own purposes', and in this case his departure from a chronological sequence, but in the end conceded the likelihood of a re-arrangement of the two scenes for dramatic reasons:

> the loss of dramatic surprise at Macduff's flight (iv.i.142) is a heavy price to pay for some increase of irony (IV.i.82). I think we must assume (I) that III.vi. originally followed IV.i. and (2) that Lenox's speeches in one scene or the other originally belonged to another character. This scene, III.vi., would then be an effective means of expanding the brief announcement that Macduff had fled at the end of IV.i.[149]

This cautious suggestion was, however, not carried out in his main text. The assumption of a prior ordering of the scenes in his Introduction was in the end relegated to a tentative suggestion in his annotation to III.vi. In a footnote to the scene, he cautiously reminded his readers that '[t]he scene may have come originally after IV.i', before referring back to his introductory discussion. His remark here appears a reflection of the conservative principles outlined by Ellis-Fermor during the preparatory stages of the new series. The same caution is also applied to the two cue-lines to songs from Middleton's *The Witch*. In his gloss to the opening phrase of the first song in III.v, presented in the Folio as '*Sing within. Come away, come away, &c'.* (TLN 1467, 751), Muir noted that the existence of the lines in Middleton's *The Witch* 'does not necessarily mean that he wrote the whole of the scene'.[150] In the end, Muir settled on the decision to include both songs in full in the relevant footnote to the text.

[149] 'Introduction', in *Macbeth*, p. xxxvii.
[150] Muir, p. 103; Hinman, *The First Folio*, p. 751.

His general acceptance that there had been interpolations in the Folio text led him to consider the evidence for the play's being cut to balance the inclusion of the later scenes. In doing so, he cited W.W. Greg's uncertainty surrounding whether the play's 'multiplicity of very brief scenes' indicated 'cutting or [...] an unusual dramatic technique'.[151] He also referred to F.P. Wilson's view that the cuts may have been the result of censorship, and argued against R.C. Bald's contention that the play's brevity was due to a Court performance.[152] After integrating a range of viewpoints, he remained uncertain over the likelihood of cutting, concluding that 'there may have been cuts' to balance the Folio text's evident interpolations.

The probability of additions and subtractions to the text was further increased for Muir by Folio *Macbeth*'s problem of mislineation. In his discussion of the play's lineation, he continued his cautious weighing of evidence, and held back from proposing his own theory on the high proportion of irregular lines:

> It would be dangerous to offer any theory about the mislineation. Human error, of one kind or another, must serve as an explanation, though there may well have been cuts to make room for the Hecate interpolations.

The Hecate scenes provided a rare point of departure from which Muir was willing to consider the possibility of cuts to Folio *Macbeth*, and his resistance to their inclusion provided perhaps the clearest example of the way his editorial decisions are often influenced by hierarchical thinking. In his commentary note to the cue-line 'Black Spirits' in IV.i, for example, he observed that

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[151] W.W. Greg, *The Editorial Problem: A Survey of the Foundations of the Text* (Oxford University Press, 1942), p. 147.
[152] R.C. Bald, 'Macbeth and The "Short" Plays', *RES*, 4.16 (1 October 1928), pp. 429-31.

> it is to be hoped that this song was altered for *Macbeth*, as some lines are relevant only to the plot of Middleton's play. But the 1673 edition of *Macbeth* prints them without alteration. No exit is marked for Hecate and the spurious witches; but the sooner they depart the better.[153]

The inconsistency of the song with the tone of the play reinforced the incompatible nature of the 'spurious witches', who were considered by contrast as notably rooted figures in Middleton's *The Witch*. In his Introduction, Muir had clearly prepared his readers to regard the Hecate scenes as corrupt, referring to the spoiling of the play by Shakespeare's fellows, its 'contamination after the performance', and a level of 'vandalism' which led him to suggest that a lesser playwright than Middleton was likely responsible.[154]

It is worth briefly turning at this point to consider the ways that more recent editors have approached the same issue of Middleton's additions to *Macbeth*. Perhaps the most striking evolution can be illustrated in the contrasting ways in which *Macbeth*'s famous brevity has been understood. As mentioned above, Muir was in doubt over whether the play's brevity followed from cutting or was a reflection of its compressed and fragmented language. In Taylor and Jowett's influential *Shakespeare Reshaped*, however, they observed that '[s]horter plays, like *Measure* and *Macbeth*, would be particularly attractive candidates for interpolation'.[155]

Moreover, in their Oxford Complete Works text of *Macbeth*, Wells and Taylor included the full songs from *The Witch*, which had appeared only as the opening phrases in 3.5 and 4.1 of Folio *Macbeth*. Whereas Ellis-Fermor promoted a 'conservative' text for her early team of editors, the Oxford editors were contributing to an emerging editorial investment in reshaping the author as one agent among many in an early modern collaborative economy. For Wells and Taylor, the play as performance provided a more valuable editorial base from which to edit the

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[153] Muir, pp. 111-12.
[154] Muir, pp. xxxv-xxxvi
[155] *Shakespeare Reshaped, 1606-23* (Clarendon Press, 1993), p. 232.

text, so that the focus would be no longer on *original* performance, but rather on what was believed could be reconstructed of the last performance. In their commentary note to the appearance of the first song in 3.5 (*Sing within. Come away, come away, &c'.* (TLN 1467, 751)), for example, they observed that

> Many editors of *Macbeth*, printing only the cue-line of the song, follow Capell in supposing that all of it should be sung at this point; but this is not suggested by F's directions, is not what Davenant prints, and is not consonant with the action required by the song.[156]

The inclusion of Middleton's song in full on the basis of the cue-line's presence is of course not suggested by F's directions, but it is worth asking what exactly *is* suggested by them. Where Muir cautiously abstained from emending his main text and included the song in an extended commentary note, the Oxford editors, influenced by the critical fashion for performance, are pulled towards emphasising an event-based conception of the text. On this basis, Wells and Taylor sought to provide a coherent grafting of the full song from 3.5 into their main text, which required a complex negotiation between three texts: Folio *Macbeth,* Middleton's *The Witch*, and Davenant's Restoration text of *Macbeth* (1674).

For Muir, questions surrounding adaptation and interpolation also significantly extended to the issue of the play's mislineation. It is evident from both his introduction and commentary notes that his approach to the problem of lineation was often to treat irregular lines as essential to the tone of the play as a work of art. For this practice he was no doubt influenced by both Richard Flatter (1891-1960) and Derek Traversi (1912-2005). Flatter's influential book *Shakespeare's Producing Hand* had appeared in 1948, arguing that where editors were insistent on setting out lines in iambic pentameter, there are often dramatic reasons, such as allowing for

[156] Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, eds, *The Oxford Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 121.

a significant pause or gesture, for the presence of irregular lines.[157] In a similar defence of the text's integrity, Traversi observed that

> [t]he verse of *Macbeth* is often, at first reading, so abrupt and disjointed that some critics have felt themselves driven to look for gaps in the text. Yet the difficult passages do not look in the least like the result of omissions, but are rather necessary to the feeling of the play.[158]

Muir was not so confident, however, that the difficult passages were always essential to the play on dramatic grounds, recognising that there were other factors to be considered when approaching such difficulties in his text. One of the famous episodes in *Macbeth* which would have presented some difficulty for Muir in distinguishing between necessary dramatic gaps and compositor malfeasance is the Bleeding Captain/Sergeant's speech of I.ii. Nearing the end of his speech to the King delivering news of Macdonwald's defeat at the hands of Macbeth, he is suddenly overcome with exhaustion:

> Except they meant to bathe in reeking Wounds,
> Or memorize another *Golgotha*,
> I cannot tell; but I am faint,
> My gashes cry for helpe.
> (TLN 739, 60-63)

Muir's approach was to rearrange the final two irregular lines of the passage into a half line and a regular iambic pentameter, which added further emphasis to the soldier's exhaustion at the end of the first part-line: 'I cannot tell-- | But I am faint, my gashes cry for help' (I.ii, 42-43). Rather than finding gaps in the captain's speech, Muir followed Traversi's advice and found the untidiness of the soldier's language a dramatic expression of his physical exhaustion. To reinforce this reading, he cited Flatter's defence of the Folio arrangement, remarking that 'perhaps one may be forgiven some slight incoherence'.

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[157] *Shakespeare's Producing Hand, A Study of his Marks of Expression to be Found in the First Folio* (W. Heinemann, 1948).
[158] *Approach to Shakespeare*, p. 89.

In addition, his decision to arrange a regular iambic pentameter from two irregular lines suggested a critical weighting towards poetic unity. One further example of this appears in his arrangement of King Duncan's initial question to the Captain, which the Folio presents as:

> *King.* Dismay'd not this our Captaines, *Macbeth* and
> *Banquoh?*
> *Cap.* Yes, as Sparrowes, Eagles;
> Or the Hare, the Lyon;
> (TLN 739, 53-56)

In contrast to the Folio's irregular metre, Muir's arrangement of the lines is notable for its emphasis on the poetic quality of the verse:

> *Dun.* Dismay'd not this
> Our captains, Macbeth and Banquo?
> *Cap.* Yes;
> As sparrow's eagles, or the hare the lion.
> (I.ii, 34-35)

Each of Muir's lines created a regular iambic pentameter metre, with the two indented lines following the standard editorial practice of indicating the sharing of a pentameter line by two speakers.[159] The overall effect was to suggest to readers a sense of artistic unity and coherence to the play; a coherence that was regularly balanced by an awareness of the ways in which the textual transmitters of the play had shaped the play, introducing into the process of transmission indisputable errors and confusion.

The 'Coherence' of the Arden Second series and the Shakespeare Monolith

[159] See A.R. Braunmuller, ed., *Macbeth* (Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 261-79; George T. Wright, *Shakespeare's Metrical Art* (University of California Press, 1988), pp. 116-42.

The focus of the previous section has been to recover a sense of Muir's critical mindset and his working methods as he edited *Macbeth* for the second series. While it is clear that Muir embraced a Platonic idea of the best witness to the original holograph, he was nevertheless aware that such a holograph was unlikely to be found. This did not prevent him, however, from relegating what he took to be the result of error and adaptation and presenting what he felt uncovered as much of Shakespeare as possible. In seeking to recover the features of the author's original manuscript, Muir was doing little more than following a coherent editorial principle. As John Jowett has observed in a 1999 essay on the editorial state of play:

> The distinction between a pre-theatrical and a theatrical manuscript is not [...] absurd, nor are editors' attempts to discern the features of a manuscript in the features of a book printed from it. In most respects, once allowance has been made for significant advances in knowledge about dramatic manuscripts and the book trade, many of the traditional 'narratives' remain plausible in themselves and more effective than any competing account.[160]

One of the main 'competing account[s]' that Jowett referred to concerns the shift to the 'primacy of performance' over a primary focus on 'what the author wrote'. An author-centred approach is often raised as a topic in order to emphasise the drawbacks of an opaque procedure for which limited evidence exists concerning an author's original intentions. It is worth asking, however, to what extent performance-oriented textual editing has made the editor's task more plausible.

The first caveat is that editors begin their work from the scrutiny of extant printed texts, each of which may or may not point to a particular performance of a play. As an editor of *Macbeth*, Muir was sensitive to the play as performance, yet remained committed to the

[160] 'After Oxford: Recent Developments in Textual Studies', *The Shakespearean International Yearbook*, vol. 1 (Ashgate, 1999), pp. 65-86 (p. 71).

substantive text as the best witness to the author's holograph. The reasons why are suggested in a comment by Harold Jenkins in the Introduction to his Arden 2 *Hamlet* (1982):

> [i]n seeking to present the play as Shakespeare wrote it rather than as it was shortened and adapted for performance I do no more than follow tradition. Even those who insist that a play is created only in the theatre would hardly, I think, prefer the contrary procedure; and those who like to imagine that some passages were cut by Shakespeare himself will not quarrel with their retention.[161]

If Jenkins underestimated the nature of the quarrels that would emerge with the modern tradition he was content to follow, it is worth asking why he might have felt that a theatrically edited text was implausible. One answer is that an edition which seeks to cohere around performance is based on a principle which introduces a greater degree of variability than an author-centred text. In the Oxford *Macbeth*, for example, the cue-lines of Middleton's songs from *The Witch* (*c*. 1593-96) lead the editors to introduce an amalgam derived from Middleton's and William Davenant's texts. Yet the principle of editing to reflect performance on the early modern stage is open to the same criticism as an author-generated text: the lack of evidence for the author's original manuscript parallels the evidence for performance on the early modern stage. As Janette Dillon has argued:

> we still lack any very firm evidence about the transmission of Elizabethan dramatic texts generally and are therefore not in a position to make judgements about the consistency of *any* surviving printed texts with what was performed on the Elizabethan stage.[162]

One of the aims of the previous section has been to demonstrate how Muir's critical mindset was often at odds with notions of textual unity. This was due in no small part to the critical tensions between New Criticism and New Bibliography that informed Muir's editorial thinking. The emergence of this positive tension can be traced back to an essay published by

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[161] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. by Harold Jenkins (Methuen, 1982), p. 75.
[162] 'Is There a Performance in this Text?', *SQ*, 45.1 (Spring 1994), pp. 74-86 (p. 84).

W.W. Greg in 1933, in which he referred to a 'wider change of outlook which has recently come over critics in relation to their textual and editorial duties'.[163] In addition to the 'traditional attitude' of 'regarding a text primarily as a literary composition', editors were now turning attention towards the

> material manuscripts and prints, and of thinking of literary problems in terms of sheets of paper or parchment bearing certain conventional signs—the question of the derivation of the variants was seen to be all important, and attention came to be focused less on some remote and perhaps unattainable original, than upon the more immediate sources from which the extant documents were derived.

New Bibliography thus encouraged editors to turn from the Platonic 'unattainable original' to the exciting material peculiarities of texts. At the outset of the second Arden series, Ellis-Fermor expressed her investment in the 'unattainable original' and the goal of recovering as much of Shakespeare as possible from the imperfect material record. Muir's working method, however, illustrates an embrace of the 'more immediate sources' that Greg referred to, as both the 'unattainable original' and those 'more immediate sources' exist in positive tension. An expression of this enabling nexus can be found in Muir's discussion of the play's lineation, in which he argued that the Folio's irregularities were faithful to Shakespeare's original intentions. He was to qualify this view, however, by remarking that

> it is not always possible to distinguish between such irregularities and those for which transcriber or printer is responsible. This being so, some compromise is inevitable.[164]

It is worth noting here how this enabling tension between authorial intention and the work of other collaborative agents in the process of acting and printing also informs the thinking of

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[163] 'The Function of Bibliography in Literary Criticism Illustrated in a Study of the Text of *King Lear*', *Neophilologus*, 18.1 (1933), pp. 241-62 (p. 245).
[164] 'Introduction', *Macbeth*, pp. xxxiii-xiv.

other editors in the second Arden series. In M.R. Ridley's edition of *Othello* (1959), for instance, he reflected that

> [i]n a hard-worked repertory company – and that is what, however high the standard of acting, Shakespeare's company was – which has to act different plays in rapid succession, very few actors, however good students they are, learn their lines precisely as the author wrote them. I once watched through rehearsal a good repertory company at work on *The Winter's Tale*. The actor playing Leontes was an old and experienced Shakespearean actor. He departed from his text in something like a hundred places.[165]

Providing his own response to the tension, Ridley suggested that each reader of the play must make her own decisions, which the editor can only place before them. Admitting his own heterodox views, Ridley observed that he had 'tried not unduly to obtrude them', instead leaving the final verdict to his readers:

> [a]ny intelligent reader [...] is as capable of arriving at a sane verdict as any editor. And, because of some peculiar features in the problem, it is more true of *Othello* than of almost any other of Shakespeare's plays that, in the end, every reader, every producer and actor, must make his own text.[166]

Confronting the difficulties surrounding the relation between his two main source texts, Q1 and F *Othello*, and their relation to 'Shakespeare's original', Ridley thus offered his readers the opportunity to create their own version of the play, which disavowed the notion of a predetermined and fixed Shakespeare whose works would be presented to readers in their 'authentic form'.

An emphasis on totality has been characterised by Leah Marcus as a means of 'conceptualizing the literary text as monolithic, invulnerable, existing in its own luminous, uncanny extra-temporal reality'.[167] Yet the notion of an 'extra-temporal reality' was for the

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[165] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by M.R. Ridley (Methuen, 1959), p. xxv.
[166] 'Preface', p. ix.
[167] *Unediting*, p. 20.

most part checked in the second Arden series by the enabling tension between a focus on the lost originals and the material peculiarities of texts. While Muir's dominant picture of a coherent text produced by a single author was consistent with a branch of criticism which had attempted to systematise an earlier way of thinking, that thinking takes on a more evolved sense of the materiality of texts.

In addition to Muir's hierarchical thinking, New Bibliography exerted an attritional effect on the New Critical concept of the text as an artistic whole. The critical pressure that would be imposed on the 'monolithic' text through the interlocking dynamic of New Criticism and New Bibliography is further suggested by Greg's primary emphasis on material factors above the concept of an 'extra-temporal reality':

> at bottom all problems of transmission are concerned with material factors, in the shape of pieces of paper or parchment covered with certain written or printed signs, and that it is in the first place through attention to the peculiarities of these, rather than through speculation as to what we fancy may have been in an author's mind, that the attack on textual problems should be made.[168]

Along with the New Critical rejection of authorial intent as a standard of literary judgement, the New Bibliography's attritional effect on the concept of organic unity worked to subtly shift Muir's critical mindset from a focus on hypothetical originals towards the meanings intrinsic to the Folio text of *Macbeth* as it exists as a material entity. Muir's editorial methodology thus straddled the two poles of authorial intention and the materiality of texts. Both areas of focus are central to Muir's method of seeking to create a synthesis of the author's original composition with the surviving material witness.

[168] 'The Function of Bibliography', p. 243.

Conclusion

The focus of this chapter has been on Kenneth Muir's editorial thinking and method. Using his Arden 2 edition of *Macbeth* (1951) to provide a clear focus on his method, the chapter has given sustained attention to his engagement with the tools and resources at his disposal, and the way his thinking and method can be situated more broadly within the larger cultural forces of his time. A few years before his contribution, Muir drew attention to the variety of critical practice within English studies in the 1940s, and argued for a greater integration of the different branches of criticism. Muir's emphasis on variety and integration has been central to this chapter, a key question of which has been to ask, how far was Muir's method intellectually coherent?

One of the first positive tensions indicated from the outset of the second series was that between Muir and Spurgeon's investment in imagistic studies as a way of getting at Shakespeare the man. Spurgeon's conviction that Shakespearean imagery provided a pathway towards the operations of Shakespeare's mind was dismissed by Muir who suggested the trite and obvious conclusions derived from such research. Una Ellis-Fermor, however, had suggested at the outset of the second Arden series that imagistic studies might join the New Bibliography as a major movement in twentieth-century Shakespeare studies. Following his own call for a greater integration of critical practice, Muir would go on to endorse Spurgeon's scholarship in his Arden 2 *Macbeth*, regularly cross-referencing Shakespeare's use of imagery in certain passages of the play to confirm Shakespeare's authorship.

When the wheels were set in motion for the second Arden series, one of Ellis-Fermor's initial concerns was there was no authoritative Shakespeare edition that had been recently

published from which her team of editors could benefit. This had of course been the situation with the first Arden series, whose editorial work was eased by the recently revised Cambridge edition (1863-66; rev. 1893-96). Although her Arden 2 guidelines referred her team of editors to the emerging work of the New Bibliographers, Ellis-Fermor acknowledged the difficulties involved in producing editions at a moment when there was not yet full agreement on a generally acceptable text. The best that could be done, she noted in the General Editor's Preface to Muir's *Macbeth*, was to present the evidence for the editor's decisions fairly, and to give space to solutions other than the editor's own.

Attentive to a lack of methodological consensus about critically edited texts, Ellis-Fermor suggested in her Arden 2 guidelines that a 'conservative' text was best. This meant that editors should avoid disturbing the original fabric as far as possible, so that conjectural emendations were to be a last resort. Most of the early Arden 2 editors followed this principle. As well as Muir, Richard David in his Arden 2 *Love's Labour's Lost* (1951) kept closely to the 1598 Quarto only adopting emendations in cases of undoubted difficulties. Further, E.A.J. Honigmann's edition of *King John* (1954) followed the Folio as closely as possible while collating all significant changes, and T.S. Dorsch in his edition of *Julius Caesar* (1955) followed the principle that emendation should be avoided in view of the Folio's general reliability, unless there is clear evidence of corruption. The only early edition that was not in principle 'conservative' was J.C. Maxwell's *Titus Andronicus* (1953). Writing in his Introduction, Maxwell pointed out that he had no initial prejudice against emendation which would count towards a conservative posture, although his text, based on the first Quarto (rather than Q2, Q3, or F), departed less often from Q1 than Dover Wilson's recent Cambridge *Titus* (1948).

Maxwell's approach demonstrates a further enabling tension between his openness to emendation and Ellis-Fermor's suggestion for conservatism in her editorial guidelines. This tension is central to the editorial activity of the second Arden series, and its centrality to editorial thinking in the twentieth century is suggested in a letter written to Maxwell in the following year by Alice Walker. Reflecting on the editing of *Richard III*, Walker wrote that 'the question is whether we are to be conservative, in the certainty that we are preserving compositor's and collator's errors [...] or whether we are to apply what can be learnt from the errors of Q which the collator did correct to the emendation of those he overlooked'.[169] Walker's observation is useful in demonstrating the positive tension between textual conservatism and editorial licence in the second Arden series. Moreover, along with Ellis-Fermor's emphasis on the goal of a generally acceptable text, Walker's observation also points to the way that editorial thinking involved a sense of collective endeavour, a feeling made clear in her further remark that

> [t]he process of purging Shakespearian texts of errors has been a gradual one – everyone has made mistakes, which it is kindest to forget; most sensible editors have contributed something, but would have contributed less if they had played for safety from fear of being wrong; and even their going astray has led others sometimes to the right path.[170]

Despite Maxwell's admission that his text did not in principle follow a conservative position, most Arden 2 editors kept close to Ellis-Fermor's espoused conservatism at the outset of the second series. A general agreement on conservative principle can be further illustrated, for example, in H.J. Oliver's Arden 2 *Timon* (1959). In his Introduction, Oliver remarked that it seemed desirable, 'when one is, apparently, so close to Shakespeare in the act of composition, to run the risk of preserving what could be mere scribe's or compositor's mannerism rather

[169] Letter from Alice Walker to J.C. Maxwell, 16 January 1954, Balliol Historical Collections, Balliol College, Oxford.
[170] Letter from Alice Walker to J.C. Maxwell.

than to run the risk of losing what could be a genuine Shakespearean idiosyncrasy or way of writing'.[171] In sync with Oliver's conservatism, Anthony Hammond's later Arden 2 *Richard III* (1981) argued that '[w]hen editorial judgement is [...] rendered helpless', the necessary principle was to keep to F 'as the text of higher authority'.[172] This went against Alice Walker's view that conservatism had no virtue in editing *Richard III*, but it nevertheless provided a series logic for most of the second Arden editors.

This chapter has also sustained attention on the way that Muir's editorial thinking was influenced by the New Criticism and the New Bibliography. In Muir's approach, problems of the texts were often solved through a New Critical paradigm that prioritised works of art as absolute wholes. When faced with the issue of mislineation in *Macbeth*, for example, Muir found the Folio's irregular metrical lines of the Bleeding Captain/Sergeant speech in I.ii essential to the play as a self-sufficient verbal object. Moreover, Muir's formalist readings also informed his thinking in relation to the play's authorship. In the Porter's speech in II.iii, Muir called attention to the Porter's language, which consisted of 'multitudinous antitheses'. The literary style of the passage conformed with the rest of the play, which augmented the authority of passages that had been disputed by others. Muir's formalist investment thus straddled fascinatingly between part and whole: if an individual part could be situated within the organic whole, then this provided evidence of Shakespeare's authorship.

That Muir's editorial mindset was informed by a domineering critical practice of his time is of course no criticism of his thinking and method. As this chapter has argued, Muir was simply putting to use the tools and resources at his disposal, drawing on the scholarship of his time to

[171] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*, ed. by H.J. Oliver (Methuen, 1959), p. xxix.
[172] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Richard III*, ed. by Anthony Hammond (Methuen, 1981), p. 51.

provide his readers with a reliable text. If not all editors shared his formalist priorities, all were concerned to recover as far as possible Shakespeare's original intentions from the material record. The challenges that this goal continued to present to editors is made clear in Anthony Hammond's reflection that

> [i]f we are concerned to recover Shakespeare's intentions, we ought to give a careful degree of consideration to alterations introduced into the prompt-book, whether by Shakespeare himself, or (if we can accurately distinguish) by another. We must weigh carefully the chances: that an alteration was made with Shakespeare's assent, willingly or grudgingly, or that an alteration was made against his desires. This weighing is not easily or reliably done.[173]

Hammond's reflection is notable for coming towards the very end of the second Arden series. His focus on authorial intention testifies to the collaborative nature of the first and second Arden editors in working towards the shared goal of fully restored Shakespearean texts. The reflection is remarkable in demonstrating the way that, after the work of the New Bibliographers of the twentieth century, there still remained perennial doubts about the distinction between Shakespeare and non-Shakespeare in the early printed texts. If Hammond was expressing a logical culmination point to a tradition of editing, the sense of a tradition coming to an end had been earlier expressed in M.R. Ridley's Arden 2 *Othello* (1959). In his Introduction, Ridley observed that

> [t]he plain truth is that today, now that certain main principles, largely through the work of Pollard, McKerrow, and Greg, have been generally accepted, a good deal of Shakespearean textual criticism is an elaborate game, entertaining to the players, entertaining also to such spectators as enjoy a display of technical expertise and of the perpetration of fouls which may escape the attention of the referee, but not very profitable to either, resulting in the end, as it is often bound to result, in a pointless draw.[174]

When Ridley wrote those words, however, the second Arden series was gaining momentum,

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[173] 'Introduction', in *Richard III*, ed. by Anthony Hammond, p. 49.
[174] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Othello*, ed. by M.R. Ridley (Methuen, 1959), p. xxxii.

and all Arden 2 editors were conscious of following in a time-honoured editorial tradition. This sense also received expression in Harold Jenkins's series-culminating edition of *Hamlet* (1982). In Jenkins's Introduction, he defended his principle of seeking to 'present the play as Shakespeare wrote it', arguing that he did 'no more than follow tradition'.[175] Once his edition concluded the series in 1982, however, the tradition of editing that was sustained and brought to a logical culmination point in the second Arden series was ripe for a reassessment. The critical reaction to the editorial tradition and the way that editors sought new ways of looking at texts will be the subject of the following chapter.

[175] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, ed. by Harold Jenkins (Methuen, 1982), p. 75.

CHAPTER THREE

Interface Design and Paratexts: A Case-Study of The Oxford *Complete Works* (1986-87)

In the autumn of 1986, four years after the completion of the second Arden Shakespeare series, a new complete-works edition of Shakespeare began to appear on shop bookshelves throughout the world. A scholarly edition to succeed W.J. Craig's (1843-1906) Oxford Shakespeare (1891) had been long in gestation, with the project passing through several hands before Stanley Wells was appointed General Editor by Oxford University Press (OUP) in Autumn 1977.[1] Browsing through the long-expected volume weighing 3.9 kgs and comprising 1432 pages within its hardcover binding, the prospective buyer would be forgiven for wondering how the edition might be different from the many other Shakespeare editions that had been steadily appearing throughout the twentieth century. Turning a few leaves to the contents page, the reader would likely have begun to feel a sense of disruption to their own sense of Shakespeare.

Firstly, the expectation of finding the plays organised into their traditional arrangement by genre would be unsettled by finding that the plays had been arranged into a chronological order that followed from the editors' own fresh enquiry into Shakespeare's language and the dating of the plays. Browsing the contents page, the reader would feel a further defamiliarising effect through the retitling of many plays, including, for example, the hitherto accepted Folio title

[1] Walter Raleigh (1861-1922) inaugurated the project in 1904 with a proposal to OUP for an affordable Folio-faithful edition (1904). R.B. McKerrow (1872-1940) moved the project forward with a preliminary study for his anticipated edition, *Prolegomena for the Oxford Shakespeare* (1939). Responsibility then passed to Alice Walker (1900-1982) following McKerrow's death in harness before Wells's appointment.

Henry VIII to *All Is True*, based on three historical references to the title in Jacobean times. To add further pinpricks, the two 'lost' plays *Love's Labour's Won* and *Cardenio* were also included in the contents, although in place of the lost plays only a brief account of their history is given.

What, the reader might ask, is going on here? Reflecting on his preparatory work for the edition, Stanley Wells has observed that he was 'determined from the start that it wouldn't just be duplicating other editions'.[2] The firm resolve to depart from editorial tradition is further indicated in Taylor's reminiscence of his interview with Wells for the Assistant Editor role:

> [t]owards the end of the interview, I asked him whether we would "act" […] upon our own conclusions, and do something that no previous edition had done, if we decided that all previous editions were wrong. Wells said "yes". Neither of us, then, had any inkling of how different our edition would be from its predecessors.[3]

Clearly, Wells and Taylor were determined that their edition would be different, and were unabashed in their ambition to challenge the long-standing assumptions of the historical editorial tradition. In this chapter, I aim to show that the edition's paratextual features condense and authorise the radical editorial principles that formed a response to the received editorial tradition. In its focus on the edition's radicalism, I am conscious of the term's origin in the Latin *radix*, meaning 'root'. This sense informs this chapter's understanding of the Oxford edition as committed to a process of turning back to its roots, as well as a growing away from one's roots in the modern sense of the term.

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[2] Stanley Wells, interviewed by Neil Aitchison, 'Editing Shakespeare', *Will@Warwick*, 28 April 2008 < https://warwick.ac.uk/newsandevents/podcasts/media/more/will/?podcastItem=editingshakespeare.mp3> [accessed 18 January 2021].

[3] 'Interface Design and Editorial Theory', in *The Routledge Handbook of Shakespeare and Interface*, ed. by Paul Budra and Clifford Werier (Routledge, 2022), pp. 105-15 (p. 107). For other work on Shakespeare and interface, see Paul Eggert, 'Apparatus, Text, Interface: How to Read a Printed Critical Edition', in *The Cambridge Companion to Textual Scholarship*, ed. by Neil Freistat and Julia Flanders (Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 97-113; Alan Galey, *The Shakespearean Archive: Experiments in New Media from the Renaissance to Postmodernity* (Cambridge University Press, 2014).

In reshaping the traditional paratextual features to reflect their own editorial principles, this chapter will argue that this re-evaluation had important consequences for the edition's readership. Since editors of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century began to establish a canon of principles and procedures for the editing of Shakespeare, no one had challenged the consensus view that the goal of editing was to recover the text as ideally conceived by the author. For the Oxford editors, however, the goal became an attempt to recover, as far as possible, the text of the first performance. Indeed, whereas the time-honoured editorial tradition was based on authorial intention as a general consensus, Wells and Taylor's edition shifted emphasis to the plays in performance. This shift was in part a critical response to the traditional assumption of regarding Shakespeare's works as verbal icons, cordoned off from their jostling exchanges so that the stage was merely incidental (and potentially corrupting) to the autonomy of his art.

A further interest of this chapter will be to track across editions and locate the interpretive vistas opened up by the Oxford editors within earlier and subsequent lines of editorial thinking. As this chapter forms part of a history of editorial thinking based on the three Arden Shakespeare series (1899-2020), each of which spans the length of a generation, I am interested in how the Oxford edition intervenes as both a response to the recently completed Arden 2 series (1951-82), and also how it influences the editorial thinking of the subsequent Arden 3 series (1995-2020).

Editors often having little say in the design and layout of their editions. As discussed in the previous chapter, for example, Ellis-Fermor's early team of Arden editors were restricted to a design and layout beyond their control. The Oxford edition, however, presented a seemingly

special case, in that its first General Editor was able to control elements of the design process. As Taylor has reflected:

> [i]t is no surprise that most modern editors have paid little attention to design. They regard accepting a publisher's house design as the price of admission to play the editorial game. But unlike most editors, some general editors may be able to influence a publisher's design of the container. Stanley Wells is one such general editor.[4]

The argument I wish to propose in this chapter is that the Oxford editors engage more fully with the surrounding developments in textual theory than has hitherto been considered. Wells, and particularly Taylor, I contend, were more deeply influenced by the critical climate of their time, and their edition bears the marks of their own response to the growing influence of textual theories that were offering alternative pathways from traditional editorial practice.

Andrew Murphy has argued that many of the Oxford edition's most radical interventions can be situated unproblematically within conventional editorial practice. Many of its controversial aspects, Murphy observed, 'have more in common with the concerns of nineteenth-century Shakespeare scholarship than with the concerns of postmodern literary theory'.[5] Where it might be possible to identify certain traces of French high theory – particularly the work of Foucault and Barthes – the editors 'fall short of pursuing that agenda in a fully rigorous manner and may, in any case, be open to interrogation more generally'.

This viewpoint comes close to echoing a broader point made by G. Thomas Tanselle in his 1986 essay 'Historicism and Critical Editing: 1979-1985':

> The basic issues that confront textual critics and scholarly editors are unchanging, and the attitudes that may be taken toward those issues, though occasionally appearing in

[4] 'Interface Design and Editorial Theory', p. 107.
[5] 'The Oxford Shakespeare Re-Viewed (Again)', *TEXT*, 1 January 2006, pp. 157-71 (p. 169).

altered guises, remain the same.[6]

For Tanselle, the 'basic issues' involve the extent to which editors are happy to depart from the early printed texts in their own editions. '[N]o more basic theme runs through the history of scholarly editing', Tanselle wrote, 'than the perennial debates over the role of editorial judgement (necessarily subjective, to a greater or less degree) in the production of responsible texts'.[7] In Tanselle's case, however, he was writing at a time when there had been a long-established critical consensus on the methodological approach to Shakespearean texts. But to extend this view to include the Oxford edition is to blur the radical nature of its intervention. While the 'basic issue' about the nature of editorial judgements was of central concern to the Oxford editors, the performance-oriented attitude and the radical intervention that followed was a major departure from the received editorial tradition. Further, to see the Oxford edition as a straightforward evolution of conventional editorial practice is to suggest that the cutting-edge textual theories rising to prominence in the 1970s and 1980s were little more than reworkings of earlier ideas, and could be fitted *mutatis mutandis* into previous models of editorial thinking that were more socially and materially oriented in their approach.

As I hope to make clear, the Oxford editors were invested in providing alternative ways of looking at texts, pointing out new directions in textual editing that were more in sync with the shifting critical climate. As has been shown in the previous chapter, the need for a new direction is evident from the culminating years of the Arden 2 project. Seeking out new directions after the second series had reached a logical endpoint to a time-honoured tradition of editing Shakespeare, the Oxford edition aimed to present a fresh image of Shakespeare. As Stanley

[6] 'Historicism and Critical Editing: 1979-1985', *Studies in Bibliography*, 39, 1 January 1986, pp. 1-46 (p. 45); reprinted in *Textual Criticism since Greg: A Chronicle, 1950-2000* (University of Virginia, 2005), pp. 109-55 (p. 53).
[7] 'Historicism and Critical Editing', p. 1.

Wells remarked shortly after the edition was published, it was 'a work of deconstruction, an attempt to see Shakespeare afresh, to cut through the accretions of the centuries'.[8]

In order to 'see Shakespeare afresh' Wells and Taylor were able to draw on the shifting intellectual climate of the time, to which in part they were active contributors in the build-up to the edition's release. This critical climate opened up different and exciting ways of looking at Shakespearean texts -- including the prizing of contingent features of the text such as the naming of Falstaff/Oldcastle -- which became points of particular interest that editors wished to illustrate rather than move beyond. The shifting critical paradigms in editorial thought inspired Wells and Taylor and lent ballast to their challenge to the assumptions of the modern editorial tradition. As Wells reflected in a conference paper delivered in 1986:

> My colleagues and I on the Oxford Shakespeare have been laboring to create fertility where before there was barrenness […] we have had a few ideas of our own […] many (though not all) of them emanating from the fertile brain of my colleague Gary Taylor. I hope the results of our efforts will be an edition that, though it may be accused of "arrogance and eccentricity", will visibly display the courage of our convictions and will come to be seen as an attempt to present readers with a truer image of Shakespeare's texts than would have been possible had we not garnered and planted the seeds sown by our predecessors and colleagues.[9]

It is the contention of this chapter that the evidence of that 'fertility' and the source of those ideas in the Oxford *Complete Works* are most clearly discernible in the edition's physical dressing. These paratextual notations serve to subtly recalibrate the reader's expectations and bring them in line with the new ideas put forward which are responsive to contemporary

[8] 'Revisionist Shakespeare', lecture given in the Sheldonian Theatre to mark the publication of the Complete Oxford Shakespeare, 1986, quoted in Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare* (Hogarth Press, 1989), p. 316. See Stanley Wells, 'Revisionist Shakespeare', *Oxford Magazine*, 24 (1987), pp. 10-13.
[9] 'The Unstable Image of Shakespeare's Text', in *Images of Shakespeare, Proceedings of the Third Congress of the International Shakespeare Association, 1986*, ed. by Werner Habicht, D.J. Palmer and Roger Pringle (University of Delaware Press, 1988), pp. 305-13 (pp. 312-13).

developments in textual theory.[10] Aiming to naturalise the critical arguments that laid down the gauntlet to its contemporary editorial tradition, the edition's physical dressing authorised fresh new ways of thinking about Shakespearean texts that have continued to influence subsequent editions ever since.

'London from Southwark' and the Droeshout Portrait

Before the book was lifted from the shelf, the Oxford edition's spine was the only surface visible to the prospective buyer. The narrow space was dominated by one part of a horizontal painting which was centred on a contemporary rendering of Shakespeare's Globe. Curious to learn more, in taking the book from the shelf the reader would then be confronted with a prospect of 'London from Southwark' which dominated the edition's front cover. The painting, attributed to an unknown Dutch artist, offers an expansive view over London around the year 1600. In contemplating this view, the reader stands outside, and is invited to step further inside, turning the pages to begin imagining the unfamiliar world in which Shakespeare's works were produced and performed. The process of reorienting the reader's expectations thus begins before the reader has glanced beyond the front cover, where the process of attuning the reader to Taylor's injunction is continued:

> We can--and indeed should, if we wish to gain the most from our encounters with his art--familiarize ourselves with the conditions of Shakespeare's time, try to think like Elizabethans; but we will always remain moderns, acting the part of Elizabethans.[11]

[10] For key contributions to paratextual studies, see Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, trans. by Jane E. Lewis (Cambridge University Press, 1997 [1987]); Helen Smith and Louise Wilson, eds, *Renaissance Paratexts* (Cambridge University Press, 2011).
[11] 'General Introduction', in *The Oxford Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor (Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 3.

Taylor's observation may have struck many of the edition's early readers, who were likely to be accustomed to editions based on the editorial principle that the first step to an encounter with Shakespeare's 'art' was through the construction of reliable texts based on what the author originally intended. The formal 'self-sufficiency' of the text, however, in Taylor's conception of history, breaks down the barriers between text and history, so that socio-historical forces outside the text could find a way in. As Herbert Lindenberger observed in 1984, noting the distinction between the 'old' and 'new' histories:

> The older history could take for granted the integrity and autonomy of the work of art; the scholar's task was to provide a suitable background of sources, details of publication, and biographical materials, as well as an accurate text, to enshrine the work within its appropriate tradition. By contrast, the new history has no illusions about a work's unity, autonomy, or, for that matter, its need for enshrinement.[12]

The 'scholar's task' in the old history can be seen as beginning with the literary text as an historical document divided and to some extent sealed off from cultural documentation. This way of thinking is clearly expressed in a 1970 essay by Harold F. Brooks, the longest serving general editor of the Arden 2 series. Reflecting on the editor's task, Brooks remarked that it was 'obvious that literature must be approached at first-hand, in the texts, and not primarily through literary historians and critics'.[13] In contrast, the demarcation between artefact and history collapses in Taylor's conception of the task facing the editor:

> Like biography, historiography, or archaeology, the editing of works of literature is an attempt to understand the past, and to make that past more accessible to our own contemporaries. And the necessary first step in understanding the works of an author is to understand the circumstances in which and the means by which those works were first composed and then transmitted to us.[14]

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[12] 'Toward a New History in Literary Study', *Profession*, 1984, pp. 16-23 (p. 17).
[13] 'The Editor and the Literary Text: Requirements and Opportunities', in *Librarianship and Literature: Essays in Honour of Jack Pafford*, ed. by A.T. Milne (Athlone Press, 1970), pp. 97-121 (p. 97).
[14] Gary Taylor, 'General Introduction', *A Textual Companion*, p. 3.

In this approach, the editor is no longer primarily concerned to recover the self-sufficency of autonomous texts, but rather to position those texts as products of historical contingency. As David Scott Kastan observed in 1988, reflecting on the wave of influence of New Historicism in North America and Cultural Materialism in Thatcherite Britain:

> A putatively disinterested formalism has been succeeded by a charged contextualization that seeks, instead of formal unity, the gaps and contradictions testifying to a text's immersion in a history that crucially affects its production and reception.[15]

One of the most compelling ways in which this critical manoeuvre from formalist principles to a 'charged contextualization' was played out in the Oxford *Complete Works* was through its mise-en-page design. Once the reader had passed by the defamiliarising view of early modern London presented on its front cover, curiously turning the first few pages, they were soon confronted by Martin Droeshout's familiar engraving of Shakespeare, which would begin to set the Oxford edition in dialogue with the First Folio.[16] If the reader had been tempted at this point to compare how the frontispiece is presented in both editions, they may have noted how the surrounding text is contrastingly arranged around the portrait which appeared to satisfy certain critical assumptions.

In the Folio arrangement, resting above the portrait are three familiar components of text, which advertise the edition as 'Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, & Tragedies. Published according to the True Originall Copies', while on the facing page is Ben Jonson's accompanying poem 'To the Reader'. In a significant interpretive move, the headline titles are

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[15] 'Review: Shakespeare in History', *College English*, 50.6 (October 1988), pp. 694-99 (p. 694).
[16] For more recent bibliographical work on the construction of the First Folio, see, for example, Ben Higgins, *Shakespeare's Syndicate: the First Folio, its Publishers and the Early Modern Book Trade* (Oxford University Press, 2022); Emma Smith, *The Making of Shakespeare's First Folio* (Bodleian Library, 2015); *Shakespeare's First Folio: Four Centuries of an Iconic Book* (Oxford University Press, 2017). Holger Schott Syme, guest ed., *SQ*, 74.4 (Winter 2023).

all notably absent in the Oxford edition. In the empty space left over, the frontispiece is raised to the top of the page, while Jonson's poem moves from the facing page to fit tightly beneath the portrait, bringing that poem into a closer dialogic relation with it. The reader thus appears to be invited to look *once again* on Shakespeare's book.

The Contents Page

Turning a few further pages to the contents page, above the chronological ordering of Shakespeare's works, the reader is presented with four preliminary sections: a 'List of Illustrations', the 'General Introduction', 'Contemporary Allusions to Shakespeare', and 'Commendatory Poems and Prefaces'. What is most noteworthy about the three sections hedged between the General Introduction is that they serve to naturalise and reinforce the editorial argument which the General Introduction sets in motion. In other words, the sections which accompany the General Introduction aim to reorient the reader's expectations to bring them in line with the argument put forward in the General Introduction and *Textual Companion.*

What makes that reorientation process necessary is the way in which the Oxford edition both objects and responds to the critical assumptions behind modern standard editions. As the previous chapter has shown, the Arden 2 series was influenced by the New Criticism and New Bibliography, two movements which had tended to see Shakespeare as a solitary artist whose texts formed an organic unity at variance with the immediate socio-historical context. This influence is apparent, for example, in J.M. Nosworthy's edition of *Cymbeline*, in which he referred to Shakespeare's 'preoccupation with unity in many forms', and the 'poet's conscious

attempt to unify experience as a whole'.[17] Similarly, in A.R. Humphrey's Introduction to *1 Henry IV*, after considering Shakespeare's use of his sources, Humphreys remarked that Shakespeare's 'structural power in uniting diverse material is as extraordinary as his psychological, moral, or poetic power'.[18] In the Oxford edition, however, a discomfort with this received tradition is clearly expressed by Gary Taylor's observation in the edition's *Textual Companion*:

> The gradual elevation of Shakespeare within the hierarchy of English and then of world literature has transformed him into the central exemplar of literary permanence and perfection, an artist somehow apart from all others.[19]

Much of the disruption to the reader's expectations in approaching the Oxford edition can be explained in the way that it departs from this starting point. Rather than presenting a solitary Shakespeare whose works were shining examples of 'literary permanence and perfection', Wells and Taylor aimed at what they believed was a truer image of Shakespeare: a man deeply engaged with and dependent on the social context in which his works, far from permanent and perfect, bear witness to indeterminacy and historical contingency. To fine-tune the reader's expectations to match the new paradigm, the three preliminary sections which accompany the edition's general introduction carry out crucial interpretive work.

The list of illustrations, for example, which heads the four sections above the chronology of Shakespeare's works, turns readers attention to the physical locations in which Shakespeare's plays were originally performed. Interspersed within the edition's General Introduction the reader encounters images of original sites of performance, such as the Hall of the Middle Temple, in London, and Johannes de Witt's copied drawing of the Swan Theatre made around

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[17] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *Cymbeline*, ed. by J.M. Nosworthy (Methuen, 1955), p. lxxxi.
[18] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *1 Henry IV*, ed. by A.R. Humphreys (Methuen, 1960), p. xxii.
[19] 'General Introduction', *A Textual Companion*, p. 19.

1596. The face of Richard Burbage also encourages readers to imagine the plays as they were first performed in the London playhouses, written not with an eye on futurity but rather to please theatre audiences and rooted to their historical circumstances.

The two sections between the General Introduction and list of 'The Complete Works' again serve to ground Shakespeare within his historical context. 'Contemporary Allusions to Shakespeare' draws attention to major events in Shakespeare's life, the effect of which was to chip away at the notion of a solitary genius whose works sprang from spontaneous acts of organic creation. The list notes such documentary evidence as the record of Shakespeare not having paid his taxes in 1597, and also having been named as a holder of corn and malt (purchasing and holding it to resell at increased prices) in his native Stratford in 1598. In the same way, the 'Commendatory Poems and Prefaces (1599-1640) draw reader's attention to how Shakespeare was perceived by his contemporaries. More significantly, the chosen poems and prefaces include selections from both Folio and quarto sources, which raise the authority of and direct readers to the other surviving witnesses to what Shakespeare originally wrote or presented on the early modern stage.

Placed immediately after the General Introduction, these two sections appear as the final tuning pieces to encourage the reader to take an imaginative leap into the circumstances in which Shakespeare's plays were produced:

> Shakespeare's work is firmly rooted in the circumstances of its conception and development. Its initial success depended entirely on its capacity to please the theatre-goers (and, to a far lesser extent, the readers) of its time; and its later, profound impact is due in great part to that in-built need for constant renewal and adaptation that belongs especially to those works of art that reach full realization only in performance.[20]

[20] Stanley Wells, 'General Introduction', in *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*, ed. by Stanley Wells and others (Clarendon Press, 1986), p. xv.

The message to the reader was clear: a full appreciation of Shakespeare's art was only possible through an experience of his plays in performance, so that to read a text as a literary artefact was somehow to misrepresent him. It is worth noting here the post-1945 rise of interest in Shakespeare as a man of the theatre, and one way this evolution can be tracked is through the increasing presence of sections dedicated to 'Stage History' and 'The Play on Shakespeare's Stage' in the Arden 2's Contents Pages (See Appendix 1). Ernst Honigmann's edition of *King John* (1954), for example, was the first to include a section on the play's stage history, yet by 1971 H.J. Oliver in his introduction to *Merry Wives* (1971) was to dedicate his first section to both 'The textual and theatrical history of the play'.

In emphasising Shakespeare's work as 'firmly rooted to the circumstances of its conception and development', however, Wells was also objecting to the way he believed that the modern editorial tradition confusingly mixed together those works as both theatrical *and* literary artefacts. As Stanley Wells later remarked in an essay concerned with editorial intervention:

> [i]n the attention that editors have given to the staging of plays by Shakespeare and his contemporaries they have, to a greater or lesser degree, treated the texts as theatrical artefacts; but at the same time they have often treated them simultaneously as literary artefacts, presenting them as texts for reading rather than performing.[21]

Thus disrupting the status of Shakespeare's plays as 'literary artefacts', Wells was also challenging a critical tradition that was associated with the establishment of English as an academic subject, and it is worth noting that at no stage of Wells's career has he been part of an academic English department. The rise of new social textual theories inspired by D.F. McKenzie and Jerome McGann further authorised Wells and Taylor's editorial thinking of

[21] 'To Read a Play: The Problem of Editorial Intervention', in *Reading Plays: Interpretation and Reception*, ed. by Hanna Scolnicov and Peter Holland (Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp. 30-55 (p. 40).

Shakespeare as a man of the theatre (for a sense of the shifting prominence given to theatrical values in the Arden 1-3 series, see Appendix 1). Whereas the play understood as a 'literary artefact' presupposed a concern with the author's foul-papers, an interest in plays as 'theatrical artefacts' shifted attention to the company prompt-book, which Taylor described as 'a socialized text, one which has been communally prepared for communication to a wider public'.[22] In Wells's Introduction, Shakespeare's own papers were described as 'including loose ends, duplications, inconsistencies, and vagueness', whereas certain prompt-books represented 'the play as close to the state in which it appeared in Shakespeare's theatre as we can get'.[23]

Memorial texts and archives

Reconfiguring the editorial frame of reference from the author's original manuscripts to the authority of original performance further opened up a significant opportunity for a critical re-evaluation of what A.W. Pollard (1859-1944) in 1909 had provisionally termed the 'bad' quartos.[24] Pollard distinguished between 'good' and 'bad' quartos by determining their source: 'good' quartos were those derived from authoritative manuscripts, while 'bad' quartos were compiled through certain techniques of memorisation during performance. Thus for Pollard the term 'good' referred to those texts which were closest to the author's original manuscripts, while the term 'bad' referred to the ways in which a memorially reconstructed text based on how the play in performance would distort the author's original intentions.

[22] 'General Introduction', *A Textual Companion*, p. 15.
[23] 'General Introduction', *The Complete Works*, p. xxxiii. See Stanley Wells, 'Editorial Treatment of Foul-Paper Texts: *Much Ado about Nothing as Test Case*', *RES*, 31.121 (February 1980), pp. 1-16.
[24] See A.W. Pollard, *Shakespeare Folios and* Quartos; Shakespeare's *Fight with the Pirates and the Problems of the Transmission of his Text* (A. Moring, 1917).

With the readjusted editorial aim of recovering the plays as they were acted in the London playhouses, however, the preserved memorials to abridged versions of provincial performance offered a possible way of arriving closer to the original words as they were presented on the early modern stage. Wells's discussion of the 'bad' quartos in his general introduction included an illustration of *Hamlet's* 'to be or not to be' soliloquy as it appeared in the less well-known Q1 *Hamlet* (1603). If readers had not known already, they were made strikingly aware that there were alternative ways of presenting some of the most familiar passages in Shakespeare. For Wells, some of the passages preserved in the 'bad' quartos were 'clearly cobbled together to supply gaps in the reporter's memory', but while they 'have many faults […] they are not without value in helping us to judge how Shakespeare's plays were originally performed'.[25]

The shift of interest to the plays in performance thus inevitably drew attention to the 'bad' quartos as preserving evidence, however imperfectly, of how the plays were originally presented on the stage. It is also clear that the influence of social textual theory can be seen in the higher authority attributed to memorial texts by the Oxford editors.[26] Indeed, just as the prompt-book was valued as a more finished 'socialized text', so too, in Taylor's words, 'a memorial reconstruction may represent a more finished, dramatic, socialized phase of the text than that preserved in an edition printed from Shakespeare's foul papers'.[27] Much has been written on the status of 'bad' quartos following the Oxford edition's re-evaluation, yet comparatively little attention has been given to the related archival documents reassessed by Wells and Taylor. These documents, although less sustained in their reporting, nevertheless offered significant anecdotal evidence of the plays in performance.

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[25] 'General Introduction', *The Complete Works*, pp. xxxi-ii.
[26] For a critique of Taylor's analysis of 'bad' quartos as performing texts, see Paul Werstine, 'McKerrow's 'Suggestion' and Twentieth-Century Shakespeare Textual Criticism', *Renaissance Drama*, 19 (1988), pp. 149-73.
[27] 'General Introduction', *Textual Companion*, p. 28.

Two such examples which appear to preserve the original words from a stage production are Ben Jonson's posthumously published commonplace book, *Discoveries* (1640), and his Prologue to *The Staple of News* (1625). In *Discoveries*, Jonson remarked of Shakespeare that

> [m]any times he fell into those things could not escape laughter, as when he said, in the person of Caesar, one speaking to him: "Caesar thou dost me wrong". He replied: "Caesar did never wrong but with just cause", and such like, which were ridiculous.[28]

Caesar's reply to Metellus, in Jonson's account, notably adds the words 'but with just cause' to the original Folio lines: 'Know, Caesar doth not wrong, nor without cause | Will he be satisfied' (F1-4). Regarding Jonson's testimony as a Folio omission, the Oxford text of *Julius Caesar*, edited by John Jowett, chose to arrange the lines as

> Know Caesar doth not wrong but with just cause
> Nor without cause will he be satisfied (3.1. 47-48)[29]

Jowett and Wells offered several reasons for authorising Jonson's account. One of which was that as Jonson's reflections post-dated the Folio's publication, this made it possible that 'the full line was still spoken in stage productions'.[30] It is interesting to note at this point how other editors have approached the same external evidence, as the inclusion of Jonson's anecdote was a significant departure from editorial practice. In Michael MacMillan's Arden 1 *Julius Caesar* (1902), for instance, MacMillan preserved the Folio's lines, although he attributed significant authority to Jonson's account in his edition's appendix:

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[28] Ben Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries Made upon Men and Matter*, ed. by Ralph S. Walker (Syracuse University Press, 1953), p. 52.
[29] *Complete Works*, p. 687.
[30] John Jowett, *A Textual Companion*, p. 387.

> [w]e probably have here the original reading, which in defence to Ben Jonson's criticism may have been altered into the Folio reading, either by Shakespeare himself or by his editors.[31]

MacMillan's hypothesis is reasonable, particularly as it is now normative to see Shakespeare as a reviser of his plays and poems. Indeed, T.S. Dorsch in his Arden 2 *Julius Caesar* (1955), also believed it likely that 'the Folio version represents an alteration made by Shakespeare or his company, perhaps in deference to a spoken criticism by Jonson'.[32] A similar Folio-fidelity is observed by David Daniell in his Arden 3 *Julius Caesar* (1998). Defending the Folio's lines, Daniell remarked in his gloss that '[t]he lines as they stand are clear, and remain unchanged through successive Folios'.[33] For his observations on Ben Jonson's criticisms, the reader was directed back to the Introduction, where Daniell acknowledged the competing authority of Jonson's record:

> Both references have suggested to later editors that lines were originally in the play that allowed Jonson's gibe, and later cut. That may well be so.[34]

Daniell did not go much further than this, other than to admit that the lines may or may not have been part of an original performance script, commenting with approval on the aptness of Jonson's words for the arrogance of a man moments from his assassination.

A similar document of value as an eye-witness account of several Shakespeare plays in performance is Simon Forman's 'Bocke of Plaies' (Bodleian MS. Ashmole 208), a private notebook containing brief accounts of *Richard II* (not Shakespeare's play), *Cymbeline*, *Macbeth*, and *The Winter's Tale*. In his notes on *Cymbeline*, Forman's recorded title for the play and the heroine's name both differ from their Folio counterparts. Forman's note on *Cymbeline*

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[31] Michael MacMillan, 'Appendix', in William Shakespeare, *Julius Caesar*, ed. by Michael MacMillan (Methuen, 1902), p. 171.
[32] 'Introduction', in *Julius Caesar*, ed. by T.S. Dorsch (Methuen, 1955), p. 65.
[33] *Julius Caesar*, ed. by David Daniell (Walton-on-Thames, Surrey: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1998), p. 235.
[34] 'Introduction', in *Julius Caesar*, p. 126.

is headed with 'Of Cymbalin king of England', and his reference to the play's heroine appears as 'Innogen', rather than the Folio's more familiar 'Imogen'. In both instances, Taylor concluded, 'Forman appears to be right, and the Folio wrong'.[35]

Taylor was, however, more confident in replacing 'Imogen' with 'Innogen', rather than in accepting Forman's recorded title for the play. The spelling 'Imogen' could be simply dismissed as a minim error, particularly as the wife of Brute (the first ruler of Britain) in Holinshed's Chronicles was printed as 'Innogen', and the name also occurs in the first stage direction of *Much Ado*. Forman's title was more problematic, as the name 'England' never appears in the play, whereas Britain(s) or British occurs fifty-one times.

The Oxford title thus maintained the Folio Catalogue form '*Cymbeline King of Britaine*', which is simply modernised to '*Cymbeline King of Britain*'. It is worth noting that this title appeared to dismiss the alternative title for the play, '*The Tragedie of Cymbeline*', which is printed in the Folio as the play's head-title, and as an alternating running title throughout the text. As well as maintaining a similar titular form to Forman's testimony, Wells and Taylor's decision also appeared to deflect attention from a 'literary' Shakespeare who wrote tragedies, comedies and histories, instead reshaping him as a playwright thoroughly invested in the present tense of the moment. As Taylor suggested:

> the title would have been pertinent to Jacobean politics *c.* 1608-11; as a number of modern critics have remarked, the choice and treatment of the play's subject-matter owe much to the political preoccupations of King James and his court.[36]

[35] 'General Introduction', *Textual Companion*, p. 28.
[36] *Textual Companion*, p. 28.

In other words, the title 'Cymbeline King of Britain' drew attention to the micro-history of Shakespeare's plays in the theatre, encouraging readers to see the plays as shaped by the here and now of their historical moment. It is worth noting here that both the earlier Arden editors were more neutral in titling the play simply as '*Cymbeline*', being open to the play as a romantic drama and tragedy, although there is an evident shift of interest towards the historical context in J.M. Nosworthy's Arden 2 edition of *Cymbeline* (1955). In Dowden's Arden 1 *Cymbeline* (1903), for example, he observed that '[t]he play of Cymbeline unites something of history with much that is romantic'.[37]

In contrast, seeing in it more of history than romance, Nosworthy described the play as 'in the main, a historical play in which the dramatist blends his two primary historical interests, those of Britain and Rome'.[38] This remark nevertheless suggested that Nosworthy's attention was centred primarily on the creative dramatist, rather than on the dramatist whose creative impulses were invariably scored by his socio-historical conditions. As his experience of editing *Cymbeline* revealed:

> the detailed analysis of *Cymbeline* which the present edition has imposed has convinced me that it is the creation of a man perpetually fascinated by his dramatic experiment, surprised and exhilarated by the new sensations and discoveries which the elaboration of his unfamiliar material has yielded.[39]

Nosworthy's image of a literary dramatist compelled by the power of the creative act contrasts sharply with Taylor's interest in the play's relation to the here and now of Jacobean politics. Moreover, this contrast offers one way of explaining the Oxford editors' decisions in taking the authority of external witnesses more seriously. In a review of their edition published four years after its appearance, Wells and Taylor reflected that

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[37] 'Introduction', in *Cymbeline*, ed. by Edward Dowden (Methuen, 1903), p. xviii.
[38] 'Introduction', in *Cymbeline*, ed. by J.M. Nosworthy (Methuen, 1955), p. xliv.
[39] 'Introduction', p. xlii.

> [i]t was an exciting time but also a dangerous time to be editing Shakespeare. Increasingly it was apparent that editorial practice had lagged behind textual research. Long-held orthodoxies were in the melting pot; new work was constantly appearing.[40]

At the time, the '[l]ong-held orthodoxies' which had sustained the growth of university English departments were being confronted by an iconoclastic turn to what was loosely termed the 'new history', one which appeared to be growing tired of the old historicism's concern with enduring truths. Providing a shrewd diagnosis of the general attitude towards formalist criticism within English studies, Jean E. Howard observed in 1986:

> In part, I believe, many teachers of Renaissance literature simply have grown weary, as I have, of teaching texts as ethereal entities floating above the urgencies and contradictions of history and of seeking in such texts the disinterested expression of a unified truth rather than some articulation of the discontinuities underlying any construction of reality.[41]

Rather than prolong the study of Renaissance texts as organically unified and detached from their social formulations, the 'new history' provided a way of fracturing the unified surface of the text in order to expose its social network which exceeded the boundaries of a self-enclosed system. This social interest offers one way to explain the higher authority attributed to the archival sources which provided eyewitness accounts to Shakespeare's plays in performance. As with *Julius Caesar* and Ben Jonson's criticism, none of the two earlier Arden editors of *Cymbeline* were willing to forego the authority of the Folio and accept the authority of external witnesses.

The Oxford editors' decisions to incorporate details from Jonson and Forman's account thus approximate to the new historical project of uncovering archival materials and anecdotes,

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[40] 'The Oxford Shakespeare Re-Viewed by the General Editors', *AEB*, 4 (1990), pp. 6-20 (p. 8).
[41] 'The New Historicism in Renaissance Studies', *ELR*, 16 (1986), pp. 13-60 (p. 15).

which provided both a means of disrupting the unified surface of the literary text, and obscuring the boundaries between 'literary' and 'historical' texts. As Sonja Laden put it, '[h]ere we might say that "poetic" New Historicists deploy such material as a means of "defamiliarizing" or refashioning literary history and broadening the scope of its materials'.[42]

For the Oxford editors, that history was one which had elevated Shakespeare to the apex of the literary canon, reinforcing his reputation as a literary dramatist somehow detached from his socialised workspace. The use of anecdotal evidence, however, offered the tools with which to unveil the reality of a more fragmented space of competing representations beneath the surface of the verbal icon. This disruption of the unified surface was perhaps nowhere more explicitly carried out than in the editors' chronological arrangement of Shakespearian works, which followed the four introductory sections which headed the edition's contents page.

Chronological Order and the Complete Works

The Oxford Shakespeare was the first edition to depart from the Folio's division of the plays into genres and present readers with a list of Shakespearean works in presumed chronological order. Both the preceding major complete-works editions, Blakemore Evans's Riverside (1974) and Alfred Harbage's Pelican Shakespeare (1956-67), were happy to follow the standard practice of organising the works into the traditional Folio categories. But the reader who had grown accustomed to the Folio distinctions would likely have been surprised when confronted with Wells and Taylor's chronological arrangement. Why the sudden change?

[42] 'Recuperating the Archive: Anecdotal Evidence and Questions of "Historical Realism"', *Poetics Today*, 25.1 (2004), pp. 1-28 (p. 8).

To answer this question, it is worth turning to Edmond Malone (1741-1812), who was the first editor to attempt to produce a chronological arrangement of Shakespeare's works – a fact that complicates the Oxford edition's radicalism. Malone's first contribution to Shakespeare scholarship, 'An Attempt to Ascertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakespeare were Written', appeared in volume one of Johnson and Steevens's ten-volume *Plays of William Shakespeare* (1778). His choices were eventually revised and republished in 1790, with a further revision published posthumously in 1821.[43] In his first version, Malone noted that

> while it has been the endeavour of all his editors and commentators to illustrate his obscurities, and to regulate and correct his text, no attempt has been made to trace the progress and order of his plays.[44]

The reason why there had been no such attempt was soon made clear: '[t]he materials for ascertaining the order in which his plays were written, are indeed so few, that, it is to be feared, nothing very decisive can be produced on this subject'. It is worth noting here that Malone's method of gathering and combining internal and external data about the plays serves to illustrate the continuing uncertainties about the evidence and methodologies used to date the canon. As Tiffany Stern has observed, following his three contributions, '[w]e have been using Malone's chronological methodology, and often his results, ever since'.[45]

Edward Dowden (1843-1913) later turned to the problems of chronology in his *Shakspere, His Mind and Art* (1875), and added a speculative chronological table in his *Shakspere Primer*

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[43] See Tiffany Stern, *Shakespeare, Malone and the Problems of Chronology* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).
[44] 'An Attempt to Ascertain the Order in which the Plays of Shakespeare were Written', in *The Plays of William Shakspeare: In Ten Volumes*, II, ed. by Johnson and Steevens (Printed for C. Bathurst *et. al*., 1778), pp. 222-373 (p. 224).
[45] *Shakespeare, Malone*, p. 1.

(1877). Dowden's arrangement was invested in Shakespeare's artistic development, and it is notable that the plays are arranged in generic clusters. E.K. Chambers' later *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems* (1930) also offered a speculative chronology, which acknowledged Dowden's own 'admirable treatment' of the subject.[46] The evidence Chambers called upon for dating the plays included: Francis Meres' *Palladia Tamia* (1598), used 'to segregate a considerable group of comparatively early works'; entries in the *Stationers' Register*; the title-pages of printed editions; Philip Henslowe's 'Diary', as well as independently recorded performances at the Inns of Court and in public theatres.

Chambers shared with Dowden an interest in generic categories as well as Shakespeare's artistic development. The plays *Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives*, for example, were grouped together as sharing 'a common vein of realistic comedy', and *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* similarly possessed 'a common vein of courtly comedy'. As with Malone, Chambers acknowledged the provisional nature of a chronological arrangement, but nevertheless believed that 'it is possible to arrive at an outline conception of Shakespeare's development, as regards both dramatic temper and the use of language'. Dowden and Chambers's approach to chronology was thus based on a primary interest in Shakespeare's temperament, and the generic categories offered evidence for the nature of his artistic development.

In contrast, and coherent with the Oxford editors' principle of rooting Shakespeare to his historical circumstances, Taylor observed in the *Textual Companion* that the Oxford chronological arrangement was influenced by three interlocking historical factors, all of which were related to the plague and the closure of the theatres in mid-1592: the change in company size, Shakespeare's turn to rhyme, and Robert Greene's famous attack on Shakespeare. The

[46] *William Shakespeare: A Study of Facts and Problems*, 2 vols (Clarendon Press, 1930), i, p. 251.

size of the company was significant for Taylor, as he noted that the early plays *The Taming of the Shrew*, *Titus Andronicus*, and the three *Henry VI* plays all required large casts, and 'all were performed, or at the very least might have been written in whole or part, before the closure of the theatres in mid-1592'.[47] From this and other detailed stylistic evidence, Taylor concluded that these plays were likely written before company structures were reduced after the 'devastating effects on the London acting profession of the long interregnum caused by the plague'.

In addition, Taylor argued that the plague and the closure of the London theatres (1592-93) were likely to have inspired an upturn in Shakespeare's fondness for rhyme. Focusing attention on the plague poems *Venus and Adonis* and *Lucrece*, Taylor argued for a sudden increase in Shakespeare's use of rhyme from 1594-97 (the so-called 'lyric period'), which then diminished with temporal distance from the plague poems. Turning from the study of internal evidence to the wider historical context, Taylor challenged Malone's argument that there is a greater presence of poetry in Shakespeare's early works. Unhappy with Malone's claim that Shakespeare's earliest plays contain the most poetry, Taylor shifted the axis to the plague as a watershed moment in Shakespeare's use of rhyme. Produced around the years 1594-95, for Taylor, were *Venus and Adonis*, *Lucrece*, and a cluster of plays with a high verse content, indicating Shakespeare's turn to poetry at the time of the plague and the suspension of theatre performances.

Taylor also floated the conjecture that Robert Greene's famous attack on Shakespeare encouraged a shift from collaboration to sole-authorship. With varying degrees of certainty, Taylor proposed that the plays which antedated the publication of *Greene's Groatsworth of Wit*

[47] 'General Introduction', *Textual Companion*, p. 95.

(1592), *The Shrew*, the three plays on *Henry VI*, and *Titus*, were suspected collaborations. As there is 'no good evidence of *any* collaboration for a full decade after', Taylor concluded that 'by abandoning collaboration, and writing a serious classical narrative poem, Shakespeare demonstrated that he did not need to adorn himself with anyone else's feathers'.[48]

Andrew Murphy has noted that R.B. McKerrow, after accepting the general editorial mantle of a putative Oxford Complete Works project in the 1920s, tentatively proposed a chronological order in a letter to Kenneth Sisam, in which he asked: 'Would you be horrified if I suggest [*sic*] that it is time to abandon the Folio order and print the plays chronologically?'.[49] McKerrow's suggestion and Sisam's positive response led Murphy to observe that arranging the works chronologically appeared an entirely conventional editorial practice. For Murphy, reflecting on the critical reception of the Oxford edition twenty years after its publication, the central objection to its chronological arrangement related to issues of practicality – the ease of navigating the texts – rather than of theory.

This seems, however, to elide the way the Oxford contents page builds its own argument, acting as a guide to interpretation and encouraging a way of thinking which fundamentally disrupts conventional editorial practice. The break with the Folio's divisions, for example, underscores a dissatisfaction with the presentation of its ordering of Shakespeare's works. The reasons for their objection to the Folio categories are later made clear by Taylor:

> The First Folio's failure to date Shakespeare's work did not so much reshape his canon as unshape it. Upon the resulting shapeless assortment the editors then imposed an artificial tripartite division which itself obscured rather than illuminated the structure and nature of the plays.[50]

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[48] *Textual Companion*, p. 97. See Rory Loughnane, 'Re-Editing Non-Shakespeare for the Modern Reader: The Murder of Mutius in *Titus Andronicus*', *RES*, 68 (2016), pp. 268-95.
[49] Letter to Kenneth Sisam, 24 November 1929, OUP archives, file number CP/ED/000018, quoted in Andrew Murphy, 'The Oxford Shakespeare Re-Viewed (Again)'.
[50] 'General Introduction', *Textual Companion*, p. 37.

In short, the problem for Taylor was that the Folio's 'malaise of classification' uprooted Shakespeare from his jostling social exchanges and monumentalised him as a classically inflected literary genius. As the first collected edition of his works, the First Folio was the foundation on which centuries of criticism had been shaped by its assumptions of a literary dramatist somehow floating beyond the urgencies and contradictions of his own cultural moment. For Taylor, the Folio categories had 'surely contributed to the subsequent fruitless centuries-long critical preoccupation with decorums of genre'. Pairing these words with the Oxford contents page, it is possible to see the chronological order as not so much a navigational device as an expression of its editorial argument. As Joseph A. Howley has recently argued, in relation to the historical shift in purpose of the traditional table of contents:

> Although the table of contents becomes a conventional element of Western books, its role shifts: supplanted as a navigational device [by the index], it now functions also as an advertisement, not only of the book's content, but of the hierarchies, structure, and intent of the author's project.[51]

More than an instructive signpost, the Oxford chronology worked to breach the seemingly transparent narrative of the Folio's presentation. In doing so, it authorised and drew attention to new interpretive vistas which followed from a simple rearrangement of the mise-en-page. In other words, a simple change of title or a grouping of certain plays to exploit their perceived connections disrupted the historical editorial tradition and provided fertile routes for critical re-evaluations.

Perhaps the most significant outcome of the Oxford chronology was its removal of the Folio's historical sequence of Shakespeare's history plays. E.M.W. Tillyard's (1889-1962)

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[51] 'Tables of Contents', in *Book Parts*, ed. by Adam Smyth and Dennis Duncan (Oxford University Press, 2019), pp. 65-79 (pp. 76, 78).

influential book *The Elizabethan World Picture* (1944), which drew on the work of Tudor mythographers such as Edward Hall and Polydore Vergil, had argued for Shakespeare's two tetralogies as forming an eight-part epic which pictured history as a repeating cycle of sin, punishment, and redemption.[52] This conservative view, however, was to be the subject of a major revision effort in the 1980s, and the Oxford editors were quick to integrate their own editorial response to Tillyard's rapid fall from favour.[53] Instead of approaching the histories as a Tillyardian eight-part epic, to break them apart and separate them within a chronology of composition was to destabilise their customary unity and point to their value as independent plays. To be sure, for Taylor, the two 'tetralogies' created from the Folio arrangement's 'accident of juxtaposition' inhibited a critical appreciation of the individuality which the eight plays possessed, and which had been occluded by their enclosure within an 'anachronistic chronological ghetto'.[54]

It is worth observing here that John Jowett, expressing a similar dissatisfaction with the Folio's tripartite division, dedicated a section of his later monograph *Shakespeare and Text* (2007) to 'The Folio as Representation and Misrepresentation'.[55] In his discussion, Jowett remarked that 'the Folio organized the range of Shakespeare's plays in an arbitrary way that remains familiar today and yet creates difficulties in seeing some of the plays for what they are'. For Jowett, 'what they are' cannot be contained within the Folio categories, which served to elide Shakespeare as a risk taker who was capable of deconstructing generic distinctions in

[52] See E.M.W. Tillyard, *The Elizabethan World Picture* (Macmillan, 1944), *Shakespeare's History Plays* (Macmillan, 1946). For a discussion of Tillyard within the context of the 1980s critical debates, see Roy Battenhouse, 'Revising Tillyard: How?', in *Shakespeare and History*, University of Birmingham, 19-24 August 1984.
[53] For influential critiques of E.M.W. Tillyard, see, for example, Graham Holderness, *Shakespeare's History* (Gill and Macmillan, 1985); Jonathan Dollimore, 'Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism and the New Historicism', in *Political Shakespeare* (Manchester University Press, 1985), pp. 2-17; and Dollimore and Sinfield, 'History and Ideology', in *Alternative Shakespeares* (Methuen, 1985), pp. 209-30.
[54] 'General Introduction', *Textual Companion*, p. 38.
[55] *Shakespeare and Text* (Oxford University Press, 2007), pp. 84-92.

his plays. Unhappy with the Folio's arrangement of the histories by chronology of reign, Jowett further argued that

> A grand narrative transcending the individual play is implied by the organization of the plays in the order of the events they portray, and in the standardization of titles to display the individual plays and 'parts' of sequences as centred on the figure of the king.

In this way, a posthumously imposed order of royal succession augmented the view that each play was a smaller tessera of a larger mosaic. For Jowett, the Folio presentation of the histories thus imposed a grand récit that sowed the myth of Shakespeare as the grand poet of the English nation. Moreover, the titular emphasis on the king left little space for 'the local, the demotic, the anti-heroic, the comic, the conscience-stricken, all aspects of the history plays as we encounter them individually'. A good example of the way that the Folio's arrangement of the histories had been internalised by centuries of editorial practice can be found in A.R. Humphreys' Arden 2 edition of *1 Henry IV* (1960). In his overview of the play, Humphreys observed that

> Serious and comic themes are entwined by many other echoes and links. They unite in a vision of national life both broad and deep, and are expressed in a style of extraordinary energy, whether in serious verse or comic prose. This vision of national life has its comprehensive geographical range and its long perspectives of time […] The great idea of England is woven from all these themes.[56]

For the Oxford editors in the 1980s, a chronology of composition fractured the idea of Shakespeare as the national poet and encouraged readers to encounter the histories rather as a disparate cluster of independent plays. By drawing attention to the demands placed on Shakespeare to cater for the current repertoire, for example, the Oxford chronology notably disrupted the customary order of the first tetralogy, placing *Titus Andronicus* between *2, 3 Henry VI*, and *1 Henry VI* and *Richard III*. In the same way, the second tetralogy was disrupted

[56] 'Introduction', in *1 Henry IV*, ed. by A.R. Humphreys (Methuen, 1960), p. xlix.

by both *The Merry Wives* and *Much Ado*. As they appeared on the contents page, the reader was thus encouraged to see the scattered histories as independent plays that Shakespeare had little interest in presenting as smaller pieces of a larger whole. When consulting the contents page for direction to plays, readers would thus have been reminded of the place a play occupied in Shakespeare's order of composition, a reminder which would reinforce the assumption of the plays as independent from any grand récit that elided the individuality of each text.

Character and Theory: Falstaff, Oldcastle, or Sir John?

For readers accustomed to a sequential historical narrative based on the customary 'two tetralogies' model, it would have been a surprise to find that the traditional *Henriad* had been rearranged to form a new tripartite cluster of works known as the 'Sir John' plays. This new trilogy consisted of *The Merry Wives* hedged between the two parts of *Henry IV*. The effect of separating the customary two parts of *Henry IV* was to draw attention to their status as stand-alone plays rather than fragments of a larger whole, and this division destabilised the sense of Shakespeare as the grand poet of the English nation. To be sure, satisfying Jowett's unease with the Folio's titular attention on issues of kingship, the 'Sir John' plays deflated the sense of the *Henriad* as a Virgilian epic or a kingly *bildungsroman*, instead shifting attention to a sequence of plays in which the comic figure of Falstaff held the centre of attention.

But while on the surface the 'Sir John' plays suggested a traditional, even Bradleyan concern with character, on closer inspection a concern with Falstaff appeared to fracture any sense of character and unity. In the Oxford edition, Taylor's method for exposing the 'fictive unity' of Falstaff's character was to use the speech-prefix 'Sir John' in *Part 1*, *Part 2*, and *Merry Wives*,

but in the dialogue and stage directions he would be 'Sir John Oldcastle' in *Part 1*, but 'Sir John Falstaff' in *Part 2* and *Merry Wives*.[57] The fictive unity of the character is thus constructed through the speech-prefix 'Sir John', only for it to be dismantled through the jarring dialogue and stage directions. In this way, Falstaff can be seen as representative of a larger theoretical framework that aimed to destabilise the history plays' neat chronological arrangement. As Taylor observed in his book *Reinventing Shakespeare* (1989),

> [c]haracter has returned, but now it is multiple, contradictory, overlapping, ad hoc, an inevitably rickety construct built by a quarrelling committee for questionable motives from unstable materials.[58]

If individual characters are assumed to be the meeting point of multiple and contradictory forces, then it is perhaps no surprise that the Oxford edition gave Falstaff three different names, alternating at various points between 'Sir John', 'Oldcastle', and 'Falstaff'. In a 1985 essay setting out his argument for the restoration of the name 'Oldcastle' to *1 Henry IV*, Taylor asked the provocative question: [n]o one has restored the name Shakespeare intended for the character, before he was forced to change it. Why not?[59]

As Taylor remarked, there was a critical consensus that the play was originally performed with the name 'Oldcastle', before Shakespeare's company was forced to change it after causing offence to William Brooke, the tenth Baron Cobham whose ancestor was none other than Sir John Oldcastle, the fourth Lord Cobham and revered Protestant martyr.[60] As it happened,

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[57] Gary Taylor, 'The Fortunes of Oldcastle', *SS*, 38 (1985), pp. 85-100 (p. 87).
[58] *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 335. For later revaluations of character criticism, see, for example, Christy Desmet, *Reading Shakespeare's Characters* (University of Massachusetts Press, 1992); Raphael Falco, 'Forum: Is there Character after Theory?', *Shakespeare Studies*, 34 (2006), pp. 21-24; Paul Yachnin and Jessica Slights, eds, *Shakespeare and Character: Theory, History, Performance, and Theatrical Persons* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009).
[59] 'The Fortunes of Oldcastle', p. 87.
[60] See Paul Whitfield White, 'Shakespeare, the Cobhams, and the Dynamics of Theatrical Patronage', in *Shakespeare and Theatrical Patronage in Early Modern England*, ed. by Paul Whitefield White and Suzanne R. Westfall (Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 64-89.

William Brooke was Elizabeth I's Lord Chamberlain from August 1596 until his death on 5 March 1597, which coincided with the approximate dating of *1 Henry IV* and *The Merry Wives*.

For Taylor, restoring the name 'Oldcastle' to *Part 1* clarified Shakespeare's changing conception of the character, but a similar restoration in *Part 2* was impossible, because Shakespeare had by now hit upon his fictive idea of the character as 'Falstaff'. Many have questioned whether the Oxford decision to restore the name Oldcastle might be attributed to the editors' aim of recovering the plays as they were originally performed. As others have noted, however, this coherence appeared to discount the preference for communally prepared texts in favour of authorial intention.

In Andrew Murphy's discussion of the decision to restore the name 'Oldcastle', he observed that '[o]ne way of viewing the choice that [the Oxford editors] make would be to say that it represents a withdrawal from the full logical implications of the theory which, elsewhere, they strongly endorse'.[61] Another way of viewing that choice, I suggest, is to see it not so much as a withdrawal from theory and a return to authorial intention, but rather as a pull towards a further theoretical position: one committed to fracturing the unified surface of one of Shakespeare's most famous characters. In this instance, if the Oxford editors had committed to the full logical implications of literary sociology, then this would have undermined both the fragmentation of Falstaff's character and the individuality of the 'Sir John' plays.

All of the earlier Arden editors of *1 Henry IV* had accepted that (in A.R. Humphreys' words) 'Falstaff was certainly once Oldcastle'.[62] During a period more determined to unite than

[61] 'The Oxford Shakespeare Re-viewed', p. 168.
[62] 'Introduction', in *1 Henry IV*, p. xxxix.

fragment, however, none of the same Arden editors chose to restore the name 'Oldcastle', despite acknowledging that the name was likely used in the play's original performance. The play's Arden 2 editor A.R. Humphreys, for example, spoke of 'Falstaff's transcendent prestige', which for Humphreys arose from the time-honoured eminence that his character had achieved, even to the extent of being treated as a work in himself in the contemporary *Shakspere-Allusion-Book* index.

But probing further into the nature of Falstaff's acquired pre-eminence, Humphreys was convinced that '[t]his eminence is not predictable from the life-story of his remote original Sir John Oldcastle'. As he went on: '[s]ince the historical Oldcastle was certainly neither old nor unmilitary and (being a warrior) probably not fat, these attributes of Falstaff must arise otherwise than from history'. For Humphreys, the fictional character of Falstaff was too much of a 'rich amalgam, a world of comic ingredients' to bear more than a passing resemblance to the historical figure of Sir John Oldcastle. Falstaff rather exceeded through his 'shotsilk variety' any attempt to contain him within a historical narrative, instead gathering the now familiar parts into himself such as the Lord of Misrule, the Vice, parasite, mock-puritan and the *Miles Gloriosus* as he achieved his eminence as a fictional character.

After the Oxford edition, however, no such fictive unity could be assumed. Faced with the rebuke that (in Taylor's words) '[t]he name "Falstaff" fictionalizes, depoliticizes, secularizes, and in the process trivializes the play's most memorable character', the Arden 3 editor of *1 Henry IV* was not so convinced. Discussing the issue in his book *Shakespeare After Theory* (1999), David Scott Kastan reflected that 'what is to me troubling about the editorial

implications of this argument is that restoring "Oldcastle", if it rehistoricizes the character, effectively *de*historicizes and in the process dematerializes the text in which he appears'.[63]

Kastan's unease with the restoration of Oldcastle was thus based on a distortion of the printed record. As a book historian, Kastan noted that none of the authoritative texts printed 'Oldcastle', so that to 'reinstate' the name was to go against the material witnesses. In addition, the absence of conclusive evidence to confirm that the substitution was based on either censorship or revision meant that editors could not be so confident that 'Oldcastle' was Shakespeare's preferred choice.

If there were no authoritative texts which printed 'Oldcastle', and no subsequent editor had chosen to do so, then the decision to substitute 'Oldcastle' for 'Falstaff' can hardly be said to be an example of conventional editorial practice. The principles and procedures of the modern editorial tradition were more firmly based on a rigorous attention to the surviving material record than to adopt a reading that occurs in none. As Greg observed, the 'attack on textual problems' was to be made through attention to the material peculiarities of the printed record, rather than through speculation 'as to what we fancy may have been in an author's mind'.[64]

Rather than a conventional decision, the substitution of 'Oldcastle' served to rupture the fictive unity of Falstaff's eminent character. By renaming Falstaff as the Lollard martyr, the name 'Oldcastle' instantly detracts from Falstaff's nature as a fictional character, enervating the play's topicality. As 'Oldcastle', the reader is invited to see the character as an embodiment of the historical Oldcastle with all of his historical and socio-political valences. The decision

[63] *Shakespeare After Theory* (Routledge, 1999), p. 91.
[64] 'The Function of Bibliography in Literary Criticism Illustrated in a Study of the Text of *King Lear*', *Neophilologus*, 18.4 (1933), pp. 241-61 (p. 243).

to restore 'Oldcastle' was thus consistent with the Oxford editors' aim of firmly rooting Shakespeare to his own historical moment, which offered one way to rinse the works of the cultural accretions that they believed had obfuscated them ever since.

Theatrical Paratexts: Act and Scene Divisions

The section above on the Oxford chronology of works has considered how the replacement of the Folio categories with a chronological arrangement reinforced the argument for Shakespeare's rootedness to his historical circumstances. It is worth noting here that one of the unintended consequences of a chronological arrangement is that it enables biographical criticism: the plays read as a developing whole through time that connects with what we know of Shakespeare's life. A further layer of cultural accretion that the Oxford editors challenged was the use of act and scene divisions in modern standard editions. In the same way, Wells and Taylor also challenged the Horatian five-act formula by attempting to recreate the highly flexible scenes of early modern performance that would create a sense of the play in performance.

The Oxford editors' unease with act and scene divisions can be traced to the fact that there are no act divisions in any of the eighteen quartos printed in Shakespeare's lifetime, and they only begin to appear in print with the 1622 Quarto of *Othello* and the First Folio in 1623. Q *Othello* 1622 includes act breaks for Acts 2, 4, and 5, while twenty-eight of the Folio's thirty-six plays are fully divided into a five-act structure.[65] To explain the change from the continuous

[65] See Alan Dessen, 'Divided Shakespeare: Configuring Acts and Scenes', in *Shakespeare and Textual Studies*, ed. by Sonia Massai and Margaret Jane Kidnie (Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 332-41 (p. 332).

flow of the play in Shakespeare's day to the five-act structure, Taylor observed in the *Textual Companion* that

> it seems clear that, during the course of Shakespeare's career, his company, under the pressure of theatrical competition, changed its practice in respect to intervals or intermissions during performance: for most of his writing life, plays for the public theatre were performed without interruption, but from *c*. 1608, when the King's Men acquired the indoor Blackfriars playhouse, performances were divided into five acts by four musical interludes. Such act divisions were also retrospectively imposed on plays originally designed for continuous performance.[66]

Taylor thus concluded that the use of act intervals in the London theatres began after the King's Men had acquired the Blackfriars playhouse in August of 1608. The implication of Taylor's insight for the Oxford edition's mise-en-page was indicated in Wells's General Introduction to the *Complete Works*:

> [n]one of the editions of Shakespeare's plays printed in his lifetime (which do not include any written after 1609) marks either act or scene divisions [...] We attempt to reflect this feature of Shakespeare's dramaturgy by making no special distinction between scene-breaks and act-breaks except in those later plays in which Shakespeare seems to have observed the new convention.[67]

Exceptions were made, however, for *Titus Andronicus*, *Measure for Measure*, and *Macbeth*, as these plays 'apparently reflect theatre practice after they were first written'. Also included as an exception to the rule was *The Comedy of Errors*, because the act divisions in a 'neo-classically structured play' appeared to be authoritative and to 'represent a private performance'.

Wells and Taylor thus aimed to reflect on the page the continuous flow of the play as it was performed on the early modern stage in Shakespeare's day. In the plays printed before the transition to the Blackfriars theatre in 1608, the Oxford texts are presented with a minimalist

[66] p. 16 ('General Introduction').
[67] p. xxxii.

single line-space to divide the acts and scenes, which reproduced the quarto-style 'running on' of the plays. In the post-1608 plays, however, the Oxford edition printed a 'Tudor rose' ornament at each act division to indicate a stronger sense of the five-act structure which Shakespeare observed after his company's move to the Blackfriars playhouse.

Most radical of all in the Oxford editors' rethinking of the use of act and scene-breaks and theatre practice was the division of four plays only into scenes. These were: *Pericles*, *Edward III* (in the 2nd edition, 2005), *Sir Thomas More*, and *The History of King Lear* (based on the 1608 quarto). These four 'scene-only' plays could be distinguished from the other plays in the volume as standing on the periphery of the eighteenth-century editorial tradition. *Edward III*, for instance, was included only in Wells and Taylor's second edition, after they believed a strong case had been made for its inclusion in the Shakespeare canon. The issues surrounding authorship and collaboration will be discussed in later chapters, but it is worth noting here that, as Richard Proudfoot and Nicola Bennett have more recently noted in their Arden 3 edition, the authorship of the play remains highly speculative.[68]

Sir Thomas More was also unique as the only play included in the edition which was based not on a printed text but a dramatic manuscript, so that the editors saw no need to introduce a system of act-scene references for the convenience of their readers. The absence of a conventional structure pointed to the play as lying outside the traditional Shakespeare canon, a circumstance acknowledged by John Jowett in his Arden 3 edition, where he praises the general editors of the series for their 'courageous decision to extend the series to this play'.[69] The same situation stood with Q *The History of King Lear*, a text which Taylor noted stood 'outside the

[68] 'Introduction', in *King Edward III*, ed. by Richard Proudfoot and Nicola Bennett (Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 89.
[69] 'Preface', in *Sir Thomas More* (Bloomsbury, 2011), p. xviii.

eighteenth-century editorial tradition', so that it did not 'seem desirable that any such misleading convention should now be imposed upon it'.[70]

All four texts, therefore, offered an opportunity to re-evaluate the act-scene references of the editorial tradition as a misleading container that reinforced the image of Shakespeare as a literary dramatist. As James Hirsch has argued, the five-act formula established a commercially driven classical respectability for Shakespeare's works at a time when stage plays were regarded as vulgar and fleeting entertainments.[71] For Wells and Taylor, however, the removal of this classical dressing established a clearer sense of the plays as written for performance: a sense of continuous flow on the page would mirror for the reader the continuous flow of the plays on the early modern stage.

The most thorough re-evaluation of act-scene references in the Oxford edition was reserved for *Pericles*. The division of the play only into scenes was coherent with Wells and Taylor's principle of minimising the breaks between acts and scenes before 1608, and it is true of course that Q does not explicitly divide *Pericles* into acts or scenes. The first printed text of the play to include clear act divisions was the second issue of F3 (1664), which placed Act 3, using Malone's modern division, at 3.3, Act 4 at 4.4, and Act 5 before the entrance of Diana at 5.1.227. Further, an alternative structural logic – one that is not factored into Wells and Taylor's arrangement – is suggested in the presence of two ruled lines marking breaks in Q1 that precede the Gower-Chorus in $C1^{r}$ and $E1^{v}$.[72]

[70] *Textual Companion*, p. 510.
[71] 'Act Divisions in the Shakespeare First Folio', *The Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, 96.2 (June 2002), pp. 219-56 (p. 227).
[72] I am grateful to Adam Smyth for this insight.

The first Arden editor of *Pericles*, Kenneth Deighton, was content to follow Malone's act and scene references, although he included a gloss to his Act 1 headline which was a direct quotation from the Cambridge editors: '*Act 1*] "The Folios have here *Actus Primus. Scena Prima*. In the rest of the play the Acts are marked, but not the scenes. There is no indication of either in the Quartos"'.[73] Deighton's gloss and the comments in his Introduction both suggested that the absence of act-scene references was an unfortunate omission in the earliest printed texts and that the editor had a duty to mark them as an essential feature of the Shakespearian text. In his Introduction, Deighton presumed Malone's act and scene markers to be beyond dispute, using them as stable frames of reference to pursue his discussion of authorial attribution.

In his Arden 2 edition of *Pericles* (1963), F.D. Hoeniger's approach to act-scene divisions illustrates a general willingness among the Arden 2 editors to pool the wisdom of previous generations of editors on matters relating to act-scene divisions and conjectural emendations. For Wells and Taylor, however, the point was to interrogate that model of accumulated wisdom and instead work to bring readers closer to the grit of the circumstances of original production. In Hoeniger's case, while he was willing to accept Malone's act-scene headings, he did make an exception for the introduction of an extra scene, which he placed at I.i. 143, marking it as 'Act I, Scene Ib'.[74] In his commentary note to the new scene, he noted that when Pericles leaves after his soliloquy at I.i. 143, the stage is empty. Hoeniger also called on the authority of Wilkins's novel *The Painful Adventures*, in which Pericles's exit is followed by Antiochus presented 'private in his lodging, and ruminating with himselfe'.[75]

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[73] 'Introduction', in *Pericles*, ed. by Kenneth Deighton (Methuen, 1907), p. 8.
[74] 'Introduction', in *Pericles*, ed. by F.D. Hoeniger (Methuen, 1963), p. lii.
[75] George Wilkins, *The Painful Adventures of Pericles Prince of Tyre* (1608), in Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*, 8 vols (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1957-75), vi (1966), pp. 492-546 (p. 500).

After explaining his rationale for departing from Malone's modern division, Hoeniger then clarified his reason for calling the new scene '1b': '[t]he new scene has been called *SCENE 1b*, and not Scene 2, so as not to make reference to concordances and to other editions difficult'.[76] Hoeniger thus soon noticed that his rethinking of the act-scene references came at a price: any rearrangement of the traditional act-scene markers had the potential to disorient his readership and disrupt an established frame of reference. A compromise between a departure from tradition and the readership is thus evident in his naming of the scene as '1b'.

Hoeniger's concern to preserve a common frame of reference for his readers is also an issue considered by Wells and Taylor in the Oxford edition. But Taylor and MacDonald P. Jackson's 'reconstructed' text of *Pericles* was from the start a dramatic editorial proposition. The editors were convinced that Q *Pericles* was a reported text (by the boy who played Marina and Lychorida, and a hired man who had a number of minor parts), and even used Wilkins's *Painful Adventures* as a second reported text to produce their textual 'reconstruction'. Explaining the reasoning behind his scene-only structure, Taylor observed in the *Textual Companion* that

> since our reconstructed text cannot easily be compared with earlier editions anyway, convenience of reference is not a significant issue. We have therefore given the play continuous scene references in both the original- and modern-spelling editions.[77]

Taylor and Jackson's reconstructed text had no precedent, so they believed it was not worthwhile to provide a convenient system of reference for readers who might be tempted to compare the Oxford text with other editions. Thus while Hoeniger's innovation was balanced

[76] 'Introduction', p. 18.
[77] pp. 559-60 (*Pericles*).

by the implied needs of his readers, Taylor and Jackson were determined to pursue their own scholarly enquiry with less seeming acknowledgement of their readership.

It is worth noting here that Wells and Taylor's approach to act-scene divisions also created tension with their publishers. As Paul Luna, the senior typographer for the Oxford edition has observed:

> there was some tension between Stanley's editorial principles and what OUP had been used to selling: very traditional-looking, compact single-volume editions with very clear act and scene divisions [s]o there was a feeling that we were producing something that was a bit too academic, too far from the norm: for example, not having big act and scene divisions but making it look as if the whole play ran on [...] I think Stanley had quite a job to get across the idea that he was trying to present the flow of a performance.[78]

The theatrical paratexts of the Oxford edition, by minimising the presence of act divisions and including four 'scene-only' plays, authorised and reinforced their editorial argument of presenting Shakespeare's plays 'as they were acted in the London playhouses which stood at the centre of his professional life'.[79] To represent the play in performance, however, this section has argued for a tension between the edition's readership and the presentation of its radical editorial arguments.

Modernising Shakespeare's Spelling

Towards the end of his General Introduction to the *Complete Works*, Wells observed that '[e]ver since Shakespeare's plays began to be reprinted, their spelling and punctuation have been

[78] Edward Ragg and Paul Luna, 'Designing the Oxford Shakespeare: An Interview with Paul Luna', *Typography Papers*, 5 (2003), the Department of Typography & Graphic Communication, The University of Reading, pp. 5-22 (p. 12).
[79] Wells, 'General Introduction', *Complete Works*, p. xlii.

modernized'.[80] Most readers would have been left with the impression that the process of modernisation was a time-honoured practice which editors had not believed worthy of serious scholarly discussion. As Wells went on:

> [o]ften […] this task has been left to the printer; many editors who have undertaken it themselves have merely marked up earlier edited texts, producing a palimpsest; there has been little discussion of the principles involved; and editors have been even less systematic in this area than in that of stage directions.

This remark on the lack of adequate discussion for modernising editors may have reminded readers of Wells's preceding publications which were released as part of a subsidiary series of the Oxford project (Oxford Shakespeare Studies): Wells and Taylor's *Modernizing Shakespeare's Spelling, with Three Studies in the Text of Henry V* (1979), and Wells's monograph *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader* (1984). In his essay on 'Modernizing Shakespeare's Spelling', Wells attempted to establish a principle for regarding modernisation as a legitimate scholarly practice. In the book's Preface, he announced that '[t]he newly proposed Oxford editions will be in modern spelling'. As he described it, the process of modernisation fitted comfortably within conventional editorial practice:

> [t]his procedure, traditional in editions of Shakespeare, removes unnecessary barriers to understanding, making it possible for the reader to concentrate on the text itself, undistracted by obsolete and archaic accidentals of presentation. Thus, his reading experience is closer to that of Shakespeare's contemporaries, who also read the plays in what was, for them, a modern form.[81]

In this view, the primary aim of modernisation is to remove from the text any of the distancing effects that are imposed on readers unaccustomed to the linguistic habits of early modern English. In other words, if the linguistic gaps between the two corresponding stages

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[80] p. xli.
[81] 'Preface', in Stanley Wells & Gary Taylor, *Modernizing Shakespeare's Spelling, with Three Studies in the Text of Henry V* (Clarendon Press, 1979), p. vi.

could be narrowed, then the accessibility of the text for inexperienced readers would be significantly improved. For Wells, ever since the plays were reprinted, the practice of modernisation appeared to have been a natural process, and editors had seldom felt the need to justify their practice. From the start, then, modernisation appeared to be a natural part of the transmission of Shakespearian texts, and '[f]or centuries after this no one seems to have thought very seriously about it'.

One of the main reasons for this apparent lack of thought is hinted at in Wells's distinction between the principles of modernisation and those well-established principles which sought to recover the original words that the author wrote. In the latter case, there was 'no lack of discussion of the principles by which editors may hope to approach ever closer to the words that Shakespeare wrote'. In the former case, however, Wells believed it was 'remarkable that […] no detailed attempt seems to have been made to rationalize the principles according to which the modernizing process is carried out'. The lack of any detailed discussion of principles for modernisation might nevertheless be explained by the corresponding profusion of thought that had been given to what the author originally wrote: crucially, this suggested that the process of modernisation was an obstacle to the prevailing interest in what the author originally wrote.

The opposition between authorial intention and modernisation can be said to begin following W.G. Clark and W.A. Wright's Cambridge edition (1863-66; rev. 1891-93), and with the rise of the New Bibliography at the beginning of the twentieth century. In an influential 1970 essay which argued for full-scale modernisation, Jurgen Schäfer reflected that '[t]he Cambridge editors seem to have frozen the text at the stage they encountered; they neither

returned to the old forms nor did they add any modernized ones'.[82] This stasis was significant for Schäfer because 'a few decades later the movement of the preceding centuries towards modernization is reversed'.

This volte-face is evident in the first Arden series, as most editions were concerned to preserve the meanings of obsolete words and phrases. In general, most of the first Arden editions retained old spellings in the text proper and often included a commentary note pairing a definition with its modern equivalent. In contrast to Wells's defence of modernisation as leaving the reader 'undistracted by obsolete and archaic incidentals of presentation', for example, W.J. Craig, in his early edition of *King Lear* (1901), took great pains to illustrate the significance of those obsolete words and phrases for his contemporary readers:

> I have in my notes endeavoured to explain to the best of my ability the exact meaning of all the obsolete words and phrases occurring in the play, and when I could, I have illustrated their meaning by examples taken from the writers of the Elizabethan age drawn from my own reading or from the stores collected in the Variorum editions of 1821 and 1880, and from other sources.[83]

For Craig, if the 'obsolete words and phrases occurring in the play' could thus be made accessible to his present-day readers, then this would provide them with a closer proximity to Shakespeare's contemporaries. It is worth noting immediately that this approach is in stark contrast to Wells, who argued that such obsolete and archaic expressions distracted the reader from concentrating on the text itself, so that his or her experience of reading the text was closer to Shakespeare's contemporaries if, like them, they were presented with a text in a modern form.

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[82] 'The Orthography of Proper Names in Modern-Spelling Editions of Shakespeare', *Studies in Bibliography*, 23 (1970), pp. 1-19 (p. 3).
[83] 'Introduction', in *King Lear*, ed. by W.J. Craig (Methuen, 1901), p. lvi.

R.H. Case, who succeeded Craig as the first Arden general editor in 1906 (see Chapter one), was also determined to flag obsolete words and phrases, observing in his edition of *Anthony & Cleopatra* (1906) that 'obsolete forms of words (mere differences of spelling excepted) are invariably given in place of following the usually eclectic plan'.[84] Representative examples of the series' treatment of spelling can be found in Henry Cuningham's glosses in his edition of *Comedy of Errors* (1907). Reflecting in one commentary note that it 'seems preferable' to preserve the old spelling '*shipwracked*' rather than give its modern equivalent, Cuningham explained: '[t]hat the pronunciation was broad appears from *Macbeth*, V. v. 51, where it rhymes with "back". The word is so spelt by Dryden, *e.g.* in *Astraea Redux*, 124, and elsewhere'.[85] As with Craig, Cuningham was concerned not to throw anything away that might preserve a route back to the original sense of Jacobethan words and phrases, which was perhaps lost in the process of modernisation. Further, the reference to Dryden also usefully points to a stabilising principle in the first Arden series; namely, that the authority of words was often based on a frequency of occurrence: the more fixed examples that could be found of a known spelling variant, the more likely it was to be authoritative.

By the time that the second Arden series was launched in 1951 (see Chapter two), Una Ellis-Fermor included a 'General Editor's Preface' in Richard David's edition of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1951), which usefully revealed her attitude towards modernisation.[86] To differentiate the new series from its predecessor, Ellis-Fermor observed that the revised series was based on the needs of the expanding university student market as well as 'senior pupils of schools'. Moreover, she believed that these pupils and students were best served by the presentation of 'a reliable text within the limits imposed by modernization, with its inevitable effects upon

[84] 'Introduction', in *Anthony & Cleopatra*, ed. by R.H. Case (Methuen, 1906), p. vii.
[85] 'Introduction', in *Comedy of Errors*, ed. by Henry Cuningham (Methuen, 1907), p. 10.
[86] pp. ix-xi (London, 1949).

spelling, punctuation and, less directly, upon collation'. For Ellis-Fermor, modernisation clearly involved a logical compromise between producing a text accessible to the growing educational market and preserving the old spellings that had been more of a concern for the first Arden editors.

The view that modernisation imposed certain limitations can be explained, at least in part, by the growing influence of the New Bibliography movement. A few years before the launch of the new Arden series, W.W. Greg published his influential monograph *The Editorial Problem in Shakespeare* (1942).[87] In a brief discussion of the accidental characteristics of the text, Greg observed that

> [w]hatever practice may be thought desirable in a popular or reading edition, in a critical --that is, a critics'-- edition modern opinion is unanimously in favour of preserving the spelling and punctuation of the original authority, at least so far as they are not actually misleading.

Greg clearly had little real interest in the practice of 'popular or reading' editions, instead identifying himself as firmly on the side of critics who were interested in the habitual spellings preserved in the original material record. As he went on:

> [t]hat modernization on the lines usually followed does quite seriously misrepresent Elizabethan English, experience has amply proved. To print *banquet* for *banket*, *fathom* for *faddom*, *lantern* for *lanthorn*, *murder* for *murther*, *mushroom* for *mushrump*, *orphan* for *orphant*, *perfect* for *parfit*, *portcullis* for *perculace*, *tattered* for *tottered*, *vile* for *vild, wreck* for *wrack*, and so on, and so on, is sheer perversion.

It is worth remembering here that Greg was a bibliographer whose primary interest was in the transmission of texts. He therefore had little concern with editors who were responsible for

[87] (Clarendon Press, 1942), p. 1.

producing editions that would be accessible to modern readers.[88] Such a conflict of interest could leave practicing editors adrift between two policies: does the editor, for example, print *banquet* so that modern readers are not distracted by unfamiliar forms, or is *banket* more appropriate in retaining the common orthography of Shakespeare's day? The Arden 2 policy was that editors were to retain only those words which were judged to be more than variant spellings, but later editors have seldom found this distinction unproblematic.[89]

In Harold Brooks's discussion of modernisation in his Arden 2 *Midsummer Night's Dream* (1979), Brooks referred his readers back to A.R. Humphreys' edition of *1 Henry IV* (1960) as an exemplar of the second Arden conventions.[90] In his Introduction, Humphreys observed that

> [m]odernization raises problems. Some words no modernization will quite deal with…Others, when Shakespeare perhaps chose between alternative forms, are left unmodernized provided that the reader will not be jolted with unfamiliarity; "vildly" (for "vilely"), though retained in some new Arden volumes, is not adopted, but milder archaisms are retained, like "stronds" (I. i. 4), "loaden" (I. i. 37), "Wild of Kent" (II. i. 54), and "bands" (III. ii. 157).[91]

Clearly, Humphreys approach to modernisation reveals some of the tensions that could arise from reconciling the results of bibliographical studies to his role as an editor of a text suitable for modern readers, and particularly school pupils and university students. While Greg, for instance, had seen the modernised form 'vile' as a perversion of the original Elizabethan English 'vilde', Humphreys was pulled towards what was never a concern for Greg: that of modernising the spelling to 'vile', so that readers were not 'jolted with unfamiliarity'.

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[88] See Stanley Wells, *Re-Editing Shakespeare for the Modern Reader*, based on lectures given at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington, DC. (Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 1.
[89] See, for example, John Jowett, 'After Oxford: Recent Developments in Textual Studies', *The Shakespearean International Yearbook*, vol. 1 (Ashgate, 1999), pp. 65-86 (p. 72).
[90] 'Preface', in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. by Harold F. Brooks (Methuen, 1979), p. x.
[91] *1 Henry IV*, p. lxxvii.

This section has dwelt at some length on the first and second Arden spelling conventions, in order to suggest that Wells's attempt to rationalise the principles and procedures of modernisation was more radical than it at first appeared to be.[92] Returning to Wells's own views on modernisation, namely that it included the removal of 'unnecessary barriers to understanding, making it possible for the reader to concentrate on the text itself, undistracted by obsolete and archaic accidentals of presentation', it is possible to see that an interest in full-scale modernisation would not lead to principles that simply followed traditional editorial practice. In fact, an attempt to rationalise principles of modernisation announced nothing less than a rupture with the editorial tradition, which had, since the Cambridge edition and the rise of the New Bibliography, pulled back towards the preservation of the non-standard orthography of Shakespeare's day.

Moreover, through the process of modernisation, Wells and Taylor were contributing to a tradition of making Shakespeare appear naturally our contemporary, speaking our language. This is perhaps an unintended consequence of Wells and Taylor's editorial work, and one that has ideological consequences. No one would modernise Spenser, for example, so that Spenser seems in many ways locked in the 1590s. But Shakespeare has been modernised since the early eighteenth century, and the process reaches beyond issues about accessibility or ease of reading: modernisation has signification ideological implications for how we think about Shakespeare as historical, timeless, and of our age.

The radical nature of Wells's approach emerges most clearly in his essay's concluding remarks. For Wells, '[t]he aim is not simply to make reading easier for those unaccustomed to

[92] Philip Gaskell has also noted that Wells's approach to modernisation was 'radical rather than conservative'. See his review article 'Studies on Shakespeare', *Cambridge Review*, CI, 2256, 2 May 1980, pp. 158-59.

Elizabethan spelling', but to think hard about the form that each word should take, so that any word choice the editor judges to be more authoritative would perhaps result in new interpretive vistas. As Wells set his first task as General Editor as the attempt to rationalise principles of modernisation, it is possible to see the editorial thinking behind this process as foundational to the Oxford editors' radicalism. Indeed, whereas the process of modernisation for earlier editors was to popularise the texts, Wells redefined modernisation as a serious scholarly activity: 'a means of exploring Shakespeare's text that can make a real contribution to scholarship'.

Modernisation and *All's Well That Ends Well*

The Oxford editors' approach to modernisation outlined above can be usefully illuminated by drawing on examples from Taylor's edited text of *All's Well*. The textual problems of the play -- its often incoherent syntax, inconsistent nomenclature and unresolved cruxes -- make it a particularly suitable text for exploring the range of editorial responses to the play. One of the first words in the play that usefully indicates changing attitudes to Shakespearian texts occurs in II.iii., which opens with Lafew and Parolles discussing the nature of the King's cure. During this exchange, Parolles reflects that:

> *Par*. Nay' tis strange, 'tis very straunge, that is the breefe and the tedious of it, and he's of a most facinerious spirit, that will not acknowledge it to be the ---------
> (TLN 255, 920-22)[93]

[93] All Folio act-scene divisions are to Charlton Hinman's *The First Folio of Shakespeare: based on Folios in the Folger Shakespeare Library Collection*, 2nd edn (W.W. Norton, 1996). 'TLN' refers to the Through Line Numbering in this edition.

In the first Arden edition of *All's Well* (1904), W. Osbourne Brigstocke considered F's 'facinerious' as 'Parolles' mistake for "facinorous", a word meaning wicked'.[94] Less convinced that Parolles's character was responsible for the error, G.K. Hunter in his second Arden edition (1959) argued that

> [t]he usual form is 'facinorous (=wicked), and edd. suppose that either Parolles or the printer blundered. But N.E.D. gives it as a true form, cites 'facinorious' from Heywood and traces it to O.F. 'facinereux." (*N.S.*).[95]

While Hunter's response emphasises a shift of interest from character analysis towards the text's material and historical circumstances, both are conservative in preserving the Folio's authority. This is in contrast to Gary Taylor, who did not accept either F1's spelling as a semantically significant variant or as a mispronunciation based on Parolles's comic persona:

> Given Heywood's *facinorious* (*OED*), F's spelling cannot be regarded as a comic blunder by Paroles, and neither the *er*/*or* variant, nor the optional *-i-*, justifies regarding it as a distinct or semantically significant form.[96]

As the word form in F was considered a spelling variant, Taylor updated the word to its modern equivalent, 'facinorious'. This same approach was taken by the Arden 3 editors, who preferred Heywood's spelling 'facinorious' as an alternative modern variant.[97] In this instance, Taylor's modernisation of F's 'facinerious' appeared to follow Wells's overall aim to both 'make reading easier for those unaccustomed to Elizabethan spelling', and also to seriously consider the form that each word should take.

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[94] 'Introduction', in *All's Well That Ends Well* (Methuen, 1904), p. 58.
[95] 'Introduction', in *All's Well That Ends Well* (Methuen, 1959), p. 52.
[96] *Textual Companion*, p. 495.
[97] Helen Wilcox and Suzanne Gossett, eds, *All's Well That Ends Well* (Bloomsbury, 2018), p. 196.

Further examples, however, suggest that Taylor's practice of modernisation appears to elide the readership as he asserted his own interpretation of the text. In the same scene, after Helen has chosen Bertram as her husband, the King praises Helen's honour to a reluctant Bertram faced with marriage to a woman of lower social status:

> Honours thriue,
> When rather from our acts we them deriue
> Then our fore-goers: the meere words, a slaue,
> Debosh'd on euerie tombe, on euerie graue:
> A lying Trophee, and as oft is dumbe,
> Where dust, and damn'd obliuion is the Tombe.
> Of honour'd bones indeed,
> (TLN 256, 1037-43)

Both the first and second Arden editors saw no need to question the Folio's 'damn'd', while the Arden 3 editors simply updated the past participle to the unsyncopated form 'damned'. For Taylor, however, the Folio spelling 'damn'd' introduced an 'unintended ambiguity', and he was willing to include his own choice of 'dammed oblivion' in the text proper:

> …The meere word's a slave,
> Debauched on every tomb, on every grave
> A lying trophy, and as oft is dumb
> Where dust and dammed oblivion is the tomb
> Of honoured bones indeed.
> (II.iii. 138-42)[98]

To explain his choice, Taylor included a commentary note in the accompanying *Textual Companion*:

> To speak of 'damned oblivion' as a tomb surely introduces an unintended ambiguity here; whereas the image of dust and dammed oblivion' is both appropriate and characteristic.[99]

[98] *Complete Works*, p. 1041.
[99] 'Textual Notes', p. 496.

Less concerned to modernise the word for the benefit of his readership, Taylor's interpretation appears more the result of Wells's injunction to think hard about the form that each word should take, so that his practice straddles between two contrasting poles: one which sought to make the text more accessible, and one which aimed to make a scholarly contribution.

A further example which suggests a tension between these two aims -- that of modernising for the benefit of a wide readership, and modernising 'in the purest spirit of scholarship' -- can be found in III.vi.[100] When the French lords discuss their plan to trick Parolles into revealing his cowardice to Bertram, the first lord reflects that

> we haue almost imbost him, you shall see his fall to night; for indeede he is not for your Lordshippes respect.
> (TLN 262, 1833-35)

All three Arden editions updated the Folio's 'imbost' to the modern past participle 'embossed', although G.K. Hunter in his Arden 2 text preferred to print the syncopated form 'emboss'd'. Each editor also found it necessary to include a gloss which explained the term. Osbourne Brigstocke's Arden 1 note quoted Dr. Johnson's definition: 'to emboss a deer is to enclose him in a wood', while Wilcox and Gossett similarly offered their own definition: 'driven [...] to extremity, like a hunted animal about to be killed'. Further, G.K. Hunter's Arden 2 edition noted that the word was 'identical with 'imbosk'', a form that Taylor was willing to adopt in his Oxford text proper:

> we have almost embosked him. You shall see his fall tonight; for indeed he is not for your lordship's respect.
> (III.vi. 99-101)[101]

[100] Stanley Wells, *Re-Editing*, p. 22.
[101] *Complete Works*, p. 1048.

In the same manner as G.K. Hunter's note, Taylor's began by observing that the Folio's 'imbost' and the form 'embosked' were etymologically identical. But Taylor went further:

> the more technical and rarer modern word here seems desirable in order to discourage the irrelevant senses of modern *emboss*. Alternatively, one might spell 'ambushed', which derives from the same French root, and which continued to be spelt 'em-' into the 17th *c*.[102]

If the interest was firmly in making the text more intelligible for the readership and discouraging 'irrelevant senses' of the modern word *emboss*, then 'ambushed' would perhaps have been the most satisfactory solution. Taylor, however, preferred 'the more technical and rarer modern word', which would have encouraged most conscientious readers to search for an elaborative commentary note in the edition's *Textual Companion*. Unlike the Arden editors, however, Taylor offered no definition of the word for his readers, so that the choice of word here has the feel of one put forward in reaction to the modern editorial tradition. In Taylor's approach to modernisation, the pressure thus appeared to be on interrogating the modern editorial tradition, rather than in following conventional practice.

Textual Cruxes in *All's Well*

This section will now turn to consider Wells and Taylor's approach to cruxes, with a focus on two famous examples from *All's Well*. In Wells's *Re-Editing Shakespeare* (1984), he observed that

[102] *Textual Companion*, p. 497.

> [i]t is proper that texts should be freshly examined from time to time in the light of the latest scholarship, but it would be dishonest of an editor to make changes merely so that his edition would be different from someone else's.[103]

Any fresh examination of a text of course is likely to lead to such changes, and it would no doubt be considered less of a contribution when the result of any such examination led to very few differences. While it would certainly be unfair to accuse the Oxford editors of making changes so that their edition 'would be different from someone else's', it is true that they were less concerned with the New Bibliographical fixing point of seeking to preserve the primary textual evidence than with seeking to make a scholarly contribution.

Many of Wells and Taylor's supplementary works that preceded publication of their complete-works edition included critiques of the long-standing editorial tradition against which they sought to identify their own practice. Aiming to disrupt the totemic ideals central to this tradition, Wells accused editors of a 'timorous conservatism' which resulted from an 'undue subservience to the editorial tradition'.[104] When the scholarly editor is 'tempted to ignore considerations suggesting that the primary evidence should be set aside', Wells observed, 'he should examine himself carefully in an effort to discover whether he is motivated by pure reason or indulging a lazy-minded reluctance to disturb the status quo'. It is evident that the spur in such thinking was clearly on doing things differently rather than accepting the authority of tradition. It is worth noting here however that Wells's admonition does seem to undermine the judgement of earlier editors, who perhaps are worth the compliment that they were able to judge for themselves and make reasoned decisions over whether to emend the primary evidence.

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[103] p. 3 ('Introduction').
[104] *Re-Editing*, pp. 3-4.

Taylor's own spur to emendation was similarly evident in his attack on the New Bibliography. In his essay 'Inventing Shakespeare' (1986), Taylor challenged what he saw as the movement's emphasis on 'objectivity, its preference for mechanical explanations [and] its insistence upon demonstrable proof', which for Taylor had 'inhibited editorial creativity and undermined editorial confidence in the validity of critical judgements'.[105] Science unhelpfully obstructed editorial judgement, so that the editor was primarily to become immersed with the author in the act of creation: 'what an editor no less than a poet requires is negative capability: the capacity to think like his author, and thereby to emend in a manner entirely characteristic of his author. The convincing emendation makes us exclaim "How Shakespearian!"'.

For Taylor, the 'ideal textual critic' was one who possessed 'both the poet's playfulness with language *and* the poet's negative capability, so that the business of emendation was 'primarily creative and critical, rather than bibliographical'. One example of Taylor's creative approach can be found in the famous crux of III.ii, in which Helen's apostrophe to bullets voices her concern for Bertram's safety in war:

> O you leaden messengers,
> That ride upon the violent speede of fire,
> Fly with false ayme, moue the still-peering aire
> That sings with piercing, do not touch my Lord:
> (TLN 260, 1517-20)

Both the first and second Arden editors were drawn to the word 'still-peering', which Osbourne-Brigstocke defended in the Folio, although G.K. Hunter preferred the later Folio form 'still-piecing'. Osbourne-Brigstocke saw no reason to challenge the authority of the First Folio, while Hunter's close reading of the passage led him to prefer the form 'still-piecing' as

[105] 'Inventing Shakespeare', *Deutsche Shakespeare-Gessellschaft West: Jahrbuch* (1986), pp. 26-44 (p. 33).

the 'clearer and seemingly more poetic form to the sense which must be present'.[106] In Taylor's commentary note, he objected to C.J. Sisson's discomfort with the sound of *piercingly-piecing*, remarking that it 'seems to us markedly Shakespearian'.[107] Ultimately, however, Taylor believed that '[a]ll the proposed glosses on 'peering', were 'relevant only tangentially if at all, and/or involve strained and elliptical interpretations'.

What was of greater interest for Taylor in the crux was the Folio's word 'moue'. In his substantial gloss on the word, Taylor questioned its sense as a word to describe the danger of a speeding bullet. A more satisfactory word for Taylor adopted in his text was 'cleave':

> Fly with false aim, cleave the still-piecing air
> That sings with piercing, do not touch my lord.
> (III.ii, 112-13)[108]

To defend his choice, Taylor cited examples from other sources which used 'much more explicit verbs' to describe the 'idea of a self-repairing invulnerability': e.g. Jonson's 'cut through ayre' (Catiline, 3.522), and 'cleave the Ayre' from Fletcher and Massinger's *Sea Voyage* (1622). Taylor's injunction, however, for the editor to 'emend in a manner entirely characteristic of his author', seems here to require some caution. To what extent, it might be asked, does the editor's imaginative meeting of minds with the author leave the door open for their own aesthetic choice? Taylor's bold pairing of the editor with the author was consistent with Wells's objection to a 'timorous conservatism', but this formula created a highly individualised approach which perhaps underestimated the centuries of debate which had established the authority of the modern editorial tradition.

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[106] 'Introduction', p. 79.
[107] 'Textual Notes', in *A Textual Companion*, p. 497.
[108] *Complete Works*, p. 1045.

A response to what Wells described as an 'undue subservience to the editorial tradition' is evident in Taylor's approach to one of the most famous cruxes in the Shakespeare canon.[109] During Diana's exchange with Bertram in IV.ii, she comments on the power of men to entrap women:

> *Dia*. I see that men make rope's in such a scarre,
> That wee'l forsake ourselues. Giue me that Ring.
> (TLN 264, 2063-64)

Osbourne-Brigstocke was at a loss with the passage, simply leaving the phrase as it stood in the Folio. 'No emendation', he judged, 'has yet been proposed which is quite satisfactory and clears away all the difficulties.[110] G.K. Hunter similarly found the best course was to leave the passage as it stood: '[e]ditors have only succeeded in sophisticating the nonsense of this prime crux in the Folio text, and therefore I leave the original reading untouched'.[111] Taylor, however, was determined to make sense of the nonsense, which resulted in a considerable departure from the Folio arrangement:

> DIANA
> I see that men make toys e'en such a surance
> That we'll forsake ourselves. Give me that ring.
> (4.2.40-41)[112]

Although his gloss noted that 'no emendation has won widespread acceptance', Taylor argued that his conjecture 'satisfies all the complicated requirements of the sense, and is well supported by parallel passages'. It is perhaps revealing that he offered no explanation of the phrase's meaning for his readership, so that the interest appears to be in providing a solution

[109] *Re-Editing,* p. 3.
[110] *All's Well*, p. 114.
[111] *All's Well*, pp. 102-03.
[112] *Complete Works*, p. 1050.

and making a scholarly contribution. If his readers desired to know more, they were directed to a forthcoming essay that would explain the reasoning behind his conjecture.

This 1989 essay was 'Textual Double Knots: 'make rope's in such a scarre''.[113] Taylor made it clear from the start that his interest was not so much in providing a solution as offering a suitable methodological framework, so that '[i]f editors share their labours, then at least our successors will be in a position to build and refine our efforts, rather than each time starting, despairingly, from scratch'. Taylor's method was built on two kinds of evidence -- 'significant' and 'structural' -- which he hoped would ultimately guide editors towards a 'meeting of minds' with the original author. 'Significant' evidence involved 'grammar, syntax, meter, word-meaning, and dramatic context', while 'structural' evidence 'helps us to reconstruct the literal shape of that sign as physical object: the letters of which it was composed'.

Applying these twin imperatives to work through the difficulties of the passage, Taylor concluded that '[w]e are [...] forced to introduce into the text of Shakespeare a 'new' thought -- although, we hope, that thought, though new to us, will be what Shakespeare thought 380 years ago'.[114] Taylor's emendation was no doubt a bold selection which satisfied Wells's objection to a 'timorous conservatism', but it is true that few later editors have accepted Taylor's emendation as recovering what Shakespeare originally thought. The reasons for this will become clear in the next chapter on the Arden 3 series, but an indication is given in Wilcox and Gossett's commentary note to the same passage in their Arden 3 *All's Well*. Their arrangement is presented as:

DIANA

[113] Published in *Shakespeare: Text, Subtext, and Context*, ed. by Ronald Dotterer (Associated University Presses, 1989), pp. 163-85 (pp. 180, 163).
[114] 'Textual Double Knots', p. 180.

> I see that men may rope's in such a snare
> That we'll forsake ourselves. Give me that ring.
> (4.2. 38-39)[115]

Wilcox and Gossett's reading followed P.A. Daniel's conjecture, which they found persuasive because 'the solution requires little emendation'. This is in contrast to Taylor, whose intervention resulted in a significant departure from the Folio reading. For Wilcox and Gossett, a respect for the ink on the page becomes part of a greater investment in the collaborative agents of production, as the decentred author is placed in a horizontal relation to a variety of close-contriving textual agents. As Emma Smith has observed more broadly: '[m]odern textual scholarship has tended [...] to embrace print as intrinsic to the transmission of Shakespeare's works, and thus inseparable from them'.[116]

The discussion of the Oxford editors' approach to modernisation and emendation which has been the topic of the previous two sections has been repeatedly drawn towards a significant tension between the edition's readership and a desire to make a scholarly contribution. Prior to the Oxford edition, the primary motive of modernisation was to make the text more accessible to a wide readership, but there are instances in the Oxford editors' approach which appear to use the process of modernisation as a way to pull towards new perspectives and interpretive vistas.

The tension between the readership and the scholarly community can also be said to inform Wells and Taylor's approach to cruxes. From the examples given of Taylor's response to the famous cruxes in *All's Well*, it appears that his primary motive was to offer solutions rather than clarify meanings for his readership. It is further worth noting here that this tension also has

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[115] p. 269.
[116] 'Shakespeare's Early Modern Books: Printing, Paratext, and Text', in *The Arden Research Handbook of Shakespeare and Textual Studies*, ed. by Lukas Erne (Arden Shakespeare, 2021), pp. 94-110 (p. 95).

implications for Wells and Taylor's key editorial goal of seeking to recover the plays as they were performed on the early modern stage. If the aim was to return as far as possible to the early modern play in performance, then modernisation would present a barrier, in that the edition would be pulled into the present. Modernisation of course produces (in Paul Eggert's words) an 'unavoidable chronological hybridity', but it nevertheless introduces mixed signals for readers presented with an edition that attempts to restore the plays as original scripts for performance.[117]

Conclusion

The Oxford Shakespeare began with the desire to be new. Much of this desire arose from a sense that the preceding editorial tradition had reached its logical endpoint at the conclusion of the second Arden series. This chapter has focused on the critical and interpretative consequences of Wells and Taylor's editorial thinking that is expressed through the Oxford edition's paratextual notations and interface design. Wells and Taylor have emphasised the way they were opening up new interpretive vistas in their editorial work, but the critical and interpretative consequences of the new avenues they opened up have received less attention.

One of the most significant departures from the modern tradition was the edition's primary focus on the plays as they were performed on the early modern stage. But to take the imaginative leap back to the plays in performance was only to reconfigure the hypothetical ideal as an original performance rather than what the author originally wrote. According to the Oxford editors, the printed page of the original witnesses had inflected interpretation towards

[117] Email, 7 August 2021.

positioning Shakespeare as a literary figure floating beyond his historical circumstances, so that the posthumously designed material interfaces deflected the reality of Shakespeare as a man firmly rooted to the present tense of his moment.

In producing an edition of Shakespeare that knowingly departed from traditional expectations, Wells and Taylor were aware that too much innovation could likely disorient readers, and one of the ways to circumvent this effect was through its paratextual features and interface design. For readers accustomed to standard modern editions, these features offered a way to recalibrate the Oxford reader's expectations, gradually attuning them to the radical argument that the edition puts forward.

One of the most striking ways in which the break with tradition is announced is through the use of the Folio's Droeshout engraving. By removing certain components of texts and bringing others into a clearer dialogic relationship, the Oxford edition attacks the modern tradition at its source, suggesting that the posthumously produced Folio had presented a transparent surface to futurity. This transparency the Oxford edition was to expose as a constructed narrative of literary cachet that distorted a truer image of Shakespeare as a risk-taking artist rooted to his historical circumstances. No longer ensconced on the lofty heights forging works that sprang from spontaneous acts of organic creation, Shakespeare was to be recognised as man living a quotidian existence, a holder of corn and malt in his native Stratford, and a man who was even known on occasion not to pay his taxes.

An interest in Shakespeare and the mundane also served a more significant purpose in cutting away the accretions of the post-Folio tradition. For Wells, the subsequent tradition had confusingly mixed Shakespeare's works together as both literary *and* theatrical artefacts. If the

Folio was the springboard for the literary heights that Shakespeare had achieved, then the Oxford edition served to redress the balance in favour of a quotidian dramatist under pressure to please the early modern theatre-goers of his time. It would be hard to underestimate the impact of the theatrical force of the Oxford edition as it objected to a tradition of seeing the plays as literary artefacts. The twentieth-century emphasis on Shakespeare as primarily a poetic genius had of course been bolstered by the drive to establish English as an academic subject in higher education. But the new emphasis on the theatre in a prominent single-volume edition was to begin the editorial fracturing of Shakespeare as the ultimate exemplar of literary permanence and perfection.

In turning attention to the theatre, the Oxford edition was able to open up new interpretive vistas and point out new opportunities for critical evaluations in places which Wells and Taylor believed had become barren. A.W. Pollard's 'bad' quartos, for example, took on new significance as providing evidence of early modern performance which could potentially disrupt the sense of a transcendental text cordoned off from its social network. In the same way, archival documents which offered external witnesses to original performance could be re-evaluated as bringing the reader closer to the original text as it was delivered on the early modern stage. None of the earlier Arden editors had overruled the Folio's authority in adding Jonson's clause to their text. Similarly, none had been influenced by Forman's recorded title of the play as '*Cymbeline, King of England*', which allowed the Oxford editors to draw attention to the micro-history of Shakespeare's play in the theatre, and the here and now of its historical moment.

To recover and represent the historical circumstances in which Shakespeare's plays were produced and performed was to destabilise the unified surface of the text considered as a verbal

icon. Within the received tradition, no editor had accepted the authority of any witness external to the authoritative Shakespearian texts. For the Oxford editors, however, Jonson and Forman seemed to be right, and the Folio editors to be wrong. In accepting the authority of external witnesses, the Oxford editors took part in the new historicist project of fracturing the traditional boundaries of the text as a self-enclosed system, thus exposing its historical contingency as a text scored by its social network. The effect was to expose Shakespeare's solitary position at the apex of the literary canon as a construct, and to show that he belonged most readily to his socialised workspace.

The fracturing of the customary autonomous texts through the use of archival documents was, however, only one part of the larger project of cutting away the accretions of the centuries. One of the most striking ways that the Oxford edition could be differentiated from its predecessors was that its aim of rinsing away the dross of tradition was visible in its paratextual features and interface design. Indeed, the clearest statement of its argument against tradition was in its use of a chronology by composition. Neither of the preceding major complete-works editions, the Riverside (1967) or Pelican Shakespeare (1969) had chosen to depart from the Folio's tripartite division of the plays into genres.

Rather than serving as an aid to support the reader's navigation of the edition, the chronology by composition aimed to subtly recalibrate the readers' expectations when it came to a major edition of Shakespearian works. Readers were immediately discouraged from seeing Shakespeare as a classically inflected genius, and were instead invited to picture a man responsive to his immediate historical circumstances. The Folio's categories, it appeared, were nothing more than a posthumously produced arrangement that had elevated Shakespeare above his quotidian circumstances. Just as Wells and Taylor were interested in 'getting back' to the

play in performance, so too a chronology by composition offered a way of getting beyond the distortions of the printed page and back to the historical circumstances in which Shakespeare's plays were produced.

The investment in historicism is also evident in Wells and Taylor's approach to the history plays. In the early 1980s, the question of how close the social life of Shakespeare's stage was to the period as understood by historians was a timely one. The Oxford editors explore this interest in exciting ways in the history plays, shifting the narrative from a focus on the English nation to smaller scale micro and local histories, such as the disputes around the unification of the crowns of Scotland and England in *Macbeth*. The critical investment in microhistories is evident, for example, in the emphasis on the Essex Rebellion in *Henry V*. Topical references to the Earl's ill-fated Irish campaign of 1599 are suggested in the Chorus to Act 5 of the play, and a discussion of references to the Earl's campaign opens Wells's short introduction to the play in the Complete Works.

Moreover, the scattering of the history plays draws attention to the plays as independent entities concerned with such local and demotic issues rather than kingship. The turn from large-scale thinking is evident in the edition's rearrangement of the traditional *Henriad* into a cluster of 'Sir John' plays, creating not so much a trilogy centred on kingship but a sequence of plays in which Falstaff held the centre of attention. But if this appeared an attempt to unify the character of Falstaff, the three names variously attributed to him throughout served to destabilise any sense of personal integrity. To be sure, the fracturing of the unified surface of one of Shakespeare's most memorable characters is made explicit in the decision to substitute "Falstaff" for 'Oldcastle'.

None of the earlier Arden editors had gone so far as to use ‘external witnesses’ such as Jonson and Foreman in their edited texts. More than any previous edition, however, Wells and Taylor were determined to push the boundaries of the traditional Shakespearean corpus and in doing so often embraced the authority they identified in the wider social and historical network. This chapter has thus aimed to begin to show some of the ways that the Oxford edition took shape from and challenged the critical assumptions which guided the earlier Arden editors. It has also begun to show some of the ways that the Oxford edition influenced the editorial thinking of the later Arden 3 series, a topic which will be taken up more fully in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

Unity and Fragmentation in the Third Arden Shakespeare series: The Case of Conflation versus Textual Materialism

Plans for a third Arden Shakespeare series were launched in 1984, with the appointment of Richard Proudfoot as the new series' founding General Editor. Working alone with publishing input from Jane Armstrong of Routledge, Proudfoot was responsible for drawing up plans for a new series at a time when the long-cherished editorial tradition which had guided its two predecessors was being rigorously challenged. As previous chapters have shown, the first and second Arden series were generation-spanning projects enabled by the co-ordinated efforts of a diverse group of editors who were committed to a series logic of producing unified and consensus editions.

As the planning work began for a third series, however, many literary and textual critics declared a growing unease over the inherited categories that had sustained the modern editorial tradition. For Jean E. Howard, writing in the eventful years between the Arden 2 and 3 series, the time was ripe to reach out in new directions and 'let the fresh energies and concepts of contemporary theory facilitate our search for productive alternatives to the traditional reading'.[118] All too aware of the resistance to such exciting new searches, many critics nevertheless shared Howard's view that texts should be constantly revealed as manmade and historically determined constructs rather than mirrors of atemporal truths.

[118] 'Scholarship, Theory, and More New Readings: Shakespeare for the 1990s', in *Shakespeare Studies Today: The Horace Howard Furness Memorial Lectures*, ed. by Georgianna Ziegler (AMS Press, 1986), pp. 127-52 (p. 131).

This chapter begins by placing the categories of unity and fragmentation within the larger context of the institutional and intellectual conditions of the 1980s and 1990s. Attention will then turn to how the two categories are put in practice by editors in the third Arden series. Firstly, I focus on R.A. Foakes's conflated edition of *King Lear* (1997), before moving on to consider the contrasting work of Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's two-volume, three-text *Hamlet* (2006), and *Hamlet: The Texts of 1603 and 1623* (2006). These two editions are isolated for several reasons. In the case of Foakes's *King Lear*, in many ways an outlier of the third series, I argue for the continuing relevance of the practice of conflation, which Foakes aimed to reconcile with a wider shift of interest towards historical specifics. Foakes's edition, I argue, illustrates how he had reconceived the notion of unity in response to a richer critical picture that was turning attention to the way literary works exist under the pressure of historical events.

A sense of this richer critical landscape in which editors were working can be clarified through the parallel case of Edmund Spenser's *Faerie Queene*. In the 1990s, the *Faerie Queene* was being newly explored as a work fascinatingly shaped over time by the crisis in Ireland. There was now a particular interest in the two different versions of the ending of Book III of the poem. It would eventually be seen much more as three distinct publications: The 3-book 1590 *FQ*; the revised 6-book 1596 *FQ*; and the 1611 version, which added a fragmentary Book VII. Instead of focusing on the wise, distant, platonic Spenser, critics – pioneeringly Greenblatt in *Renaissance Self-Fashioning* – thought of Spenser as an engaged colonial official. These same interests in Spenser parallel the new ways of reading Shakespeare's histories.[119] Critics and students interested in those crises needed historically specific editions because they were interested in locating the local politics of the works.

[119] See, for example, David J. Baker, *Between Nations: Shakespeare, Spenser, Marvell, and the Question of Britain* (Stanford University Press, 1997); Christopher Highley, *Shakespeare, Spenser, and the Crisis in Ireland* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

As a further response to this richer climate, Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's two volume, three-text *Hamlets* offers a useful case-study for considering how the New Textualism provided alternative methodologies within a shifting critical landscape for practicing editors. The departure from a single conflated text and the printing of three separate texts in two different volumes puts in practice a materialist methodology inspired by the New Textualism, as each text is emphasised as a separate material entity. In both Foakes's and Thompson and Neil Taylor's response to the growing interest in postmodern fragmentation, what was of primary concern was the needs of their readership. In comparing Foakes's conflated *King Lear* and Thompson and Taylor's Textual Materialist *Hamlets*, then, I am interested in how the imagined reader experiences the text, and the different expectations that the editors imagine for their readership. My argument is that the intellectual pressures of the moment that celebrated postmodern fragmentation carried the danger of producing a fragmented vision of the edition's readership.

The interest in historical specifics as it emerged in the 1980-90s is pivotal to gaining a sense of the nature of the pressures on the third Arden editors during a time of significant methodological upheaval. This interest points to the way a richer critical landscape would facilitate and inspire new and refreshing ways of editing Shakespearean texts. In the previous chapter, I considered how the new ideas drawn from a richer, more exciting critical landscape facilitated the work of Wells and Taylor in their Oxford edition (1986-87). In this chapter, my interest is in the central categories of unity and fragmentation.

To frame the analysis, my focus is on the contrasting editorial thinking and method of the Arden 3 editors of *King Lear* and *Hamlet*. In particular, I am interested in the interpretative

consequences that the two approaches have for each edition's readership. Pursuing this interest, the key questions of the chapter include: how might the edition's readership experience Foakes's conflated *King Lear* text and its interruptive apparatus for flagging textual alterity? And how does that experience differ with a shift of interest towards the philosophies of the New Textualism? Are readers more interested in exploring the differences between the three texts of *Hamlet*, or are they better able to cope with a single text?

Unity and Fragmentation in the Shakespearean Text

In his book *Appropriating Shakespeare* (1993), Brian Vickers recalled a time when the 'student of Shakespeare could read a wide range of books and articles devoted primarily to interpreting the plays in a modern critical-analytical way, with varying emphases on their historical context'.[120] However, the 'great change in -- so far mainly English-speaking -- culture over recent years', Vickers observed, 'has been [a] division of the field of criticism into clearly labelled competing groups, each with its preferred journals, founding mythology, terminology, and other codes of reference'. The main critical schools that Vickers acknowledged were psychoanalytic criticism, Marxism, Feminism, New Historicism and Cultural Materialism. Those critics, he went on, 'who do not belong to any group risk being "marginalized" -- dismissed, ignored'. It is worth noting here that Vickers is unusual as an oppositional figure to the fresh energies of the new and exciting critical landscape. Along with Harold Bloom, Vickers complained about the loosely grouped 'school of resentment', but their critiques greatly simplified what was going on at the time. One early example of this threat of obscurity to textual critics and editors is clearly suggested by Gary Taylor's warning at a 1985 conference

[120] *Appropriating Shakespeare: Contemporary Critical Quarrels* (Yale University Press, 1993), p. ix.

of the Society for Textual Scholarship. Finishing his paper, Taylor declared that 'all future editions of Shakespeare should be, and will be, based upon the hypothesis of revision. In other words, if you don't jump on the boat now, you may be left, looking hopelessly foolish, alone on the pier'.[121]

The fragmentation of the field of English studies into competing and rival groups, Vickers argued, 'had meant that critics have adopted the theory, method, and terminology of whichever group has won their allegiance as templates with which to interpret Shakespeare'. Under the pretence of opening up the field to fresh enquiry, such approaches appeared to 'effectively close it down, recasting it in their own images'. In a similarly despondent mood, Frank Kermode observed in 1989 that 'more literary criticism is now being written than ever before, and of a kind that is thought by many to be more valuable, more intelligent, and more exciting than any before it'.[122]

The difficulty for Kermode, however, was that '[a]lthough much of this new criticism is indeed intelligent and, to sympathetic readers, exciting, it is often the work of writers who seem largely to have lost interest in literature as such'. Those who appeared to have lost interest in literature and turned towards a literary sociology were memorably labelled by Harold Bloom as 'The School of Resentment'. For Bloom, this group was 'compelled by its dogmas to regard aesthetic supremacy, particularly in Shakespeare's instance, as a prolonged cultural conspiracy undertaken to protect the political and economic interests of mercantile Great Britain from the eighteenth century until today'.[123]

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[121] 'The Rhetoric of Textual Criticism', *Text: An Interdisciplinary Annual of Textual Studies*, 4 (1998), pp. 39-57 (p. 47).
[122] *An Appetite for Poetry: Essays in Literary Interpretation* (Collins, 1989), p. 5.
[123] *The Western Canon: The Books and Schools of the Ages* (Harcourt Brace, 1994), p. 50.

A sign of the times was evident in Graham Bradshaw's review of four Arden editions in 1982, which in many ways reflected the shifting critical interests in its pronouncement on the second series' governing principles.[124] In his discussion of Jenkins's edition of *Hamlet* (1982), Bradshaw remarked that '[s]ince every 'Shakespearean' is likely to recognise indebtedness to Professor Jenkins, it is a pity to have to report that this long-awaited edition of *Hamlet* arouses yet graver misgivings'. One of the major problems for Bradshaw was that Jenkins's commentary notes 'resound with the noise of door after door being irritably banged shut'.

Jenkins appeared too confident in his own interpretation of the play, which led Bradshaw to comment that 'after centuries of perplexity and delight, there is at last one reader who can "understand" the play'. In another indication of shifting interests, Jenkins was also at fault for his dislike of 'the sophisticated modern theatre-goer', and 'had no grasp on the fundamental principle that the printed text of a drama is at best an imperfect record of the dramatist's conception'. The overall effect of Bradshaw's review was to chip away at the foundations of Jenkins's *Hamlet* as a stable and unified edition.

Bradshaw's review thus usefully marks a sea change in editorial thinking from unified and coherent texts that sustained the first and second Arden series, towards an investment in fragmentation. The emerging sense of textual unity as a fraudulent category was also voiced by Terry Eagleton, who argued in 1983 that it was an 'arbitrary prejudice' to hold that 'literary works form organic wholes', when they are clearly depositories of 'many suggestive frictions and collisions of meaning'.[125]

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[124] 'Hamlet in the Prison of Arden', *LRB*, 4.16 (September 1982), pp. 12-14.
[125] *Literary Theory: An Introduction* (University of Minnesota Press, 1983), pp. 80-81. For a defence of artistic unity, see Richard Levin, 'The Cultural Materialist Attack on Artistic Unity, and the Problem of Ideological Criticism', in *Ideological Approaches to Shakespeare: The Practice of Theory* ed. by Robert P. Merrix and Nicholas Ranson (Lampeter: Mellen, 1992), pp. 39-56.

Witnessing the same prejudice, Francis Barker and Peter Hulme remarked in 1985 that it was 'meaningless to talk about the unity of any given text', as materialist criticism 'demonstrate[s] that, athwart its alleged unity, the text is in fact marked and fissured by the interplay of the discourses that constitute it'.[126] A further unease with artistic unity was expressed by Malcolm Evans, who in 1986 argued forcibly that the 'fictional unity' of texts must be 'torn apart', to display the previously smoothed over 'discourses and social contradictions that constitute the text'.[127]

By 1995, when the first three editions of the third Arden series were published, Margreta de Grazia argued that Platonic texts produced to conform with a 'supposed higher Unity' were no longer acceptable.[128] For de Grazia, the effort to produce stable and unified editions was a 'grand editorial hoax that has duped generations of readers into taking editorial composites for authorial work'. As she went on:

> for this generation this textual fixity has become unacceptable. In this poststructuralist and postcolonial age, the editorial labours that produced conflated texts are now held suspect, disparaged on theoretical grounds as essentialist and logocentric, mistrusted on political grounds as imperialistic or even totalitarian.

What was needed in place of the 'unacceptable' conflated texts, de Grazia argued, were editions that pointed more to a 'rude mechanics than to the shaping fantasy of authorial genius'. Rather than a textual fabric that suggested 'the stuff that dreams are made on', de Grazia argued for typographical systems that would flag 'textual hybridity'. The suspect transparency of the

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[126] 'Nymphs and Reapers Heavily Vanish: the Discursive Con-texts of *The Tempest*', in *Alternative Shakespeares*, pp. 191-205 (p. 196).
[127] *Signifying Nothing: Truth's True Contents in Shakespeare's Text* (University of Georgia Press, 1986), p. 196.
[128] 'The Question of the One and the Many: The Globe Shakespeare, The Complete King Lear, and the New Folger Library Shakespeare', *SQ*, 46.2 (1995), pp. 245-51 (pp. 247-48).

text could thus be exposed as an illusion by typographical devices such as brackets that 'scar or score the pages', presented as 'so many seams, hinges, and joints'. A mise-en-page that was thus scored and scarred for de Grazia would isolate the multiform text from a sense of political imperialism that she detected in modern standard editions. With such an 'intrusive apparatus' overlaying texts, editions of the future might be rescued from the political suspicions aroused by the clean page of traditionally conflated texts.

In the same essay, de Grazia announced her enthusiasm for the editions that were being produced which reflected her call for textual multiplicity. Michael Warren's *Complete King Lear* was praised for its indefinite variability. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine's New Folger edition was similarly commended for its typographic system of square, angled and half brackets used to flag textual hybridity within the main body of the text. De Grazia also looked ahead to R.A. Foakes's Arden 3 *King Lear*, which she noted was 'exploring typographical alternatives' to the uniform presentation of traditionally conflated texts. De Grazia significantly concluded her essay by declaring that, in a poststructuralist age, Shakespeare was under 'technological and ideological pressure to be multiform'. Such pressures thus extended to the Arden 3 editors, who, operating under the Arden name, were working in the shadow of a long-enshrined tradition whose shared assumptions were, as I have attempted to outline above, being increasingly destabilised by the materialist arguments for multiplicity and fragmentation.

How, it might be asked, did the third Arden editors respond in the face of such pressures? No editor of course would wish to be accused of following an outdated mode of criticism, but there were issues to be faced as to how the new, little tried and tested methodologies promoted by materialist critics would translate into editions produced for modern-day students and general readers. The next section will turn to consider R.A. Foakes's Arden 3 edition of *King*

Lear (1997), paying sustained attention to how Foakes responded to the challenges put forward at the time to what was one of the major demonstration texts used by materialist critics for the display of textual instability.

'The Many and the One': Conflation and Textual Hybridity in R. A. Foakes's Arden 3 *King Lear*

R.A. Foakes was among the first commissions for the new Arden series. His appointment in the mid 1980s was to the considerable task of producing an edition of *King Lear*, at a time of heated debates over the nature of the quarto and Folio texts. At the time of his appointment, Foakes was a Professor of English at the University of California, Los Angeles. He was judged by Proudfoot to be among the best editors available based on previous performance.[129] Foakes's experience included two contributions to the second Arden series: an edition of *Henry VIII* in 1957, and *The Comedy of Errors* in 1962. When approached for the third series, Foakes was busy working on his book, *Hamlet versus Lear* (1993), which provided a history of the changing critical fortunes of the two plays.[130] Published four years before the release of his Arden 3 *King Lear* (1997), the book offers important insights into the nature of Foakes's thinking while he was working on his edition.

In his opening remarks, Foakes reflected on the same displacement of literature in English studies by the emerging schools of poststructuralist criticism that troubled Brian Vickers:

[129] Richard Proudfoot, email, 27 January 2022.
[130] R.A. Foakes, *Hamlet versus Lear: Cultural Politics and Shakespeare's Art* (Cambridge University Press, 1993).

> [i]n universities, criticism has displaced literature as the source of power in English studies, for the critical processing of literature can be taught more easily than literature itself, and through the creation of journals and schools of criticism provides professional enhancement and prestige.

One of the advantages Foakes acknowledged for the new historically oriented criticism was that it illuminated the way that all readings of plays are relative, so that '[t]he meanings critics find relate to their own values and their own world as well as to the play, and broadly speaking, tend to reflect or overtly embody their own political or social ideology, whether conservative, quietist, liberal or revolutionary'. What was of concern to Foakes, however, was how the displacement of literature by criticism as 'the source of power in English studies' threatened to lose sight of Shakespeare's artistry. In seeking to disestablish Shakespeare from the privileged traditional institutions that had elevated him above his peers, Foakes was unhappy that poststructuralist critics were

> abolishing the canon, tearing down the boundaries of literature, recognizing all texts as variants of the same kind of discursive practice, and so elevating critical interpretation to an importance equivalent to, if not greater than, that of the literary text the critic 'constructs' for us.

In the larger context, it is important to note that such challenges to the 'privileged separateness' of texts were designed to fracture the cultural perception of unity that was held to have maintained Shakespeare at the centre of power in Anglo-American culture. As Leah Marcus has observed,

> [w]hat does need to be emphasized is that in the last half-decade, this territory we call "Shakespeare" has come to appear less and less a single, unified thing. It is instead a vast set of different, and sometimes contradictory, social and cultural forces better characterized through a plural -- Shakespeares -- than as a singular Shakespeare.[131]

[131] 'Disestablishing Shakespeare', in *Teaching with Shakespeare: Critics in the Classroom*, ed. by Bruce McIver and Ruth Stevenson (University of Delaware Press, 1994), pp. 98-114 (p. 100).

If a 'singular Shakespeare' was required to invoke the common cultural heritage of English-speaking Westerners, then Shakespeare had to be imagined as a singular entity who transcended his own moment. What is important to emphasise here is an emerging critical investment in fracturing and dispersing a celebrated unity that sustained the hierarchical positioning of Shakespeare in conservative Anglo-American culture. This is significant in that the larger cultural concerns with unity and fragmentation also naturally extended into the debates surrounding the texts that are read.

In challenging Shakespeare's place as the supreme cultural icon, Foakes observed how poststructuralist critics had effectively 'open[ed] up to scrutiny the motives and ideologies often concealed [...] under claims by earlier critics that they were engaged in an objective pursuit of truth'.[132] Rather than pursuing abstract truths in literary texts, Foakes noted how poststructuralist critics emphasised a relativity which had 'led to attacks on the concept of organic unity in Shakespeare's plays proposed by Romantic critics like Coleridge, and to the dismissal of any idea of permanent or transhistorical artistic values'. Foakes's own response to such attacks was perhaps not surprising, particularly as he had recently published two volumes of Coleridge's lectures on literature.[133]

For Foakes, the poststructuralist attacks on 'long-cherished' critical practices had only 'confirmed the importance of Shakespeare'.[134] Despite the levelling arguments that destabilised the hierarchical patterning of works of literature, the work of the new schools of criticism in their reinterpretations of Shakespeare had confirmed one constant feature: 'the unstated assumption that Shakespeare deserves special attention; and this implies that his plays are

[132] *Hamlet versus Lear*, p. 7.
[133] *Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Lectures 1808-1819: On Literature*, 2 vols (Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987).
[134] *Hamlet versus Lear*, p. 117.

notable artistic achievements'. While accepting that the changes in critical fashion had opened up new perspectives on Shakespeare, Foakes nevertheless felt that 'the issue of artistic value, and its relation to meaning, needs to be reconsidered'.

In his own reconsideration of artistic and aesthetic value, Foakes proposed a model that would integrate both poststructuralist and older critical practice. Accepting that it was no longer possible to entertain the concept of artistic form as 'immanent in a work and to keep recycling the notion of organic unity', Foakes turned to Coleridge's formulation of 'dramatic illusion'. Although Coleridge followed Schlegel in attributing 'organic form' to Shakespeare's plays, Coleridge went further in 'internaliz[ing] the sense of unity as a mental experience in the viewer or reader'.

The resulting dramatic illusion led Coleridge to argue that 'the aesthetic experience depended upon a willing and active awareness of illusion as illusion'.[135] Thus the 'beautiful Whole' would be perceived in 'the mind of the spectator'.[136] For Foakes, what was at stake in the 'loss of a sense of the design of the whole' was the real value and pleasure that readers gained from 'watching or reading a play as a work of art that unfolds in time on the page as we read, or in space and time in the theatre'.

Foakes's proposed model thus sought to integrate a restored sense of unity within a poststructuralist model of textual instability. Such a model assumed the possibility of a negotiated solution between two different modes of thinking, one allowing for the operation of a Coleridgean sense of 'inward illusion', the other for a poststructuralist sense of the text as a

[135] Frederick Burwick, *Illusion and the Drama: Critical Theory of the Enlightenment and Romantic Era* (Pennsylvania State University Press, 1991), p. 222.
[136] R.A. Foakes, ed., *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, i, p. 157.

process to be infinitely unravelled. In putting forward his new approach, Foakes was influenced by the work of Juliet Sychrava, who had argued the case for both approaches to reading texts. In suggesting her own way of combining the two approaches, Sychrava usefully distinguished between the notion of *how* we perceive, which was related to Schiller's category of the 'sentimental', and on *what* we perceive, which was related to the concept of the 'naïve'. For Sychrava, to read a text in the poststructural sense as an unstable process was to read

> 'reflectively' or outwards, from text to context, to context-of-context -- and this will always reveal the instability of meaning. But it is possible to read 'determinately' or inwards, from context-of-context, to context, to text, and this is perhaps more like the way in which we usually -- as readers, not critics -- read. In this sense, such 'determinant' reading could be called 'naïve' and would provide what we think of as specific, stable meanings. This model of two possible directions can, it seems, be a way of combining or at least holding together the naïve and the sentimental awareness.

In Sychrava's integrated model, the inward 'determinant' / 'naïve' readings were thus connected with the stable meanings of older critical practices, while the 'sentimental' readings acknowledged postmodern instability, shifting from 'text to context, to context-of-context'. Foakes saw his own proposed model as analogous to Sychrava's position, in that his proposal sought to 'allow for the operation of 'inward illusion' in a simultaneous subjective and objective relation to Shakespeare's plays'.[137]

In Foakes's view, this dependent relation between subject and object did not allow for the notion of meaning as an immanent value that was eternally present, but rather that meaning was 'generated through the interaction of subject and object, reader and text, to the extent that

[137] *Hamlet versus Lear*, p. 142.

he or she recreates a sense of pleasure and formal satisfaction in experiencing it'. In this way, the reader of Shakespeare's plays has both a subjective and an objective relation to a text, and that 'just as each of us "completes" its meanings, so our sense of a play as a work of art is generated through our interaction with it. As Foakes went on:

> [t]he design we perceive, like the meanings of a text, will vary for readers or viewers at different times, even while certain features, such as the story line, remain more or less constant, if subject to differing emphases. Meaning and design are both there in the text and not there, so it is not impossible to speak of Shakespeare's artistry, if it is done in the recognition that our perception of artistry relates to the beholder as well as to the text itself.

What Foakes thus hoped to offer was nothing less than 'a direction in which the criticism of Shakespeare might go' through providing a concept that sought to reclaim some ground for the aesthetic appreciation of texts as works of art, one which recognised a sense of the whole play and of artistic design as generated through an ever changing relation between readers and texts.

Foakes's aim of rehabilitating a sense of Shakespeare's artistry was a response to the poststructuralist challenge against the preceding critical interest in texts as totalised wholes, which on closer inspection appeared as unstable and often contradictory repositories of social and cultural forces. In this way, the larger cultural aims of fracturing the unitary nature of Shakespeare as a supreme cultural icon were paralleled by the attempts to destabilise Shakespearean texts as works designed to form coherent and artistic wholes.

These larger critical moves are important for understanding the ways that textual critics working in the atmosphere of fragmentation would approach their texts. To be sure, the broader cultural assault on unity held further consequences for textual critics and editors, who had traditionally produced singular conflated texts that aimed to present to readers a stable text that recovered as much as possible what the author wrote. Any editor who sought to produce an

edition along such lines after the challenges of the 1980s and 1990s would be in danger of looking hopelessly out of date.

Conflation and the New Textualism: R.A. Foakes's Arden 3 *King Lear*

One of the first challenges to conflation was put forward by Michael Warren in a 1976 essay arguing for the separate integrity of Q and F *Lear*. For Warren, the 'implications of their differences for interpretation and for performance make it clear that they must be treated as separate versions', so that 'eclecticism cannot be a valid principle in deciding readings'.[138] As the anti-conflationist arguments gained force, they would soon extend into editorial practice in Wells and Taylor's decision to print separate texts of Q and F *Lear* in their Oxford edition (1986-87). In their desire to be new, Wells and Taylor would find a rich source of ideas in the new schools of poststructuralist criticism that were appearing to destabilise literature within English studies. Before the Oxford edition appeared, most editors followed a tradition of conflation that extended back to Alexander Pope in 1725.

The long-cherished practice had been turned into a New Bibliographical methodology in Greg's landmark essay, 'Rationale of Copy-Text'. In this essay, Greg aimed to provide a method for editors to recover as much as possible of what the author wrote from a lost holograph manuscript (see Chapter two). He introduced the now famous distinction between textual 'accidentals' (punctuation and spelling) and 'substantives' (words affecting meaning). In doing so, his assumption was that the earliest text was likely to be the closest to the author's

[138] 'Quarto and Folio *King Lear* and the Interpretation of Albany and Edgar', in *Shakespeare, Pattern of Excelling Nature*, ed. by David Bevington and Jay L. Halio (University of Delaware Press, 1978), pp. 95-107 (p. 105).

own punctuation and spelling, so the earliest text should be chosen as the editor's copy-text. The substantives (or 'the author's expression'), however, were unlikely to be fully preserved in a single text, so editors were granted the freedom to choose substantive readings from collateral texts that in their judgement provided authoritative readings.

Up until the 1980s, most editors -- including most of the Arden 2 editors -- subscribed to Greg's thinking about the kind of manuscripts that served as copy for early printings. Even if they didn't arrive at Greg's particular conclusions, they followed his eclectic method which resulted in a scientific consistency evident in the second Arden series. The practice of conflation, however, began to be seriously called into question by textual critics working on *King Lear* in the 1970s. A growing opposition to Greg's eclectic method depended for its force on the canvassed hypothesis that the quarto and Folio *Lear* texts preserved two separate unrevised/revised stages in the evolution of the play.

The logical conclusion for those who accepted the revision hypothesis was that the traditionally conflated text muddied the separate stages of Shakespeare's artistry that were preserved in the two distinct texts of *King Lear*. The significance of Wells and Taylor's presentation of two-text *Lears* in their Oxford edition is suggested by Wells's reflection in 1989 that '[t]he most important recent development in textual studies of Shakespeare is the acknowledgement that Shakespeare revised some (at least) of his plays, and that it is possible to recover certain texts in both revised and unrevised form'.[139]

In his own Arden 3 edition of *King Lear*, Foakes reflected on the 'intense scrutiny' that the texts of *King Lear* had received in the 1980s, which had 'led to an important revaluation of

[139] 'Pluralist Shakespeare', *Critical Survey*, 1.1 (1989), pp. 63-69 (p. 63).

editorial principles'.[140] The process of revaluation had made it increasingly untenable for editors to follow the practice of conflation when the case had been made for the separate quarto and Folio versions of *King Lear*. Foakes also reflected on the latest editions of the play, which included Michael Warren's *The Complete King Lear* (1989), Jay Halio's Folio-based Cambridge edition (1992), and René Weis's parallel-text edition (1993).[141] All the latest editions, that is, accepted the arguments for revision which appeared to be reaching beyond doubt after the Oxford two-text *Lear*.

It is worth emphasising here that Foakes was long-accustomed to a tradition of editing that sought to recover as much as possible of Shakespeare from the existing material witnesses which were believed to derive from a single lost original. If Foakes accepted the revision hypothesis, then he would also have to concede that the editorial tradition to which he had made substantial contributions had created misguided texts that entangled the separate stages of Shakespeare's artistry.

This may partly explain why, after his own study of the evidence for revision, Foakes was not convinced that there was enough evidence to support the claim for two distinct versions of *King Lear*. For Foakes, 'many of the advocates of revision in Shakespeare have taken a dogmatic and purist stance, which abandons the idea of *King Lear* as a single work of which we have variant versions'. It is no surprise that Foakes found the revisionist claims 'dogmatic' and 'purist', particularly as few editors in the preceding tradition had put forward their ideas so vigorously, preferring to treat their own contributions with a measure of caution.

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[140] 'Introduction', in *King Lear*, ed. by R.A. Foakes (Walton-on-Thames: Thomas Nelson, 1997), p. 113.
[141] Michael Warren, ed., *The Complete King Lear* (University of California Press, 1989); Jay L. Halio, ed., *The Tragedy of King Lear* (Cambridge University Press, 1992; rev. 2005); René Weis, ed., *King Lear: A Parallel Text Edition* (Longman, 1993; rev. 2010).

For Foakes, the crucial question was that while there is persuasive evidence for revision, was there enough to go one step further and consider the quarto and Folio texts as preserving two distinct plays? For Foakes, there was a clear distinction to be made between an *evolving* text, and two *separate* texts, and this subtle distinction which was not always clearly distinguished in the arguments put forward by the advocates for revision made all the difference for the practicing editor. Sharing his own findings in his Introduction, Foakes remarked that 'none of the differences between Q and F radically affects the plot of the play, or its general structure, and there is every reason to think that we have two versions of the same play, not two different plays'. Foakes's own response was thus to accept the claims that the two texts of *King Lear* offered evidence of authorial expansion, but he nevertheless remained sceptical that *King Lear* is preserved as two distinct plays.

Foakes's two-version theory was also influenced by the work of the book historian D. F. McKenzie. In his three Panizzi Lectures of 1985, later published as *Bibliography and the Sociology of Texts* (1986), McKenzie aimed to respond to the recent developments in critical theory and practice and stimulate discussion on the future direction of bibliography. In the book's Foreword, McKenzie reflected that

> [d]efinitive editions have come to seem an impossible ideal in the face of so much evidence of authorial revision and, therefore, of textual instability. Each version has some claim to be edited in its own right, with a proper respect for its historicity as an artefact; and yet the variety of authorized forms has opened up editorial choice in new ways, even to the point of creating, through conflation, quite new versions thought more appropriate to the needs of newly defined markets.

McKenzie thus recognised that each extant text had 'some claim to be edited in its own right' as an historical artefact. For McKenzie, however, to accept the claims for revision and textual instability was to effectively close off 'editorial choice' by rejecting a postmodern 'variety of authorised forms', which granted editors the freedom of creative editing in the

construction of new versions. Indeed, although McKenzie recognised that the principle of authorial intention 'no longer compels universal assent', he was unwilling to reject 'the old idea of recovering 'the work' as distinct from its versions'. McKenzie found the rejection of authorial intention a 'worrying' development in textual criticism, and he suggested that

> the work may be the form traditionally imputed to an archetype; it may be a form seen as immanent in each of the versions but not fully realized in any one of them; or it may be conceived of as always potential, like that of a play, where the text is open and generates new meanings according to new needs in a perpetual deferral of closure.

McKenzie's thinking provided a way for Foakes to integrate the older forms of criticism with the new, in much the same way he had done so in *Hamlet versus Lear*. In both cases, the play and its meanings are continually generated anew through the repeated interactions between readers and texts. Moreover, in suggesting that the author's work might be seen as 'immanent in each of the versions but not fully realized in any of them', McKenzie also suggested a way that a conflated text could be created to represent a single 'work', while not losing sight of the separate versions as witnesses to the work. Both the single 'work' and the separate versions could thus be acknowledged in the creative editing of texts, and McKenzie's work offered a way for Foakes to integrate a traditionally conflated text with the recent developments in critical theory.

The reader and the text: Foakes's Arden 3 *King Lear*

When Foakes's Arden 3 edition of *King Lear* appeared on shop bookshelves in 1997, a prospective buyer would soon find themselves gazing on a stock photographic scene dominated by the shadowy prospect of a hawthorn tree. The Arden Shakespeare imprimatur heads the stock photographic cover, and underneath is announced the play's title as 'King Lear' in large

white font. Some readers may have been surprised to find the play advertised on its cover as a singular play of 'King Lear', particularly at a time when, as mentioned above, recent editions had been produced which printed either the quarto or Folio text, or the parallel texts of both. Seeking for answers, in turning the pages to the Introduction, the reader would find Foakes's explanation for the decision:

> I have used the title *King Lear* rather than '*The Historie of King Lear*', the running title in the Quarto, or '*The Tragedie of King Lear*', the running title in the Folio. Categories were used loosely in Shakespeare's time, the play in both versions has the same basic pattern, and it is generally known now as one of his major tragedies. The title I have preferred is what the play is now commonly called, and puts an emphasis on the word 'King', which is significant, since Lear's behaviour as a monarch is so important in the play.[142]

The traditional title and Introduction thus set up the expectation for readers that the edition would present a singular text that departed from other recent editions. The sense of a stable, unified text is also reinforced by a double-page spread separating the Introduction from the play. On the right hand side of an otherwise blank double-page is printed in capitalised black type the words 'KING LEAR'. On the following page, before the play begins, is a 'LIST OF ROLES', which includes short descriptions of each of the characters who appear in the play. On the opening page of the play, the title 'KING LEAR' is repeated, and, resting above a printed horizontal line, is used as the running head title throughout the play. The reader is thus increasingly attuned to expect a singular, conflated text, that is presented as the author's singular 'work'.

The first sign that this expectation will be consistently fractured, however, is indicated in 1.1.32. Here Foakes included the stage direction: '*Sennet. Enter* ^{Q}*one bearing a coronet, then*^{Q} *LEAR*,'. The appearance of a superscript '^{Q}' would have reminded readers of the system that

[142] p. 149.

Foakes had devised and set out in his Introduction: '[t]he present edition includes, with markers in the form of superscript ^{Q} (for Quarto) or ^{F} (for Folio), the passages found in one text but not the other'. Pausing to consider Foakes's first use of Q-only lines, the reader would thus be jolted out of the sense of a unitary text and made aware of the textual differences that flagged the text as an editorial construction. In reading the stage direction, the reader is invited to hold two different readings in mind, and then choose their own reading as they work their way through the text. Here the reader is invited to choose whether to imagine the entrance of an additional character before Lear 'bearing a coronet', or to accept the Folio reading in which the words are absent.

To support the reader's own interpretation, Foakes offered his own view in his commentary note:

> ***one . . . then*** not in F, and on stage sometimes Lear has taken a coronet from his own head to give to Albany and Cornwall at 140-1; but I think Lear should be crowned [...] and the direction in Q points up both the ceremonial nature of the occasion and Lear's intention to give the coronet to Cordelia when he passes control of her third of the kingdom to her.

This gloss serves as a useful example of the way that the aims Foakes set out in his Introduction are put in practice: '[t]he aims of this edition are, first, to make available the text(s) in a form that enables readers to understand the relation between them and to appreciate the problems caused by textual differences; secondly, to help the reader to imagine some of the ways in which the action of the play might be staged; and, thirdly, to open up some of the inexhaustible possibilities for shaping and interpreting the play'. The primary aim of enabling readers to 'understand the relation between' the Quarto and Folio texts is here put in practice by Foakes's comment on his own preference for the Q-reading, while describing the outcome of both Q and F readings, so that his readers can make up their own minds.

One of the potential pitfalls of Foakes's superscript system, however, relates to his seemingly opposed choice to produce a conflated text. The problem is set in relief by the running title of '*King Lear*' that heads the page, which points to the unity of the singular 'work', while the sigla continually detracts from this notion by drawing attention to the differences between the quarto and Folio versions. A good example of the way Foakes's text continually fractures the text as a singular 'work' can be found in 1.4. 217-22:

> LEAR
> Does any here know me? ^{Q}Why^{Q}, this is not Lear.
> Does Lear walk thus, speak thus? Where are his eyes?
> Either his notion weakens, ^{Q}or^{Q} his discernings are
> lethargied - Ha! ^{Q}sleeping or^{Q} waking? ^{Q}Sure^{Q} 'tis not
> so. Who is it that can tell me who I am?
> ^{F}FOOL^{F} Lear's shadow.

Each word enclosed in the superscripts here acts as a cue for the reader to pause and reflect on their own creative responses to the fragmented text. In this way, the sigla serves as a destabilising device which encourages readers to engage in their own creative restructuring of the text. Moreover, some of Foakes's quarto-only choices are likely to be accepted as authoritative by the reader, with the first 'Why' and 'or' arguably here making little difference to the interpretation of the passage.

Turning to the commentary notes, the reader is alerted to the difference in sense between Q's 'Sleeping or waking, ha? | Sure 'tis not so'., and F's shorter 'Ha, waking? 'Tis not so'. In the same way, the reader is invited to reflect on the textual differences in attributing the words 'Lear's shadow' to Lear (as in Q), or to the Fool (as in F). Explaining the differences for his readers in his gloss, Foakes observed that

> Q is simpler, as Lear calls himself a *shadow* or semblance in contrast to the substance or real person. In giving the words to the Fool, F is more complex: does the Fool mean both that he is Lear's shadow

> (or the mirror-image in which Lear may see himself as a fool), and that Lear has become a shadow of his former self, a mere appearance of a king lacking in authority? In Q Lear at once [...] becomes conscious of a split in himself which in F is as yet marked only by the Fool's acerbic comments.

The attention to the textual differences between Q and F, as well as Foakes's splitting of the singular text into two equally balanced readings, usefully emphasises the way that his text continually operates in tension with the notion of the unitary 'work'. What is important to stress is thus how the attention to textual alterity unsettles the reader's sense of the play as a coherent and unified whole, as they are continually detracted from picturing the play in the mind towards the question of textual differences.

It is worth remembering at this point Foakes's Coleridgean sense of the play as a coherent work of art generated in the reader's mind through their own interaction with the text. In Foakes's use of a superscript system, however, the reader's effort to picture the play in the mind is consistently interrupted by the flagging of textual difference. A good example of this tension can be found in Lear's final speech:

> LEAR
> And my poor fool is hanged. No, no, ^{F}no^{F} life!
> Why should a dog, a horse, a rat have life
> And thou no breath at all? ^{Q}O^{Q} thou'lt come no more,
> Never, never, never, ^{F}never, never.^{F}
> [*to Edgar?*] Pray you undo this button. Thank you, sir.
> ^{Q}O, o, o, o.^{Q}
> ^{F}Do you see this? Look on her: look, her lips,
> Look there, look there! *He dies*.^{F}

Reading Lear's final words in Foakes's text, the reader is repeatedly reminded of the contrasts between the two versions as the stress is placed on textual difference. The reader is thus encouraged to choose their own readings as Foakes exposes his own text as a creative construction, one that is open to rearrangement to suit the reader's own preferences. By drawing attention to those differences, however, the sigla disrupts the reader's attention from a sense of

the overall design of the play which exists in the mind of the reader. In this way, the sense of unity and coherent design that might be pictured in the reader's mind as approximating to the authorial 'work', is consistently opposed by the reminders of textual alterity.

It is worth remembering here that Foakes's Arden 3 edition was produced during a time when the revision hypothesis for *King Lear* was in full force. At the same time, book historians were arguing for the physical dressing of books as containers of individual texts to be factored into interpretations. Foakes's edition can thus be seen as a product of this period, one which sought to bring an earlier style of critical practice into dialogue with the newer forms that were being debated as he worked on his text.

In more recent times, however, the claims for revision in *King Lear* have appeared to lose some ground. The revision hypothesis proposed that the quarto and Folio *Lear* texts preserve distinct authorial versions. Foakes, however, did not accept the distinction. His own view was that Q and F preserved separate versions, though the textual differences were not enough to claim them as distinct works of art. Following this logic, his separate version theory was enough to warrant directing his reader's attention to the textual differences between Q and F.

Richard Knowles, in his recent New Variorum *King Lear* (2020), has observed that after the confident claims for revision and the need to present separate, unconflated quarto and Folio texts, the ensuing debates had led back to doubt: 'Q and F are the basic documentary texts, and editions may still justifiably be made of either of them; but exactly what is being edited in each case is now less certain than what once was thought'.[143] In considering the current return to doubt, Foakes's editions appears a shrewd response to the debates of the time, when there was

[143] *A New Variorum Edition of King Lear*, 2 vols (MLA, 2020), i, p. 1206.

considerable pressure on editors to keep their texts distinct. Indeed, Knowles goes further in suggesting that

> [o]ne viable choice for future editions may be once again a conflated text, not pretending to recover one or two lost ideal authorial versions, but providing an archive of possibilities, arranged as coherently as possible, from which actors and producers will, as they always have, make a selection.

Knowles is duly cautious to emphasise that future conflated texts would not simply mean a return to the methods of an older criticism. Knowles's conflated text thus advocates for the lessons of book history to be factored into the presentation of a blended text. The editor would not be seeking for a 'lost ideal', but opening up the text for readers to make their own selections from an 'archive of possibilities'. The discussion above has drawn attention to the tensions between unity and fragmentation in Foakes's hybrid text, a tension that seeks to promote the unity of the text, while flagging textual differences that pull the reader towards a sense of fragmentation. What I hope to have shown is how Foakes's synoptic method of putting forward an 'idea of the work' while drawing attention to textual difference offers one viable way that this might be developed in editions of the future.

The rise of the New Textualism: Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's Arden 3 *Hamlet* (2006) and *Hamlet: the Texts of 1608 and 1623* (2006)

Ann Thompson was working as a Senior Lecturer in English at Liverpool University when she was first commissioned to produce an Arden 3 edition of *Cymbeline*. In 1993, as Professor of English at Roehampton University, she was asked to join Richard Proudfoot as the joint General Editor of the new series. As one of the series' general editors, Thompson was then free to choose which play from those remaining she and Neil Taylor would edit. One of her reasons

for choosing *Hamlet* was to counter a tradition of female editors being responsible for 'easy Folio-only comedies'.[144] The first and second Arden series, for example, had included just one female editor each, both responsible for comedies. These were, Grace Trenery's Arden 1 edition of *Much Ado about Nothing* (1924), and Agnes Latham's Arden 2 *As You Like It* (1975). Thus in choosing one of the major 'difficult' tragedies, Thompson was clearly countering the male-dominated textual-editing establishment.

Once she had chosen *Hamlet* in 1993, Thompson dedicated two years to considering the history of the play's textual problems. In formulating her approach, Thompson could look to the work of E.A.J. Honigmann and R.A. Foakes, both of whom were preparing a conflated edition of *Othello* and *King Lear* respectively at the time. In addition to the conflated texts being produced by her fellow experienced editors, there was also an Arden series logic for the production of conflated editions, which had contributed to the success of the first and second series. In Foakes's case, his decision to produce a conflated text was based on his conviction that there were no sufficient grounds for regarding the two substantive texts of *King Lear* as distinct authorial conceptions of the play. On this basis, he was free to select what he regarded as the 'better' readings from either Q or F, though signalling where this occurred throughout his text by his system of superscript.

Reflecting on Foakes's approach in a conference paper delivered in 1997, Thompson and Taylor considered the problems they faced in their own methodological approach to the three surviving texts of *Hamlet*. For Thompson and Taylor, Foakes's use of in-text superscripts ran 'the risk of interrupting the flow of reading certain passages'.[145] If Foakes's system for flagging

[144] Ron Rosenbaum, 'Shakespeare in Rewrite', *The New Yorker*, 13 May 2002, pp. 68-77 (p. 74).
[145] 'The Politics and Poetics of Editing *Hamlet*', in *Problems of Editing*, ed. by Christa Jansohn (Max Niemeyer Verlag, 1999), pp. 150-63 (p. 151).

textual hybridity was adopted by Thompson and Taylor in their edition of *Hamlet*, then the interruption would no doubt be increased, as the pool of texts from which to produce a conflated text would be extended to three versions, which ran the risk of cluttering the page with a sea of disruptive typographical markers.

Like Foakes, Thompson and Taylor were also working in the aftermath of Wells and Taylor's Oxford edition. In a now well-known reflection on their decision to print a single text of *Hamlet*, Wells and Taylor remarked that

> [i]t now seems obvious that we should have included two versions of *Hamlet*, as we did of *King Lear*, a Folio-based version and one based on Q2 [i]t was not yet at all clear that the rewriting of *Hamlet* was as important for anyone's interpretation of the play as the rewriting of *Lear* [and] *Hamlet* was one of the last plays we edited; we were tired.[146]

If *King Lear* was the demonstration text for textual fragmentation in the Oxford edition, then it seemed that *Hamlet* was next in line for deconflation, with the corresponding emphasis on the texts as three separate authoritative versions. This shift of attention can be explained by the rising influence of the 'New Textualism' movement, a term given prominence in Margreta de Grazia and Peter Stallybrass's influential essay of 1993, 'The Materiality of the Shakespearean Text'. In this essay, de Grazia and Stallybrass argued that critics had projected a range of post-Enlightenment categories on to Shakespeare, which included the 'single *work*', and the 'autonomous *author*'. For de Grazia and Stallybrass, the Oxford editors were right to print a radical two-text *Lear*, but they nevertheless remained conventional in holding on to the post-Enlightenment categories of 'work' and 'author'.

[146] 'The Oxford Shakespeare Re-Viewed', *AEB*, 4 (1990), pp. 6-20 (pp. 16-17).

Following their essay, Graham Holderness, Bryan Loughrey, and Andrew Murphy also began to challenge the revision hypothesis as remaining bound to the category of the author. In their words: '[t]extual [r]evisionism acknowledges textual multiplicity as a fact, only to reconcile it with the integrity of the author'.[147] In an essay which argued against editorial intervention and for the presentation of texts as authentic material objects, they also offered a useful summary of the New Textualism's aims:

> [p]rogress is no longer measured retrospectively, as it was in the editorial culture initiated by the eighteenth-century scholars, and reconfirmed by New Bibliography, as a slow and gradual approximation to the *authorial* original; but in the culture of 'New Textualism' prospectively, by the degree to which the modern edition can be seen as splitting into modern textual forms correspondent to the original individually printed texts.

What Holderness, Loughrey and Murphy thus hoped to see was a full release of textual plurality from the singular author who still remained the singular creative source of multiplicity. For these critics, the author was a construct made to conform with a normative cultural and institutional project. In arguing for textual plurality, therefore, Holderness, Loughrey and Murphy were contributing to wider efforts at separating Shakespeare from some of the cultural institutions with which he had become associated over the centuries. The disestablishing nature of the New Textualist movement is important to bear in mind when considering the movement's influence on Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's Arden 3 edition of *Hamlet*, an edition which in contrast was part of the Arden Shakespeare series: a monument and status symbol of traditional cultural authority.

It is also worth pointing out here a further potential conflict which related to Thompson's interest in feminism. Her investment in feminism can be clearly illustrated as early as 1984 with the publication of her Cambridge edition of *The Taming of the Shrew*, which she revised

[147] "What's the Matter': Shakespeare and Textual Theory', *Textual Practice*, 9.1 (1993), pp. 93-119 (p. 110).

in 2003 during her work on *Hamlet*.[148] Moreover, before joining the Arden team, Thompson had recently returned from a term as Visiting Professor at the Center for Women's Studies at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio, where she had delivered a graduate course on feminist theory. Reflecting in 1994 on how her Arden role related to her feminist commitments, Thompson observed that

> [i]t seemed at the time to some of my friends that these two aspects of my career were incompatible: even in the United States Women's Studies are still a marginal, controversial area, existing precariously within academic institutions and vulnerable to political pressures and financial cutbacks. Shakespeare Studies are at the very centre of English studies, arguably one of the more conservative disciplines, and the Arden Shakespeare series has been since 1899 (and will remain) a monument of traditional cultural authority.[149]

Thus to some of Thompson's colleagues it seemed that there was a conflict of interest in both roles: her editorial work for Arden would reinforce the conservative tradition of 'cultural authority', while the other would be directed against the male-dominated worlds of editing and the male author who occupied the centre of the Western canon. As I hope to show, the tension between 'centre' and 'margin' highlighted in both Thompson's interest in New Textualism and Feminism, reveals an important influence on Thompson's thinking, and in this way can also usefully begin to expose the contours of a friction between unity and fragmentation.

The tension between a New Textualist influence and an Arden association with singular, conflated texts arguably nuanced Thompson's approach as she sought to respond to the claims of both opposed textual cultures. Indeed, a New Textualist methodology excluded the notions of author and work from the text, and saw all surviving texts as discrete, mutually independent entities. For the New Textualists, the practice of conflation smoothed over the text's material

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[148] Ann Thompson, ed., *The Taming of the Shrew* (Cambridge University Press, 1984; rev. 2003).
[149] *Sexuality and Textuality in the Editing of Shakespeare: Inaugural Lecture* (Roehampton Institute, 1994), p. 1.

pluralities as the editor pursued the unifying consciousness of the playwright as he composed the plays.

Thompson, however, does not go so far as to reject the category of author, or even the idea of the 'work' spread across the three versions of *Hamlet*. Indeed, a refusal to reject these categories outright is suggested in Thompson's concession that 'we [...] have to concede that, if one were forced to choose just one of the three early texts of *Hamlet* as, on the balance of the evidence, the most likely to have authority, it would have to be Q2'. Moreover, for Thompson and Taylor, what provided the authority for their free-standing Q2 *Hamlet* was the 'general agreement among scholars, that Q2 derives from an authorial manuscript'.[150]

Looking back to their Arden predecessor, Harold Jenkins, Thompson and Taylor remarked in their Preface that 'Harold Jenkins did his job so well that we felt there was no need to do it again in the same way'.[151] Discussing the method of conflation in their Q2 *Hamlet* Introduction, the editors distinguished between two types of conflation: 'one motive for conflation is the wish to publish as much *Hamlet* as possible'; and secondly, 'the term "conflation" can also be used to mean any individual act of emendation in which the editor who is faced with an unsatisfactory reading in the copy-text turns automatically to the other text as a possible source for a better reading'.

Without interrogating either motive, Thompson and Taylor observed that '[i]n this multiple edition of *Hamlet* we have eschewed both forms of conflation on principle, preferring to treat

[150] 'Introduction', p. 11.
[151] 'Preface', in *Hamlet* (Cengage Learning, 2006), p. xix.

each text as an independent entity'. But in a second appendix included in their Q2 *Hamlet* ('The nature of the texts'), the editors recognise conflation as a viable practice:

> [w]e acknowledge that there is a case for a conflated edition, taking Q2 as the copy-text but incorporating the additional F material, but we have decided against this option on two practical grounds: we are restricted to the production of no more than three texts; and we have no reason to believe that we can produce a better Q-based conflated edition than that of our predecessor, Harold Jenkins.

The editors thus recognised the 'case for a conflated edition', but were restricted on practical grounds from including a fourth conflated text, as the editors of the third Norton Shakespeare had done, and saw no reason to repeat a conflated edition that would draw comparisons with Jenkins. In addition, the alternative decision to print three separate texts was not, they argued, 'because we believe that they were, in fact, entirely independent, but because none of the evidence of possible dependence is sufficiently widespread to oblige us to make any particular act of conflation as a result'.

What, then, did Thompson and Taylor feel they were editing? From their own investigation, it is clear that Q2 was chosen as the closest to Shakespeare's original manuscript. The editors recognised that Q2 will have errors arising from various co-contrivers, including compositor malfeasance, so they were willing to use other texts and conjectural emendations to solve those problems. Unlike earlier editors, however, Thompson and Taylor were unwilling to change lines because another version was judged superior on a literary level. The work of their predecessor, Harold Jenkins, appeared to have encouraged Thompson and Taylor towards an alternative methodology. In this way, Thompson and Taylor's decision appeared to be influenced more by the pressures of the past bearing on the present than on a firm conviction that they were presenting the best possible text to their readers. It is worth asking at this

juncture, then, how the editors imagined their readership, and what expectations they placed on them as readers of a two-volume, three-text Arden *Hamlet*.

'Refusal to choose': the reader and the Arden 3 *Hamlets* (2006)

Browsing for a new edition of *Hamlet* in 2006, a prospective buyer would be curious to find a new Arden edition of *Hamlet* among the selections. Here the buyer might be tempted to ask: would it follow the Arden series logic in presenting a conflated text based on what the editors believed to be the most authoritative text? How would it respond to the work of its Arden predecessor, Harold Jenkins?

Before opening the book, the reader might also be encouraged to notice the title of the edition. The play's title 'HAMLET', presented in a bold white typeface and printed over the body of Ophelia -- reinforced by the 'Arden Shakespeare' banner – suggests that the reader will be presented with a singular and coherent text of Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.[152] Curious to know more, the reader might then turn to the Contents Pages. The lexical field of the introductory material emphasises 'challenge' and 'mystery', with sub-sections dedicated to: '*The challenges of* Hamlet', '*The challenge of editing* Hamlet', '*The challenge of dating Hamlet*', and '*The continuing mystery of* Hamlet'.

Perhaps the most striking section of the Introduction that would have presented a further pin prick to the reader's expectations of a singular 'HAMLET', was a section dedicated to the

[152] See Stanley Wells, 'The play's the thing – in triplicate', *The Guardian*, 9 July 2006 < https://www.theguardian.com/books/2006/jul/09/classics.features> [accessed 21 March 2024].

question ‘Why a three-text edition?’ Leafing over a few pages, the reader finds a ‘Note on the Text’ between the editors’ Preface and Introduction. Here Thompson and Taylor explain to their readers that ‘[t]his volume contains an edited and annotated text of the 1604-5 (Second Quarto) printed version of *Hamlet*, with passages that are found only in the 1623 text (the first Folio) printed as Appendix 1’. This statement may begin to raise several questions for potential readers, the most prominent of which may be: why, after a long and uninterrupted tradition of conflated texts, are we being presented with a Q2-only text? One possible answer is suggested by what follows:

> [u]niqely, however, we are also offering readers a second volume, *Hamlet*, *The Texts of 1603 and 1623*, which contains edited and annotated texts of the other two early versions. The second volume is an entirely optional supplement: the present volume does not depend upon it in any way, and we imagine the majority of readers will be content with just one *Hamlet*.

This revelation places the reader in a somewhat curious position. From the edition’s title ‘HAMLET’, printed clearly on the edition’s front cover, and repeated twice on succeeding pages before the ‘contents’, the reader’s expectation is attuned to the presence of hierarchy in a seemingly horizontal project. But in revealing that there are a further two texts that have some claims to independent authority, the reader may well feel that they are not being presented with the full picture. From the start, then, a nagging doubt may be presented which spurs the reader to wonder what exactly may be missing as they read the single Q2 text of their Arden *Hamlet*.

It is worth comparing at this point how Foakes saw his own readership in his Arden *King Lear*. As shown above, Foakes presented his readers with a single, conflated text, that offered his readers the opportunity to select their own readings from Q and F, while still holding in mind an idea of the authorial ‘work’. The reader was thus offered the materials to generate for themselves a design of the whole in their minds eye, which could be achieved by rearranging the separate pieces from Q and F.

In the Arden Q2 *Hamlet*, however, the sense of a whole is unsettled by the presentation of three texts across two volumes. This form of presentation ran the risk that, for many readers, there may well always be a sense of something missing, and it would be their job to compare across the texts to judge for themselves. This is of course, exactly what the editors hoped, as they explained early on in their Q2 *Hamlet* edition: '[w]e fervently hope that readers will study both volumes, experience the imaginative power of all three texts, and explore and weigh the scholarly debates surrounding their origins'.

The call for readers to begin their own investigations into the textual history of *Hamlet* is, of course, always to be welcomed, and will continue to be a valuable pedagogical method. But there does nevertheless appear here a lack of conviction in the editors' words 'fervently hope'. Moreover, it has to be pointed out here immediately that, in the same Q2 edition's second appendix, the 'imaginative power' attributed to the three texts appears to lose force when attention turns to Q1. Here, towards the end of the book, Thompson and Taylor observe that '[t]hose brought up on the better-known versions of the play are almost bound to find Q1 a disconcerting reading experience, since, in terms of both structure and language, it mixes familiar with unfamiliar material'.

This all leads to a growing sense that Thompson and Taylor imagine their readers to be primarily interested in a single coherent text, and less interested in comparing the textual differences across the three plays. Indeed, as they explain in their Introduction: [a]lthough we have edited, modernized and annotated the texts in such a way that a reader can choose to read each version separately, we are aware nevertheless that not all readers will wish to do this'. In

a further withdrawal from imagining their readers as wishing to weigh the scholarly debates surrounding the multiple texts of *Hamlet*, the editors concede that

> however much we are committed to the project of producing a multiple-text edition, we have to concede that the Arden Shakespeare is associated with single-text, eclectic editions. We have not produced an eclectic edition, but we feel that we must at least provide our readers with the material to read a *Hamlet* within that tradition.

Thus breaking free from the traditional Arden commitment to eclectic editions, Thompson and Taylor nevertheless present the dispersed material as offered for readers to rearrange and generate for themselves such a text. In this way, the expectations placed on the reader share affinities with Foakes's imagined readership. But the reader's active generation of their own eclectic text is made far more difficult in the two-volume, three-text *Hamlets*, where the textual differences are not immediately flagged on the page, but dispersed across the bloated two-volumes. As the editors recognise, most readers will prefer the freestanding Arden *Hamlet*, but once readers are aware that their Arden *Hamlet* is in fact an Arden Q2 *Hamlet*, they may wonder why the editors had restricted themselves, as far as possible, to the single Q2 text.

For readers who were familiar with a traditionally conflated *Hamlet*, for example, one of the first likely pinpricks would have been presented in the guard Marcellus's words as he waits with Horatio and Barnardo for the ghost's third appearance:

> Good now, sit down, and tell me he that knows
> Why this same strict and most observant watch
> So nightly toils the subject of the land,
> And with such daily cost of brazen cannon
> (1.1.67-72)

Q2's 'with' appearing in the final line here is defended by the Arden editors as making 'acceptable sense'. But they do note that '[m]ost editors (including Jenkins, who usually

favours Q2) adopt Q1/F ‘why’, assuming ellipsis of ‘there is’. Here one might reasonably ask, if most editors prefer Q1/F’s ‘why’, how likely is it that readers are best served with Q2’s arrangement?

This question may appear a slight quibble with the example here given, but the phrase ‘most editors prefer’ occurs passim throughout the text as the reader follows the commentary notes. One other example can be found in 1.5., when Hamlet encounters his father’s ghost. Hamlet’s Q2 line ‘But bear me swiftly up. Remember thee?’, is glossed by Thompson and Taylor with the words: ‘[p]resumably the implication is that Hamlet will move quickly to his revenge [...] but most editors prefer F’s ‘stiffely’ meaning ‘strongly’, which is supported by *H5* 3.1.7: ‘Stiffen the sinews’’. The recurrence of the phrase ‘most editors prefer’ can thus have the effect of straining a strategy of reliance on Q2, as each repetition adds to the strain on the perceived independence and authority of the Q2 text. In other words, there is a destabilising force unsettling the independence of Q2, as the reader is continually reminded that most editors have preferred to merge the Q2 text with readings from Q1 and F.

Thus one of the outcomes of Thompson and Taylor’s approach is that it can often pressurise editors into a defence of less popular readings that are rejected by most eclectic editors. A good example here is Polonius’s well-known counsel to Laertes in 1.3, in which he offers the aphorism, presented in the Arden Q2 *Hamlet* as: ‘Neither a borrower nor a lender, boy’ (1.3. 74)’. In the relevant gloss, F’s ‘Neither a borrower nor a lender be’, is noted as ‘an easier reading’, but, in their defence of Q2, Thompson and Taylor suggest that ‘Polonius could be addressing his son as *boy* and suppressing the obvious verb’. Either of course, are viable alternatives, but in the free-standing Arden Q2 *Hamlet*, Polonius’s words ‘Neither a borrower nor a lender, boy’, are granted the authority to stand in their main text, and are thus what most

readers will accept as the authoritative words of Polonius's speech. One other example occurs in 3.3, when Hamlet contemplates the killing of his uncle as he finds him at prayer:

> Now might I do it. But now 'a is a-praying.
> And now I'll do it [*Draws a sword.*] - and so 'a goes to
> heaven,
> And so am I revenged! That would be scanned:
> A villain kills my father, and for that
> I, his sole son, do this same villain send
> To heaven.
> Why, this is base and silly, not revenge.
> (3.3. 72-79)

The Q2 line 'Why, this is base and silly, not revenge' is arranged in Q1 as 'This is a benefit and not revenge!', and in F as 'O this is hire and sallery, not revenge'. In Jenkins's discussion of Q2's 'base and silly' in his Arden 2 *Hamlet*, he believed that '[t]he Q2 compositor evidently had trouble with his copy: *silly* is a fairly obvious misreading of *sallery*'.[153] Similarly, in George Hibbard's Folio-based Oxford text, he argued that F's reading is 'plainly superior to the *base and silly* of Q2, since it provides a genuine antithesis to *revenge*'.[154]

F's 'hire and sallery', usually modernised to 'hire and salary', suggests that Hamlet imagines having hired Claudius to kill his father, and would be paying his wages in sending him to heaven. Thompson and Taylor acknowledge the general consensus in their commentary note, remarking that 'F's reading [...] is generally adopted on the grounds that the Q2 reading is erroneous'. Many reader would thus likely wonder whether the F reading did not replace Q2's error in the main text.

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[153] p. 513.
[154] *The Oxford Shakespeare: Hamlet* (Oxford University Press, 1987), p. 275.

Zachary Lesser has argued that the New Textualism reached both its culmination and exhaustion in Thompson and Taylor's Arden 3 *Hamlet*.[155] He identifies the main point of exhaustion as resulting from a loss of faith in the textual stemma that lies behind the three surviving witnesses. But this culmination and exhaustion point is also arguably reinforced by the needs of the imagined readership. In Foakes's conflated *King Lear* text, he saw his readers as active generators of the text who were encouraged to prioritise a coherent sense of the 'work' as it formed in the mind's eye.

All the materials to aid the readers grasp of the 'work' while still retaining a sense of textual alterity were made available in his single, conflated text. By contrast, Thompson and Taylor's imagined reader is never fully settled, and the three-text presentation is never fully at ease with its place within an Arden Shakespeare series. The question Thompson and Taylor appeared struggling to answer, was whether or not their readers wanted a stable and coherent reading experience, or whether they desired a more fragmented experience, where they are empowered to engage with textual difference and weigh the 'scholarly debates' over the textual origins of *Hamlet*.

In the Arden three-text *Hamlet*, there is a curious indecisiveness between unified and fragmented readings, as the free-standing Q2 *Hamlet* pulls towards a singular unity, while the supplementary Q1/F edition serves to destabilise the unity of the Q2 text and pull the reader towards a sense of textual fragmentation and difference. At the level of the text, then, the New Textualism movement which began with the aim of fracturing the unitary nature of the Shakespeare monolith, appears to meet considerable resistance in the form of the imagined reader. This the publishers appeared to recognise: the majority of readers required not so much

[155] *Hamlet After Q1: An Uncanny History of the Shakespearean Text* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014).

a fecund multiplicity (though this in some ways should be offered), but an experience of the play as a unified and coherent whole.

It is here worth recalling the reflections of H.C. Hart as he worked on his Arden 1 edition of *Merry Wives of Windsor* (1904). As mentioned in Chapter one, Hart shared with his readers the difficulties he faced in presenting the 'discrepancies' of the extant Q and F texts 'in any intelligible form before the reader who has only one text before him'.[156] A possible solution he considered was 'the cumbrous one of printing both texts side by side, passage for passage, and not separately'. He nevertheless settled on flagging the 'most important passages' in his commentary notes to draw readers attention to textual difference within his conflated text. Hart did not elaborate on the 'cumbrous' method of including more than a single text in his edition, but there are indications in the Arden three-text *Hamlets* of the difficulties that Hart foresaw.

The first is that, as mentioned above, the Arden 3 *Hamlet* was originally conceived as a single-volume, three-text *Hamlets*, which would have extended over a thousand pages. As the publishers recognised, this could well have deterred many readers, who would likely choose a less forbidding edition by one of their competitors. Secondly, the editors' policy of defending Q2 readings where possible is unsettled by the consistent reminders in the commentary notes that 'most readers' prefer the F arrangements.

In this regard, it is worth noting Richard Proudfoot's reflection on the splitting of the three texts. One of the major difficulties Thompson and Taylor encountered was that when they reached the F text, they had some trouble in finding enough annotation and textual apparatus

[156] 'Introduction', in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Methuen, 1904), p. xvii.

to argue that it needed to be printed separately from Q2.[157] Thirdly, for theatre practitioners, none would consider basing a production on the differences between Q2 and F. Why then, one is tempted to ask, depart from an Arden series logic and present readers with an extended edition that includes three different *Hamlet* texts?

Reflecting on the advantages of a focus on textual multiplicity in the classroom, Annabel Patterson observed in 1994 that

> one might be skeptical of what results one could get by exposing a large undergraduate class to the intricacies of textual theory or Shakespearean analytical bibliography. Even graduate students rapidly become restive against the mental discipline required to follow the highly technical and often tendentious arguments that have been adduced to explain the differences between Quarto and Folio versions; and teachers may well feel that the degree of uncertainty introduced by the revisionist textual theory of the last decade -- whereby *the* text of *King Lear* or *Hamlet* has been replaced by the theory of equally *valid* versions created by theatrical practice -- is simply too great for themselves or their undergraduate students to handle.[158]

Patterson's scepticism usefully points to a further reason why the Arden 3 *Hamlet* editors' believed that most readers would be content with a Q2 *Hamlet* edition. For undergraduate students, particularly those reading the play for the first time, it is likely that few would be ready to engage in scholarly debates over the play's textual origins.

Even for critics writing from within the New Textualism movement, there was a feeling in the 1990s that its methodology could not be extended to editorial practice without some problems. In fact, a scepticism over the place of multiplicity in modern standard editions was shared by Leah Marcus, one of the leading apologists for the New Textualism. Reflecting on her own experience of teaching Shakespeare in the undergraduate classroom, Marcus argued that there was still a place for 'standard composite texts':

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[157] Richard Proudfoot, email, 1 April 2022.
[158] 'Palinode', in *Teaching with Shakespeare*, pp. 254-59 (p. 257).

> [i]n the undergraduate classroom particularly, we will continue to rely on them. My experience has been that while undergraduate students are captivated and intrigued by the idea that there may be more than one way for *Hamlet* to deliver "To be or not to be", or for *The Taming of the Shrew* to end, they cannot be expected to cope with dual versions of all the plays they read unless they read very few plays.[159]

Instead of offering two- or even three-text versions that strained the readers patience, Marcus went on to suggest a more effective method of alerting readers to textual instability:

> A more successful way to introduce the idea of Shakespearean textual instability is by injecting bits and pieces of variant versions at key points in the discussion in a way that frees students to develop confidence in their own powers of interpretation, since they see that even the composite text itself does not possess the ultimate authority we tend to credit it with.

In Marcus's words, there is a curious echo of the difficulties that H.C. Hart faced in presenting the textual differences to readers while still remaining accessible. Both Hart and Marcus saw the value in a conflated text for readers which consistently flags textual hybridity, which would expose the text as an editorial construction that possessed no 'ultimate authority'. Foakes recognised this, and his own text might serve as one example of how a traditionally conflated text, incorporating the lessons to be gained from the New Textualism, might continue to serve as one model for editions of the future.

Conclusion

Foakes's *Lear* and Thompson and Neil Taylor's *Hamlet* could reasonably be said to encapsulate two extremes of a range of possibilities that existed within the Arden 3 editions of single Shakespeare texts. It is noteworthy that the series began conservatively, particularly with

[159] 'Disestablishing Shakespeare', in *Teaching with Shakespeare*, p. 112.

Foakes's conflated edition, which along with Honigmann's conflated text of *Othello*, fulfilled the traditional expectations of an Arden conflated text. Yet, as this chapter has shown, the expansion of editorial possibilities during this period began to reflect a richer and more exciting critical landscape within English studies If the former emphasis on literary texts as stable, literary works of art was becoming sterile, that earlier model was giving way to a focus on historical specifics as criticism became an openly plural activity.

Thompson and Taylor were influenced by the New Textualism movement founded by Margreta de Grazia and Peter Stallybrass in the 1990s. As this chapter has shown, the New Textualism provided a method that the Arden 3 editors of *Hamlet* could apply that would distinguish their edition from Jenkins's, with the aim of opening up new interpretive vistas and offering fresh readings on the play. With a settling expectation of a continuation of a traditional emphasis on unity and coherence, Thompson and Taylor's edition nevertheless announced the arrival of a postmodern dispersal within the traditionally conservative Arden Shakespeare series. If the Arden 3 *Hamlet* can therefore be seen to have occupied the far corner of the dispersal strategy of the New Textualism, it was however only part of a more extensive strategy of dispersal which gathered momentum as the third series developed.

One of the most prominent signs of a shift in critical investments throughout the third series can be found in its declared emphasis on performance history. As previous chapters have shown, for many who looked back on the second series in the 1980s, there was often a shared unease with the preceding editorial practice that had sought to establish 'stable' or 'fixed' texts, which aimed to provide both a reliable basis for literary critics and an accessible text for students and general readers. Counter to the stability of the 'literary' text, however, a

performance-oriented approach marked a shift of interest from stability towards an ever expanding record of variegated performance.

This shift of emphasis from fixity to dispersal is also registered with the scale of revised Arden 3 editions published between 2016 and 2018. Indeed, it is also worth noting here that the *New Cambridge* series were also adding supplements to older Introductions at the same time. To take one example, Claire McEachern released a revised edition of *Much Ado about Nothing* in 2016 (2005; rev. 2016). Providing a short rationale for offering a revised version before the series had been completed, McEachern referred to the backward and forward movement of Shakespeare's texts, as they both recede into the distance and project forward with the ever expanding list of performances and the latest scholarly developments and critical interpretations. This makes the plays for McEachern 'very much a moving target', which requires that scholarly editions 'must hustle to keep pace'. This brief justification is placed at the beginning of her section 'Additions and Reconsiderations', which includes a lengthy discussion of the performances that followed from her first edition published in 2005.

Similarly, in Ayanna Thompson's revised introduction to Ernst Honigmann's *Othello* (1997; rev. 2016), Thompson shifts the conservative discourse from character criticism and the play's greatness as a tragedy towards the burgeoning field of early modern race studies and global Shakespeare studies. For Thompson, early modern race and global Shakespeare studies have enacted a 'seismic change' which can be compared with the 'critical revolution' of the new historicism in the 1980s. Thompson's new introduction thus offers a radically different way into the text for readers whose expectations will be oriented towards a scholarly concern with early modern race and global studies.

Throughout her Introduction, Thompson expresses a critical investment in dispersal through her conception of the play's narrative as ultimately escaping any 'one frame, or one story'. Rather than providing a singular narrative for all, *Othello* is for Thompson a play which 'provides a story that will not remain stable; it will not sit still'. If the attention to the infinite ways in which the *Othello* story might be retold appeared to destabilise the sense of a stable text, then Thompson makes this explicit by distinguishing her own model of multiplicity from 'that platonic ideal of an Ur-text *Othello* [which] could not erase the histories and stories that proliferate out of it'. As with McEachern's additions and reconsiderations, Thompson draws attention to the ever expanding ways in which the play can be revised, which suggests that any retelling of the story from a different perspective offers the materials for new texts and new editions.

The new emphasis on performance history, however, was not the only force that telescoped a shift of interest from unity towards proliferation as the third series developed. Indeed, a parallel shaping force of instability can be traced in the burgeoning field of authorship studies and collaboration, a field that was nascent at the launch of the third series. Jonathan Hope's *The Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays: A Socio-Linguistic Study* (1994), and a series of essays by MacDonald P. Jackson that culminated in his *Defining Shakespeare: Pericles as Test Case* (2003) provided key contributions to the emerging field.[160] A further influential study was Brian Vickers's monograph *Shakespeare, Co-Author* (2002), which offered a survey of attribution methods while urging textual critics to confront the realities of co-authorship in Shakespearean texts. Published seven years after Jonathan Bate's edition of *Titus Andronicus* (1995), one of the three editions to announce the launch of the third series, Vickers was able to

[160] Jonathan Hope, *The Authorship of Shakespeare's Plays: A Socio-Linguistic Study* (Cambridge University Press, 1994); MacDonald P. Jackson, *Defining Shakespeare: Pericles as Test Case* (Oxford University Press, 2003. See also Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).

express his unease with Bate's treatment of the evidence for George Peele's hand in at least three scenes of the play (1.1, 2.1, 4.1).

In his Arden 3 *Titus* Introduction, Bate challenged previous editors and textual critics who he believed had sought ways to dismiss the play from the canon of Shakespeare's works on the grounds of bad taste. Writing against this tradition, Bate expressed a firm conviction that 'the play was wholly by Shakespeare', citing the play's 'tight structural unity' as offering clear evidence for 'a single authorial hand'. For Bate, the play's unity provided sufficient grounds for suspecting that *Titus* was wholly Shakespeare's, so that any suggestion of its being a 'patched-together collaborative effort', or a 'broken-backed collaborative play' was easily dismissed by the overriding quality of unity evident in the play's tight and unified structure. In doing so, Bate made a powerful case for *Titus*'s intellectual interest, and an emphasis on the play's achievements – counter to earlier low opinions – arguably made single-authorship more plausible. Bate's first edition of *Titus* can be usefully grouped together with Lois Potter's *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (1997) and Gordon McMullan's *Henry VIII* (2000), both of which appeared within close proximity of Bate's series-opening edition. These three plays would soon attract an increased interest as the field of authorship studies and collaboration began to be established. It is significant that all three editions appeared before the publication of Vickers's monograph *Shakespeare*, *Co-Author* (2002).

In McMullan's edition, the play is attributed to Shakespeare and Fletcher on the play's title-page, although McMullan – influenced by the work of Hope and Masten -- was suspicious of the historical attempts to pinpoint individual shares between the two playwrights. In challenging the historical efforts at separating out the individual shares in the play, or 'the quest for a stable fingerprint' in *Henry VIII*, McMullan was influenced by the work of Jeffrey Masten,

whose *Textual Intercourse* (1997), borrowing from poststructuralist theory, had challenged the status of the author by drawing attention to the complex and messy network which provided the means for the production of plays in the early modern period. For McMullan, the realities of the collaborative network exposed the single-author paradigm as hopelessly reductive, so that any attempt to credit the work of individual authors within the play would be frustrated by the broader reach of the play as a textual negotiation between a variety of professional and cultural agencies.

In a footnote included in his section on collaboration, however, McMullan acknowledged 'a burgeoning field of computational analysis of authorial characteristics that tends to concentrate on stylometry [...] an approach which has yet to gain the approval of linguists and literary critics'. The work of Masten had appeared to construct a significant barrier to authorship studies as the third series began, but in challenging the theoretically inflected thinking of Masten and McMullan, Brian Vickers's book *Shakespeare, Co-Author* soon laid down the gauntlet to critics who had called off the search for the author. While McMullan emphasised the insurmountable obstacles involved in seeking to recover the author from the betraying text, Vickers argued for the continuing importance of the author as a legitimate and identifiable category in the production of early modern texts.

Just how far the field of authorship studies and collaboration had developed during the course of the third Arden series is indicated in the revised editions of Lois Potter's *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (2015) and Jonathan Bate's *Titus* (2018), both of which appeared as the third series was reaching its conclusion. In her new section, 'Additions and Reconsiderations', Potter reflected that 'it has taken roughly a generation, but collaborative plays like *The Two Noble Kinsmen* seem finally to have become a focus of interest in their own right'. She proceeded to

give a concise history of the development of authorship studies and collaboration since her first edition appeared in 1997, noting that this interest had 'not yet become apparent' when she finished editing the play 'some twenty years ago'.

Perhaps the most striking instance of the way that authorship studies and collaboration were beginning to influence editorial thinking towards the closing stages of the third series was indicated in Bate's revised edition of *Titus* published in 2018 (see Appendix 1 for a larger sense of the shifting prominence given to authorship and collaboration). Reflecting on an edition produced over twenty years earlier which firmly denied the possibility of *Titus* as a collaborative play, Bate now believed that his case for Shakespeare's sole authorship led him to an 'unbalanced conclusion' based on several studies that had since been discredited. Instead, Bate now acknowledged a 'compelling body of evidence that the primary author of the first act was George Peele'. What McMullan had referred to in 2000 as the 'burgeoning field of computational analysis', Bate could now refer to with some confidence, as the advances in stylometrics had 'led to a broad scholarly consensus that the first act of the play is heavily marked by the hand of the dramatist George Peele'.

In a further shift of interest from the play's structural unity and single authorship, Bate now referred to the idea that 'Shakespeare began his career as the reviser of existing plays', which he noted was 'gaining increasing traction in twenty-first scholarship'. The additional possibility that Shakespeare began his career as a reviser led Bate to put forward three hypotheses: 1) that the play was an active collaboration; 2) that Peele began the script which was subsequently finished by Shakespeare; or 3), that Peele wrote an Ur-*Titus* which was the primary source for a reworked version by Shakespeare. Considering the three possibilities, Bate was less

convinced by the idea of active collaboration, finding it more plausible that Shakespeare likely 'finished an unfinished play' or 'rework[ed] an existing play'.

The shift of interest from unity and atemporal truths towards the fresh energies of a plural critical climate took on a variety of shapes within the third Arden series, and the various strands considered here all appear to point to one conclusion: that the practice of editing in the present day has now become an act of criticism. It is significant that all the editions considered in this chapter were shaped by the arguments and responses of editors engaged in lively editorial debates that are preserved within the pages of the editions produced from the 1980s and 90s. Moreover, it is possible to see in the third series' shift of interest from unity towards dispersal a freeing up of the previously stable literary text to be put in service of the new discoveries and fresh energies of a pluralised critical landscape.

During the course of the second Arden series, most of the team of editors had accepted it as their duty to provide a stable text that would be reliable for the practice of literary criticism. In the 1950s, for example, Fredson Bowers had reminded critics that bibliography was concerned with editing 'not as a usurper of the functions of legitimate criticism, but instead as the necessary foundation on which [...] textual criticism must be based and to which criticism must constantly refer for more or less definitive judgements'. Working within this tradition, in Richard David's Arden 2 *Love's Labour's Lost* (1951), David observed in his introduction that 'an edition of this kind, intended in the first place for students, should not parade new theories'. This shared understanding of the editor's role breaks down, however, with the shift of interest from unity towards fragmentation that has been the key concern of this chapter. In the various ways that this chapter has sought to elucidate, editors are now free to parade new theories, and

it can be reasonably argued that the practice of editing, in the dying days of the third Arden series, was approximating ever more closely to the functions of legitimate criticism.

To put this another way, this chapter began by observing the fragmentation of the discipline of English studies in the late 1980s, as new schools of criticism began to replace the study of literature as the source of power within English departments of the time. The expansion of critical schools since this nascent period of fragmentation has led to a jostling for attention from the various competing schools in an effort to dominate the discipline of Shakespeare studies. There has, however, been a more recent, equally climactic change within the discipline. In the various ways that I have shown, editing had become a fully-fledged act of criticism in the dying days of the third Arden series. In fact, while in the 1980s criticism had in some senses become more powerful than literature, the closing stages of the Arden 3 series bear witness to the practice of editing beginning to eclipse criticism as the most shaping force in scholarly reading cultures of Shakespeare.

CHAPTER FIVE

The Critical Practice of the Third Arden Shakespeare series (1995-2020)

Following significant '[r]ecent events in Cambridge', in 1981, Raymond Williams was persuaded to bring forward some materials from a course of English Faculty lectures he was planning to deliver in the autumn of that year. The title he chose for his lecture, delivered earlier than planned in March 1981, was 'Crisis in English Studies'.[1] Williams aim in this lecture was to identify and explain some 'currently controversial positions' within literary studies, some of which he saw as fundamentally incompatible with 'the existing dominant paradigm of literary studies'.

In his discussion of those 'controversial positions', Williams's interest was in Marxism and structuralism, both of which embraced diverse tendencies that resisted reductive labelling. At the centre of the controversy, for Williams, was the way that some tendencies within both movements were compatible with orthodox critical practice, while others had 'for some years been challenging the dominant paradigm – and thus its profession'. The nature of such challenges had the potential, Williams suggested, to shift and replace the orthodox paradigm, along with its established professional standards and dominant methodologies.[2] These circumstances, for Williams, offered clear evidence of a moment of crisis, and his diagnosis in 1981 was that 'it is where we now are, although at a relatively very early stage, in literary studies in Cambridge'.

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[1] 'Crisis in English Studies', in *Writing and Society* (Verso, 1983), pp. 192-211 (p. 192).
[2] But see Joseph North's argument for a split between two competing paradigms up until the 1970s in his *Literary Criticism: A Concise Political History* (Harvard University Press, 2017), pp. 1-2.

In the following year, Peter Widdowson's edited collection of essays *Re-Reading English* was published, which included an introductory essay by Widdowson that recalled Williams's diagnosis in its title: 'Introduction: The crisis in English studies'.[3] Widdowson introduced the book as a reflection on the current state of English or 'Literary Studies', with the ambitious aim of redirecting the course of the discipline in response to 'pressing social and political needs'. Arguing that many teachers and students of English were aware that their discipline was in some sort of crisis, Widdowson claimed that '[t]he focus…has been on the ideological space which literature as a specific category occupies (whether it has a "relative autonomy", and what, by virtue of this, its value may be), and on the exposure of Criticism as an ideological practice'.

For Widdowson, the primary focus of the crisis was on interrogating a widely held position that there was a *given* literature possessing inherent value, and the assumption that literary criticism was able to teach us how to read literature in order to get at a work's 'true meaning'. Such attitudes, Widdowson observed, 'remain a dominant force in the educational-political field of "English"'. In his concern with the larger issues of English studies as a discipline, Widdowson's own analysis reached beyond debates surrounding the most appropriate methodology for the discipline, to a concern with the nature of the discipline itself: 'it is a question, posed from within, as to what English *is*, where it has got to, whether it has a future, whether it *should* have a future as a discrete discipline, and if it does, in what ways it might be reconstituted'.

[3] 'Introduction: The Crisis in English studies', in *Re-Reading English*, ed. by Peter Widdowson (Routledge, 1982), pp. 1-14.

By the mid-1980s, the sense of a crisis in English studies was widely acknowledged. In John Drakakis's edited book *Alternative Shakespeares*, Drakakis announced that since the publication of Widdowson's *Re-Reading English* (1982), it had 'become commonplace to speak of "a crisis in English Studies"'.[4] Following Williams and Widdowson, Drakakis saw the crisis arising from a challenge to established critical practice, which resulted in a series of shifts of emphasis within the discipline, many of which were confronting what Williams described as the 'dominant paradigm'. Four years after Williams's lecture, Drakakis referred to critical practice as an 'openly pluralist activity'. Where Williams had tentatively acknowledged the existence of tendencies within Marxism and structuralism that were at odds with the dominant paradigm, Drakakis now saw 'proponents of particular positions contesting vigorously the intellectual space which it has occupied'.

Following Widdowson's emphasis on literary criticism as an ideological practice, Drakakis further reinforced Widdowson's concern with the uninterrogated assumptions of established practice, observing that 'the protean values' that 'critics have discovered in the texts themselves can be demonstrated to be in large part the projections of their own externally applied values'. Raising the stakes for alternative forms of critical practice, Drakakis argued that 'what is now needed as a matter of extreme urgency are new kinds of Shakespeare criticism which are thoroughly self-aware and which actively resist those traditions whose main strategy for dealing with the threat they pose is one of domestication'.

In an essay published a year later, Jean E. Howard went beyond Drakakis's view of the threat of domestication facing 'the new kinds of Shakespeare criticism' he and his co-contributors

[4] 'Introduction', in *Alternative Shakespeares*, ed. by John Drakakis (Methuen, 1985), pp. 1-25 (p. 1). See also Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, eds, *Politic Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, 1985); Patricia Parker and Geoffrey H. Hartmann, eds, *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory* (Methuen, 1985).

proposed in *Alternative Shakespeares*. For Howard, the new and emerging forms of early modern criticism were in danger of being marginalized because they could not be rapidly assimilated to familiar critical idioms: '[t]he new thus becomes equated with what is wrong or merely faddish, the familiar with truth and commonsense'.[5] If new critical procedures were faced with automatic marginalisation, however, Howard saw a bleak future in which critics would go on answering the same questions, 'in ever more ingenious and sterile ways'.

Howard's primary concern was not so much that criticism would proceed on the basis that all the important questions had been answered, but that such criticism would sustain the notion that critical practice was based on self-evident assumptions which offered the key to a realm of unmediated truth. Following Drakakis's rallying cry for 'thoroughly self-aware' forms of criticism, Howard argued that 'it is crucial to get away from the notion that literature floats above the rest of human experience in a timeless, ahistorical void and to recognize that it has connections to other aspects of the culture which gave rise to it and that it inevitably performed ideological work in that culture'.

Just how crucial it was to get away from the notion of literature as atemporal is indicated in the International Shakespeare Congress seminar on Shakespeare ideology held in West Berlin, 1986. Some of the papers from this seminar were published in Jean E. Howard and Marion O'Connor's influential *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History & Ideology* (1987). In the volume's introduction, Howard and O'Connor announce their aim of interrogating Shakespeare's 'universality', instead seeking to 'reveal ways in which historically specific factors determine the "Shakespeare" produced in criticism, in the classroom, and on the stage'.[6]

[5] 'Scholarship, Theory, and More New Readings: Shakespeare for the 1990s', in *Shakespeare Studies Today: The Horace Howard Furness Memorial Lectures*, ed. by Georgianna Zeigler (AMS Press, 1986), pp. 127-52 (p. 128).
[6] 'Introduction', pp. 1-17 (p. 4).

In doing so, Howard and O'Connor acknowledged the emergence of a dynamic political criticism within early modern studies in the 1980s.[7] The development of feminism, new historicism, the variants of Marxism, including cultural materialism, the authors remarked, were all related to a political criticism that aimed broadly to examine how Shakespearean texts 'have functioned to produce, reproduce, or contest historically specific relations of power (relations among classes, genders, and races, for example) and have been used to produce and naturalize interested representations of the real'. In questioning Shakespeare's universality, the volume thus aimed to expose the way that a supposedly 'disinterested' criticism served an ideologically oppressive function of erasing differences of gender, class, history, and culture.

A shorthand history of the 1980s 'crisis' in English studies and its urgent call for self-reflexive forms of criticism is perhaps permissible in providing a crucial context for the launch of the third Arden Shakespeare series. From its beginnings in 1899, the Arden series has sought to provide a comprehensive account of each play's editorial and critical history through the relevant edition's introduction. While individual editors of the first and second series differed in their critical tendencies, both series can be characterised as following a broadly held consensus that reflected an orthodox paradigm of their moment.

The seismic events of the 1980s, however, pointed to a future in which that consensus was by no means given, as critical practice had become, in Drakakis's words, an 'openly pluralist activity'. This situation had significant implications for the nature of the third iteration of the Arden Shakespeare series. If critical practice had become plural, how would this reality affect

[7] For a critique of the alleged politically progressive turn in literary studies, see Joseph North, *Literary Criticism: A Concise Political History* (Harvard University Press, 2017).

and shape a series that had historically relied on a critical consensus to ensure a series logic and coherence among its range of individual volumes? How would editors rise to the challenge of providing comprehensive introductions within a critical climate of plurality and ideological suspicion, in which established and emerging critical practices were colliding and jostling for attention?

In this chapter, I aim to explore these questions through a history of the critical practice that can be taken to represent the third Arden series. An analysis of the critical investments of a diverse group of editors extending over a twenty-five year period is of course beyond the limits of this chapter, which cannot hope to be comprehensive. This chapter will therefore focus on three critical modes in seeking to expose the nature of the critical climate and practice in the third Arden series. In doing so, the chapter also claims that the Arden introductions, when placed in sequence, provide a way to track the critical developments within English studies in the twenty-first century, as each editor aimed to provide a comprehensive state of editorial and critical play within their Arden 3 editions.

This claim, however, comes with three caveats. The first is that, in arguing for the collective introductions as spaces that register and illuminate the critical state of play, I am not suggesting that a history of criticism follows a linear path of inevitable progress. Rather, this chapter understands critical practice as recursive: earlier forms of criticism have not been simply abandoned as a result of the 'crisis' and the emergence of new forms of criticism. As Evelyn Gajowski has observed, speaking of close reading, genre studies, and character studies: 'the

critical and theoretical climate of the twenty-first century does not dismiss or disregard them as much as it reinvigorates and transforms them'.[8]

The second caveat to note in providing a critical history of the third Arden series is that individual editors do not always share the same critical priorities, even though they are working in the same moment and as part of a larger collaborative project. Differences in critical posture can be illustrated, for example, when considering the editorial investments in the crucial concepts of unity and fragmentation, a theme explored in the previous chapter. The final caveat to note is that individual editions can themselves be seen as interventions in critical history that disrupt the sense of a tidy story of critical progress into which editions can be neatly placed as representative of a larger narrative. An awareness of editions as interventions in scholarly debates usefully disrupts the sense that editions can be slotted unproblematically within a neat teleological pattern that assumes the steady progress of critical practice.

The three critical frameworks that will be the focus of this chapter are: performance criticism, feminism, gender and sexuality, and source studies. For performance criticism, I focus on Claire McEachern's *Much Ado about Nothing* (2005), Barbara Hodgdon's *The Taming of the Shrew* (2010), and Ayanna Thompson's revised Introduction to Ernst Honigmann's *Othello* (1997; rev. 2016). To explore the critical investments in feminism, gender and sexuality, I examine Juliet Dusinberre's *As You Like It* (2006), Valerie Wayne's *Cymbeline* (2017), and Suzanne Gossett and Helen Wilcox's *All's Well That Ends Well* (2018). To consider source studies, I explore Jonathan Bate's *Titus Andronicus* (1995; rev. 2018), John Drakakis's *Merchant of Venice* (2011), and Sukanta Chaudhuri's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (2017).

[8] 'Introduction: Twenty-First Century Shakespeares', in *The Arden Research Handbook of Contemporary Shakespeare Criticism*, ed. by Evelyn Gajowski (Arden Shakespeare, 2021), pp. 1-18 (p. 3).

In each case, I aim to explore individual editors' critical investments in the relevant practice, connecting their priorities to the 'crisis' in English outlined above. A further aim is to track across the individual editors' investments to explore the degrees of autonomy and difference in their critical investments. As well as selecting editions that are spread over the series' twenty-five year course, I have also tried to choose editions that illustrate a diversity of critical tendencies existing within the critical frameworks whose labelling can risk an easy sense of homogeneity. Pursuing these aims, I argue for the Arden Introductions as paratextual spaces that offer a barometer of the critical state of play in the field of English studies.

Performance criticism

The third Arden series' commitment to performance was declared in its overall aim to 'present the plays as texts for performance'. The Introductions and the commentary notes, the general editors observe, 'discuss the history of the reception of the texts within the theatre and scholarship and beyond, investigating the interdependency of the literary text and the surrounding "cultural text" both at the time of the original production of Shakespeare's works and during their long and rich afterlife'. In this emphasis on the theatre, the series can be said to share an interest in performance-oriented criticism with Wells and Taylor's Oxford edition (1986-87).

The investment in performance can be seen broadly as a reflection of wider critical developments in Shakespeare studies. From the pioneering work of Harley Granville-Barker (1877-1946) and Muriel C. Bradbrook (1909-1993), performance critics such as Bernard

Beckerman (1921-1985), John Russell Brown (1923-2005), and J.L. Styan (1923-2002) helped to advance a critical methodology for a version of performance criticism that would provide scholarly rigour for the study of Shakespeare 'in his local habitat'.[9] In particular, J.L. Styan's landmark book *The Shakespeare Revolution: Criticism and Performance in the Twentieth Century* (1977), considered the steady growth of stage-centred criticism in the twentieth century, and his book can be seen as an attempt to close the gap between the theatre and scholarship.

Styan's work is also significant for the way it transferred a traditional search for the 'true meanings' of autonomous texts to a desire to recover the authenticity of original Shakespearean productions. 'The search is on', Styan remarked in his introduction, 'for the theatrical effect and experience of the original performance, in the belief that the meaning is in the experience'. Styan's critical agenda extended well into the 1980s and its influence on the Oxford *Complete Works* is nicely captured in Stanley Wells's comment that 'Shakespeare's work is firmly rooted in the circumstances of its conception and development' and 'reach[es] full realization only in performance'.[10]

With the theoretical ferment and disciplinary 'crisis' of the 1980s, however, many scholars expressed unease with a traditional investment in the isolated author and atemporal truths. In response to what many felt was the intellectual cul-de-sac in which English studies found itself, many literary critics argued powerfully for a search for productive alternatives to traditional

[9] See Harley Granville-Barker, *Prefaces to Shakespeare*, 5 vols (Sidgwick & Jackson, 1927-37); Muriel C. Bradbrook, *Elizabethan Stage Conventions*, *A Study of Their Place in The Interpretation of Shakespeare's Plays* (Cambridge University Press, 1932); Bernard Beckerman, *Shakespeare at the Globe, 1599-1609* (Macmillan, 1962); John Russell Brown, *Shakespeare's Plays in Performance* (Edward Arnold, 1966); J.L. Styan, *The Shakespeare Revolution: Criticism and Performance in the Twentieth Century* (Cambridge University Press, 1977).

[10] 'General Introduction', in *Complete Works*, p. xiii.

ways of looking at texts. In *Shakespeare Reproduced*, for example, Howard and O'Connor pointed to the way that texts have been received throughout history as constructions that disrupt the sense of those 'true' meanings: '[f]ar from distorting the 'true' meaning of an unchanging text [...] such constructions *are* the text'.

Writing three years later, W.B. Worthen's important essay on 'Deeper Meanings and Theatrical Technique' challenged performance critics who he believed were in thrall to Shakespeare's cultural authority.[11] Taking stock of performance criticism in the late 1980s, Worthen argued that a tension between text and performance was fundamental to the critical investments and dominant assumptions of performance critics. Characteristic of this conflict was a continuing interdependence between 'literary' and 'performance' critical modes. For Worthen, to prioritise the 'literary' was to assign authority to the author and the text and ignore the interpretive dynamics of stage production. In this way, Worthen believed that the priority given to the text, traditionally conceived as a Platonic ideal, prevented performance critics from pursuing its justifying critical agenda: 'to locate the space and practice of criticism in relation to the practices of performance'.

Pursuing this agenda in two further contributions in the 1990s, Worthen sought to decentre performance criticism – traditionally invested in a fidelity to Shakespeare's text -- and reposition the study of Shakespearean performance within the broader field of performance studies. Pioneered by scholars invested in cultural anthropology such as Victor Turner (1920-1983) and Richard Schechner (1934-), performance studies in the 1990s began to gradually borrow from a wide range of critical methodologies, including feminism, queer studies, post-

[11] 'Deeper Meanings and Theatrical Technique: The Rhetoric of Performance Criticism', *SQ*, 40.4 (1989), pp. 441-55.

colonial studies, and race studies.[12] Around the time the third Arden series was launched, in 1997 Worthen reflected that performance criticism was engaged in an effort to discover a nexus between theory and performance that would expose a 'contestable Shakespeare'; that is, a 'Shakespeare' open to intercultural exchange.[13] To sustain the ghost of a previous paradigm, for Worthen, risked erasing the cultural exchanges recognisable behind the mask of transcendence: '[w]e impoverish, in other words, the work of our own performances, and the work of the plays in our making of the world'.

Worthen's observation usefully points to the generic openness of performance criticism during the early stages of the third Arden series. This openness can be sharply illustrated when comparing the editors' critical investments in performance across the series. Claire McEachern's *Much Ado* (2006) offers perhaps the most striking example to illustrate the diverse critical approaches to performance within the series. Not far into her Introduction, McEachern revealed that '[t]his edition treats the play as a literary text, not a script'. Somewhat disrupting a series logic, McEachern anticipated the charge of having 'no sense of humour, let alone a sense of theatre'. To justify her decision, she argued that a scholarly edition was more suited to treat the scholarly strands of the play rather than the theatrical elements. Moreover, McEachern pointed to the shortcomings of an attempt to reproduce stage experiences in print, although she went so far as to provide instances of staging choices in her introduction and commentary notes.

In all of these arguments, McEachern echoed the position taken by Reg Foakes in his Arden 3 *King Lear* (1997). There Foakes pointed out a 'fashion in criticism' for claiming the real play

[12] See Victor Turner, *From Ritual to Theatre: The Human Seriousness of Play* (Performing Arts Journal Publications, 1982); Richard Schechner, *Between Theatre and Anthropology* (University of Philadelphia Press, 1985).
[13] *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 189.

as the performance, not the text.[14] Resisting this posture, Foakes suggested that the 'real play' was 'as much the text we read, and perhaps act out in the mind, as the performance we watch, and scripts are what directors and actors make for the stage out of the reading texts provided for them by editors'. Foakes's influence should perhaps come as no surprise, as during her work on the edition McEachern was working in the same English department with Foakes and A.R. Braunmuller at the University California, Los Angeles (UCLA). To be sure, Reg Foakes is described as her 'associate general editor' in the Preface to her edition.

McEachern believed that a scholarly edition was required to address both the 'theatrical and the scholarly strands' of a play. In making this distinction, however, McEachern appeared to risk separating theatre and scholarship as distinct modes of enquiry. The particular medium of the scholarly edition, McEachern argued, was most suited to scholarship on the play, which could provide a multiplicity of readings, whereas a stage production is restricted by the choices a director and actors have to make in rehearsal.

McEachern's distinction between theatre and scholarship is also central to her overarching interpretation of the play. In her thematic reading, she argued that 'Shakespeare offers a play of light and dark, of romantic union wrestled from fear and malice, and of social harmony soothing the savagery of psychic violence'. Here the 'light' and 'dark' binary opposition is wedded to the 'double life' of theatre and scholarship. The 'light' elements of the play are represented by the 'darlings of the theatre' Beatrice and Benedick, who have been central to the play's popularity in the theatre.

[14] p. 4 ('Introduction').

The Hero and Claudio plot, however, constitutes the 'dark' scholarly side of the play, which has historically been 'a target of scholarly scrutiny'. For McEachern, the 'light' and 'dark' sides of the play ultimately depend upon each other. Beatrice and Benedick please because their romantic union is achieved against the background of near-tragedy. If Claudio and Hero challenge the generic expectations of comedy, it is because 'Shakespeare offers another vision of the human power to change and to choose'. Lightness and darkness, theatre and scholarship, thus exist in a necessarily symbiotic relationship. This interpretation has clear critical continuities with an older paradigm, in particular a formalist concern with the reconciliation of opposites to achieve a harmonious whole. This approach is of course in keeping with her emphasis on the play as a 'literary' text, as the sense of the theatrical elements of the play are absorbed within her formalist reading.

When McEachern turns to consider the play's stage history, she notes that '[t]his account will not rehearse the chronological stage history of the play *per se*, but will rather take up questions of staging, certain answers provided in the history of productions and their implications for the play's effect'. Attentive to the 'answers' concerning 'questions of staging', and the 'play's effect', McEachern appears to prioritise stable meanings in the play that remain consistent across historical junctures. As W.B. Worthen has observed, 'a literary perspective takes the authority of a performance to be a function of how fully the stage expresses meanings, gestures, and themes located ineffably in the written work'.[15] Following a literary analysis, the interpretive dynamics of the play thus remain consistent over time due to the intrinsic qualities of the literary text.

[15] *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance*, p. 4.

McEachern sees the 'play's effect' not as contingent on the audience's response but as an outcome of the play's deliberate use of theatre to 'induce or to dissuade love'. For evidence, McEachern referred to Jean Howard's essay on 'Renaissance anti-theatricality' which discussed early modern antitheatrical tracts that cited the theatre's incitement to illicit sexual identities.[16] While this further gestures towards stable meanings in McEachern's interpretation, Howard's particular concern was to disrupt any notion of the play's 'universal' meaning in her essay. A focus on the antitheatrical discourse in the early modern period allowed Howard to illustrate the way that meanings are ultimately contingent on the reception of audiences located at different historical junctures. Howard's method can perhaps be most usefully seen as supplementary rather than antagonistic to McEachern's Formalist criticism. To be sure, while Howard would reject the moralistic presumptions of an earlier formalist paradigm, her work was also part of a larger critical movement committed to seeing literary writers as agents within their own culture. Literary writers might, for example, help to establish a cult of virginity around Queen Elizabeth. Such strategies were not considered detriments to literary achievement, but rather part of it.

Four years later, however, Barbara Hodgdon's edition of *The Shrew* (2010) offered considerable pushback against the critical and ideological investments in the 'literary' text represented in Reg Foakes and Claire McEachern's early contributions to the third series. In the 1990s, Hodgdon published a series of influential articles and a book on Shakespeare's history plays, *The End Crowns All* (1991), which intervened in an ongoing 'text-against-performance' debate.[17] In *The End Crowns All*, Hodgdon applied a New Historicist mode to

[16] 'Renaissance anti-theatricality and the politics of gender and rank in *Much Ado About Nothing*', in Jean E. Howard and Marion O'Connor, eds, *Shakespeare Reproduced*, 1987, pp. 163-87.
[17] See Barbara Hodgdon, *The End Crowns All: Closure and Contradiction in Shakespeare's History* (Princeton University Press, 1991); 'Katherina Bound; or, Play(K)ating the Strictures of Everyday Life', *PMLA*, 107 (1992), pp. 538-53; "Looking for Mr. Shakespeare after 'The Revolution': Robert LePage's Intercultural *Dream* Machine', in *Shakespeare, Theory, and Performance*, ed. by James C. Bulman (Routledge, 1996), pp. 68-91.

performance, arguing that performances fracture the notion of 'ideal' texts into multiplicity, 'especially when they venture into unknown territory that may shatter readers-turned-spectators notions of textual integrity'. For Hodgdon, Shakespearean plays 'exist in multiple states – as the words constituting the playtexts, as the readings based on those texts, and as their concrete, historically particular theatrical representations, or performance texts'.[18]

In putting forward her argument, Hodgdon was careful to distinguish between her two terms 'playtexts' and 'performance texts'. Both terms aimed to destabilise the idea of an 'ideal' text controlling the authority of a performance. The term 'playtext' referred to the indeterminacy of the words that traditionally identify 'Shakespeare's play', and was differentiated from other more determinate textual categories. Her use of the term 'performance text' further aimed to disrupt the notion that 'the written word represents the only form in which a play can possess or participate in textuality'. Combining the two terms 'performance' and 'text' together, Hodgdon described her composite term as an 'apparent oxymoron': one that 'freely acknowledges the perceived incompatibility between the (infinitely) flexible substate(s) of a Shakespearean play and the (relative) fixity of the term 'text'.

The two terms 'playtexts' and 'performance texts' are crucial to Hodgdon's position in clarifying the way that Shakespearean texts exist in 'multiple states'. On the one hand, the private, critical reading of a 'playtext' 'replaces the play with another text'. On the other hand, a 'collectively mediated performance [...] re-*places* the play within a theatrical and cultural space'. While the final outcome of a critical reading or performance will differ, 'the *processes* that generate each text, each "performance", so to speak, share more similarities than differences'. Every private act of reading, and every collectively mediated public performance,

[18] *The End Crowns All*, p. 3.

made by different means and for different audiences, further adds to the existing 'multiple states' of Shakespearean plays.

Hodgdon's edition of *The Shrew* can be seen as a further intervention in the text vs performance controversies to which she had contributed in the 1990s. In contrast to McEachern's emphasis on the 'literary' text, Hodgdon began her Introduction with a section entitled 'What Kind of Play?' in which she described the play as 'inherently theatrical'. In *The Shrew*'s 'theatre of illusions', the reader soon learns, 'nothing remains stable for very long'. Seeking to further destabilise notions of an 'ideal' text as a repository of 'universal' meanings, Hodgdon here suggests that the play's meanings are ultimately determined not by what is ineffably located in the text, but by historically situated readers and audiences: 'the "kind" of history that *The Shrew* tells will, like all history, depend on who tells its story, on how it is told and, in that specialized arena of historiography that has to do with theatre, on what those who perform it and those who witness its performances remember'.

Hodgdon further revived her argument for the multiple states of Shakespearean plays as a result of both critical reading and their passing through the collective mediation of various collaborative agents in the process of production. *The Shrew*'s histories, Hodgdon writes, are enabled and shaped by the '[p]layers and other theatre personnel, the material conditions of the Elizabethan theatre, the various companies through whose hands the play passed and the conditions of licensing'. Moreover, there is also the work of agents responsible for 'remaking and refashioning the play, turning it into print for readers': *The Shrew* can thus be seen as 'a product of shared performance, both in terms of the labour involved in writing and printing and in the work players do to (re)shape and (re)make that writing as performance'.

Hodgdon's attentiveness to the conditions under which early modern plays were produced allows her to mount a series of challenges to a traditional investment in Shakespeare's sole-eminence. Considering *The Shrew*'s lack of an epilogue as 'the most intransigent textual question', for example, Hodgdon recalled Brian Morris's conjecture that *A Shrew*'s Sly-scenes and epilogue 'however garbled, are witness to Shakespeare's holograph'. Wells and Taylor's alternative premise was that *The Shrew*'s lack of an epilogue points to the Folio's printing of an earlier stage of composition before Shakespeare's additions to the Sly framework, which are represented in *A Shrew*. For Hodgdon, in fixating on 'Mr Shakespeare', such premises artificially construct a 'Shakespeare or non-Shakespeare' binary and in doing so obscure what Paul Werstine has called the 'close contriving' of playing companies, playwrights, actors, bookkeepers and annotators during the composition of plays.[19]

Turning to the well-known 'Sincklo-Soto' crux in *The Shrew*'s Induction (1.1.87), Hodgdon further interrogates the way that editors have traditionally 'allow[ed] the desire for Shakespearean priority to drive the interpretation of evidence'. In the Folio *The Shrew*, a Lord recalls an actor having 'plaide a Farmers eldest sonne' in an earlier play, to which 'Sincklo' responds: 'I thinke 'twas *Soto* that your honor meanes' (TLN 94, 98). What makes this exchange a crux is the discrepancy between 'Sincklo' and '*Soto*'. The Folio's speech prefix 'Sincklo' refers to the actor 'John Sincler' who is also named in *2 Henry IV*, *The Malcontent*'s Induction, *3 Henry IV*, and the anonymous play *The Second Seven Deadly Sins*. Sincler's name is not given in the list of the Principal Actors of the King's Men in the Folio, although it is possible that he played the role when the play belonged to Pembroke's Men in the early 1590s.

[19] Paul Werstine, 'Close contrivers: nameless collaborators in early modern London plays', in *Elizabethan Theatre XV*, ed. by A.L. Magnusson and C.E. McGee (University of Toronto Press, 2002), pp. 3-20 (p. 5).

The name 'Soto' also appears in John Fletcher's *Women Pleased* (*c*. 1619-23), and provides a good match for *The Shrew*'s 'Soto' because in Fletcher's play he is also a farmer's eldest son, attempting to woo Lady Belvidere for his master while in disguise. As Fletcher's play clearly post-dates Shakespeare's death, Hodgdon notes that this fact troubles the theory that *The Shrew* predates *A Shrew*. Several theories have been put forward to explain the 'Soto' reference in *The Shrew*. One is that the 'Soto' of *The Shrew* provides evidence of late additions for a revival of the play before the First Folio's publication in 1623.

A further influential hypothesis that originates with Dover Wilson is that Fletcher's *Women Pleased* was based on an earlier, now lost, play owned by the Chamberlain's Men. The existence of an earlier *ur*-text would allow for a reference to 'Soto' that preceded the later date of Fletcher's play. The problem for Hodgdon, however, was that in prioritising Shakespeare's authority, such theories ignored the working dynamics of the early modern theatre, reductively explaining away the possibilities of revisions by collaborative agents. Widening her scope from 'Mr Shakespeare' to the theatre's collaborative economies, Hodgdon proposed a connection between the name 'Soto' and the King's Men's possession of Fletcher's *Women Pleased* and *The Shrew*. As both plays were owned by the King's Men, Hodgdon conjectured that Fletcher may have had a hand in *The Shrew*'s Induction, recalling the name 'Soto' from his earlier play.

Focusing on *The Shrew*'s lack of an epilogue and the 'Sincklo-Soto' crux thus allowed Hodgdon to interrogate an ideological investment in Shakespeare's authority as the creator of stable, self-sufficient texts. From a performance perspective, Hodgdon illustrates how such textual peculiarities as missing parts or knotty cruxes might be seen not so much as errors or slips in the production of texts, but as providing evidence for the way that the surviving material record speaks to the multiplicity of performance. Indeed, the close contriving of various agents

as part of a collaborative playhouse practice indicates the way that the play's performance history exposed the 'myth of textual fidelity'.

Rather than seeking solutions to textual peculiarities by appealing to 'Shakespeare's holograph' or imagined *ur*-texts that 'sustain myths of Shakespeare's immanent authority', Hodgdon argued for the collectively mediated 'multiple states' of the surviving *Shrew* texts: 'I view the two *Shrew* plays as representing different stages of an ongoing theatrical commodity that was formed at some point in the early 1590s and has been undergoing mutations ever since'.[20] The contrast with McEachern's 'literary' account in *Much Ado* here becomes abundantly clear. While McEachern's 'literary' approach emphasises the 'stable meanings' ineffably located in the printed text and which provide the basis for a successful performance, Hodgdon's performative view recalls her earlier arguments for the 'multiple states' in which early modern plays circulated: 'a performance is not a performance *of* the text – neither in the early modern period nor in subsequent centuries'. In Hodgdon's performative view, then, an ideological investment in the literary 'text' as the authorising ground for performance is thus exposed as a conceptual illusion that is unmasked by the process of theatrical representation.

McEachern and Hodgdon's sharply opposed critical investments in the text and performance serve usefully to illuminate the twin poles of the wider 'text-performance controversies' that were the subject of scholarly debate during the early and middle stages of the third Arden series. The way that the text-performance debates have shaped later approaches to performance can be seen in Ayanna Thompson's revised Introduction to *Othello* (2016). Indeed, Thompson's Introduction provides a new inflection to the earlier text-performance debates that can also

[20] 'Introduction', in *The Shrew*, p. 36.

serve as a 'state of play' for Shakespearean performance studies towards the end of the third Arden series.

From the start, Thompson orients her readers towards the 'multiple frames' in which readers and audiences experience Shakespearean plays, being 'both timely and untimely all at once'. This view suggests that the plays both possess recurring themes that are able to pose salient questions and speak to different ages, while also possessing a malleability that allows them to be reshaped for different historical moments. This mode of thinking has a direct throughline with her earlier monograph *Passing Strange* (2011), in which Thompson mounted a series of provocations to disrupt Shakespeare's cultural authority through the lens of critical race studies.[21]

In this book, Thompson borrowed from Othello's description of Desdemona's fascination with his adventures. Desdemona found his stories 'passing strange', listening to them 'with a greedy ear'. For Thompson, the multivalent term 'passing' of her book's title described individuals who pretended to be a member of a racial group different than their own. 'Passing' could also suggest the formation of a new identity, reflecting the desire to 'rewrite the story from a different point of view'. The term could also be used to describe the changes taking place over time. The implications for an understanding of text and performance were made clear in her argument that Shakespeare

> was / is always defined through the recreation of his identity, image, texts, and performances…[He] needs to be rendered as contingent – as in process and as passing -- as the creative moment in which his name, image, text, and performance are invoked.

[21] *Passing Strange: Shakespeare, Race, and Contemporary America* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

Thompson's critical investment in presenting Shakespeare and his works as historically contingent upon multiple factors is a commitment that is sustained and reinforced in her revised Introduction to *Othello*, written five years later. Just as in *Passing Strange* she had prioritised Shakespeare's landing on a culture as always 'in process and as passing', in her Arden 3 Introduction Thompson argues that *Othello* is 'not an inanimate object that never changes', but rather that

> *Othello* is a dynamic organism that is affected by every hand that touches it – from the actors who perform the role, the visual artists who re-imagine and re-animate the character, the creative writers who rewrite the plot, to the scholars who contextualize its various, disparate and interconnected histories.

Thompson's commitment to the 'multiple *Othellos*' that are inevitably produced by 'every hand that touches' the play has clear critical continuities with Barbara Hodgdon's argument for the 'multiple states' of the *Shrew* texts as they survive and as they are experienced by later readers and audiences. As discussed above, however, Hodgdon's new historicist focus was on how theatre personnel reshaped the plays for performance, and on how printshop workers refashioned the play during the printing process. An attentiveness to the 'close contriving' of playhouse companies and theatre personnel thus meant that Hodgdon's idea of an authoritative performance never extended far beyond the surviving texts, a situation acknowledged in her consciously oxymoronic term 'performance text'.

Whereas Hodgdon's 'multiple states' theory was tied to the historical moment of the Renaissance, Thompson's approach to performance reaches beyond a focus on the early modern moment in her argument for 'multiple *Othellos*'. Indeed, her interest extends beyond the close contriving of early modern playhouse companies and theatre personnel that creates authoritative 'multiple states' of texts, towards the way that Shakespearean plays continue to be adapted as part of Shakespeare's 'afterlife': 'actors', 'visual artists', 'creative writers' and

'scholars' all actively contribute to the creation of new versions of *Othello* that carry the play's timely and untimely elements into new historical moments.

In *Passing Strange*, Thompson described her book as 'the first […] to offer a sustained examination of a type of contemporary-Shakespearean-cultural-race studies'.[22] Adopting this approach, she acknowledged Peter Erickson and Francesca Royster as the two scholars who had influenced her the most, because they had drawn attention to the way that Shakespeare and race are both connected in 'the contemporary American imagination'. Erickson's *Citing Shakespeare* examined how black artists (novelists, poets, and sculptors) engaged in dialogue with Shakespeare's works, while Royster's *Becoming Cleopatra* drew on pop culture sources to explore African-American counter narratives about Cleopatra's race and place in history.

Thompson's description of her practice as 'a type of contemporary-Shakespearean-cultural-race studies' illuminates her critical investment in how 'actors', 'visual artists', 'creative writers', and 'scholars' engage with Shakespeare's works to reproduce them for a new cultural moment. In her account of the play's performance history, for instance, Thompson describes performance directors and actors as actively shaping the meanings of the play in performance, which on the page are 'enigmatic and imprecise'.[23]

Moreover, the eighteenth-century actor Edmund Kean (1789-1833) is described as an interpreter of Othello, and the intensity of his performances 'cast a long shadow on future performances'. In the same way, the actress Fanny Kemble's interpretation of Desdemona which included her fight during the murder scene in 1848 is acknowledged as changing future

[22] p. 12 ('Introduction: The Passing Strangeness of Shakespeare in America').
[23] 'Introduction', in *Othello*, p. 49.

performances of Desdemona. Connecting Kemble's interpretation to the surrounding ideas of her time, Thompson also observed that Kemble was a staunch abolitionist who 'often wrote about the horrors of slavery from a feminist perspective'.

Paul Robeson's (1898-1976) performances in London (1930), New York (1943), and Stratford-upon-Avon (1948) are described in the same manner, following the same structure of actor-interpretation-social politics. Robeson's position as the first black Othello of the twentieth century was precarious, as he would be on stage during a time in US history when theatres were still segregated. Within this political climate, Thompson writes, Robeson 'had to make his Othello less threatening sexually and emphasize his naïveté in matters of the heart'. Rather than focusing on Robeson's stage performance, however, Thompson's interest is in Robeson's politics and the wider political climate that shaped his interpretation. For Thompson, Robeson's Othello performances awakened him politically: Robeson soon became a member of the Community Party, using his popularity to raise social and political issues in the media, and promoting the issues of desegregating major league baseball and colonial countries' exploitation of Africa.

Thompson's discussion of the role of actors in reinterpreting *Othello* illustrates her commitment to the way that they are empowered to reimagine the play within the parameters of their social and political moment. Moreover, by focusing on the wider socio-political world of performance, Thompson reinforces her commitment to the way that actors engage with Shakespeare's works in different social and political moments. Actors possess agency and are empowered to change and authorise meanings within their own social and political context: the text on the page serves only as a blueprint for 'enigmatic and imprecise' meanings. In this way, Thompson's investment in modern appropriations can be shown to shift further along the line

from McEachern and Hodgdon's investment in a text-based approach towards a deeper commitment to challenging Shakespeare's cultural authority and making something new in Shakespearean performances.

Feminism, Sexuality, and Queer Studies

In June 1994, the year before the launch of the third Arden series, Ann Thompson delivered her inaugural lecture at the Roehampton Institute in London entitled 'Sexuality and Textuality in the Editing of Shakespeare'.[24] Her purpose was to explore the 'supposed tensions' between feminism and Shakespeare. Thompson's own experience of these tensions were made clear from the start, as she informed her audience that she had recently taught a graduate course on feminist theory in 1993 as part of her position as Visiting Professor at the Center for Women's Studies at the University of Cincinnati, Ohio. Earlier in the same year, however, she had signed a contract to become joint General Editor of the third Arden series.

Reflecting on these two aspects of her career, Thompson suggested that the main problem was that feminism was still considered 'a marginal, controversial area, existing precariously within academic institutions and vulnerable to political pressures and financial cutbacks'. Shakespeare studies, conversely, were 'at the very centre of English studies', and the Arden Shakespeare series was 'a monument of traditional cultural authority'. Whether or not feminism was still a marginal movement at the time, the study of women's writing and feminist criticism was often considered a direct threat to the study of Shakespeare. Thompson recalled,

[24] Ann Thompson, *Sexuality and Textuality in the Editing of Shakespeare: Inaugural Lecture* (Roehampton Institute, 1994).

for example, having heard complaints that recent publications and conferences had been 'unduly dominated by the notion of 'gender'', which the detractors seemed to suggest was 'something possessed by straight women, lesbian women and gay men, but not by straight men who consequently feel excluded'.

Thompson nevertheless saw that the work of the past few decades had made it far easier for female Shakespearean scholars to identify themselves as feminists in the 1990s, with the field of feminist criticism being now 'widely recognized and respected'. Taking courage from this state of play, Thompson looked forward to how feminist criticism might shape the editions produced for the third Arden series. In their Introductions, Thompson suggested, feminist editors must 'interrogate the assumptions made about gender in the text itself, and in the previous transmission and elucidation of the text, drawing on ways in which Shakespeare has been reproduced and appropriated by patriarchal cultures'. For Thompson, the focus on gender was essential because of the way that previous editors had often 'neglected, distorted and trivialized topics which are of interest to women'.

Evidence of this neglect could be seen as recently as the 1970s and 1980s. Feminist criticism at this time is often judged to be rather naïve, advocating for women as if they were real-life characters, and defending their honour as admirable heroines. Aware of this often-rehearsed commonplace, Dympna Callaghan has argued that feminist critics during this time are often portrayed as advocating for women 'as if they were real women who had turned up at a consciousness-raising group in need of protection from brutal husbands'.[25] As feminist criticism gained critical currency in these two decades, however, it is important to recognise

[25] 'Introduction', in *A Feminist Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. by Dympna Callaghan (Wiley, 2016), pp. 1-18 (p. 14).

the striking diversity of critical voices that resists the collective agreement suggested by the label of feminist criticism.[26]

As Marianne Novy has noted, the first work of Shakespearean feminist criticism appeared in 1975 with Juliet Dusinberre's monograph *The Nature of Women*, a celebration of the characterization of women in Shakespeare's plays which was published in the same year as Agnes Latham's Arden 2 *As You Like It* (1975).[27] In many ways, Dusinberre's book is of its time in its positive outlook, adopting Shakespeare as a proto-feminist and celebrating his plays' characterization of women. Reflecting on the changes that had happened since the book was first published in a Preface to her Second Edition in 1996, Dusinberre described the book as participating 'in a battle about ownership' that challenged competing paradigms: '[w]ho determines the questions we ask and the answers we give? Who owns the literary text? Who owns the authoritative critical voice? Who owns the past?'.[28]

With the emergence of critical pluralism in the 1980s, such questions became central to English studies in the 1980s. The rise of New Historicism and its domination of early modern studies in this decade led to trenchant debates that would fuel the battle for ownership that Dusinberre describes. The New Historicist method was focused on how subversion is contained within state power and recuperated, which as an analytical coordinate existed in tension with feminism's emphasis on gender and resistance. As Ania Loomba and Melissa Sanchez have observed, new historicist critics frequently challenged feminist politics and methods with

[26] A good example of the diversity of feminist criticism in the 1980s can be found in Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz, Gayle Greene and Carol Thomas Neely's edited book *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare* (University of Illinois Press, 1980). This book was inspired by a Special Session organised by Carolyn Ruth Swift Lenz at the 1976 MLA convention in Minneapolis, which she titled 'Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare'.
[27] *Shakespeare and Feminist Theory* (Arden Shakespeare, 2017), p. 5.
[28] 'Preface to the Second Edition', in *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women*, 2nd edn (Macmillan, 1996), p. xii.

'charges of anachronism and skepticism about the possibilities of political resistance'.[29] For the new historicists, any attempt at resistance was contained by state power within an early modern politics of patriarchal dominance.

The heated debates of the 1980s between feminism and new historicism, including Stephen Greenblatt's notorious statement that 'on stage there is in fact but a single gender', appeared to reduce the force of feminist criticism in English studies.[30] As Evelyn Gajowski has argued, under the influence of historicism, feminism 'lost its voice': '[i]t became naïve to analyze female agency and unfashionable to analyze female subversion; it became fashionable, instead, to underscore how any subversion, including female subversion, was inevitably contained by power structures, including patriarchal structures'.[31]

Many feminist critics in the 1980s, however, found innovative ways to move beyond the acrimonious debates and mobilise strategies from both movements. For some feminist critics, this involved shifting attention towards questions of gender and sexuality. In 1982, Gayle Rubin showed how this might be done, in a paper delivered at the Barnard Conference on Women and Sexuality. The paper was eventually published in 1984 as 'Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality'.[32] In her landmark article, Rubin sought to move beyond feminist approaches to sexuality, which she believed were inadequate for examining erotic injustice and the oppression of sexual minorities, arguing for a 'radical theory of sex' that can 'identify, describe, explain, and denounce erotic injustice and sexual oppression'.[33]

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[29] *Rethinking Feminism in Early Modern Studies: Gender, Race, and Sexuality* (Routledge, 2016).
[30] 'Fiction and Friction', in *Shakespearean Negotiations* (University of California Press, 1988), pp. 66-94.
[31] 'The Presence of the Past', in *Presentism, Gender, and Sexuality in Shakespeare* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 1-24.
[32] Gayle Rubin, 'Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality', in *Pleasure and Danger: Exploring Female Sexuality*, ed. by Carole S. Vance (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984), pp. 267-319; see also Rubin's earlier essay, 'The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex', in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. by Rayna Reiter (Monthly View Press, 1975), pp. 157-210.
[33] 'Thinking Sex', p. 275.

In the following year, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* took a gay-lesbian approach that integrated a feminist method in her historical analysis of male homosocial relations and homosexuality. Sedgwick's pioneering book gave theoretical traction to a growth of scholarship in early modern same-sex attraction with further field-shaping contributions provided by Bruce Smith (1991), Jonathan Dollimore (1991), Alan Sinfield (1992), Valerie Traub (1992), and Jonathan Goldberg (1992).[34] These studies were foundational to the emergence of gay and lesbian studies as a distinct academic field in the 1990s.

The emphasis on same-sex attraction in these pioneering monographs on gay and lesbian studies generally relied on a distinction between homosexuality and heterosexuality as ontologically fixed sexual identities. The emergence of 'queer' theory as a distinct field in the 1990s, however, reframed the analytical coordinates of gay and lesbian studies towards an interrogation of the common assumption of stable sexual identities and a transhistorical heteronormativity. The term 'queer theory' was first introduced by Teresa de Lauretis in 1991. Writing in the Introduction to a special issue of the journal *differences*, de Lauretis explained that 'queer' was a term she used to 'problematize some of the discursive constructions and constructed silences in the emergent field of "gay and lesbian studies"'.[35]

Foundational to the emergence of queer theory as a distinct field in the 1990s were Judith Butler's *Gender Trouble* and Eve Sedgwick's *Epistemology of the Closet*, both published in

[34] Bruce Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England: A Cultural Poetics* (University of Chicago Press, 1991); Jonathan Dollimore, *Sexual Dissidence: Augustine to Wilde, Freud to Foucault* (Oxford University Press, 1991); Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (University of California Press, 1992); Valerie Traub, *Desire and Anxiety* (Routledge, 1992); Jonathan Goldberg, *Sodometries: Renaissance Texts, Modern Sexualities* (Fordham University Press, 1992).
[35] 'Introduction', in *Queer Theory: Lesbian and Gay Sexualities* (Indiana University Press, 1991), pp. iii-xviii.

1990.[36] Rooted in French poststructuralism, Butler's *Gender Trouble* interrogated what she saw as the dominant heterosexual assumption underwriting feminist literary theory, seeking to break down gender binaries as stable categories of analysis and reformulate the idea of 'gender' as a socially constructed and ritualistic 'performance'. Sedgwick's *Epistemology* had argued that the heteronormative power structures of Western culture constructed a heterosexual-homosexual binary that rendered homosexuality an 'open secret': the privileged status of heterosexuality in Western culture suppresses a broader spectrum of 'closeted' sexualities that ultimately serves to naturalise heteronormative behaviour.

In seeking to deconstruct stable sexual identities and interrogate heteronormative power structures in Western culture, Butler and Sedgwick's work provided field-defining theoretical traction to queer studies. As Evelyn Gajowski observes, in building on Butler and Sedgwick's inaugural work, queer theory 'has been concerned with deconstructing static, fixed ideologies of identity and the binary oppositions of male/female, hetero/homo, past/present'.[37] Daniel Juan Gil has usefully suggested three waves in early modern queer studies. In a 2011 essay, Gil described a first wave which 'sought to recover lost "gays": Shakespeare himself was gay or some of his characters were gay'.[38]

The second wave was codified in Jonathan Goldberg's *Sodometries* (1992), with an expansion of critical attention to the world of early modern homosociality, a critical approach that 'represented a considerable expansion of the field of sexuality studies to encompass all social relationships and the ways they are suffused with currents of sexual desire'. Gil's third-

[36] Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* (Routledge, 1990); Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* (University of California Press, 1990).
[37] 'The Presence of the Past', p. 5.
[38] 'The Deep Structure of Sexuality: War and Masochism in *Henry IV*, *Part 2*', in *Shakesqueer: A Queer Companion to the Complete Works of Shakespeare*, ed. by Madhavi Menon (Duke University Press, 2011), pp. 114-120 (p. 114).

wave criticism seeks to understand sexuality as an expansive category of analysis that resists individual experience and identitarian politics. In Gil's account, this third wave was inaugurated through the difficulties of identifying sexuality as 'a distinct phenomenon within the constellation of interpersonal ties that define social life'. Influenced by Leo Bersani's idea of sexuality as a kind of 'self-shattering', third-wave queer criticism is thus invested in prising sexuality from its homoerotic or homosocial cover, figuring it as 'a distinct social and psychological phenomenon without reducing it to a sexual identity'.[39]

The rise to prominence of queer studies in the 1990s also had an important influence on feminist criticism. A clear distinction between the two practices was made from the inception of queer studies, with its rejection of identity to focus on what Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has called 'the open mesh of possibilities, gaps, overlaps, dissonances and resonances, lapses and excesses of meaning when the constituent elements of anyone's gender, of anyone's sexuality aren't made (or can't be made) to signify monolithically'.[40] As Loomba and Sanchez have observed, '"queer" and "feminist" work has often described itself in oppositional terms, with queer scholars accusing feminists of being homophobic and heteronormative and feminists accusing queer scholars of misogyny and blindness to male privilege'.[41]

As the third Arden series began in the mid-1990s, the emergence of queer studies provides a wider context in which to understand Ann Thompson's advice to feminist editors to interrogate assumptions about gender in their texts, and to indicate how Shakespeare has been reproduced and appropriated in patriarchal cultures. Writing in the 1990s, Dusinberre echoed Ann Thompson's reflection that feminism was now 'widely recognized and respected'. What

[39] See Leo Bersani, *The Freudian Body: Psychanalysis and Art* (Columbia University, 1986).
[40] *Tendencies* (Duke University Press, 1998), p. 8.
[41] *Rethinking Feminism*.

had been won was the 'fight to make the marginal central, although there is still a good way to go'.[42] Moreover, her earlier concern with the 'battle about ownership' evoked the same 'supposed tensions' between the marginal and central that Thompson had discussed in her inaugural lecture. In the very early stages of the third Arden series, Dusinberre predicted a continually secure place for feminist criticism in English studies: '[f]eminist scholarship is here to stay, and the new freedom it has created to remap the territories of literary study has benefitted all readers who sense the hidden barbed wire which demarcates the boundaries of traditional literary study'.

A few years later, however, when Dusinberre began working on her Arden 3 edition of *As You Like It* (2006), queer theory appeared to be gaining critical currency within universities and taking off as a radical new critical practice within English studies. Indeed, in her edition's Preface, Dusinberre flags its rise to prominence, noting that '[i]f I have now got queer theory straight, it is entirely due to Anne Fernihough'. Fernihough and Dusinberre were colleagues at Girton College, Cambridge, and both co-taught classes on gender together, which included an exam paper on 'Gender and Writing' that covered the work of Judith Butler and Eve Sedgwick.[43]

In her Introduction to *As You Like It*, Dusinberre's commitment to queer theory is made clear in her section on 'Fictions of Gender'. Beginning with the part of Rosalind, Dusinberre first acknowledged feminist studies that had analysed the ways in which the play reflects Elizabethan attitudes toward women. Her priority, however, soon turns to Rosalind's part as unmooring fixed gender identities and attesting to a diffuse and fluid understanding of gender.

[42] Dusinberre, 'Preface to the Second Edition', p. xxxii.
[43] Anne Fernihough, email, 8 July 2023.

As she has reflected in a private communication: Rosalind 'is the only woman character in the play where the "feminine" and the "masculine" are so completely intertwined, and I think the fluidity of it does make a new reality which lasts beyond the play itself'.[44] Shakespeare's own experiments in gender ambivalences includes creating for the boy actor who plays Rosalind the further role of Ganymede, a role the boy must perform as part of Rosalind's disguise in the Forest. Endorsing Judith Butler's model of gender as performance, Rosalind is thus presented as 'manifest[ing] an awareness of gender as performance which has become an indispensable part of contemporary understanding of Shakespeare'.

Dusinberre's focus on the boy actor reflects a wider critical investment in boy actors at the time she was writing her Introduction. Her own critical interest in boy actors and their ability to act femininity or masculinity is already evident in *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women* (1975), which included a chapter on 'Disguise and the Boy Actor' (pp. 231-72). Valerie Traub had proposed in 1992 that the boy actor works as a way of safely exploring homoeroticism on the early modern stage, 'working for both actors and audiences as an expression of non-hegemonic desire within the confines of conventional, comedic restraints'.[45] For Dusinberre, the boy actor's transvestism in playing Rosalind-Ganymede allows Shakespeare to explore both the homoerotic and the heterosexual, although both supposedly 'fixed' sexual binaries are ultimately collapsed in the boy actor's movements between the masculine and feminine, and the heterosexual and homosexual.

This way of thinking extends into Dusinberre's discussion of the relationship between Rosalind and her cousin Celia, who accompanies Rosalind when she is banished from the court

[44] Email, 22 September 2023.
[45] *Desire and Anxiety*, p. 118; see Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge University Press, 1996).

by Duke Frederick. Their relationship is first presented as a friendship between equals, and briefly placed within the modern women's movement, during which performances of the play often explored the friendship between the two women. Dusinberre soon turns her attention, however, to presenting their relationship through the lens of queer theory, so that their friendship breaks down the heterosexual-homosexual binaries and now becomes inherently erotic. As she observed, linking her interpretations to the queer theory that was taking off at the time: '[m]odern gender theorists argue that the fantasies of all individuals cross the boundaries of the heterosexual and homosexual, occupying instead a "queer space"'.

Dusinberre thus draws attention to the crossing of static boundaries in Rosalind and Celia's love for one another, with a particular emphasis on how Orlando's presence affects the dynamic of their relationship. Focusing on recent queer readings of their relationship, Dusinberre points her readers to critics who see Orlando's presence as reinforcing heteronormative power structures and therefore disrupting Rosalind and Celia's homoerotic relationship.[46] In contrast, Dusinberre cites Jan Stirm's interpretation that celebrates Celia's joy in Rosalind's love for Orlando, as Celia retains narrative control of Rosalind's access to Orlando, without sharing her object of desire.[47] Both readings thus open up a 'queer space' in which to explore the diffuse nature of gender and sexuality, as the binaries male/female, homo/hetero are destabilised in place of a more capacious understanding of gender and sexuality.

The same process of disrupting gender binaries through the lens of queer theory extends to Dusinberre's discussion of Orlando. In her queer reading, Rosalind's setting out her 'male' role as Ganymede in the first act of the play serves to destabilise Orlando's own presumed

[46] See Theodora A. Jankowski, *Pure Resistance: Queer Virginity in Early Modern English Drama* (University of Philadelphia, 2000).
[47] See Jan Stirm, '"For solace a twinne-like sister": teaching themes of sisterhood in *As You Like It* and beyond', *SQ*, 47 (1996), pp. 374-86.

masculinity. In I.iii, Rosalind and Celia discuss the dangers of travelling to the Forest of Arden as two gentry women. Celia's proposal to 'put myself in poor and mean attire' (1.3.108) is countered by Rosalind's suggestion of cross-dressing to provide physical safety:

> Were it not better,
> Because I am more than common tall,
> That I did suit me all points like a man?
> A gallant curtal-axe upon my thigh,
> A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart,
> Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,
> We'll have a swashing and a martial outside…
> (1.3.112-17)[48]

In Dusinberre's queer reading, however, the male characteristics that Rosalind attributes to her male persona – 'swashing', 'martial' -- contrast sharply with Orlando's own masculinity. After winning his wrestling match against Duke Frederick's court-wrestler Charles, Orlando describes his feelings of love after his post-match exchange with Rosalind: 'O poor Orlando, thou art overthrown! | Or Charles or something weaker masters thee'. (1.2.248-49). His sense of being 'overthrown' and mastered by 'something weaker' contrasts with Rosalind's idea of a 'martial' masculinity that will provide protective cover for her journey to the Forest of Arden. Moreover, the juxtaposition of *weaker* and *masters* destabilises the idea of fixed gender categories, as both Rosalind and Orlando slide between and disrupt the binary opposition of masculine/feminine.

Dusinberre's critical investments in her edition thus reflect a moment after the emergence of queer theory in the 1990s and during a time in which it was taking off within English studies after the turn of the century. The interest in challenging binary distinctions of heterosexual/homosexual shows the influence of Eve Sedgwick's work in the 1990s, and

[48] *As You Like It*, ed. by Juliet Dusinberre, pp. 186-87.

Dusinberre's emphasis on gender as 'the equivalent of a wardrobe of clothes to be put on and off at will' follows Judith Butler's voluntarist argument for the performativity of gender. Indeed, in *Gender Trouble*, Butler had made her gender-performance model clear: '[t]here is no gender identity behind the expressions of gender; that identity is performatively constituted by the very "expressions" that are said to be its results'. In the same way, Dusinberre presents the world of *As You Like It* as one in which male-female, heterosexual-homosexual binaries are confounded within a queer space that ultimately transcends conventional notions of gender and sexuality.

Dusinberre's queer readings attest to the establishment of queer theory as a mainstream critical practice in the twenty-first century. Indeed, its growing influence across the third Arden series is evident in Valerie Wayne's later edition of *Cymbeline* (2017). Wayne's own feminist commitments are long standing, with one the earliest expositions of her priorities being voiced in the introduction to her edited book *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminism of Shakespeare* (1991).[49] As she noted in her Introduction, the papers published in her book were prepared from a seminar on Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare as part of the Shakespeare Association of America Conference in Austin, Texas, in 1989. The purpose of this seminar was to continue the conversations between feminists, new historicists and cultural materialists that had begun at the World Congress of the International Shakespeare Association in West Berlin in 1986, which resulted in the publication of Jean E. Howard and Marion O'Connor's *Shakespeare Reproduced* (1987).

[49] Valerie Wayne, ed., *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminism of Shakespeare* (Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991).

Wayne's edited book also included Valerie Traub's 'Desire and the difference it makes', which challenged Freudian sexual taxonomies of gendered oppositions and put forward a model of sexuality as embracing polyvalent modes of erotic fantasies, practices and subject positions.[50] Wayne's support for Traub's work and politics is also evident in her Arden Introduction to *Cymbeline*, which includes a section on 'Disruptions of difference and homoeroticism' that connects ideas central to queer theory with the play. In this section, Wayne sets the tone by citing Traub's observation that pastoral scenes enable a suspension of the social order, which allows for the 'fleeting indulgence of polymorphous desire' before that social order is restored.[51]

Reading the play through a queer lens, Wayne promotes the play's active exploration of gender fluidity and non-normative sexualities. Focusing on the scenes in which Innogen is disguised as the male 'Fidele', Wayne argues that her male disguise releases 'multiple forms of erotic desire and shifting genders'. When she arrives disguised as Fidele at the cave in Wales to meet her brothers, Arviragus and Guiderius, Wayne proposes that the brothers' response contains homoerotic elements, as Guiderius claims that '[w]ere you a woman, youth, | I should woo hard, but be your groom in honesty' (3.6.67-68).[52] Arviragus's unconscious attraction, which Wayne also proposes as an 'incestuous desire', is suggested in his consolation that 'I'll make't my comfort | He is man, I'll love him as my brother' (3.6.68-69).

Wayne's investment in *Cymbeline*'s ambiguous gender and sexual identities also shapes her reading of the play's final scenes. After Innogen/Fidele's disruption of gender and sexual

[50] Valerie Traub, 'Desire and the Differences it Makes', in *The Matter of Difference*, pp. 81-114. This essay is also a chapter in Traub's monograph, *Desire and Anxiety: Circulations of Sexuality in Shakespearean Drama* (Routledge, 1992).
[51] *The Renaissance of Lesbianism in Early Modern England* (Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 175.
[52] *Cymbeline*, ed. by Valerie Wayne (Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 276.

binaries, Innogen/Fidele's final embrace with her husband Posthumus reads as ambiguous in relation to Posthumus's own sexuality. Gender and sexual ambiguities further extend in the play's final scenes as, if Posthumus and Cymbeline love Innogen/Fidele as a woman, her brothers, surrogate father and foreign master appear to love her as a boy, while the audience, who have witnessed her as both Innogen and Fidele, might well love her as both. In this reading of the play, Wayne follows Traub's broader interpretation of Shakespearean dramas as never fully closing down the 'circulations of desire that were released within the pastoral world'.[53]

Wayne's commitment to feminism and sexuality is also prioritised through her focus on misogyny, which has been an ongoing interest in her scholarship.[54] Misogyny had been a dominant interest in the Introduction to her edition of Edmund Tilney's *The Flower of Friendship* (1991), in which she discussed ideologies of marriage and identified misogyny as a 'residual ideology' during the late sixteenth century.[55] It remains a major thread in her Arden Introduction, as she weaves misogyny into her discussion of genre, sources and its presence in other Shakespearean plays.

Discussing the play's genre, Wayne took inspiration from Helen Cooper's seminal monograph *The English Romance in Time*, in which Cooper argued that the medieval romance genre explores women's subjectivity and is sympathetic to active female desire. One of Cooper's generic distinctions that interests Wayne is 'the calumny romance', which presents the narrative of a woman's infidelity until she is proved innocent and the charges against her shown to be slanderous. Wayne ties the 'calumny plot' to the wager plot involving Posthumus,

[53] 'Introduction', in *Cymbeline*, p. 92.
[54] Valerie Wayne, email, 10 July 2023; see, for example, Valerie Wayne, 'Historical Differences: Misogyny and *Othello*', in *The Matter of Difference*, pp. 153-80.
[55] Edmund Tilney, *The Flower of Friendship: A Renaissance Dialogue Contesting Marriage*, ed. by Valerie Wayne (Cornell University Press, 1991).

Iachimo and Innogen in *Cymbeline*, arguing that wager stories are one form of the calumny plot 'because the man who initiates the bet doubts that any woman can be faithful and then offers false proof of his success in seducing a targeted woman'.[56]

Misogyny is directly associated with calumny plots and wager stories, in the way that misogynists share the same goal in seeking to slander women and blacken their reputation. This leads Wayne to a fascinating discussion of sixteenth-century debates about women involving authors who wrote on both sides of an argument, recalling the early modern teaching method of *in utramque partem*, in which students would be trained to argue both sides of a given question. In the medieval period, theologians had aligned an anti-woman position with being anti-marriage, a view which assumed that celibacy and virginity were superior to companionate marriage. By the late sixteenth century, however, Wayne notes that companionate marriage became 'the preferred alternative in protestant England, and the concept of married chastity accorded moderate sexual pleasure a role in strengthening the bond between spouses'.

The late sixteenth-century shift in cultural attitudes towards women is central to Wayne's reading of *Cymbeline* in her Arden Introduction, as she argues that the play's use of misogynistic discourse becomes part of its 'innovative treatment of women and sexuality when the character who utters it calls for his wife's death comes to regard his own actions as even worse than hers'. For Wayne, Posthumus's forgiveness and acceptance of Innogen's perceived infidelity constitutes 'such a major departure' from a misogynistic discourse that it 'deserves recognition as one of the play's chief features'. Shakespeare thus revises the narrative of calumniated heroines such as Hero, Hermione, and Desdemona, presenting a more sympathetic

[56] 'Introduction', p. 7.

view of women in *Cymbeline* that reflects wider societal changes which took place in late sixteenth-century England.

Wayne's dominant reading, however, ultimately resists a simplistic narrative of progress towards women's liberation and possession of equal rights. Indeed, just as she had argued in her introduction to Tilney's *The Flower of Friendship*, her notion of misogyny as a 'residual ideology' that survives from the medieval alignment of anti-women and anti-marriage establishes a crucial balancing pole in her reading of *Cymbeline*. While the play offers a critique of misogyny and exhibits women's strength, Wayne notes that this only occurs in a context that ultimately 'valorizes women's sexual control in the interest of male lineage and power'.

Focusing on misogyny as a 'residual ideology' thus provides a major thread that runs through Wayne's readings of *Cymbeline*, and the emphasis on misogyny's staying power in her Introduction reflects her wider insight that, as she has observed in a private communication:

> Misogyny is *still* a residual ideology, which attests to its remarkable staying power and argues against more simplistic narratives of progress that have so often been made about women, gender, and sexuality. Feminists in the US have had a lesson in its endurance with the recent Supreme Court's ruling against abortion.[57]

One further edition that is useful to bring into dialogue with Wayne and Dusinberre's Arden editions is Suzanne Gossett and Helen Wilcox's *All's Well That Ends Well* (2018), published in the following year. In this collaborative edition, Suzanne Gossett was primarily responsible for the introduction and commentary, while Helen Wilcox was primarily responsible for the text

[57] Email, 10 July 2023.

and textual notes. Gossett's Introduction can be contrasted with Wayne and Dusinberre's in being less influenced by queer theory's emergence in the twenty-first century. Her discussion of feminism, gender and sexuality is treated primarily within her four sections on: 'Family structures' (pp. 24-31), 'Helen and the world of women' (pp. 31-44), 'Sexuality and the bed-trick' (pp. 50-61), and 'Masters and Men' (pp. 61-75).

In her first section, Gossett's interest in the role of family and patriarchal society in *All's Well* points to what she has elsewhere described as an interest in the 'representation of family relations' on the Jacobean stage.[58] Her discussion of 'family structures' focuses on the King's paternal power over Bertram, as both the King and the Countess place demands on him to live up to his deceased father's exalted reputation. In doing so, Gossett tied her discussion to the historical context, referring her readers to the English institution of 'wardship', in which 'young heirs of land-holders whose fathers died before they reached their majority became "wards of the crown"'. This guardianship, Gossett further explained, 'gave power over the ward's finances and even over his or her choice of marriage partner'.

Gossett's historicism also functions alongside a critical investment in literature and psychoanalysis that has been an ongoing interest in her work. Discussing the Countess's opening line, 'In delivering my son from me, I bury a second husband' (1.1.2), she observes that the Countess's speech has 'the whiff of incestuous attachment […] in speaking of [Bertram] as a 'second husband''.[59] Moreover, for the play to fulfil its titular promise requires

[58] 'Why Should a Woman Edit a Man?', *Text*, 9 (1996), pp. 111-18 (p. 117). See also Gossett's '"I'll look to like": Arranged Marriages in Shakespeare's Plays', in *Sexuality and Politics in Renaissance Drama*, ed. by Carole Levin and Karen Robertson (Edwin Mellen Press, 1991), pp. 57-74; 'Resistant Mothers and Hidden Children', in *Pilgrimage for Love: Essays in Early Modern Literature in Honor of Josephine A. Roberts*, ed. by Sigrid King and Josephine A. Roberts (Arizona Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, 1999), pp. 191-207; '"You not your child well loving": Text and Family Structure in *Pericles*', in *A Companion to Shakespeare's Works*, ed. by Richard Dutton and Jean E. Howard (Blackwell, 2003), pp. 348-64.
[59] 'Introduction', in *All's Well*, p. 125.

a family structure that provides Bertram with personal autonomy as part of a 'non-incestuous marriage'.

From the fear of incest, Gossett's investment in psychoanalytic readings further extends to her focus on male adolescent behaviour. In her section on 'Masters and Men', Gossett turns attention to Bertram as an 'awkward adolescent' finding it difficult to adjust to the decorum of court life. His difficulties as a youthful provincial aristocrat in adapting to courtly conduct is expressed through his resistance to the King's authority and having his sexual future determined for him. Providing an historical explanation for Bertram's behaviour, Gossett refers to Roger Ascham's *The Schoolmaster* (1570), in which Ascham writes that 'the most dangerous' period of a man's life is between seventeen and twenty-one years old, 'and speciallie soch as do liue in the Court'.

However, Gossett also notes that Bertram's behaviour may be 'psychosexual rather than historical or cultural'. In this view, Bertram's resistance to the marriage is based on a 'conscious or unconscious' sexual abhorrence. Such feelings might arise from Bertram's uncertainty over whether his bride to be, as the Countess teases him, is his sister, or because Helen is connected with the 'mother' from whom Bertram wishes to separate in order to reach full maturity as an adult male. Moreover, as Gossett observes, in fulfilling the King's desires, Bertram would effectively be acting as a surrogate for the King in Helen's bed.

Gossett's weaving of historicist and psychoanalytic readings into her Introduction to *All's Well* bears testimony to the way that residual forms of feminist criticism continue to inform current critical practice. As Valerie Traub has reflected, soon after the emergence of feminism as a distinct field, 'Shakespeare's works were read for the light they shed on representations of

femininity, the patriarchal family, and the supposed 'life cycle' of virginity, courtship, marriage, maternity, and widowhood – along with those figures who defied their strictures'.[60] Moreover, by the early 1990s, Traub further notes, 'the psychological frameworks that had been crucial to much early scholarship had largely been displaced by an ascendant historicism'.

A brief glance across the three Arden series supports Traub's argument for a general shift of interest towards representations of femininity in Shakespeare's works. In W. Osbourne Brigstoke's Arden 1 *All's Well* (1904), he described the play's Countess as 'a charming old lady: full of tenderest sympathy for the sweet girl she has, so to speak, adopted: she loves her as a daughter – and it is noticeable that one can hardly conceive of anyone else being able to be so kind and helpful to her'. In doing so, he drew on what Stuart Sillars has called 'a strong force of sentiment in Victorian criticism, 'especially in the discussion of women characters'.[61]

The model of Victorian sentimentality also extends into G.K. Hunter's Arden 2 *All's Well* (1959), although now it is expressed in passing through G.B. Shaw's view that the Countess is 'the most beautiful old woman's part ever written'.[62] For Hunter, however, the Countess becomes part of a 'norm Shakespeare intends us to accept'.[63] Her 'norm of propriety' is depicted as a foil against which the relation between Bertram and Helena gains a richer moral perspective. In Hunter's reading, the Countess takes her place within a larger collective ritual of self-sacrifice -- the acceptance of death that leads to fuller life -- which provides the play's 'point of reconciliation': 'this acceptance of death, leading to fuller life, is something that

[60] 'Introduction – Feminist Shakespeare Studies', in *The Oxford Handbook of Shakespeare and Embodiment*, ed. by Valerie Traub (Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 1-38 (pp. 8-9).
[61] *Shakespeare and the Victorians* (Oxford University Press, 2013), p. 50.
[62] George Bernard Shaw, *Our Theatres in the Nineties*, 3 vols (Constable and Company, 1932), i, p. 29.
[63] 'Introduction', in William Shakespeare, *All's Well That Ends Well*, ed. by G.K. Hunter (Methuen, 1959), pp. xxxii-xxxiii.

Helena, the Countess, the King, Parolles, Diana all have to face in turn; that the pattern is not fully achieved for Bertram is the major thematic failure of the play'.

In Gossett's Arden 3 *All's Well* (2018), she provides a richer picture of the way women are represented in Shakespeare's plays, an investment that supplements the criticism of her predecessors in placing a range of perspectives in rich dialogue. While acknowledging Shaw's view of the Countess as 'the most beautiful old woman's part ever written', Gossett enriches the critical picture through reference to the variety of shifting attitudes towards the Countess as the 'fixed point in *All's Well*'. Gossett's reading attests to the broader range of perspectives inspired by the various waves of different kinds of feminism. For Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith, for instance, responding to a traditional view of the grandmotherly nature of the Countess, such readings are products of a 'sentimentalized stage history which has conditioned us to see her as a fairy godmother'.[64] For Gossett, however, *All's Well* can be distinguished from other Shakespearean comedies through its 'strong images of female solidarity, within and particularly between generations'.[65] In gathering a range of views on Shakespearean female characters, Gossett's discussion attests to the way that the various waves of feminism have enriched critical practice.

This section has aimed to bring the critical investments of three Arden editors into an enabling dialogue. The focus has been on feminism, gender, and sexuality. In doing so, I have shown that each of the three editors – Dusinberre, Wayne, and Gossett – have different commitments that are complementary. Moreover, their complementary critical interests point to a richer and more exciting critical landscape in the field of feminism, gender, and sexuality.

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[64] Laurie Maguire and Emma Smith, 'Many Hands: a New Shakespeare Collaboration', *TLS*, 19 April 2012.
[65] 'Introduction', in *All's Well*, p. 31.

Each contributes new kinds of information. Dusinberre responded to the rise of queer studies in the 1990s to provide her readers with a fascinating discussion of gender fluidity and the breakdown of gender and sexual binaries in *As You Like It*.

In her Arden 3 *Cymbeline*, Wayne did not hide her feminist commitments in similarly reading the play through the lens of queer theory, focusing much attention on the gender and sexual fluidity of Innogen/Fidele. What is distinctive in Wayne's criticism of the play, however, is an emphasis on misogyny, which informs her reading of the play in her Arden Introduction. Indeed, misogyny provides a major thread throughout her Introduction, being central, for example, to her discussion of calumny plots and wager stories as narratives that seek to slander women and blacken their reputations.

If the keynote of Wayne's feminism in her Arden 3 *Cymbeline* is misogyny, Suzanne Gossett presents a complementary perspective in her later Arden 3 *All's Well*. The feminist priorities of her Introduction focus on the three areas of family structures, historicism, and psychoanalysis. In her readings, historicist and psychoanalytic frameworks are weaved together in a way that points to the continued critical currency of earlier forms of feminist thinking. Taken together, the three complementary approaches of Dusinberre, Wayne, and Gossett serve to illuminate the way that the diversity of exciting and complementary approaches has lent fresh energies to feminism as it is now practised in the academy.

Source studies

In 1985, Francis Barker and Peter Hulme took stock of the ideological assumptions underwriting traditional source studies in an essay on 'the discursive con-texts of *The Tempest*' which was included in Drakakis's *Alternative Shakespeares*.[66] In their essay, Barker and Hulme sought to interrogate the problematic relationship between text and context in traditional approaches to source study. The dominant approach, the authors observed, was caught in a critical paradox: while the text is always acknowledged as historically produced, that history is 'reduced to being no more than a background from which the single and irreducible meaning of the text is isolated'.

Viewing the traditional relationship between text and context as unequal, Barker and Hulme proposed the term 'con-text' with a hyphen as a way to level the inequality in the conventional text-context relation: '[c]on-texts are themselves *texts* and must be *read with*: they do not simply make up a background' (emphasis in original).[67] The equal privileging of congruent texts inscribed within *The Tempest* thus allowed Barker and Hulme to open up a wider discursive field of dynamic con-texts that imbricated the play within a colonial discourse and that 'could be traced independently of authorial "intentionality"'.

In the same year, Stephen Greenblatt's essay 'Shakespeare and the Exorcists' also expressed concern with traditional approaches to source study.[68] Writing at a time of theoretical ferment, Greenblatt observed that the 'most important effect' of theory on critical practice was to 'subvert the tendency to think of aesthetic representation as ultimately autonomous, separable from its cultural context and hence divorced from the social, ideological, and material matrix

[66] 'Nymphs and Reapers Heavily Vanish: The Discursive Con-Texts of *The Tempest*', in *Alternative Shakespeares*, pp. 191-205.
[67] p. 236.
[68] 'Shakespeare and the Exorcists', in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. by Patricia Parker and Geoffrey H. Hartman (Methuen, 1985), pp. 163-87 (pp. 163-65).

in which all art is produced and consumed'. Just as Barker and Hulme had challenged the dominant assumption of single texts as the ultimate objects of study, Greenblatt similarly argued that approaching plays as autonomous artefacts left them with merely an 'accidental relation' to their sources, providing only a 'glimpse of the "raw material" that the artist fashioned': '[i]n so far as this "material" is taken seriously at all, it is part of the work's "historical background", a phrase that reduces history to a decorative setting or convenient, well-lighted pigeonhole'.

In his own reading of *King Lear*, Greenblatt illustrated the way that the play's 'raw materials', considered as merely 'accidental' in traditional readings, expose and illuminate the play's embeddedness within a wider discursive network. Greenblatt argues that Shakespeare was likely influenced by Samuel Harsnett's attack on Catholic ritual, 'Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures', in which Harsnett denounces Catholic exorcism as a theatrical fraud. In *King Lear*, Greenblatt argues, Shakespeare remembered Harsnett's Catholic denouncement, particularly in Edgar's fraudulent exorcism of Gloucester's suicidal intentions at the cliffs of Dover, which would reinforce, in the state-backed theatre, the ideology of Catholic exorcism as a fraud.

Greenblatt had memorably begun his essay with a description of traditional source study as 'the elephants' graveyard of literary history', a traditional search for the 'raw materials' that the author originally had in mind and worked with, consciously or unconsciously, in composing his plays. In this view, history serves as the 'decorative setting' for the fetishized single text, which is positioned as the ultimate object of study. Once the boundaries separating literature from history are collapsed, however, Greenblatt argued that traditional source study was 'compelled to change its character: history cannot simply be set against literary texts as either

stable antithesis or decorative background, and the protective isolation of those texts gives way to a sense of their interaction with other texts and hence to the permeability of their boundaries'.[69]

Taking stock of wider critical attitudes towards source study in 1988, Robert S. Miola's essay on 'Shakespeare and His Sources' argued that the term was 'today highly problematic'.[70] Focusing on how North's Plutarch has been traditionally regarded as 'the sole and pre-emptively powerful source' for *Julius Caesar*, Miola observed that this position 'now finds itself in very mixed company': [c]ritics have proposed as sources a variety of figures, texts, and movements: Euripides, Seneca, Cicero, Livy, Virgil, St Augustine, Marlowe, contemporary religious polemic, the tyrannicide debate, and Counter-Renaissance scepticism, to name only the most interesting'. What was most important for Miola in his gathered compendium of proposed sources, was that critics were evidently subscribing to a more capacious notion of 'source': '[m]any do not seek out the fountainhead at all, but search instead the deep and perilous waters of intertextual *écriture*'.

Miola soon returned to the problem of sources in his 1992 monograph 'Shakespeare and Classical Tragedy'.[71] In his opening chapter, Miola referred to a lack of agreement regarding the term 'source', arguing that while some critics continued to follow a time-honoured model, others recognised the 'limitations of a linear, author-centred, and largely verbal approach' that allowed for a 'wide range of possible interactions between sources and texts'. The problematic term 'source', Miola remarked, now signified a 'multitude of possible relations with a text [...] ranging from direct contact to indirect absorption'.

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[69] 'Shakespeare and the Exorcists', p. 165.
[70] 'Shakespeare and His Sources: Observations on the Critical History of 'Julius Caesar'', *SS*, 40 (1988), pp. 69-76 (p. 69).
[71] *Shakespeare and Classical Tragedy: The Influence of Seneca* (Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 7.

Miola thus saw that source study had become more diverse and capacious in the late twentieth century. A 'new understanding' had emerged that moved beyond the linear, precise sequencing of Shakespeare's sources to a more oblique relation between text and source. As Miola observed:

> [w]e know that sources often come mediated through various other works and translations and that they combine eclectically with other sources. Sources manifest themselves in many forms, verbal and non-verbal – in transformed convention, rhetorical or structural format, scenic rhythm, ideational or imagistic concatenation, thematic articulation.[72]

As Miola diagnosed, by the 1990s, source study was in the process of critical re-evaluation. Source study had become more open, diverse, and there was no longer a widely held consensus on what constituted a source and how it functions. This state of play can be seen when turning to one of the first volumes published in the third Arden series, Jonathan Bate's *Titus Andronicus* (1995). Beginning his section on *Titus*'s 'Sources', Bate revisited an orthodox view of the play as being based on a prose narrative account surviving in a mid-eighteenth-century chapbook, and that both the play and prose narrative provided a source for the ballad entered in the Stationers' Register with *Titus* in 1594.[73]

In re-evaluating the traditional order of narrative-play-ballad, however, Bate followed the work of Marco Mincoff, G.K Hunter, and MacDonald Jackson in arguing for *Titus* as a sourceless play: 'the play came first, the ballad was based on the play, and the chapbook was a re-expansion of the story based on the ballad'.[74] Removing the prose narrative as a possible

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[72] *Shakespeare and Classical Tragedy*, p. 7.
[73] See Geoffrey Bullough, *Narrative Sources*, vi (1966), pp. 7-23.
[74] 'Introduction', in *Titus Andronicus*, ed. by Jonathan Bate (Routledge, 1995; rev. 2018), p. 82. See Marco Mincoff, 'The source of *Titus Andronicus*', *Notes & Queries*, 216 (1971), pp. 131-34; G.K. Hunter, 'The "Sources" of *Titus Andronicus* – once again', *Notes & Queries*, 228 (1983), pp. 114-16; 'Sources and meanings in *Titus Andronicus*', in *The Mirror Up to Shakespeare*, ed. by J.C. Gray (University of Toronto Press, 1983), pp.

source for *Titus* allowed Bate to discount the search for lost sources and open a space in which to explore how Shakespeare 'could have invented the play out of his reading'. Here Bate's critical commitment to Renaissance humanism and Shakespeare's reading of the classics becomes clear. Imagining a Shakespeare inventing his play out of his own reading, Bate replaces the term 'source' with his two key terms 'pattern' and 'precedent'. These terms he takes from Titus's justification for killing Lavinia in the play. In 5.3, Titus describes the centurion Virginius's slaying of his daughter as '[a] pattern, precedent, and lively warrant | For me, most wretched, to perform the like' (5.3.43-4).[75]

Having made the case for *Titus* as a sourceless play, Bate's own critical commitment turned from a search for the play's sources to a belief that 'the play was composed out of a series of *patterns* in Shakespeare's reading of the classics'. Acknowledging that the figures of Aeneas, Hecuba, Virginius, Coriolanus and Seneca's Hippolytus were 'among those patterns', Bate argued that the most significant patterns related to Shakespeare's reading of Ovid. The principal pattern, according to Bate, is spelt out in 4.1, in which Lavinia 'turns the leaves' of a copy of *Metamorphoses* to the rape of Philomel. For Bate, what is spelt out here serves to illustrate the Philomel story as providing *Titus*'s primary structural pattern.

Bate's 'second pattern' relates to Shakespeare's reading of Livy's *History of Rome* and Ovid's *Fasti*. Both books provide an account of Tarquin's rape of Lucrece. In the classical narrative, Lucius Junius Brutus leads the revolt against the King after his son's rape of Lucrece. In *Titus*, this role is played by Lucius, who goes into exile in 3.1 saying that he will return '[a]nd make proud Saturnine and his empress | Beg at the gates like Tarquin and his queen'

171-88; MacDonald P. Jackson, '*Titus Andronicus: Play, Ballad, and Prose History*', *Notes & Queries*, 234 (1989), pp. 315-17.

[75] *Titus Andronicus*, ed. by Jonathan Bate, pp. 307-08.

(3.1.298-99). Moreover, turning their thoughts to revenge over Lavinia's rape, Marcus justifies the plan for revenge through invoking Junius Brutus as an explicit avenger for the rape of Lucrece in 4.1.91. As he urges Titus:

> …swear with me – as, with the woeful fere
> And father of that chaste dishonoured dame,
> Lord Junius Brutus swore for Lucrece' rape –
> That we will prosecute by good advice
> Mortal revenge upon these traitorous Goths,
> And see their blood, or die with this reproach.
> (4.1.89-94)[76]

Again, Bate directs his readers to the way that the play spells out the structural patterns that affirm Shakespeare's reading of the classics. To assist his readers and reinforce his argument for the play being explicitly patterned upon Ovid, Bate provided an appendix including the two classical stories of rape that appeared to confirm a direct line between Shakespeare and Ovid. In doing so, Bate's critical commitment to Shakespeare and Ovidianism sets in relief a residual form of criticism that elides historical contingency through a humanist belief in fundamental, enduring truths. This investment in Renaissance humanism can perhaps be best seen in his earlier monograph *Shakespeare and Ovid* (1993).[77] In the book's Preface, Bate acknowledged that 'in recent years', scholarship had become more self-conscious, and that 'it has become customary for critics to stake out a position within or between the competing discourses into which literary studies have disintegrated'.[78]

While acknowledging the benefits of recent critical developments in drawing attention to the political dimension of critical practice, Bate nevertheless appeared to place himself against

[76] Bate, p. 257.
[77] *Shakespeare and Ovid* (Clarendon Press, 1993). See also Jonathan Bate, 'Ovid and the Mature Tragedies: Metamorphoses in *Othello* and *King Lear*', *SS*, 41 (1989), pp. 133-44.
[78] p. viii.

the anti-humanism of a radically sceptical poststructuralism by claiming that 'one of the arguments of the book is that Shakespeare sometimes viewed Ovidianism as a means to transcend contemporaneity'. Moreover, Bate argued, Shakespeare's reading of Ovid asserted 'literature's power to continue to work beyond its moment of production'. His own commitment to humanism was justified through an approach that sought to work within the horizons of an early modern mentalité: 'humanist imitation was based on the premiss that classical texts were appropriate patterns or models because they embodied fundamental, enduring truths'.

Bate described *Shakespeare and Ovid* as 'unapologetically a work of reconstructed humanism'. In doing so, he was aware of the polemical nature of his assumption that 'one of the values of literary and dramatic creations is their capacity to speak of [human] conditions and aspirations'. The critical investment in a 'reconstructed humanism' provides a useful label for illuminating his own approach to sources in his Arden 3 *Titus*. As a residual form of humanist criticism, his approach maintains the boundaries between the foregrounded text and the decorative setting of the text's wider discursive network. Bate's argument for Shakespeare's classical reading in his Arden 3 *Titus* can thus be seen as an intervention in scholarly debates which show that, as a reflection of critical practice during the course of the third Arden series, the humanist values of transcendent, eternal truths still find scholarly assent.

The divergent approaches to sources in the third Arden series can be set in relief by bringing Bate's humanistic approach into dialogue with John Drakakis's later edition of *The Merchant of Venice* (2011). Bate's investment in humanism and the potential of Shakespeare's work to transcend its own historical moment contrasts sharply with Drakakis's own commitment to situating Shakespearean texts within a non-hierarchical discursive network. In his Introduction,

Drakakis referred to the critical re-evaluations of Geoffrey Bullough's 'conservatively historical' work on Shakespeare's sources, a project in which he himself was invested at the time, and continues to be, as the general editor of the revision of Bullough's *Narrative and Dramatic Sources* (1957-75).

In contrast to Bullough's traditional, author-centred approach to source study, Drakakis drew his readers' attention to the way that poststructuralist criticism had displaced the author within a wider discursive matrix. In Jonathan Goldberg's essay 'Speculations: *Macbeth as source*', to which Drakakis directed his readers, Goldberg argued that 'there is no immediate path to the author as source of the text except through a relay of mediations, and, by the end, even the supposed ultimate source – the author – must be considered within a heterogenous dispersal'.[79] Already, this critical priority contrasts with Bate's assumption of a more linear, precise sequencing in Shakespeare's use of his source materials.

Drakakis entitled his section on the play's sources 'The Con-Texts of *The Merchant of Venice*'. The poststructuralist term 'con-text' was borrowed from Barker and Hulme's essay on 'the discursive con-texts of *The Tempest*', discussed above, which was included in Drakakis's *Alternative Shakespeares*. As part of Drakakis's title, the term flags his investment in recent critical re-evaluations of what he describes as 'the complex ways in which a variety of texts circulate and interact with each other'.[80] Just as Goldberg had argued for the 'heterogenous dispersal' of textual fabrics, Barker and Hulme's term 'con-text' denotes the text's inscription in history and its dynamic interaction with other texts.

[79] 'Speculations: *Macbeth* as source', in *Shakespeare Reproduced*, pp. 242-64 (p. 242).
[80] 'Introduction', in *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. by John Drakakis (Bloomsbury, 2011), p. 31.

Within this critical context, Drakakis argued that *The Merchant of Venice* can be shown to 'engage dynamically with a series of texts to which its relation is not strictly linear or hierarchical'. The relation of linearity between source and text has been discussed above in Bate's argument for a series of patterns in *Titus Andronicus* that expose a direct line between Shakespeare and Ovid that followed from Shakespeare's reading of the classics. For Drakakis, however, a direct line to Shakespeare's 'sources' was complicated by their oblique nature as they are cobbled together through Shakespeare's working with a series of texts in the composition of his plays.

Turning to *The Merchant*'s 'casket story', Drakakis pointed to the various sources available to Shakespeare as he composed the play: Boccaccio's *Decameron*, Richard Robinson's translation of the *Gesta Romanorum* (1575), and Book 5 of Gower's *Confessio Amantis*, as well as Contari's description in his *Commonwealth and Government of Venice* (1599) of a 'patriarchally controlled 'lottery' [which] recalls the practice of election to political office in Venice'.[81] Drakakis also referred to the lost play *The Jew*, which he suggested might have provided Shakespeare with the idea for the choice of caskets.

While most of these sources are referenced in Bullough's account, Drakakis's interest was in problematising the idea of Shakespeare's sources. In this lost play *The Jew*, for example, he notes that '[w]hat we do not know is precisely how allegorical the depictions of the individual characters in this lost play were, or indeed how, and in what form, they may have been accessible to Shakespeare'. While Bate was happy to dismiss lost sources in his argument for a more direct line between Shakespeare and Ovid, Drakakis's priority was to complicate this linear approach and paint a more oblique picture of Shakespeare's use of source materials.

[81] p. 32.

This commitment can be further seen in Drakakis's discussion of Robert Wilson's late morality play *The Three Ladies of London* (1584). As he observes, Wilson's play 'anticipates in allegorical form some of the motifs of Shakespeare's play'. Emphasising Wilson's use of allegory, Drakakis observes that the three ladies of Wilson's title are personified abstractions of Love, Lucre and Conscience. Many of the play's details, Drakakis notes, are recuperated in *The Merchant of Venice*, with one significant difference: Shakespeare's play 'represents a decisive break with such traditional formal features of theatrical representation in its folding of the kind of dramaturgy that Wilson deployed into more sophisticated forms of characterization'.

For Drakakis, Shakespeare's 'folding' of different dramatic elements into his *Merchant of Venice* complicated Bullough's description of *Three Ladies* as an 'analogue' for the play, further challenging the notion of a linear, precise sequencing of source to text in Shakespeare's plays. Moreover, Drakakis's discussion of Wilson's play moves from an elite book-based approach to how the core elements of *Three Ladies* might have existed as part of an early modern consciousness: 'the play's narrative involving an Italianate merchant, a Jew and a usurer, a marriage between Love and Money, along with sundry refinements developed in other texts, indicates how these interconnected details might have circulated in the Elizabethan popular consciousness'.

Invoking a 'popular consciousness' as an additional form of mediation in Shakespeare's use of sources further complicates the notion of linearity. This becomes clear in Drakakis's inclusion of Alexander Silvayn's *Declamation 95* as a possible conjugal text in Shakespeare's composition of the *Merchant of Venice*. Silvayn's Declaration 95 was one of 100 'Declarations'

(or 'discours de controverse') that structured his book *The Orator*, first published in 1581 (a pseudonym for Alexander van den Busche) and translated by Anthony Munday in 1596.

Sharing several core elements with Wilson's play, including a Turkish setting and a Christian merchant indebted to a Jew, Drakakis observes how Silvayn's *Declamation 95* was 'one of a number of dialogues that were both exemplary and topical' in Shakespeare's day. Moving beyond a book-based culture, the circulation of competing narratives in the early modern popular consciousness sets in relief one of the difficulties of tracing specific print narratives to their source in Shakespeare's plays. As Drakakis argued: '[w]e have no way of knowing if, or how, Shakespeare recalled or used it during the composition of the *Merchant of Venice*'.

In his discussion of the diversity of narrative materials available to Shakespeare, both through a book-based culture and a more problematic dispersal of narratives through a residual oral tradition, Drakakis's edition of the *Merchant of Venice* can be seen as a critical intervention. His particular commitment is to interrogate traditional modes of source study, an investment that has critical continuities with a line of thinking which began in his edited volume *Alternative Shakespeares* (for a way of detecting shifting interest in source studies across Arden 1-3, see Appendix 1). Indeed, the series of critical departures he makes from Bullough's traditional approach to source study points to a commitment to detaching Shakespeare from a humanistic mode of transcendence towards rooting him more firmly within his own determinate historical conditions.

Rather than seeking to recover a sense of what was in Shakespeare's mind as he wrote his plays, Drakakis de-hierarchises this traditional model through a con-textual approach that shows how Shakespeare's plays were 'part of a rich tapestry of collective fantasies, which could

be moulded, embellished, inflected, adjusted and transformed, and which were capable of endlessly innovative repetition'. In this way, Drakakis's 'Shakespeare' is at odds with Bate's humanistic model of 'Shakespeare', embedding the *Merchant of Venice* within a non-hieararchical relation to the series of circulating 'con-texts' in Shakespeare's own cultural moment.

Drakakis's method of pluralising Shakespeare's sources, in which he aimed to widen the scope of traditional source study beyond the 'immediate literary milieu' that had been the primary focus of Bullough's project, shares critical affinities with Sukanta Chaudhuri's 2017 edition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.[82] Indeed, the presence of a more plural approach to source study during this stage of the third Arden series can be seen to reflect wider developments in source study within English studies. In his discussion of *Dream*'s possible sources, Chaudhuri entitled his section 'Sources and Analogues', recalling two of Bullough's categories (the others are 'probable' and 'possible' source) that had evolved as occasion demanded.

Chaudhuri's primary focus in this section is on *Dream*'s presentation of '[f]airies and fairy lore'. Turning first to the figure of Robin Goodfellow/Puck, Chaudhuri describes the figure as 'compounded of many items of English fairy mythology, of both Celtic and Teutonic origin'.[83] His composite nature is further reinforced through Chaudhuri's running the gamut of now familiar folkloric influences: the puck or 'pouka', hobgoblins, will-o'-the-wisps, the 'brownie', and goblins. The 'overlap of roles', Chaudhuri suggests, is 'partly traditional; in part, it seems to be of Shakespeare's own making to yield dramatic capital'.

[82] Bullough, *Narrative Sources*, viii (1975), p. 345.
[83] 'Introduction', in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 44.

Chaudhuri's account of Puck as of 'Shakespeare's own making' out of a rich folkloric tradition is so far in keeping with Bullough's discourse in his *Narrative and Dramatic Sources*. Indeed, the critical lexicon of Chaudhuri's title, 'Sources and Analogues', points to Bullough's own increasing unease with the term 'Sources' as he pursued his multi-volume project. As Drakakis has argued, Bullough's adoption 'of the category of "analogue" indicates unease with the more straightforward linear derivations that inform the categories of "probable source", "source", and "possible source"'.[84] Where Chaudhuri's method departs from Bullough, however, is in its altered focus on a wider cultural frame of reference that moves beyond a hierarchised interest in literary texts and the 'fundamental truths' they embody.

This shift of interest can perhaps best be seen in Chaudhuri's section on 'Ovid: the classics and the fairies'. Following Bate's argument for Shakespeare's deeply scored Ovidian influence, Chaudhuri argues that 'Ovid enters deeply into *Dream*': '[t]he varied origins and no less varied functions of Shakespeare's fairy world appear in its links with Graeco-Roman mythology, as derived from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*'.[85] Invoking Shakespeare's grammar-school education that would include extensive study of Ovid's works, Chaudhuri notes that Shakespeare would have known the original Latin as well as Golding's translation, and that in *Dream* he 'at times clearly follows one or the other'.

However, Chaudhuri is less committed to Bate's direct line between Shakespeare and Ovid in his discussion. In contrast to Bate's model of the series of patterns that connect Shakespeare and Ovid in *Titus Andronicus*, Chaudhuri argues that in *Dream*, Shakespeare 'is not following

[84] 'Inside the Elephant's Graveyard: Revising Geoffrey Bullough's *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare*', in *Shakespeare and Authority: Citations, Conceptions, and Constructions*, ed. by Katie Halsey and Angus Edmund Vine (Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), pp. 55-78 (p. 58).
[85] p. 52 ('Introduction').

a specific passage but drawing on merged memories of several'. The pluralised frame of reference recalls Colin Burrow's argument in his monograph *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity*, which had made two influential claims.

Discussing Shakespeare's education, Burrow argued that 'Shakespeare's education may have tumbled together and confused the sequence of texts that we regard as "primary" and "secondary", and that may have left him with a creatively confused sense of literary chronology'.[86] Burrow further added that Shakespeare 'could make use of his classical reading because he did not have a dogmatic or programmatic attitude to it'. Burrow's model of Shakespeare's 'tumbled together and confused' memories from his classical education usefully complicates the precise linear patterning and structural parallels that were often the goals of traditional source study.

Burrow's questioning of a traditional emphasis on linearity in source study has further critical continuities in Chaudhuri's discussion of *Dream*'s forest setting. The model of Shakespeare's 'tumbled together and confused' memories is supported in his claim that the wood near Athens is both 'quintessentially Ovidian' and 'also Spenserian'. A forest infused with magic, including Puck's flower love-in-idleness, points to forest's Ovidian elements, while traces of *The Faerie Queene* are suggested in the 'animals that not only threaten but sustain the fairy order – the squirrel with nuts, snakes and bats with their skins for garments – and flowers everywhere, closely viewed with lyrical delicacy'.

In addition to the forest setting's Ovidian and Spenserian elements, Chaudhuri also puts forward a more capacious model of Shakespeare's possible source materials, arguing that

[86] *Shakespeare and Classical Antiquity* (Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 38, 242.

Shakespeare 'turns the syncretic fairy lore of his times into a sustained poetic creation mingling classical, medieval and contemporary, remote and proximate, popular and elite'. Just as Burrow had argued for Shakespeare's 'tumbled together and confused' memory, Chaudhuri paints a picture of Shakespeare's characters as composite products, mixing native and classical influences into new forms on the early modern stage.

Chaudhuri's approach in his Arden edition can thus be seen as a barometer of shifting critical interest in traditional source study. Indeed, the three editions discussed in this section serve to illustrate a broader shift of interest towards a plural approach to Shakespeare's use of sources that challenges the traditional linear and hierarchical model of source study. Both Drakakis and Chaudhuri's editions complicate the humanistic assumptions underwriting Bate's argument for Shakespeare's Ovidianism that followed from Shakespeare's reading of the classics.

More recently, Drakakis has challenged the idea of a direct line between Shakespeare's classical education and his putting that learning directly to use in the public theatre. In his monograph *Shakespeare's Resources* (2021), he points to the significant problem with this model:

> [t]he implication is that there must have been a clear and direct link between the commercial pressures fostered by a new public institution that perhaps sought to legitimise its activities with occasional reference to literary and rhetorical analogues, and the processes of imitation that were instilled into the schoolboy's thinking.[87]

Drakakis goes on to suggest that the problem with traditional notions of a 'clear and direct link' connecting the commercial pressures of the theatre with 'the processes of imitation' gleaned from a classical education was that it separated the 'literary' writer from the alternative

[87] *Shakespeare's Resources* (Manchester University Press, 2021), p. 361.

modes of discourse available to Shakespeare within a residual oral tradition: '[t]he scholarly desire to position Shakespeare as a primarily literary writer has often obscured the Shakespeare who, as a practicing dramatist, relies also on oral formulae and circulating narratives and anecdotes that could be imitated and contaminated by innovation'.

Moreover, Drakakis points to the dynamic interaction between a residual early modern oral culture and the new technology of print which complicates the notion that Shakespeare only became aware of 'narratives, memes, structures and existing theatrical forms' once they were written down. 'And yet', Drakakis writes, 'there continue to emerge dutifully enthusiastic endorsements of Shakespeare's indebtedness to "the classics"'. Perhaps, however, as the various critical approaches to source study in the third Arden series suggests, there is room for both self-reflexive approaches in twenty-first century English studies.

Conclusion

This chapter began by returning to the 'crisis' in English studies in the 1970s and 1980s. During this moment of 'crisis', critics such as Raymond Williams and Peter Widdowson saw that new critical modes were emerging, some of which were in tension with what Williams defined as the field's 'dominant critical paradigm'. Focusing on the space of the third Arden series' introductions, this chapter has sought to track shifting ideological and critical commitments in the twenty-first century. In doing so, I have also aimed to contribute to the picture of the way English studies has developed since the moment of 'crisis' in the 1970s and 1980s.

For those who had diagnosed a 'crisis' in the discipline, the purpose was to urgently redirect the course of a discipline that had operated for too long on 'self-evident' assumptions. For Widdowson, it was a ripe moment in which to interrogate those assumptions. A 'crisis' indicated the high stakes of the disciplinary ferment: it was about taking stock of just what English *was*, where it had got to, and whether English studies had a future. To track how the discipline has developed since the seismic events of the 1970s and 1980s, the volumes of the third Arden series provide a valuable resource, since the series began shortly after the 'crisis' in the field and extends well into the twenty-first century, with A.R. Braunmuller and Robert N. Watson's series-completing edition of *Measure for Measure* appearing in 2020. This chapter has thus had two broad aims: to consider how critical practice has developed following the 'crisis' in English studies, and in doing so to return to Widdowson's question of just what English studies *is* in the current moment.

One of the clear changes in literary criticism since the crisis in the discipline has been that critics and editors have become acutely self-aware of their own ideological commitments. For some Arden 3 editors, this new self-awareness is acknowledged while their criticism nevertheless continues to be expressive of established fields. Indeed, as the selections in this chapter have illustrated, residual forms of criticism continue to be present in the third Arden volumes, pointing to their ongoing critical currency -- albeit modified though certain collisions and abrasions with newer critical idioms -- in twenty-first century English studies.

From the selections considered here, it is possible to argue that Shakespeare criticism is *still* energised by the spirit of political interrogation from the 1970s and 1980s that involved a disciplinary turning back on itself to question its dominant assumptions. Jonathan Bate, for instance, acknowledged that the theoretical upturn had induced a political self-awareness in his

own critical practice, but he was nevertheless unapologetic in eschewing modern critical theory in his commitment to Renaissance humanism and Shakespeare's reading of the classics.

Moreover, Claire McEachern was also committed to an established critical idiom that separated the 'literary' text from its determinate historical conditions. From her literary perspective, McEachern was invested in a critical practice that understood the authority of a performance to be an outcome of how closely a performance expressed the 'stable' meanings, gestures and themes located in the 'literary' text. If some of the Arden introductions defy the series' logic, however, in this case pushing back against the series' policy of emphasising the text in performance, then this, I argue, only points to the now richer, critical hybridity of the discipline. Taken as a whole, the Arden 3 editions suggest a discipline that has heeded the call of a 'crisis' in the discipline: all critical practice in the series is acutely self-aware, and much of the critical practice in the series celebrates a removal of the boundary between literature and history.

If Bate and McEachern were committed to a literary criticism expressive of established fields, then other selections considered in this chapter point to a more capacious criticism that embraces a greater freedom to place literature among alternative discourse. From the selections considered here, Ayanna Thompson and John Drakakis perhaps best encapsulate a critical practice committed to the text's inscription in history. This was shown in Ayanna Thompson's investment in presenting Shakespeare's works as historically contingent, seeking to disrupt the 'Shakespeare Factor' in her revised Introduction through the lens of critical race studies. In contrast to McEachern's literary perspective of performance, Thompson argued that the meanings on the page were always enigmatic and imprecise, and it was ultimately the

responsibility of empowered actors and directors to reshape the meanings of the play in performance.

As one of the central spokesmen for the 'alternative Shakespeares' movement in the 1980s, Drakakis was similarly committed in his Arden edition of *The Merchant of Venice* to placing Shakespeare within his determinate historical conditions. Indeed, as this chapter has suggested, his approach to source study can be brought into dialogue with Jonathan Bate's as occupying the two extremes of what is now possible in literary criticism between an investment in literature and history. In Bate's edition of *Titus*, which flowed from his study of Shakespeare's blending of literary influences in *Shakespeare and Ovid*, he argued for a direct patterning between Ovid and Shakespeare in *Titus Andronicus*. Bate's approach can thus be seen as part of the wider critical landscape of fresh discoveries that were opening up new and exciting avenues of research. Like Colin Burrow and Robert Miola, Bate's research focused on reading and composition practices among Shakespeare's contemporaries, which allowed him to show that the early modern educational system produced a special kind of facility and receptivity that could be called a humanist poetics.

This approach is underwritten by a humanistic assumption that Shakespeare sometimes used Ovid as a way to transcend his own cultural moment. In contrast, Drakakis's commitment was to interrogating the notion of a 'timeless' Shakespeare. This challenge was made clear in his critical lexicon, which shifted from the idea of Shakespeare's 'sources' to the 'con-texts' of *Titus*. The term 'con-texts' signalled Drakakis's commitment to challenging traditional source study signed and sealed by Geoffrey Bullough and Kenneth Muir, instead seeking to locate Shakespeare within a wider discursive network that roots him to his own historical moment.

The final words are perhaps best left to the question raised by the alleged crisis in English and that is worth returning to: what *is* the field of English studies now? During the so-called 'crisis', Jean E. Howard reflected that if new critical modes were domesticated within a dominant paradigm, then she saw a bleak future in which critics would go on asking the same questions in more ingenious and sterile ways that would be hazardous for the discipline of English studies. Rather than experiencing a momentous 'crisis', this chapter has argued for the expanding range of interests, the vast amounts of fresh research, and a broader conception of what literary critique can achieve. As the selections from the third Arden volumes affirm, the disciplinary response to the 'crisis' has made the field more capacious, more exciting, and opened up new and ever expanding questions within the discipline: with less of a hard fence now separating literature and history, literary criticism has become more elastic, and the third Arden volumes parade some of the rewards.

CODA

Arden 4: Emerging Directions

This thesis has argued that the activity of editing Shakespeare in the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries always inscribes specific cultural, intellectual, and institutional frameworks onto the resulting editions that are necessarily products of their time. For each of the editorial projects that this thesis has investigated, I have shown how Shakespearean editions absorb and respond to the surrounding ideas of the time and are thus shaped by the cultural, intellectual, and institutional pressures of the day.

To systematically interrogate the three Arden Shakespeare series and Wells and Taylor's Oxford edition, the thesis has used these editorial projects as book-historical case-studies for exploring Shakespearean editorial activity in the previous and current century. In doing so, I have kept four research questions at the centre of my enquiry: how did each project come into being? What were the operating assumptions underwriting those projects? What was the impact on the general readership? What were the commercial and intellectual pressures existing on those editions? After exploring these questions in relation to a series of Shakespearean editorial projects, the picture that emerges is that editorial thinking and method is always in flux. The evolving tools, resources, and methods are always open and responsive to the pressures of larger intellectual, institutional, and cultural developments. Following this logic, this thesis has illustrated that editorial business is never finished: it is always mobilised and energised by the shifting paradigms in which editorial activity takes place.

With this in mind, this coda will look ahead to the emerging directions of the fourth Arden Shakespeare series, which is now in preparation. In doing so, I have benefitted from a zoom interview with the Arden 4 general editors, Peter Holland, Tiffany Stern, and Zachary Lesser (For a transcript of the full interview, see Appendix 2). In what follows, I will be drawing on this conversation to consider how the fourth Arden series might develop and respond to its Arden predecessors, with a focus on many of the themes that have been central to this thesis. These are: 'textual approaches', 'digitisation', 'Introductions', 'the readership', 'shifting critical climates', 'Arden editors and cultural diversity', 'critical, cultural, and institutional tensions', and 'attribution and the Shakespearean canon'.

Textual approaches

This thesis has argued that after the theoretical upturn of the 1980s and 1990s, editors are now faced with greater expectations surrounding innovation. This is perhaps one of the ways that editing has remained vital: new editorial methodologies provide a way to keep the field fresh and make for a vibrant and exciting discipline. The need to innovate is also evident in the fourth Arden series' textual policy. During our conversation, the general editors mentioned that 'versioning' (the practice of editing specific material texts rather than works in the Platonic sense), which was of interest to the Arden 3 editors, was no longer of interest to them. Rather than version-based editions, the Arden 4 series will be invested in (in Peter Holland's words) 'an edition that represents a performance to which that might be a witness, or part of a witnessing'. As Holland went on:

> we are asking people to specify what it is, what this event is, that their edition will be seeking to represent, and that's in itself quite a radical move because the whole emphasis – which I think

> emerged ever more strongly while Arden 3 was underway – that versioning was crucial, was the only way properly to represent an edition, doesn't make any sense to us anymore.[1]

The Arden 3 emphasis on versioning that Holland attests to here has received sustained attention in Chapter four of this thesis. As the chapter argued, both Foakes's *King Lear* (1997) and Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor's two-volume, three-text *Hamlets* (2006) were both heavily scored by the version-based principles that were gaining critical currency as the Arden 3 series ran its course. A shift of interest from version-based to specific event-based editing in the Arden 4 series will thus constitute a significant development in editorial thinking and method.

Moreover, an Arden 4 investment in editing *to* a specific event, so that the edited text becomes a witness, or partial witness is truly innovative in its breadth of scope. As was seen in Chapter three, the Oxford editors' were invested in recovering and presenting Shakespeare's plays 'as they were acted in the London playhouses which stood at the centre of his professional life'.[2] In a striking evolution of editorial methodology, the Arden 4 series requires editors to decide on their own what specific event they will attempt to reconstruct. 'The one parameter we put around this', Lesser noted, was that 'it does have to be an early modern goal, I mean they can't reconstruct a nineteenth-century *Hamlet* without Fortinbras'. It is also worth emphasising here that Arden 4 editors are free to reconstruct something other than performance. As Lesser observed, 'some people are doing an edition where they are trying to reconstruct Shakespeare's intended script for the play, which is more of a kind of Arden 2 goal, and we leave that as a possible goal as well'.

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[1] Peter Holland, zoom interview, 12 October 2023. For a persuasive argument against versioning, see Tiffany Stern, *Shakespeare, Malone and the Problems of Chronology* (Cambridge University Press, 2023).
[2] Stanley Wells, 'General Introduction', in *The Complete Works*, ed. by Stanley Wells and others (Clarendon Press, 1986), p. xxxiii.

Providing an example of his own approach, Holland noted that his own Arden 4 *King Lear* will be based on the St Stephen's Night performance at James I's court, 26 December 1606. Comparing this event-based approach to a version-editing principle, he noted that it would be unhelpful to edit *to* the Boxing Day event as if Q was the perfect record of the performance, and that this approach does not necessarily exclude aspects of F. If version-based editing became a generally held view during the course of the third series, as Holland suggests, then a textual policy at odds with versioning as 'the only way properly to represent an edition' is likely to prove controversial. As he observed: 'we are expecting at times when these volumes come out some pretty sharp rebuttals from individuals, and so be it. But if all we're doing is something tamely predictable, there is no purpose in doing Arden 4 at all'.

This reflection also speaks to the breakdown of consensus editions that this thesis has explored, which inspired alternative methodologies that have made the field of Shakespearean editing more vibrant and exciting. While versioning remains a viable option for Shakespearean editors, the Arden 4 general editors are thus boldly embracing an innovative method that also takes stock of the lessons of the past. This suggest a rich multivocality can be expected in the fourth series, which also runs through the three preceding series. Within a plural critical and editorial climate, it also appears that the Arden 4 series will embrace both residual and progressive forms of critical practice. As Zachary Lesser reflected: 'we kind of see it as like returning to editing after everything we've learned, from the critique of New Bibliography/New Bibliographical editing say over the last twenty years, not going towards versioning or unediting, but turning back to editing with those lessons in mind'. In his emphasis on a return to editing, Lesser's view thus usefully points to the way that scholarly editing involves a

complex negotiation between the present and the past: namely, a consolidation of earlier thinking with the need for scholarly innovation.

Digitisation

In 2015, Leah Marcus observed that '[g]iven the direction of publishing today, the Arden 4 Shakespeare now in its early stages may exist only or primarily in Web format'. If Marcus's suggestion was right, then this would prove a remarkable shift in the identity of the Arden series, which has built its name on physical copies with a successful design and layout. All of the previous three Arden Shakespeare series have come out of a codex world, although developments in technology began to impact on the series with the Arden 2 CD-ROM, released in 1997 with a price tag of £2,500.[3]

The release date of the Arden 2 CD-ROM also unfortunately meant that its content was not up to speed with the latest developments in Shakespeare studies. The Arden 3 series was already underway, and was itself in the process of moving towards digitisation, with most editions added to Bloomsbury and Faber and Faber's Drama Online Core Collection (https://www.dramaonlinelibrary.com/). While this shows that there was a clear shift towards digitisation as the Arden 3 ran its course, it is clear that the emerging Arden 4 series has a greater commitment to digitisation than its predecessors.

[3] See Raymond Siemens, 'Review of the Arden CD-ROM: Texts and Sources for Shakespeare Study', *Early Modern Literary Studies*, 4.2 (September 1998) < http://purl.oclc.org/emls/04-2/rev_siem.html > [accessed 11/11/2023].

This commitment is perhaps most evident in the tag-line 'born-digital' that has been attributed to Arden 4 since its inception. This appears to strengthen Marcus's claim that the series 'may exist only or primarily in Web format'. This would perhaps strike those familiar with the Arden format as a surprise, and also that it risks losing a sense of its identity with a full transition to the digital world. In our conversation, however, Holland noted that the tag-line had changed since the start of the project:

> I think when we began, everybody – including ourselves – was anticipating that students would no longer have a print copy in a classroom, and that hence it had to be primarily a digital form, and, at least in the classrooms I know of, across the US and UK, that simply isn't the case, and for a variety of reasons we still expect / require our students to have print copies. So that means the notion that 'born-digital' excludes the print copy is no longer tenable, and I don't see that changing over the next few years.

One of the main reasons why students are still 'expect[ed] / require[d]' to have print copies arguably concerns accessibility and convenience. As this thesis has shown, Arden print editions have proved increasingly valuable throughout their history as scholarly resources in secondary-school and university settings. Acutely aware of how Arden editions remain valuable in printed form, the Arden 4 general editors are thus seeking to strike a balance between print and digital. As Zachary Lesser explained:

> I think being 'born-digital' doesn't mean that it's exclusively digital. It means that it begins digitally and the editions are completely created digitally so nothing needs to be digitised or transformed into digital. But it can be outputted in print as easily as it can be outputted digitally. So in that sense, that's what I understand 'born-digital' to mean.

The similarities in design that Lesser sees between the print and digital thus indicates that there is likely to be a more mutual relationship between the two forms in the fourth series. One of the reasons for this change concerns the possibilities of the digital space and the way that it exceed the limitations of the printed page. On the printed page, there was enough space to provide readers with enough information to meet their requirements, but in the digital space

there is a danger of providing too much information. This would make it easy for the reader to lose sight of the conventional Arden parameters. As Tiffany Stern observed: '[t]here was one stage where we thought we'd have tons of images and sounds and things, and now I think we'll have "what are your ten images and what are your five sounds?"'

The shift of emphasis towards digitisation also has implications for the Arden 4 introductions. A significant change here is that the fourth series will seek to provide 'digital readings': short, modular sections with clear subheadings so that readers can locate the sections most relevant to their needs and interests. As Lesser observed, 'one of the things about the introduction we've stressed is kind of modular, short sections that can be read on a kind of dip-in and dip-out basis digitally, and should be clearly headed so that people know what each one is about, which also means they should be understandable individually rather than only in linear succession, though we also think that's how most people read print introductions anyway, so it works well for both modes'.

Introductions

When Una Ellis-Fermor began planning work for the second series, she provided the first set of Arden guidelines for editors on writing their Introductions. In the first place, editors were asked to provide a '[d]escription of text': '[t]his should include adequate and, if possible impartial discussion of textual problems (if any) giving due, but not undue, attention to the most recent work in the field'.[4] The priority given to textual matters in Ellis-Fermor's

[4] Una Ellis-Fermor, *Notes for the Revised Edition of the Arden Shakespeare*.

guidelines reflected a growth of interest in the problems of text, something that Harold Jenkins in 1974 pointed to as the main reason for the expansion of Arden 2 Introductions.

As this thesis has shown, however, after the events of the 1980s and 1990s, textual scholarship was displaced from the centre as critical activity became openly plural within English studies. Following Arden 1, the Arden 2 editions always began on the dating and textual history relevant to the play in question. The Arden 3 series, however, replaced that orderly progression with a more essayistic introduction, with textual issues largely relegated to the back. This shift of emphasis is reflected in the policy of the third Arden guidelines, which state that

> [i]t is not necessary to follow the format of Arden 2. Indeed many readers are likely to be discouraged from reading the Introduction at all if it begins with daunting technical minutiae.[5]

As bibliography and textual editing were displaced among new and emerging forms of critical practice, the third Arden series thus saw an opportunity to provide inexperienced readers with a more engaging entry to Shakespearean texts. It is worth noting here that even during the course of the second series, there was a sense that beginning an Introduction with textual matters was likely to be off putting for the readership. In his 1974 talk on the Arden series, Harold Jenkins observed that in their Introductions, editors must formulate their own view on the F text, and if there is one, on the Q or Quartos, as well as the relation between them: '[t]hese he must explain in his introduction, whether or not he expects anyone to read this, so that it can be clear on what principles his own text is based'.[6]

[5] **V INTRODUCTION**, 13b1, **Shape/order**, *Arden 3 Editorial Guidelines*, 2004.
[6] Harold Jenkins, 'The Arden Shakespeare', HJ/2/22, Queen Mary archives, University of London.

If Jenkins doubted the patience of his readers, this was subservient to a need to prioritise the latest developments in Shakespearean research, which at the time was dominated by bibliography and textual studies. As these fields gave way to new and emerging critical forms, however, the Arden 3 Introductions were able to explore new ways of engaging readers from the start. Indeed, all Arden 3 editors followed the advice not to begin with a discussion of textual matters. This appears to have been a successful shift of emphasis that will be continued in the Arden 4 series. As Lesser observed:

> [w]e're not planning any radical transformation of the Introduction. Like Arden 3 I don't think we want the kind of Arden 2 style where the detailed discussion of textual matters is the first thing that you're likely to encounter. But that's already something Arden 3 did. It's not been an area where we've had huge discussions of transforming what's there.

Although it thus seems that readers can expect few surprises in the Arden 4 Introductions, Peter Holland reflected that the Arden 3 Introductions often made it difficult for readers to locate specific topics of interest. For instance, when searching for the date of the play, the Arden 3 Introductions often made it difficult to pinpoint their precise location. To make it easier for readers to navigate the Introductions, Holland mentioned that the Arden 4 will introduce clearer subheadings. In doing so, the general editors are acutely aware of how readers approach Introductions, not reading them in a linear fashion, but in segments depending on their focus of interest:

> I don't believe anybody ever, other than in the act of proofing, reads an Arden Introduction from beginning to end, in a linear fashion. We go to it for segments, I mean, it's certainly what I do, and we want to be inviting, so that when you start you might actually feel, 'yes, this person can write and I'm going to enjoy reading whatever I read of this'.

It is worth noting here that even during the Arden 2 series, editors often questioned whether readers would be reading their Introductions in 'a linear fashion'. In his paper delivered at Oslo in 1974, for instance, Harold Jenkins remarked that it was an editor's duty to explain in his

Introduction 'his view of the nature of his F text & if there is one, of the Q text as well'.[7] 'This he must explain in his Intro', Jenkins wrote, 'whether or not he expects anyone to read it'. It is therefore perhaps surprising that only relatively recently has this realisation been acted upon in scholarly editions of Shakespeare.

The Readership

The Arden Shakespeare series was launched against the background of rapid educational expansion and the growth of an educated lay readership. In response to wider social, cultural, and intellectual changes, the first Arden series was designed to appeal to the widest possible audience. As the first series ran its generation-spanning course, the Arden name gained a reputation for scholarly excellence, a reputation that gradually increased across the twentieth century. Those who pick up an Arden edition today are presented with what has always been a core requirement of Arden editions: comprehensive 'state of the art' summaries of the scholarship surrounding the plays or poems in question. In the Arden 4 series, however, one of the concerns appears to be about how certain readers might be put off by scholarly commentary notes. As Peter Holland reflected, 'we know that students – I know with my own students – can be put off by the extent of the commentary in an Arden edition as undergraduates, and especially in schools'.

Holland's concern about maintaining scholarly rigour while engaging student readers points to a central question: how do you maintain scholarly excellence while catering for student readers who might be legitimately put off by extensive scholarly annotations? Not wishing to

[7] 'The Arden Shakespeare'.

distinguish between the 'scholar' and the 'student', the Arden 4 solution will be to distinguish between 'standard' and 'brief' commentary notes, which is an expansion on the standard Arden 3 annotations. The 'standard' annotations will follow the second and third series' commitment to scholarly excellence, providing comprehensive glosses that present readers with state of the art scholarship. The 'brief' annotations will only be available in the Arden 4 digital version, allowing readers to toggle between the 'standard' and 'brief' notes according to their preference.

Shifting Critical Climates

In 2019, Ann Thompson reflected that 'much larger changes in textual, critical and performance studies happened between Arden 2 and Arden 3 than seem to be happening between Arden 3 and 4'.[8] Those changes have been discussed at length in this thesis, but how do the Arden 4 general editors reflect on the critical changes that are happening between Arden 3 and 4? When the Arden 3 series began in 1995, the critical changes were still gaining force, so that the Arden 3 editors had to digest and assimilate the transformations while they were still occurring.

One of the benefits for the Arden 4 series is that its team of editors can now look back and take stock of the lessons from those transformations. As Lesser noted: 'we have the benefit of a kind of post-revisionist textual criticism where we can assimilate a lot of (I think our editors have assimilated a lot of) that transformation, and can now reflect on what to take from it, and what to preserve from, say, Arden 2'. This reflective mood presents a welcome openness to

[8] 'Arden Completed', paper for Shakespeare Association of America Conference, 2019 (unpublished).

earlier editorial approaches, a move that also crucially acknowledges the now plural nature of editorial activity.

There are also wider critical developments extending beyond textual criticism that will distinguish the Arden 4 series from its predecessor. One of the fields that will have a greater presence in the series is Book History. Looking back at Arden 3, Lesser observed that even though many editors were actively contributing to the field of Book History, there was little engagement with the field in the Arden 3 editions:

> if you look at Arden 3s, interestingly an area you really don't see anything much discussed is book history. I mean you see a discussion of the text, you don't see particular interest in circulation of plays in print in the way that we now do, though the general editors and editors were certainly doing that kind of work outside of the editions.

As well as book history, there has also been a burgeoning of interest in Shakespearean adaptations that the series will seek to reflect. This is particularly the case with Global Shakespeare performances, so that the Arden 4 series will aim to move beyond the British establishment stage. Reflecting on the growth of interest in adaptations and providing an insight into their place in the Arden 4 series, Holland remarked that 'increasingly one does want to talk about how has this play been adapted into other things, be it by being filmed, by being translated, by being relocated, all the kinds of transformation that adaptation can offer, and that is part of areas of interest for us now in a way that it wasn't before'.

A further area of interest that the New Oxford Shakespeare (*NOS*) (2016-17) embraced has been attribution studies. This thesis has directed attention to the way that Wells and Taylor's Oxford edition influenced the course of editorial thinking and impacted on the course of the Arden 3 series (see Appendix 1 which provides a way of detecting shifts in critical thinking across the Arden 1-3 series). So how might the emphasis on attribution in the *NOS* influence

the work of the Arden 4 editors? While the general editors recognise that each Arden editor has their own sphere of interests, it seems that attribution will not be a dominant interest in the fourth series. Commenting on the *NOS*' emphasis on attribution and authorship studies, Stern posed the question:

> is anyone interested in attribution at all anymore? If New Oxford has killed it, and I think it has, then this sets up a whole different set of priorities for looking at a play, where maybe authorship isn't actually the thing. I mean I guess we're thinking more about occasion than authorship.

Stern has argued powerfully against the reliability of attribution software, most notably in her 2011 response to the Arden 3 *Double Falsehood* (2010).[9] It would be unfair to say, however, that attribution studies has ran out of steam following the *NOS*, as the continuing work of attribution scholars testifies. Brian Vickers and Gary Taylor, for example, continue to produce work in this field that supports the claims of their larger editorial projects.[10] If the fourth Arden series sets out a more sceptical or disinterested position, this will be a significant development for editorial thinking in the twenty-first century.

Arden Editors and Cultural Diversity

During the planning stages of the third Arden series, Richard Proudfoot and Ann Thompson aimed to address the relative absence of women editors of Shakespeare by including a fair share of women among their commissioned editors. With the fourth series now in preparation, it

[9] '"The Forgery of some modern Author"?: Theobald's Shakespeare and Cardenio's "Double Falsehood"', *SQ*, 62.4 (2011), pp. 555-93. See also David Carnegie and Gary Taylor's edited collection of essays *The Quest for Cardenio: Shakespeare, Fletcher, Cervantes, and the Lost Play* (Oxford University Press, 2012).
[10] See, for example, Brian Vickers, '*Arden of Faversham*, the Authorship Problem: Shakespeare, Watson, or Kyd?', *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, 37.2 (2021), pp. 580-93; 'Authorship Candidates for *Arden of Faversham*: Kyd, Shakespeare, and Thomas Watson', *Studies in Philology*, 118.2 (2021), pp. 308-41.

seems an appropriate moment to ask whether there are any other underrepresented groups that they would like to see as part of a culturally diverse team of editors. As well as meeting their objective of including a fair share of women, the Arden 3 series also included the first Arden edition to be edited by a scholar of colour: Sukanta Chaudhuri's *Midsummer Night's Dream* (2017).

If the Arden 3 general editors were unhappy that their predecessors included only one female editor, then the Arden 4 general editors might similarly look back at their predecessors who included only one scholar of colour. While this move towards greater cultural diversity is to be welcomed, Holland pointed to the current challenges of including a fair share of scholars of colour in the Arden 4 series:

> [w]e have a number of scholars of colour editing Arden editions. I would have been delighted if we had even more but, let's be clear, there aren't as many scholars of colour in Shakespeare studies who are ready to take on the demands of an Arden edition. There will be in a few years' time. I mean that is clearly one of the changes I'm watching in the US, in the changing demographic, if you like, of people in tenure-line positions in Shakespeare studies at US universities.

Holland's observation points to the challenges in achieving parity between white scholars and scholars of colour in the fourth Arden Shakespeare series. It is clear that the general editors have made an enormous amount of effort to recruit scholars of colour to edit for the Arden 4 series, and their efforts have been rewarded with a number having agreed to take on an edition. There are, however, cases beyond their control. In approaching scholars of colour, some have declined due to commitments, many of which are more 'pressing' than the long-term project of an Arden edition.

A further challenge relates more broadly to the demographics of the field. Within early modern studies, the general editors noted that the tenured professoriate is much whiter than the

younger scholars. Scholars of colour tend to be more early-career scholars, which creates a real tension between career obligations toward tenure (especially in the US) and taking on an editorial project that some institutions will not consider on the same level as a monograph. While the general editors recognise the substantial contribution that early-career scholars of colour can bring to an Arden edition, the current system thus creates a disabling tension between career obligations and taking on a scholarly editorial project.

When commissioning scholars of colour, the Arden 4 general editors have also reflected on the issue that feminist editors have raised, namely that women are often assigned to edit Shakespearean comedies, while men have traditionally edited the tragedies. In the same way, the general editors are also concerned not simply to assign scholars of colour to the traditional 'race' plays, *Othello*, *Titus Andronicus*, or *Merchant of Venice*. To do so might imply that race is only of concern in these three plays, which would be to elide the questions of race that are relevant to the other plays and poems within the larger Shakespearean corpus. As Lesser observed, reflecting on his own Arden 4 edition of *Macbeth*:

> I have to think about it with *Macbeth*. In what sense is *Macbeth* a play about race? What does race mean in the early modern period? How is Scotland depicted? These kinds of questions, in every play it will come up, in language as well as in character.

Lesser's commitment to exploring the racial aspects of *Macbeth* suggests that early modern race studies will have a significance presence in the Arden 4 series. This of course reflects the current state of play in Shakespeare studies, as early modern race studies has grown since the millennium to take up a commanding position in the field. An example of just how race studies might affect the Arden 4 volumes is indicated in Holland's reflections on a recent production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at Notre Dame University. In the production, Holland noted, Hermia couldn't call out 'God speed, fair Helena. Wither away?', because 'fair' was being used

‘as a positive marker by virtue of its whiteness’. In a subtle change, the production thus had Hermia refer to Helena as ‘dear’ or ‘sweet’ Helena. Holland’s point adds further emphasis to the way that issues of race are relevant to all Shakespearean plays and poems.

Critical, Cultural, and Institutional Tensions

In 2016, Valerie Traub reflected that ‘[w]ithin early modern studies, a significant number of feminists have made it a point of principle to work on women writers or non-Shakespearean texts in order to render Shakespeare less central as the defining feature of the ‘Renaissance’. While this argument can cut both ways, with some feminist scholars being pushed from Shakespeare to women writers, for some feminist scholars following Traub’s logic, work on an Arden Shakespeare edition may go against their intellectual principles. How might the Arden 4 general editors work with such tensions in the field?

In Chapter five, I considered how a selection of Arden 3 editors approached feminism, gender, and sexuality in their Introductions. In doing so, I hoped to show how a range of approaches that parade the rewards of critical plurality. While Dusinberre, Wayne, and Gossett all have their own critical investments, those investments use Shakespeare to illustrate issues concerned with feminism, gender, and sexuality. Reflecting on this area of study as it applies to the Arden 4 series, Holland argued that the tensions that exist are valuable tensions:

> I think those tensions are good tensions, not fundamental and disabling tensions. They’re tensions that are about an intelligent sensitivity to complexities of culture which all scholars ought to have whatever they’re working on and it can’t be different for Shakespeare.

If some scholars who turned from Shakespeare saw 'fundamental and disabling tensions', Holland thus sees such tensions as normative, part of the process of responding intelligently to the 'complexities of culture'. If Valerie Traub saw scholars leaving Shakespeare behind as an instrument of oppression, then this arguably dispenses with a more positive opportunity to engage Shakespeare in rethinking contemporary issues of feminism, gender, and sexuality. If Shakespeare can serve as an instrument of oppression, this shouldn't mean, Holland argued, that Shakespeare 'can't also be used as an instrument of rediscovery of individualities and identities'. Holland's view that such tensions are normative no doubt receives support from many scholars who are working on Arden 4 editions, many of whom have individual commitments to feminism, gender, and sexuality. This point was emphasised by Lesser, who explained that all those working on Arden 4 editions are excited to be doing it:

> so maybe they don't feel that tension between working on Shakespeare as a canonical male author and working on women writers, though we certainly have editors among the group who work on women writers and are feminist editors and have no issue.

This representative view suggests that the critical conflicts indicated by Traub were perhaps more salient during the course of the Arden 3 series than in the current climate. Indeed, as Lesser emphasised, if there are feminist editors happy to edit for the Arden 4 Shakespeare series, then this suggests that 'maybe some of that conflict has died down or been reframed'. Whether or not the conflict has died down or been reframed, it seems safe to say that the Arden 4 editions will illustrate the ways in which Shakespeare serves as an instrument of cultural empowerment.

There is, however, one institutional tension of concern that has significance for the fourth Arden series. This concerns the relation of scholarly editing to one's academic career. The general editors were keen to stress that there is a lack of understanding within universities about

scholarly editing and the particular intellectual demands it places on individuals. This becomes significant at the stage of commissioning editors for the Arden Shakespeare series. Despite the significant demands placed on practicing editors, a scholarly edition currently does not count towards tenure for those holding a tenure-track position. This can lead to the regretful situation in which early career scholars are advised by their mentors not to undertake an editorial project, due to the risks it involves to one's future career prospects.

As editions of Shakespeare do not currently count towards tenure, this means that the Arden 4 general editors have tended to focus their efforts on commissioning experienced professors holding tenured positions. This becomes a tension, however, when considering issues of cultural diversity. As Zachary Lesser explained:

> if you look at the field of professors who have tenure compared to the field as a whole including professors who do not have tenure it looks quite different, in terms of race, in terms of gender, in all sorts of ways. So that is a tension in the academy, which has effects on us for sure.

For the Arden Shakespeare series to achieve greater cultural diversity among its team of editors, then the general editors recognise the challenges presented by the tenure system. The clear tension that arises from this situation is an unfortunate and fundamentally disabling one: one which creates a conflict between the target of greater cultural diversity and career progression. In other words, early career scholars of colour will not be encouraged to produce scholarly editions, because it will not count towards their tenure. The obvious solution that immediately suggests itself is to review the status of scholarly editions as worthy contributions towards academic tenure. For Holland, the consequences of not finding a solution appear dire:

> I do find this – this is not about Arden it's about the whole question of scholarly editing – that the failure to understand it risks disabling the future well beyond Shakespeare, of scholarly editions of texts, and that's shocking. That's a real risk because it will not give people the academic standing that they have a right to gain from it. If people are going to feel and be told by their mentors, "don't

> do it because it risks your future career prospects", because of the energy it involves and the lack of reward / prestige you will get from it, that's terrible.

If the 'failure to understand' scholarly editing becomes entrenched in the academy, then Holland's outlook paints a bleak picture for the future of scholarly editions of Shakespeare. In interrogating a range of editorial projects, this thesis has attested to the scholarly demands that are placed on practicing editors when editing for a series like the Arden Shakespeare. In tracking the work of scholarly editors across the twentieth- and twenty-first centuries, the thesis has shown that scholarly editing is a complex, Janus-faced practice that places significant demands on individual editors. Following an interrogation of a series of editorial projects, it is clear that editing places significant intellectual demands on scholars, particularly in the way that it requires a daunting combination of innovation with a consolidation of earlier thinking.

Moreover, scholarly editing is an activity that transfers and mediates products of cultural value for a new generation. Without it, this risks not fully retaining the relevance of Shakespeare, and breathing life into his texts through the urgencies and contradictions of the present moment. This thesis has been concerned to illustrate systematically the ways that editorial thinking absorbs the surrounding ideas of the time, ideas that are inscribed into the texts produced in specific moments. The requirement to consolidate earlier and current thinking, as well as produce an original edition places significant demands on practicing editors that deserve full recognition. It is one of the hopes of this thesis that it might lead to a better understanding of just what scholarly editing entails.

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M.R. Ridley, *Anthony & Cleopatra*, 1954
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J.H. Walter, *Henry V*, 1954

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E.A.J. Honigmann, *King John*, 1954

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John Russell Brown, *The Merchant of Venice*, 1955

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T.S. Dorsch, *Julius Caesar*, 1955
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J.M. Nosworthy, *Cymbeline*, 1955
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Peter Ure, *Richard II*, 1956

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Andrew S. Cairncross, *2 Henry VI*, 1957

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R.A. Foakes, *Henry VIII*, 1957

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H.J. Oliver, *Timon of Athens*, 1959

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M.R. Ridley, *Othello*, 1959

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G.K. Hunter, *All's Well That Ends Well*, 1959
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A.R. Humphreys, *1 Henry IV*, 1960
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Andrew S. Cairncross, *1 Henry VI*, 1960
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R.A. Foakes, *Comedy of Errors*, 1962
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Illustrating the travels of Saint Paul, reproduced from the copy
of Abraham Ortelius, *Threatrum Orbis Terrarum* (1584) in Yale University Library.
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F.D. Hoeniger, *Pericles*, 1963

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J.H.P. Pafford, *The Winter's Tale*, 1963

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Andrew S. Cairncross, *3 Henry VI*, 1964

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J.W. Lever, *Measure for Measure*, 1964
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A.R. Humphreys, *2 Henry IV*, 1966
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Clifford Leech, *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, 1969

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H.J. Oliver, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 1971

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Agnes Latham, *As You Like It*, 1975

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J.M. Lothian and Thomas W. Craik, *Twelfth Night*, 1975

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Philip Brockbank, *Coriolanus*, 1976

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Harold F. Brooks, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, 1979

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Brian Gibbons, *Romeo and Juliet*, 1980

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A.R. Humphreys, *Much Ado about Nothing*, 1981

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Anthony Hammond, *Richard III*, 1981

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Brian Morris, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 1981

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K.J. Palmer, *Troilus and Cressida*, 1982

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Harold Jenkins, *Hamlet*, 1982

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Emerging Directions: an Interview with the Arden 4 General Editors, Peter Holland, Tiffany Stern, and Zachary Lesser.

1. *The third Arden series notably distinguished itself from its predecessor in emphasising the plays as 'texts for performance'. Is it too early to speak of an Arden 4 'style' that you envision for the fourth Arden series*?

Peter Holland (PH): Yes Arden 3 had a new emphasis on performance. My students are always amazed when they discover that Arden 2 had no notion of stage history anywhere in it. That simply didn't figure. But it [Arden 3] was also interested in versioning, and *Hamlet* is the exemplar of that more than anything. We're very much *not* interested in that, and we're not interested in volumes that are, as it were, representing 'F', or representing 'Q1'. What we're interested in is an edition that represents a performance to which that might be a witness, or part of a witnessing. So it's not about a kind of diplomatic reprint modernised of a particular published text, it's about recovering a moment of performance, which is something Arden 3 was *not* interested in. So we are asking people to specify what it is, what this event is, that their edition will be seeking to represent, and that's in itself quite a radical move because the whole emphasis -- which I think emerged ever more strongly while Arden 3 was underway – that versioning was crucial, was the only way properly to represent an edition, doesn't make any sense to us anymore, and if you want an example of why it doesn't quite make sense, Tiffany's little Cambridge Elements book on Malone and the Problems of Chronology is a perfect explication of all those kinds of assumptions that were left unquestioned and should have been questioned.

Tiffany Stern (TS): So instead of a being a series which says 'you must all do this same one thing', 'you must all come up with the first performance', or 'you must all come up with Shakespeare's manuscript', instead we're asking each editor to choose what thing they are going to come up with, given their text, and to edit to that. So one of the questions we asked them when we asked them to come up with a proposal, was to state what the texts are that have come down to us, what they think they are in origin, and then to state what they are going to edit *to*. So, for instance, I am editing *The Tempest*, and I am going to edit *to* the Court performance at the Palatine Wedding. So that's not a first performance, but it's a known performance, and I can then research the wedding, and the other stuff that happened in the wedding and relate *The Tempest* to it, and to me that makes sense, because I believe that the text we have is somewhat nearer to that than to any moment of origin. But each person is coming up with a moment, so some people are editing to first performance, or first Globe performance, or first Court performance, or even kind of a moment in the long life of this performance on an average day. But what we're not doing is telling all editors to do the same thing, we're telling editors to own the thing they are doing, and edit to that. We sort of think that will make an Arden that's teachable in a kind of different way from other texts, because one of the things you can teach is, 'why have they edited to this moment?', 'how does that affect the play?', and 'what can we learn by thinking of it in those terms?'.

Zachary Lesser (ZL): I'll just add that it's not always a performance, I mean some people are doing an edition where they are trying to reconstruct Shakespeare's intended script for the play, which is more of a kind of Arden 2 goal, and we leave that as a possible goal as well. So we kind of see it as like returning to editing after everything we've learned, from the critique of New Bibliography /New Bibliographical editing say over the last twenty years, not going towards versioning or unediting, but turning back to editing with those lessons in mind.

PH: And with a degree of ambition, and chancing, and risk-taking as part of it. So, in terms of *Lear*, I'm working on *that* performance on St Stephen's night at court. That's not a surprise, but I don't believe necessarily it excludes aspects of F, and I don't believe it requires me to, as it were, only edit as if Q was the perfect record of that event, because that doesn't seem to me to be helpful, or convincing, in a variety of ways. So, we are expecting at times when these volumes come out some pretty sharp rebuttals from individuals, and so be it. But if all we're doing is something tamely predictable, there is no purpose in doing Arden 4 at all. There are obviously areas which Arden 4 will reflect that simply weren't present in the same way at the time that Arden 3 was created, not least over issues of race and gender and identity in all kinds of ways that we want our scholars to be alert to in commentary, in a way that I don't think people have been. It's no surprise that twenty to twenty-five years ago or more, people didn't annotate / write commentary notes about raced language, in a way that we would absolutely expect them to now, and I just use that as a single example, a glaring example if you like. It's not about people were failing to do something before, people weren't thinking in that way before, and it's not blame on them, but it's now an obligation on us, and I think that's crucial. We've had some moments where we've looked at some drafts of material from our editors and we've had to say, 'yes but you're not actually thinking about how the word "black" is being used in this verse line. Is it a raced word or not at this point? And we want to encourage you to think about what that might mean'.

2. *Leah Marcus suggested in 2015 that '[g]iven the direction of publishing today, the Arden 4 Shakespeare now in its early stages may exist only or primarily in Web format'. How much emphasis are you placing on digitisation and does the physical book still have a place in an Arden series*?

PH: It's changed since we began the project. And I think when we began, everybody -- including ourselves -- was anticipating that students would no longer have a print copy in a classroom, and that hence it had to be primarily a digital form, and, at least in the classrooms I know of, across the US and UK, that simply isn't the case, and for a variety of reasons we still expect / require our students to have print copies. So that means the notion that 'born-digital' excludes the print copy is no longer tenable, and I don't see that changing over the next few years. I think the lure of possibility came and then went, and we've reverted to a different thing, but there *will* be a digital form of Arden 4, that is planned from the start, in a way that Arden 3 did not. Arden 3 moved to becoming digital, and it did it in a format that -- I don't think I'd like you to quote me on this – that hasn't been satisfactory. I mean I think the drama online representation of Arden 3 editions doesn't solve anything, not least because any note, you have to click on each note in turn, you can't just, as it were, switch all the notes on, which was the obvious thing to do. I was part of the ill-fated Arden 2 online CD-ROM that was selling for many thousands, and at one point we commissioned a host of wonderful new introductions. Barbara Hodgdon wrote a brilliant brief history of Shakespeare in performance, in about 15,000 words. All of that stuff we commissioned way back then vanished! That's the other thing about born-digital stuff, as the platform shifts, you can't access the earlier materials. I use the Arden 2 CD-ROM because it's a very useful tool. If I want to find what does F and Q look like on a particular line I can find it faster by opening my Arden 2 CD-ROM than any other way. But my computer has to imagine it's Windows XP and not Windows 11 in order for that to work.

TS: It is the case that we did some kind of bells and whistles about being born digital, and now we're going to be born print and digital, which is a different thing. If you're thinking print, that really limits the digital things you're going to do, because if you're thinking print, then you're

still letting the size of the page determine the size of notes, and you can't have loads of print images and you can't have any sounds. There was one stage where we thought we'd have tons of images and sounds and things, and now I think we'll have 'what are your ten images and what are your five sounds?'. So the print and the digital won't be vastly different, it will just be that with the digital, you'll be able to switch on and off features and kind of scan it in different useful ways, we hope. But it's also the case that we're now starting to get editors very near the end, very near submission time, and none of us really quite precisely know what the digital look is going to be like, because we're reliant on Bloomsbury's digital people, who we are not properly in conversation with, who are meant to come up with magic, but we haven't seen the magic yet!

ZL: I think being 'born-digital' doesn't mean that it's exclusively digital. It means that it begins digitally and the editions are completely created digitally so nothing needs to be digitised or transformed into digital. But it can be outputted in print as easily as it can be outputted digitally. So in that sense, that's what I understand 'born-digital' to mean. For instance, with introductions we are thinking of digital reading as an important aspect of readers' encounters with Arden 4, in a way that was not thought about obviously with Arden 3 when it began. So one of the things about the introduction we've stressed is kind of modular, short sections that can be read on a kind of dip-in and dip-out basis digitally, and should be clearly headed so that people know what each one is about, which also means they should be understandable individually rather than only in linear succession, though we also think that's how most people read print introductions anyway, so it works well for both modes. So that's an example of the 'born-digital', the way that it does affect, even though we do plan to have a printed Arden 4.

PH: And I think there's a very interesting case going on at the moment which is the New Variorum editions going digital, and trying to do things in their digital versions that the print couldn't do. I've been waiting for months now – they're well past their original date – for Richard Knowles magnificent *King Lear* to go digital because I need a magnifying glass I haven't got in order to read the print version: it's 2 thousand pages, and probably 2 million words. The size of the font is too small for me to read comfortably. It's as simple as that. So the sooner that goes digital the easier it will be on my eyes to make use of the resources that it offers. I don't know whether you've looked at the New Variorum website because it's a fascinating exploration of some of the things that might be possible when you've got a full-scale historical collation, something we're not remotely interested in. It's not as if we're moving in that direction, but how do you represent what the evidence of the collation history of the text is, and online you can do it rather differently.

3. *The Arden 3 editorial guidelines state that '[i]t is not necessary to follow the format of Arden 2. Indeed many readers are likely to be discouraged from reading the Introduction at all if it begins with daunting technical minutiae'. How might the Arden 4 Introductions begin and what will be the critical priorities of the volumes' surrounding materials*?

PH: One of the things I think Arden 3 never quite resolved, because it left things fairly open for individual editors to explore, was…there are editions in Arden 3 that make it difficult for the reader to find where in the introduction is the discussion of the date of the play. Without having necessarily a template which says, 'you begin with date, first publication, textual history' and so on, you don't have to do that, but you do have to make it easy for the readers to find the segments of the introduction they are interested in at any one moment. I don't believe anybody ever, other than in the act of proofing, reads an Arden Introduction from beginning to end, in a linear fashion. We go to it for segments, I mean, it's certainly what I do, and we want

to be inviting, so that when you start you might actually feel, 'yes, this person can write and I'm going to enjoy reading whatever I read of this'. It's locating the crucial elements that seems to me to be something that there is an obligation on all editors to make clear. I don't mind whether date comes near the beginning or near the end of the introduction but I want there to be a subheading that says the date of the play, so that I can find it because it's there on the Table of Contents page for the edition. I think that's the kind of thing that is of concern to me. Because of my own interests in performance I tend to resist a segment that is linear stage history, because I've never found the chronological narration of stage history across twenty pages to be able to say enough. It becomes vague and a series of dates and lead actors rather than an account of what is interesting in a particular production, but there has to be a way of representing that differently. I did that in the *Coriolanus* by having a Table of Principal Productions, and I can see people wanting to do something similar for this. But that's the kind of thing, it's 'how does somebody access the part of the introduction they want?'.

ZL: We're not planning any radical transformation of the introduction. Like Arden 3 I don't think we want the kind of Arden 2 style where the detailed discussion of textual matters is the first thing that you're likely to encounter. But that's already something Arden 3 did. It's not been an area where we've had huge discussions of transforming what's there.

PH: And it's a sign of the success of Arden 3, that we don't feel that in areas like that we need to have a radical solution just for the sake of having a radical solution. They changed the model and they did it damn well.

4. *Richard Proudfoot remarked in 1999 that 'it was the first Arden series that developed many of the features of design and layout best known to us today'. Looking back at the three Arden series, which particular qualities do you see as having stood the test of time*?

PH: Doesn't Arden 1 really derive from some of the things that the Furness Variorum was doing in terms of layout? Some of that goes back further to what the Globe edition and the Cambridge edition was doing earlier. My graduate students are always amazed to discover that nobody thought of putting in line numbers until the middle of the nineteenth century! And there's good reason why nobody bothered to do it until then, because suddenly people wanted to be able to access and cite text in a rather different way. So you need line numbers in order to identify where you are going, not just somewhere in a scene, especially if it's the last scene of *Love's Labour's Lost*. So that model is emerging out of multiple things and I don't know if Arden 1 has a kind of unique claim to certain features of that.

ZL: It's striking actually that most editions do not have text, commentary, and textual notes on the same page, though we kind of think of that as the Platonic ideal of a Shakespeare edition. Most texts don't actually have that. For me the key thing about the Arden that has lasted all this time and we certainly are continuing in our own way is that it's a series of individual editions of each play by different editors. And we really I would say are emphasising that in this series, by stressing that each editor must decide on their own what they're trying to reconstruct. The one parameter we put around this is that it does have to be an early modern goal, I mean they can't reconstruct a nineteenth-century *Hamlet* without Fortinbras. We want to have editions that do particular things within that parameter, and I think that's an expansion of that tradition of the Arden, which obviously other editions have as well, though not a lot of editions before Arden 1. Scholarly editions with each editor doing a play or the poems independently within a certain guideline.

PH: And that emphasis on scholarly editions stays crucial. As you know Oxford are now revamping the World's Classics series based on the New Oxford Shakespeare, so that Gary Taylor, Terri Bourus, and John Jowett's *Modern Critical Reference* Edition is the textual basis. If you look at that, look how light its annotation is. It's got some glossing annotation, some staging annotation as marginalia. It does it in a way that isn't consistent or coherent at times. In that respect it's quite like the RSC Shakespeare Complete Works, but that is going to now transfer into the Oxford single play editions, which in my understanding are going to have new introductions, but nothing extra in terms of the annotation. Arden 3, New Cambridge, and Stanley Wells's Oxford single-play series are very similar in having a kind of elaborateness of commentary, and we are absolutely committed to that. These are scholarly editions. In one sense what does that mean, it means not only does it make use of scholarship, but it is also usable by scholars, that it's not that thing called a student edition *tout court* because I don't find student editions – I look at a lot of student editions – but they don't often tell me things I don't know. I do find that Arden editions are always telling me things I didn't know, and however well I know a particular Arden edition I go back to it and I find more things I didn't know. That's the depth of its resourcefulness, and we want to be in that category. It doesn't mean the other is called something like 'dumbing down', it just has a limitation on the demographic of its readership that we're not interested in.

5. *Do you have any editions from the three Arden series that you are particularly fond of, or that you regard as crucial, and why*?

ZL: I would highlight Jenkins's Arden 2 *Hamlet* as a terrific one, of its moment but exemplary of that kind of scholarship. I greatly enjoyed the Ard3 *Hamlet* as well, and wrote about it in the epilogue to my *Hamlet* book because I think it is a very important edition — again, exemplary of its moment.

PH: There are crucial Arden 2s and 3s aplenty. As I think of the list just of 2s, I think of Kermode's *Tempest*, Muir's *Lear* and *Macbeth*, Brooks' *MND*, Brockbank's *Cor*, Foakes' *Errors* and *H8*, Hunter's *All's Well*, Jenkins' *Hamlet.* Most of the 3s have been and continue to be hugely important, too many to list. The ones that are crucial are also ones I am fond of. I don't think I can distinguish between them. Oh, one exception: I admit that Ridley's *Othello* was crucial to me and was the first Arden I owned - I used it when doing my A levels in 1967 - but I am not in the least fond of it for all the obvious reasons.

TS: As Peter makes clear, sometimes the Arden is important because it's wonderful, and sometimes because its timely … Jonathan Bates' Arden 3 Titus was really important for me – and was a truly novel edition – because it experimented with ways of thinking of multiple texts in one text. I was fascinated by the 'revision' movement and was very influenced by that ed. For the same reason, I (though not many other people) was fond of the Honigmann Arden 3 Othello – as I was fascinated by his thoughts about the appearing and disappearing willow song. I join the others in loving the Jenkins' Arden 2 Hamlet. And I feel obliged to mention the Arden 1 Much Ado by Grace Robartes Trenery. Is it splendid? No: but it's the first ever Arden (and the only one of its series) to be edited by a woman, so has a different kind of importance. Without her, maybe there wouldn't be me!

6. *What are the targeted readerships you have in mind for the fourth series and how does this differ from previous series*?

TS: It will be possible to access a more student friendly version of the Arden...

ZL: We're calling it 'brief'. 'Standard', and 'brief', precisely because we don't want to distinguish between student and scholar as if that determines the type of commentary that you might want. But we do want to distinguish between the 'standard', that is, everything you know of from Arden 2 and 3 mainly (Arden 1 was already a sort of different form of commentary). That's why we're calling it a 'standard' commentary, but we are asking editors to also produce a 'brief' commentary, which will be available in the digital version, toggling, if you prefer, to read the brief commentary. So that is a bit of an expansion of approach to Arden 3 as far as how we think you can reach the broad audience that the Ardens have always aimed to reach.

PH: And still crucially maintain what is characteristic of the brand, which is scholarly excellence. So you can't lose that, and we know that students – I know with my own students – can be put off by the extent of the commentary in an Arden edition as undergraduates, and especially in schools, and yet what that 'briefer' edition might do is to make the commentary less daunting, more accessible, more user-friendly if you like, whatever you want to use as the label, and especially if online you can simply toggle between the two, you can get the best of both worlds.

ZL: And still produced by all the same person. In other words, as part of a unified scholarly endeavour, not sort of spun off with just glossing or something as some editions have done.

7. *Ann Thompson has suggested that 'much larger changes in textual, critical and performance studies happened between Arden 2 and Arden 3 than seem to be happening between Arden 3 and 4'. How do you see the critical climate changing between the Arden 3 and 4 series*?

PH: Less than between Ardens 2 and 3. No Arden 2 to the best of my knowledge has a single photograph from a performance. We accept as normative now there will be a number of images of the play in performance, and it would be strange if an edition of a certain size didn't have space for photographs.

ZL: I see Ann's quotation. These things are very hard to quantify, probably most people will have a tendency to view the changes that happened during their career as being greater than others, so I don't know, I mean in some areas the changes have been greater in the last thirty years than in the previous thirty years, in other areas less.

TS: The demographic of Arden editors this time round will be really different from other times, and that means we're going to have parity women to men. We're going to have a range of people from different backgrounds, and so I think they'll all come with their much wider range of different thoughts. I think that's one thing. And then I think there have been kind of different critical moves since Arden 3 that are going to affect things, and one is: is anyone interested in attribution at all anymore? If New Oxford has killed it, and I think it has, then this sets up a whole different set of priorities for looking at a play, where maybe authorship isn't actually the thing. I mean I guess we're thinking more about occasion than authorship. I mean for myself, I think thinking in terms of actor's parts or different bits of text having different dates allows you to kind of analyse what a text is in the first place differently.

ZL: The Arden 3 you know put performance front and centre, but what it means by performance is something different from where we are now. I think Ann is primarily really thinking about textual criticism. I mean I do think in textual criticism there was a massive transformation between Arden 2 and Arden 3. I think that's part of why we are taking the

approach we are now, which is to say actually when Arden 3 began in 1990 probably with their first discussions it was just the beginning of that transformation. By the time it was ended it was quite deep into it, and we have the benefit of, a kind of post-revisionist textual criticism where we can assimilate a lot of (I think our editors *have* assimilated a lot of) that transformation, and can now reflect on what to take from it, and what to preserve from, say, Arden 2. I'd also say that there was a huge transformation in textual criticism, but if you look at Arden 3s, interestingly an area you really don't see anything much discussed is book history. I mean you see a discussion of the text, you don't see particular interest in circulation of plays in print in the way that we now do, though the general editors and editors were certainly doing that kind of work outside of the editions. So it hadn't yet seemed worthy of inclusion thinking about the people who produced the books.

PH: I'd add into that interest in adaptations, as something that was not seen as part of Shakespeare editions a while back. But increasingly one does want to talk about how has this play been adapted into other things, be it by being filmed, by being translated, by being relocated, all the kinds of transformation that adaptation can offer, and that is part of areas of interest for us now in a way that it wasn't before.

TS: That's true, and maybe off the back of that as well you want someone, if they're going to write a note about performance, not just to go to 'the RSC in 2003 did this', and we're saying ok, find out what happened in non-Anglophone countries, refer to completely other performances, know the performance world that's beyond the British establishment stage.

PH: And of course there are resources now that were impossible a few years ago through sites like MIT Global Shakespeare, like ASIA, the Asian Shakespeare Intercultural Archive, that make it possible to work on that material. I mean I taught a course last semester on Shakespeare and Asia with a colleague who is an expert on Chinese theatre, and we couldn't have done that without the MIT and ASIA sites, because our students could access those performances, in a way that would have been impossible without that, I mean they just didn't exist that kind of record. But get away from the idea that performance equals RSC and that's the end of it, just as we've got interested in global performance and global adaptation.

ZL: Remember the Arden 3, the first one is 1995 the last one is 2018. So it's hard to even say what's between the series, I don't know when Ann said that, but if she's making the comment in 2015, Shakespeare studies looks pretty different between 2015 and 2023 honestly. So who knows what it'll look like in 2033 when we'll certainly still be publishing editions, despite the dreams of Bloomsbury!

PH: I mean go back a few years, the idea that the RSC would make available video versions of every single Shakespeare play in at least one production, that didn't happen a few years ago! Or what's coming out of the Globe on Screen, what's coming out of Asian productions that are accessible, and are being subtitled for us. I remember the shock of discovering that when Mark Thornton Burnett explores work in languages that he certainly does not know and which aren't available in subtitled form, he could get them subtitled! I had no idea until I was talking with him that you could do that, at an affordable rate. Think how that just increases what you can know about, and that you *should* know about, that is part of an obligation to understand the breadth of performance history, the breadth of reception materials.

8. *Richard Proudfoot and Ann Thompson were determined to address the relative absence of women editors of Shakespeare by including a fair share of women among their commissioned*

editors. Now that the fourth series is in preparation, are there any other underrepresented groups that you would like to see as part of a culturally diverse team of Arden editors?

PH: Well, Sukanta Chaudhuri's *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which as I'm sure you know was a result of an earlier editor not completing the task, for a variety of reasons, Sukanta was the first scholar of colour to edit an Arden edition. We have a number of scholars of colour editing Arden editions. I would have been delighted if we had even more but, let's be clear, there aren't as many scholars of colour in Shakespeare studies who are ready to take on the demands of an Arden edition. There *will* be in a few years' time. I mean that is clearly one of the changes I'm watching in the US, in the changing demographic, if you like, of people in tenure-line positions in Shakespeare studies at US universities. We're doing everything we can, I mean we have had a number of really exciting people commissioned who *are* scholars of colour. We don't commission them *because* they're scholars of colour, we want to make sure that now we're 50-50 male and female, no we're not 50-50 white and scholars of colour but we've made strides beyond any other edition.

ZL: We actually have more women than men at the moment. I would say we've also tried to think carefully about another thing that feminist editors have raised, what plays are assigned to women, what plays are assigned to men. We've been pretty deliberate about that, and tried to think about that also with scholars of colour, that it's not simply the quote-unquote 'race plays' that scholars of colour edit, or that have questions of race in them. I mean that's a thing we've stressed to all editors, which I think is a huge transformation honestly, even from Arden 3. The idea that questions of race are not just for *Othello*, *Titus Andronicus*, and *Merchant of Venice*. I have to think about it with *Macbeth*. In what sense is *Macbeth* a play about race? What does race mean in the early modern period? How is Scotland depicted? These kinds of questions, in every play it will come up, in language as well as in character. So we've been very conscious of this the whole time that we've been commissioning. I think we have some really great pairings of editor and play, which is what we've been trying to think about, rather than just who's on our list of editors, kind of like, 'who can be an interesting person for this particular play?'

PH: And we're watching things happening in the theatre that deal with race that are really fascinating and complex. I don't mean just what used to be called non-traditional or in the UK colour-blind casting, but also what do you do with certain bits of language next. In a production we did here of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hermia couldn't call out Helena 'Fair Helena wither away' because 'fair' is being used as a positive marker by virtue of its whiteness. Perfectly easy thing for the text to change to 'dear Helena' or 'sweet Helena', there are easy things to be done. I've come across this in many, many theatre companies across the US and beyond where people are making those kinds of textual adjustments because they are recognising how raced the language can be. Sometimes it's about other words that become dangerous. The word 'niggard' is one that no actor in the US at the moment would want to be saying in case it is misheard. 'Be not niggard of your thanks' is a dangerous phrase to use, because somebody in the audience will mishear and will complain, and that's a problem. So there are ways in which we are dealing with race issues in Shakespeare and performance that we need to think about, because it affects, as Zack is saying, *all* the language, *all* plays, not just the plays that have a character of colour in them. And what colour is Cleopatra? Don't get me started! That could keep us occupied for months!

9. *In 2016 Valerie Traub observed that '[w]ithin early modern studies, a significant number of feminists have made it a point of principle to work on women writers or non-Shakespearean*

texts in order to render Shakespeare less central as the defining feature of the 'Renaissance". Do you see any tensions between certain contemporary critical frameworks and the practice of editing within an Arden Shakespeare series?

PH: We've talked about issues relating to gender and race identities. It raises questions over sexuality, and what do we mean by same sex relationships in the early modern period which cannot simply be determined by a late nineteenth / early twentieth century vocabulary. So that becomes an area of tension, and I think those tensions are *good* tensions, not fundamental and disabling tensions, they're tensions that are about an intelligent sensitivity to complexities of culture which all scholars ought to have whatever they're working on and it can't be different for Shakespeare. Because Shakespeare has been used as an instrument of oppression, doesn't mean he can't also be used as an instrument of rediscovery of individualities and identities. I mean that seems to me to be part of the process, so I find this is normative and I don't think it's different for Shakespeare except that Shakespeare is more visibly engaged in culture wars than perhaps some other people are. I think of the problems in Florida at the moment where it may be impossible under the current legislation to teach Shakespeare plays complete in schools because of censorship of issues to do with sex, never mind about sexuality. I mean can you teach *Romeo and Juliet*? If a parent complains its language is too – well I don't know what the modern word would be – too racy? Then you're liable to get into legal trouble. That's scary! As if schoolkids aren't interested in sex!

ZL: Everyone who's doing one of these Arden editions was excited to do it so maybe they don't feel that tension between working on Shakespeare as a canonical male author and working on women writers though we certainly have editors among the group who work on women writers and are feminist editors and have no issue. So maybe some of that conflict has died down or been reframed. I would say there's always a tension, and we think their own scholarship will come to bear in interesting ways on this particular play, and we tell them that also there are certain basic things they need to cover and it can't simply be their own monograph in edition form. I think that's also a productive tension. We think of each edition as a piece of scholarship and not a kind of mechanical exercise of editing, it's a work of scholarship and we want them to be creative and follow their scholarly interests but there's also certain things that have to be done. So that's a tension I think in any edition, particularly in an Arden edition which strives to be an individual piece of scholarship not controlled by us. I feel like a real tension we've maybe encountered occasionally and we have to talk through is people who really are committed to a kind of versioning idea of editing which is, I think, not an uncommon view in our field right now among people working on textual matters. That won't work for us, I mean if you're really committed to editing Q1 *Romeo and Juliet* as the Arden *Romeo and Juliet*, that's not where we're at. Or F *Romeo and Juliet* for that matter, that's not what we're asking people to do, and we've had to talk through that occasionally at a proposal stage. So I think that's a real tension in the field, which is about the future of editing.

PH: There's one other area I'd want to add in that is about the relationship of editing to one's academic career. There is a lack of understanding across universities and even in English departments about what kind of scholarship editing represents. I've served regularly on the Notre Dame Committee that reviews campus-wide cases for tenure and promotion to full, and I've often heard people even within the humanities say 'oh well it's just a student edition' when not only about Shakespeare work but about major editions in the classics. The understanding of what kind of abilities are involved and what kind of intellectual demands major editing projects place on an individual is no longer understood widely. I find that deeply troubling

because editing stretches me as a scholar far more than writing monographs, because it calls on too many different disciplines.

ZL: It affects who we can ask to do an edition or who'll say yes. Fewer and fewer tenure-line faculty. It's very hard to do this as a junior faculty member in the US because it won't count for your tenure. So we're looking for people who have gotten tenure but then that's a problem because the field has changed particularly in questions of diversity. If you look at the field of professors who have tenure compared to the field as a whole including professors who do not have tenure it looks quite different, in terms of race, in terms of gender, in all sorts of ways. So that is a tension in the academy, which has effects on us for sure. Not everyone's in an academic position. I don't know that Arden 3 would have hired someone who was not a professor in a tenured position frankly. I don't think they had any untenured faculty in Arden 3. That's something we aren't bound to, that we have not felt bound to, that someone is not in an academic position they can't do it. In that sense it's more like Arden 1, though I'm trying to think if we have anyone who's not currently in an academic position.

TS: We have people who don't have permanent jobs and have said to us 'look I'll do this, but it's possible that at a certain stage I will lose access to the useful digital sites that you get through a university'.

PH: I do find this – this is not about Arden it's about the whole question of scholarly editing – that the *failure* to understand it risks disabling the future well beyond Shakespeare, of scholarly editions of texts, and that's shocking. That's a real risk because it will not give people the academic standing that they have a right to gain from it. I mean when I was asked by Richard Proudfoot to edit for Arden 3 I was absolutely over the moon I had been asked to do something like edit an Arden edition. I mean it was an astonishing moment for me of confidence in me as a then comparatively early-mid-career scholar. If people are going to feel and be told by their mentors 'don't do it because it risks your future career prospects', because of the energy it involves and the lack of reward / prestige you will get from it, that's terrible.

ZL: I've been struck by how much that reaction is still there. We often ask people who generally have their first book at least very close to done for that reason.

10. *The New Oxford Shakespeare (2016-17) put in practice a range of attribution methodologies to make a series of important interventions in Shakespeare's canon of works. What influence can we expect this work to have on the editions produced for the Arden 4 series*?

Chris: You don't seem so keen on attribution!

ZL: Well, some of our editors may be, you know, and that's fine. We actually have discussed attribution as one of these areas -- there's different areas. Some of our editors will be less interested in performance, others will be less interested in book history, or detailed bibliographic work. I mean we have editors who are not really coming out of textual editing bibliography, and we have editors who are not coming out of performance, like me, and we tell them you have to get up to speed on those things, you have to be able to do them, but they don't have to be the heart of your edition. Everyone's edition can really focus on…but you have to cover these things, and I think attribution's in that area. I don't expect most of our editors are going to mainly be excited about attribution. But I'm doing *Macbeth* and I will engage with the question of who revised *Macbeth*, hopefully in some interesting ways but also in the 'some have argued this, and others have argued this' way. I'm not going to do my own massive

stylometric analysis or anything because I'm not particularly interested in that kind of thing. But I will cover the ground of what's been said, and I think inevitably once you start doing that, once you start trying to cover the basic ground you find things that interest you and you run with them. I'm sure that will be true of our editors who are not particularly interested in book history, but we'll say 'well you've got to at least think about the first quarto and who published it, and what it was doing and what it looks like', and people will find things once they start just even covering the basics. But I wouldn't say any of us are particularly thrilled about that area of work, so it's not front and centre for us like it is in the Oxford. I mean all the Oxford and Middleton stuff, you know, obviously that's the heart of those editions.

11. *The Arden 3 series included four extra plays in its list compared with Arden 2: Edward III, Sir Thomas More, The Two Noble Kinsmen, and Double Falsehood, or the Distressed Lovers. How do you look back at the Arden 3 interventions in the Shakespeare canon, and will the Arden 4 series seek to promote any further Shakespearean works to canonic rank*?

PH: There will be *Sir Thomas More*, there will be *Two Noble Kinsmen*, there will not be *Double Falsehood*, and there will not be *Edward III*. Is that 'right'? Well, we can argue the case every which way. I am pleased that there were Arden editions of *Edward III* and *Double Falsehood* but we did not feel that it was necessary to repeat that work. There wasn't something so fundamentally important about them that warranted their inclusion. Nor is there *Arden of Faversham*, which of course is by Thomas Kyd, but then everything's by Thomas Kyd at the moment, thank you Brian, or Sir Brian as he prefers to be known. I actually think that Richard did an amazing job with *Edward III*, it's a really fine piece of work.

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