SHAKESPEARE

THREE TRAGEDIES

HAMLET • MACBETH
ROMEO AND JULIET

Edited by Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine

THE NEW FOLGER LIBRARY SHAKESPEARE

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HAMLET

MACBETH

BY WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

EDITED BY BARBARA A. MOWAT AND PAUL WERSTINE

WASHINGTON SQUARE PRESS

New York London Toronto Sydney Singapore

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A Washington Square Press Publication
1230 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10020

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ISBN: 0-671-72261-1

First Washington Square Press printing February 2003

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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Cover design by Tom McKeveny
Cover art by Kinuko Y. Craft

Printed in the U.S.A.

THE NEW FOLGER LIBRARY SHAKESPEARE

Designed to make Shakespeare's great plays available to all readers, the New Folger Library edition of Shakespeare's plays provides accurate texts in modern spelling and punctuation, as well as scene-by-scene action summaries, full explanatory notes, and notes recording the most significant departures from the early printed versions.

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Barbara A. Mowat is Director of Academic Programs at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Executive Editor of *Shakespeare Quarterly,* Chair of the Folger Institute, and author of *The Dramaturgy of Shakespeare's Romances* and of essays on Shakespeare's plays and on the editing of the plays.

Paul Werstine is Professor of English at King's College and the Graduate School of the University of Western Ontario, Canada. He is general editor of the New Variorum Shakespeare and author of many papers and articles on the printing and editing of Shakespeare's plays.

The Folger Shakespeare Library

The Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington, D.C., a privately funded research library dedicated to Shakespeare and the civilization of early modern Europe, was founded in 1932 by Henry Clay and Emily Jordan Folger. In addition to its role as the world's preeminent Shakespeare collection and its emergence as a leading center for Renaissance studies, the Folger Library offers a wide array of cultural and educational programs and services for the general public.

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From the Director of the Library

For over four decades, the Folger Library General Reader's Shakespeare provided accurate and accessible texts of the plays and poems to students, teachers, and millions of other interested readers. Today, in an age often impatient with the past, the passion for Shakespeare continues to grow. No author speaks more powerfully to the human condition, in all its variety, than this actor/playwright from a minor sixteenth-century English village.

Over the years vast changes have occurred in the way Shakespeare's works are edited, performed, studied, and taught. The New Folger Library Shakespeare replaces the earlier versions, bringing to bear the best and most current thinking concerning both the texts and their interpretation. Here is an edition which makes the plays and poems fully understandable for modern readers using uncompromising scholarship. Professors Barbara Mowat and Paul Werstine are uniquely qualified to produce this New Folger Shakespeare for a new generation of readers. The Library is grateful for the learning, clarity, and imagination they have brought to this ambitious project.

Werner Gundersheimer,
Director of the Folger Shakespeare Library
from 1984 to 2002

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to the Huntington and Newberry Libraries for fellowship support; to King's College for the grants it has provided to Paul Werstine; to the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, which provided him with a Research Time Stipend for 1990–91; to R. J. Shroyer of the University of Western Ontario for essential computer support; to the Folger Institute's Center for Shakespeare Studies for its fortuitous sponsorship of a workshop on "Shakespeare's Texts for Students and Teachers" (funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities and led by Richard Knowles of the University of Wisconsin), a workshop from which we learned an enormous amount about what is wanted by college and high-school teachers of Shakespeare today; to Alice Falk for her expert copyediting; and especially to Stephen Llano, our production editor at Washington Square Press, whose expertise and attention to detail are essential to this project.

Our biggest debt is to the Folger Shakespeare Library—to Werner Gundersheimer, Director of the Library from 1984 to 2002, who made possible our edition; to Deborah Curren-Aquino, who provides extensive editorial and production support; to Peggy O'Brien, former Director of Education at the Folger and now Director of Education Programs at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, who gave us expert advice about the needs being expressed by Shakespeare teachers and students (and to Martha Christian and other "master teachers" who used our texts in manuscript in their classrooms); to Allan Shnerson and Mary Bloodworth for expert computer support;

to the staff of the Academic Programs Division, especially Rachel Kunkle (whose help is crucial), Mary Tonkinson, Kathleen Lynch, Carol Brobeck, Liz Pohland, Owen Williams, and Lisa Meyers; and, finally, to the generously supportive staff of the Library's Reading Room.

Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine

An Introduction to the Texts of This Edition

In this collection of *Three Tragedies* we reprint the single-volume editions of plays edited by Mowat and Werstine and published by Washington Square Press in 1992. These single-volume editions are based directly upon early printed texts of the plays—*Romeo and Juliet* on the quarto printed in 1599; *Hamlet* on the quarto of 1604–5, with additional passages from the text first printed in the 1623 collection of Shakespeare's plays now known as the First Folio; and *Macbeth* on the 1623 First Folio printing. While the texts and explanatory notes are the same in this collection of *Three Tragedies* (except for formatting) as in the 1992 single-volume editions, the single-volume editions contain fuller discussions of the relation of our texts to the early printed versions, along with more extensive textual notes; an introduction to Shakespeare's language; information about Shakespeare, his theater, and the publication of his plays; a list of further readings; illustrations drawn from the Folger's holdings of rare books; and an essay about the play. Readers interested in such matters are encouraged to consult the 1992 editions. In the present volume we offer accurate texts in modern spelling, full explanatory notes, and scene-by-scene action summaries.

For the convenience of the reader, we have in our editions modernized the punctuation and the spelling of the early printed texts. Sometimes we go so far as to modernize certain old forms of words;

for example, when *a* means *he,* we change it to *he;* we change *mo* to *more, ye* to *you,* and *god buy to you* to *goodbye* to *you.* But we have not modernized forms of words that sound distinctly different from modern forms. For example, when the early printed texts read *sith* or *apricocks* or *porpentine,* we have not modernized to *since, apricots, porcupine.* When the forms *an, and,* or *and if* appear instead of the modern form *if,* we have reduced *and* to *an* but have not changed any of these forms to their modern equivalent, *if.* We also modernize and, where necessary, correct passages in foreign languages, unless an error in the early printed text can be reasonably explained as a joke.

Whenever we change the wording of the early printed text or add anything to its stage directions, we mark the change by enclosing it in superior half-brackets (⌜⌝). (In *Hamlet,* which we base on Q2 [the quarto of 1604–5], with variants and additional passages from F [the 1623 Folio text], we also use two other forms of brackets—pointed parentheses (‹›) enclose all the words that are printed in F and not in Q2; square brackets ([]) mark off all the lines that are printed only in Q2 and not in F.) We want our readers to be immediately aware when we have intervened. (Only when we correct an obvious typographical error in the early printed text does the change not get marked.) Whenever we change the wording of an early printed text—as, for example, the 1604–5 quarto of *Hamlet*—we list the change in the textual notes that follow each play. In this edition, when we have simply corrected an obvious error, we do not list the change in the textual notes, nor do we list punctuation changes. (For more complete textual

notes, the reader is advised to consult the single-volume editions of the plays.)

In our editions, we regularize a number of the proper names, as is the usual practice in editions of Shakespeare's plays. For example, although *Hamlet*'s queen of Denmark is called "Gertrard" or "Gertrad" in the 1604–5 quarto, in our edition she is always designated "Gertrude," her name in the 1623 printing of the play and the name that has become familiar to readers and playgoers. In addition, we expand the often severely abbreviated forms of names used as speech headings in early printed texts into the full names of the characters. We also silently regularize the speakers' names in speech headings, using only a single designation for each character, even though the early printed texts sometimes use a variety of designations.

Our editions differ from some earlier ones in trying to aid the reader in imagining the play as a performance rather than as a series of actual or novelistic events. Thus stage directions are written with reference to the stage. For example, in 2.3 of *Macbeth*, instead of providing a stage direction that says "The Porter opens the gate," as many editions do, this edition has "The Porter opens the door." There may have been doors on Shakespeare's stages for the Porter to open, but almost certainly there were no gates. Whenever it is reasonably certain, in our view, that a speech is accompanied by a particular action, we provide a stage direction describing the action. (Occasional exceptions to this rule occur when the action is so obvious that to add a stage direction would insult the reader). Stage directions for the entrance of characters in mid-scene are placed so that they immediately precede the charac-

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ters' participation in the scene, even though these entrances may appear somewhat earlier in the early printed texts. We do not record these alterations in the position of stage directions in the textual notes. Latin stage directions (e.g., *Exeunt*) are translated into English (e.g., *They exit*).

In our editions, as well, we mark with a dash any change of address within a speech, unless a stage direction intervenes. When the *-ed* ending of a word is to be pronounced, we mark it with an accent. Like editors for the last two centuries, we print metrically linked lines in the following way:

BENVOLIO
Good morrow, cousin.
ROMEO Is the day so young?
(*Romeo and Juliet* 1.1.163–64)

However, when there are a number of short verse-lines that can be linked in more than one way, we do not, with rare exceptions, indent any of them.

The Explanatory Notes

The notes that appear directly after each playtext are designed to provide readers with the help that they may need to enjoy the play. Whenever the meaning of a word in the text is not readily accessible in a good contemporary dictionary, we offer the meaning in a note. Sometimes we provide a note even when the relevant meaning is to be found in the dictionary but when the word has acquired since Shakespeare's time other potentially confusing meanings. In our notes, we try to offer modern

synonyms for Shakespeare's words. We also try to indicate to the reader the connection between the word in the play and the modern synonym. For example, Shakespeare sometimes uses the word *head* to mean *source,* but, for modern readers, there may be no connection evident between these two words. We provide the connection by explaining Shakespeare's usage as follows: "**head:** fountain-head, source." On some occasions, a whole phrase or clause needs explanation. Then we rephrase in our own words the difficult passage, and add at the end synonyms for individual words in the passage. When scholars have been unable to determine the meaning of a word or phrase, we acknowledge the uncertainty.

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The Tragedy of

ROMEO AND JULIET

Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*

In *Romeo and Juliet,* Shakespeare creates a world of violence and generational conflict in which two young people fall in love and die because of that love. The story is rather extraordinary in that the normal problems faced by young lovers are here so very large. It is not simply that the families of Romeo and Juliet disapprove of the lovers' affection for each other; rather, the Montagues and the Capulets are on opposite sides in a blood feud and are trying to kill each other on the streets of Verona. Every time a member of one of the two families dies in the fight, his relatives demand the blood of his killer. Because of the feud, if Romeo is discovered with Juliet by her family, he will be killed. Once Romeo is banished, the only way that Juliet can avoid being married to someone else is to take a potion that apparently kills her, so that she is buried with the bodies of her slain relatives. In this violent, death-filled world, the movement of the story from love at first sight to the union of the lovers in death seems almost inevitable.

What is so striking about this play is that despite its extraordinary setting (one perhaps reflecting Elizabethan attitudes about hot-blooded Italians), it has become the quintessential story of young love. Because most young lovers feel that they have to overcome giant obstacles in order to be together, because they feel that they would rather die than be kept apart, and especially because the language that Shakespeare gives his young lovers is so exquisite, allowing them to say to each other just what we would all say to a lover if we only knew how, it is easy to respond to this play as if it were about all young lovers rather than about a particular couple in a very unusual

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