

NARRATIVE AND DRAMATIC SOURCES OF SHAKESPEARE

Edited by
GEOFFREY BULLOUGH

Volume VII
MAJOR TRAGEDIES:
HAMLET
OTHELLO
KING LEAR
MACBETH

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PREFACE

UNTIL a late stage in collecting material on the later plays of Shakespeare I hoped to get an adequate amount of it into one volume, but (as wiser friends forewarned me) this proved almost impossible, and it was decided, rather than 'scamp' the 'great' tragedies, to devote this volume to them and a final volume to the 'romances'. Consequently I am able to include here not only the obvious pieces but a number of minor analogues which may help to throw light on the plays and the conditions in which they were written. A particular feature of this volume, and of the next, is the suggestion that the plays were rather more topical than has sometimes been supposed, e.g. that the *Ur-Hamlet* may have been affected, if not prompted, by the negotiations for the marriage of James VI and Anne of Denmark, and that Shakespeare may have taken advantage of current political issues in his references to England and Poland as well as in Hamlet's adventure with the pirates. Moreover, I have ventured to supplement a suggestion made many years ago that the play-within-the-play contained elements originally derived from some account of the murder of Francesco Maria I, Duke of Urbino.

If it be thought that I have occasionally trespassed beyond my brief by giving material which is barely narrative or dramatic, I plead guilty but am not repentant. In the section on *King Lear* there is a chapter from S. Harsnett's *Declaration of Egregious Popish Impostures*, the importance of which has been shown by Professor Kenneth Muir. I wish that I could have given more, but I have restricted myself to one of the more 'narrative' parts of that clever piece of controversial writing.

So much has been written about these tragedies, especially in recent years, that the Bibliography (though only a small fraction of what it might have been) is longer than in previous volumes. I have separated the major from the minor sources and analogues of *Hamlet*, and listed the critical studies of minor sources,

etc., along with the texts. I have also inserted a section on the political and historical background of this play. For *Hamlet* and *Lear* I have also given a list of writings which, although not specifically concerned with sources, contain diverse ideas about Shakespeare's creative use of his materials.

I am grateful to the Council of the Malone Society for permission to use its edition of *The True Chronicle History of King Leir* as the basis of my text, and to the Scottish Text Society for permission to use (in slightly modernized form) an excerpt from *The Original Chronicle of Andrew of Wyntoun*, edited by F. J. Amours. As in previous volumes references to Shakespeare's plays are to the three-volume edition by W. J. Craig. Like many previous editors, I have made use of the late Oliver Elton's translation of *The First Nine Books of Saxo Grammaticus* (1894), and of H. Howard Furness's translation of *Der bestrafte Brudermord* (which I have revised somewhat). My debt to other scholars is incalculable, but I wish especially to thank the colleagues and friends who have sent me offprints or answered queries. These include Professors Vittorio Gabrieli of Rome and Piero Pieri of Turin, A. P. Stabler of Washington State University and Harold Fisch of Bar-Ilan, Mr K. Brown, Dr R. Freudenstein, Miss Emily Lyle, Sir Peter Noble and Mr Yngve Olsson. The librarians to whom I gratefully dedicate this volume include those at University of London King's College, Edinburgh University Library, the British Museum, and the National Library of Scotland.

NOTE ON THE ILLUSTRATIONS

1. Francesco Maria I, Duke of Urbino, from P. Giovio, *Elogia Virorum bellica Virtute illustrium*, 1575, p. 321.

Paolo Giovio (1483-1552), born at Como, was encouraged by Leo X to write a history of his own times. Falling out of favour with Paul III he retired to his birthplace, where he lavishly adorned his villa with antiquities and portraits of famous soldiers and men of learning. Among them was the portrait of Francesco Maria, painted by Titian not long before the Duke's death in 1538. Giovio wrote short biographies to accompany the portraits, which were engraved and first published in 1551.

2. The tree of Banquo's royal descendants, from John Leslie, *De Origine, Moribus, et Rebus Gestis Scotorum*, Rome, 1578, p. 260.

Leslie (1527-96), made Bishop of Ross in 1566, followed Queen Mary to England and was imprisoned before going to France in 1574. A doughty defender of his Queen against detractors such as Buchanan and Knox, he maintained her right (and James VI's) to succeed Queen Elizabeth on the English throne.

3. R. Holinshed, *The Chronicles of Scotland*, 1577 edn.

The small cuts reproduced on pp. 489, 491, 494 and 497 were not given in the 1587 edition. They were probably the work of Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder, who was living in London in 1576. Edward Hodnett regards the illustrations as 'the finest specifically designed for an English book before 1600, and among the most successful in an English book of any period'. (*Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder*, Utrecht, 1971, pp. 48-57.)

All these illustrations are taken from copies of the books in the National Library of Scotland, by kind permission of the Trustees.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

1. <i>Shakespeare's Works and Apocrypha</i>		PhT	<i>The Phoenix and the Turtle</i>
A&C	<i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	PPil	<i>The Passionate Pilgrim</i>
Ado	<i>Much Ado about Nothing</i>	R ₂	<i>King Richard the Second</i>
AFev	<i>Arden of Feversham</i>	R ₃	<i>King Richard the Third</i>
AShrew	<i>The Taming of A Shrew</i>	RJ	<i>Romeo and Juliet</i>
ATL	<i>As You Like It</i>	Son	<i>Sonnets</i>
CE	<i>Comedy of Errors</i>	TA	<i>Titus Andronicus</i>
Cor	<i>Coriolanus</i>	Tem	<i>The Tempest</i>
Cym	<i>Cymbeline</i>	TGV	<i>Two Gentlemen of Verona</i>
Ham	<i>Hamlet</i>	Tim	<i>Timon of Athens</i>
1H4	<i>Henry the Fourth, Part I</i>	TN	<i>Twelfth Night</i>
2H4	<i>Henry the Fourth, Part II</i>	TrC	<i>Troilus and Cressida</i>
H ₅	<i>Henry the Fifth</i>	TSh	<i>The Taming of The Shrew</i>
1H6	<i>Henry the Sixth, Part I</i>	VA	<i>Venus and Adonis</i>
2H6	<i>Henry the Sixth, Part II</i>	WT	<i>The Winter's Tale</i>
3H6	<i>Henry the Sixth, Part III</i>		
H8	<i>Henry the Eighth</i>		
JC	<i>Julius Caesar</i>		
KJ	<i>King John</i>	2. <i>Modern Editions and Other Works</i>	
LComp	<i>Lover's Complaint</i>	Arden	<i>The Arden Shakespeare (original)</i>
Lear	<i>King Lear</i>		
LLL	<i>Love's Labour's Lost</i>	Camb	<i>The New Cambridge edition, edited by J. Dover Wilson, A. Quiller-Couch, &c.</i>
Luc	<i>The Rape of Lucrece</i>	Coll	<i>Shakespeare's Library, ed. J. P. Collier</i>
Mac	<i>Macbeth</i>	Conf	<i>John Gower, Confessio Amantis</i>
MM	<i>Measure for Measure</i>	ELH	<i>English Literary History (Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore)</i>
MND	<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i>	ElSt	<i>E. K. Chambers, The Elizabethan Stage</i>
More	<i>Sir Thomas More</i>		
MV	<i>The Merchant of Venice</i>		
MWW	<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i>		
NobKin	<i>Two Noble Kinsmen</i>		
Oth	<i>Othello</i>		
Per	<i>Pericles</i>		

<i>EngHist Soc</i>	English Historical Society	<i>ShJb</i>	Jahrbuch der deutschen Shakespeare-Gesellschaft
<i>EngStud</i>	<i>Englische Studien</i>	<i>ShLib</i>	<i>Shakespeare's Library</i> , 6 vols. 2nd Edn. 1875, edited by J. P. Collier and W. C. Hazlitt
<i>E Studies</i>	<i>English Studies</i>	<i>ShQ</i>	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>
<i>FP</i>	<i>Fratricide Punished</i>	<i>Sh.Soc.</i>	<i>Transactions of the New Shakespeare Society</i>
<i>Hol.</i>	Holinshed's <i>Chronicles</i>	<i>SPhil</i>	<i>Studies in Philology</i>
<i>JEGP</i>	<i>The Journal of English and Germanic Philology</i>	<i>SpT</i>	<i>The Spanish Tragedy</i>
<i>Jest Books</i>	<i>Shakespeare Jest Books</i> , edited W. C. Hazlitt	<i>Sh Survey</i>	<i>Shakespeare Survey</i>
<i>Lee</i>	Sir Sidney Lee, <i>Life of Shakespeare</i>	<i>Texas</i>	<i>University of Texas Studies in English</i>
<i>MalSoc</i>	Malone Society Reprints	<i>TLS</i>	<i>The Times Literary Supplement</i> (London)
<i>MedSt</i>	E. K. Chambers, <i>The Medieval Stage</i>	<i>TR</i>	<i>The Troublesome Raigne of King John</i>
<i>MLN</i>	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>	<i>Var.</i>	<i>The New Variorum edition</i> , ed. H. H. Furness, &c.
<i>MLR</i>	<i>The Modern Language Review</i>	<i>WSh</i>	E. K. Chambers, <i>William Shakespeare</i> .
<i>MPhil</i>	<i>Modern Philology</i>	3. <i>Other Abbreviations</i>	
<i>New Arden</i>	The Arden Edition of Shakespeare (revised and reset)	<i>Arg</i>	Argument
<i>N&Q</i>	<i>Notes & Queries</i>	<i>Chor</i>	Chorus
<i>Oxf.</i>	The Oxford Edition of Shakespeare, text by W. J. Craig; Introductory Studies by E. Dowden	<i>Prol</i>	Prologue
<i>PhilQ</i>	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>	<i>Rev.</i>	Review
<i>PMLA</i>	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America	<i>F</i>	Folio edition
<i>RES</i>	<i>The Review of English Studies</i>	<i>n.d.</i>	No date
<i>SEL</i>	<i>Studies in English Literature</i> (Rice Institute)	<i>Q</i>	Quarto edition
		<i>S.R.</i>	The Stationers' Register
		<i>STC</i>	<i>A Short-Title Catalogue of Books printed . . . 1475-1640</i> (1950)

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HAMLET

INTRODUCTION

THERE were two major versions of *Hamlet* before the first Folio. On 26 July 1602 there was entered in the Stationers' Register to James Roberts 'A booke called the Revenge of Hamlett Prince Denmarke as yt was latelie Acted by the Lord Chamberlayne his servants'. Next year, after the accession of James I, appeared the first Quarto, 'The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke. By William Shakespeare. As it hath beenc diverse times acted by His Highnesse servants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Universities of Cambridge and Oxford, and elsewhere. At London printed for N.L. [Nicholas Ling] and John Trundell.' The second Quarto of 1604 was claimed to be 'Newly imprinted and enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie. Printed by J.R. [James Roberts] for N.L.'

The relationship between the three texts has puzzled editors and bibliographers, but it is now generally agreed that whereas Q₂ and F₁ are authentic texts approved by the King's Men, Q₁ was a pirated version based on memories of the play as performed either in full or in abridgment. The main reporter may have been the actor who played Marcellus and Lucianus. Greg believed that this busy man also played the ambassador Voltemar. The theory accounts for the difference between the perfect intelligibility of some parts of Q₁ and various degrees of imperfect reproduction found in others.

Q₂ is widely held to be a text based on Shakespeare's own 'foul papers' which were set up by two compositors having different habits. At times, when the manuscript was confusing owing to bad writing or interpolations, the compositors may have referred to a copy of Q₁.¹ The Q₂ manuscript was the 'author's final draft which had been handed to the company in

¹ A. Walker, 'The Textual Problem of *Hamlet*: A Reconsideration', *RES* n.s. II, pp. 328-38; J. M. Nosworthy, *Shakespeare's Occasional Plays*, 1965, Ch. 10.

all its untidiness'.¹ A fair copy of this would be made for the production, and this probably 'served as the Folio copy', with the omission of 225 lines and the insertion of others not in Q2. A copy of the printed Q2 itself was also used for F1, but to what extent is still debated.²

The Folio text is slightly shorter than Q2, and since *Hamlet* is an unusually long play (nearly 4,000 lines) F1 may represent the piece as it was performed by 1620. Most modern editions provided a 'maximum' text made up from Q2 and F1.

If Q1 was a pirated text, from what version of the play was it taken? The detailed analysis made by the late G. I. Duthie proves that 'practically everything in (Q1) depends upon the full Shakespearian text of Q2 or upon a stage version of that'.³ 'Practically everything'; but not everything, for there are remarkable differences between the two not explicable by a simple failure of verbal memory. Thus Polonius is called Corambis and his servant Reynaldo is Montano; the nunnery-scene is introduced earlier than in Q2, immediately after Corambis suggests that Ophelia be used to test Hamlet's madness; there is an important difference in the treatment of Gertrude, for at the end of the closet-scene she not only protests her innocence but promises to help her son get his revenge: 'I sweare by heaven I never knew of this most horride murder', and 'I vow . . . I will conceale, consent, and doe my best / What stratagem soe're thou shalt devise.' There is also a scene between the Queen and Horatio in which she is told of Hamlet's return to Denmark and says that she will help Hamlet by deceiving her husband. Moreover, although in Q1 Horatio says in that scene that he has had a letter from Hamlet 'Where as he writes how he escap't the danger', the letter is never read aloud, and Hamlet does not personally tell him (and the audience) the story of his voyage. Nor are the pirates mentioned. Horatio merely says:

Being crossed by the contention of the windes,
He found the Packet sent to the King of England . . .

¹ Nosworthy, *op. cit.* p. 139.

² A. Walker, *Textual Problems of the First Folio*, 1953, pp. 121-37; H. Jenkins, *Studies in Bibliography*, vii, pp. 69-83, xiii, 47n.; Nosworthy, *op. cit.* pp. 142-63.

³ G. I. Duthie, *The 'Bad' Quarto of Hamlet*, 1941, p. 273.

and that Hamlet will tell his mother all about it when they meet. We never see him doing so. Only the changing of the letter is briefly described, then 'He being set ashore, they went for England'. Some topical allusions are omitted from Q₁, e.g. in the discussion about the Players' leaving the city (Q₂, II.2).

These differences could be the result of abridgment and invention by actors or reporters—modern productions of Shakespeare have afforded ample evidence of changes equally sweeping. It is also possible that the version behind Q₁ differed from that represented in Q₂, and that the play underwent some revision by Shakespeare. I cannot enter here into this intricate problem, but I believe that the play was mainly written between 1598 and 1601, and that alterations were made, probably in 1601 or 1602.¹

The name Amlotha appears out of the mists of Icelandic antiquity in a quotation from the poet Snæbjorn preserved by Snorri Sturlason in his *Prose Edda* (c. 1230) referring to 'the Nine Maidens of the Island mill stirring the baleful quern of the Skerries, they who in ages past ground Amleth's meal'. This may allude to one of the riddling sayings of the hero Amleth who in Saxo Grammaticus fools the courtiers who when they are walking by the sea bid him 'look at the meal'—i.e. the sea-shore sand; whereupon the hero, pretending to be mad, replies solemnly 'that it has been ground small by the white waves of the sea'. It is possible therefore that there was a legend about an Amleth who assumed madness two or more centuries before his life story was told by the Dane Saxo Grammaticus at the end of the twelfth century, who was asked to write his *Danish History* by Archbishop Absalon of Lund, who died in 1201. First printed in 1514, *Historiae Danicae* had several editions at Basle and Frankfurt and was translated into Danish in 1575. An English version of the first nine books was made by Oliver Elton in 1894,² and this has been used for the present reprint [Text I].

As a collector of legends Saxo was to Denmark what Geoffrey

¹ Cf. J. D. Wilson, *Camb.*, pp. xix-xxii: 'Shakespeare may first have handled the play sometime after Lodge's reference of 1596 and then revised it in 1601.' E. K. Chambers, *WSH*, i, p. 423, thought that it was written between 1598 and 'the death of Essex in February, 1601'. Cf. also the discussion in Duthie, *op. cit.* pp. 78-84.

² *The First Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus*, trans. by Oliver Elton, 1894; excerpts in I. Gollancz, *The Sources of Hamlet*, 1926.