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Patrick Cheney
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Introduction:
'Printless foot': finding Shakespeare

Toward the end of *The Tempest*, Prospero lets slip the enigmatic phrase 'printless foot' during his famous valedictory speech on the theatricality of magic art. In doing so, he speaks deftly to the fundamental paradox about Shakespeare's authorship addressed in this book: that William Shakespeare would produce a dramatic art on the early seventeenth-century London stage written through with a discourse of print culture.

Prospero's speech has long been recognized to derive from Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where the witch Medea addresses Hecate and other demons of the night, as she gathers herbs when preparing to reverse the aging process of her father-in-law, Aeson. Prospero's incantation begins,

> Ye elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves,
> And ye that on the sands with printless foot
> Do chase the ebbing Neptune, and do fly him
> When he comes back; you demi-puppets that
> By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make.
> (*The Tempest* 5.1.33–7)

Here Shakespeare presents his dramatic artist-figure self-consciously imitating the author of a printed poem from antiquity, yet he represents the metaphysical agents invoked, those elvish spirits of nature, as theatrically performing the invisible action of their own erasure. Effectively, Prospero's 'demi-puppets' dance on the sands with 'printless foot'.

Prospero's speech has been widely discussed, but, to my knowledge, never in quite these terms. Scholars agree that Shakespeare carefully imitates Ovid, both the original Latin and Arthur Golding's 1567 translation, relying on paraphrase and on improvization, in the process turning up his 'most sustained Ovidian borrowing'.[1] While inescapably Prospero's valediction to

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[1] J. Bate, *Shakespeare and Ovid* 249.

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magic continues to be identified as Shakespeare's farewell to the theatre, I wish to draw attention to three neglected features as points of entry for the present discussion (we shall return to the speech at the end of chapter 2). First, while the opening line invoking the 'elves of hills, brooks, standing lakes, and groves' fairly accurately renders the corresponding line in both Ovid and Golding, the next four lines form Shakespeare's invention.[2] According to Jonathan Bate, the 'earlier part of [Prospero's] … speech seems to be a lightening of the [Ovidian] original: the playful spirits chasing the tide as it ebbs and running from it as it comes back are like children on the beach' (251). Second, the most striking set of terms for Shakespeare's improvization, 'printless foot' and 'demi-puppets', elegantly evokes and brings into conjunction the 'two different and in some sense fundamentally opposed forms of production [in Shakespeare's professional career]: theatrical performances and printed books'.[3] Third, Shakespeare presents Prospero conjoining theatre and book in an unusual yet precise formulation, first using language to erase the evidence of print, as the elves chase the ebbing ocean with 'printless foot', and then drawing attention to the agency of performance, as the elves 'make' their fairy rings in the moonlight.

While modern editions of *The Tempest* recognize the 'theatrical overtone' of 'demi-puppets',[4] annotation on 'printless foot' remains scant. For instance, John Dover Wilson, Frank Kermode, Anne Barton, Stephen Orgel, and David Lindley do not provide any gloss at all. In their Arden 3 edition, Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan usefully gloss the phrase as 'leaving no print or trace (first occurrence in *OED a*.). Because the elves are not corporeal, they leave no footprints. Cf. *VA* 147–8, where nymphs dance on the sands without leaving footprints' (ed. 265). In *Shakespeare's Words*, David Crystal and Ben Crystal gloss 'printless' as simply 'making no print, leaving no trace', citing *The Tempest*.[5]

Similarly, criticism on 'printless foot' in recent important discussions of Prospero's speech remains negligible. Bate can label the speech an 'extremely skilfully managed … piece of Renaissance imitation' but neglect it as a model of Shakespearean authorship, instead emphasizing the 'deeply disturbing' collision between 'pagan' and 'Christian' systems of ethics (251–3). In a follow-up to Bate, Raphael Lyne does transpose Prospero's speech to

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[2] Golding translates Ovid's Latin ('auraeque et venti montesque amnesque lacusque') as 'Ye Ayres and windes: ye Elves of Hilles, of Brookes, of Woods alone' (7.197). As we shall see, in 1839 Maginn first noticed the presence of two words not accounted for in either Golding or Ovid (Furness, ed. *Temp* 235): 'elves' and 'alone'.

[3] Bristol, *Big-Time Shakespeare* 30.

[4] Orgel, ed., *Temp* 189.

[5] Crystal and Crystal, *Shakespeare's Words* 346.

Shakespeare's authorship, suggesting that the most disturbing anomaly, Prospero's sudden evocation of black magic, might show the playwright confidently 'putting Ovid in his place' – that is, 'renouncing' Ovid's *literary* magic *in his poetry*. Yet Lyne skips over both 'printless foot' and 'demi-puppets', and thus misses the specific professional context for Shakespeare's allusive Ovidian speech.[6] For, as the Vaughans report, the *OED* cites *The Tempest* as the first use of the word 'printless', suggesting that it might be not simply rare in English but a Shakespearean coinage, with only two other examples cited, the first by Milton in *Comus*, clearly indebted to Shakespeare: 'Whilst from off the waters fleet / Thus I set my printless feet / O'er the Cowslip's Velvet head' (896–8).[7] This brief history helps mark the word 'printless', in conjunction with 'demi-puppets', as a rather fine metonym for the peculiar early modern signature that I call 'Shakespeare's literary authorship'.

More specifically, the emergence of the word 'printless' at the very time that print culture is becoming established, along with the way 'printless' modifies the word 'foot', encourages us to view Shakespeare's phrase in terms not simply of print culture but more precisely of printed poetry. According to Stephen Hinds, 'Few word-plays are more familiar in Latin poetry than the one between the bodily and metrical senses of the word *pes* [foot]'.[8] Shakespeare's use of 'printless foot' in a speech clearly revising his favorite (Latin) author evokes print poetry and manifestly erases it. Especially when juxtaposed with 'demi-puppets', 'printless foot' comes to stand for an unusual phenomenon neglected in modern Shakespeare scholarship: an invisible poetic authorship produced within the London commercial theatre.

Thus, Shakespeare puts the representation of printed poetry into immediate conjunction with staged theatre, as if to draw attention to the material conditions of his own authorial predicament: he is the consummate 'man of the theatre' paradoxically engaged with the art of print-poetry.[9] While some might take the peculiar form of the conjunction between poetic book and performed theatre to verify Shakespeare's standing as an arch-theatrical man eschewing print along with poetry, I shall argue to the contrary: Shakespeare's authorial representation brings theatre decisively into play with printed poetry, inventing arguably his most enduring (yet today, perplexing) legacy. The self-conscious character of the representation might lead us to classify Shakespeare's seminal English authorship as fundamentally (but never merely) 'literary', and further, to locate printed books, the art of poetry, and staged theatre as historic components of the Shakespearean literary imaginary.[10]

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[6] Lyne, 'Ovid, Golding and the "rough magic" of *The Tempest*' 160–1. See also Barkan, *Gods Made Flesh* 288; S. A. Brown, *Metamorphoses of Ovid* 70–6; Baldwin, *William Shakspere's Small Latine and Lesse Greeke* 2: 448–51.

[7] Neither Early English Books Online (EEBO) nor the Chadwyk-Healy database for poetry, drama, and prose records an earlier use of the word 'printless' than that in Shakespeare's late romance.

[8] Hinds, *Metamorphoses of Persephone* 16. Hinds cites Ovid, *Met* 5.264, *Am* 3.1.8, *Tr* 1.1.15–16; Catullus, *Odes* 14.21–3; and Horace, *Ars poetica* 80. While Ovid did not invent the pun, his wide use of it might have led Shakespeare to attach 'Ovidian' significance to it. For the concept of *ebbing verse*, see *WT* 5.1.101–3.

[9] The phrase 'man of the theatre' comes from (e.g.) *The Oxford Shakespeare* (xxxvi). In an important 1986 essay, Levin identifies the major accomplishment of the twentieth century: 'Our century … has

THE CRITICAL CONTEXT: AUTHORSHIP ON 'PAGE' AND 'STAGE'

Prospero's discourse of 'printless foot' and 'demi-puppets' bridges a historic divide in Shakespeare studies: between what we might call *theatre criticism* and *bibliographical criticism*. Theoretically, these two forms of criticism seem to have little to do with each other, for indeed the expertise required for each tends to be quite different. Theatre criticism is more diverse and complex, but those who practice it tend to be concerned with questions of theatre history, with performance, with metatheatre, and thus with viewing Shakespeare as a consummate playwright, actor, and shareholder in the Chamberlain's Men and later the King's Men, committed to the new economy of the London commercial theatre.[11] In contrast, the much more recent bibliographical criticism, not as diverse but nonetheless complex, tends to focus on the history of the book, on print culture, and on a material model of cultural collaboration that underwrites the production of printed books by William Shakespeare.[12]

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restored our perception of him to his genre, the drama, enhanced by increasing historical knowledge alongside the live tradition of the performing arts' ('Critical Approaches to Shakespeare from 1660 to 1904' 228).

[10] I derive this latter concept in response to Montrose, 'Spenser's Political Imaginary', subsequently central to his *The Subject of Elizabeth*.

[11] See Gilbert, 'Performance Criticism'; and its companion piece, Tastpaugh, 'Performance History'. On metatheatre, see Dubrow, 'Twentieth-Century Shakespeare Criticism' 41. By grouping metatheatre with performance, I am yoking two potentially separate forms of criticism in order to emphasize a broader, shared branch devoted exclusively to Shakespearean drama.

[12] A recent issue of *Shakespeare Quarterly* opens with a superb model of this criticism: Stallybrass, Chartier, Mowery, and Wolfe, 'Hamlet's Tables and the Technologies of Writing in Renaissance England'. This form of criticism is so new that it does not show up in *An Oxford Guide*, ed. Wells and Orlin, which inventories twelve forms of criticism, ranging from 'Humanist Interpretations' to 'Performance Criticism'. The ninth form, 'Materialist Criticisms', discusses only the 'three most influential strands – Marxism, new historicism, and cultural materialism'; see Harris, 'Materialist Criticisms' 472. In settling on the term 'bibliographical' to designate this broad form of criticism, in part to offset theatre criticism, I am grateful for conversations with Lukas Erne.

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Despite differences with theatre criticism, bibliographical criticism nonetheless grows out of, bonds itself with, and remains complicit in the dominant twentieth-century model of Shakespeare as 'the working dramatist'.[13] In the words of one of its leading practitioners, 'Shakespeare had no obvious interest in the printed book. Performance was the only form of publication he sought for his plays.'[14] In its emphasis on collaboration and the material production of art, bibliographical criticism thus joins theatre criticism not simply in denying the status of 'author' to William Shakespeare but in rejecting the 'literary' as a category.[15]

For the majority of critics today, the divide between theatre and bibliographical criticism may exist in practice (as perhaps in training), but during the past few years a new field has sought to cross the divide: 'stage-to-page' criticism. According to a recent practitioner, 'As a movement … the stage-to-page field, combin[es] … theatre history and book history, reaching towards a "Shakespeare" defined by multiple contexts rather than authorial intention … [This] critical movement … concentrates not on "Shakespeare" the individual author but on the collaborative, multilayered, material, historical world that fashioned the Shakespeare canon.'[16] As this formulation makes clear, stage-to-page criticism joins bibliographical and theatre criticism in benefiting from recent historicism to respond to the traditional model of Shakespeare famously articulated by Milton in *L'Allegro*: 'sweetest Shakespeare, fancy's child', 'Warbl[ing] … his native Wood-notes wild' (133–4). Recent historical criticism in all three forms – theatre, bibliographical, page-to-stage – rightly resists this *poetic* view of Shakespeare for being fanciful and thus unhistorical.

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[13] Greenblatt, ed., *Norton* 1.

[14] Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Book* 6. Kastan voices the received wisdom; see *Pelican Shakespeare*, ed. Orgel and Braunmuller 1; J. Bate, ed. 97. For other important bibliographical criticism, see Orgel, 'What Is a Text?'; de Grazia and Stallybrass, 'Materiality of the Shakespearean Text'; Maguire, *Shakespearean Suspect Texts*; Blayney, 'Publication of Playbooks'; Masten, *Textual Intercourse*; Murphy, ed., *Renaissance Text*, and *Shakespeare in Print*. One origin lies in McKenzie, 'Printers of the Mind'.

[15] On how bibliographical criticism differs from performance criticism, see Kastan 6–9; for his critique of the 'literary' as a category, see esp. 14–49. However, on how 'the autonomy of the author and of the work are the most celebrated casualties of the newer historical criticism', see Keilen, *Vulgar Eloquence* 8, including a spirited defense of the 'literary' (esp. 4–12).

[16] Stern, *Making Shakespeare* 5–6. Stern cites two 'recent books' as 'principal' instigators of the new field: *New History of Early English Drama*, ed. Cox and Kastan; *A Companion to Shakespeare*, ed. Kastan. Two older books (cited by Orgel, 'What Is a Text?' 83) are Honigmann, *The Stability of Shakespeare's Text*; Bentley, *Profession of Dramatist in Shakespeare's Time*. More recently, see Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance*; Weimann, *Author's Pen and Actor's Voice*; D. A. Brooks, *From Playhouse to Printing House*.

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The present book joins an even newer, or fourth field of criticism; this field acknowledges the revisionist principle of social collaboration in the production of Shakespeare's plays but simultaneously grants *individuated literary authorship* to 'Shakespeare' himself. No doubt the origins trace to the early and mid-1990s; in Richard Helgerson's succinct formulation, Shakespeare 'helped make the world that made him'.[17] Louis Montrose is more specific when discussing Edmund Spenser, in a thrilling indictment of Michel Foucault, who powerfully advanced Roland Barthes's 'death of the author' with the concept of the 'author function':[18]

> Foucault's own anti-humanist project is to anatomize the subject's subjection to the disciplinary discourses of power. I find this aspect of Foucault's social vision – his apparent occlusion of a space for human agency – to be extreme. In other words, my intellectual response is that his argument is unconvincing, and my visceral response is that it is intolerable.[19]

Montrose does not 'seek to restore to the individual the illusory power of self-creation'; nor does he wish to 'remystify the social production of the text, to reassert its status as an expression of the autonomous author's singular creative genius'. Rather, 'Any meaningful response to Foucault's provocative concept of the "author function" will commence, not by rejecting it, but rather by expanding and refining it, by giving greater historical and cultural specificity and variability both to the notion of Author and to the possible functions it may serve' (92). Like many critics today, Montrose rejects the exaggeration of Foucault's model of 'social construction', calling for a model that allows for the author's individual agency.

While Montrose does not specify the details, among Shakespeare critics Michael Bristol most lucidly crystallizes what we might call a post-revisionist model of authorship:

> Authorship need not be understood as a sovereign and proprietary relationship to specific utterances. It is perhaps more fully theorized in terms of dialogue and ethical sponsorship. The author is both debtor and trustee of meaning rather than sole proprietor; authority is always ministerial rather than magisterial. (Bristol, *Big-Time Shakespeare* 58)

According to Bristol, 'Shakespeare labored in his vocation at the selection, composition, and verbal articulation of scripts intended for production in the theatre. But Shakespeare did not work in conditions of sovereign independence and artistic isolation … He was in continual dialogue with other writers, including both his literary sources and his immediate contemporaries.' Thus, Bristol concludes that 'Shakespeare's vocation can … be interpreted both as the practice of a craft and as the production of a commodity in the context of a nascent show business' (58).

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[17] Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood* 215.
[18] See Barthes, 'Death of the Author'; Foucault, 'What Is an Author?'
[19] Montrose, 'Spenser's Domestic Domain' 92.

To my knowledge, we have not improved upon Bristol's formulation, which carefully embeds Shakespeare's 'authorship' in the material culture of his time yet grants to him a 'vocation' that is 'literary', dependent on 'dialogue with other writers', both those in his own literary system (such as Spenser and Christopher Marlowe) and those in systems other than his own (such as Virgil, Ovid, Petrarch, and Chaucer). While Bristol's phrasing inclines toward a social construction of the author, he makes possible a criticism that grants authorial individuation. In today's post-revisionist climate, perhaps we need no longer fear attending to the agency of the author, as long as we allow for his social embededness.[20]

In *Troilus and Cressida*, Shakespeare seems to anticipate a post-revisionist model of authorship, when Achilles asks Ulysses, 'What are you reading?' (3.3.95), and Ulysses reports on the contents of his book, twice using the theatrical concept of the actor's 'part':[21]

> A strange fellow here
> Writes me that man, how dearly ever parted,
> How much in having, or without or in,
> Cannot make boast to have that which he hath,
> Nor feels not what he owes, but by reflection;
> …
> I do not strain at the position –
> It is familiar – but at the author's drift,
> Who in his circumstance expressly proves
> That no man is the lord of any thing,
> Though in and of him there be much consisting,
> Till he communicate his parts to others.
> (*Troilus and Cressida* 3.3.95–117)

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[20] In *Patterns of Intention*, Baxandall writes of 'posited purposefulness' for visual artists: 'The account of intention is not a narrative of what went on in the painter's mind but an analytical construct about his ends and means, as we infer from them the relation of the object to identifiable circumstances' (109; used by Montrose, *Subject of Elizabeth* 257n8). In Shakespeare studies, the assignment of intentionality requires that we rely on bibliographical scholarship to determine as accurately as possible that indeed Shakespeare wrote a given passage, and not, say, George Peele, or that his text is not affected in a substantive way by a compositor or other collaborative agent.

[21] On the word 'part' in Shakespeare's acting vocabulary, see *SNPP* 120, 123–4, 141, 170.

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We do not know who the 'strange fellow' or 'author' is (Plato has been the main candidate), and the topic being discussed is the nature of perception – 'that the eye could not see itself except by reflection'[22] – but the 'drift' that Ulysses reads into his author's text bears usefully on the question of authorial agency. Especially in the last three lines, Ulysses anticipates a post-revisionist model when he locates agency in the reciprocity between self and other: 'man' cannot own (be 'lord of') 'any thing', 'though' he himself possesses much value ('consisting').[23]

As illustrated in Ulysses' phrase 'author's drift', Shakespeare occasionally uses the word 'author' and its cognates in his works: a total of twenty-four times, across both poems and plays, from the beginning of his career to the end. Half of these instances appear to refer to a nonliterary cause or agency, as when Ursula in *Much Ado about Nothing* says, 'Don John is the author of all' (5.2.98–9), meaning the cause of the civic turmoil in Messina.[24] But the other half of the instances clearly refer to a literary 'author' – whether the author of a printed book, as in Ulysses' phrase, or the author of a staged play, as in the final Chorus to *Henry V*: 'Thus far, with rough and all-unable pen, / Our bending author hath pursu'd the story' (Epilogue 1–2). As such, Shakespeare's own definition of authorship is divided, not merely between the conceptual and the literary (the causal and the creative), but between the print-author and the play-author. As we shall see, even though Shakespeare uses the word 'author' to emphasize a character's agency and intention, inside his fictions he tends to represent authorship itself more obliquely. In effect, his works stage a historic dialogue about the meaning of the 'author'; in the process, they open up a story about Shakespearean literary authorship itself.

The leading spokesman for the post-revisionist 'return of the author' in Shakespeare criticism has become Lukas Erne.[25] Erne's groundbreaking 2003 monograph, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist*, relies on post-revisionist notions of authorship to resist the conclusions of bibliographical, theatre, and stage-to-page criticism, and thus to find space for the individuated literary author:

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[22] Muir, ed. 126.

[23] In *Shakespeare and the Poets' War*, Bednarz uses the Ulysses speech to identify Shakespeare's theory of 'authorial self-reflection' (264), in opposition to Jonson's theory (51; see 263). In *Censorship and Sensibility*, Shuger also selects Ulysses' speech to illustrate the social character of subjectivity in early modern identity: 'for early modern persons identity was, and was felt to be, relationally constructed. Selfhood – one's sense of identity and value – seems, that is, to have been experienced as radically dependent on the image of oneself seen in the eyes of others' (160).

[24] In chapter 6, I show the extent to which the details of *Much Ado* encourage us to see Don John as a 'literary' author; this villain dangerously rejects poetry in favor of theatre.

[25] The phrase 'return of the author' comes from the title of the conference held in 2004 at the University of Leicester, which aimed to create a dialogue between Erne and editors of the *Oxford Shakespeare*, Wells and Taylor. The conference was organized by Richard Wilson. The dialogue between recent authorship criticism and theatre criticism is complicated; for instance, Wells discusses the nineteenth- and twentieth-century division over seeing *King Lear* as 'a work of literature' or as 'an actable drama',

> Shakespeare, 'privileged playwright' that he was, could afford to write plays for the stage *and* the page … From the very beginning, the English Renaissance plays we study had a double existence, one on stage and one on the printed page … Printed playbooks became respectable reading matter earlier than we have hitherto supposed, early enough for Shakespeare to have lived through and to have been affected by this process of legitimation … The assumption of Shakespeare's indifference to the publication of his plays is a myth.[26]

By seeing Shakespeare as a 'literary dramatist' composing scripts *both* for performance *and* for publication within his own moment, Erne constructs a historical model that coalesces the best energies of poetical, theatrical, and bibliographical criticism; most emphatically, he alters 'stage to page' to 'stage *and* page'.

As one of Erne's forerunners, Julie Stone Peters, puts the case rather forcefully in her 2001 *Theatre of the Book*,

> The printing press had an essential role to play in the birth of the modern theatre at the turn of the fifteenth century. As institutions they grew up together … In the English-speaking world, Shakespeare's career has helped to produce one of those enduring lies so convenient to the history of progress: that Renaissance dramatists were unconcerned with the circulation of their work on the page; that the press kept aloof from the stage and the early stage kept aloof from the press. But nearly a century before Shakespeare was born, there began, in fact, to develop a relationship that would help create the theatre for which he wrote. Printing, far from being marginal to the Renaissance theatre, was crucial at the outset … Drama was understood to play itself out in two arenas – on the stage and on the page.[27]

Following the historical and bibliographical research of Peters and Erne, criticism is starting to abandon the simplicity of either a strictly theatrical or a strictly bibliographical criticism, or even page-to-stage criticism, in an attempt to render more accurately the relationship between the two media in the early modern era. During the past five years, a sobering piece of

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to offer a model both related to and different from the one presented here: '*King Lear* has come to be seen as the height of its author's achievement as a dramatist and as a poet: a poetic drama whose poetry can be fully apprehended only through performance' (ed., *KL* 2–3).

[26] Erne, *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* 20, 23, 25–6. As a major progenitor of his project, Erne cites Berger, *Imaginary Audition*, who aims to demonstrate the way in which the language of Shakespeare's plays demands a literary interpretation. In 'Shakespeare for Readers', Erne supports his argument for viewing 'Shakespeare's rise to prominence as print-published dramatic author' (MS 1) by discussing stage directions in the early printed texts as sites 'where we may … hope to observe him speaking in his own voice' (MS 8).

[27] Peters, *Theatre of the Book* 1–8.

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news has awakened some from the pleasures of performance intoxication: if we seek historical accuracy, no longer can we separate theatre from book, performance from print, in criticism on William Shakespeare.[28]

While embracing Erne's and Peters's post-revisionist model, I suggest nonetheless that the formulation of a 'literary dramatist' is not quite accurate, since it remains unconsciously circumscribed by the 'dramatic' terms of the previous phases, and thus neglects to account for the five freestanding poems that this author saw published during his own lifetime.[29] In 1593 and 1594, Shakespeare published two Ovidian narrative poems, complete with dedicatory epistles to the Earl of Southampton: *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. By 1599, Shakespeare's reputation as a nondramatic author was so marketable that William Jaggard, who in 1623 would bring out the First Folio of the plays, printed *The Passionate Pilgrim*, whose title page falsely ascribed the collection of lyric poems to 'W. Shakespeare'. Then in 1601 Shakespeare himself contributed a 67-line philosophical hymn, known today as 'The Phoenix and Turtle', to Robert Chester's *Love's Martyr*, which also printed poems by Ben Jonson, John Marston, and George Chapman. Finally, in 1609 *Shake-speares Sonnets* appeared, printing both the Sonnets and a third narrative poem, *A Lover's Complaint*, although we still do not know whether Shakespeare authorized the volume or not. In 1640, when John Benson printed the first collected edition of Shakespeare's *Poems*, modeled carefully on the Folio plays, he suggested that the 'excellent and sweetly composed poems' deserve 'proportionable glory' with the plays. Benson even intimates that only the author's 'death' (*2^r) prevented Shakespeare from publishing his poems in a volume companionate with the plays.[30]

Ever since Charles Gildon in 1710, critics have been trying to account for the fact that the world's most famous playwright ended up producing a

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[28] In 'Shakespeare and the Bibliophiles', Nelson recently surveys book owners of Shakespeare's poems and plays before 1616: 'I conclude, against the grain of much modern criticism, that Shakespeare's poems and plays ought to be approached, if we are to respect history, not as documents of politics, theology, religious controversy, philosophy, or anthropology, but as "poesy": that is to say, as objects of delight, as verbal and dramatic art, as – dare I think it? – English Literature' (70). In a personal communication, Lawrence Manley reminds me that in 1602 the Countess of Bridgewater's library included 'Diuers Playes by Shakespeare', as recorded in the inventory supplied by Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England*, who comments: 'Perhaps a volume in which diverse separate quartos were bound together, the first of which was printed in 1602' (266; see 248–9).

[29] Recently, Erne has mended this breach; see 'Print and Manuscript'.

[30] On Benson, and for chapters on all five poems and *The Passionate Pilgrim*, see *SNPP* (on the question of the Sonnets' authorization, see ch. 8).