

HAMLET

The third edition of *Hamlet* offers a completely new introduction to this rich, mysterious play, examining Shakespeare's transformation of an ancient Nordic legend into a drama whose philosophical, psychological, political, and spiritual complexities have captivated audiences world-wide for over 400 years. Focusing on the ways in which Shakespeare reimagined the revenge plot and its capacity to investigate the human experiences of love, grief, obligation, and memory, Heather Hirschfeld explores the play's cultural and theatrical contexts, its intricate textual issues, its vibrant critical traditions and controversies, and its history of performance and adaptation by celebrated directors, actors, and authors. Supplemented by an updated reading list, extensive illustrations, and helpful appendices, this edition also features revised commentary notes explicitly designed for the student reader, offering the very best in contemporary criticism of this great tragedy.

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HAMLET, PRINCE OF DENMARK

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HEATHER HIRSCHFELD

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PHILIP EDWARDS



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PREFACE

One of the consequences of the enduring, and global, appeal of *Hamlet* is the nearly limitless commentary on the play. This edition thus cannot but be selective in its presentation of the play's critical tradition and performance history. Its new Introduction and revised commentary aim to provide robust accounts of influential early approaches to the play as well as persuasive recent treatments of it.

All editions of *Hamlet* must grapple with the play's significant textual challenges. These challenges result from the existence of three distinct early editions of the play: the quarto of 1603 (Q1), the quarto of 1604/5 (Q2), and the text supplied in the 1623 First Folio (F). Q2 has over 200 lines not in F; F has over 80 lines not in Q2. Q1, half the size of the other two texts, has stage directions and an entire scene that appear neither in Q2 nor in F, as well as a linguistic sensibility that differs markedly in places from the others.

This state of affairs demands that editors have a coherent explanation for the existence of these distinct texts, the connections between them, and their relationships to what Shakespeare might have written and what his acting company might have performed. In the first edition of the *New Cambridge Shakespeare (NCS) Hamlet*, Philip Edwards provided such an explanation, offering a consistent theory of the three copies and clarifying how his theory determined the various choices he made for his text. His account remains seminal for other editors and scholars considering the textual problem.

Edwards's explanation, roughly twenty-five pages, was thoroughly integrated into his Introduction. This is not the case in the new Introduction. Instead, this Introduction outlines the play's complex textual status, the questions that arise from it, and the various answers, both old and recent, that scholars have formulated for it. Edwards's account, upon which the text of the revised *NCS Hamlet* remains almost entirely based, is preserved in the 'Textual Analysis' at the end of the volume, distinct from the rest of the Introduction.

I am grateful to A. R. Braunmuller and Brian Gibbons for asking me to undertake this revision and for their careful reading of the manuscript, and to Emily Hockley at Cambridge University Press for her advice and patience. I was greatly assisted by the enthusiasm of the talented students in my undergraduate honours seminar, '*Hamlet* 24/7', at the University of Tennessee: Peter Cates, Savannah DeFreese, Emily Ferrell, Taylor Gray, Brenna Hosman, Noreen Premji, Bridget Sellers, Sophia Shelton, Logan Sutherland, Gage Taylor, and Courtney Whited. I am especially thankful for the support of Anthony Welch.

H. H.

Knoxville, Tennessee
2018

ABBREVIATIONS AND SHORT TITLES

All quotations and line references to plays other than *Hamlet* are to G. Blakemore Evans (ed.), *The Riverside Shakespeare*, 1974.

Adams	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. Joseph Quincy Adams, 1929
N. Alexander	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. Nigel Alexander, 1973 (Macmillan Shakespeare)
P. Alexander	<i>William Shakespeare, The Complete Works</i> , ed. Peter Alexander, 1951
Bullough	Geoffrey Bullough (ed.), <i>Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare</i> , 8 vols., 1957–75
Cambridge	<i>The Works of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. William George Clark, J. Glover and William Aldis Wright, 1863–6, viii; 2nd edn, 1891–2, vii (Cambridge Shakespeare)
Capell	<i>Mr William Shakespeare, His Comedies, Histories and Tragedies</i> , ed. Edward Capell, 1767–8, x
Clark and Wright	<i>Hamlet Prince of Denmark</i> , ed. William George Clark and William Aldis Wright, 1872 (Clarendon Press Shakespeare)
Collier	<i>The Works of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. J. Payne Collier, 1842–4, vii
conj.	conjectured
CR	David Farley-Hills, <i>Critical Responses to 'Hamlet' 1600–1900</i> , 4 vols. (New York: AMS Press, 1996–2006)
Dowden	<i>The Tragedy of Hamlet</i> , ed. Edward Dowden, 1899 (Arden Shakespeare)
Duthie	George Ian Duthie, <i>The 'Bad' Quarto of 'Hamlet': A Critical Study</i> , 1941
Dyce	<i>The Works of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Alexander Dyce, 1857, v
F	<i>Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies</i> , 1623 (First Folio)
F2	<i>Mr William Shakespeares Comedies, Histories, and Tragedies</i> , 1632
Hanmer	<i>The Works of Shakespear</i> , ed. Sir Thomas Hanmer, 1743–4, vi
Hoy	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. Cyrus Hoy, 1963 (Norton Critical Editions)
Jenkins	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. Harold Jenkins, 1982 (Arden Shakespeare)
Johnson	<i>The Plays of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Samuel Johnson, 1765, viii
Kittredge	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. George Lyman Kittredge, 1939
Knight	<i>The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspeare</i> , ed. Charles Knight, 1838–43, 1, 'Tragedies'
MacDonald	<i>The Tragedie of Hamlet</i> , ed. George MacDonald, 1885
Malone	<i>The Plays and Poems of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Edmond Malone, 1790, ix
MLN	<i>Modern Language Notes</i>
MSH	J. Dover Wilson, <i>The Manuscript of Shakespeare's 'Hamlet'</i> , 2 vols., 1934; reprinted 1963
N & Q	<i>Notes and Queries</i>

NV	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. Horace Howard Furness, 2 vols., 1877; reprinted 1963 (A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare)
OED	<i>The Oxford English Dictionary</i> , 1884–1928, reprinted 1933
PMLA	<i>Publications of the Modern Language Association of America</i>
Pope	<i>The Works of Shakespear</i> , ed. Alexander Pope, 1723–5, vi
Pope ²	<i>The Works of Shakespear</i> , ed. Alexander Pope, 2nd edn, 1728, viii
Q1	<i>The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet Prince of Denmarke</i> , by William Shakespeare, 1603 (first quarto)
Q2	<i>The Tragicall Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke</i> , by William Shakespeare, 1604, 1605 (second quarto)
Q 1611, Q 1676	Quarto editions of those dates
RES	<i>Review of English Studies</i>
Ridley	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. M. R. Ridley, 1934 (New Temple Shakespeare)
Rowe	<i>The Works of Mr William Shakespear</i> , ed. Nicholas Rowe, 1709, v
RQ	<i>Renaissance Quarterly</i>
Schmidt	Alexander Schmidt, <i>Shakespeare-Lexicon</i> , 2 vols., 1874–5; 2nd edn, 1886
SD	stage direction
SH	speech heading
<i>Shakespeare's Words</i>	David Crystal and Ben Crystal, <i>Shakespeare's Words: A Glossary & Language Companion</i> (London: Penguin Books, 2002).
Spencer	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. T. J. B. Spencer, 1980 (New Penguin Shakespeare)
SQ	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>
Staunton	<i>The Plays of Shakespeare</i> , ed. Howard Staunton, 1858–60, reissued 1866, iii
Steevens	<i>The Plays of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, 1773, x
Steevens ²	<i>The Plays of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, 2nd edn, 1778, x
Steevens ³	<i>The Plays of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, 4th edn, 1793, xv
Sternfeld	F. W. Sternfeld, <i>Music in Shakespearean Tragedy</i> , 1963
Taylor, Jowett, Bourus, and Egan	<i>The New Oxford Shakespeare</i> , ed. Gary Taylor, John Jowett, Terri Bourus, and Gabriel Egan (Oxford University Press, 2016)
Theobald	Lewis Theobald, <i>Shakespeare Restored</i> , 1726
Theobald ²	<i>The Works of Shakespeare</i> , ed. Lewis Theobald, 1733, vii
Theobald ³	<i>The Works of Shakespeare</i> , ed. Lewis Theobald, 1740, viii
Thompson and Taylor	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, rev. edn (Bloomsbury Arden, 2016)
Tilley	Morris Palmer Tilley, <i>A Dictionary of the Proverbs in England in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries</i> , 1950 [references are to numbered proverbs]
TLS	<i>The Times Literary Supplement</i>
Walker	William Sydney Walker, <i>A Critical Examination of the Text of Shakespeare</i> , 3 vols., 1860
Warburton	<i>The Works of Shakespear</i> , ed. William Warburton, 1747, viii
White	<i>The Works of William Shakespeare</i> , ed. Richard Grant White, 1857–66, xi
Wilson	<i>Hamlet</i> , ed. J. Dover Wilson, 1934; 2nd edn, 1936, reprinted 1968 (New Shakespeare)

