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Introduction

Although he was popular in the book trade of his own lifetime, the number of new editions and revivals of Shakespeare's plays declined in the decades that followed his death.[1] Indeed, by the middle of the century, Shakespeare's plays and poems had all but vanished from the London theatre and print markets. Shakespeare's canonization was by no means inevitable and it did not follow a neat, linear trajectory. This study offers a new account of Shakespeare's rise to cultural prominence, claiming that the watershed moment in his authorial afterlife came not in the eighteenth century, as previous critics have suggested, but instead during and as a result of a succession dispute known as the Exclusion Crisis of 1678–82. The Crisis and a related event known as the Popish Plot represented the biggest threat to the English monarchy since the civil wars. The nation became polarized over the question of who ought to succeed Charles II. The Crisis years also witnessed a huge resurgence of interest in Shakespeare's plays. In addition to revivals – and the preparation of new editions – of *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Julius Caesar*, ten Shakespeare plays were altered to voice support for the reigning monarch, Charles II, and his brother and heir, James, duke of York. These plays were both performed and printed over a short period of time, making Shakespeare available to readers and audiences on a scale not witnessed since the early seventeenth century.

The Exclusion Crisis and Popish Plot had a profoundly detrimental impact on the theatre market: they transformed the theatres into battlegrounds for political disputes, disturbances were common, and there was a vogue for highly political plays. The Crisis also ushered in the strictest theatrical censorship in seventeenth-century history. These factors, I argue, helped to encourage writers to turn to the alteration of an earlier playwright's work. Alteration was less labour-intensive, it allowed playwrights to build on pre-existing plays that had proven successful in the distant past, and it also offered a form of protection as dramatists could use the age of a play and its original author to make false claims about the play's polemical content.

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I further argue that Shakespeare's low authorial status and the parallels that could be construed between his characters and plots and the figures and events of the Crisis made his plays ideal candidates for topical alteration.

Ten new alterations were produced during the most sustained period of rewriting in Shakespeare's authorial afterlife. His plays had been revived and altered before 1678, but their appearance had been sporadic and there is little evidence to suggest that audiences would have been aware that the plays they watched had been written by or altered from the works of a man named Shakespeare. This all changed after 1678. The Exclusion Crisis alterations did not simply alert audiences to the fact that Shakespeare provided the source play, but also promoted Shakespeare's authorship with unprecedented reverence. The years 1678–82 therefore mark the point at which audiences began to recognize Shakespeare as the author of plays they saw performed. His popularity remained high after 1682, with a substantial number of new editions published and significant performances taking place in both the public theatres and at Court.

By the early 1670s Shakespeare's plays had all but vanished from the performance and print markets. This lull in his popularity was never to be repeated. In the wake of the Exclusion Crisis his plays were made available on a scale not witnessed since the early seventeenth century, thus reversing what might otherwise have been a permanent disappearance of Shakespeare's plays from canonical familiarity. By 1683 stationers were not only willing to invest in Shakespeare, but even deemed his plays marketable enough to risk producing pirate copies.[2] Their faith in Shakespeare's plays as profitable commodities continued from the Crisis years into the famous editions of the eighteenth century and beyond. His plays were seldom altered after 1683 as the performance and publication of unaltered Shakespeare became more and more common, but, on the rare occasions when the plays were modified, his authorship was invariably discussed in positive terms. I am by no means suggesting that Shakespeare's rise to prominence followed a linear trajectory, nor that it was in any way inevitable, but I do intend to argue that his canonization over the course of the eighteenth century was not simply initiated during, but was also made possible by, the Exclusion Crisis of 1678–82.

Print, Politics and Alteration

This is the first monograph to approach Shakespeare's authorial afterlife from the angles of book and theatre history while offering analysis of the political and material contexts that helped to revive interest in his plays. In

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the 1980s and 1990s, scholars considered Shakespeare's canonization across large spans of time. They did so through examination of a wide range of sources and viewpoints, including allusions, alterations, private diary entries and physical monuments.[3] These scholars paved the way by providing a general overview of Shakespeare's afterlife, and their most significant contribution was to rescue alterations of Shakespeare's plays from the scathing, dismissive and anachronistic attacks of earlier critics to allow for more sensitive analysis of the impact contemporary politics and aesthetic taste had on the redaction of the plays.[4]

The fields of bibliography and book history have thrived within Shakespeare studies of the last thirty years,[5] and yet, with the exception of Don-John Dugas' *Marketing the Bard: Shakespeare in Performance and Print, 1660–1740* (2006), their methodologies have yet to be applied to book-length studies of Shakespeare's authorial afterlife.[6] I specifically focus on representations and reproductions of Shakespeare that circulated in the mass public sphere because I believe that these offer the most accurate indication of how Shakespeare and his plays were perceived. I do not prioritize the views of contemporary commentators and critics, such as John Dryden and Samuel Pepys, because to do so would offer only a partial account. For example, Dryden sometimes did and sometimes did not appreciate Shakespeare. This tells us a lot about Dryden and his changing opinion and agendas, but it tells us little about Shakespeare's status in the late seventeenth century. Likewise, Pepys' preference for Samuel Tuke's *The Adventures of Five Hours* over *Othello* reflects one man's opinion, offered in a private diary entry.[7] By contrast, a Shakespeare play's presence in, or absence from, the seventeenth-century theatre and print market speaks volumes. I therefore concur with Dugas' view that 'if a comment about Shakespeare appeared in the printed edition of a play [or other work] neither written by nor adapted from Shakespeare, many people looking for references to the playwright were probably ignorant of its existence'.[8] I also recognize that Shakespeare's rise to prominence was somewhat fortuitous, it did not follow a clear trajectory from nadir to zenith. I provide analysis of fifty-eight years of theatrical, political and publication history, and remain alert to subtle, localized and at times contradictory developments in Shakespeare's authorial afterlife.

A few scholars have identified a peak in the number of new alterations or Shakespeare publications from the late 1670s, but they have either failed to link this rise in Shakespeare's popularity to the Exclusion Crisis or else overlooked the fact that, rather than a peak, Shakespeare's plays actually enjoyed sustained popularity from 1678 onwards. Michael Dobson, like

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me, notes renewed interest in Shakespeare's plays during the Exclusion Crisis but, as his study does not include publication history, he overlooks the impact that alterations produced during these years had on demand for new editions of the plays in the 1680s and 1690s. Consequentially, he highlights the role that (a variety of) agents of the eighteenth century played in Shakespeare's canonization. Katherine West Scheil observes the changing way in which Shakespeare's authorship is discussed in the later seventeenth-century alterations but, as her study concentrates on comic alterations, she sees this as part of a wider trend towards acknowledgement of sources.[9] She does not recognize that the reverence altering playrights such as Charles Gildon, Colley Cibber and George Granville showed for Shakespeare at the turn of the century is in fact a continuation of the canonization begun in prologues to the alterations of Shakespeare's histories and tragedies produced during the Crisis.

Dugas acknowledges that 'the period 1679–1684 was one of the most prolific intervals in the history of Shakespeare quarto publication' and that 'publication of Shakespeare quartos nearly doubled in the 1680s', but, as his study does not focus on politics, he does not link this sudden and sustained resurgence of interest in Shakespeare's plays to the Exclusion Crisis.[10] His focus also prevents him from noting how the positive discussion of Shakespeare's authorship continued from the Crisis into the next century. Dugas instead cites the price wars between two rival stationers – Jacob Tonson and Robert Walker – in 1734–35 as the key turning point in Shakespeare's authorial afterlife because it made 'copies of cheap single editions of every one of [Shakespeare's] plays [and apocrypha] readily available in bookshops throughout London'.[11] The price wars were indeed an important moment in Shakespeare's publication history, but I argue that they ought to be seen as a further example of Shakespeare's continued popularity in the wake of the Exclusion Crisis. Without the Exclusion Crisis it is hard to imagine a situation in which stationers would be fighting over the exclusive rights to publish Shakespeare. Indeed, as I demonstrate in my concluding chapter, following the Exclusion Crisis, stationers released more new Shakespeare editions than at any point since the early seventeenth century, and altering playwrights followed the lead of Exclusion Crisis prologues by discussing Shakespeare's authorship with great reverence.

Like Adam Hooks' *Selling Shakespeare: Biography, Bibliography, and the Book Trade*,[12] and the collection I recently edited with Peter Kirwan, entitled *Canonising Shakespeare: Stationers and the Book Trade, 1640–1740*,[13] *Shakespeare's Rise* offers an alternative way of conceiving authorship that

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takes into account the important role that agents of the book trade played in shaping the way in which Shakespeare – by which I mean both the man and his plays – was presented to consumers. I extend these studies' discussion of the roles stationers played in Shakespeare's canonization to include analysis of the profound impact altering playwrights, such as William Davenant, Dryden and Nahum Tate, had on Shakespeare's authorial afterlife, and the ways in which both his plays and his perceived abilities as a writer were presented to playgoers and book buyers.

Shakespeare Alterations

I identify three main phases of alteration during the Restoration period.[14] Shakespeare's plays were altered in the 1660s without readers and audiences being alerted to Shakespeare's role as a source author. These plays, predominantly produced by Davenant, include his combination of *Measure for Measure* and *Much Ado about Nothing* into *The Law against Lovers*, his redaction of *The Two Noble Kinsmen* into *The Rivals*, his version of *Macbeth* and his collaboration with Dryden to produce *The Tempest; or, The Enchanted Island*. A version of *Romeo and Juliet* in which the two lovers survive was also produced at this time (by James Howard), as was an alteration of *The Taming of the Shrew* in which Grumio's part was augmented to allow the actor and playwright John Lacy to amuse audiences with buffoonery delivered in a Scottish accent (*Sauny the Scott*, by Lacy). These alterations frequently supplemented the number of female roles found in Shakespeare's plays, most probably in response to the introduction of actresses after 1660, and also added many new songs.[15] Whilst the alterations produced between 1660 and 1668 – predominantly comedies – did engage with contemporary politics, particularly by celebrating the restoration of rightful rule (see Chapter 2), they were nowhere near as partisan as the second wave of alterations produced in response to the Exclusion Crisis.[16]

No new alterations were produced between 1668 and 1677, and it looked as if the practice of redacting Shakespeare had dried up altogether. As I have said, from around 1677 there was then a sudden renewal of interest in Shakespeare's plays, and this time consumers were alerted to his authorship when his plots and characters were radically altered (predominantly) to offer support for the duke of York's claim to the throne. Most of the ten plays selected for alteration between 1677 and 1682 were chosen from among Shakespeare's history plays and tragedies. They included rewrites of *Richard II* (by Nahum Tate), *Henry VI* (two alterations by John Crowne),

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Timon of Athens (by Thomas Shadwell), *Titus Andronicus* (by Edward Ravenscroft), *Romeo and Juliet* (by Thomas Otway), *King Lear* (Tate), *Coriolanus* (Tate), *Troilus and Cressida* (by John Dryden) and *Cymbeline* (by Thomas Durfey). As demonstrated in Chapter 4, one of the most significant changes included the horror and new scenes of rape added to Shakespeare's plays, with his male and female characters redacted in line with contemporary Tory rhetoric. More new female roles were added, but one notes further polarization of Shakespeare's female characters: into negative, lusty figures who distract male characters from their public duty, and passive, virtuous characters who take on symbolic significance as contested objects over which legitimate and illegitimate males are seen to fight.[17] From 1683 onwards Shakespeare's plays were seldom altered and were more frequently published and performed in unaltered form. However, when they were altered – by Charles Gildon (*Measure for Measure; or, Beauty's Best Advocate*) and Colley Cibber (*The Tragical History of Richard the Third*) – Shakespeare's authorship continued to be advertised and praised.

When determining what constitutes a Shakespeare publication I have disregarded much modern criticism concerning Shakespeare and authorship attribution studies in a bid to historicize seventeenth-century theatregoers' and playbook readers' notions of what Shakespeare did and did not write. If a play appeared on stage or in print with Shakespeare's name cited as author or author source, then we must remain alert to the clues it offers about Shakespeare's perceived vendibility and for the ways in which he was presented to consumers.

I use the terms 'revival' and 'alteration' to describe, respectively, plays that have simply been prepared for the stage and those that have been significantly changed or modified. What is often referred to as 'Davenant's *Hamlet*' (published in 1676) is an example of a revival and not an alteration.[18] As the note to the reader in the quarto indicates, it was simply abridged, much as performances continue to be today.[19] Hazelton Spencer and Mongi Raddadi have treated the play as an alteration.[20] Raddadi argues that the 1676 version leaves Hamlet 'bereft of his most characteristic features, his philosophical bent, cynicism, and theatricality', and claims that Hamlet has become 'more active and less talkative', but Davenant (or whoever) adds neither new lines, characters, nor plot stands.[21] It is true that cropping necessarily alters characters, but the same may be said of casting choices, costume, accent and a number of other factors that are equally typical of stage productions. As Lukas Erne has argued, 'by considerably abridging *Hamlet* in preparation for performance, Davenant was

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only doing what Shakespeare and his fellows had done long before him'.[22] I am therefore inclined to see this *Hamlet* as a revival of Shakespeare's play: it is not an alteration but a performance text.

Davenant was the manager in charge of the Duke's Company who staged *Hamlet*, but had another playwright prepared the text, it seems unlikely that the theatre company would have considered it an alteration or paid the poet's benefit.[23] Songs and lavish costumes are again all that Davenant appears to have contributed to the Restoration production of *Henry VIII*, and I am thus inclined also to view this version as a revival and not an alteration.[24] John Howard's *Romeo and Juliet*, a play for which no text survives, let alone one in which performance cuts are indicated typographically (as in the 1676 *Hamlet* quarto), was not to my mind a mere revival because the decision to keep Romeo and Juliet alive will have profoundly impacted the play's genre (presumably making it tragicomic) and, one assumes, necessitated the addition of new lines.

My definition of alteration is in line with that which Dryden articulates in the preface to *Don Sebastian, King of Portugal* (1690). He claimed that it is the 'contrivance, the new turn, and new characters, which alter the property', and thus a play's status, from a revival to an alteration (A2v). The word rewriting is here appropriate, as it is the labour put into adding to and changing plays that distinguishes them as alterations. The altered play must, however, still resemble the source text enough for comparative reading to reveal substantial similarities. To take the example of Nahum Tate's *King Lear* (analysed in Chapter 4), anyone who reads the quarto and the folio versions of Shakespeare followed by Tate's *Lear* will recognize the same situation of a king who wishes to test his daughters' love for him and divide his kingdom accordingly; a similar *dramatis personae*, with a significant character addition in Clarina and omission in the Fool; particular rewriting of characters such as Cordelia, Edgar and Edmund/Bastard, who have their roles increased; a very similar story, but with a modified plot and a sub-plot that has become an integral part of the main plot; familiar intrigues; and a generic alteration from tragic to a happy ending.

Having said this, I recognize that few late-seventeenth-century playgoers or play-readers would have conducted comparative readings between source plays and alterations. Equally, not many people would have had enough knowledge of the Shakespeare source texts to recognize a performed play as alteration, but we would have very few examples if we limited our scope to only those plays that Restoration theatre patrons and play-readers would have recognized as Shakespeare alterations. Indeed, as

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I go on to argue in Chapters 3 and 5, one of the reasons why Shakespeare was selected for alteration during the Exclusion Crisis is because his plays were by then unfamiliar. This meant that playwrights and theatre managers could dishonestly advertise radically altered versions of Shakespeare's plays as brand new plays or else as old and politically innocuous plays. False advertising was a much-used technique between 1678 and 1682 because it offered a way of attracting patrons during times of theatrical recession and might also help to avoid the attention of censors.

In order to mark the difference between an alteration and an entirely new play, we may turn to the example of Dryden's *All for Love; or, The World Well Lost* of 1677, a play that deals with the story of Antony and Cleopatra, which Shakespeare dramatized in his play of that name. Dryden's play certainly contains echoes of Shakespeare's, but Shakespeare is by no means a source author the way he is of Tate's *Lear*, and there is little to link the two plays beyond the story Shakespeare (and Samuel Daniel and others) had drawn upon. As Maximillian Novak has argued, critics need to look beyond Dryden's title-page claim that he wrote his play in 'Imitation' of Shakespeare's 'Stile' (indeed, Dryden does not call it Shakespeare's or an alteration), and recognize 'the literature about Cleopatra, which went far beyond Shakespeare's play'.[25] He rightly adds that by 1677, Mark Antony and Cleopatra 'belonged to the realm of a changing myth'.[26] Shakespeare wrote one play about Antony and Cleopatra, Dryden another.

There are two main ways of approaching Shakespeare alterations. The first is to compare the altered plays with their source texts in order to offer a reading of the impact modifications have on plots and characters[27] – what Linda Hutcheon labels 'fidelity criticism'.[28] The approach often draws on comments playwrights make about their alterations in paratexts to the printed plays.[29] The second option is to consider the altered plays as unified dramatic pieces: not as amalgamations of surviving Shakespearean material, omissions and new additions, but instead as plays in their own right.[30] Rather than explore how changes to the source text reflect and respond to the concerns of a specific moment in time, the second approach identifies ways in which the play as a whole resonated with contemporary concerns. While the first approach seeks to reconstruct something that approximates to authorial intention (or adaptorial intention), the second disregards readerly paratexts and attempts to historicize a play's initial reception, especially by audiences attending live theatrical performances. In sum, it might be said that the first approach concerns itself with the politics of altering plays, while the second focuses on the politics of altered plays. I predominantly adopt the second approach; differences between

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the Restoration alterations and the Shakespearean source plays are not of interest to me in and of themselves but only insofar as they impact how the altered plays interact with contemporary politics. The Shakespeare plays selected for alteration will have been unfamiliar to most readers and audiences. I intend to historicize the plays' initial reception by adhering to what playgoers are likely to have known about the Shakespeare source plays. In attempting to historicize the late-seventeenth-century audience's knowledge of his plays I do, however, recognize that twenty-first-century readers will inevitably have greater knowledge of the Shakespeare plays than of the Restoration Shakespeare alterations. To guide the reader I therefore indicate relevant changes made to the individual plays without intending to suggest that the relationship between the Shakespeare source play and the alteration would have impacted a late-seventeenth-century audience's understanding of the play.[31]

I thus differ from previous scholars by balancing analysis of Shakespeare and the book trade between 1642 and 1700 with examination of alterations and by placing both in the context of the political crises that helped to shape not only demand for Shakespeare, but also consumers' perceptions of Shakespeare's plays and his authorship. I emphasize the years 1678–82 as the watershed moment in Shakespeare's afterlife and argue that by the mid 1680s his works had been not simply revived, but also established as popular print titles. The further canonization of Shakespeare's plays over the course of the eighteenth century ought thus to be seen as a continuation of the promotion and popularization of Shakespeare begun during the Exclusion Crisis.

Shakespeare, 1642–1700

I focus primarily on the afterlife of Shakespeare's plays because his poems were almost completely absent from the print market of the period. I do, however, discuss all known poetry editions produced between 1642 and 1700, and in Chapter 1 I also consider how Shakespeare's plays were rewritten as ballads. Rather than begin in 1660, like most studies of Shakespeare's afterlife, Chapter 1 provides examination of his popularity during the civil wars and Interregnum, when the theatres were closed. I interrogate when, how and why his plays were published, and examine how sections or versions of his plays may have circulated in new generic forms when the theatres were closed by order of law from 1642 to 1659. I focus on how Shakespeare's plays were abbreviated and transmuted into drolls (short plays or playlets) and play-ballads, or else reduced to aphorisms or short

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dialogues within commonplace books and anthologies. I suggest that these abbreviated Shakespeare texts formed part of the underground performance repertory established during the Interregnum and that, rather than a lull, the years 1642–59 instead represent a crucial moment in Shakespeare's popular afterlife.

In my second chapter I challenge existing narratives of Shakespeare's status in the early Restoration and draw on Stationers' Register entries, printed editions, performance records and alterations of his plays to argue that Shakespeare's name was still deemed marketable in the early 1660s and clearly appealed to stationers, but that his popularity was at an all-time low by the mid 1670s. I believe that previous critics have failed to notice this significant dip in Shakespeare's popularity because of confusion over Restoration versions of *The Tempest* and the presence of two *Hamlet* quartos bearing the date 1676. I have already used paper evidence to demonstrate that one of the '1676' *Hamlet* quartos features a false imprint and actually dates from just after the Exclusion Crisis in 1683/4, and I here distinguish editions of John Dryden and William Davenant's *Tempest* alteration from later spin-offs that do not use Shakespeare's play as a source text. The evidence suggests that, without the Exclusion Crisis, Shakespeare's plays might have fallen into obscurity.

My third chapter explores the reasons behind the renewed interest in Shakespeare's plays as source material in the years 1678–82. Pamphlet literature of the Crisis frequently drew on the reigns of Richard II and Henry VI – reigns dramatized by Shakespeare – as examples either of what happens when monarchs do not respect Parliament, or else of the long-term consequences of usurpation. As mentioned above, I claim that the Crisis had a devastating impact on the theatre market and generated demand for plays offering direct engagement with contemporary politics, and that Shakespeare became the most altered playwright during these years because his plays contained numerous ready-made parallels.

Chapter 4 concentrates on how the Shakespeare alterations engaged with the political tumult in Exclusion Crisis London, with his histories and tragedies appropriated to offer responses to the policy to exclude the duke of York from the succession. I primarily focus on the gender and sexual politics at the heart of the alterations, and the ways in which these resonated with Tory support for James and the rules of primogeniture on which his claim to the throne was based. The plays' Tory tone is reflected in the dramatization of patriarchal authority and idealized male conduct. Playwrights, like pamphlet writers, drew analogies between the public and private sphere, and I identify three key ways in which they sought to

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do so. First, the alterations demonize usurpation and civil war as having terrible consequences for private families and instead advocate strong, legitimate, male rule. Secondly, the plays reverse Whig attacks on royal promiscuity and instead stress the need to dominate female characters politically. Thirdly, the altering playwrights use new scenes of rape in order to depict as would-be rapists illegitimate characters who display a desire to usurp power. They do so, I argue, to undermine support for Charles II's eldest illegitimate (but Protestant) son, the duke of Monmouth, who was proposed by some exclusionists as an alternative successor to the throne. The Exclusion Crisis alterations therefore offer crucial insight into not just Shakespeare's authorial status, but also late-seventeenth-century gender and sexual politics.

My fifth chapter examines how Shakespeare's name and authorial status were presented to readers of playbooks and theatre audiences by focusing on references to his name found in the theatrical and readerly paratexts of alterations produced between 1678 and 1682. I argue that the Crisis helped to foster inconsistent portrayals of Shakespeare's authorship. The strict censorship governing stage productions encouraged the use of theatrical paratexts that praised Shakespeare and promoted his authorial status, while greater freedom of expression in print allowed for far less reverential discussion of Shakespeare's authorship. The chapter underlines both the marketing ploys found in different media and the significant role the Crisis played in the promotion of Shakespeare as an author.

My concluding chapter then explores the impact the Exclusion Crisis had on Shakespeare's authorial afterlife at the end of the seventeenth century, arguing that there are several ways in which his authorial status was boosted following the Crisis. Most importantly, a greater number of quarto editions of Shakespeare's plays were published than at any point since the closing of the theatres in 1642, and these playbooks were joined by the release of the Fourth Folio in 1685 and what might be termed a 'Fifth Folio' in 1700. When we turn to the performance market we see that unaltered versions of Shakespeare's plays were not only produced in the public theatre(s) but were also selected for performance at the Court of James II (1685–8). Shakespeare plays were altered far less frequently in the years following the Crisis and, on the few occasions when they were altered, his authorship was not simply acknowledged but also discussed with unambiguous reverence in both performance and print.

I therefore chart how Shakespeare's plays were modified in order to allow for surreptitious performances during the ban on acting, used to celebrate restored rule and bolster the repertory of the reopened theatres

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in the early 1660s, all but forgotten when new plays took over the market in the late 1660s and early 1670s, radically resurrected between 1678 and 1682, and then consolidated as Court favourites and popular print titles in the 1680s and 1690s. I place the publication, alteration and performance of Shakespeare's plays in the context of the political crises that helped to shape both his authorial reputation and the form, content and occasions on which his works were sold to consumers. At the heart of this monograph is the contention that the Exclusion Crisis is the crucial moment of and reason for the most fundamental transformation of Shakespeare's status in his authorial afterlife. It is to the fate of Shakespeare and his plays between 1642 and 1659 that I now wish to turn.

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