accidental, pre-pubertal or post-pubertal, enabling or disabling. Anyone interested in the multiple premodern meanings of castration will enjoy this morbidly fascinating collection; it deserves the attention of all who work on ancient, medieval or early modern masculinities.

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LUKAS ERNE. **Shakespeare and the Book Trade**. Pp. xvi + 302. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013. Cloth, £27.99. Paper, £18.99.

This is the sequel to Lukas Erne's *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* of 2003, which argued that, contrary to popular belief, Shakespeare courted a wide print readership as well as playgoers. From the evidence of what was printed and when, Erne constructed a new narrative in which his playing company saw that print publication was in their interests, and Shakespeare soon embraced its possibilities. In this new book, Erne counts and tabulates frequencies of editions and reprints to reach the inescapable conclusion that Shakespeare was by far the most successful writer of printed plays of his time and for decades afterwards. Erne presents this as the logical completion of the argument of the earlier book; Shakespeare desired greatness in the print medium, and he achieved it. One could, however, accept the latter conclusion without admitting the former; perhaps he did not seek literary greatness but had it thrust upon him.

The argument of *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* has attracted just one serious attempt at refutation. In *Shakespeare Studies* 2008, David Scott Kastan objected that Erne's book contains only two chapters of hard evidence, one on the Elizabethan publishing of Shakespeare and one on the Jacobean publishing of him, or rather the Jacobeans not publishing him because there was a sharp falling off after 1603. By then, 15 of Shakespeare's plays had been published and just 4 more appeared before the 1623 Folio offered virtually his entire dramatic output. Of those 15, seven were bad quartos that are difficult to see as officially authorized publications because they give a poor impression of the script ('To be, or not to be, I there's the point' and so on). If Shakespeare and/or his fellow actors wanted his plays to appear in print, asked Kastan, why did they use 'staying orders' in the Stationers' Register to prevent publication of *The Merchant of Venice*, *As You Like It*, *2 Henry 4*, and *Much Ado About Nothing?* Of these, all but *As You Like It* were in any case soon thereafter printed, but for Kastan the players' desire to stop publication crucially detracts from the significance of the eight good quartos upon which rests Erne's central claim that Shakespeare's scripts were routinely sold for print publication 2 years after the first performance.

Erne has responded to Kastan's argument in a new preface written for a second edition of *Shakespeare as Literary Dramatist* (2013), and for the sequel reviewed here he simply assumes acceptance of his earlier claim. Astonishingly, for the new book Erne needed to make no fresh discoveries to demonstrate conclusively that Shakespeare was by a long way the most successful dramatist in print in his lifetime and for decades after. He merely had to count things that anyone could have counted before. Just how to count things can be a point of contention, of course; does the 1623 Folio count as one edition of Shakespeare or 36? And how do you count the plays in the Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher folio of 1647 given that it has 'only a few Beaumont-and-Fletcher collaborations, fewer than a dozen single-authored Fletcher plays and no single-authored Beaumont plays, but a number of Fletcher-and-Massinger collaborations as well as, it seems, collaborations between Fletcher and Nathan Field; Fletcher and Middleton; Fletcher and Rowley; Middleton and Rowley;

Fletcher, Massinger and Field; and Fletcher, Massinger, Ford and Webster; and a single-authored play by Ford' (p. 235). Erne's counts have the significant merit of not being idiosyncratic; he tallies much as Alan Farmer and Zachary Lesser tallied for their articles in *Shakespeare Quarterly* in 2005 showing that, contrary to Peter W. M. Blayney's influential claim, printed plays were an important and lucrative part of the early publishing industry.

Erne's first chapter substantially reprints his article from *Shakespeare Survey* 2009, proving that no matter how you slice the data, Shakespeare outsold all other dramatists by a wide margin. Taking two statistics from many: on average 20% of plays were reprinted within 9 years of the first publication, but for Shakespeare's it was 60%, and broadening the horizon to 25 years, the average was 50% for everyone but 85% for Shakespeare (pp. 47–48). Even more stark is a simple rank order of total numbers of editions up to the closure of the theatres in 1642: 145 editions of Shakespeare's plays, followed by 55 of Thomas Heywood's, 41 of Ben Jonson's and then 36 of Fletcher's. Extending the period to 1660 makes little difference: Shakespeare still has twice as many editions as his nearest rival (pp. 41–42). The evidence in this book is stronger than the evidence in its predecessor and seems unassailable.

What follows is an examination of the misattribution of plays to Shakespeare as publishers try to cash in on his popularity. The third chapter considers the kinds of book-layout codes that publishers employed to signal the high status of their contents, including 'Latin title page mottoes, dedications, prefatory epistles, commendatory poems, dramatis personae, arguments, sententiae markers, continuous printing (that is, mid-line speech prefixes), and act and scene division' (p. 99). Shakespeare's printed plays almost always lacked these things, but Erne points out that such markers became common in printed plays only after the Shakespeare boom years of the 1590s and only because three classically minded and self-important dramatists—Jonson, John Marston, and George Chapman—pushed publishers to signal a work's importance this way. Shakespeare more modestly lets his plays stand without such supports. Chapter four is a valuable series of accounts of the careers of the various men who published and printed early editions of Shakespeare, tracing their apparent preferences for certain kinds of subject matter. Chapter five examines the known evidence of how readers responded to early editions of Shakespeare, counterpoising the Bodleian Library's refusal to admit such trivia with other libraries that took them and collectors who valued them highly. Then come the necessary appendices of raw data on which the whole argument is built and by which others may attempt to demolish it.

If you value empirically grounded narratives—and this reviewer does—Erne's second book on the early publication of Shakespeare is even more impressive than the first. As Kastan objected, the first book had little data to go on, especially because editions of new Shakespeare plays rather dried up after 1603, although reprints of existing ones continued to sell. Just what caused that drought is unclear, and Erne's suggestions—perhaps they were held back as first steps were taken towards what would eventually become the Folio project—are, by his own admission, not highly convincing. Because it is unnecessary to accept the first book's argument to accept the second, *Shakespeare and the Book Trade* is an even greater triumph and as the dust-jacket's commendations rightly boast, our view of Shakespeare will never be the same again.

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