reading of an understudied Ovidian text, John Beaumont's *Metamorphosis of Tobacco*, suggesting New World horizons beyond the previous chapters' emphasis on the 'Orient' and on canonical texts. Having turned westward, Jacobson then shifts her focus away from the familiar poetry of the 1590s, still half-grounded in the classical tradition, to provide a final bravura reading of the English merchant Richard Ligon's voyeuristic encomium to the African mistress of Cape Verde's Portuguese governor. Identifying parallels between Ligon's description and poems by Donne, Marlowe, and Chapman, Jacobson demonstrates that 'new, contemporary Eastern references in English poetry are what allow Ligon to change the symbolic language of blackness, converting the mistress from a barbarous savage into an ancient, Eastern beauty' (p. 199). At the close of Jacobson's study, then, we find that the importation and assimilation of 'barbarous' Eastern products and concepts into late sixteenth-century English poetic language was never a retrograde or marginal cultural paradigm, but lay at the heart of a continuous process of economic, linguistic, and cultural appropriation on a global scale.

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ZACHARY LESSER. ***Hamlet* after Q1: An Uncanny History of the Shakespearean Text.** Pp. 292. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. Hardback, £39.

This is a history of the attempts to account for the many substantial differences between the three substantive editions of *Hamlet*: the bad first quarto (Q1) published in 1603, the good second quarto (Q2) published in 1604 or 1605, and the Folio (F) of 1623. The key fact that puts the word 'uncanny' into Lesser's title is that the existence of Q1 remained unknown to scholarship until an exemplar was discovered in 1825, and another one turned up in 1856. The first lacked the final page and the second lacked the title page, so the edition itself has a curiously Platonic existence: only by mentally (or digitally) combining these two books can we reconstruct a perfect exemplar of Q1. By the time Q1 turned up, scholars had spent more than a century making sense of the differences between (what we now call) Q2 and the Folio, and for Lesser this 'belated' appearance of Q1 gave a peculiarly uncanny cast to its existence and its effects. In the first half of the book especially, Lesser uses the ideas of Sigmund Freud and Michel Foucault to describe the rewriting of the play's textual history that occurred because its first edition was the last to be studied.

For this reviewer the use of literary theory is the least interesting aspect of Lesser's book, which in its best parts performs two valuable services: (i) exploring in detail the arguments of nineteenth and early-twentieth-century textual scholars working on *Hamlet*, and (ii) re-examining the Q1/Q2/F differences to come up with fresh explanations for them. A recurrent theme is the relationship between Shakespeare's play and what seems to have been an earlier play with the same title and story, sometimes called the *Ur-Hamlet* (from the German prefix meaning original or prototype). The evidence for this earlier play is Thomas Nashe's reference to 'whole *Hamlets*, I should say handfulls of tragical speaches' (1589), Philip Henslowe's record of a performance of a play called *Hamlet* in 1594, and Thomas Lodge's reference to a fiend who 'looks as pale as ye Vizard of the ghost which cried so miserally at ye Theator like an oister wife, *Hamlet*, reuenge' (1596); other possible allusions to it cannot be so securely dated before Shakespeare's play. Before Q1 turned up, this earlier play could be dismissed as merely a source that inspired Shakespeare to write his masterpiece, as *King Leir* was for his *King Lear*, but the mix of high and low quality writing in Q1 gave the distinct impression Shakespeare had taken over and incompletely revised an

earlier play. This had unsettling consequences for nineteenth-century conceptions of Shakespeare's genius.

The most successful explanations for the existence of Q1 that Lesser traces are that it was Shakespeare's first stab at the play (with Q2 and F showing how it looked after his polishing) and the rival view that Q1 represents a debased recording—by stenography? by memorial reconstruction?—of that polished Shakespeare play, which merely happened to get printed first. A substantial merit of Lesser's book is the minute detail with which he traces the genesis and evolution of these ideas as they were shaped by nineteenth-century scholarly competitiveness and the emergence of new facts and hypotheses. But more valuable still are Lesser's own contributions to the debates about the textual and theatrical relationships of Q1/Q2/F. In his first chapter, Lesser handles the complex relationships between the stationers responsible for funding and printing the first two editions—Nicholas Ling, Valentine Simmes, and James Roberts—and re-examines their title pages. Lesser discovers that Ling must have instructed Roberts, his printer of Q2, to copy the style of Simmes's title page for Q1, as they have in common the use of a hanging indent for a prose paragraph that everyone else reserved for religious books (pp. 66–7). This discovery enables Lesser to explain the otherwise mysterious fact that Ling would seem to be harming sales of his own stocks of Q1 by publishing Q2 before all exemplars of Q1 were sold. Because they were similarly styled, Ling could have Q1 and Q2 side-by-side in his shop in order to satisfy readers who wanted the original 1580–90s version of the play as well as those who wanted the latest version, enlarged by Shakespeare; less-discriminating browsers might not even be able to tell them apart at first glance.

Lesser's second chapter concerns the seemingly vulgar phrase 'country matters' that in Q2/F Hamlet uses to Ophelia in the Mousetrap Scene and which in Q1 is phrased 'contrary matters'. Around this phrase Q1/Q2/F has small but telling differences that Lesser explores in themselves and in the critical responses they have stimulated. His major thesis is that 'country matters' did not necessarily sound vulgar (*cunt-ry*) until after Q1 appeared and offered the variant reading. Or rather, Hamlet was undoubtedly being vulgar, referring to the sexual looseness of country people, but not in the explicitly genital way that we have come to suppose. The same point about critical over-certainty regarding sex structures Lesser's third chapter, about the imagined location of the Closet Scene between Hamlet and Gertrude in which Polonius is murdered. It is often assumed that only after Freud and his biographer Ernest Jones declared the play to be about mother/son incest was this scene set in Gertrude's bedroom, but as Lesser shows that had long been the imagined location in pictures and in performances, even though the word 'closet' does not mean bedchamber. Before Q1 reappeared, the Ghost was generally assumed to enter the Closet Scene wearing the same armour from his previous appearances on the battlements, but Q1 adds the detail that on this occasion he is 'in his night gowne', and Lesser traces the effect of this upon interpretations not only of this scene but the whole play. Under the influence of Henry Irving's production of 1874, a nightgowned ghost domesticated the entire story, which became a Victorian melodrama about Gertrude's fallen state and her reformation. Happily, Lesser is no more content to merely describe the play's critical and performance history than he is to merely describe its textual history, and he most intriguingly points out that for Gertrude to be still using her dead husband's bed has the same meaning as the Ghost retaining his armour: both these objects ought, by the laws of inheritance, to have been passed to young Hamlet (pp. 153–4).

Lesser's fourth chapter does for the 'To be' speech the same synthesis of critical history and textual history performed in the first three chapters. The key word here is 'conscience', which can mean our sense for distinguishing right from wrong (loosely, our sense of guilt)

but also more generally our consciousness of the world that apprehends so many complexities in each situation that we are stultified and cannot act decisively. The former sense is most clearly active in Q1's version of the speech, which is conventionally religious in its eschatology where Q2 and F seem positively agnostic. Only once this simple sense of 'conscience' was activated by Q1 did critics begin to assert that in the 'To be' speech the word has the more philosophical sense of consciousness in general. Having traced the vacillations on this point, Lesser gives us his opinion that, in fact, across all three texts the word 'conscience' in the 'To be' speech 'is decidedly unlikely to carry any meaning other than the religious one' (p. 195), which is the sense it has everywhere else that it is used in these three texts. Q1 daringly complicates the familiar idea that those with bad consciences are cowards, fearing to die because fearing the judgment that will follow—which implies that those with clear consciences are fearless—by claiming that conscience makes us all cowards, bad and good alike. Lesser sees Q1's as the only coherent version of this speech, with Q2 and F so incoherent and disjointed that they might almost be, he jokes, memorial reconstructions of it.

In his conclusion, Lesser traces the difficulties that post-New Bibliographical textual scholarship and criticism have regarding Q1/Q2/F *Hamlet*, not wanting to tie them all together under the rubric of 'Shakespeare' and yet lacking the nerve to treat them as entirely independent either. He details the Arden3 editors' absence of any strong conviction about the relationship between the early editions and their falling back on a theory of relatedness that seemed to them merely the least likely to be mistaken. Taken seriously, this 'hollowed-out shell of a familiar theory' is in danger of collapsing into New Textualist nihilism that would require us to put together all versions of the story, including sources and derivatives, and treat them equally as various versions of *Hamlet*. Lesser declares that he began with a New Textualist bracketing off of the three texts so that he could reconsider their relationships without inheriting received ideas of the dependence of one upon another in the set, but he concludes that we cannot do that forever: '. . . the issue of textual origins can be productively deferred, but it will not ultimately be evaded' (p. 219). This is good to hear, since Lesser's own suggestions for the editions' textual origins—offered too tentatively at times—are deeply rooted in expert knowledge and throw new light upon problems that, as he rightly insists, we cannot avoid unless we give up thinking about the play altogether.

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HELEN LYNCH. **Milton and the Politics of Public Speech**. Pp. xvii + 284. Farnham & Birmingham VT: Ashgate, 2015. Hardback, 60.

Helen Lynch's *Milton and the Politics of Public Speech* concerns itself with how Milton and many of his contemporaries conceived of the political realm and of public discourse. She is interested in his and their 'idea of public speech' (p. xiii) as it is evident from various 'image clusters' they employ (p. 27), 'the compelling images by which writers reveal and propogate their (more or less conscious) ideas, in short the way they construe and construct their world' (p. xiv).

She argues that the imagery that Milton and many of his contemporaries employed to conceive of politics and rhetoric corresponds in revealing ways to Hannah Arendt's picture in *The Human Condition* of how the pre-Socratic Greeks understood politics and rhetoric. Hannah Arendt, in other words, has provided an account of how the Greeks understood politics and political speech and action. That account takes the form of a set of interconnected