

the folio text has therefore generally been thought to have been printed independently from a manuscript.

OTHELLO

I believe this to be true of *Othello*. Here I can find nothing that points to F being printed from Q, and something against it. *Othello* was the latest of the Shakespearian quartos, having appeared in 1622. By then the printing of the folio was already in progress, though it had not yet reached the Tragedies. If Q was authorized the company presumably reserved the right of reprinting. It must have already appeared when the play was reached in the folio, and why it was not used as copy is not clear. The texts do not differ widely. Q is evidently cut: the few omissions in F are probably accidental. Occasional profanity in Q has been rather thoroughly eliminated in F. Chambers concludes that the copy for Q, if a stage manuscript, must antedate the Act of 1606 against profanity in plays. But we cannot consider the quarto of *Othello* apart from certain Beaumont and Fletcher plays that the King's men allowed to be printed between 1619 and 1623, plays that were written after the Act and appear unexpurgated in the quartos.¹ Clearly authors paid very little attention to the Act, whatever actors may have done. But it is not certain that either Q or F goes back to a stage copy—neither shows the stigmas of a prompt-book—and that F is expurgated is one of several indications that lead me to suspect that this purgation was in part at least the work of the folio editor rather than of the book-keeper. Chambers thinks that Q and F are independently derived from one original, a feature of which was the occasional writing of a line of verse as two separate half-lines—'perhaps for emphasis'. This division of lines—for reasons of typography, not emphasis—is a common habit of the folio compositors;² but here it occurs in the quarto likewise, sometimes at the same point sometimes not. But there is more to it than this; for in some cases we find accompanying mislineation in Q, where I have little doubt that the source of the trouble was a

¹ See K. W. Cameron, "'Othello', Quarto I, Reconsidered', *PMLA*, 1932, xlvii. 671.

² See *The Library*, 1936, xvii. 180-1; McKerrow, *Prolegomena*, 1939, pp. 47-9.

marginal addition or alteration in the original manuscript. My belief is that both Q and F go back fairly directly to foul papers, and rather confused and illegible ones at that. Misreadings in one or other text are frequent. How puzzling the writing and the alterations might be is shown by a passage where what was evidently a marginal addition appears in F (probably correctly) as 'She must change for youth', and in Q as 'she must have change, she must'; moreover Q places it at the end instead of the beginning of the sentence to which it belongs. Possibly Shakespeare had not made up his mind. For I do not think that all the differences of reading between Q and F can be due to error or misunderstanding. I suspect that some alternative readings were left undecided or imperfectly deleted in the foul papers. For instance when Othello embroiders on the theme 'Put out the light', the reading of Q, 'but once put out thine', and that of F, 'but once put out thy light', may both go back to Shakespeare's own hand. And so in part at least may the two versions of Emilia's subsequent speech:

Q: 'Twill out, 'twill! I hold my peace, sir? No!

I'll be, in speaking, liberal as the air . . .

F: 'Twill out, 'twill out! I, peace?

No, I will speak as liberal as the North . . .

If not, it will be difficult to avoid bringing in an element of reporting, and the texts are too good for that.

But I am not convinced that either Q or F was printed directly from the foul papers, though the cuts might of course have been indicated in these and observed by one compositor but not the other. The stage directions are normal for an author and have a common basis in the two texts.¹ Q adds some elucidations of the action: these would be adequate for the stage but show no marked characteristics of the prompter. In F the directions are fewer and generally briefer and would be rather inadequate for performance. Q has one massed entry (at 1. iii. 47, recalling those in the *The Merry Wives*) with duplication later: this is not in F. Q is the only early quarto divided into acts: F adds a division into scenes.

Both texts show signs of editing. An amusing instance of

¹ See appendix (p. 173).

what I take to be interference by the sophisticating editor of the folio occurs in the last act where Lodovico explains

that belike Iago in the nick
Came in and satisfied him.

The editor objected to the colloquial 'nick' and substituted 'interim'¹—and I am sorry to say that the Cambridge editors fell for it. A single page of Q (sig. C4) illustrates the editing on both sides. There is a line divided between two speakers that runs (correctly) in Q:

Due to the Moor, my lord.—God bu'y, I ha' done.

F ruins it by a pedantic expansion of the second half to 'God be with you: I have done'. A little later a patch of prose by the Duke marks the transition from moralizing to business, and this is led up to by one prose line appended by Brabantio to his sententious couplets:

I humbly beseech you proceed to th' affairs of state.

So F: but Q seeks to reduce it to verse in the form:

Beseech you now, to the affairs of the state.

I think it probable that Q was printed from a private transcript made from the foul papers with a fair amount of editing. There is no indication of playhouse use, the tinkering being literary rather than theatrical. In that case of course there is no knowing how the manuscript got into the publisher's hands. But in view of the protection extended in 1619 by the Lord Chamberlain to the King's men's plays we can hardly believe it was printed without their sanction.² Still, if the copy did not come from the playhouse, this may account for the folio editors' mistrust of the quarto text. F may possibly have been printed from the foul papers themselves, supposing them to have been a good deal edited subsequent to the assumed transcript; but perhaps, in spite of a few queer spellings that might be Shakespearian, it is more

¹ So in *Hamlet*, I. i. 65, 'jump at this dead hour' (Q1, 2), he substituted 'just' for 'jump'.

² See above, p. 44. It was entered on 6 Oct. 1621 under the hand of Sir George Buc.

probable that another transcript intervened. Again there is no indication that this was made for the theatre.

In 1630 a second quarto appeared. It was printed from Q1, but with the omitted passages restored. Clark and Wright believed that these were derived, not from F, but from a manuscript, which would give them independent authority. Chambers doubts this—I think with reason, for it is clear that Q2 did have recourse to F elsewhere. It is, namely, expurgated, and though the purgation is not as thorough as in F, where oaths are altered the alteration is almost always the same. For instance:

Q1: O God! O heavenly God!

F, Q2: O heaven! O heavenly powers!

Also in a passage already cited Q2 like F reads 'interim' in place of 'nick'. It would be surprising therefore if Q2 had drawn on a different source for the restorations. There are of course a few errors and variants. Presumably the passages were copied into the margins of a copy of Q1, and not always correctly copied. The heavy punctuation and capitalization of F have disappeared; but even if the copyist preserved them the compositor would naturally tend to follow a uniform style. It would have been simpler, one would suppose, to have printed Q2 directly from F: there may have been copyright objections.

TROILUS AND CRESSIDA

I suspect that the manuscripts used for *Troilus and Cressida* were of a somewhat similar character, though here F appears to have been actually set up from a corrected copy of Q. I think there can be no doubt of this. Besides common errors and unusual spellings there are several points where the arrangement in F can only be explained by peculiarities in Q that the latter is unlikely to have taken over from its copy. But if so, the example of Q used for F had been extensively altered from another source, since besides minor changes several short passages are added. The relation of the manuscripts behind Q and F is a particularly difficult problem. Revision has of course been suggested. But besides more general objections there is the difficulty of