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5

Rethinking Prologues and Epilogues on Page and Stage

*Sonia Massai and Heidi Craig**

Our chapter rethinks current notions about early modern prologues and epilogues, by considering, for the first time,¹ how differently these documents functioned on the stage and on the page. These documents are, for example, permanently printed in playbooks (when they were included), even though they were impermanently part of performance; they are permanently not printed in playbooks (when they were not included), even though they were spoken on stage; they were sometimes added to, or written for, the page; and they were sometimes tweaked for readers. This chapter therefore recovers the untold, specifically non-performance-focused story of prologues and epilogues, looking at, but also beyond, their function as theatrical documents spoken in early modern playhouses to consider them as texts that found their way into printed playbooks.

This chapter also offers an overview of the rate of inclusion of prologues and epilogues in early modern printed playbooks. By so doing, it aims to establish whether some types of printed

playbooks were more likely than others to include prologues and epilogues, how prologues and epilogues changed over time, and the extent to which printed prologues and epilogues may relate to the prologues and epilogues that were spoken on stage. By focusing on prologues and epilogues as theatrical and print documents, we demonstrate that these texts had functions apart from – and sometimes contrary to – those of their stage counterparts. Printed prologues and epilogues illuminate the complexity of remediation, including the various strategies used to repackage plays existing in the theatrical medium for the medium of print, which is also a central concern of Claire M. L. Bourne's chapter in this volume. While the presence of printed prologues and epilogues may signal a playtext's beginnings on the stage, such paratexts transcend their theatrical origins and take on lives of their own in print.

Out of the 622 plays listed in W. W. Greg's *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration* up to 1642, 33 per cent include prologues and 26 per cent include epilogues.² The rate of inclusion is relatively comparable for prologues and epilogues over time, as shown in Figure 5.1. In most ten-year periods from 1590 to 1642,³ the numbers of prologues and epilogues rise as the numbers of first editions rise and vice versa, except for the 1590s, when the number of first editions soars, but the number of prologues and epilogues included in first editions plummets. The rate of inclusion of prologues and epilogues continued to rise after the closure of the theatres in 1642. Out of the 191 first editions listed in Greg printed between 1643 and 1660, twenty-two texts have prologues only, eleven have epilogues only, and sixty-eight have both prologues and epilogues; over half of first editions from this period (101 out of 191, or 53 per cent) have therefore either prologues or epilogues.

The drop in the inclusion rate of prologues and epilogues in printed playbooks in the 1590s is extraordinary, and more extraordinary still is the fact that it has not been considered hitherto, given that it challenges received views about the relative popularity of prologues and epilogues in the period. While critics have so far assumed that statements about prologues and

FIGURE 5.1 *Rate of publication and rate of inclusion of Prologues and Epilogues in First Editions.*

epilogues spoken onstage apply equally to their incarnations in print, we reveal the differences between the rates of inclusion of, and attitudes towards, theatrical and printed paratexts. Representative of early scholarship on early modern dramatic paratexts is E. K. Chambers, who states that '[t]he applause was often invited in the closing speech or in a formal epilogue, on the same lines as the prologue, which it seems to have replaced in favour about the end of the sixteenth century'.⁴ Chambers reached this conclusion in light of passing references to the relative popularity of prologues and epilogues in the period. One of them comes from *The Birth of Hercules*, a university manuscript play (1597–c. 1600), where the fifth line of the prologue reads 'the epilogue is in fashion; prologues no more'.⁵ Chambers is correctly quoting what people said at the time about *performance* – and assumes the same holds true of printed paratexts. The *printing* records, however, tell a different story. The numbers of printed prologues, compared to the numbers of printed epilogues, from 1600 onwards suggest that prologues remained popular, at least for readers, as shown in Figure 5.1. The other two extracts quoted by Chambers, moreover, suggest that only some stage prologues may have gone out of fashion, among them Inductions. According to the prologue that prefaced Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Woman Hater* (London: R. Raworth, 1607), 'Inductions [were by then] out of date, and a Prologue in Verse, [was] as stale as a black Velvet Cloak, and a Bay Garland'.⁶

Other types of prologues and epilogues were, however, just starting to become popular, at least among readers, judging from their survival rate in print. The 'Prologue at Blackfriars' that prefaces Philip Massinger's *The Emperor of the East* (London: J. Waterson, 1632), for example, refers to the practice of speaking a prologue as an 'imperious custome'. Massinger's performed prologue presumably relates to the performance of the text licensed by Henry Herbert in 1631. But what happens when that performance observation is printed for readers? And did the imperious custom of the stage prologue exert a similar pressure on plays in print? The soaring numbers of prologues

and epilogues included in printed playbooks in the 1630s suggests that the fashion for speaking prologues was indeed felt in printing houses, such that stationers were expected to print prologues, even when, as here, they were stage-oriented and self-hating. Ironically, such printed prologues, included to replicate fashionable theatrical experience, actually flag up a disconnection between stage and page. *The Emperor of the East* is also representative of the types of playbooks that started to include prologues and epilogues more regularly than others. Figure 5.2 shows the number of first editions that included prologues and epilogues, per type of playbook.

Up to 1590, prologues and epilogues were mostly included in interludes, moralities and miracle plays. After the drop in the inclusion rate of both prologues and epilogues in playbooks published in the 1590s, the most significant rise in the numbers of printed prologues and epilogues occurs in commercial plays originally staged by children's companies in the 1600s and then by adult companies in the 1630s. The 1600s and the 1630s are remarkable for the so-called 'War of the Poets' and the open rivalry between Blackfriars and the Cockpit/Phoenix,⁷ but also because they marked two time periods when theatre-making was at its most self-conscious. Prologues and epilogues often focused on the purpose of playwriting, play-going and play-reading; indeed, some are self-conscious about the role of prologues and epilogues, as the example of *The Emperor of the East* indicates. The numbers of prologues and epilogues in printed playbooks during these two time-periods seem therefore to have soared because these paratexts became privileged *page* sites in which playwrights could propose, nuance or criticize different modes of writing, staging, or responding to contemporary drama, either as performed or as reproduced in print. Similarly, the closure of the theatres ushered in a new era of dramatic self-consciousness, when the rise in printed prologues and epilogues reflected a wider increase in dramatic paratexts printed between 1642 and 1660. Interregnum prologues and epilogues could be newly written for the page, reflecting the time of publication, not the moment of performance; these and other

FIGURE 5.2 *First Editions featuring Prologues and Epilogues, per type of play.*

paratexts written during the Interregnum often articulated the value and nature of drama in a moment when the stage was suppressed. At the same time, the effort to recover and publish older stage orations reflected a new appreciation for theatrical documents previously deemed to be expendable.

The drop in the inclusion rate of prologues and epilogues in printed playbooks published in the 1590s seems significant, especially in light of the paratexts' rise in popularity in the 1600s, 1630s, and during the Interregnum. Given that this drop is limited to a single ten-year period, it seems unreasonable to assume that dramatically fewer prologues and epilogues were spoken on stage in the 1590s than from 1600 onwards, even in light of the introduction of benefit performances (special performances for which a share of the revenue would be received by the playwright as part of his payment for writing the play).⁸ The introduction of the benefit performance did not simply replace a non-commercial economic model that relied on aristocratic patronage alone. Aristocratic patronage is indeed crucial to an understanding of the old moralities as 'elite great-hall plays', whose pedagogical purposes reflected 'the moral economy of household life'; the prologues and epilogues printed with moralities, emphasising their edifying mixture of learning and mirth, reinforce an understanding of the economic/material conditions of theatrical productions in aristocratic households.⁹ However, scholars, including Paul Whitfield White, have shown that the old moralities, whose title pages often included character lists that specified how many actors were needed to perform them, were also regularly performed by professional and amateur companies in public halls and play-performing taverns.¹⁰ Even so, references to public performances in prologues prefaced to the old moralities, which may have functioned to invite applause and remuneration, are extremely rare. An isolated example occurs in Lewis Wager, *The Repentance of Mary Magdalene* (1566):

Hipocrites that wold not haue their fautes reueled
Imagine slaunder our facultie to let,

Faine wold they haue their wickednes still concealed
 Therfore maliciously against vs they be set,
 O (say they) muche money they doe get.
 Truly I say, whether you geue halfpence or pence,
 Your gayne shalbe double, before you depart hence.

...

Is wisdom no more worth than a peny trow you?
 Scripture calleth the price thereof incomparable.
 Here may you learne godly Sapience now,
 Which to body and soule shall be profitable.¹¹

The unusual reference to a paying audience in this prologue suggests that occasional prologues, the ‘impermanent’ prologues and epilogues that Stern describes in ‘Prologues, Epilogues, Interim Entertainment’,¹² were not included in printed editions of Tudor interludes as often as the didactic ones that have survived in print. The drop in the number of prologues and epilogues in the 1590s should therefore be ascribed not to a waning of popularity on stage but to what types of prologues and epilogues were deemed to be popular with readers at different times during the entire period under discussion here.

The closure of the theatres in 1642 marked a new phase in the production and transmission of plays in print so the rise in the rate of inclusion of prologues and epilogues after 1642 must be considered more closely: it illuminates not only dramatic attitudes from the era of the theatre ban, but also from the period when the playhouses were open – just. For example, the large numbers of prologues and epilogues included in editions of Beaumont and Fletcher’s plays printed after 1642 suggest a significant gap between the number of prologues and epilogues spoken on stage and those transmitted into print before 1642. Out of the eighteen first editions of Beaumont and Fletcher plays printed before 1642, only six (33 per cent) are printed with either a prologue or epilogue.¹³ By contrast, out of the thirty-five works first printed in the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio of 1647, twenty-one (60 per

cent) are printed with either a prologue or epilogue.¹⁴ If the theatrical paratexts in the 1647 Folio mostly reflect what was actually spoken onstage before 1642, it is unreasonable to assume that the Beaumont and Fletcher plays that happened to be first printed before 1642 were about half as likely to have prologues and epilogues spoken onstage than those that happened to be first printed after 1642. Rather, this increase in inclusion suggests that, after the closure of the theatres, stationers made a concerted effort to reproduce the theatrical experience for reading audiences who could not easily access it. Accordingly, a printer's note in the Beaumont and Fletcher Folio draws attention to the inclusion of theatrical paratexts and the efforts taken to retrieve them, ending with an admission that some were not composed by the dramatists themselves: 'WE forgot to tell the *Reader*, that some *Prologues* and *Epilogues* (here inserted) were not written by the *Authours* of this *Volume*; but made by others on the *Revivall* of severall *Playes*'.¹⁵ This statement raises profound questions about printed prologues and epilogues, asking how many that survive might derive from revivals, not from original performances; it also demonstrates the unprecedented importance accorded to stage orations in print in this later period, when the stage was suppressed.

Although the printing of prologues and epilogues ostensibly forges a connection between a play's staged and textual iterations, ironically, it can also highlight a fundamental disconnection between stage and page. This occurs repeatedly and consistently throughout the period. For example, the prologue attached to *Wily Beguiled* (London: C. Knight, 1606) reveals disparities, rather than continuities, between the two media. The prologue begins with a meta-theatrical joke: upon entering, the Prologue asks a player, 'What play shall wee have here tonight?' The Player answers: 'Sir you may look upon the title.' Looking upon a title-board upon which 'Spectrum' is written (see Matthew Steggle's chapter in this volume for more on the use of stage boards) the Prologue complains, 'What *Spectrum* once again?' A Juggler enters and switches the title-

board: a stage direction states that ‘*Spectrum* is conueied away: and *Wily beguiled* stands in the place of it’.¹⁶ The joke depends on elements of surprise and confusion; in the theatre, the title-board authoritatively announces the title. The impact of this joke is lessened in print: in the play’s first edition, ‘*Wily Beguiled*’ is what is authoritatively printed on the title page, while ‘*Spectrum*’ is only the head title. The Player’s instruction to ‘look upon the title’ generates two different responses: in the theatre, both Prologue and spectator look towards a title-board marked ‘*Spectrum*’; in the playbook, the reader looks to the title page (where one should ‘look upon the title’) and sees ‘*Wily Beguiled*’. The experiences of the Prologue and spectator are aligned in the theatre but diverge in the context of print. Efforts to reproduce stage effects in print therefore reveal a disconnection between the functions of the theatrical prologue and of its printed iteration; similar such print divisions are addressed by Bourne in this volume.

Another potential disconnection between page and stage emerges when one considers whether printed theatrical paratexts reflect what was actually spoken on stage, either with the particular play with which it was printed, or even at all. Stern notes that prologues and epilogues regularly circulated outside their plays, which led to their regular loss; as she puts it, ‘one reason why printed plays often lack prologues or epilogues is that the papers containing them had wandered, not that they never existed’.¹⁷ But, as she also notes, stage orations also ‘wandered’ into different plays. We know that theatrical paratexts were recycled; the same prologue is prefaced to Dekker’s *Wonder of a Kingdom* (London: N. Vavasour, 1636) and Rowley’s *All’s Lost by Lust* (London; T. Harper, 1633), while the prologue to the 1635 edition of Beaumont’s *Knight of the Burning Pestle* is borrowed (with the omission of one line) from Lyly’s *Sappho and Phao* (London: T. Cadman, 1584).

The potential disconnection between extant printed theatrical paratexts and what was actually spoken on stage is especially high in plays printed after 1642. During the theatre ban, already-itinerant theatrical documents would have been

particularly susceptible to loss – the longer the period between performance and publication, the greater the likelihood that such documents would go missing, while the upheaval that attended the theatrical prohibition threatened dramatic manuscripts of all kinds.¹⁸ In this respect, the increase in printed stage orations after 1642 is particularly remarkable; it suggests perhaps a comparative indifference to them before 1642, when copy texts of stage orations would have been more readily available. It could also be that some of these prologues and epilogues were actually written after the closure of the theatres but presented as pre-1642 documents to bolster the text's ability to conjure the absent theatre. (For further reflection on lost, absent and forged theatrical documents, see Roslyn L. Knutson and David McInnis's chapter in this volume).

Unsurprisingly, given the gap between the interest in and the supply of stage orations after 1642, it appears that post-1642 stationers attached prologues and epilogues to plays in print that may not have had them – or may have had different ones – in performance. In Andrew Crooke and Henry Brome's edition of *Five New Plays* (London: A. Crooke and H. Brome, 1659) by Richard Brome, for instance, the same epilogue appears twice: it is printed after *The Lovesick Court* and then again following *The Weeding of Covent Garden*, where it is the first of two epilogues attached to the play; the latter play also features two prologues. This epilogue may have been spoken aloud with both plays, but Crooke and Brome's inclusive publication of dramatic paratexts in *Five New Plays* suggests otherwise. Matthew Steggle has noted that, along with the two prologues and epilogues, the paratextual matter to *The Weeding of Covent Garden* contain 'three extra, anomalous, items' that have little to do with the play itself: Richard Brome's verse satire 'Upon Aglaura printed in Folio', attacking the overly large format of Suckling's play; an eight-line song that has no obvious connection to *Weeding*, but which replicates lines from a song in Brome's comedy *A Jovial Crew*; and Brome's commendatory poem to William Cavendish's *The Variety*.¹⁹ The generic epilogue attached to both *The Lovesick Court* and

The Weeding of Covent Garden could therefore reflect Crooke and Brome's catch-all approach to paratexts, rather than their fidelity to what was actually spoken onstage.

It is especially doubtful that the recycled theatrical paratexts attached to an edition of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Thierry and Theodoret* (Q2b [London: H. Moseley, 1649]) reflect what was actually spoken onstage during the play's performance. Neither of the first two editions of *Thierry* (Q1 [London: T. Walkley, 1621] and the first issue of Q2, from 1648) includes a prologue or epilogue. The second issue of *Thierry* Q2 (1649), features a prologue and epilogue previously attached, respectively, to Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Noble Gentleman* (from F1 1647) and to Shirley's *The Changes, or Love in a Maze* (Q1 1632). The epilogue to *The Noble Gentleman* meanwhile was repurposed for the second issue of the Second Quarto (Q2b) of Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Woman Hater*, published in 1649 by Humphrey Moseley. Critics have characterized these borrowings as indiscriminate: Fredson Bowers described *Thierry* Q2b's theatrical paratexts as 'dramatic flotsam';²⁰ Tiffany Stern, noting the 'frank plunder' of *The Noble Gentleman*'s stage orations for *Thierry* and *The Woman Hater*, comments that 'it is as though any old Beaumont and Fletcher prologue or epilogue would do for any of their texts'.²¹ However, while it is true that *Thierry*'s theatrical paratexts – associated with other plays and only attached to a reprint several years after the closure of theatres – were probably never spoken aloud with that play, the ostensibly indiscriminate recycling of theatrical paratexts seems more careful upon closer inspection. First, why would a stationer (perhaps Humphrey Moseley, the edition's publisher) go to the trouble of sourcing stage orations from two different plays (and one from another dramatist), when he could simply reuse *The Noble Gentleman*'s epilogue along with its prologue? We know the epilogue to *The Noble Gentleman* lent itself to being recycled, since it was reattached it to Q2b of *The Woman Hater*. Moreover, while the theatrical paratexts do not necessarily resonate with *Thierry*, they do resonate with the

new context of publication in the late 1640s. *The Changes* epilogue can be read as a poignant commentary on the current moment of theatrical silence:

If not for what we are, (for alas here
No Roscius moves to charme your eyes, or eare)
Yet as you hope hereafter to see Playes,
Encourage us and give our Poet bayes.²²

What in 1632 appears to be a highly conventional apology and request for approval becomes in 1649 a pointed reference to theatrical suppression. That there is 'No Roscius' 'to charme your eyes, or eare', is no longer simply an acknowledgment that contemporary actors fail to live up to the standard set by the Roman actor, a paradigm of dramatic excellence. The absence of Roscius instead evokes the regrettable loss of an entire tradition of theatrical performance. Likewise, the straightforward connection between audience approval and continued performances asserted by the epilogue would have been a distant, bittersweet memory by 1649. The epilogue's promise that encouragement will lead to more plays could function as a call for a resumption of performance (a vain one given the tightening restrictions on theatre in the late 1640s);²³ at best it promises that approval will lead to more plays in print.²⁴ The example reveals that stationers' indifference to printing the performance faithfully did not mean that they indiscriminately printed whatever theatrical documents were at hand. On the contrary: turning away from what was actually spoken onstage gave stationers a wider choice of prologues and epilogues, the selection, reproduction (and perhaps even the composition?) of which could function as form of cultural commentary.

Prologues and epilogues could also be altered for the same play as it moved from performance into print. It is worth highlighting that even when occasional prologues and epilogues were included in a printed playbook, the printed version did not necessarily reflect the version that was spoken on stage.

As the title page in both editions of Richard Edwards' *Damon and Pithias* (1571, second edition 1582) suggests, print publication may lead to the revision of occasional prologues. Having explained that the play was '[n]ewly Imprinted, as the same was shewed be- / fore the Queenes Maiestie, by the Children of her Graces / Chappell', the title page goes on to specify that the prologue was instead 'somewhat al- / tered for the proper vse of them that hereafter / shall haue occasion to plaie it, either in / Priuate, or open Audience'.²⁵ We have known for a long time that print publication prompted authors like Ben Jonson to omit the work of his collaborators, and that plays often included more lines as printed playbooks than as spoken on stage.²⁶ But we are less aware of the fact that theatrical paratexts may also have been tweaked and changed in preparation for print publication.

A further disconnection between the stage and the page emerges when the logic for including prologues and epilogues in performance – they were typically spoken, only on first and special performances – is compared to the logic for including them in print. While the presence of a prologue and an epilogue in a playbook suggests a new play 'in its freshest and so most fluid state . . . while a play lacking them appeared to have been audience-tested and approved', once prologues and epilogues *were* included in a printed playbook, they subsequently tended to be reprinted – making exceptions to this rule telling.²⁷ If any changes occurred in the paratextual materials that accompanied the printed play, these changes were generally incremental additions or a reordering of the sequence in which these materials had originally been printed.

There are, however, a few telling exceptions to the tendency to reprint prologues and epilogues in later editions, which are worth exploring in detail, because they qualify, and therefore clarify and reinforce, the general principle that printed prologues and epilogues denote a stable (and, if anything, a growing) paratextual apparatus, which boosted the readerly status achieved by a play when the latter was reprinted.²⁸ In some cases, the omission of prologues and/or epilogues from

later editions appears to have occurred accidentally. For example, the prologue which appears in Q1 (1597) of *Romeo and Juliet* is dropped from the First Folio; some editors assume the compositor accidentally missed the Prologue printed on A2v because he cast the play off from the head title starting on A3.²⁹ Similarly, Greg speculates that Q2 1614's omission of the epilogue from Q1 *Wily Beguiled* (London: C. Knight, 1606) stems from 'the use of an imperfect copy'.³⁰ Whatever the cause, once the epilogue was dropped in Q2 (London: C. Knight, 1614), it was never restored in the subsequent editions of Q3 (London: C. Knight, 1623), Q4 (London: T. Knight, 1630), Q5 (London: T. Knight, 1635), Q6 (London: T. Alcorn, 1638). By contrast, the epilogue in Q1 of *Mercurius Britannicus* (London: 1641; publisher unknown for this edition and all subsequent editions) was probably omitted accidentally from Q2 (also 1641) because it was restored in Q3 (again, 1641), whose title page boasts that the text has been 'reprinted with sundry Additions'.

A further example from John Mason's *The Turk* (London: J. Busby, 1610) suggests that theatrical paratexts could be replaced with more literary ones to bolster the readerly status of the play. The prologue and epilogue that appeared in *The Turk*'s first edition (Q1) were omitted from Q2 (London: F. Faulkner, 1632), while a prose argument was added. The prologue and epilogue in Q1 are generic, while Q2's argument outlines the play's convoluted plot – a series of faked deaths and resurrections, and various configurations of romantic pairings. The omission of the prologue and epilogue and the addition of a new argument would therefore seem to have been deliberate: the replacement of a theatrical paratext with one that is arguably more 'literary' could be seen as an effort to reposition the play primarily as a reading text.

The omission of a prologue and epilogue could also be a part of a wider marketing strategy. For example, Henry Killigrew's *The Conspiracy* (London: A. Croke, 1638) included a verse prologue and epilogue, which were omitted from the play's single-text Folio edition of 1653, printed under the title

Pallantus and Eudora. In 'The Publisher to the Reader', the stationer John Hardesty characterizes 'the former impression' (Q1) as a '*Corrupted Fragment or Foul Draught* of what this Play was intended'. Hardesty states that if 'the Corrections, Expungings, and Additions be consider'd, it is almost the one half otherwise. This hath made me likewise impose a New Name upon it', i.e. *Pallantus and Eudora*.³¹ We have long known that reprints could be marketed by denigrating the texts of earlier editions – famously, Heminges and Condell urged readers to buy Shakespeare's First Folio by asserting that its plays already in print were 'diuerse stolne, and surreptitious copies' while F1 offered the plays 'cur'd, and perfect of their limbes'.³² As *Pallantus and Eudora* demonstrates, however, theatrical paratexts could fall victim to this process of textual 'corruption' and 'correction' – putting pressure on the seemingly clear division between text and paratext.

The fate of the joint prologue attached to the first edition of *The Troublesome Reign of King John* Parts 1 and 2 (Q1 [London: S. Clarke, 1591]) also suggests how the function of stage orations could be undermined if they were transmitted into print, and upheld if they were omitted. The joint prologue to Q1 registers the novelty of the play and the recent popularity of Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, referring to audiences who 'with friendly grace of smoothed brow / Have entertained the Scythian Tamburlaine, and given applause to an infidel', and entreats them to 'Vouchsafe to welcome . . . A warlike Christian and your countryman'.³³ Q2 (London: J. Helme, 1611) omits the joint prologue (but retains Q1's prologue to Part 2), perhaps because the reference to the play's novelty no longer held true, and because the reference to popular plays of the 1590s may have seemed dated by then. Far from making the play seem fresh, retaining such a prologue – with its patently untrue boasts of novelty and time-bound references – would only underscore the play's age. Ironically, the omission of *The Troublesome Reign's* prologue from Q2 makes the play seem fresher.

To conclude, this chapter has highlighted disconnections between the purpose of stage orations and printed theatrical

paratexts. It has therefore reinforced the notion championed by theatre and print historians, such as Stephen Orgel and Janette Dillon, that, if the play is a book, it is not a play.³⁴ These scholars have stressed the distance between text and performance, between what we can reasonably assume happened on stage and what was eventually reproduced on the page. We have similarly suggested that extant printed theatrical paratexts cannot always be taken to represent what was spoken on stage. The transmission from stage to page often marked a change in the purpose, phrasing, and collocation of these texts, which were not simply reproduced or omitted when stage plays reached the press, but were instead often radically transformed.

Notes

- * Craig gratefully acknowledges the support of the Huntington Library, where she completed her portion of this chapter as a short-term fellow.
- 1 Earlier studies have considered prologues and epilogues as dramatic, political or bibliographical devices: see, for example, Douglas Bruster and Robert Weimann, *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theatre: Performance and Liminality in Early Modern Drama* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), or David M. Bergeron, *Textual Patronage in English Drama: 1570–1640* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006). We instead focus on prologues and epilogues as textual artifacts and on their transmission from stage to page.
- 2 Our use of the term 'prologue' is inclusive of all varieties of prologic materials, ranging from choric introductions and choruses that introduce the play and then reappear throughout (as, for example, in *Henry V*), inductions, as well as prologues that introduce the play as performed and readerly prologues written for print.
- 3 Given the slow rise of a reading market for printed playbooks in the sixteenth century, we have included all first editions published between 1512 and 1590 in a single period-group; the 1630s have been rounded up to 1642.

- 4 E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 2: 550.
- 5 Chambers, 2: 547n.
- 6 Chambers, 2: 547n.
- 7 For more details, see, for example, J. P. Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Poets' War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001); Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996); Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearean Stage 1574–1642*, 4th edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); or Martin Butler, *Theatre and Crisis 1632–1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984).
- 8 See, for example, Tiffany Stern, *Documents of Performance in Early Modern England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), esp. 81–82 and 93–96. Stern establishes that ‘benefits were eased into the theatrical process, existing for some authors on some days in some theatres before 1600 or so, and existing for most authors in most theatres (and largely on the second day) only from the late 1620s’ (93).
- 9 G. Walker, *The Politics of Performance in Early Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 52.
- 10 Paul Whitfield White, *Theatre and Reformation: Protestantism, Patronage and Playing in Tudor England* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
- 11 Lewis Wager, *The Repentance of Mary Magdalene* (1566), A2v.
- 12 Stern, *Documents*, 81–119.
- 13 It is worth noting that some Beaumont and Fletcher plays include prologues and epilogues in second-plus editions printed before 1642, but not in first editions, such as the second edition of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1635), and the third edition of *The Maid's Tragedy* (1630). These editions confirm both the accretive nature of printed prologues and epilogues, as well as the revived interest in printing stage orations in the 1630s.
- 14 This higher rate of inclusion does not simply reflect the folio format; the relative paucity of stage orations in Shakespeare's First Folio [and of course there's the fact that the prologue to *Troilus* only entered really late and only because of contingencies in the playhouse] indicates that, while a large format could accommodate inclusion of prologues and epilogues, it did not guarantee it.

- 15 Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *Comedies and Tragedies* (London: H. Moseley and H. Robinson, 1647), g2r.
- 16 *Wily Beguiled* (London: C. Knight, 1606, 1614), A2r–v.
- 17 Stern, *Documents*, 100.
- 18 For example, because dramatic manuscripts were often housed in playhouses, unprinted plays and stage orations must have been lost forever when the theatres were pulled down. Gary Taylor, *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 51–52.
- 19 Matthew Steggle, 'Brome, Covent Garden, and 1641,' *Renaissance Forum* 5 (2001), Retrieved from <http://web.archive.org/web/20051219211148/http://www.hull.ac.uk/renforum/v5no2/steggle.htm>
- 20 Fredson Bowers, general ed., *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, 10 vols (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), 3: 373.
- 21 Stern, *Documents*, 106.
- 22 James Shirley, *Changes, or Love in a Maze* (London: W. Cooke, 1632), A1v.
- 23 Parliament renewed the ordinance against playing four times, on 16 July 1647, 11 August 1647, 22 October 1647, and 9 February 1648, each time increasing the severity of the penalties for actors and spectators who contravened the law. Authorities also cracked down on surreptitious performance during and immediately following the trial and execution of Charles I, conducting destructive theatrical raids in January 1649 and pulling down the Fortune, Cockpit and Salisbury Court theatres in March 1649.
- 24 Although Greg, Bowers and Stern point out that *Thierry* reprints *The Changes* epilogue, a single word change seems to have gone unnoticed. In *Changes*, the prologue promises 'if this Play / Proceed more fortunate, wee shall *blesse* the day'; in *Thierry* this line has become, 'if this Play / Proceed more fortunate, wee shall *crown* the day.' (our emphasis) The change in wording from 'bless' to 'crown' seems significant in the context of the year of publication.
- 25 Richard Edwards, *Damon and Pithias* (1571), A1r.

- 26 The title page of Ben Jonson's *Every Many Out of His Humour* (London: W. Holme, 1600), for example, states that the printed text of the play '[c]ontain[s] more than hath been Publickely spo- / ken or Acted' (A2r). In 'To the Reader', his preface to *Sejanus his Fall* (London: T. Thorpe, 1605), Jonson once again provides one of the best-known accounts of how print publication occasioned the removal of lines by a collaborator: 'Lastly I would informe you, that this Booke, in all nū- / bers, is not the same with that which was acted on the / publike Stage, wherein a second Pen had good share: in / place of which I haue rather chosen, to put weaker (and / no doubt lesse pleasing) of mine own, then to defraud so / happy a *Genius* of his right, by my lothed vsurpation' (¶2v).
- 27 Stern, *Documents*, 82; exceptions are discussed on 101.
- 28 Reprints of playbooks denote exceptional levels of popularity among early readers, given that, on average, only one in six plays reached publication in the period, and less than half were ever reprinted, let alone reprinted more than twice. For more details, see, for example, Peter W. M. Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', in J. D. Cox and D. S. Kastan, eds, *A New History of Early English Drama* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997), 387.
- 29 Stanley Wells, Gary Taylor, John Jowett, and W. Montgomery, eds, *The Oxford Shakespeare: A Textual Companion* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), 290.
- 30 W. W. Greg, *A Bibliography of the English Printed Drama to the Restoration*, 4 vols (London: Printed for the Bibliographical Society at the University Press, Oxford, 1939–59), 1: 234b.
- 31 H. Killigrew, *Pallantus and Eudora*, London: J. Hardesty. 1653), A2r.
- 32 Heminges in William Shakespeare, *Comedies, Histories and Tragedies* (London: E. Blount, J. Smethwick, I. Jaggard, W. Aspley, 1623), πA3r.
- 33 *Tamberlaine* (A2r).
- 34 Stephen Orgel, 'The Book of the Play', in P. Holland and S. Orgel, eds, *From Performance to Print in Shakespeare's England* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 13–54; Janette Dillon, 'Is There a Performance in this Text?', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 45 (1994), 74–86.