

REVIEWS

*The Plays of George Chapman: The Tragedies with
'Sir Gyles Goosecappe': A Critical Edition,*

General Editor: Allan Holaday,

Assisted by G. Blakemore Evans and Thomas L. Berger

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It was in 1970 that the University of Illinois Press published an edition, in old-spelling, of George Chapman's comedies under the general editorship of Allan Holaday. Scholars then expected a Tragedies volume to follow in a short time but seventeen years have had to pass before their expectations were met with the publication of the title under review. In spite of the lapse of time and the change of publishers, it is a welcome publication and Allan Holaday, General Editor, well deserves praise, although he has edited no plays himself in this volume. As much praise should go to the individual editors, especially to G. Blakemore Evans and Thomas L. Berger who extended their devotional assistance to the General Editor, without which its publication would not have been possible. How difficult it may have been to bring their work to fruition can be seen from the memorial dedication to two editors, John Hazel Smith and Dennis G. Donovan. In fact, apart from the General Editor, Evans alone participated in the preparation of both the Comedies and the Tragedies volumes.

The Tragedies volume skilfully adopts every aspect of the format of its companion volume to such an extent that nobody, unless unusually attentive, would probably realize the change of publishers and the lapse of time. Even the General Introduction, signed by the three scholars mentioned in the headline, is taken word for word from the Comedies volume, the last paragraph being rewritten for a fresh acknowledgement. But the new volume introduces useful improvements: it provides, on the verso of Contents, a list of *Abbreviations* of periodicals and codes used in the volume. The tragedies included are *Bussy D'Ambois*, the Byron plays, *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, *Caesar and Pompey*, and *Chabot Admirall of France*. The edited text of each play with succinct textual footnotes is preceded by a Textual Introduction and followed by a Historical Collation, Press-Variants, and Textual Notes.

The late Professor John Hazel Smith, who contributed a good edition of

The Gentleman Usher to the Regents Renaissance Drama series, again made an excellent contribution to this Tragedies volume by producing a parallel text edition of the 1607 and the 1625 versions of *Bussy D'Ambois*. How formidable the editorial problems of this play can be will be seen from his well documented description of relevant studies during the past fifty years. Scholars' opinions about, and their inevitable evaluation of, revisions apparent in the 1625 version have fluctuated from one side to another, leading one of the editors to a belief in the 1607 version as his basic text and another to a belief in the 1625 version, and yet another to a belief in 'editorial' eclecticism more or less traditionally observed by those who pay their respect to both versions. Faced with the difficult editorial problems inherent in *Bussy D'Ambois*, Smith was really brave to review a good number of important opinions offered from both sides of the Atlantic, pinning down the burden of each argument most efficiently in such a small space allowed for the Textual Introduction. He came to "have the impression that most previous editors who have seriously deliberated the question [of revision] have been as much guided by their aesthetic preferences as by anything else" (p. 22). "But it is by no means impossible," he wrote, "for an author, any author, to weaken a work in revision" (p. 22). He goes on, "A critic has the right to tell him he has done so; a producer may have the power to prevent him from doing so; an editor has the right of the critic, but not the power of the producer" (p. 22). An admirable scholar and editor, Smith was judiciously and indeed rightly persuaded by Robert Adams's 1966 "astute comment (later echoed by Tricomi [in 1973]) that '*Bussy I* and *Bussy II* [i.e., the two versions of the play] are so different from each other that, if we seriously respect the integrity of texts, it is only good sense to treat these plays as two different works of art'" (p. 23) and he "decided that a parallel text edition of both versions would be more useful to scholars than would yet another editor's *choice* between the two" (p. 23). Adams surely, and Smith most probably, judging from the dates of the articles he consulted, anticipated the recent tendency of the contemporary editorial climate that culminated in 1986 in the two versions of Shakespeare's *King Lear* in the one-volume Oxford Shakespeare. Smith has presented his parallel text with a useful typographical device embedded in it. He has printed every verbal variation between the two versions so unambiguously in boldface that the interested reader of the text of the 1607 quarto may immediately recognize at the corresponding place on the facing page an actual revision carried out. His parallel text will be certain not only to facilitate but also to stimulate comparative studies of the two versions.

It is not an easy task for the General Editor to keep his team of individual editors always under his reasonable control, having them stick to his editorial

principles at large. Where press-variants occur in both formes of a sheet, their arrangement does not seem to be always consistent. For example, in *Bussy D'Ambois*, the general rule throughout is that the variants in the inner forme should be recorded before those in the outer forme; and this is the case with the Byron plays, as with *The Blind Beggar of Alexandria* and *Monsieur D'Olive* in the Comedies volume. But that rule applies no more to *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, *Caesar and Pompey*, *Chabot Admirall of France*, and *Sir Gyles Goosecappe* than to the plays in the Comedies volume. Probably a more serious inconsistency, which is not so noticeable in the Comedies volume, lies in each editor's attitude towards the extant copies of the quarto(s) for collation. Thomas Berger, who has assisted the General Editor, recently emphasized the importance of studying press-variants and wrote that the "collation of *all* extant copies of a particular text is . . . a necessary if onerous task [for editors, although] its rewards are most often negligible" ("Press Variants in Substantive Shakespearian Dramatic Quartos", *The Library*, Sixth series, Vol. 10 (1988), p. 240). In fact, it is only Thomas Berger and the late Dennis Donovan who have been rigorous enough with this matter: they have tracked down and collated forty-five extant copies of *Caesar and Pompey*, including the copy in the Hamilton Collection of the Royal Library of Sweden and several other copies in the possession of private individuals such as Robert H. Taylor in Princeton, N. J. (I must confess that about a dozen years ago, when I studied the play, I failed to track down nine of their forty-five copies, in addition to two copies in the Kodama Memorial Library of Meisei University which I have only recently come to know about—the consequence was my failure to discover four pairs of variants, each occurring in the outer forme of sheets B, E, and I and the inner forme of sheet H.) The other less rigorous editors have failed to record a good number of press-variants. Worthy of serious attention is indeed Berger's warning given with special reference to Shakespearian quartos. In this context, it may be pertinent to mention how the quartos of Chapman's plays have been dealt with in the Tragedies volume.

The quartos of *Bussy D'Ambois* listed in the PRESS-VARIANTS are divided into two groups, 'First Quarto' and 'Second Quarto'. The former comprises the 1607 edition and its 1608 issue, and the latter the 1641 edition and its subsequent issues down to 1657. There are many more copies than Smith lists: at least two more copies of the 1607 edition, i.e., another BL (Ashley 375) and Bodl (the 'Verulam Plays' copy); two more copies of the 1608 issue (University of London and the Taylor copy in NjP); eleven more copies of the 1641 edition, i.e., another BL (C.12.g.5(1)), Bodl (Malone Q.1.), three Cambridge copies (Magdalene College, Gonville and Caius College, Trinity College), Eton College (Chapman II(c)), IU, Meisei University, NjP,

NLS, another TxU (one that is not bound); a copy of the 1641 issue, i.e., CSmH (D/C1942/114347); five copies of the 1646 issue, i.e., BL (644.d.43), CSmH, DFO, MH (14424.13.8*), Hamilton (Royal Library of Sweden, Vol. C, 7); two copies of the 1657 issue, i.e. BL (644.d.44), Forster (Victoria and Albert Museum). It is not surprising that the variants in the 'Second Quarto' which occur in the uncorrected state of the Eton copy and/or the BL copy (C.12.g.5(1)) have escaped recording. They include besides a few others the following:

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|-----------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| C ₃ | 32 (II.i.128) | th'tw'other]tw'other |
| | 28 (II.ii.15) | ith']it'h |
| I ₁ | 27 (V.i.143) | yet,]yet |
| | 34 (V.i.150) | rock]rock, |
| I ₂ ^v | 16 (V.ii.47) | others]other |
| | 20 (V.ii.51) | drop)]drop, |
| | 33 (V.iii.1) | none]noe |
| | 35 (V.iii.2) | <i>Exeunt</i>]Exit |
| I ₃ | 5 (V.iii.9) | fore-warn'd.]for-warned: |
| | 6 (V.iii.10) | come:]come, |
| | 36 (V.iii.40) | pow'rs.]pow'rs; |

In addition to the copies collated of the 1608 edition of *Charles Duke of Byron*, there are at least six more copies, i.e., CtW, Meisei University copy, NjP (Taylor), Pforz, University of Newcastle upon Tyne copy, and NLS, although the last one is missing for many years and not available. The editor John B. Gabel has recorded no press-variants in the 1625 edition, which he thinks originated in "an ignorantly edited copy of Q₁" (p. 272). Fortunately he has been able to discover all the press-variants in the 1608 edition but his decision of the corrected and the uncorrected states has failed to convince me on several occasions. For example, interesting variants, well-known to scholars of Chapman's plays, occur in the inner forme of sheet H and Gabel, in compliance with a more or less traditional view of the matter, takes the readings such as "idle and ridiculus King" (though not 'ridiculus' as he prints it; *The Conspiracy*, V.ii.5) to be in the uncorrected state. He even claims in his Textual Note that "There is no question that 'age' [V.ii.154] occurs in the uncorrected state of the forme, 'gae' in the corrected" (p. 418). But this does not seem to be quite true: two occasions of stop-correction appear to have taken place in that forme. Correction (including respacing) to be carried out in one way or another was called for at six places, as for example from "BY RONS" to "BYRONS" in the running-title or from "gae" to "age". What actually happened, I believe, was that at a fairly early stage of the print run, the split "BY RONS"

caught the corrector's eye for immediate correction, perpetuating itself in only several copies. All the other errors such as "gae" escaped his eye until he realized much later that he should have corrected the typo and at the same time altered the distorted text to restore the blank verse metre at V.ii.5, thus leaving the corrected readings in several copies only. (Incidentally, Gabel nevertheless rightly accepts the reading, "idle and ridiculus King".)

Robert J. Lordi, who is in charge of *The Revenge of Bussy D'Ambois*, has also come short of full collation. There are at least four more copies of the 1613 quarto: IU, Meisei University copy, NjP, and NLS. He appears to have overlooked two pairs of variants in the inner forme of sheet A and another less important pair in either forme of sheet E, those in sheet A being 'worth]worthy' (Dedication 23) and 'fictions:]fictions,' (Dedication 26). Probably he should have divided the variants in the outer forme of sheet C into two states of correction, assigning 'dry]dye', 'engender,]engender' and 'lines]liues' to the second state, so that one can know more tangibly how stop-correction was carried out.

I have already said much about *Caesar and Pompey* as a tribute of respect to its editors, Thomas Berger and the late Dennis Donovan. If the case of *Caesar and Pompey* can be taken as representing one of the opposite extremes of the General Editor's principles, that of *Chabot Admirall of France* does the other. Evans collated fourteen copies of the 1639 edition but there are in fact at least twenty-six more copies known to be extant: three in the Bodley (Mal. 188(4); Mal. 254(3); Mal. B.166(6)), two in Newcastle upon Tyne University, one each in Bristol Public Library, Cambridge (Trinity College), Eton College (A.413), Leeds University, London University, Sheffield University, the Royal Library of Sweden (Hamilton Collection, Vol. H, 7), CLUC, DLC (though not permitted to photograph), ICN, ICU, IU, MB (another copy), NjP (Taylor), NLS, NN, NNC, Pforz, PU, and two copies of MWiW-C. Records of press-variants, therefore, seems to be inevitably incomplete and unrecorded variants occur in sheets B (outer—uncorrected: CLUC, etc.), C (outer—uncorrected: TxU, etc./inner—State I, uncorrected: MWiW-C¹; State II, uncorrected: TxU; State III, uncorrected: NNP, ViU), D (outer—uncorrected: CLUC, etc.), and G (inner—uncorrected: IU). Apart from various examples of "chaotic punctuation" (p. 624), what I think are relatively important are the following variants:

B4 ^v	RT	<i>Admirall of France</i>]French Admirall
C4 ^v	1 (II.iii.145)	Kings]King [?]
C3 ^v	1 (II.iii.79)	fitly]om. [State II]
C1 ^v	12 (II.ii.46)	heart.]hearts: [State III]

- G₂ 8 (IV.i.349) Made of]But shade of
 9 (IV.i.350) But shade]Shade
 G₃^v 17 (IV.i.457) thought]though

John F. Hennedy, editor of *Sir Gyles Goosecappe*, has collated ten copies of the 1606 edition, of which six more are known to be extant: another BL (11773.bbb.5.), another CSmH, Glasgow University copy, IU, Pforz, PU. Fortunately he has saved himself from serious oversight, with the exception of a single instance that occurs in NNP alone: 'to this]this' (III.i.255). But he has failed to recognize two occasions of correction taking place in the inner forme of sheet C during the print run: the 'hart, if]hart if,' variant (I. iv.113) occurs in the uncorrected state of Pforz and PU alone. In his collation of Dyce and D^{Fo}, where the 'knowe]konwe' variant (V.i.174) occurs in the uncorrected state as in one CSmH, Glasgow and IU, he seems to have failed to recognize two stages of stop-press correction in the inner forme of sheet H. Similarly, although Hennedy records only two corrected states in the outer forme of sheet D, there are, in fact, at least four states (apart from the variation of the catchword on the verso of D₄). A copy in the Huntington alone presents an uncorrected reading at III.i.44: 'Cut' for the correct reading 'Cut:'—this represents the first state. What Hennedy classifies as the first state should be the second. And this second state should be divided into two sub-states, to one of which belong 'Bingcob' (II.i.272) and 'Arte' (III.i.67)—readings of one CSmH and MB alone. What Hennedy classifies as the second state combines the third and the fourth states, the fourth being represented by the two uncorrected readings of MH alone—'Kingcob' (II.i.272) and 'ftarte' (III.i.67). I suspect that he may have been unaware of the problems I once raised in "Variants and Bibliography" in connection with this particular play and other contemporary plays in *The Library* (Sixth Series, Vol. 1 (1979), pp. 255–64).

Here I record these more important variants that have escaped the notice of the editors of the Tragedies volume, partly in order to concede the constructive element in Thomas Berger's opinion and to share with other scholars of Chapman all available information not only concerning the whereabouts of extant copies of Chapman's play-quartos but also concerning the press-variants discovered in them, and partly to stress that nearly all of the editors, ignoring studies of variants "at their peril" (a phrase used by Berger in his article in *The Library*, Vol. 10 (1988), p. 241), have nevertheless been very lucky to successfully discover important variants necessary for conscientious editing. In this context, however, it may probably be pertinent to make a passing reference to an article entitled "A Sampling Theory for Bibliographical Research." David Shaw contributed it to *The Library*, Fifth

series, Vol. 27 (1972), pp. 310–19, and showed how many copies of an edition ought to be examined to ensure that the probability of failure to record every variant is reduced to a tolerable minimum.

I have checked a few pages, which correspond to the quarto's sigs. B1^v-2 and E1^v-2, of the edited text of each play against the quarto text, finding that the edited text has been prepared carefully and printed generally accurately, with sensible but minimum alterations of punctuation in the quarto. An unhappy instance of error, probably typographical, has been noted in *Sir Gyles Goosecappe*, I.ii.49, where the quarto text reads 'I say they lie, and I will die int.' but the edited text omits the second 'I'. Opinions may be divided about the form of 'euerla-/sting' in *Chabot Admirall of France*, III.II.31, which in the quarto is printed as a hyphenated word at the end of the line and at the beginning of the following line with practically no space between the 'r' and the 'l'. The edited text prints it in two words, providing a judicious textual note: "*possibly one word in Q*" (p. 658). A few words later, however, one finds 'everlastingly' printed unmistakably as one word in the quarto and may well be inclined to take the hyphenated word to be intended likewise as one word. More subtle is the case of capitalization. *The Conspiracie of Charles Duke of Byron*, iii.i.15–17, reads both in the quarto and in the edited text: 'The creation,/Turnd into *Chaos*, and we then desire,/For all our ioye of life, the death of sleepe;'. But the edited text of *Bussy D'Ambois*, Q2 (and also Q1), accepting the capitalization adopted by the Revels Plays edition of the play, reads at III.i.97–8: 'Or how should Sleepe possesse my faculties,/Wanting the proper closer of mine eyes?' and again at III.i.108–9: 'Then come my Love, Now pay those Rites to Sleepe/Thy faire eyes owe him:'. Capitalization of 'sleepe' in *The Conspiracie of Charles Duke of Byron* would probably be more consistent in terms of editorial principles.

For all this, the General Editor and his team have good reasons for being proud of the present volume under review and scholars, especially of the drama of Renaissance England, are really indebted to them for it and its companion volume, which have enabled them to consult the old-spelling edited texts of Chapman's plays, for the first time since the publication of John Pearson's much less reliable edition of 1873.