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There are good reasons for scholars and critics of English Renaissance drama to focus on the plays that survive, but it is important to be reminded, as David McInnis and Matthew Steggle’s collection *Lost Plays in Shakespeare’s England* does, of those that have not. According to state-of-the-art guesswork, less than twenty percent of the plays written for and performed in London’s commercial playhouses between 1567 and 1642 are extant (543 of ca. 3,000). Even more depressingly, about 13,000 dramatic manuscripts must have existed, as William Proctor Williams conjectures (18), of which all but a few have perished. Thanks to Philip Henslowe’s *Diary*, Sir Henry Herbert’s *Office-Book*, and other sources, many lost plays can nonetheless be identified. They are now receiving considerable attention, for instance in the *Lost Plays Database* (http://www.lostplays.org), a website established by Roslyn Knutson and David McInnis, in Martin Wiggins’s ongoing *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue*, a comprehensive multi-volume reference work published by Oxford University Press, and in the present collection.

Given the First Folio, Shakespeareans may feel they have been spared similar loss, and it is undoubtedly true that most of Shakespeare’s plays have survived. Nonetheless, the case of “Cardenio,” which Shakespeare seems to have co-authored with John Fletcher around 1612, makes it likely that not all of them have, and the recent buzz created by the theory that the play partly survives in Lewis Theobald’s *Double Falsehood* illustrates how much is perceived to be at stake. “Love’s Labour’s Won”, listed among Shakespeare’s plays in Francis Meres’s *Palladis Tamia* in 1598 and mentioned in a bookseller’s list of 1603, may be another lost Shakespeare play. McInnis and Steggle’s confidence that it designates a lost play rather than an alternative title of one that survives may be misplaced, however; a possibility that is strengthened by Andrew Gurr’s investigation of alternative or double titles (59-62). Other plays may be partly lost: if the Folio versions of *Macbeth* and *Measure for Measure* constitute non-Shakespearean revisions, as Gary Taylor and John Jowett have argued, then, as Matthew Steggle points out, there must have been “partially erased early versions of Shakespeare plays” (81). Earlier generations of scholars have argued for “Ur-versions” of various other Shakespeare plays, including *Hamlet, The Taming of the Shrew*, and *Titus Andronicus*, although such “Ur-argumentation” (44), here ably anatomized by Knutson, now looks dated. Nonetheless, that early dramatic writing by Shakespeare is lost seems plausible. As John H. Astington points out, “as an ambitious writer on his way to prominence in the early 1590s” (91) Shakespeare may have contributed to more collaborative plays than have survived.

Plays in which Shakespeare may have had a hand are good candidates for the Shakespeare apocrypha, the subject of Peter Kirwan’s monograph, which explores the past and present thinking about the boundaries of Shakespeare’s dramatic canon. Chapter 1 provides a historical survey, demonstrating just how changeable the borderlines of the canon have been over time. Following the addition of seven plays in the Third Folio in 1664 (*Pericles, The London Prodigal, Thomas Lord Cromwell, Sir John Oldcastle, The Puritan Widow, A Yorkshire Tragedy, and Locrine*), the 43-play canon remained influential well into the eighteenth century. In the early nineteenth century, Ludwig Tieck even “suggested that the canon be extended to sixty-seven plays” (45). Chapter 2 focuses on plays that – like *The London Prodigal* and *A Yorkshire Tragedy* – belonged to the Chamberlain’s and the King’s Men’s repertory during Shakespeare’s time and were attributed to Shakespeare in early
modern publications but are not usually considered as his today. Rather than trying “to establish precisely what Shakespeare’s involvement with the plays may have been,” Kirwan argues that within a socialized paradigm of authorship, the attributions to Shakespeare make good sense: in the theatre, “distinctions between ‘Shakespeare’ and ‘not-Shakespeare’ were blurred enough not to preclude the attachment (prior or subsequent to print) of Shakespeare’s name” (75).

The following chapter turns to “the question that has dominated study of the Shakespeare Apocrypha,” namely modern attempts at assigning “plays, acts, scenes, lines and words to (an) individual writer(s)” (115). Kirwan focuses on those plays he believes “may well include a Shakespearean contribution” (118), namely Sir Thomas More, Locrine (which he believes Shakespeare may have readied for performance by the newly-formed Lord Chamberlain’s Men), Edward III and Arden of Faversham. Kirwan calls for greater “acknowledgement of uncertainty” (127) than most attribution scholars have shown but welcomes authorship analysis of small sections of text as long as “it allows them to be productively reintegrated into their historical contexts, rather than segregated into authorial canons” (162-3). The final chapter is interested in the impact of recent and current debates over inclusions in or exclusions from the canon. Double Falsehood, thanks to Brean Hammond’s edition (2010), has now controversially been integrated into the Arden Shakespeare series. The Oxford University Press edition of Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works (general editors Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino, 2007) contains editions of Macbeth and Measure for Measure on the grounds that Middleton adapted Shakespeare’s plays. And Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen’s edition of Collaborative Plays by “William Shakespeare and Others” (2013) contains Locrine, Thomas Lord Cromwell, The London Prodigal, A Yorkshire Tragedy, and Mucedorus, among others. For Kirwan, these editions bid farewell to the idea of a fixed canon and offer “productive stimulus for debate” (178).

Kirwan’s understanding of the apocrypha, then, makes of it a productive off-shoot of the necessarily fluid canonical boundaries. He acknowledges and builds on recent “developments in textual-canonical theory,” which, he adds, “has only been directly addressed in recent years in three articles by Christa Jansohn, Richard Proudfoot and John Jowett” (8). This fails to take account of Jansohn’s important monograph, Zweifelhafter Shakespeare (2000), which is regrettably – and perhaps tellingly – absent from Kirwan’s long bibliography. Publications in German are now ignored even by some of the most eager Shakespeareans. While the boundaries between Shakespeare canon and apocrypha may be increasingly fluid, those between languages of scholarship have never been more solid: canonical English is in; apocryphal German is out.

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