

Romola Nuttall

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## Publishing *Misfortunes*: Recording Performance at the Inns of Court

*This essay investigates the motivation behind the print publication of The Misfortunes of Arthur, privileging its functionality as a record of court performance rather than the political significance of its circulation. Examination of the playbook's distinctive and extensive paratextual apparatus reveals the authors' involvement with print publication. In considering the bibliographic presentation of the dumbshows, this essay finds overlooked parallels between Misfortunes and Stuart court masques and thus repositions the role which Misfortunes, and Inns drama more broadly, played in the developing relationship between early modern English print and performance.*

In the early stages of planning the 2019 revival of *The Misfortunes of Arthur*, we became committed to publishing the staged reading as an online video that would allow the play to be seen and heard beyond the moment of performance.<sup>1</sup> A similar desire may have motivated the play's authors to decide to publish *Misfortunes* as a printed playbook in 1588; this printed text would provide an accessible record of the play beneficial to students and colleagues, in their case, students of the law and public servants, an idea explored by Lorna Wallace in this Issues in Review. My own essay is less concerned with the political implications of the play's transmission in print and more interested in how the playbook functions as a record of performance.

This discussion compares the octavo of *Misfortunes* published in 1588 to other examples of privately produced plays, focusing on the paratextual materials which distinguish them from commercially produced playbooks. Through its extensive inclusion of non-dramatic textual elements — alternative speeches, descriptions of costuming, authorial identifications — the printed *Misfortunes* acts like a directors' cut DVD that aims to promote the endeavours of its authors, devisers, and

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Romola Nuttall ([romola.nuttall@kcl.ac.uk](mailto:romola.nuttall@kcl.ac.uk)) is an associate research fellow at King's College London and has taught at Central School of Speech and Drama and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London.

directors. The playbook exposes an impulse to record an ephemeral, exclusive, visually spectacular, and politically motivated performance, thus connecting Inns drama with the court masques that began to be printed in the Jacobean period. This essay shows that considering *Misfortunes* through its publication and bibliographic presentation offers us new ways of contextualizing the play within the early modern period's emerging conventions for capturing performance in the medium of print.

The playtext itself, printed in black letter with continuous scene divisions and names of speakers in roman type, follows the model provided by the three previously published Inns of Court plays, *Gorboduc*, *Jocasta*, and *Supposes*. These playbooks, some of the earliest examples of vernacular printed drama in England, take their bibliographic presentation from English translations of Seneca; *Misfortunes*'s debt to Seneca is evident even in its appearance on the printed page. Where *Misfortunes* differs from its peers is in the way its paratexts bookend the printed script. Academic and Inns dramas typically used paratexts to negotiate anxieties about the emergent medium of print at a time when manuscript publication was a more respected form of transmission. For example, Jasper Heywood's preface to his translation of Seneca's *Thyestes* (1560) presents publication as a process so fraught with potential for textual corruption that 'to the printer thus I sayde: within these doores of thyne, / I make a vowe shall neuer more come any worke of myne'.<sup>2</sup> Heywood printed his third Senecan translation, *Hercules Furens*, the following year, undermining his professed antipathy to print in *Thyestes*.<sup>3</sup> Printer and bookseller John Day's preface to the second printed *Gorboduc* (1570) similarly implies that authors regarded publication as a worst case scenario. Day claims that William Griffith, who published *Gorboduc* in 1565, did so without the authors' knowledge and in such poor quality that a second edition became necessary to redeem the first. That Griffith's *Gorboduc* is not replete with errors suggests Day was performing an elaborate textual dance to validate his re-publication of the play.<sup>4</sup> Robert Wilmot's *Tancred and Gismund* (1591), originally written for performance at Inner Temple (ca 1567), appeared in print with a wealth of prefatory material: dedications to members of the nobility, addresses to readers, a poem praising the author. Wilmot assures readers that he recognizes his peril by quoting a proverb: 'for a lewd word escaped is irreuocable, but a bad or base discourse published in print is intollerable'.<sup>5</sup> These protestations typify the roundabout way writers and agents of the book trade negotiated the newness of print for their readers.

*Misfortunes* contains no such expressions of anxiety from its printer or authors. Rather than beginning with a dedication or a preface, the poem that immediately

follows the title page performs as a kind of framing device. On the following page, a stand-alone note gives details of title, authorship, and production:

The misfortunes of Arthur (Vther Pendragon's Sonne) reduced into Tragicall notes by THOMAS HVGHES ... And here set downe as it past from under his handes and as it was presented, excepting certaine wordes and lines, where some of the Actors either helped their memories by brief omission: or fitted their acting by some alteration.<sup>6</sup>

The end of this note points readers to another note 'in the ende, of such speaches as were penned by others' (π4v). Readers duly find the two alternative Gorlois speeches at the back of the book, each introduced with its own note explaining that they were 'penned by William Fulbecke ... and pronounced in stead of *Gorlois* his first/last speche' (Gr-v). A final note offers further details about the authors' individual contributions, naming the author of alternative choruses as well as the members of the group who devised the dumbshows and directed the proceedings at court.

Instead of using paratextual materials to justify publication, *Misfortunes* grounds the play within the occasion of performance and draws attention to the authors' roles within the drama's creation. The note prefixing Nicholas Trotte's introductory poem sets the scene for readers, describing who its speakers were and how they were costumed. The frequent references to Fulbecke's speeches, along with the admission that actors altered or omitted some lines, force readers to distinguish between performance and printed text while celebrating the performance itself. The way these notes identify each member of the group (some — Trotte, Hughes, and Fulbecke — more prominently than others) indicates that the authors took a personal interest in bringing the play to the press. If the play had been well-received at court, the authors may have been keen to publish their text in a way that reminded readers of its successful performance.

The playbook's paratexts would have increased its printing costs, making it unlikely that their inclusion was initiated by the printer-publisher, Robert Robinson. The stationer, who licensed the text for publication and then would profit from the sales, typically, covered the outlay required for a playbook's production.<sup>7</sup> *Misfortunes*'s presentation raises the possibility that its authors were responsible, at least in part, for financing its publication. Robinson, as a general rule, tends to save space within the playbook. *Misfortunes* uses thirty sheets, in comparison to Griffith's thirty-six and Day's thirty-two for their editions of *Gorboduc*. Robinson consistently squeezed fifty lines onto a page with minimal spacing between

scenes, presumably to reduce paper costs (the most expensive element of print publication). Yet he printed Trotte's poem, for which only thirty-four lines were used per page, and the note which follows it (quoted above) with striking amounts of surrounding blank space. This layout choice seems improbable on Robinson's part while suggesting Trotte and/or Hughes (or both) may have played an active role in how the playbook proclaimed their contributions. J.P. Collier declares that the playbook's numerous corrections and cancellations were conducted 'under the superintendence of the play's principal author', inferring that Hughes was physically present in the printing house.<sup>8</sup>

There is no record of *Misfortunes* in the Stationers' Register, increasing the likelihood that the authors brought the play to the press privately. Robinson's background makes it still more unlikely that he sought out copy of the playtext himself. *Misfortunes* was the first playbook he had worked on and by far the most ambitious text he had produced to date. He also had a connection to one of the play's contributors, Francis Flower, through involvement in legal proceedings resulting from his illegal printing of texts held by Flower's Latin and grammar book patent.<sup>9</sup> Flower would have been well-acquainted with more experienced stationers through his possession of this patent, yet he entrusted Robinson, who does not appear to have ever worked on a dramatic text before, with the publication of *Misfortunes*. Flower may have used Robinson's infringement of his patent to induce the stationer to work for a lower fee than another member of the book trade would have accepted, or to allow the authors an unusual level of involvement with presentation and content. Robinson's device and name feature prominently on the title page, indicating that he saw *Misfortunes* as a vehicle for reputational gain. That three copies of the octavo survive seems evidence of a high print run. We cannot rule out the possibility that Robinson initiated publication of *Misfortunes* or that the work was published primarily for commercial gain. Even if Robinson did provide the full production costs, however, the level of authorial presence evident in the playbook's paratexts is striking.

The playbook's emphasis on the event of its performance strengthens the idea that the authors actively sought its publication. They would have had to provide performance details to Robinson and were clearly interested in using publication to record all aspects of the performance, offering readers more than a printed script. *Misfortunes*'s title page makes plain this principle. Unlike other Inns dramas, which use generic classifications like *The Tragedie of Gorboduc*, or *The Tragedie of Tancred and Gismund*, *Misfortunes* is introduced as

## CERTAINE DE

vises and shewes presented to  
 Her MAIESTIE by the Gentlemen of  
 Grayes-Inne at her Highnesse Court in  
 Greenwich, *the twenty eighth day of*  
 Februarie in the thirtieth yeare of her  
 MAIESTIES most happy  
 Raigne. (π)

Rather than outlining subject matter or genre to potential purchasers, the play-book identifies itself through the status of its audience, creators, and non-scripted elements. 'Certaine devises and shewes' alludes not only to the playtext but also to the dumbshows, the carefully choreographed sequences of music and movement that proceeded each act. Robinson rather than the authors could have decided this wording, but, either way, the title page text establishes from the outset the playbooks' concern with broadcasting all aspects of performance.

Dumbshows are non-verbal introductions to the acts that they proceed. In their use of classically oriented allegory they can connect closely to the disguisings that comprised court entertainment throughout the sixteenth century and to court masques of the Stuart period.<sup>10</sup> Recording the dumbshows must have informed the publication of Inns dramas. Dumbshows offered more than lavishly costumed display or, as James Wallace suggests 'a break for the ears'; rather, they 'served as a cryptic game for the audience to play ... demanding that subsequent action be interpreted against them'.<sup>11</sup> Their printed descriptions reveal them to be alternative, non-verbal versions of the acts they proceed. *Gorboduc*, for example, opens with a group of wild men trying unsuccessfully to break apart a bundle of sticks. After they remove one stick, they find it easy to part and break the rest. As the printed text explains, 'Hereby was signified, that a state knit in vnytie doth continue stronge against all force. But beyng deuyded, is easely destroyed'.<sup>12</sup> This sequence exemplifies how dumbshows establish their play's thematic project; in *Gorboduc* division within the royal family leads to division of the kingdom. Only as the drama unfolded would the audience have fully comprehended the connections between dumbshow and drama. Publication therefore offered the composers of these sequences opportunities to explain their full significance to readers, thus demonstrating their skill and ingenuity. This impulse particularly applies to *Misfortunes*, the only Inns drama to identify the devisers of its dumbshows by name.

Descriptions of dumbshows are present in all four surviving Inns tragedies; George Gascoigne and Francis Kinwelmersh even inserted them into their translation of *Jocasta*, an intervention which reveals the level of audience expectation attached to them. But *Misfortunes* gives particularly detailed attention to its dumbshows. In the first dumbshow, for example, three furies and three nuns converge onstage before departing through separate doors. Each of the furies carries two props — a snake and a cup of wine; a firebrand and a Cupid; a whip and a Pegasus — thus, as Felicity Brown observes, extending *Gorboduc's* fourth dumbshow, in which three furies carry a snake, a whip, and a firebrand. The playbook explains the sequence as follows:

*By the first furie with the Snake and the Cup was signified the Banquet of Vther Pendragon, and afterwards his death which insued by poysoned cup. The second furie with her firebrand & Cupid represented Vthers unwafull heate and loue conceyued at the banquet, which neuer ceased in his posteritie. By the third with her whip and Pægasus was prefigured the crueltie and ambition which thence insued and continued to th'effecting of this tragidie. By the Nuns was signified the remorse and despaire of Gueneuora, that wanting other hope, tookd a Nunrie for her refuge. (A1r)*

The dumbshow sets the tone for the action that follows it, but the original audience — even an early modern audience well-versed in this kind of symbolism — would not have grasped its full significance until after listening to Gorlois's account of Uther's actions and witnessing Guenevora's departure to a convent. The specificity of the furies' props, which each represent a different aspect of the play's prehistory, may only ever have been appreciated by readers.

As well as providing interpretative descriptions of dumbshows, printed Inns plays guide readers' interpretation of the drama in a series of 'Arguments', printed, like the dumbshows, before the start of each act. These sections of text may have been included in performance, acting as prologues; alternately, they may only ever have been readerly elements, working to accentuate the drama's moralistic and intellectual qualities. *Misfortunes* includes an argument for the play as a whole, which is printed above the account of the first dumbshow as well as arguments ahead of each act and references each element of the Uther Pendragon backstory. Uniquely among printed Inns drama, the arguments for each act appear as lists of numbered scene summaries, a system that establishes particularly close connections between dumbshow and playtext. For example, the last scene of act 2 is listed as:

4 In the fourth Scene the King of Ireland & other forreine Princes assure Mordred of their assistance against Arthur. (B2r)

The dumbshow passage which follows ends with an Irish man, who ‘did furiously chase’ a king from the stage. The printed text explains, ‘The Irish man signified Reuenge and Furie which *Mordred* conceiued after his folle on the Shoares, whereunto *Mordred* headlong yeeldeth himselfe’ (B2v). Spectators watching a performance would have recognized the Irish man of the dumbshow through costuming, since he enters ‘apparailled with an Irish Iacket and shirt, hauing an Irish dagger by his side’ (B2v). The figure anticipates the Irish king, Gillamor, who swears allegiance to Mordred in act 2 scene 4. When Mordred thanks Gillamor ‘For your great helpe and valiant Irish force’ (C2r), the audience could have connected the end of the dumbshow and the second act’s final scene. Readers, by contrast, could have made these connections from the beginning of the act.<sup>13</sup> This format also emphasizes the playbook’s interest in documenting performance: the ‘Argument’ of each act is divided into dramatic units.

The orderly presentation of each ‘Argument’ and the intimate relationships between arguments and dumbshows indicate close collaboration between the play’s contributors. Hughes was the principal author, but he does not appear to have been involved in the dumbshows; the end of the playtext names the individuals who devised them: Francis Flower, Christopher Yelverton, Francis Bacon, and John Lancaster. The overlap between script and dumbshow suggests that these four worked with a copy of Hughes’s script, or that he provided them with a detailed account of what the drama would contain before they began work on the dumbshows, or that the dumbshows’ content influenced the script’s composition. The numbered scene summaries may represent a plan for the play provided by Hughes. Alternatively, Flower, Yelverton, Bacon, and Lancaster may have produced the scene summaries to connect their elements of the drama more clearly to Hughes’s script for readers.

Alan Stewart attributes the printed descriptions of the dumbshows to Bacon, based largely on Bacon’s subsequent activity as the author and organizer of court masques.<sup>14</sup> *Misfortunes* marks an early (and often overlooked) point in this writer’s lifelong engagement with drama as a means of self-promotion. Bacon frequently sought advancement through his uncle, Lord Burghley, both a member and active patron of Gray’s Inn. Curtis Perry declares it ‘unavoidable ... that the play’s authors would have had his interests in mind’ and even speculates that Burghley was directly involved in *Misfortunes*’s production.<sup>15</sup> Perry argues that the play’s anti-militaristic message and its ‘strikingly pessimistic’ portrayal of



Arthur promote Burghley's political agenda.<sup>16</sup> The earl of Leicester became associated with Arthurian iconography following its appearance in *The Entertainment at Kenilworth* (1575) and in pageantry marking his arrival in the Netherlands in 1585.<sup>17</sup> In the late 1580s, Burghley and Leicester were often in opposition.<sup>18</sup> Queen Elizabeth recalled Leicester from wars in the Low Countries in 1586. The original audience of *Misfortunes* would have known about his failure and very possibly connected this incident to the play's negative portrayal of Arthur. Bacon would have likely thought it important to align *Misfortunes* and Burghley's political interests. A letter from Bacon to Burghley, believed to date from pre-1592, 'could even refer to *Misfortunes*'.<sup>19</sup> Here, Bacon assures Burghley that 'Graies Inne is well furnyshed of galant yowng gentlemen ... ready to furnysh a maske'.<sup>20</sup> Whether or not the letter refers to *Misfortunes*, this document demonstrates that Burghley took an interest in dramatic performances by Gray's Inn and that Bacon aimed to impress his uncle through such activity. We can view *Misfortunes*'s print publication as an extension of that activity.

In print, the dumbshows underscore the play's anti-militaristic message. The text, for example, informs readers that the banquet scene prepared in the third dumbshow is laid out by 'the seruaunts of Peace' (C3v). After their exit, another pair of gentlemen lay swords over the banqueting table, after which two more gentlemen arrive to enjoy the banquet. A messenger disturbs them. Upon reading the letters he gives them, the gentlemen destroy the banquet table and 'violently snatching the Swordes unto them, they hastily went their way' (C3v). Readers are informed that the swords were brought by 'the seruaunts of Warre' (C3v). The printed text connects the scene's act of destruction to war itself more explicitly than the performance. The printed text similarly strengthens the final dumbshow's critique of military pomp by featuring four painted targets carried across the stage by gentlemen dressed in black. The first depicts a man's bleeding heart topped with a crown and a laurel wreath, symbolism that conflates victory with death rather than success. The printed account explains this imagery as 'signifying the King of *Norway* which spent himself and all his power for *Arthur*, and of whom there was nothing but his heart to injoy the conquest that insued' (F1r). The description heightens the futility of conquest beyond what the moment of performance offers, drawing the reader's attention to the lack of benefit the king of Norway will reap from spending himself and all his power in support of Arthur. The interpretative descriptions of the dumbshows strengthen the play's critique of the militarism, a critique Perry argues reflects Burghley and Leicester's relations at the time of its performance.



Understanding *Misfortunes* as a politically symbolic report of a court performance brings it, and, indeed, Inns drama more broadly, into conversation with printed court masque.<sup>21</sup> Both dramatic forms use print to share exclusive celebrations and commentaries on contemporary politics with wider audiences, combining scripted text and reported action to fully document performance. Lauren Shohet argues that printed court masques functioned as aide-mémoires for members of the audience and a means of communicating all aspects of the performance to readers not in the original audience.<sup>22</sup> Masques went to press soon after their performance — in some cases the printed text was produced before the performance had taken place — increasing their functionality as reports of politically relevant spectacles.<sup>23</sup> *Misfortunes* is the only Inns drama that went to press in the weeks immediately following its performance, the date of which appears on the title page. Advertising the temporal proximity of the play's performance to the published text was perhaps an attempt to increase the playbook's appeal for its earliest readers. Considering *Misfortunes* as an early experiment in printing a court performance raises the possibility that this Inns play influenced the tendency to publish court masques soon after their performance.

Indications of temporality, descriptions of reported action, and explanations of the script — the kinds of paratexts found in the elite and politically codified forms of Inns drama and court masques — are notably lacking in their commercially performed counterparts. Marlowe's *Tamburlaine* (1591) contains a rare preface; however, Richard Jones uses it to alert readers to an absence of material. The book omits 'some fond and frivolous Iestures' that digress from the play, a removal of performance elements that contrasts sharply with the textual inclusivity found in privately performed drama.<sup>24</sup> Omission is again evident in *The Spanish Tragedy*, in which a note interrupts the action to inform readers that 'this play of Hieronimo in sundrie languages was thought good to be set down in English more largely for the easier understanding to euery publike reader'.<sup>25</sup> The rationale for printing only the English text of the play-within-the-play seems understandable, but the note implies that the play featured multiple languages in performance. Both playbooks appear to have removed material that could have been included in performance.

We find an exception to this trend in *Hamlet*. The description of the dumbshow that proceeds *The Mousetrap* suggests a non-verbal re-enactment of Old Hamlet's murder that intensifies the new king's guilt. The printed text mimics the functionality of dumbshow descriptions found in printed Inns dramas, and the performed sequence recalls staging practices particular to the Inns. Scholars have highlighted ways in which the first printed quarto of *Hamlet* (1603)

claims an intellectual quality, from the title page's reference to performance at Oxford and Cambridge to the printed sententiae that mark Corambis's advice to Laertes.<sup>26</sup> The inclusion of a dumbshow description presents another way in which Q1 *Hamlet* aligns itself with dramatic conventions particular to academic communities, reflecting priorities of publication that are generally absent from professional playbooks.

Asserting intellectual cleverness appears to have been crucial to the print publication of Inns drama and court masques. Although masque texts are predominantly descriptive, rather than explanatory, they share with Inns drama a preoccupation with rationalizing nonverbal performance elements. In the preface to *Hymenaei* (1606) Ben Jonson argues that 'it is by the intellectual seriousness of the programme underlying the text and its solid foundation of classical learning that it is able to reach transcendent truths'.<sup>27</sup> The way Inns dramas recount and explain their dumbshows connects closely to Jonson's explanations of symbolism used in his masques.

Inns drama and masques order key elements similarly, interspersing passages which interpret and describe performance with the spoken text. As noted above, Inns dramas give the argument of each act and the description of the dumbshow ahead of the performance text, allowing these components to function as interpretative frameworks.<sup>28</sup> Printed court masques demonstrate the same concern for presenting the accounts of performance and their descriptions chronologically, serving the dual purpose of capturing performance and offering readers interpretative paths into it. The preface to Thomas Chapman's *The Memorable Masque*, presented by the Inns in 1613, expresses regret that some speeches do not have 'their proper place' next to the descriptions of scenery and costume to which they relate.<sup>29</sup> Chapman lays the blame for this unsatisfactory presentation firmly at the printer's door: it was because of the printer's 'unexpected haste ... and never sending me a proof till he had past those speeches ... His fault is therefore to be supplied by the observation and reference of the reader, who will easily perceive where they were to be inserted'.<sup>30</sup> Chapman's reference to the disorder in his printed masque reveals that the object of such order was to make all aspects of the performance more intelligible to readers, aiding their 'observation and reference'. The systematic layout of reported action and spoken text is a distinctive element of Inns drama in print, one that quite possibly informed the bibliographic presentation of court masque.

Shohet identifies modesty as a striking feature of court masques' print publication: 'the majority of masque accounts are un-illustrated, usually quartos, sometimes octavos or smaller'.<sup>31</sup> Inns dramas likewise record extravagant spectacles in

unillustrated quartos and octavos with no typographical hint of the flamboyancy they contain. In noting the modesty and affordability of printed masques, Shohet implies that their readership extended beyond courtly circles, an idea that we can productively apply to Inns drama. Inns plays frequently featured the same subjects found in commercial theatre; Henslowe records payments to dramatists for 'a Booke called ferrex & porrex', potentially an alternative version of *Gorboduc*, and a series of plays about Arthurian Britain, demonstrating that the court and the Inns shared an interest in these subjects with a wider social range of playgoers and play readers.<sup>32</sup>

The explanatory notes and descriptive passages which this essay has explored root the printed playtexts they accompany in the occasion of performance. They also provide a level of intellectualism, implying that the plays they append are complex enough to require interpretative tools. We can attribute the general absence of these features from commercial playbooks to the fact that these playbooks are not concerned with documenting a specific performance. Professional playbooks' relative lack of paratextual material may also result from the need to make print publication more cost effective. This hypothesis supports my suggestion that the level of paratextual detail in *Misfortunes* resulted from the authors' financial, as well as ideological, investment in the play's publication. Comparing the bibliographic presentation of *Misfortunes* to other examples of privately produced plays has revealed idiosyncrasies that further indicate authorial involvement in publication. Considering features which the printed *Misfortunes* shares with other privately performed plays has highlighted connections between Elizabethan Inns drama and Stuart court masques. Continuing to explore these connections will lead to a fuller appreciation of the role which *Misfortunes*, and Inns drama more broadly, played in the development of English drama in print.

## Notes

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- 1 See <https://www.thedolphinsback.com/arthur.html>.
- 2 Jasper Heywood, *Thyestes* (London, 1560; STC: 22226), *Early English Books Online (EEBO)*, [Q31r](#).
- 3 A different stationer printed *Hercules Furens*, which could imply that Heywood had genuine reasons to be unhappy with Richard Payne's work on *Thyestes*. The similarity of his complaint to those made by other writers, however, supports the likelihood that his complaint was contrived.
- 4 Stephen Orgel, 'The Book of the Play', in *From Performance to Print in Shakespeare's England*, ed. Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (Basingstoke, 2006), 21, [https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230584549\\_2](https://doi.org/10.1057/9780230584549_2).
- 5 Robert Wilmot, *The Tragedie of Tancred and Gismund* (London, 1591; STC: 25764), \*4r.
- 6 Thomas Hughes, *Certaine Deuises and Shewes Presented to her Maieste ...* (London, 1587; STC: 13921), [π4v](#). All quotations from *The Misfortunes of Arthur* derive from this edition (referencing the British Library copy) and will be cited in the text.
- 7 See further, Peter W.M. Blayney, 'The Publication of Playbooks', in *A New History of Early English Drama*, ed. John D. Cox and David Scott Kastan (New York, 1997), 383–422.
- 8 J.P. Collier, ed. *The Misfortunes of Arthur by Thomas Hughes* (London, 1828), 3.
- 9 On the patent system, see Howard W. Winger, 'Regulations Relating to the Book Trade in London from 1357 to 1586', *The Library Quarterly: Information, Community, Policy* 26 (1956), 157–95, <https://doi.org/10.1086/618320>. For records of Robinson's Star Chamber case, see Edward Arber, *A Transcript of the Registers of the Company of Stationers of London: 1554–1640*, 4 vols (London, 1876), 2.796–9.
- 10 On early Tudor entertainment, see Sydney Anglo, 'The Evolution of the Early Tudor Disguising, Pageant, and Mask', *Renaissance Drama* 1 (1968), 3–44, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41917407>.
- 11 James Wallace, 'Staging Arthur', 151, in this Issues in Review, <https://doi.org/10.12745/et.24.2.4891>.
- 12 Thomas Norton and Thomas Sackville, *The Tragedie of Gorboduc* (London, 1565; STC: 18684), A2v.

- 13 See further, Margaret Rose Jaster, 'Staging a Stereotype in Gaelic Garb: Ben Jonson's "Irish Masque", 1613', *New Hibernia Review* 2.4 (1998), 86–98, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20646259>.
- 14 Francis Bacon, *Early Writings 1584 — 1596*, ed. Alan Stewart (Oxford, 2012), 61, <https://doi.org/10.1093/actrade/9780198183136.book.1>.
- 15 Curtis Perry, 'British Empire on the Eve of the Armada: Revisiting *The Misfortunes of Arthur*', *Studies in Philology* 108.4 (2011), 513, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23056051>.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 John Stow records Leicester's entry into the town of Donhage with a tableau of 'Arthur of Britaine, whom they compared to the earle'; *The Annales of England* (London, 1592; STC: 23334), 1208. See also David Norbrook, *Politics and Pageantry in Elizabethan England* (London, 1984), 115–6.
- 18 Simon Adams, *Leicester and the Court: Essays on Elizabethan Politics* (Manchester, 2003), 19.
- 19 Perry, 'British Empire', 513. On the suggestion that Bacon's letter refers to *Misfortunes* see also Stewart, ed., *Early Writings*, 71 and Brian Jay Corrigan, ed., *The Misfortunes of Arthur: A Critical, Old-Spelling Edition* (New York, 1992), 1.
- 20 Bacon to Burghley, Lansdowne MS 170, fo. 13r.
- 21 Future work could consider links with Elizabethan entertainment texts, like the 1575 entertainment at Kenilworth (1575) — recorded in William Patten, *A Letter Whearin Part of the Entertainment vntoo the Queenz Maiesty at Killingwoorth Castl in Warwik Sheer in this Soomerz Progress 1575 is Signified* (London, 1578; STC: 15190.5) — and the 1591 entertainment at Elvetham (1591) — published as *The Honorable Entertainement Gieuen to the Queenes Maiestie in Progresse, at Eluetham in Hampshire, by the Right Honorable the Earle of Hertford* (London, 1591; STC: 7583) — printed to celebrate both the queen and the host who provided the entertainment.
- 22 Lauren Shohet, 'Horizons of the Masque', in *Reading Masques: The English Masque and Public Culture in the Seventeenth Century* (Oxford, 2010), 39, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199295890.003.0002>.
- 23 Shohet, 'Reading', in *Reading Masques*, 123, <https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199295890.003.0003>.
- 24 Christopher Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great* (London, 1590; STC: 17425), A2r. On Jones's interventions to the scene divisions, see Claire M.L. Bourne, 'Making a Scene; or *Tamburlaine the Great* in Print', in *Christopher Marlowe, Theatrical Commerce, and the Book Trade*, ed. Kirk Melnikoff and Roslyn L. Knutson (Cambridge, 2018), 115–33.

- 25 Thomas Kyd, *The Spanish Tragedy* (London, 1592; STC: 15086), K3r.
- 26 See Paul Menzer, 'The Tragedians of the City? Q1 *Hamlet* and the Settlements of the 1590s', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 57.2 (2006), 162–82, <https://doi.org/10.1353/shq.2006.0064>; and Zachary Lesser and Peter Stallybrass, 'The First Literary *Hamlet* and the Commonplacing of Professional Plays', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59.4 (2008), 371–420, <https://doi.org/10.1353/shq.0.0040>.
- 27 Ben Jonson, *Hymenaei*, in *Court Masques: Jacobean and Caroline Entertainments, 1605–1640*, ed. David Lindley (Oxford, 1995), xi.
- 28 The one exception is *Tancred and Gismund*, which prints descriptions of all five dumbshows on single a leaf at the back of the playbook.
- 29 Thomas Chapman, *The Memorable Masque*, in Lindley, ed. *Court Masques*, 78.
- 30 Ibid.
- 31 Shohet, 'Reading', 101.
- 32 See further Kim Gilchrist, *Staging Britain's Past: Pre-Roman Britain in Early Modern Drama* (London: 2021) and Paul Whitfield White, 'The Admiral's Men, Shakespeare, and the Lost Arthurian Plays of Elizabethan England', *Arthuriana* 24.2 (2014).