

EARLY MODERN LITERARY STUDIES



**Roger A. Stritmatter & Lynne Kositsky, *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare's The Tempest* (Jefferson, NC: MacFarland, 2013). x+261 pp.
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The composition date of Shakespeare's play *The Tempest* is generally thought by Shakespeare scholars to be between late 1610 and mid-to-late 1611, in part because of its reliance upon several sources that did not exist before then, most notably William Strachey's eyewitness account of the July 1609 wreck of the ship *Sea Venture* off the coast of Bermuda and the almost miraculous survival of its passengers and crew and their subsequent voyage to Virginia — news that galvanized London when it arrived in September 1610. Strachey's account, written in the form of a letter dated 15 July 1610, was not published until fifteen years later by Samuel Purchas as 'A True Reportory of the Wracke and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates'.¹ Most scholars agree that similarities of theme, incident, language and imagery between the document and the play demonstrate that Strachey's letter, in manuscript, was a *Tempest* source.

¹ William Strachey, 'A True Reportory of the Wracke, and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates, Knight; upon, and from the Ilands of the Bermudas: His Coming to Virginia, and the Estate of that Colonie then, and after, under the Government of the Lord La Warre, July 15.1610. written by William Strachy, Esquire', in *Haklvytvs posthumus, or, Pvrchas his Pilgrimes. Contayning a history of the world, in sea voyages, & lande-trauells*, ed. By Samuel Purchas, 4 vols (London: Henrie Fetherstone, 1625), 4:1734–58.

Over the past decade, Roger Stritmatter and Lynne Kositsky have published a number of articles that attempt to overthrow the scholarly consensus and dislodge *The Tempest* from its moorings at the end of Shakespeare's career. The book under review is largely a revised collection of those efforts and a revelation of their grand conclusion: *The Tempest* was originally an Elizabethan play, written and performed sometime before 1603, that was revised and revived under its present name for a Jacobean audience. To support this contention, they use a multi-pronged approach. First, they lay out their reasons for asserting that *The Tempest* was performed under another name in 1604/5. Second, they demonstrate that all the sources used by Shakespeare in writing the play were available before 1603, and third, they rehearse their arguments from their 2007 essay that Strachey's letter was plagiarized from sundry texts, misleadingly dated, and written too late for Shakespeare to use as a source. A secondary purpose of the book is to refute what its authors see as unmerited criticism of their earlier efforts, and in passing, to claim that the history of *Tempest* scholarship is shot through with error and fraud.

Their most radical assertion is that *The Tempest* 'was performed as early as 1603' (pp. 9, 99, 202), though not under its present name. Instead of the title that first appears in theatrical records of 1611 and in the folio of 1623, Shakespeare's original play was a 'tragidye' called *The Spanishe Maz*, listed in the Revels Office accounts of 1604/5 as performed on Shrove Monday (11 February).² No text survives of *The Spanish Maze* to prove the point, but from this title and a great deal of speculation Stritmatter and Kositsky glean a remarkable amount of information that they use to identify the play as an early version of *The Tempest*. The parallels they propose between *The Spanish Maze* and *The Tempest*, however, are highly debatable, not only because no text of the former exists for comparison but also because Stritmatter and Kositsky's interpretations of the latter are often questionable, frequently far-fetched, and depend on a chain of least-likely interpretations of the existing evidence. As Shakespearean critic Gary Taylor observed, most fringe theories go unanswered by academics because 'it takes an enormous investment of time to answer ... charges that can be made very quickly'.³ Alden Vaughan, with historical and literary evidence, and Tom Reedy, through textual analysis,

² Stritmatter and Kositsky attribute 'A Tragidye of The Spanishe Maz' to Malone ms. 29, as printed in E. K. Chambers, *The Elizabethan Stage*, 4 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923), 4:172. They misread Chambers, who clearly locates the play's sole reference in the Audit Office Accounts rather than the Malone manuscript (pp. 135–37, 171–72).

³ Gary Taylor, *Frontline: The Shakespeare Mystery*. "Uncovering Shakespeare: An Update" (PBS, 17 September 1992). Retrieved from <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shakespeare/debates/gtedebate.html>.

discredited the claims Stritmatter and Kositsky put forth in their 2007 article, ‘Shakespeare and the Voyagers Revisited’ (all of which claims are repeated and amplified here),⁴ but it would take a volume twice as long and tedious to rebut the many examples of error in fact and logic that pervade this book. A general discussion of the governing thesis along with a few representative examples must suffice, without repeating our earlier refutations, which still stand.

Stritmatter and Kositsky see a clear thematic connection between the lost play and the drama by Shakespeare: ‘*The Tempest* [of 1623] is ... fundamentally about a “maze”’, they declare. ‘Throughout the play the characters wander in the mode of the Christian pilgrim, through a disorienting labyrinth which induces in them the various altered states of consciousness characteristic of the contemplative penitent treading a maze’ (pp. 54–5).⁵ The original title’s ‘Spanish’ is equally revealing. Clearly to Stritmatter and Kositsky, though strangely overlooked by both early and modern critics, ‘*The Tempest* (among other things) is a play about Spain and dynastic Spanish politics’ (p. 55). Stritmatter and Kositsky quote a one-hundred-year-old reference to assert that Milan and Naples ‘during the 15th and 16th centuries were “in the undisputed possession of Spain”’ (p. 56). Checking the source (not easy; the citation provides the wrong volume and chapter numbers)⁶ reveals that the quoted passage applies to the late 16th century, not ‘during the 15th and 16th centuries’. Stritmatter and Kositsky supposed that Shakespeare based the plot on and derived the characters’ names from the political machinations of Ludovico Sforza (1452–1508), who seized power and ultimately the title from his nephew, Gian Galeazzo Sforza, the Duke of Milan (1469–1494), who had married Isabella of Aragon (1470–1524), the daughter of Alfonso II, king of Naples (1448–1495). Shakespeare is supposed to have extrapolated the details of these events from a few short

⁴ Alden T. Vaughan ‘William Strachey’s “True Reportory” and Shakespeare: A Closer Look at the Evidence’, *Shakespeare Quarterly* 59 (2008), 245–73; Tom Reedy, ‘Dating William Strachey’s “A True Reportory of the Wracke and Redemption of Sir Thomas Gates”: A comparative textual study’, *RES* 61 (2010), 531–52; Roger Stritmatter and Lynne Kositsky, ‘Shakespeare and the Voyagers Revisited’, *RES* 58 (2007), 447–72.

⁵ See also Stritmatter and Kositsky, ““O Brave New World”: *The Tempest* and Peter Martyr’s *De Orbe Novo*’, *Critical Survey* 21.2 (2009), 21–2, where their discussion of ‘amazement’ misquotes Stephen Greenblatt, who in the cited passage wrote that “Wonder [not amazement]. . . is the decisive emotional and intellectual experience in the presence of radical difference’. They cite Greenblatt’s *Marvelous Possessions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), pp. 14, 54, although we find nothing relevant on the latter page.

⁶ The source as given is ‘Brosch, Mauritz. “Papal Policy”, chapter XXII in *The Cambridge Modern History, vol. IV, The Thirty Years War*. Web. Accessed January 17, 2007.’ The cited reference is actually in vol. IX, chapter XXIII, and date of publication is 1906.

en passant background remarks in Peter Martyr's account of how he came to write his *Decades of the New World*, as set down in Richard Eden's 1555 translation (pp. 31–3).⁷

Unfortunately for this theory, these 'dynastic Spanish politics' concerned noble Italian houses between 1477 and 1500, four years before the end of the war that wrested Naples from the French and joined it to the Kingdom of Aragon, under Ferdinand II of Aragon, and more than three decades before the advent of the Italian War of 1536–38 that resulted in Spanish control of Milan.⁸ This is no small error; a large part of Stritmatter and Kositsky's thesis relies upon the misrepresentation that these events transpired between Italy and Spain. This type of sleight-of-hand argument is not the language of scholarship, it is the rhetoric of advocacy.

Stritmatter and Kositsky see great significance in *The Spanish Maze* having been performed on Shrove Monday 1605. They convince themselves that it was a 'Shrovetide play' by examining Shrovetide symbolism to find that *The Tempest's* 'oscillating pattern of Lenten penitence and Shrovetide excess, the metaphor of the labyrinth, the recurrent imagery of food and digestion, and the scenes of Shrovetide anti-theatricality ... match no festival occasion *except* Shrovetide' (p. 84, their emphasis).⁹ The reason this important motif has been missed by previous scholars is that they were unaware that the recorded performance date of All Hallows Day 1611 was not the original performance date, implying that the correct date was Shrove Monday 1605, though Stritmatter and Kositsky offer no evidence that *The Spanish Maze* made its premiere on that date (p. 64). How this all ties in with their assertion that *The Tempest* is 'fundamentally' about characters in a maze (p. 55) and that 'dynastic Spanish politics' importantly underlie its plot is unexplained.

The performance of plays at court during Christmas and Shrovetide was traditional under Elizabeth and observed by James even as he extended the revels.¹⁰ No seasonal theme was required for a play performed during those times, as is evident from the other plays

⁷ Richard Eden, *The Decades of the Newe Worlde of West India* (London: Guilhelmi Powell, 1555), sig. 47v-48.

⁸ It also appears that they confuse Ferdinand II of Naples with Ferdinand II of Aragon (Ferdinand III of Naples) (p. 32).

⁹ Stritmatter and Kositsky first discussed the play's Shrovetide aspects in 'A Movable Feast: The Liturgical Symbolism and Design of *The Tempest*', *Shakespeare and Asia*, ed. by Douglas A. Brooks (*Shakespeare Yearbook*, 17 [Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2010]), pp. 337–72.

¹⁰ John Astington, *English Court Theatre, 1558–1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), p. 116.

named in the same document in which *The Spanish Maze* appears. *The Comedy of Errors* hardly seems compatible with Innocents Night (December 28), which memorializes the innocent children slaughtered by Herod as he sought to find and kill the Christ child. And Jonson's comedy *Every Man in His Humour* seems inappropriate for Candlemas (February 2), which commemorates the ritual purification of Mary forty days after the birth of Jesus. Indeed, the characteristics that Stritmatter and Kositsky identify as belonging to the genre of 'Shrovetide plays' are common to the masque (a festive and elaborate play of patterned music, dancing, singing and acting-out of allegorical material) and antimasque (a comical spectacle of disorder and dancing, usually preceding the accompanying masque). These were regularly part of the seasonal revels of the court and courtly celebrations, such as a marriage or christening, not reserved for important dates on the liturgical calendar. As for *The Tempest* being a Shrovetide play, David Lindley's observation is apt: 'It has at various times been read as a romance of reconciliation, a Christian allegory of forgiveness, a meditation on the powers of the imagination and the limits of art, a psychological drama of fatherhood, a play about Jacobean politics, and a dramatisation of colonialist or patriarchal ideology (to name but the commonest approaches)'.¹¹ So is it a Shrovetide play? Of course it is, if that is what one reads into it. But trying to prove it was written *as* a Shrovetide play is reminiscent of the Englishman Haines in Joyce's *Ulysses*: 'Shakespeare is the happy hunting ground of all minds that have lost their balance'.¹²

Stritmatter and Kositsky attribute the later change in the play's title to a confluence of circumstances, including King James's insistence on peace with Spain, which the original title and text presumably undermined, and England's expanded overseas exploration and foothold settlements, which inspired 'an ideological battle between the stage and the [Virginia] colony' as reflected in such diverse texts as William Crashaw's sermon to the Virginia Company of London in February 1609 and the Company's *True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia* in late 1610. Using the methodology of 'careful reading "between the lines" of contemporaneous literary allusions' (p. 202), Stritmatter and Kositsky discover numerous references to or borrowings from the play that would become known as *The Tempest* in those pre-1611 writings and many more, including the satirical play *Eastward Ho!* (1605) by George Chapman, Ben Jonson, and John Marston

¹¹ David Lindley, ed. *The New Cambridge Shakespeare: The Tempest* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p. 1.

¹² James Joyce, *Ulysses* (New York: Random House, 1934), p. 234.

(pp. 57–9).¹³ Eventually, they say, excitement over *Sea Venture*'s wreck and its castaways' survival inspired this play's timely new title (pp. 55–59, 107–13), though strangely the event contributed nothing to the play itself. From this and other such reasoning, Stritmatter and Kositsky conclude: 'that Shakespeare's play ... existed by 1603 seems ... certain' (p. 99).

Their explanation of how the anonymous 'tragedy' of the very early seventeenth century morphed a decade or so later into William Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, identified as a comedy in the *First Folio*, is equally eccentric, relying upon the looseness of definitions and the commonplace observation that the play contains the ingredients of possible tragedies (pp. 56–57). Using this yardstick, almost all of Shakespeare's plays could be classified as tragedies, and certainly three other Shakespeare plays listed on the same Revels Office document as *The Spanish Maze* — *Measure for Measure*, *The Comedy of Errors*, and *The Merchant of Venice* — 'contain . . . the subject matter of tragedy',¹⁴ yet the scribe listed none of them as a tragedy.

Stritmatter and Kositsky are at their best and most imaginative when they forge the connections between *The Tempest* and Richard Eden's travel books (1555, 1577). Long recognized as an ancillary source for *The Tempest*, Eden, they have discovered, contains almost every detail in the play, though widely scattered among the several narratives that make up the work. In addition to the plot being taken from Martyr's brief synopsis of how he came to write his work, the idea of killing Alonso in his sleep derives from Martyr's account of the native conspiracy against Columbus in Eden on folio 123; the idea of Caliban's rebellion is snatched from f. 24v and Prospero's possession of the island from f. 20 (p. 35). Shakespeare took the ideas and imagery of the mutiny and conspiracy from ff. 2, 18v, 19, and 28r (p. 36), and the discovery of the plot from ff. 19 and 123. Caliban's character and dialogue was cobbled together from references on nine different pages: ff. 3, 39–39v, 60v, 74, 97, 130v–131, and 202 (pp. 31–38). Prospero's power over the storm derived from accounts on ff. 114v and 150v of the Spaniards overawing the Indians by firing their guns, which they mistook for thunder and lightning coming from the heavens (p. 39). And of course Shakespeare's description of the flora

¹³ That *The Tempest* drew on *Eastward Ho!* rather than the other way around is argued in, among other works, Paul Stevens, 'The New Presentism and Its Discontents: Listening to *Eastward Ho!* and Shakespeare's *Tempest* in Dialogue', in *Rethinking Historicism from Shakespeare to Milton*, ed. by Ann Baynes Coiro and Thomas Fulton (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012), especially pp. 150–52.

¹⁴ Robert Langbaum, ed. *Signet Classics: The Tempest* (New York: Penguin, 1964, 1987), xxii, quoted by Stritmatter and Kositsky, *Date, Sources and Design*, p. 56.

and fauna of the enchanted island came from Eden, as well as almost every phrase and image (pp. 39–41).¹⁵ Apparently, Shakespeare could scarcely have written a word without Eden.

To clear the way for their thesis to supplant the current consensus, Stritmatter and Kositsky must eliminate the post-1603 sources that have been seen as influencing Shakespeare's play, most notably the Virginia and Bermuda pamphlets and especially William Strachey's letter, on the grounds that all of *The Tempest's* thematic and topical sources were readily available to Shakespeare by the end of the sixteenth century. While exploration narratives collected by Eden and by Richard Hakluyt (1589, 1598–1600)¹⁶ were the prime sources, Stritmatter and Kositsky identify others to explain various passages in *The Tempest*: Ovid, Virgil, Erasmus, Ariosto — all of them suggested by previous scholars as possible, probable, or definite sources for Shakespeare's play. Stritmatter and Kositsky, however, elevate minor sources into major sources on the basis of a few correspondences 'from sign' (verbal parallels) regardless of the context.

In their *Review of English Studies* article of 2007,¹⁷ Stritmatter and Kositsky spurned the reliance of *The Tempest* on Strachey's composition on two principal grounds. First, from interpretations of both internal and external evidence, they argued that Strachey's manuscript of 'True Reportory' was not sent to England on or about 15 July 1610 as implied in the heading of the earliest published version,¹⁸ and therefore was inaccessible to Shakespeare as a source for *The Tempest* (which, this book argues, he had already written seven years or more earlier). Second, they tried to demonstrate that Strachey was 'a notorious plagiarist' who copied sources published after the first recorded performance of the play, specifically the Virginia Company-approved Bermuda pamphlets of 1610 and Captain John Smith's *Map of Virginia* (1612). Neither claim could bear scrutiny, as critics have demonstrated.¹⁹

¹⁵ Elsewhere in the book (pp. 87–95, 231 n.19), Stritmatter and Kositsky argue that the play's island was Lampedusa in the southern Mediterranean, in rejection of Richard Paul Rowe's recent Oxfordian advocacy of Vulcano off Sicily's northern coast (*The Shakespeare Guide to Italy* [New York: Harper, 2011], pp. 278–92).

¹⁶ See also Stritmatter and Kositsky, 'The Tempest and De Orbe Novo', pp. 9, 19, 130–33.

¹⁷ Stritmatter and Kositsky, *RES* (2007), pp. 447–72.

¹⁸ Purchas, *Purchas His Pilgrimes*, 4:1734.

¹⁹ In addition to Vaughan and Reedy, see Gabriel Egan, 'Shakespeare' in *The Year's Work in English Studies* 88 (2009), pp. 392–93; 'Shakespeare' in *The Year's Work in English Studies* 89 (2010), pp. 343–44; and 'Shakespeare' in *The Year's Work in English Studies* 91 (2012), p. 404.

A lynchpin of Stritmatter and Kositsky's argument is the description of the tempest and St Elmo's fire in the play. Other sources, they say, are verbally closer to *Tempest* than Strachey, yet the parallels they cite are as — or more — fragmentary than Strachey's and generally out of context. Instead of from Strachey, they say, Shakespeare's description of St Elmo's fire was directly influenced by Erasmus' *Naufragium* (1523),²⁰ Ariosto's *Orlando Furioso* (1532, trans. 1591), and Antonio Pigafetta's description of St Elmo's fire in his account of the voyage of Ferdinand Magellan in Eden (pp. 49–51). They take pains to demonstrate that almost all of the Strachey/*Tempest* storm parallels are scattered amongst some of Shakespeare's previous plays, entirely missing the significance of them being clustered in both Strachey and *The Tempest*, one reason that the former is considered a source for the latter.

Take, for example, Strachey's use of 'amazed' (once) and 'amazement' (three times) in describing the storm, and his description of St Elmo's fire as 'streaming along with a *sparkeling blaze*, halfe the height vpon the *Maine Mast*, and shooting sometimes from Shroud to Shroud ... running sometimes along the *Maineyard* to the very end, and then returning', and that the viewers 'observed it with much wonder and carefulnesse' for 'it might haue strucken *amazement*, and a reuerence in our deuotions according to the due of a miracle' (certain words bolded and italicized for comparison).²¹ Ariel appears to the ship's crew and passengers in the form of St Elmos fire, as he reports to Prospero

I boarded the King's ship: now on the beak,
Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin
I *flamed amazement*, Sometime I'd divide
And *burn* in many places – on the *topmast*,
The *yards* and bowsprit would I *flame* distinctly,
Then meet and join. (1.2.196–201)

Despite these close verbal and visual connections not found together in any other source and Stritmatter and Kositsky's previous claim to work 'from sign', they reduce the resemblances to the single phrase 'flamed amazement' and dismiss it on the grounds that

²⁰ Not a novel suggestion, see J. D. Rea 'A Source for the Storm in *The Tempest*', *Modern Philology* 17 (1919), 279–86; Preserved Smith, *Key to the Colloquies of Erasmus (1536–1584)* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1927), pp. 20–21; and Kenneth Muir, *Shakespeare's Sources: Comedies and Tragedies* (London: Methuen, 1957), p. 261.

²¹ Strachey, 'True Reportory', 4:1735–7. All quotations from *The Tempest* are from the Arden Third Series edition, ed. Virginia Mason Vaughan and Alden T. Vaughan (London: Bloomsbury, rev. 2011).

the solitary word ‘amazement’ can be found in Eden, where it is used in completely different contexts (pp. 52–53):

- The enemies being ‘*amased* by reason of *this greate miracle*’ (74v)
- They showed him things that ‘had further delited his mynd with the harmony of their musycall instrumentes ... they dysmyssed him *halfe amased with to[o] muche admyration*’ (122v)
- ‘*wheremat the kyng was greatly amased*’ (223v)
- ‘*[H]e was greatly amased* and made signs holdinge uppe his hande to heaven, signifying therby that ovr men came from thense’ (218v–219)

The Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare’s ‘The Tempest’ contains a chapter entitled ‘William Strachey, Plagiarist’ in which Stritmatter and Kositsky contend that Strachey’s ‘habit of plagiarism is well established by modern critical scholarship’ and that he has a ‘widely acknowledged reputation as a plagiarist’ (pp. 141–42). Yet even Strachey’s biographer, S. G. Culliford, upon whose work Stritmatter and Kositsky rely to make that claim (p. 155, n. 4), never uses the word when reciting Strachey’s various credited and uncredited borrowing from other writers.²² Instead they play a literary shell game to argue the odd notion that because certain passages from Strachey’s *Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania* (their principal evidence of his plagiarism), written by November 1612, were taken from Captain John Smith’s *Map of Virginia* (1612), they have demonstrated a ‘pattern’ of borrowing in which Strachey’s Bermuda letter was partly plagiarized from Smith (p. 142–45).²³ That Strachey did borrow from many texts has been established conclusively by other scholars; that it was out of the ordinary for writers of the time or that he was known as a particularly infamous example has not. Stritmatter and Kositsky continue to downplay Strachey’s title page announcement in *Historie of Travell* that his book is ‘in part gathered, and obteyned, from the industrious and faithful Obseruations, and Commentaries of the first Planters and elder Discouerers; and in parte

²² S[tanley] G[eorge] Culliford, *William Strachey, 1572–1621* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1965), pp. 144–89.

²³ Their strongest argument, Smith’s and Strachey’s description of Chesapeake Bay, was dismissed by Reedy on the grounds that ‘a fixed distance, such as that between two Capes, cannot be a copied parallel, since it exists outside literary invention’ and the two were expressed in different terms, one in miles and the other in leagues (Reedy, *RES* 61 (2010), 548). Stritmatter and Kositsky reveal their confusion about sound methodology as they attempt to use the same argument against Reedy’s date and location comparisons, ignoring the fact that Reedy used the argument to explain *identical* points using this phrasing, not a choice between three *different* dates and locations (p. 162).

observed, by *William Strachey* gent'.²⁴ For his day, that was an author/editor's forthright statement that he had mixed his own and others' narratives and a sufficient shield against accusations of plagiarism.²⁵

Stritmatter and Kositsky offer no new reasons for their opinion that Strachey's letter was plagiarized and completed in 1612 and misdated two years earlier, but instead argue themselves into a logical briar patch. For example, their early research failed to find the draft of Strachey's letter that was discovered in Bermuda in 1983 and published in 2001, known as the Bermuda ('B') text,²⁶ so it was not included in their 2007 paper. In their response to its use by Reedy in his rebuttal to their paper, they agree that the composition of the early draft is contemporary with the actual events and acknowledge that the 'B' version or something comparable may have arrived in England with Gates in September 1610 (pp. 17, 19–21, 124, 126–27), declaring that it even bolsters their case for a completion date of 'True Reportory' in 1612 or later.²⁷ However, Stritmatter and Kositsky continue their previous argument that Strachey plagiarized from *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colony in Virginia* (1610) for facts that appear in the earlier 'B' version, such as the date of the storm (p. 162), and they attribute the close wording between the pamphlet and Strachey's letter, as previously demonstrated by Reedy, to Strachey plagiarizing the document more than a year later.

Logically, their scenario argues that the 'B' text reached London in time to inform *Declaration*, but that Strachey wrote the published version of the letter using facts gleaned second-hand from the *Declaration* that were based on his 'B' draft. According to Stritmatter and Kositsky's theory, instead of the pamphlet writer following Strachey and

²⁴ William Strachey, *The Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania (1612)*, ed. by Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund (London: Hakluyt Society, 1953), [p. 1].

²⁵ Here and elsewhere in this review we sometimes paraphrase portions of the discussion in Vaughan's *SQ* article because Stritmatter and Kositsky ignore or misreport several key points in *Date, Sources and Design*, especially pp. 128–33. Among their curious misrepresentations is Vaughan's statement (*SQ* [2010], 256) that 'in 1625 there was no earthly reason to append anything to *Reportory* that was not already there, and certainly no purpose in changing the document's date', which Stritmatter and Kositsky imagine to be an 'implication ... that we said that Purchas changed the document's date from some ulterior motive' (*Date, Sources and Design*, p.132–33). No such implication was implied or intended.

²⁶ The existence of the 'B' text was first publicly discussed in Ivor Noël Hume, *The Virginia Adventure, Roanoke to James Towne: An Archaeological and Historical Odyssey* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1994), pp. 243–44. Noël Hume then edited it for publication as 'William Strachey's Unrecorded First Draft of His *Sea Venture* Saga', *Avalon Chronicles* 6 (2001), 57–87.

²⁷ If they are right about that, then Shakespeare could have acquired the essence of Strachey's story, if not the embellished version, when the renamed *Spanish Maze* (by their accounting) was performed at least as early as November 1611. What does that do to Stritmatter and Kositsky's insistence that 'there is little doubt that Shakespeare's play was known to the London theatre public no later than 1603' (pp. 99, 202) and presumably, therefore, had nothing to do with Strachey's narrative, regardless of when it was written?

summarizing his points, Strachey copied the pamphlet and expanded the summaries, despite the fact that his earlier draft contains similar phrasing. This resembles their 2007 argument, repeated here (pp. 153–56, 216–19), that Strachey’s letter was written to answer questions from Richard Martin, even though the passages they claimed were answers are for the most part present in the letter from Governor De La Warr and the council in Virginia to the Company, written in Strachey’s handwriting and dated 7 July 1610, which arrived in London in September, three months before Martin penned his letter.²⁸

In one unintentionally ludicrous ‘parallel’ that Stritmatter and Kositsky employ to cast doubt on Strachey’s influence, they assert that the ‘gallows complexion’ of Shakespeare’s boatswain²⁹ has its analog in the pale countenance of a fearful shipmaster in Erasmus’ ‘Naufragium’ (p. 50). No other critic interprets it to mean what Stritmatter and Kositsky apparently do; to the contrary, the boatswain is insolent to his social superiors and encourages the sailors to work cheerily to save the ship. The phrase as used by Gonzalo means the man looks like a criminal whose destiny is to be hanged for his blasphemy and combative attitude toward his betters, invoking the adage ‘He that’s born to be hanged need fear no drowning’, as almost any annotated edition explains.³⁰ Stritmatter and Kositsky again ignore the context in their eagerness to abuse Strachey.

Stritmatter and Kositsky reassert and expand their notion that only after his return to London in late 1611 or early 1612 could Strachey have obtained access to the sources essential to the completion of his letter (pp. 124, 144–45). Only two major texts have been identified, José de Acosta’s *Naturall and moral historie of the East and West Indies* (trans. London 1604) and Eden’s *History of travayle in the West and East Indies* (1577),³¹ which Stritmatter and Kositsky say were unavailable to him at Bermuda and Jamestown (p. 124). As proof that Strachey copied the Virginia Company’s *True Declaration*, they cite passages from both the pamphlet and Strachey that appear to originate in Eden, using the logic that Strachey, without access to Eden in Virginia, must have drawn on *True*

²⁸ Reedy, *RES* 61 (2010), pp. 545–46.

²⁹ ‘GONZALO: I have great comfort from this fellow. Methinks he hath no drowning mark upon him — his complexion is perfect gallows’ (1.1.27–29).

³⁰ ‘GONZALO: O, look, sir, look, sir; here is more of us!

I prophesied, if a gallows were on land

This fellow could not drown. [*to Boatswain*] Now, blasphemy,

That swear'st grace o'erboard, not an oath on shore?

Hast thou no mouth by land? What is the news?’ (5.1.216–20)

³¹ Culliford, pp. 165, 168.

Declaration after he returned to London (p. 181). Unhappily for their theory and apparently unbeknownst to them, Strachey's copy of Eden's 1577 edition, signed and dated 2 May 1609, a month before the *Sea Venture* sailed, is in the Yale University Beinecke Library, acquired in 1879 from the estate of the American book collector George Brinley.³² An inscription in another hand notes its presentation, presumably much later than 1609, to a 'plantation', a term often used for the Virginia Colony and its subdivisions before the Crown took over the Virginia Company in 1623.³³ (Hobson Woodward clearly refers to this volume in his *Brave Vessel* [2009], one of the works listed in Stritmatter and Kositsky's bibliography [p. 249], but they seem not to have noticed it.³⁴) The survival of Strachey's copy of Eden suggests that he was likely to have had Acosta with him also. Besides whatever books Strachey had in Virginia, George Percy and other gentlemen colonists likely brought, or were sent, useful books.³⁵

Stritmatter and Kositsky commit elementary errors in reading that are difficult to understand. Despite their claim to have 'labored many hours over the chapters that respond to Reedy and Vaughan, reviewing data and wrestling with every textual or historical enigma we encountered' (p. 201), they fail to read Vaughan's 2008 article closely, leading to several egregious errors. Vaughan, for example, clearly states in his text and notes that Edmond Malone, while citing the *Sea Venture* episode of 1609 as the determining evidence for *The Tempest*'s date of composition, focused on Sil[vester] Iovrdan [Jourdain], *A Discovery of the Barmvdas* (1610), and that it wasn't until 1901 that Morton Luce pinpointed Strachey's eyewitness narrative as the key document.³⁶ Yet Stritmatter and Kositsky protest that '[T]he reader of Vaughan's article will be surprised to learn that, although Malone in fact lists fourteen texts ... as possible *Tempest* sources,

³² Bookplate in volume, also *Catalogue of the American Library of the late Mr. George Brinley of Hartford, Connecticut* (Hartford: Press of Case Lockwood and Brainard Company, 1878–97), Part I, p. 6, item 41.

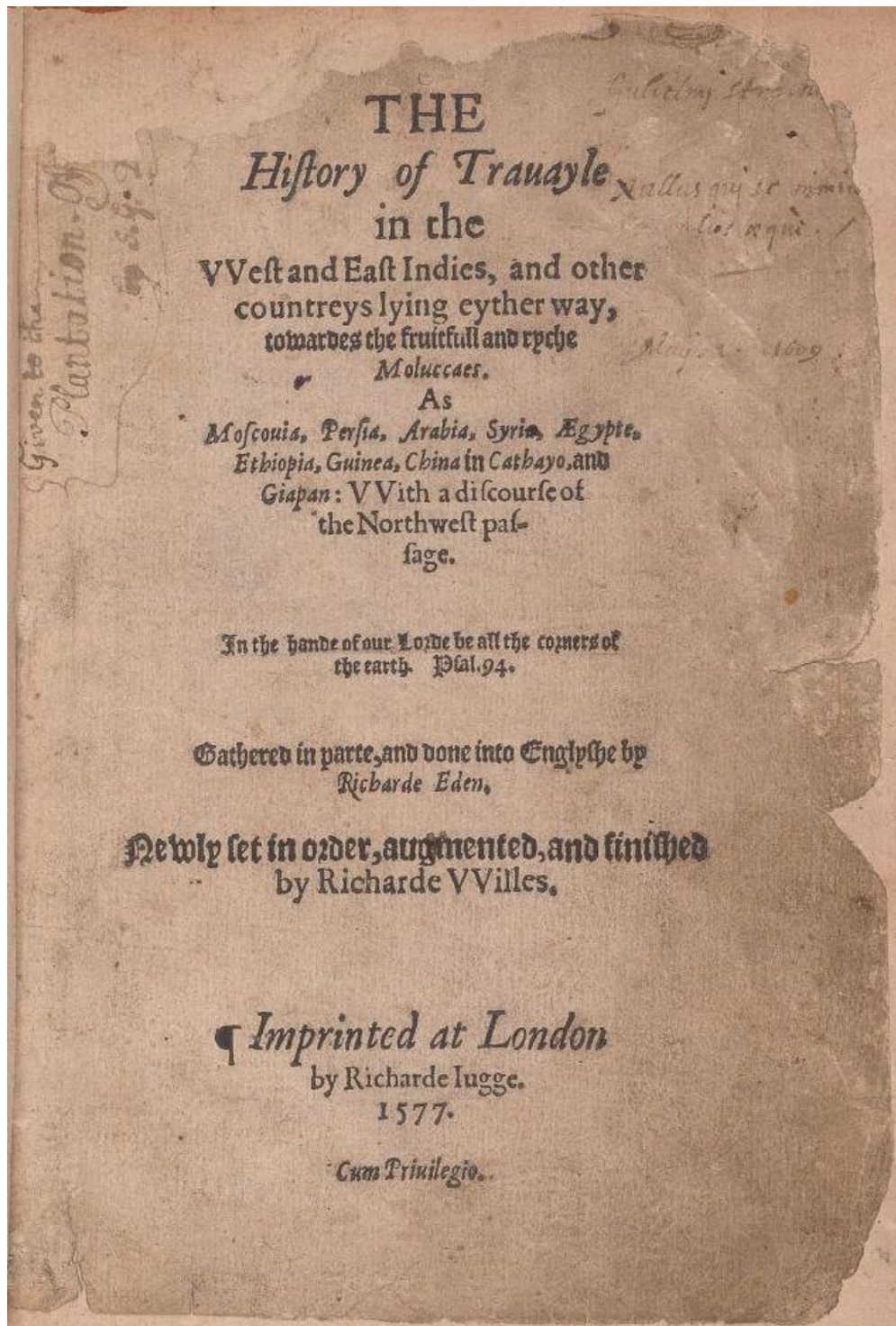
³³ BEIN Eca 555Eb: Imperfect: t.p. mutilated and repaired with no loss of text but with partial loss of ms. presentation inscription: Given to the plantation of [torn] by S.G. [torn]. Additional ms. notes and ms. date: May 2, 1609. First and second leaves also repaired but with no loss of text.

³⁴ Hobson Woodward, *Brave Vessel: The True Tale of the Castaways Who Rescued Jamestown and Inspired Shakespeare's The Tempest* (New York: Viking, 2009), pp. 10, 210.

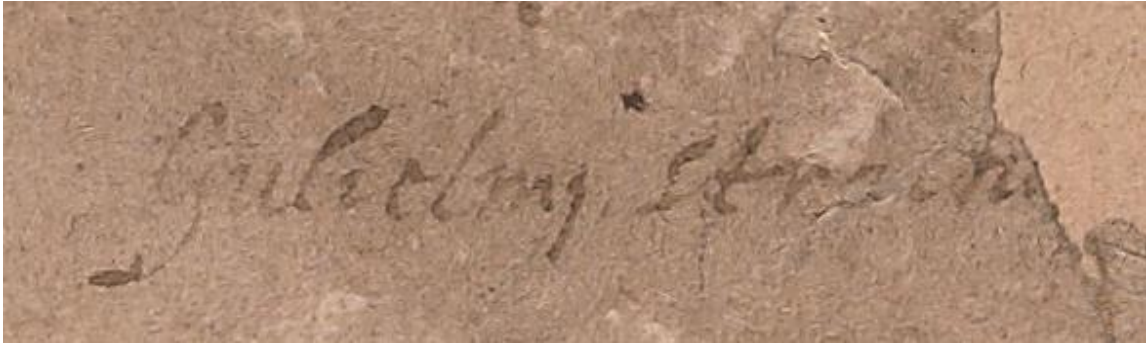
³⁵ Stritmatter and Kositsky refer readers to William S. Powell, 'Books in the Virginia Colony Before 1624', *William and Mary Quarterly*, 3d ser. 4 (1948), 77–84. That brief article almost exclusively concerns the early 1620s and is therefore irrelevant to Strachey's manuscript. But see Mark Nicholls, 'George Percy's "Trew Relacyon": A Primary Source for the Jamestown Settlement', *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography*, 113 (2005), 212–275 (p. 216), for evidence that Percy's brother, the Earl of Northumberland, sent books to him in Virginia. Strachey himself acknowledges assistance from Percy's 'Commentaries and observations' in *Historie of Travell*, p. 4. See also Culliford, pp. 185–86.

³⁶ Vaughan, *SQ* 59 (2008), p. 245 and note.

Strachey's *Reportory* is not one of them' and that 'Unlike Malone, Luce was an advocate of the Strachey theory' (pp. 117–18).



Title page of William Strachey's copy of Richard Eden's *History of travayle in the West and East Indies* (1577), edited by Richard Willes, signed and dated 2 May 1609. Courtesy Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.



Detail of Strachey's signature.

Another example of imprecise reading is their assertion that Reedy erred in saying that both Strachey's accounts and the Virginia pamphlet agree that the source of the leak in *Sea Venture* could not be found (pp. 162–63). In fact Strachey writes, 'Many leaks were thus found ... but the principle one could not be discovered' in the 'B' version, and 'the Leake (if it were but one) which drunke in our greatest Seas, and tooke in our destruction fastest, could not then be found, nor ever was, by any labour, counsell, or search', in the printed version. Stritmatter and Kositsky claim that Strachey reports that the leak was discovered in the hold, but they misread Strachey, who is clearly recounting — not the exact location of the leak — but when (Tuesday morning, the second day and that of the hurricane) it was first discovered that the ship was leaking in the hold, which consisted of the entire lower area of the ship above the ballast.³⁷

Similarly, Stritmatter and Kositsky's response to the evolution of a phrase used by Strachey and the anonymous author of *True Declaration*, as pointed out by Reedy, defies common sense (texts modernized):

³⁷ 'Our Gouvernour vpon the tuesday morning (at what time, by such who had bin below in the hold, the Leake was first discovered) had caused the whole Company, about one hundred and forty, besides women to be equally diuided into three parts, and opening the Ship in three places (vnder the forecastle, in the waste, and hard by the Bitacke) appointed each man where to attend; and thereunto euery man came duely vpon his watch, tooke the Bucket, or Pumpe for one houre, and rested another' (4:1736).

Strachey “B”
7 June 1610

“True Reportory”

True Declaration
8 November 1610

how willing they were to
make the greatest exer-
tions, though almost
drowning amidst them.

how mutually willing
they were yet by labor to
keep each other from
drowning, albeit each
one drowned whilst he
labored

‘those which labored to
keep others from drown-
ing were half-drowned
themselves in laboring

As Reedy explained,³⁸ the description improves as it moves from draft to final letter to *True Declaration*, evolving into fine antimetabole and demonstrating the reliance of *True Declaration* upon Strachey. Stritmatter and Kositsky can only respond with a rhetorical question, ‘Why wouldn’t Strachey, borrowing the already ‘perfected’ figure, convert an elegant expression into a wordier one?’ and assert that the argument ‘depends upon his [Reedy’s] assumptions — that Strachey was the original writer and that copyists inevitably improve what they borrow’, an explanation that ignores the three different versions of the same information. Strachey, Stritmatter and Kositsky imply, degraded the figure in order to disguise his ‘plagiarism’ (p. 162).

Another of Stritmatter and Kositsky’s shortcomings deserves attention. They clearly want their readers to accept *On the Date, Sources and Design of Shakespeare’s ‘The Tempest’* as ‘rigorous scholarship’, a characteristic they find conspicuously lacking in their critics (e.g., pp. 117, 200–201). In addition to their factual and analytical deficiencies, as the examples cited in this review illustrate (the tip of the iceberg), Stritmatter and Kositsky’s work conspicuously lacks bibliographic thoroughness and accuracy. Examples abound. The book’s bibliography lists *A True Declaration of the Estate of the Colonie in Virginia* but omits its place of publication, publisher, and date, presumably because it is ‘Not in STC’, though in fact it is (#24833). We are informed that ‘R[ichard] Riche’ (actually Rich) wrote *Newes from Virginia* but are given misinformation about the title and another incorrect STC number (it should be 21005, not 23350). And so forth. The book’s supplementary list of ‘Conventions and Major Original Sources Used in This Book’ (pp. 10–11) is similarly error-prone. Ivor Noël Hume’s surname is not Hume, as Stritmatter

³⁸ Reedy, *RES* 61 (2010), p. 539.

and Kositsky could have learned from the Library of Congress catalogue or other standard source (oddly, he does not appear in their current bibliography though he does in their list of major sources in the Introduction [p. 10]); Strachey's 'True Reportory' appears in volume four of Purchas's *Pilgrimes* (they cite the pages but omit the volume number [pp. 10, 248]); and many scholars will be surprised by their assertion that the 'standard text' of Strachey's *Historie of Travell into Virginia Britania* is R.H. Major's 1849 edition rather than Louis B. Wright and Virginia Freund's 1953 edition, both published by the Hakluyt (not Hackluyt) Society. Stritmatter and Kositsky's bibliographic inaccuracy extends even to their own publications. Their *Shakespeare Yearbook* article in fact has a different subtitle and is on different pages than those they cite, as are the pages in their *Oxfordian* article (p. 248). Several years ago, Irvin Matus proposed a comprehensive critique of the *RES* article's manifold bibliographic errors but did not live to complete it.

These errors in fact, interpretation, and scholastic methodology and apparatus may be partly explained by a contradiction that pervades the book. In the title and very often in the text, Stritmatter and Kositsky acknowledge Shakespeare as the author of *The Tempest*, thereby implicitly accepting the conventional judgment that the plays attributed to Shakespeare, and certainly *The Tempest*, were by William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon. Again and again, they acknowledge 'Shakespeare's uncanny genius' (p. 83), 'Shakespeare's ability to shape dramatic action' (p. 88), 'Shakespeare's design', (p. 94), 'Shakespeare's seminal work' (p. 113), and give more lengthy commendations such as 'In Eden's Ovidian New World Shakespeare found a copious vocabulary of natural history that is reproduced in *Tempest*' (p. 34), and '[I]n 1603 . . . Shakespeare was already the most prominent literary figure of his generation, a dramatist whose works had been performed to public acclaim at least since 1592 and had appeared in print in more play quartos than those of any other writer' (p. 107). On such evidence, this book seems not to be an anti-Stratfordian challenge to traditional authorship but a fresh inquiry into the dating, sources, and design of a play by Shakespeare.

That assumption, however, requires the reader to overlook the final pages, in which Stritmatter and Kositsky reveal their motive for writing the book: to remove the chronological barrier against the authorship of Edward De Vere, the 17th Earl of Oxford, whom Stritmatter and Kositsky believe was the true writer of the works of William Shakespeare. Oxford died in 1604, six years too early to have written *The Tempest*. '[W]e are confident' Stritmatter and Kositsky conclude, 'that the reflexive argument that

Oxford cannot have been the author because he died before *The Tempest* was written is rapidly becoming obsolete' (p. 205). For readers already committed to that interpretation, this book, which earned Stritmatter the Shakespeare Fellowship's 'Oxfordian of the year award' in 2013, should strengthen their faith.³⁹ For readers familiar with the long-simmering debate over the sources and dating of *The Tempest*, Stritmatter and Kositsky's book will illustrate how tenacious, tendentious, and misguided the Oxfordian argument remains.

³⁹ *Shakespeare Matters*, 12.4 (Fall, 2013), p. 1.