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Shakespeare and the Object a cura di **Keir Elam e Fabio Liberto**

Rubrica di linguistica e glottodidattica a cura di Claudio Di Meola

Lavoro redazionale a cura di Chiara Moriconi, Francesca Zaccone

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Zachary Lesser. "Hamlet" After Q1: An Uncanny History of the Shakespearean Text. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. Pp. 292, € 29,00.

The story of the accidental discovery of *Hamlet's* first Quarto in a closet of Sir Henry Banbury's manor house in 1823 and of its effects on the subsequent critical interpretations of Shakespeare's most emblematic play are the central argument of Zachary Lesser's study, *"Hamlet" After Q1: An Uncanny History of the Shakespearean Text* (University of Pennsylvania Press, Philadelphia, 2015). Q1 was included in a badly bound volume of twelve Shakespeare plays, all first editions, but the text of *Hamlet* appeared as a different version from those known up to that time, particularly as to some characters and scenes (the final missing leaf was accidentally discovered by the Dublin bookseller M. W. Rooney in 1856).

Lesser discusses the cultural debate generated by that discovery, and illustrates how Q1 has influenced our general understanding of *Hamlet* and Shakespeare.

A few illuminating examples are given of how even the analysis of single words which are different or missing in Q1 can throw new light on the text and suggest new interpretations.

Rather inspiring are Lesser's comments on the discovered Q1, seen in Freudian terms as the return of the "uncanny" – ("something 'known of old and long familiar' had returned to the Victorian in an unfamiliar form" (11) – and also his historicist perspective when considering a text belonging to two totally separated periods (1603 and 1823) with no connection in the intervening years and whose importance lies in its predating the text generally known as *Hamlet*.

Lesser gives an ample overview of the many critical interpretations and the philological theories of New Textualism about Q1 and Shakespearean authorship, concluding that future studies “must reckon with the uncanny historicity of Q1” (221) and its relation to the successive texts of *Hamlet*.

A pleasant reading and a fascinating book, rich in facts, suggestions, and ideas.

Simonetta de Filippis