

**Manuel J.Gómez-Lara, María José Mora, Paula de Pando, Rafael Portillo, Juan A. Prieto-Pablos and Rafael Vélez Núñez, eds. 2014.**  
***Restoration Comedy 1660–1670. A Catalogue***  
**Amherst, NY: Teneo Press.**

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*Restoration Comedy 1660–1670. A Catalogue* is the first volume in a series whose main goal is “to offer an objective, detailed view of all Restoration comedies, based on the descriptive and quantitative information obtained from an analysis of the plays” (3). In order to achieve this aim, the members of the research team from the University of Seville who launched The Restoration Comedy Project take the various aspects of the production of the plays and their dual nature as literary and performance texts into account. As this first volume covers the years 1660–1670, its main section, titled “Comedy Files,” includes 92 files, one for each of the plays written and/or performed in England during this decade. Each file provides information about the play’s title, author, printing history, modern editions, performances, preface, dedication, prologue, epilogue, characters, location and time setting, plot summary, genre, stage directions, songs and dances, and sources.

This main section is preceded by a comprehensive introduction which explains the methodology employed, advances a series of conclusions derived from the collected data, and incorporates explanatory tables and figures. The “Introduction” is divided into 13 sections: 1. Preface, 2. The Corpus, 3. Title Pages, 4. Performance, 5. Prints and Reprints, 6. Prefatory Matter, 7. Dramatic Structure, 8. Genres and Sub-genres, 9. Tables of Characters, 10. The Actors, 11. Stage Directions, 12. Music, and 13. Sources. In the “Preface,” the

editors explain the main goal of their project and the importance of this volume as part of their research project. "The Corpus" is made up of the criteria the research team used for the choice of the works which have been included in this first volume. The section "Title Pages" deals with the 15 different items which can be found on the title pages, which are placed in a fairly standard order and grouped into six main areas, as explained in this section. In "Performance," the editors make reference to the sources they had to resort to in order to find out whether the works had been performed or not. Taking this information into account, they split the section up into four sub-sections: Premiere dates, Revivals, Unacted plays, and Companies and playhouses. "Prints and Reprints" focuses on the 71 printed plays and on the 30 reprinted texts. The 3 sub-sections of "Prefatory Matter" make reference to the most important paratextual additions to the plays: Dedications, Prefaces and epistles to the reader, and Prologues and epilogues. In "Dramatic Structures," the authors explore to what extent both the external and internal structures are worth considering. Therefore, this section deals with Acts and entr'actes, Scenes, and the three unities (time, place and action), which are also relevant when dealing with the structure of these plays. In "Genres and Sub-genres," the editors state that, despite the existence of a series of crossover cases, the comedies contained in this volume may be ascribed to at least three major generic groups: romantic, comic, and satirical. The section "Tables of Characters" deals with the type of information provided by such lists although it sticks to the five main types of characters portrayed in these comedies: gallants, women of honour, helpers, blocking characters, and comic butts. In "Actors," not only do the editors focus on both the actors and actresses who worked for the Duke's Company or the King's Company but they also pay special attention to those who engaged in common strategies such as cross-dressing. In "Stage Directions," the editors make reference to the importance of stage directions for a full understanding of the play, which is the reason why they decided to catalogue them all. The section "Music" deals mainly with the occurrence of musical turns in 60 plays out of a total of 74 and with their place in the comedies. Finally, in "Sources," the editors refer to the topics, situations, and characters which Restoration dramatists drew from previous literary productions. Apart from the detailed introduction, a series of appendices which follows the core section allows for a quick search

of specific data: title and author's name variants, plays listed by title/author, title-pages, performance, prints and reprints, prefatory material, dramatic structure, genres, character types, actor's roles, stage directions, music, sources and a select bibliography.

Without doubt, *Restoration Comedy 1660–1670. A Catalogue* must be regarded as an invaluable source of information for anyone interested in the plays written and/or performed in that decade. Despite the undeniable importance of the core section, it is worth highlighting the introduction which precedes the comedy files. The detailed description of the different parts of a play together with the analysis of the factors which influenced the writing and/or production of plays at the time makes this volume an essential work for anyone interested in Restoration comedies. Not only is it a magnificent starting point for students who would like to plunge into the theatrical world of the period, but it may also be a useful reference manual for scholars who are widely read in Restoration Comedy as it will allow them to find any important detail related to the large number of plays written and/or performed during this time. It is also necessary to mention the methodology used by the editors: taking the resulting volume into account, it is obvious that the editors devoted a long time to the elaboration of a comprehensive system of analysis which they apply to every play. Although the introduction may be considered one of the most important parts of the volume, the appendices following the core section should not be undervalued. At a glance, it is possible to gather information which otherwise would take us long hours to find. The only downside is the size of the book, which makes it difficult to carry comfortably, although this problem could be solved with the publication of an electronic version. I hope the editors will be able to fulfil this venture with the publication of other volumes including the later comedies.

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