James Shapiro. *A Year in the Life of Willliam Shakespeare: 1599*. New York: HarperCollins, 2005. Paperback 2006. Pp xix, 394.

Shakespearean criticism has long been handicapped by a dearth of information about the bard himself. In the main, scholars have had to resort to a few available documents and to material drawn from the plays and sonnets to suggest this most elusive of men, who, compared with other writers of his day, failed miserably at self-publicity. In studying the year 1599, James Shapiro attempts to untie this knotty problem by examining contemporary documents and placing what he has found into a well-defined historical framework. Moving deftly from history to play, he interweaves reports of important events, like Lancelot Andrewes's Richmond Palace sermon on the expedition to Ireland and Essex and Elizabeth's bedchamber confrontation, with complementary scenes, themes and lines from Shakespearean works that may have been in process during this year: *Henry V*, *All's Well That End's Well* and *Hamlet*. He also connects these works with more local stories, such as the timber raid of the Chamberlain's Men, the signing of the Globe contract, and the arrival of the 'witty fool' Robert Armin (222). The result is a plausible view of Shakespeare's life and activities during a pivotal year for England, as she abandoned chivalry for globalization, and for Shakespeare, who began to locate his plays' conflicts within the minds of his characters, in the process 'redefining the relationship between speaker and audience' (297).

The year is divided into its four seasonal divisions, each accompanied by an appropriate illustration from T.F.'s *A Book of Diverse Devices* (c. 1600). 'Winter' contains the struggle between the clown Will Kemp and his employers, Elizabeth's boxing of Essex's ears, the British defeat at Blackwater, and Andrewes's sermon. 'Spring' brings the construction of the Globe Theatre, the writing of *Henry V*, the Somerville plot, and Elizabeth's Accession Day. 'Summer' holds London's fear of 'the invisible Armada', the unauthorized sonnets of *The Passionate Pilgrim*, Shakespeare's overhaul of Thomas Lodge's *Rosalind* in *As You Like It*, and the Arden legacy in Warwickshire. 'Autumn' completes the cycle with Essex's return, early work on *Hamlet*, Essex's conspiracy, and the revision of *Hamlet*. In the centre of the book, a splendid plate section that includes Baptista Boazio's 1599 map of Ireland, probably commissioned for Essex's military venture, assists the text in bringing alive this critical year. Finally, Shapiro includes an extensive bibliographical essay.

Relying largely on letters, diaries, sermons, art descriptions, and publications, Shapiro grounds his book in the Elizabethan court and in the world of

the Globe actors. He places documents about Queen Elizabeth, her administration and adherents in unusually high relief. The resulting insider's view of a challenging period in post-Reformation England is of value to the student of Shakespeare. Three areas are of particular note: Elizabeth's fortification of her regal position, her manipulation of propaganda, and her 'displacement of the religious by the nationalist' (164). In her mid-sixties and without an heir, the Queen was aware of her vulnerability. She expressed this personally in an inordinate sensitivity to aging and politically in both her domestic and foreign policy. In order to lessen the strength of the knights of the realm, she had permitted their number to decline (255). At the beginning of the Irish rebellion, she dragged her feet rather than empower a military lord; later, she denied needed support to the troops in Ireland lest Essex be too successful. She overreacted to rumors of a Spanish attack on London, and she moved against free speech.

During 1598, Elizabeth's authorities had pressed to curb playgoing, and in 1599 her censors worked to seek out the seditious *bugswords*, or 'coded terms' (128) of London's authors, finally ordering the burning of their books (136). In an effort to gain support for her foreign policy, she regularly 'tune[d] the pulpits' (78) with her preachers aligning church and state. As Peter Heylyn, a contemporary observer, put it, they would 'cry up her design'. Shapiro offers Andrewes's well-tuned 'This Day' sermon as an example and connects it to the 'Saint Crispian' speech in *Henry V* (83). He also reports on the Paul's Cross Accession Day sermon of Hugh Holland and on one preached the next day by John Richardson; both sermons prove significant for Shakespeare's plays.

For thirty years, Elizabeth's appropriation of the feast of St. Hugh of Lincoln as her Accession Day had rankled some of her subjects. This incursion of the secular into the sacred had even resulted in the adaptation of a Marian hymn to honor Queen Elizabeth. So when Holland defended the state for observing Accession Day 'in the manner of a holy-day' (167), Richardson responded by preaching 'Give unto Caesar's [sic] that which is Caesar's' (Matt. 22:21). For his audacity, the preacher was sequestered and silenced. Perhaps in response, Shapiro notes, Shakespeare worked the appropriation of a religious holiday for political purposes into both *Henry V* and *Julius Caesar*.

The struggle between the religious and the secular penetrated to the public theater as well. The Elizabethan stage, says Shapiro, 'retained some of the energies that had been the domain of the church' (151). Its communal per-

formances seemed to ease the 'sensory deprivation' resulting from the stripping of the churches and their sacramental rituals. Playgoers expected 'a mix of religion and politics' (138). The plays' revelations about the intersection of church and state, however, do not seem connect us directly to the man, Shakespeare. As Shapiro notes, Shakespeare was raised in a town with limited cultural opportunities (25), arrived in London in 1580, and moved frequently from rented quarters to rented quarters 'to the frustration of tax collectors' (20). He never left England (25). The popular clown, Will Kemp, called him 'Shakerags' (39). In 1597, he bought a ten-room home and property in Stratford, where, contrary to Privy Council direction, he hoarded eighty bushels of barley in his barn (240). Known locally as an investor, he agreed to 'procure money' for some Stratford friends (232). He was offended at William Jaggard's unauthorized publication of *The Passionate Pilgrim* in April or May of 1599 (194). In an age when authors knew each other's style well (9), he was able to tell George Buc what part a contemporary author/actor had played, but could not remember the author's name (192). His application in 1599 for a revised coat-of-arms may not have been entirely truthful (246); the same is true of his dealings to recover some Arden property lost twenty years earlier (247). This account is hardly the portrait of a man who was interested in pleasing either church or state. The most favorable impression of Shakespeare given in the documentary record may lie in the fact that, along with the famous second bed to his wife, he bequeathed 'twenty pounds and all my wearing apparel' (232) to his sister, Joan.

Shapiro not only analyzes what survives in the Shakespearean archive; he also gives us a list of what is missing: no testimonial for Hamnet at his death (13); no letters home to his wife and children, who lived at a distance and whom he appears to have visited once a year (230); no legal action against William Jaggard. Surprisingly, the plays fail to privilege Stratford's favorite St. George and the dragon (148); its disastrous fires of 1594 and 1595, which were known in London (238); or its local Rollright Stones legend (237). These omissions are significant, and Shapiro diligently draws attention to them. A fine comparative look at the sonnet 'When My Love Swears' in its first and second versions leaves the reader aware of an emotionally intuitive author, but we lack empirical evidence that William Shakespeare possessed such intuition. We search in vain for the spirit of a man who knows himself to have abandoned his honor like Mark Antony, betrayed his lover like Othello, brooded on old wrongs like Hamlet, loved his child like Prospero, or been forgiven like the characters of the late romances. Despite historical lacunae,

Shapiro has raised useful and provocative questions about Shakespeare's culture and personality.

1599 is like the finest Elizabethan lace made from linen thread. It presents more about Shakespeare and his times than we have known heretofore, especially with regard to Queen Elizabeth and 'equivocating' James I. Its fragility, however, derives from its concentration on one year. We hope that the author will soon return to his spinning with no limit to the pattern of his web.

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Frances A. Shirley (ed). *Troilus and Cressida*. Shakespeare in Production. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Pp xxi, 258.

The recent shift of emphasis in Shakespeare studies to performance issues has made inevitable the emergence of projects like Cambridge's 'Shakespeare in Production' series, which, according to the cover of this volume, offers 'the fullest possible stage histories of individual Shakespearean texts'. Each volume offers these 'stage histories' in two ways: first, through a chronological survey of what is known about a play's stage history, from its first performance to its most recent; and second, through a text annotated with descriptions of how particular moments were staged in different productions. Frances Shirley's volume on *Troilus and Cressida*, which I take to be representative, also offers a list of all known productions, including filmed versions; a bibliography; and a small number of photographs. A review of any particular volume will have to be concerned with the concept behind the series as much as with the individual contribution. Frances Shirley, it should be said, has done a thorough scholarly job of turning up what information seems to be available about past productions of *Troilus and Cressida* (though in many cases this is, inevitably, very little). The problems I find in her book are mainly with the publisher's concept.

Shirley's introductory survey is very useful, but limits are imposed by the small availability of information about most earlier productions of *Troilus and Cressida*. Even in the case of more contemporary stagings, the editor herself has not seen most of them, and has had to rely on anecdotal information or information taken from program notes and newspaper reviews. This is no