

Editorial

Within the pages of this issue, readers will find insightful arguments and inspiring research about plays ranging from the fifteenth century to the seventeenth. These pieces exemplify the broad perspective on early theatre that is a founding principle of this journal.

The first three articles centre on examples of fifteenth-century drama, and each is particularly concerned with how we might better understand the relationship between text and performance. Ann Hubert considers how the Digby *Conversion of St Paul* manifests onstage the title character's interior spiritual transformation through its representation of his preaching and through the sermon-like speeches of the character Poeta. The play and the medieval sermon tradition thus become linked as rhetorically sophisticated texts that teach about the mechanisms of religious change. Elza C. Tiner discusses what the varied forms of language in Thomas Chaundler's Latin play *Liber apologeticus* indicate about likely performance at New College, Cambridge. Her consideration of the ante-chapel and the bishop's palace at Wells as possible performance spaces persuasively imagines how such a structure could be used for playing. Lloyd Edward Kermode analyzes the significance of two surviving accounts of the city of York's 1486 entertainment for King Henry VII as evidence of the potentially subversive power dynamics at play in civic pageantry. In the process, he argues that written texts, including the verses written for performance and accounts written for posterity, were of as much interest to early players, producers, and audiences as they are to today's literary critics.

A fourth article and the note that follows are studies of plays with little in common in terms of subject matter. Yet together, these two pieces indicate the impact of the past on London's commercial stages. Misha Teramura identifies the fifteenth-century military leader John Hunyadi as the probable subject of the lost play *Vayvode*, performed by the Admiral's Men in 1598. By focusing on this individual's battles with the Ottoman Turks, the play does not just represent historical events onstage but comes into dialogue with an older but still popular play in the Admiral's Men repertory, Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*. Miryana Dimitrova's note looks even farther into

the past, explaining how Beaumont and Fletcher's *The False One* appropriates characters from accounts of Rome by the historian Lucan to offer an ambivalent portrayal of Julius Caesar and thus a potentially critical comment on contemporary court politics.

Brett D. Hirsch's review essay discussing Jeremy Lopez's monograph *Constructing the Canon of Early Modern Drama* and Jonathan Bate and Eric Rasmussen's anthology *William Shakespeare and Others: Collaborative Plays* demonstrates not only varied ways of approaching early theatre but also considerable debate about which examples of early drama are worth our attention. The following short reviews of individual books show that there is still much to be said about English performance traditions stretching from the Middle Ages up through the early modern period.

With this issue, the editors also announce a change in the journal's distribution format. Starting with volume 19 (2016), *Early Theatre* will continue to be available online but will no longer appear in print. We have been contemplating this shift away from paper subscriptions for the past five years, partly because the costs of printing and mailing are difficult to sustain without significant increases in the journal's subscription rates. Given our increasing electronic readership, not only via online subscriptions managed by ITER at the University of Toronto but also through various aggregators, including EBSCO, Gale/Cengage, and now J-STOR (as of 2016), we are able to make this change without sacrificing the journal's scholarly impact and visibility. We wish to thank our loyal print subscribers, who have supported our work over many years, and gratefully encourage them to continue this support for *Early Theatre's* mandate by taking up new online subscriptions either as individuals or through their institutional libraries.

THE EDITORS