

Organizing her book rhetorically under the rubrics of invention, memory, and delivery, Enders plentifully illustrates her contentions from French medieval drama – a body of work with which English scholars are apt to be too unfamiliar. Medieval discussions of rhetorical invention, as she shows, give rise to theatrical views of torture; historical narratives of the origins of drama are consistently linked to torture and to invention at the same time. (The *Rhetorica ad Herennium* is a case in point.) Memory served as ‘the epistemological place where the inventional materials of torture were assembled (*dispositio*) and rehearsed for performance (*actio*)’ (61). The very art of memory, according to legend, grew out of Simonides’ ability to remember what had been dismembered in the human victims of a collapsed building.

A mnemonically engendered oration was persuasive precisely to the extent that it was dramatic, as Enders has argued in her earlier *Rhetoric and the Origins of Drama*. Here she goes on to stress that the memory image was persuasive and dramatic because it was violent. She recalls that Thomas Bradwardine taught his students how to memorize the signs of the zodiac by visualizing them as a series of gory mutilations. As Nietzsche was later to theorize, pain is the ‘strongest aid to mnemonics’ (100). Violence in the classroom was a device to ensure that students would not forget what they had been taught; violence in the theatre was thought to operate in a similar way, as dramatic action oscillated between violence and play. To the extent that plays were regarded as pedagogical devices, they shared with the classroom a devotion to violent means of flogging the memory and the will.

Enders points out that language is itself a ‘matter of force’, as Roland Barthes has argued (160). The terminology of catharsis is one of pathology and pain. The properties of medieval plays run heavily to rocks, cudgels, knives, daggers, whips, and the like. John Gattton says it eloquently in his memorable title, ‘There Must be Blood’ (193). Jody Enders’ evocation of the medieval theatre of cruelty brilliantly captures what is so important and abiding about this concept of theatre, in a book that is both learned and daring.

DAVID BEVINGTON

Edward J. Esche (ed). *Shakespeare and his Contemporaries in Performance*. Aldershot, VT: Ashgate, 2000. Pp xii, 364.

In his consideration of ‘Shakespeare and Cultural Tourism,’ Dennis Kennedy comments on the postwar Shakespeare festivals that proved so crucial to the

history of twentieth-century Shakespearean performance. He remarks that their Bard 'was a modernist Shakespeare,' elaborating that 'in general terms the festivals saw Shakespeare as an acknowledged universal monument and attempted in production to realize his greatness' (5). Against that cultural icon, Kennedy sets the Shakespeare of the new Globe Theatre, a commodified heritage property in a postmodern world where the 'past becomes a universal Disneyland' (8). Kennedy's essay was the keynote address at 'Scaena: Shakespeare and his Contemporaries in Performance', an International Conference held at St John's College, Cambridge, in August 1997. It serves as the effective introduction to this selection of papers from that conference, which attests to performance criticism's ongoing negotiations between modernist and post-modernist conceptions of the purpose of playing.

The roots of performance-based criticism of early modern drama are firmly in modernist readings of Shakespeare; seminal works in the field by critics such as J.L. Styan and Alan Dessen rest on the assumption that effective performance will help to realize the playwright's intentions. More recently, critics such as Barbara Hodgdon and W.B. Worthen have challenged that view, suggesting that each generation of theatrical practitioners surrogates the 'classic' playtexts it performs. *Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* contains timely contributions to these debates. Its editor, Edward J. Esche, declares that the conference from which it stems aimed 'to bring together English Renaissance drama scholars for the discussion, exploration and practice of performance criticism, and to address Shakespeare within the context of his fellow dramatists' (x). In terms of the latter aim, it seems regrettable that only seven of the volume's twenty-one essays consider the works of Shakespeare's contemporaries, given performance criticism's urgent need to escape its foundational bardolatry by 'provid[ing] materials that might allow Shakespeare to be considered within a context of Renaissance drama and dramatists' (xi). Still, this collection directs attention toward the cultural potential inherent in productions of non-Shakespearean Renaissance drama, whether (as in the case of Kristin Crouch's essay on Ford's *The Broken Heart* in performance) by attesting to the theatrical power of an infrequently staged text, or (as in the case of Peter Happé's '*The Magnetick Lady*: Is the Unperformed Performable?') by considering the stageworthiness of a text scarcely, if ever, staged at all.

As far as its broader agenda goes, Esche's collection promotes a healthily catholic definition of 'performance criticism', offering everything from speculations on the early reception of early modern English plays, to reports on their reincarnations in nineteenth- and twentieth-century international theatres, to close readings of the meanings generated by specific productions. With the

possible exception of H.R. Coursen's unabashedly subjective view of recent Shakespearean films, though, these essays are linked by their authors' determined contextualization of productions both Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean within the cultures that produce them.

Kennedy's provocative consideration of the relationship between the new Globe Theatre and the West's current touristic economy establishes this focus, concluding that

The Globe may look like Shakespeare's house but the risk continues that too much difference will be collapsed here, too much of the unknown glossed over, making Shakespeare into a heritage property that justifies a self-satisfied and self-serving present, a present always already determined by late monopoly capitalism. If the Globe Centre wishes to be more than Disney it must strive – in the midst of its touristic success – to show that Shakespeare is not us, he is a strangely surviving other in a world of the same, and our fascination with him is a fascination with something that we can never fully assimilate. (17)

Kennedy's powerful critiques of both modernist conceptions of 'Shakespeare Our Contemporary' and postmodernist appropriations of Shakespeare as 'commodified icon' (17) provoke questions central to many other essays in this volume. Even as they produce their own, highly interested versions of 'authentic' Shakespeare, mightn't performances at sites like the Globe *also* embody the desire of performers and spectators to explore the 'Otherness' of Shakespeare? How might performance criticism allow both for the depth of that desire and for its problematic realization that in theatres whose performers, bound after all by their own cultures' systems of signification, cannot easily perform something that is 'not us'?

Some of the most effective essays in this collection answer this question by focusing on what Poonam Trivedi describes as 'modes of exchange' between early modern playtexts and the diverse theatrical cultures that reproduce them (73). Trivedi's analysis of two Shakespearean productions performed in traditional southwestern Indian theatrical forms (Yakshagana and Kathakali) applauds the process of 'indigenization' by which Indian theatre practitioners stage both the similarities and the radical differences between Eastern and Western theatrical aesthetics (73–4). Contemporary exchanges with the early modern theatre are also explored in Nigel Wheale's 'Culture Clustering, Gender Crossing: *Hamlet* Meets Globalization in Robert Lepage's *Elsinore*'. Wheale suggests that Lepage's appearances as Ophelia and Gertrude in his one-man adaptation of *Hamlet*, while referencing the boy actresses of the

Shakespearean stage and the *onnagata* of Kabuki theatre, may also 'derive from his interest in the pathos of the contemporary male body seeking to mimic the gender and sexuality which it can never be' (131). Yoko Takakuwa's analysis of gender performativity in Japanese adaptations of *King Lear*, Wilhelm Hortmann's account of Shakespearean production in German-speaking theatre during and after the Nazi period, and Nick Tippler's close reading of the representation of power in Gale Edwards' 1996–7 RSC production of Webster's *The White Devil* similarly trace exchanges between modern practitioners and early modern playtexts. In such work, early modern authors appear neither as governing genii nor as victims of postmodern appropriation, but rather as part of the dialectic by which theatrical meanings are produced and reproduced.

A useful correlative to such insights is offered by the more exclusively early modernist work in the volume. A number of essays consider playtexts' meanings in relation to possible authorial intentions and to how those intentions might have been affected by the perceptions of early modern theatrical spectators. Thus, Janette Dillon's exploration of the flamboyantly stylish *flaneur*-esque figures in late sixteenth-century 'War of the Theatres' plays argues that '[e]ven as the theatre stages the excesses of fashion that audiences clamour for, it seeks to reject that status and to validate its own authenticity via its capacity to recognize the theatrical forms that need to be disowned' (173). Similarly, Mark Hutchings traces the multiple and sometimes conflicting meanings that might have been coded and read into *Othello* by a playwright and an audience sensitive to the ambiguities of Elizabethan and Jacobean constructions of the Turks.

Such work highlights the limitations placed on authorial intention by performance. Juxtaposing it, as Esche does, with scholarship more clearly focused on the importance of the playtext 'as she is writ' leads to provocative questions about the role of the authorial text in performance criticism. A number of essays consider the thorny issue of textual cuts and their potential impact on performance meanings. Mark H. Lawhorn shows how the presence of Falstaff's Page in *2 Henry IV* and *Henry V* complicates the audience's attitude toward Henry V's *realpolitik*. Meanwhile, Pamela Mason (writing on *Much Ado About Nothing*), Randall Martin (on representations of Queen Margaret in *3 Henry VI*), and Diana E. Henderson (on the 'disappearance' of Queen Isabel in most productions of *Henry V*) suggest how the inclusion of lines or characters frequently cut in performance might lead to more nuanced readings of these plays' ambivalent gender politics. Each author offers a scholarly analysis of the historical, editorial, and theatrical conditions that affect the

reproduction of Shakespearean playtexts, elucidating the importance of marginalized figures and moments. At the same time, their critique of theatrical cuts as producing, in Martin's words, 'underachieved Shakespeare' (336), proves the ongoing authorizing power of Kennedy's modernist Shakespeare, *He Who Must Be Realized*, over the most politically inflected of readings.

Some important perspectives on performance are perhaps underrepresented here. For example, in a volume of this length it seems odd that only one essay – Peter Thomson's idiosyncratic and fascinating exploration of the career and legacy of the clown Richard Tarlton – considers the transforming power of a specific performer in any depth. Considerable room remains to explore what Wheale, citing the work of Anthony B. Dawson, describes as 'the agency of the actor as they demonstrate the simultaneous authenticity and performativity of character, role and action' (128). On a more technical note, the weakness of the volume's copy-editing sometimes distracts from its arguments. Still, by bringing together a diverse range of perspectives on the modernist Bard, his early modern context, and his postmodern successors, *Shakespeare and his Contemporaries in Performance* offers worthwhile contributions to a field of study as vital and plural as the playing it examines.

ROBERTA BARKER

Lynn Forest-Hill. *Transgressive Language in Medieval English Drama*. Aldershot, VT: Ashgate, 2000. Pp 215.

There is room aplenty for Lynn Forest-Hill's study. Slander, lies, boasts, insults, and other types of transgressive speech are scattered widely, if not thickly, throughout biblical and moral plays, uttered by an interesting range of evil lords, 'rude mechanicals', Vices, and reform-bent truth-tellers. Neither David Lawton's *Blasphemy* (Penn, 1993) nor my recent book, *Lies, Slander and Obscenity in Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge, 1997) touches the drama, except for the Croxton Play of the Sacrament (Lawton), while articles tend to consider only one deviant type, usually idle language. Unlike *The Book of Margery Kempe* or the *Gawain-Poet's Patience*, where deviant speech provokes sustained and sharply conflicting responses, the plays' sporadic and local uses of transgressive language as a dramatic device presents organizational challenges to a writer. Forest-Hill meets them by writing a two-part book: a loose survey of earlier plays followed by extended readings of three early Tudor moralities: *Magnificence*, *The Play of the Wether*, and *King Johan*. But first