use a director? As a summing up of the contents of this volume, this final essay seems a bit out of its element — oddly enough, since it is directly concerned with stage performance. But the overall effect of all the essays is to prompt us to rethink old assumptions about staging interiority and exteriority by understanding stage properties and rereading stage roles, costumes, and spaces. From that point of view, this book is a success.

Helen Ostovich

Elizabeth Klett. *Cross-Gender Shakespeare and English National Identity: Wearing the Codpiece*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. Pp 168.

Elizabeth Klett's *Cross-Gender Shakespeare* is an ambitious account of the burgeoning practice of women playing male roles in contemporary Shakespearean performance. The author states that the genesis of her project was the near-simultaneous experience of performing in a student production and seeing the second of her book's major examples of a cross-dressed Shakespearean performance, Kathryn Hunter as King Lear, onstage. Structurally, Klett pursues her inquiry chronologically with each chapter devoted to one high-profile production or to thematically linked stagings. She begins with an account of Deborah Warner's 1995 staging of *Richard II* with Fiona Shaw in the title role. She continues with Kathryn Hunter's performance as Lear in Helena Kaut-Howson's production, Vanessa Redgrave's Prospero at the Globe, and Dawn French's portrayal of Bottom in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, concluding with a consideration of three all-female productions at the Globe in its 2003 and 2004 seasons.

The strength of Klett's work lies in the record it offers of the productions she has chosen to chronicle. The breadth of her research into these productions has enabled her to reassemble their key aspects for this account. She details set and costume designs, focusing on important choices such as the hospital-set prologue for Hunter's Lear (which framed the action with Hunter as an elderly woman before her appearance as the male king) and the construction of 'original practices' costumes at the Globe. Klett unfortunately provides few examples of practitioner experience in these roles and

productions, but the material included shows the contradictions that often arise between stated intentions and critical reception. Klett's monograph thus provides a fascinating theatre-history-led account of these seven cross-gendered productions.

Klett's work also provides first-hand performance evidence of these cross-gendered productions, including valuable information about changes made in the Globe's all-female *Richard III* over the course of its theatrical run. The book's description of the apparent excision of a physical encounter between the actresses playing Hastings and Jane Shore between one preview and later performances, taken alongside Klett's comment that the episode was 'met with an uncomfortable silence' (148) by its audience, helps her reader to gauge the comfort level of both audience and theatre management with this style of performance.

In her pursuit of theatre history, Klett also chronicles the differences in both the playing spaces for and the performance (and critical) traditions of several of the plays she considers. The author draws distinctions between the small, flexible space of the National Theatre's Cottesloe auditorium; the thrust stage of the Globe; and the proscenium arch of many West End theatres. By delineating each space, Klett is able to identify some theatrical influences that shaped these performances and their reception. The Cottesloe's traverse configuration 'highlighted the confrontational aspects of many of the relationships and scenes' in *Richard II* (37); the Globe, 'due to [its] lack of the usual theatrical conventions, focuse[d] attention on the actor's body as a primary means of creating meanings' (153); and the proscenium arch of the Albery Theatre contributed to the design for *Dream* of 'highly detailed settings' which upheld 'an ideology of theatrical realism' (117).

Klett also pays great attention to the performance histories of the plays, presumably in an attempt to juxtapose her chosen cross-gendered productions with more traditional interpretations. For example, she devotes a section to analyzing *Richard II* in relation to Ernst H. Kantorowicz's reading of the play as an exploration of the 'King's Two Bodies', emphasizing this aspect of the play's critical tradition. To that end, Klett views Fiona Shaw's body as androgynous rather than female, paired with another form of androgyny exemplified by David Threlfall's (Bolingbroke's) body. She seems to be arguing for a notion of the King's Two Bodies as both male and female, exemplifying the yin and yang of sexuality. Rather than treating the Warner/Shaw *Richard II* as groundbreaking in its use of cross-gendered casting, Klett's approach thus securely yokes the production to a staid (and potentially outdated) critical

tradition. *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Tempest* are also tied to past production history, similarly dissipating Klett's argument that the productions challenge received notions of Shakespeare's work.

The attention she gives to playing space and critical and performative tradition distracts Klett from what might have been her central argument. Her chosen structure is not as helpful as it could be to her discussion of these cross-dressed productions as representations (subversive or otherwise) of *English National Identity*: the second half of the monograph's title. In many ways, the identity question generates the most interesting material in the book but it is often subsumed by contextually necessary but lengthy discussion of the productions themselves. Much of Klett's argument about English national identity stems from her revisiting of the varied critical responses to each production. This matter is placed at the end of each chapter, a choice that provides fascinating closing content but is not structurally conducive to further investigation. Klett uses the critics' responses not as a starting point for her discussion of English national identity but as a conclusion; thus, she is unable to delve into either performative or cultural reasons for the often-negative responses to these productions. This would have been a fascinating line of enquiry had Klett had the space to develop it, but one senses the heavy hand of an editor (or PhD supervisor) stifling what may be Klett's most important contribution to scholarship. By skirting the issue, Klett (and her editor and/or publisher) may be unintentionally complicit in the same downplaying of feminist issues that Klett infers from remarks made by the directors Deborah Warner and Helena Kaut-Howson to the effect that they did not want their work to be overtly feminist.

At times, Klett's concentration on the performance histories of the specific plays detailed in each chapter also misses points about other contemporary performances. Her discussion of the country house setting used in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* neglects to note that Jonathan Miller had a few months previously also set his version (Almeida Theatre, 1996) amid country house dwellers and had featured a Cockney Puck. That Francis was not alone in his concept speaks to wider cultural implications around such directorial choices: implications that are not addressed by Klett.

Despite these drawbacks, Elizabeth Klett has produced a fascinating view of theatrical history between 1995 and 2004. With the publication of this monograph, a new tier of Shakespearean investigation has been opened. Klett's work shows the interactions of design, critical and performance history, playing space, actor physicality, and, above all, casting in the theatrical environment.

Her consideration of the reception of these productions, in particular, should generate a rich vein of study. As evidenced by two recent productions of *Hamlet* containing a character called Corneli*A* (RSC, 2008; RNT, 2010), women are ever more frequently being cast in roles traditionally reserved for men. Klett has provided us with the historical background for this phenomenon.

Jami Rogers

Michael J. Redmond. *Shakespeare, Politics, and Italy: Intertextuality on the Jacobean Stage*. Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2009. Pp. 242.

The interest in Italy evident in the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries has attracted significant scholarly attention over a long period of time. Michael Redmond not only approaches this inexhaustible subject from a new perspective and uncovers the kind of creative uses of Italy that his predecessors have not addressed, but he also employs a different critical method in his examinations. Unlike most of his predecessors concerned with direct influences, Redmond treats Italy as an intertext, and explores multiple ways in which Italy acts as a cultural resources available to Renaissance playwrights to draw on for their political plots. Considered neither a set of sources nor a series of influences, in Redmond's critical practice intertext is a cultural sign through which Italy frames a variety of discourses and shapes plots in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama. By exploring a large body of texts that gave rise to specific knowledge and ideas and that shaped notions about Italy in early modern England, Redmond in turn constructs the humanist, book-oriented foundations of intertextuality as a set of directions followed in a new play. Offering a number of useful ways to think about cultural and literary transmediations between England and Italy, by which we follow 'the historical evolution of discourse from the Elizabethan period onwards' (25), Redmond's book heralds a new way of thinking about influences after 'the death of traditional source criticism' (1) and 'the customary recycling of narrative sources' (97). Since New Historicism buried source study in the elephants' graveyard of literary history (to echo Stephen Greenblatt on the subject), source study has been altogether neglected. Now that New Historicism has been relegated to an archive of critical methodologies, critics can breathe with