

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 Cornelia (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.

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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 resource 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

relief and pursue the most important of early modern principles of composition, imitation, creatively and imaginatively, as Redmond forcefully exemplifies. After a detailed Introduction (1–27), ‘The Politics of Intertextuality’, which offers an explanation of the use of intertext in contradistinction to the old study of sources — a shift which actually reveals a much more extensive presence of the source in the recipient body of texts — the reader will find four chapters devoted to specific instances of this kind of intertextuality.

In the first chapter, “‘You are better read than I’: Rereading the Italianate Englishman’, Redmond traces the rich history of early English familiarity with Italy, beginning with some of the earliest readings of and commentary on Italian authors from the Puritan preachers and early humanists to, among others, Samuel Lewkenor, Thomas Coryate, James Shirley, and Richard Brome. Using a selection of examples from literature, Redmond shows that the afterlife of the early humanist warning about the vices of Italy survived in ‘the circulation and subversive power of the printed word, rather than the direct experience of travellers’ (30). This claim about the ‘anti-travel’ (30) argument in English pedagogical writing about Italy will likely provoke criticism from those who have written about more immediate contact with Italy and the importance of ocular proof and travelers’ experience.

The next chapter is concerned with the nuances of how Machiavellian political thought and the humanist writing of Francesco Guicciardini and Stefano Guazzo infuse the plays of Shakespeare’s contemporaries, like Barnabe Barnes’s *The Devil’s Charter* and Marlowe’s *The Jew of Malta*. The chapter brings a wealth of new information about how to frame both plays and offers fresh readings of each. The politico-cultural and historical material brought in to frame the argument shows that this is a book written by a specialist in Renaissance literature who is also a cultural comparatist and whose linguistic ability allows him to access Italian sources and thus expand the possibilities of criticism and produce original arguments.

The penultimate chapter, “‘I have my dukedom got’: Shakespeare and the Evolution of the Italianate Disguised Ruler Play’, is devoted to *The Tempest* and *Measure for Measure*. Redmond successfully frames Shakespeare’s plays within the history of criticism about ‘the hereditary rulers of the peninsula’ (121), referring to the same Italian states which feature in Shakespeare’s romance and in Machiavelli’s ‘denunciation’ (121) of those rulers and their ruling practices. A number of other playwrights are invoked in this chapter, including Ben Jonson, George Chapman, Richard Brome, and Thomas Middleton. The analysis is detailed and seamlessly oscillates between an

examination of literature and elucidation of Anglo-Italian sources, as well as historical narratives and events. In this chapter Redmond's use of politico-cultural intertext is employed to uncover the multiple meanings of Italy as a source of debates about political philosophy and state government. Redmond's excellent reading of *The Tempest* is yet another reminder to what extent this is, first, a deeply humanist play and only then a Mediterranean play. These Italian intertexts implicitly render the postcolonial connections of *The Tempest* secondary in importance.

The last chapter is concerned with the 'ideological incoherence' (171) between the tribute plot and the part of the Italianate stage villain Iachimo as the opposing ways in which Jacobean England negotiates the simultaneous divide between, and proximity of, the villain to the foreigner. This chapter offers a perceptive analysis of the historical tenets of what Redmond calls 'the problematic status of national affiliation in *Cymbeline*' (179) because of its ambivalent construction, or as Redmond has it, 'promotion' (179), of Britishness, which the Italian Iachimo is called upon to trouble.

Each chapter of this important book is carefully executed and ends with a succinct conclusion, which eases reading. Redmond fully achieves the goal of redefining what source studies can mean at the present critical moment, giving us a thorough, convincing, and original way of reading transnational cultural contacts. The wealth of new material he uses to frame the transposition of Italy to England not only expands the body of criticism on this topic in a significant way, but also offers new ways of thinking about the signification of Italy in early modern drama, as well as about new critical possibilities afforded by that signification. The style of Redmond's book is engaging throughout and free from the weight of theoretical jargon. Discreetly and effectively, he manages to turn theory into a new reading practice and critical methodology. It is a pity that Redmond's fine prose is occasionally tainted by typos, like the misspelling of Debora Shuger's surname as 'Shugar' twice on page 96 and in the bibliography, or of *Il Principe* in note 2 on page 131. Apart from proposing a number of connections that have remained unaccounted for until now, Redmond's book will likely have a long shelf life not only because of its perceptive literary analyses but also because it adds another dimension to our knowledge of the humanism that lies behind early modern drama, specifically in the circulation of texts, books, and knowledge between England and Italy.