

Review

Bücherschau

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BÜCHERSCHAU

Geliebte, Gaben und Gelehrte: Die Sonette feiern global Jubiläum

William Shakespeare's Sonnets for the First Time Globally Reprinted: A Quatercentenary Anthology (with a DVD), ed. by Manfred Pfister and Jürgen Gutsch. Dozwil: Edition SIGNATHUR, 2009. 752 S. – ISBN 978-3-908141-54-9 – € 63,00 (hb.).

The Sonnets of Shakespeare: Edited from the Quarto of 1609, ed. by Thomas George Tucker. Cambridge Library Collection. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1924; repr. 2009. lxxxvii, 239 S. – ISBN 978-1-108-00378-0 – £ 18.99 (pb.).

Patrick Cheney ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Poetry*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. xviii, 295 S. – ISBN 978-0-521-84627-1 – £ 45.00 (hb.) – ISBN 978-0-521-60864-0 – £ 15.99 (pb.).

A sonnet can be a gift, a very personal present on the occasion of a birthday, an anniversary or some other festive event. It is thus highly appropriate that a celebratory, unique edition of Shakespeare's sonnets has been published to mark the four hundredth anniversary of their first printing. This new, handsomely produced anthology, which for brevity's sake has been titled *Shakespeare's Sonnets Global*, offers a generous yet discerning selection of translations, imitations, rewrites, parodies, and appropriations in other cultural media. The surprising guises in which Shakespeare's sonnets appear do not only include translations into more than seventy languages, but many other, sometimes entirely unexpected modes of expression. Since such diversity could not possibly be accommodated within the book proper, which is already a substantial, 750-page volume, a complimentary DVD provides rich illustration and research opportunities for anyone interested in the protean power and global spread of the Shakespearean sonnet. A tempting array of film clips, audio and music versions, book designs and artworks has here been assembled to please both browsers and scholars, who will undoubtedly, despite the middlebrow image of the term 'gift book', consider this anthology an ideal present.

In fact, the gesture of gift-giving in sonnet 26 – "To thee I send this written ambassage" – is not unrelated to the more comprehensive one of dedicating an entire book to a friend or patron. Mysterious Mr. W. H., to whom the 1609 quarto edition is famously dedicated, receives the poems as his very own 154 children, among whom there is not one bastard, since he is their "onlie begetter". But claiming a unique inspirational source may well be the first lie among much disingenuous harping on truth in the sonnets, whose puzzling and teasing aspects have contributed to their long history of worldwide dissemination in translation. This history is not mentioned in Sasha Roberts's chapter on "Reception and influence" in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Poetry*, an omission which is not difficult to explain. Each of the amazingly numerous translations of Shakespeare's sonnets that have appeared in the 400 years since their publication can have a local impact only, appealing to discrete, sometimes very

small, language communities. Pfister's and Gutsch's anthology of more than five dozen national, regional and other Shakespearean sonnet traditions now offers the first chance to survey the entire field and will therefore make a perfect present for speakers of any language – except for Swedes, whose English is so good that they prefer to read the sonnets in English (p. 660). From Afrikaans to Yiddish, however, to name the first and the last entries among the alphabetically arranged essays and sample poems, readers can now compare different versions of the same sonnet in a language they know. Basque or Korean readers will find their entries preceded by Armenian and Klingon, respectively, and such contextualisation may indeed strengthen their sense of belonging to a global, in fact, a universal community, even though most members of that larger community will not understand the sonnets in Basque or Korean. However, for all its apparent serial inaccessibility, the Pfister and Gutsch anthology is anything but a small-scale replica of Babylonian babble. In their book and DVD, mutual intelligibility is achieved not by back-translation (although there are some instances of this method), but by the simple device of historical essays in English, and by expanding the concept of reception far beyond mere translation.

Each set of translated Shakespeare sonnets is critically and historically introduced by specialists speaking for each language group. This arrangement makes for a diversity of voices and stimulates comparison. The accompanying DVD also contains each separate essay, but the text files have not been bundled, thus making search procedures just a little cumbersome (an unfortunate omission, given that the book comes without an index). A cursory glance at the table of contents will suffice to register the playful yet seriously investigative mind-set informing the entire collection, which accommodates minority languages such as Maori, various dialects such as Sicilian Italian or Swiss German (Markus Marti's introduction to this idiom is a must-read for all those who have an aversion to dialects), dead or disappearing languages, synthetic languages such as Esperanto or *Star Trek's* Klingon, and even sign languages. Such openness can be accommodating and democratic, but also exclusive and élitist. If we take Shakespeare's sonnets in Latin, we witness not only the disappearance of an art form, i.e. the writing of Latin verse, but also the disappearance of an audience, be it ever so small, for such ingenious semantic and formal efforts. Today, the phrase "Shakespeare in Latin" signifies "pointless, élitist erudition" (p. 415). In fact, in his extraordinarily erudite Cambridge sonnet edition of 1924 T. G. Tucker did resort to paraphrase in Latin whenever he felt that his efforts at precise annotation in English did not suffice. In 1965, Tucker's edition was used by the Finnish translator Aale Tynni, whose English was rather weak (p. 222); it may well be that her Latin was stronger.

Pfister and Gutsch often combine sophistication with good fun, or even with a certain quirkiness. Parodistic versions of the sonnets in German make for a delightful chapter, even though Sebastian Donat's original essay on parody as a parasitic mode would have profited from some more copy-editing (as it stands, many a "lingual" infelicity is "waiting in the literary brush", p. 293). Admirers of *Star Trek* will particularly enjoy the tongue-in-cheek pseudo-linguistics of the essay on Klingon, while the trouble with Richard Burt's essay on "'Being your slave' – Not Citing Sonnets 57 and 58 and the 'TraUmisSion' of Race in the United States" is the utter seriousness of its diatribe against the bland mediocrity of American film and television programmes which quote Shakespearean sonnets. While Burt's cinematic tips are always useful and can be verified by watching the extracts on the accompanying DVD, he deplores an

absence whose deliberate omission he cannot prove. Nevertheless, readers of the collection should not miss his engaged, if amiably Quixotic essay.

Translation involves numerous formal choices such as deciding whether to use verse, free verse or prose, determining the type of rhythm, the length of lines, the number of lines, the rhyme scheme (if rhyme is used at all). All these deliberations precede the act of translation. Again, the collection will offer invaluable material for investigating the tension between choices made due to individual preference or because linguistic constraints and the dominance of cultural traditions curtailed available options. Reflections on these issues by experienced translators like Ángel-Luis Pujante for the variant forms of Spanish are very informative, as witnessed by his account of choosing either a decasyllabic or an alexandrine line for Catalan (p. 100). Chinese renderings of the sonnets, both Mainland and Taiwanese, have a similar history of formal deliberations (pp. 105–135). Readers of the collection who wish to test their aesthetic ear can turn to the sonnet recordings in all the languages anthologised. Listening to, say, sonnet 29 by Liang Zongdai, who “paid strict attention to Shakespeare’s rhyme scheme” (p. 106), can easily become an exercise in humility, if not humiliation, because even the apparently simple task of detecting the repetition of rhymes will take many more hearings than expected.

Translators’ manipulations due to their fear of the poet’s homosexuality, apparently referred to in the sonnets, often focus on nouns and pronouns used for the “beauteous and lovely youth” (54.13). If the degree of a culture’s relative homophobia is taken as a measure of its backwardness or progressiveness, this collection provides ample material for study. To facilitate such research, adding not just the translator’s name, but also the year of composition or publication to each poem in the anthology would have been helpful. As Pfister points out in his general introduction, Bowdlerisation can take many forms and began early on, since even Benson in his 1640 edition replaced “sweet boy” by the neutral “sweet-love” (108.5), although he retained masculine pronouns in other fair-youth poems (as Roberts notes in *The Cambridge Companion*, p. 265). Interestingly, some grammatical systems provide indeterminate pronouns that make it easy to gloss over same-sex affection in the text. Whereas Italian will not allow any grammatical gender fiddling (p. 370), Hungarian does not distinguish between “he” and “she”, thus permitting much greater vagueness (p. 328). Linguistic falsification can also backfire, as it does in Serbian, where the fair youth is called “brother”, which is now a term stigmatised as mafia street slang (p. 590). Sometimes, slight manipulations are more harmless though no less culturally motivated, as when “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” can only sound absurd in a “torridly humid and hot” climate like southern Kerala’s, forcing translators to tone down the summer’s ferocity even in the first line of sonnet 18 (pp. 355 and 388).

In reading the anthology it becomes evident that not all cultures are equally enthusiastic about adopting Shakespearean sonnets. Denmark and Iceland appear to be rather sonnet-resistant, whereas India and Germany are veritably sonnet-struck. Amitava Roy emphasises that Bengali translations are numerous and play an important role in many cultural areas, including education. This intensive process of reception is driven by the mutual exchange of cultural prestige: by virtue of his poems in Bengali the foreigner Shakespeare enhances the fame of the great indigenous poet Tagore, whose own versions in turn salute the great Englishman. It emerges that translation obliterates the concept of Shakespeare as ‘colonial heritage’ (cf. pp. 345–350). The high prestige of the sonnets is certainly not the only, but an important driver in the rich recep-

tion of German-speaking areas, where the poems have slowly but incrementally achieved the status of most favoured objects of poetic ambition and competition. Werner von Koppenfels's historical account, which includes discussions of Dorothea Tieck, Stefan George, Karl Kraus and Paul Celan, emphasises the ludic, agonistic and celebratory energies that foster and sustain a tradition of publicly sanctioned poetic frenzy (pp. 277–284).

Polyglot global sonnet reception is not a closed book to monolingual readers, since music, theatre, film and painting transcend the realm of language. Erika Greber's essay on visual poetry manages to keep a straight face while unabashedly fooling around with sonnets whose lines are vertical rows of writing implements and strategically chosen food items. Stacks of coloured matchsticks or pencils, whose numbers 13 and 14 have broken tips; quatrains of uniformly curved grilled sausages alternatively decorated with right-margin-adjusted mustard or ketchup dabs; ethnic versions featuring columns of fish and chips or hamburgers and hotdogs: no doubt these visual renderings will inspire Shakespearean scribblers and barbecuers worldwide. For all the light touch of such visual poems, it must be said that they have a liberating effect: they create a theatrical dimension, and they will probably be useful in tough teaching environments. However, this is not meant as an endorsement of soppy poetic appreciations, such as celebrated in Peter Weir's 1989 film *Dead Poets Society*, although studying all the surprising occurrences of the sonnets in the generous film archive collected on this DVD will undoubtedly be a rewarding task. Furthermore, browsing the pictorial collection with illustrations, sometimes geared to individual sonnets, sometimes catching the spirit of the sequence in general, may well turn into a research project, as will the study of book covers in their amazing historical and multinational diversity and of musical versions, among them Shostakovich's well-known setting of sonnet 66, all provided on the accompanying DVD.

With the exception of a nice floral design on its cover, not a single illustration will be found in T. G. Tucker's 1924 Cambridge edition of the sonnets, reissued now employing new scanning and print-on-demand technologies to provide out-of-print books for research libraries. Embedding this influential edition in the context of the 1920s global sonnet reception might be an illuminating project, because for all his astounding scholarship with its collection of carefully selected parallel passages, whose explanatory power has not evaporated in the intervening years, and with his intrepid elucidations in Greek and Latin, Tucker also expresses strong views and opinions. Personal and period character can indeed be teased out of an apparently rather dry apparatus. There is an authoritarian stance: Tucker tells the reader which word to stress in a line, thus predetermining the way it is to be interpreted – modern editions only tell their readers where to put the stress within a word. There are value judgments: dirty poems like sonnets 135 and 136 are invariably “trivial pieces” (p. 216), although Tucker is not naïve; in contrast to his colleagues he is aware of the meanings of “will”: “a cant term for *membrum pudendum*” (p. 216). There is homophobia: when it comes to “But since she prick'd thee out for women's pleasure” (20.13), he explains that “passion” in the second line merely means “strong feeling” and that “the end of the sonnet is a negation of the worst” (p. 96), the “worst” obviously being buggery. There is nationalism: not once is Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon* referred to, quite in contrast for instance to Colin Burrow's Oxford *Complete Sonnets and Poems* of 2002.

How pleasant is the (snickering?) perusal of intimate love letters by a group of friends for the writer of these texts and his addressee? How friendly is the intensive desire communicated in

verse epistles to a lover, while (blind?) copies are being distributed to a coterie of readers, who assume the role of overhearers and voyeurs? Is limited manuscript circulation the greater or the lesser breach of trust than publishing those messages in print? Questions such as these arise from Lukas Erne's chapter on "Print and manuscript" in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Poetry*. The oblique kinkiness of the sonnets' immoral exposures appeals to curiosity and lust whose pleasure can only be topped by assuming that everything, including all the moaning, has been staged, except the speaker's profession – he really is an actor. What distinguishes the sonnets from pornography with its tedious repetition of perfunctory scenarios is their ingenious variation and foregrounding of *mise-en-scènes*, of acting rather than of acts. The theatrical in the poems and the poetical in the plays are indeed the main programmatic emphasis Patrick Cheney has given to his fine *Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Poetry*. Such generic collusion is most certainly a key to a better understanding of the dramatist's sonnets, and David Schalkwyk's chapter on "Poetry and performance" rightly locates the performative in the speech acts of praising and blaming as they blend one into the other in the poems (p. 249). If it were recognised and acknowledged that the global sonnet reception, as it is collected and displayed in *Shakespeare's Sonnets Global*, is indeed a quasi-performance of Shakespearean poetry, a much wider horizon would emerge for the study of those perennially intriguing fourteen lines.

Werner Brönnimann (St. Gallen)

Männer, die die Welt bedeuten: Frühneuzeitliche Schauspieltruppen

Helen Ostovich / Holger Schott / Andrew Griffin, eds., *Locating the Queen's Men, 1583–1603*. Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. xiii, 284 S. – ISBN 978-0-7546-6661-5 – £ 55.00 (hb.).

Terence G. Schoone-Jongen, *Shakespeare's Companies: William Shakespeare's Early Career and the Acting Companies, 1577–1594*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. viii, 264 S. – ISBN 978-0-7546-6434-5 – £ 55.00 (hb.).

Andrew Gurr, *Shakespeare's Opposites: The Admiral's Company, 1594–1625*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. ix, 328 S. – ISBN 978-0-5218-6903-4 – £ 50.00 (hb.).

Edel Lamb, *Performing Childhood in the Early Modern Theatre: The Children's Playing Companies, 1599–1613*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. xii, 224 S. – ISBN 978-0-2302-0261-0 – £ 45.00 (hb.).

Pamela Allen Brown / Peter Parolin eds., *Women Players in England, 1500–1600: Beyond the Male Stage*. Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. xvii, 352 S. – ISBN 978-0-7546-6535-9 – £ 20.00 (pb.) – ISBN 978-0-7546-0953-7 – £ 60.00 (hb.).

The excavation of the Rose and the (re)construction of the Globe in the early 1990s; a concomitant attention to the material conditions of stage-playing and theatre-going; the critical edition of texts formerly derided as 'bad' quartos; the exploration of the early modern theatre as a business that involved corporate identities and marketing strategies; and a seeming exhaustion

of oeuvre-centred enquiries – all these have contributed in recent years to a strengthening of scholarly interest in what the editors of *Locating the Queen's Men* call “the repertory approach”. This is based on the assumption that “early modern theatre-goers did, by and large, go to see a Strange's Men's play rather than one by Kyd; a Queen's Men's play rather than one by Greene or Wilson” (p. 3). The conflict between authors insisting on faithfulness to their text and actors insisting on their right to improvise is thus relegated to the sidelines; they become “collaborators rather than rivals” in a flourishing branch of the entertainment industry. In this way, authors become quite displaced and, even without any deconstructivist agenda, quickly “lose their author-function (and become what they were in the sixteenth century: mere writers)” (p. 3). From this pivot of company identity, literary and theatre historians explore aspects as diverse as membership, internal organisation, repertory, performance style, intertextual relations with plays by other companies or other playwrights, relations with the authorities of court, country and city, touring and printing.

While four of the five books under consideration here come under the heading of ‘repertory studies’, *Locating the Queen's Men* is the only collection among these four and consequently covers the widest spectrum of topics. Its essays have been arranged to cover playing spaces “In and Out of London” (Part 1), the contest between print and performance both of and in the plays (Part 2), readings of the plays in their generic, cultural and political contexts (Part 3) and performance aspects (Part 4). All of the essays acknowledge the groundbreaking work done by Scott McMillin and Sally-Beth MacLean in *The Queen's Men and Their Plays* (1998) and declare that they intend to continue and extend it, taking, as Roslyn Knutson puts it, *The Queen's Men* as their “parent text and offer an ‘afterword’” to it (p. 99). In this project the collection succeeds admirably. Not all of the contributors engage centrally with the Queen's Men's plays and players; some – such as Lawrence Manley on the Stanley family's patronage policies, or David Kathman's enquiry into the seamier side of the inn-playhouses – seem a little hooked onto this central interest (like the beards in Eleanor Rycroft's essay on facial hair and masculinity), but all of them are substantial in themselves and shed new light on the Elizabethan theatre. Most absorbing to this reader, however, are the contributions that provide what McMillin and MacLean largely left out: readings of individual plays. The degree of political acumen and meta-theatrical reflection in the Queen's Men's plays completely contradicts their former reputation as one-dimensional bombast in ‘jigging’ fourteeners, theatrical ‘stuff’ only good enough to be mocked or improved upon by the genius of Christopher Marlowe or William Shakespeare. As literary texts, *The Famous Victories of Henry V* or *The True Tragedy of Richard III* are inferior to Shakespeare's versions, but as *theatrical* texts they can hold their own. The Queen's Men established the secular history play, and they – not the Admiral's Men – were the first to stage satires about contemporary London. All of this was done with a definite political agenda: “Older genres, such as the morality play, stock characterization, and clowning routines were valid and entertaining ways of communicating serious, even propagandistic, ideas to a general audience, while also permitting an important critical distance from historical narrative” (Karen Oberer, p. 182). Their heavily emblematic dramaturgy does not leap off the page, but it allowed for a complex and often ironic presentation of political interaction. *The True Tragedy of Richard III*, argues Brian Walsh, “exemplifies how the Elizabethan play of history marks a new intervention in English historical consciousness at the end of the sixteenth century:

a fantasy of access to the past that both constructs an experience of history and reveals that experiences of history are always constructed" (p. 133).

In view of the fact that the vast majority of plays is lost and those that survive are often not attributed to any writer or even company, scholars looking at repertoires are obliged to work around many gaps. One of the most tantalising gaps concerns Shakespeare's early career as a player and playwright in London. Terence Schoone-Jongen now takes up this challenge, yet is quite explicit about what his enquiry into *Shakespeare's Companies* is and what it is not: "primarily a work of synthesis rather than a work of original documentary research" (p. 8). Since no new documentary evidence has come to light, it would not be fair to criticise him for not providing an answer to the question how Shakespeare spent his so-called 'lost years', i.e. the years between the twins' birth in February 1585 (or, to be precise, the twins' conception in the spring of 1584) and the two remarks that survive in print locating him with a very high degree of probability in London by 1591–92. Schoone-Jongen's project is the humble but challenging one of clarification. He sets out "to explain, analyze, and assess the competing claims about Shakespeare's pre-1594 acting company affiliation" (p. 3), and his conclusion is that Pembroke's, Strange's and the Queen's are plausible contenders, with Sussex's and Leicester's following behind. He tends to be sceptical of grand theories that raise as many questions as they seem to solve. This cautious bent may add to the impression that his study has nothing new to offer; but it is the indispensable virtue of one who sets out to survey a muddy field in which too many stakes have been claimed on ill-conjectured evidence. However, not all of his meticulous recapitulations are equally needful. For instance, he fills more than twelve pages (pp. 67–79) reiterating Andrew Gurr's argument in *Shakespearian Playing Companies* (1996) that the idea of an amalgamation of Strange's Men and Admiral's Men during Shakespeare's early years in London does not stand up to scrutiny. E. K. Chambers and W. W. Greg presented this theory before the Second World War, and since then its most authoritative endorser was – Andrew Gurr, in *The Shakespearean Stage* (1993). Schoone-Jongen adds very little to Gurr's subsequent revocation, and very little is gained by rehearsing the argument once again. His cool determination to steer clear of partisanship (possibly influenced by the fact that he is not an 'Eng. Lit.' graduate but has just finished law school) is more valuable when he proceeds to unpick ideologically knotty issues like Shakespeare's "Lancashire Connection" (chapter 9). He quickly dispatches recent expounders of the theory that Shakespeare spent his early adult years in the Catholic Houghton household in Lancashire and focusses on Ernst Honigmann's book-length study of 1985. He questions all of Honigmann's inferences, mainly with the help of Robert Bearman, Douglas Hamer and Glyn Parry, but it is refreshing to read an account that has no axe to grind. He says in his introduction that he is interested in "the inseparability of biography, historiography, and theatre history" (p. 3), and he values the debate about 'William Shakespeare' in Lancashire because it has served as "the basis for an investigation into regional theatrical practices, regional household culture, and recusant culture" (p. 171). Yet it has to be said that he does not himself provide any such investigation; his main interest, as well as his main talent, clearly lies in the exposition of historical evidence (see also his Appendix, which collates the companies' provincial gigs from 1584 to 1594), not in its evaluation and interpretation. It may not be possible to conclusively deny that Shakespeare was a Queen's Man, but the idea makes so little sense – compared with the theory that he rather wrote *against* them in dramatic

and theatrical competition – that its inclusion among plausible theories either is unnecessarily literal-minded or shows a lack of insight.

Andrew Gurr has been publishing books about various aspects of early modern playgoing for forty years, and there is probably no-one now living who knows more about the matter than he does. His most recent book, *Shakespeare's Opposites: The Admiral's Company*, gives the impression of a man who feels completely at home with his material – so much so, in fact, that he sweeps through his story and leaves the reader to find out by herself which of his arguments are informed guesswork and which are based on fact. After all, Gurr presented one of the main premises of his history – that the Privy Council set up a 'duopoly' of playing companies, the Admiral's and the Chamberlain's Men, after the plague years of 1592–93 and got the city aldermen to tolerate the players thus circumscribed – in two previous books and at least one article, so it is understandable that he could not be bothered to explain it all over again. There is, however, something rather cavalier about a study that begins, without introduction, by stating that "For six years from May 1594 the English government gave two acting companies the exclusive right to entertain Londoners." (The footnote with the caveat and the reference to his 2005 article in *Shakespeare Survey* follows three pages later: "The idea behind this scheme [...] is merely a hypothesis [...]", p. 3, n. 1.) He continues that "We know little about what one of the companies did to fulfil that privilege, except for Shakespeare's plays [...]. About the other company we know a lot" (p. 1) – and proceeds to tell us a lot, with the narrative panache and incredible wealth of detail we have come to expect from him. After a description of "The Company's Unique Features" (chapter 1), among them the new (or newly imagined) genres of devil comedy, London comedy and popular English histories, Gurr spends chapter 2 on a lengthy discussion of what he regards as the Admiral's specialty: disguise plays. Born out of the necessity to keep the customers on their toes – playgoers who, according to Gurr, had the choice between two companies, or perhaps four, if they could afford to frequent the boys' troupes –, disguise plays offered novelty where there were no new faces: "The experienced audience knew who each player was, and could watch the game of trickery through disguise without any risk of being conned" (p. 51). Three material objects survive that serve as sources both for this company and for their rivals. One is Philip Henslowe's diary, in which he recorded his financial transactions from 1592 to 1603, among them his activities as, first, landlord to the Admiral's Men and later also their banker and impresario (chapter 3). The second are the excavated foundations of the Rose playhouse, where they played from 1592 to 1600; the third is the contract that specifies the dimensions of the Fortune, built in Shoreditch when the Chamberlain's Men moved next door to the Rose in 1599. Gurr describes these two buildings and explains the staging implications of each feature with the expertise of one who, for a dozen years, has been chief academic advisor at Shakespeare's rebuilt Globe (chapter 4). All of this is fascinating, but it has to be said that there is a sense of haste or carelessness about the book. Searching for an engagement with Roslyn Knutson's critique of the 'duopoly-theory', one comes across a paragraph on pp. 31–32 that sums up her argument in *Playing Companies and Commerce* – and then one comes across the same paragraph again on p. 176. Further, the book's dedication facetiously quotes "Adrian Fennyman, alias Tom Wilkinson in *Shakespeare in Love*", but the name in the film is Hugh, not Adrian. These mistakes make no big difference, but they do not make a good impression, either.

Most distinct in their identity and reputation, of course, were the boy companies that competed with the adults for customers in their more exclusive indoor playhouses. In *Performing Childhood in the Early Modern Theatre*, Edel Lamb presents a lively study of the working conditions of child actors as well as of current discourses of childhood, which in many ways overlapped with the discourses of playing and theatre: “Both the child and the player are imagined in early modern culture as mouldable and shifting entities; both are perceived to have the potential to become something else through acting that part” (p. 9). These are the dangers of imitation so endlessly proclaimed by the anti-theatricalists: playgoers who enjoy the embodied fantasies of fornication and regicide on stage might re-enact these atrocities in real life, just as the child who imitates a stammerer will develop a real stammer himself, according to Ben Jonson in his *Discoveries*. As Lamb shows in her reading of *Poetaster*, this anti-theatrical discourse was cleverly tapped: the play (and the boy) is sold “by seducing the audience and asking them to do exactly what the play criticises – to respond erotically to theatre” (p. 55). Within the theatrical fiction, the children’s adolescent instability becomes “a trope for gender mutability and indeterminacy” (p. 36): as boys, they are perceived in many ways as female; and in their widely acclaimed roles as old men, their lack of virility is that of ‘second childishness’. Both the actor and the part thus serve playwrights to explore the manifold threats to “an ideal adult masculine identity” (p. 39). Lamb argues that the players’ ‘boyishness’ was crucial to the ways in which they were marketed by their masters; yet their actual biological age was, surprisingly, of secondary consideration. When the Children of Paul’s and the Children of the Queen’s Revels were (re)installed in 1599 and 1600, most of their players seem to have been precisely that: children under the age of twelve. “However, as the companies aged, so did the boys” (p. 3), and when Nathan Field, the Elijah Wood of Jacobean theatre, left the Queen’s Revels in 1613 to join Lady Elizabeth’s Men, he was 26 years old – and still positioned himself rhetorically as a child in relation to the more experienced playwrights, his “masters” (chapter 5). There is no doubt that this discursive immaturity and legal minority contributed to the boys’ sexual exploitation, both physically and as the objects of male and female adult fantasy.

Not the least of the erotic titillations was provided by the many-layered ambiguities of the cross-dressed boy actor. Lamb would agree with the editors of *Women Players in England, 1500–1660*, who speculate that “The erotic frisson of the transvestite theatre likely derives in part from its [...] artful and anomalous erasure of women from the world of traditional performance” (p. 7). Theories of the playgoers’ synchronic consciousness of both actor and character are strengthened by growing evidence that “even the unprivileged playgoer had often seen women playing women” (p. 7). ‘Playing’, in this fascinating collection of essays, is defined as “any act of embodied display or representation intended for an audience” (p. 5) in a playhouse or in the “alternative playing spaces of the street, alehouse, market square, parish green, manorhouse and court” (p. 1), encompassing the representation of theatrical fictions as well as other “mimetic forms, such as singing songs and ballads, dancing jigs, cross-dressing, miming, jesting, and masking” (p. 4). The new focus here is neither on the foreign actresses who were seen at the late Tudor and early Stuart courts, nor on the noble and royal ladies starring in court masques, although both sorts of female player receive their dues in sections entitled “Beyond the Channel” and “Beyond the Stage”. Thanks, in part, to new insights gained from the Records of Early English Drama into the traditional worlds of civic religion and parish drama – vilified

by puritan preachers and suppressed by godly magistrates – we now know of women’s customary participation in all forms of cultural life, including the production, sponsoring and performance of amateur drama (“Beyond London”). Women even earned their keep by ‘performing’ for audiences in less circumscribed surroundings than the public stage: there were female mountebanks, balladeers, musicians, dancers, tumblers – itinerant professionals who relied on their gift of the gab to sell their services (“Beyond the Elite” and “Beyond the All-Male”). Seen in these cultural and economic contexts, the introduction of ‘actresses’ on the English public stage after 1660 may rather seem, not as an act of female emancipation and professionalism, but more like a ‘hemming in’, a confinement of female performative power.

Angela Stock (Bielefeld)

Menschen, Werte, Positionen: Politik der Mythen und Mythen des Politischen

David Armitage / Conal Condren / Andrew Fitzmaurice eds., *Shakespeare and Early Modern Political Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. xii, 302 S. – ISBN 978-0-5217-6808-5 – £ 55.00 (hb.).

Glenn Burgess, *British Political Thought, 1500–1660: The Politics of the Post-Reformation*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. xiv, 423 S. – ISBN 978-0-333-57411-9 – £ 22.99 (pb.) – ISBN 978-0-3335-7410-2 – £ 65.00 (hb.).

Aaron Kitch, *Political Economy and the States of Literature in Early Modern England*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. xi, 228 S. – ISBN 978-0-7546-6756-8 – £ 55.00 (hb.).

It certainly comes as a surprise to read in the introduction to *Shakespeare and Early Modern Political Thought* that “until very recently one major early modern writer has not been treated systematically as a participant in the political thought of his time: William Shakespeare” (p. 1). The treatment may not have been systematic, but with Kott, Orgel, Dollimore, Hadfield, Wilson and Alexander, all representatives of a whole industry of ‘politicised Shakespeares’, one might ask whether there really is room for an entirely new perspective on Shakespeare’s investment in political issues. The editors’ contention that “Elizabethans and Jacobean were politically closer to the ancient Greeks and Romans more than a thousand years before them than they were to liberal individualism three hundred years later” (p. 3) might have yielded promising contributions. However, the references to classical ideas in this volume are limited, even though its authors investigate two distinctive features of early modern politics that resonate with Plato’s *Republic*, Aristotle’s *Politics*, Tacitus’ *Annals* and Seneca’s tragedies: the personal nature of political participation, focussing on character and counsel rather than institutions, and the rhetorical embedding of political thought.

Most of the contributions in this volume distil scholarly debates of the past without opening new avenues: Cathy Curtis discusses the *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa* as complementary modes of political life; Susan James reflects on the political implications of superstition in *Macbeth* and *Julius Caesar*; Aysha Pollnitz sees in the education of Prince Hal and Hamlet a “discussion of succession dilemmas” (p. 121); Andrew Fitzmaurice explains Hamlet’s rhetorical

strategy of paralipsis as “self-enslavement” (p. 151) at a corrupt court; Conal Condren considers the equivocation of good government in *Measure for Measure*; Jennifer Richards probes into the political purpose of *Henry VIII* and identifies honesty as the key moral-political issue; Phil Withington compares *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and *Two Angry Women of Abingdon* to show that Shakespeare’s female characters exemplify urban citizenship; David Colclough investigates acts of persuasion in *Julius Caesar* to point to “the limits on political advice and action” (pp. 232–233); Eric Nelson examines *The Rape of Lucrece*, *Titus Andronicus* and *Coriolanus* to argue that for Shakespeare virtue does not reside in a particular political system.

Only four of the contributions are truly thought-provoking. David Armitage focusses on Shakespeare’s conception of property and its political and theatrical implications. He explains why Shakespeare “was a public personality as a rights-bearer but not an office-holder, in later life an armigerous gentleman of property but throughout a man without civic responsibilities” (p. 31). Investigating the metaphors that link property with sovereignty in the history plays, Armitage argues that Shakespeare viewed public office sceptically because he was acutely aware of “the fragility of the illusion that sustains [property and politics] through collusive agreement” (p. 42). Cathy Shrank identifies an interesting architectural motif in the *Sonnets* and demonstrates that “within sonnets 1–17, the young man is periodically constructed in architectural terms as a country house” (p. 113). In this way, the duty to procreate is linked to the Elizabethan dictate that aristocrats residing in London return to their country estates and fulfil their obligations towards their tenants. This political reading of the *Sonnets* is convincing even if the exact implications of the “politics of repastoralisation” (p. 116) remain unclear. In the wake of Skinner’s claim that active citizenship in the early modern period “grew out of the educational programme of humanism” (p. 236), Markku Peltonen discusses the anxieties that came with this conviction. He links the question whether the “usage of the powers of the *ars rhetorica* [should] be limited to a more exclusive body of councillors and nobles” (p. 236) to a 1576 narrative about an ancient, self-governed community of so-called Raellyans who consulted the *ars rhetorica* to decide whether they should elect a king at all but ended up with a tyrant, a story “concocted by a humble schoolmaster in Buckinghamshire called William Clever” (p. 243). Peltonen traces the ambivalent stance towards rhetorically empowered commoners in *Coriolanus* back to democratic and aristocratic renderings of Menenius’ belly fable and argues that “neither the ordinary citizens nor their tribunes can genuinely persuade one another” (p. 252). Stephen Greenblatt takes a brief exchange over *Macbeth* with former US president Bill Clinton as his point of departure to argue that “in Shakespeare *no* character with a clear moral vision has a will to power and, conversely, no character with a strong desire to rule over others has an ethically adequate object” (p. 67). This observation does not seem particularly helpful nor his explanation that early modern political thought was “deeply influenced by what the philosopher Bernhard Williams called ‘ethicized psychology’” (p. 70). Greenblatt’s argument, however, gains momentum when he observes that the “last words of Elizabethan and Jacobean tragedies and histories are conventionally spoken by the person in command” (p. 79) while it is either Albany (Quarto) or Edgar (Folio) who speaks the last word of *King Lear*. He argues that this deviation from generic constraints is indicative of Shakespeare’s political stance: political authority and truth are irreconcilable; there is no “ethical object for secular ambition” (p. 71) and “larger ethical ambitions [...] only lead to disastrous consequences” (p. 78).

Truly thought-provoking is Greenblatt's statement that "Shakespeare did not think that one's good actions are necessarily or even usually rewarded, but he seems to have been convinced that one's wicked actions always return upon one's head, with interest" (p. 72). Had Shakespeare written plays in which good deeds are always or mostly rewarded and wicked actions have no negative consequences, would these playscripts have survived? Can we conceive of a five-act play that portrays a benevolent, just and powerful ruler whose popularity rises with each act? Like most contributors to this volume Greenblatt does not really consider the impact of generic conventions on early modern literature and drama. Shakespeare's political thought is channelled through given literary traditions, and so we should not be surprised to see his rulers – elected or appointed – turn tyrannous or weary of office. This methodological problem is addressed by Quentin Skinner, who cautions us that it "would be misguided to treat Shakespeare's works as direct evidence for his beliefs [because] he was living and writing in a literary culture profoundly shaped by the rhetorical arts" (p. 272). Skinner speculates that "the habit of arguing *in utramque partem* may well have played a significant role in the unparalleled rise of the drama towards the end of the Elizabethan age" (p. 273). This may indeed be the reason why Shakespeare was never treated systematically with regard to political thought. Shakespeare opted for a "political life one step removed: namely through verse and drama" (p. 9), and in this respect "was even more elusive than many of his contemporaries" (p. 21).

It is thus hard to conceive how this volume could shed more light on Shakespeare as a political thinker, and hardly surprising that there is no entry for 'Shakespeare' in the index to Glenn Burgess' study *British Political Thought, 1500–1660*, a survey which explores "the way in which Scottish and English political thinking was marked by the impact of religion (above all, of the Reformation) on the affairs of the commonwealth and its government" (p. xiii). In his prologue Burgess shows that "Renaissance political thinking was not by any means simply a product of humanism" (p. 1). The chronologically ordered chapters are centred on carefully selected, mostly canonical texts (by More, Hooker, Hobbes, Knox, Rutherford, etc.) that allow the reader to re-think the crucial debates on the relationship between religion and political allegiance, the nature of the church and its relationship to secular authority as well as the issue of religious diversity and tolerance by the ruler. One example of Burgess' convincingly discursive approach is his treatment of Robert Persons' *Conference about the Next Succession to the Crowne of England* (1594). Focussing on the implication of canon and civil law on Persons' line of argument, Burgess shows that for Persons to "fail in religion was the worst offence a ruler could commit" (p. 112). Burgess then cites Puritan and Catholic thinkers to elucidate various attacks on the Protestant church-state and finally turns to Perkins, Whitgift and Hooker to show that a "casuistical attitude underlay much political thinking" (p. 126) in that it "provided the framework within which we can understand a world in which even the most conformist of people might be driven to acts of disloyalty" (p. 127). What may appear as anti-monarchical republicanism in Perkins and Hooker, he cautions us, should be seen in the light of the conflict between the church and a queen, Elizabeth, unwilling to settle her succession.

Aaron Kitch's *Political Economy and the States of Literature in Early Modern England* sets out to challenge "metanarratives such as the Marxist paradigm of a 'transition from feudalism to capitalism'" (p. 16) as well as the "naïve abstractions [that] new historicism sometimes depends on" (p. 16). This collection of his essays marks a great achievement in terms of interdisciplinar-

ity in that it examines how generically diverse literary texts from 1580 to 1630 were shaped by and in turn shaped economic praxis as well as economic debates. In chapter 1, Kitch shows how Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* is imbued with the idea of "heroic commerce" and thus breaks with the Virgilian epic tradition that "regards trade as an obstacle to heroic virtue" (p. 28). The English epyllion is discussed in chapter 2 as a genre that "blend[s] sexuality and economics in order to produce a counter-nationalist genre that regards trade as an agent of peace" (p. 50). Chapter 3 compellingly charts Nashe's *Lenten Stuff* as a satire that "highlights tensions between London and the outports within the Elizabethan project of a unified and centralized economy" (p. 99). In chapter 4, Kitch argues rather conventionally that Marlowe's *Jew of Malta* "registers the historical dynamic of Jewish assimilation" (p. 121) in the context of trading nations, while Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* "criticizes a mercantile state that reserves the right of private ownership to an elite class" (p. 125). Following Agnew and Forman, he argues in chapter 5 that Middleton's city comedies challenge the idea that the economy could be regulated successfully by the state while pointing to the "link between character and credit acknowledg[ing] the complex intrapersonal aspects of economic exchange" (p. 153). In his most innovative chapter, Kitch sketches how in his masques Ben Jonson criticises the rising political power of city merchants, while Middleton and Munday in their pageants "countered the exclusivity of the court by idealizing mercantile trade as an engine of political, religious, and international unification" (p. 177). Though somewhat eclectic, the small number of cultural artefacts enables Kitch to steer clear of generalisations and his book comes strongly recommended.

Burgess with his focus on religion and Kitch with his focus on economy are central pieces of a puzzle that sketches early modern political thought. They both have demonstrated convincingly that political thought as intellectual history is best construed indirectly: it is a desideratum of general debates and common practice as much as it is an agenda set by political treatises. If we accept their claim that early modern political thought was multifarious and pragmatic, Shakespeare as a deflector rather than a reflector of political power may come less as a surprise. And if *Shakespeare and Early Modern Political Thought* fails to identify the playwright's political position we should be thankful to the contributors and the editors for not confining Shakespeare to a definite piece in that puzzle.

Felix Sprang (Hamburg)

Stephen Hamrick, *The Catholic Imaginary and the Cults of Elizabeth, 1558–1582*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. vii, 240 S. – ISBN 978-0-7546-6588-5 – £ 55.00 (hb.).

This book contributes to the growing field of scholarship on the relationship between Catholicism and Elizabethan literature. Its particular interest is in how English poets deployed what the author terms "the Catholic imaginary" to a variety of ends, ranging from self-promotion to advancement of a patron to critique or celebration of Queen Elizabeth. Hamrick rightly points out that early modern scholars have largely separated out questions of Catholic practice from their studies of English Petrarchism, and hence they have failed to recognize how profoundly the language of Petrarchan courtship helped to shape the "cults of Elizabeth." In chapters that focus primarily on three poets – Barnabe Googe, George Gascoigne, and Thomas Watson – Hamrick

sets out to show how deeply Elizabethan literature drew upon the Catholic imaginary, and how much this imaginary was embedded within Petrarchan discourse. The result is a predominantly political account of these poets and their engagement with their Queen, as Hamrick persuasively shows the persistence of Catholicism long after the church's official shift to Protestantism.

In chapter 1, Hamrick demonstrates how Elizabeth transformed Catholic rites and customs from their traditional forms to suit her own political purposes. He focusses in particular on her appropriation of Catholic mass for her Christside celebration in 1559, and argues that she in effect replaced the mass with herself as the focal point of the occasion. Here and elsewhere, Hamrick makes clear that these transformations are not strictly acts of secularising or desacralising Catholic practices. Instead, he regards them as to some degree retaining the religious power of their original purposes. This becomes clear in his discussion, in chapter 2, of the courtly procession celebrating St. George, which replicated traditional rogation ceremonies, retaining the sacrality that belonged to the earlier practice. These discussions of political uses of the Catholic imaginary are largely in the service of Hamrick's wider claim about English poetry, and the subsequent chapters address the poetry directly. He begins with an examination of Googe, who, he claims, was not only giving voice to a severe Protestant rejection of Petrarchan, intemperate love, but was also actively participating much more pointedly in Elizabeth's marriage and succession question. Through a convincing close-reading of Googe's *Eclogues*, Hamrick argues that Googe modelled the character of the bad Coridon on Elizabeth's suitor, Robert Dudley, whom he regarded as a real threat to Elizabeth's autonomy, and to Protestantism more broadly. This chapter on the whole makes a good case for the residual power of the Catholic imaginary even in the hands of a hostile figure like Googe.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on Gascoigne, who provides Hamrick with the strongest example of how the Catholic imaginary worked. Having served as Elizabeth's almoner at her coronation, Gascoigne began a career of courtly service, writing Petrarchan verse in which Elizabeth functioned alternately as devotee, sinner, saint, and even as a figure for Christ. Hamrick bases most of his reading of Gascoigne on a little-known work, *Dan Bartholmew of Bathe*, which he regards as "a comprehensive model for the transfer of the Catholic imaginary to the cults and anticults of Elizabeth" (p. 128). According to Hamrick, Gascoigne's supposed failure as a poet is overstated by critics, who have ignored the favour he seems to have garnered from Elizabeth herself. Taking this, to my mind, a bit too far, Hamrick claims that Elizabeth may in fact have recognised herself in Gascoigne – that the two were in effect secret sharers. The book's final chapter is on Watson's *Hekatompithia*, which he reads as an extended Petrarchan allegory; Watson's dedicatee, Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford, provides the model for the suffering lover. Oxford, who strove to be loyal to Queen Elizabeth at the same time that he clung to his Catholicism, provides a perfect model for the complexities of maintaining the Catholic imaginary in this period. Hamrick's intriguing suggestion that Elizabeth herself is the anonymous mistress of the text, based on his reading of Watson's prefatory "Exhortation to his little book", is perhaps the largest single contribution of this chapter to Watson scholarship, and helps to make sense of this little-understood sonnet cycle as a whole.

At its best, *The Catholic Imaginary and the Cults of Elizabeth* draws our attention to a series of poetic texts that are largely ignored by most scholarship of the period, and forces us to see how persistent Catholicism was in shaping the seemingly secular Petrarchan discourse of Eliza-

bethan literature. If the book had been written in a clearer, more forceful manner, its impact would no doubt be all the stronger. Its diction and style, however, are disappointing: not only is the book poorly edited, including endless repetitions and mistakes, but it is also much vaguer about its terms than it should be. There is never an adequate definition, for example, for “the cults of Elizabeth”, which are treated as if they were a reified institution or place (which Gascoigne would try to “re-enter”), nor is the “Catholic imaginary” ever explained in a satisfying manner. Moreover, there are too many sentences that rely far too heavily on abstract nouns or categories and hence fail adequately to convey their meaning. Here is one example pulled out among many: “As ‘makers of love’, such Italianated individuals engage in a broad range of constitutive material practices including physical behaviors and characteristic terminology” (p. 73). The problem with all of this is that it makes the book much more difficult to read, and to learn from, than it should be. Hamrick is a fine researcher and scholar and would be well served by applying more of his critical skills to his own writing.

Ramie Targoff (Brandeis)

Helen Hackett, *Shakespeare and Elizabeth: The Meeting of Two Myths*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009. 295 S. – ISBN 978-0-691-12806-1 – \$ 35.00 / £ 24.00 (hb.).

Whether Elizabeth I and Shakespeare ever actually met remains uncertain. She may have seen him perform on stage, though it is most unlikely that she would have gone to a playhouse like the Globe, as *Shakespeare in Love* would have us believe. As a young boy he may have been at the “Princely Pleasures” of 1575, and, as Sir Walter Scott suggests in his novel *Kenilworth*, have seen her at the pageants. Or Shakespeare might have been presented to his Queen, as the author of the play, at the end of a performance at court. Regardless how scanty and inconclusive the actual evidence may be, however, mythic narratives have staunchly paired these two cultural icons, not least of all to cement the coupling of English political and literary greatness. In her lively account of the way biographers, forgers, writers of historical fiction, Shakespearean scholars and, most recently, mainstream film directors have continually reforged this imaginary relationship, Helen Hackett is less interested in presenting unequivocal historical evidence to decide the case once and for all. Rather, her purpose is “to explore why this legendary pairing has had such enduring appeal and what we can learn from the wide variations in the presentation of that pairing in different periods, different genres, and different cultural contexts” (p. 6).

As such, her theoretical point of departure is unabashedly psychoanalytic. The wide array of texts which, since the early modern period, have kept alive an implicit conversation between the bard and his Queen, are treated as responses to larger cultural forces and symptoms of a shifting need to repress certain aspects both have come to represent while foregrounding others. The fact that their imagined contact keeps resurfacing, she contends, says less about the historical time they emerged from than the diverse times and places in which this conversation came to be re-imagined, circulated and ideologically deployed. Compellingly, Hackett insists that “homage to, or reaction against, a constructed heritage is necessary to the self-definition of any culture” (p. 7). Indeed, precisely because the meeting between Elizabeth and Shakespeare

belongs to an imaginary past, it has proven to be irresistible for the self-definition not only of British but also of American culture. One of the many telling details Hackett brings to the fore is that by the nineteenth century, historians had come to couple the birth of America with that of Shakespeare. They were conceived as twins, born to Queen Bess in a Golden Age when royalty and commoners could meet on a shared ground, namely that of a burgeoning imperialist project.

As she moves through the centuries, Hackett skilfully decodes the political and cultural interests at stake as each new generation rewrites this double myth. To give just a few of her insightful readings: in the eighteenth century, the harmonious contact between the Queen and her poet feeds a cultural nostalgia for a time when royalty allegedly supported the arts unconditionally. Yet it is also the beginning of a curious imbalance. As Shakespeare comes to be elevated to quasi divine status, cultural misogyny, finding Elizabeth no longer compatible with the feminine sensitivity current at the time, casts her as a woman of unnaturally thwarted sexuality. By the nineteenth century, the imbalance shifts again. In reaction to the monumentalisation of the Bard, *Punch* begins to print cartoon versions of the imaginary meeting between the two cultural celebrities. At the same time, Victorian culture gives birth to the mythic scene of the vain old queen, smashing her mirrors. Bespeaking first and foremost to the cult of feminine youth, this fantasy poignantly resurfaces a century later in Hollywood's equation between queens and stars, notably in Bette Davis' moving impersonation of a woman struggling with the personal price of her political power. Modernism, with its celebration of emancipation, however, also emerges as the cultural moment to rediscover the charisma of female rulers. Indeed, in the face of a second World War, Virginia Woolf has reason to acknowledge in *Between the Acts* that England may need a pageant coupling Elizabeth and Shakespeare, even if such an imaginary scene can only be presented as a fragment of a cultural heritage.

Regardless, then, whether the contact between these two mythic figures serves as a sign of confidence, nostalgia, social critique or aesthetic experiment, it allows us to engage in a conversation about the fraught relationship between femininity and political power, even while serving as the basis for a discussion of the subversion but also the complicity between theatre and politics. The paucity of historical evidence regarding Elizabeth and Shakespeare makes for their tropic value. It may well be that we keep returning to this mythic scene precisely because we know it is part and parcel of an imaginary past. As Hackett wisely acknowledges, her book is really about the indeterminacy and mobility of the past regarding an equally shifting present. We will probably never know for certain whether these two cultural icons ever met. But what we can be certain of is that because we are so heavily invested in their conversation, they will continue to do so in the future.

Elisabeth Bronfen (Zürich)

Eric Langley, *Narcissism and Suicide in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. xi, 336 S. – ISBN 978-0-19-954123-2 – £ 50.00 (hb.).

The notion of the early modern subject as the epitome of optimistic self-awareness and enthusiastic self-sufficiency is a particularly tenacious critical cliché – in part for the simple reason that

some aspects of it can be shown to be tenable. Eric Langley's study offers a very thorough and original inquiry into an early modern discourse which can serve to provide a fresh perspective on this cliché. Narcissism and suicide define extremes of selfhood, they are symptoms of an egocentric excess, so the early modern debates which they gave rise to were intent on challenging and containing their implicit assumptions about the subject's autonomy: "the suicide and the narcissist are cautionary figures of immoderate individualism" (p. 2).

At the outset, Langley gives an apt definition of the kind of involuted thinking which his book addresses: "My subject is the subject whose subject is himself" (p. 2). This sentence is not playful academic rhetoric, but a poignant demonstration of the kind of style which a concern with self-reference has given rise to since antiquity, a style where "rhetorical gemination mimetically manifests structures of ipseity formation" (p. 20). This close attention to style turns out to be particularly fruitful in the discussion of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, where Langley gives a wonderfully lucid critical assessment of rhetorical figures of repetition in the source-text of Ovid's Latin, which Arthur Golding and other early modern translators tended to drop. Even though Langley's book is subdivided into two parts which consider narcissism and suicide respectively, attention to the continuities between the two areas is never suspended, and *Romeo and Juliet* is made to serve as an elegant transition: Romeo's unrequited Petrarchan love to Rosaline is both in attitude and in style markedly narcissistic while "the requital of love redeems all assertions of selfless mortification, invalidating introspection through rewarding generous self-sacrifice" (p. 131).

The turn towards the subject of suicide in part two is also a turn towards the Stoics, whom early modern rhetoric was in the habit of blaming for promulgating praise of self-slaughter. Langley here produces an impressive panorama of the Stoic thought on suicide and of its repercussions in early modern philosophy. Indeed, "Stoicism provides the prevailing philosophical and suicidal atmosphere" (p. 160) of the plays discussed in this part of the book. In *Julius Caesar*, suicide is a strikingly staged action, "an aesthetic event" (p. 156) and its close association with a lofty ideal of *romanitas* turns Cleopatra's death in *Antony and Cleopatra* into an act of mediation: "Adopting high-Stoic vocabulary of resolute suicide, Cleopatra successfully unifies the Roman and Egyptian, bringing both models together in a single act" (p. 188).

In Langley's book, narcissism and suicide on the early modern stage thus emerge as part of a more general exploration of humanist self-determination and of the limits of agency – an exploration for which the radical reflexivity of narcissism and suicide turns out to be remarkably productive. Though held up as mementoes against an overconfident sense of selfhood, they thus "become increasingly empty as threats, increasingly resonant as precursors" (p. 281). In this wide-ranging study – which touches on most of Shakespeare's plays as well as on Dante, Milton, Donne, and many of the latter's contemporaries – the author has therefore opened up a rich new context for the consideration of early modern subjectivity. The discourse which he analyses acts much like an intellectual microcosm of the subversive influences and of the regulating counter-debates that shaped the early modern self.

Stephan Laqué (München)

Manfred Beyer, *“A beggar’s book outworths a noble’s blood”*: Werte und Wertekonflikte in Shakespeares Dramen. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2009. 828 S. – ISBN 978-3-8253-5548-7 – € 64,00 (hb.).

Diese Studie läßt schon aufgrund ihres Umfangs eine grundsätzliche Aufarbeitung und Neubewertung der Diskussion um zentrale Wertbegriffe und deren Verhandlung in Shakespeares Dramen erwarten. Eine solche Re-Evaluierung Shakespeares im Kontext des Ethical Criticism ist gerade vor dem Hintergrund der intensiven Beschäftigung mit der religiösen Umbruchsituation der englischen Renaissance in der Shakespeareforschung der letzten Jahre ein vielversprechendes Vorhaben. Eine solche Situierung oder Auseinandersetzung mit diesen neueren Entwicklungen scheint jedoch nicht das Anliegen des Autors zu sein. Die sehr knappe, sechseitige Einleitung beschränkt sich stattdessen auf die Formulierung der Zielsetzung, “welche Werte nun Shakespeare in seinen Dramen darstellt” (S. 9), eine Minimaldefinition des Wertebegriffs (“Ideen, Figuren oder Dinge, denen individuell oder allgemein eine hohe Anerkennung gezollt wird”, S. 10) sowie den Hinweis auf Nutzung des “einschlägigen Wortfeldes” (S. 10) als Deutungsbasis, wodurch verhindert werden solle, “Shakespeares Werke als Projektionsflächen moderner Wertvorstellungen zu verfälschen” (S. 11). Die hier angedeutete kritische Haltung gegenüber aktueller Shakespeareforschung wird in zwei Sätzen auf psychoanalytische, postkoloniale und feministische Deutungsansätze zugespitzt (S. 9). Dem steht das – zumindest in dieser Formulierung – problematische Ziel gegenüber, “möglichst keine eigenen Werte und Werturteile in die Dramen hineinzuprojizieren” (S. 10). Der mögliche Widerspruch zwischen der Anerkennung einer Differenz der “Wertesysteme” und der scheinbaren Objektivierbarkeit von interpretatorischen Aussagen, die den “vom Autor intendierten Maßstab” (S. 10) zu enthüllen vermögen, soll aufgelöst werden durch die herauszuarbeitende “auktorial intendierte Wertungsperspektive [...], die mithilfe von unterschiedlichen Perspektivträgern transportiert wird” (S. 10); letztere sind für Beyer etwa Figuren, Handlung und Bildlichkeit. Gerade in der Analyse einzelner Dramen erweist sich jedoch die Entscheidung darüber, ob und wann eine Figurenrede subjektiv oder auktorial zu deuten sei, als kaum möglich. Im Spannungsfeld zwischen Überzeitlichkeitsanspruch und notwendiger historischer Kontextualisierung Shakespeares beruft sich der Autor auf Leo Kirschbaums Postulat aus dem Jahr 1956, der “uniqueness of the individual Shakespeare play” (S. 11) gerecht zu werden, statt diese etwa aus “Shakespeares Zeitgeist” (S. 11) zu erschließen, und entscheidet sich für die Ausblendung der in der Folge des New Historicism entstandenen Shakespeareforschung. Dieser Verzicht auf jüngere Forschung setzt sich fort bei der sehr knappen Referenz auf gattungsspezifische Aspekte der Wertethematik in Tragödie, Komödie und Historie (S. 12–14).

Im Anschluß an die Einleitung folgt die detaillierte Dramenanalyse, geordnet nach Gattungen sowie Chronologie, wobei sich – so das programmatisch vorweggenommene Ergebnis – in den Komödien der Wert der Liebe als dominant erweise, in den Historien der Wert der Königswürde bzw. Macht, während in den Tragödien eine Wertepluralität die Individualität der tragischen Protagonisten widerspiegele (S. 14). In einem letzten Teil werden die Ergebnisse im Hinblick auf ihren Stellenwert in “Shakespeares Wertesystem” (S. 689) nochmals aufbereitet. Übergreifend ergibt sich daraus der Befund einer Affirmation des Systems der *chain of being* in den Tragödien gegenüber Säkularisierungstendenzen in den Historien, während in den Ro-

manzen und Komödien “die Durchlässigkeit des Systems nachsichtiger [...] präsentiert” werde (S. 695). Innerhalb der ausführlichen Drameninterpretationen führen die im Hinblick auf die Herausarbeitung einer “auktorial intendierte[n] Rezeptionsperspektive” (S. 15) vorgenommenen Charakteranalysen der Figuren zu allzu einsinnigen Lesarten bzw. Einebnungen Shakespearescher Ambivalenzen, etwa wenn im Rahmen des *Hamlet*-Kapitels Polonius “minderwertige Charakterzüge” (S. 168) sowie “fortgeschrittene Senilität” (S. 169) attestiert werden, Kate in *The Taming of the Shrew* eine “unangenehme Wesensart” (S. 497) zugeschrieben wird oder bei Othello von einem “erschreckenden charakterlichen Niedergang” (S. 191) die Rede ist, während Jagos Motivation als nur “vordergründig ambivalent” erscheine, “sich aber letztlich doch auf seinen Mangel an Selbstwert, modern gesprochen auf Minderwertigkeitskomplexe zurückführen” lasse (S. 183). Der weitgehende Verzicht auf eine Kontextualisierung bzw. Diskussion der historischen und konzeptionellen Verankerung der Werte befördert eine Universalisierung etwa des Begriffs der Liebe sowie die angesprochene Einebnung von Ambivalenzen in den Dramen. Signifikanterweise fehlt ein Kapitel zur Liebeskomödie *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, die nur punktuell erwähnt wird und deren Einordnung in die etablierte Wertehierarchie, innerhalb derer “die Liebe [...] an oberster Stelle” (S. 739) der ideellen Werte rangiert, problematisiert werden müßte. Bei der Analyse von *Twelfth Night* führt diese Vorgehensweise dazu, daß der zweifelhafte Partnerwechsel am Ende des Dramas mit dem lapidaren Verweis auf die “‘identischen’ Zwillinge” (S. 568) plausibel gemacht werden muß.

Die Analyse verweist auf die notwendige Interdependenz der Begriffsfelder Wert und Identität in all ihren Facetten, die punktuell durchaus anerkannt wird: “Werte wie Schönheit, Ehre, Loyalität, Tapferkeit, Treue etc. sind natürlich letztlich alle in irgendeiner Weise konstitutiv für den Selbstwert von Figuren” (S. 795). Aber es bleibt fraglich, ob der gewählte Ansatz diesen komplexen Interdependenzen gerecht werden kann. Dies zeigt sich etwa auch daran, daß sich das Kapitel zur “Relativität der Werte” (S. 803) gerade nicht mit Relativität, sondern mit Mäßigung als notwendigem Gegengewicht zum ins Übermaß gesteigerten Wert befaßt, wobei das Zusammenspiel zwischen humoralpsychologischen, religiösen und ethischen Diskursen allerdings völlig außer acht bleibt. Der Band leistet fraglos eine ausführliche werkimmanente Analyse von Shakespeares Dramen im Hinblick auf Werte und Wertkonflikte. Allerdings stellt sich die Frage nach dem Erkenntnisgewinn eines Ansatzes, der auf die Diskussion der komplexen Interdependenzen von Werteproblematik und Identität im Kontext der religiösen, sozialen und psychologischen Umbrüche der Zeit verzichtet, wie sie in Shakespeares Dramen verhandelt werden. Ein Band, der offenbar auch Schüler und Studierende als Zielpublikum intendiert, bei denen Grundlagen wie etwa die Kenntnis der (neu-)platonischen Stufenleiter “nicht mehr unbedingt als bekannt vorausgesetzt werden” (S. 455) können, sollte auf eine Positionierung innerhalb der jüngeren Shakespeareforschung nicht verzichten.

Beate Neumeier (Köln)

Amüsieren geht über Studieren: Lachen, Fluchen und Rhetorik

Rick Bowers, *Radical Comedy in Early Modern England: Contexts, Cultures, Performances*. Studies in Performance and Early Modern Drama. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008. x, 122 S. – ISBN 978-0-7546-6380-5 – £ 50.00 (hb.).

William W. Demastes, *Comedy Matters: From Shakespeare to Stoppard*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. viii, 203 S. – ISBN 978-0-230-60471-1 – £ 45.00 (hb.).

Kiernan Ryan, *Shakespeare's Comedies*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. xiv, 284 S. – ISBN 978-0-333-59931-0 – £ 47.50 (hb.) – ISBN 978-0-333-59932-7 – £ 15.99 (pb.).

Ekkehart Krippendorff, *Shakespeares Komödien: Spiele aus dem Reich der Freiheit*. Berlin: Kadmos, 2007. 293 S. – ISBN 978-3-931659-87-5 – € 22,50 (pb.).

Tragedy used to be the form of early modern drama that attracted most critical attention, but now comedy has caught up. As Rick Bowers' study shows, the category of comedy is broad enough to include a play like Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*, usually seen as a tragedy, and Dekker's *The Wonderful Year* (1603), a pamphlet full of black humour about the plague. What these texts have in common with *The Second Shepherds' Play*, Harington's *Metamorphosis of Ajax*, Marston's Antonio plays, Middleton's *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside*, and Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, Bowers argues, is a Bakhtinian emphasis on the body and wildly exuberant mockery that, following Bakhtin, is inherently radical. Bowers pointedly omits Shakespeare's romantic comedies, which he sees as more conservative and "feminine" (p. 8) than these boisterous, "masculine", and "politically oppositional" (p. 2) texts from the fringes of the canon. Although Bowers brings out the theatrical qualities and humour of a play like *The Jew of Malta*, which he likens to a wrestling match in its over-the-top violence, the radicalism of these texts is less clear. Of course, Dekker's plague and Harington's toilet bring out our common humanity, which has a levelling effect; but does Dekker's mild mockery of the authorities, who are at a loss how to deal with the plague, constitute a radical political statement? Did the Queen's banishment of Harington from Court because of his pamphlet spring from fear of his radicalism, or from offended good taste?

Demastes's study is the most theoretical and wide-ranging of the four. It covers playwrights from Aristophanes to Stoppard, and also discusses aspects of tragedy. Demastes begins with inverting Aristotle's preference for tragedy over comedy: tragedy speaks of a dangerous idealism that disconnects us from the world as it is, whereas comedy teaches us to live in harmony with nature, including our bodies. Comedy overcomes divisions between mind and body, the self and others. That is why, in his view, comedy matters: it can save us from the problems the world faces today, such as unbridled capitalism and global warming. This is a tall claim, particularly since, in its current Hollywood incarnation, comedy often advertises procreation, which may well be at odds with sustainability. Demastes, however, limits himself to "comedy at its best", and hardly touches on romantic comedy. Similarly, when he invokes "nature", this means modern scientific theories such as sociobiology, chaos theory, neurology, and fractals. To illustrate his points, Demastes discusses some Shakespeare plays, not all of them comedies. Hamlet, in fact, exemplifies a figure who tragically fails to achieve the status of a comic hero. For too long, he disregards the promptings of his body, which tells him to forego

vengeance and instead engage, like animals, in ritualised aggression (such as play acting, verbal abuse and fencing). Demastes may seem to overlook the ghost here, who keeps reminding Hamlet of his duty, but the metaphysical is seen as a neurological phenomenon, and thus delusional. Similarly, Demastes deconstructs the war ethos in *Troilus and Cressida*: Hector's plan of returning Helena to the Greeks is the only sensible, comic, solution, in line with the animal's wish for survival. Troilus's idealism, privileging the mind over the body, blocks this plan, so that the war goes on, with all its consequences. Falstaff, by contrast, makes his mind subservient to his body, which makes him a great comic hero. Some of his comic virtue rubs off on Hal. Yet comedy also valorises adaptability to a new environment, and there Falstaff fails: when Hal becomes King, he does not change with the times.

Drawing on games theory, Demastes discusses the balance between selfishness and altruism in other Shakespeare plays. The Duke in *Measure for Measure* freely forgives Angelo, who himself believes in strict exchange. Something similar happens in *The Tempest* and *The Merchant of Venice*, where Antonio and Shylock are forgiven beyond their desert, in an echo of divine grace. Portia is the golden mean between Antonio's naïve altruism and Shylock's selfish legalism. She also achieves a rare feat in her marriage: unlike other couples, such as Benedick and Beatrice, whose love excludes former friendships ("Kill Claudio!" 4.1.287), her relationship with Bassanio finds room for Antonio. Being so immensely learned, this book is not an easy read. Sometimes there is jargon ("agelastic", pp. 72, 73, 83), or the precise connection between a scientific theory and a specific play is unclear, or there are inconsistencies: war is the antithesis of comedy in *Troilus*, but American soldiers in World War II are praised for their comic spirit. Still, it is interesting to see how Demastes tries to make modern science relevant to literary studies.

Whereas Demastes engages in a dialogue with contemporary science, Kiernan Ryan eschews modern criticism, and refers to the likes of Nicholas Rowe, A. W. Schlegel, Heinrich Heine, and William Hazlitt instead. He discusses Shakespeare's ten early, so-called "festive" comedies, ending with *Twelfth Night*. Although he does note family resemblances, the emphasis is less on an over-arching theory of Shakespearean comedy than on close readings of individual plays. Ryan painstakingly goes through each play, asking what its structure, diction, and themes contribute to its meaning. Though he often mentions the Elizabethan context, he does not read the plays alongside other texts; only the way Shakespeare has used his sources and the early reception history are sometimes brought into the argument. Occasionally, Ryan takes modern editors to task for obscuring the original meaning by emendations. The result of what may sound like an old-fashioned approach is actually refreshing: freed of the encrustations of new historicism and outright theoretical agendas, the comedies reveal unexpected new angles. Perhaps the most incisive reading is that of *The Merchant of Venice*. Avoiding the usual extremes of seeing Shylock as either tragic victim or comic villain, Ryan suggests that the Christians and the Jews are in fact each other's mirror images: Antonio hates Shylock because he realises there is no real difference between his own investment banking and Shylock's usury. Shylock, on the other hand, may plead his humanity in his famous Rialto speech, but chooses to become as inhumane as his enemies in his vengeance, applying "the monstrous symmetrical logic of the terrorist" (p. 114) by symbolically doing unto them what they have done to him. Both sides are to blame for commodifying the flesh that is common to all humans, symbolised by the bond.

Ryan also deconstructs ostensible dichotomies between Venice and Belmont, between racial and sexual injustice, with Portia exacting a bond from Antonio that echoes Shylock's. These similarities underlying apparent oppositions are made tangible by a virtuoso analysis of recurring key terms, such as "equal" and "kind", the latter suggesting kinship. Another highlight is Ryan's analysis of *Much Ado About Nothing*. Beginning with the theme of fashion in clothes, he argues that the play is concerned with the way our responses to love are themselves fashioned, influenced by conventions. The state and the church, represented by Don Pedro and the Friar, manipulate characters' emotions as much as Don John does. Even rebels like Beatrice and Benedick are at last forced to give in to a world that has determined that romantic love and marriage are our common destiny. However, not just desire is scripted, but also feelings such as jealousy, which gives the comedy a dangerous edge. Although Ryan does not draw overall conclusions about Shakespeare's comedies, his analyses collectively do reveal some common features. Far from being blandly conservative, many of them are concerned with democratic levelling, servants showing up their masters' faults; and with deconstructing gender and sexual preference, in particular in *As You Like it* and *Twelfth Night*. Many also have a Utopian quality, offering glimpses of an ideal world in which desire is not repressed and social and gender restrictions melt away. Yet, as the consummation of the lovers' happiness is postponed beyond the ending of *Twelfth Night*, and Feste reminds us of the wind and the rain of the real world, this utopia is forever beyond our reach.

Ekkehart Krippendorff's highly readable German-language introduction to the comedies (including *All's Well that Ends Well* and *Measure for Measure*) aims at a broader readership. The introductory chapter deals with issues of genre, drawing on Aristotle, Hegel, Schiller, and Heine, and with the early modern theatre world. Comedy, in this study, is not primarily about Bakhtinian subversion, but about a serene contemplation of man in society. Social belonging is the focus of its politics, not the class struggle. The cross-dressing heroines, for example, see issues from both (gender) perspectives, which is a precondition for democratic interaction. While tragedy is about the tyranny of fate, comedy frees us from passions and the limitations of the real. Krippendorff often delves deep into the prehistory of texts and settings: in the *Comedy of Errors*, for example, the city of Ephesus calls to mind St. Paul's epistle to the Ephesians, famous for its remarks on gender relations, one of the play's themes. We are told of the contemporary background and stage history of individual plays, and of historical ironies: in *The Merchant of Venice*, the roles of Venice and Belmont on the mainland have been reversed, as Venice is now the fairy tale location, opposed to the gritty industrial city of Mestre on the *terra firma*. History is never an aim in itself, however, but only shows how Shakespeare "always transcends his own historicity" and speaks to later generations, too (p. 266). Though one might object to some omissions (such as the religious allegory in *Measure for Measure*) and some claims (like the idea that Morocco's colour is irrelevant in *The Merchant*), the book offers many surprising new facets and views. *Twelfth Night's* Illyria is seen as a state that should be happy, in the absence of political concerns, but whose inhabitants make their own lives miserable by chasing false ideals. Not just theatre goers, but also Shakespeare specialists will read this book with pleasure.

As this survey of recent studies shows, comedy is no longer the preserve of particularly radical theoreticians. Bowers still embraces Bakhtin, but Demastes seeks for new theoretical founda-

tions, while Ryan and Krippendorff return to an emphasis on close readings, which has always been at the core of productive criticism.

Paul Franssen (Utrecht)

Björn Quiring, *Shakespeares Fluch: Die Aporien ritueller Exklusion im Königsdrama der englischen Renaissance*. München: Fink, 2009. 281 S. – ISBN 978-3-7705-4582-7 – € 34,90 (pb.).

Der Verfasser von *Shakespeares Fluch* ähnelt dem durch Roland Barthes sprichwörtlich gewordenen Buddhisten. Denn wie dieser aus der Saubohne entziffert Björn Quiring aus dem zunächst randständig erscheinenden Phänomen des Fluchs eine ganze Welt. Den Weg hierzu bereitet, wie in weniger inspirierten Zeiten nicht anders denkbar, ein ausgefeiltes theoretisches Setting.

Zunächst begreift Quiring den Fluch, neben verwandten Sprechakten wie dem Eid oder dem Segen (im Sinne einer impliziten Selbst- bzw. Fremdverfluchung), als paradigmatische Figuration, die Paradoxien juristisch-politischer Ordnungen zur Anschauung bringt. Flüche, so Quiring in Anlehnung an Walter Benjamins *Zur Kritik der Gewalt*, haben eine wesentlich rechtserhaltende Funktion. Jahwes Fluch über Schlange, Mensch und Acker (Genesis 3.14–19), die apokalyptische Verfluchung der Verdammten durch Jesus (Matthäus 25.41), aber auch die antike Praxis der Binnen-Sicherung der Polis durch Flüche gegen die im Außen situierten 'Feinde' legitimieren Vergangenheit und Gegenwart der bestehenden Wirklichkeitsordnung im Verweis auf deren Jenseits. Zugleich bilden sie als wiederholbare Formeln die Möglichkeit einer rituellen Bestätigung.

Insbesondere die philosophischen Untersuchungen Jacques Derridas, auf die Quiring sich an zentralen Stellen seiner Arbeit bezieht, machen eine fundamentale Instabilität solcher Setzungen im Sinne von Zeichenhandlungen deutlich. Performativitätstheoretisch ist für die rechtserhaltende Funktion des Fluchs das Verhältnis von Äußerungsakt und Ausgesagtem interessant. Dieses entpuppt sich als wechselseitiges Bedingungsverhältnis zwischen den gesellschaftlichen Ordnungen allererst begründenden Symbolhandlungen einerseits und dem normativen Geltungsanspruch der dadurch gestifteten Inhalte andererseits. Die 'ursprüngliche' Legitimität des instituierenden Äußerungsakts ist somit immer nur nachträglich durch den normativen Geltungsanspruch der dadurch getroffenen Aussage begründbar – und umgekehrt. So erzeugt die Unterscheidung zwischen Äußerungsakt und Aussage eine juristische Indifferenzzone zwischen Legitimität und Willkür, zwischen Recht und Unrecht, in der die Autorisierung und Authentizität jeder politischen Institutionalisierung wie auch der Geltungsanspruch ihrer Inhalte und Praktiken niemals ganz gesichert scheinen.

Es ist schade, daß die zumeist einsprachigen Kollegen und Kolleginnen aus dem anglophonen Ausland die elegante Wissenschaftsprosa von Björn Quiring kaum werden genießen können. Denn Quiring verbindet in dieser Arbeit, die 2007 mit dem Martin-Lehnert-Preis der Deutschen Shakespeare-Stiftung ausgezeichnet wurde, seine systematischen Überlegungen zum Fluch mit einer an den New Historicists geschulten These zur Durchlässigkeit des frühneuzeitlichen Theaters auf öffentliche Legitimationsdiskurse. In ausgreifenden und quellenreichen Einleitun-

gen zu den einzelnen Textlektüren erfüllt Quiring den Anspruch historischer Tiefenschärfe. Dabei wird deutlich, daß das frühneuzeitliche Theater die Faszination an den deprivatisierbaren Sprechakten des Fluchs auch deswegen auskosten kann, weil im nachreformatorischen England sakrale Sprachhandlungen – von der Eucharistie bis zum Anathema – ihre perlokutionäre Kraft zunehmend einbüßen. Infolge der diversen Verfügungsansprüche seitens der anglikanischen Kirche, der Puritaner, der klandestinen Katholiken wie auch aufgrund wachsender Relevanz von schriftlichen Vertragsformen für Juristen und Kaufleute stehen sie im Greenblattschen Sinne zur theatralen *re-negotiation* an.

Methodisch ermöglicht dies zu zeigen, wie das frühneuzeitliche Theater die skizzierten Unbestimmtheiten soziopolitischer Ordnungsmodelle ausnutzt und in wirkungsvolle *stage effects* ummünzt. So etwa in *Richard III*, dessen Titelfigur Quiring als Parodist der Eucharistie und des Feudaleids dechiffriert. Die Wahrnehmung von institutionellen Symbolhandlungen als theatrale Akte macht aus dem Theater eine ironische Beobachtungsinstanz, in der sich der legendäre Leitspruch des Globe verwirklicht: *totus mundus agit histrionem*. Diese Überlegenheit einer theatral gebrochenen Beobachtung zweiter Ebene büßt der Zuschauer des späteren *King John* schon ein. Hier scheitert nicht allein die substantielle Rückverankerung politischer Repräsentation, sondern in den zahlreichen metatheatralen Passagen inszeniert sich das Stück zugleich als wesentlich zeitabhängige und damit potentiell sich selbst überholende Institution. Gegenüber den Fallstricken des positiven Rechts, dies macht Quirings Lektüre von *King Lear* im Anschluß deutlich, helfen auch keine Rückgriffe auf naturrechtliche Legitimationsmuster, wie sie von Aristoteles bis ins Hochmittelalter zu verzeichnen sind. Vielmehr entäußert sich Lears konsequente Inanspruchnahme naturrechtlicher Begründungsfiguren seiner Herrschaft in einen Kataklysmus von Flüchen, die binnendramatisch in die bekannte Katastrophe münden und diskursgeschichtlich spätere Konzepte politischer Souveränität antizipieren, wie sie Quiring vor allem ausgehend von Hobbes beschreibt.

Einer Analyse Giorgio Agambens zufolge, den Quiring wiederholt zitiert, bewohnt Hobbes' "Wolfsmensch des Menschen in der Person des Souveräns dauerhaft den Staat" (so Agamben in *Homo Sacer*, 2002, S. 117). Für die daraus resultierende Unentscheidbarkeit zwischen Legitimität und Willkür reserviert Agamben bekanntlich den Begriff des 'Ausnahmestandes', auf den auch Quiring sich bezieht. Da dieser Ansatz programmatisch zugleich auf eine institutionalitätstheoretische Begründung für die sogenannte Biopolitik im Sinne Foucaults zielt, d. h. auf machttechnisch sich je unterschiedlich ausprägende Verfügungsansprüche auf den menschlichen Körper, ist nicht ganz klar, warum Quiring, der Foucault ansonsten bis in die spätesten Schriften zitiert, ihn als Historiker der Gouvernamentalität – wie übrigens auch Agambens inzwischen übersetztes *Il regno e la gloria* – in dieser Hinsicht konsequent ausblendet. Gerade die abschließenden Überlegungen zur Entgrenzung des Naturbegriffs in *King Lear* wie auch zur damit einhergehenden Ökonomisierung politischer Herrschaft hätten dadurch weitere Differenzierungsimpulse gewonnen. Dies zuletzt Gesagte sei jedoch weniger als grundlegende Kritik denn als Zeugnis einer angeregten Lektüre zu verstehen. Denn fest steht: das ist ein verflucht gutes Buch!

Roger Lüdeke (Düsseldorf)

Stefan Daniel Keller, *The Development of Shakespeare's Rhetoric: A Study of Nine Plays*. Tübingen: Francke, 2009. viii, 310 S. – ISBN 978-3-7720-8324-2 – € 58,00 (hb.).

Wer immer sich mit Shakespeares Rhetorik auseinandersetzt, muß die bereits vorliegenden Arbeiten kritisch durchmustern, um auf ihren Erkenntnissen aufzubauen. Nun trägt die vorliegende Arbeit, eine Zürcher Dissertation, einen anspruchsvollen Titel, der implizit auf einen prominenten Buchtitel, Wolfgang Clemens *The Development of Shakespeare's Imagery* (1951), ursprünglich auch eine Dissertation, Bezug nimmt. Jedoch ist sie von dieser in methodologischem Ansatz und Durchführung gänzlich verschieden, was schon der erste Augenschein vermittelt. Denn dieser legt nahe, daß die aktuelle Arbeit sich weitgehend in statistischen Tabellen erschöpft, Tabellen, die der Rhetorik als eines Instruments der persuasiven Einflußnahme auf ein rezipierendes Publikum unangemessen sind. Darin ist die Arbeit vergleichbar mit Caroline Spurgeons *Shakespeare's Imagery and What It Tells Us* (1935), einer amerikanischen Studie zu Shakespeares Bildlichkeit, ebenfalls auf statistischer Grundlage, die durch Clemens fast zeitgleich erschienene Dissertation *Shakespeares Bilder* (1936) methodologisch überholt wurde. Außerdem erscheinen einige Eingangskapitel des Buches fragwürdig: Kapitel 2 über "Shakespeare's education in rhetoric", weil schon anderswo (von T. W. Baldwin, Sr. M. Joseph, B. Vickers) behandelt, Kapitel 1 über "Purpose and methodology", weil nicht auf dem aktuellen Forschungsstand, Kapitel 3 über "The contextual use of rhetorical figures", weil in den Textanalysen kaum funktional umgesetzt. Überflüssig sind die beiden Appendices mit einer alphabetischen Liste der rhetorischen Figuren und einem Wust von statistischen Tabellen. Weitere Fragen an das vorgelegte Opus wie etwa die nach den Selektionskriterien der behandelten neun Stücke erübrigen sich ebenso wie die Frage, weshalb in der Benutzung rhetorischer Kategorien Anfängerfehler unterlaufen, so bei der Verwechslung von "tropes" und "topes" (*topoi*).

Aus Platzmangel seien hier nur die Kapitel über *Richard III* und *Hamlet* näher betrachtet. Ersteres beginnt mit einer statistischen Komparatistik der Verwendung von acht rhetorischen Figuren in dem *history play* und in *Titus Andronicus*, wobei als Ergebnis konstatiert wird, daß Shakespeare in *Richard III* mehr Vokative und Wiederholungsfiguren verwendet als in der frühen Tragödie. Anschließend wird die Verteilung einzelner Figuren auf die dramatischen Charaktere untersucht. Als Resultat wird herausgestellt, daß Richards rhetorisches Profil vorwiegend durch *climax*, *anthyphora*, *paralipsis*, *aposiopesis*, *syllipsis* und *paronomasia* markiert ist. Zur Beantwortung der Frage, wieso die Rhetorik seinen Charakter als Bösewicht prägt, sollte man jedoch besser den brillanten Aufsatz von Wolfgang G. Müller (*Anglia*, 1984, S. 37–59) konsultieren. Bei den Verwünschungsreden der Frauen im Drama genügt zudem nicht allein die Untersuchung einzelner Stilfiguren; sie müssen in den größeren Kontext des Genres eingebettet werden. Außerdem geht die Rhetorik nicht allein in Stil (*elocutio*), d.h. in Figuren und Tropen, auf, sondern schließt auch die Kunst des Redevortrags (*actio*) ein. Dies ist besonders evident in *Hamlet*, wo sie die Basis der Schauspieltheorie bildet (s. Plett in *ShJb West* [1981], 133–153). Bei der Statistik, die auch dieses Kapitel einleitet, fragt man sich zum wiederholten Mal: *cui bono*? Die Rhetorik von Hamlets Monologen, immerhin Herzstücke des Dramas, bleibt von der Untersuchung gänzlich ausgeschlossen. Das ist zu bedauern. Die statistische Offenlegung der Verwendungshäufigkeit der relativ unwichtigen Stilfigur des *hendiadyn* bildet dafür kein Kompensat.

Auf die Diskussion weiterer Kapitel sei an dieser Stelle verzichtet. Als Fazit bleibt zu konstatieren, daß der Titel des Buches durchaus ein Desiderat anspricht. Es kann jedoch gegenwärtig noch nicht realisiert werden, solange nicht gründliche Einzelstudien zu spezifischen Dramen vorliegen, wie dies Maria Wickert bereits vor mehr als einem halben Jahrhundert anhand einer auch heute noch mustergültigen rhetorischen Analyse des *Julius Caesar* im *Shakespeare Jahrbuch* von 1948 demonstriert hat.

Heinrich F. Plett (Essen)

Wenn der Barde zweimal klingelt: Stadtentwürfe, Briefe, Boten

Darryll Grantley, *London in Early Modern English Drama: Representing the Built Environment*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008. x, 231 S. – ISBN 978-0-230-55429-0 – £ 50.00 (hb.).

D. J. Hopkins, *City / Stage / Globe: Performance and Space in Shakespeare's London*. New York: Routledge, 2009. v, 235 S. – ISBN 978-0-415-87552-3 – £ 22.50 (pb.) – ISBN 978-0-415-97694-7 – £ 70.00 (hb.).

Erst in der Frühen Neuzeit entwickelt sich London zu der Metropole, die ihre Stellung als Hauptstadt Vereinigter Königreiche und später dann im Rahmen der Anglobalisierung eines weltumspannenden Kolonialreichs einnehmen kann. Der Aufstieg der City of London, die seit der Mitte des 16. Jahrhunderts immer weiter über ihre Stadtmauern hinauswächst und bald eine einzigartige ökonomische und kulturelle Magnetwirkung entfaltet, ist eine Möglichkeitsbedingung für Shakespeares Theaterwelt. London ist zugleich das Motiv wie auch der Produktions- und Vorführungsort für die dramatischen Beschreibungen oder Phantasmen der Stadt, die in den beiden vorliegenden Studien analysiert werden. Beide legen Wert darauf, daß die Wechselbeziehungen zwischen Stadt und Theater in der Frühen Neuzeit sowohl auf der materiellen Ebene vorhandener Bausubstanz und topographischer Gegebenheiten als auch auf der ideellen Ebene von Projektionen und performativen Akten in beständig revidierten Denk-, Seh- und Handlungsweisen beschrieben werden müssen.

Das Programm seiner Studie beschreibt Grantley wie folgt: "This study will trace the presence of London in various ways – as subject, as setting and in terms of the emerging consciousness of metropolitan life – in the drama of the early modern period from before the theatre had any particular association with the capital to the middle of the seventeenth century, by which time it had an established place in London's cultural life." (S. 19) Die Entwicklung der dramatischen London-Entwürfe, die Grantley erzählt, ist in ihren Hauptelementen nicht neu, aber in der materialreichen Gesamtsicht und in den Nuancierungen, die an einzelnen Dramen sichtbar werden, ergibt sich eine überaus interessante, in einigen Punkten weiterhin diskussionswürdige Geschichte der symbiotischen Beziehung zwischen Stadt und Theater. Die älteren Dramenzyklen und Interludien, die zumeist nicht für ein Londoner Publikum entstanden und außerhalb Londons gespielt wurden, sind überwiegend an den spätmittelalterlichen allegorisierenden Moralitäten orientiert. Die darin eröffnete Sicht auf London ist schematisch und unspezifisch: im Rahmen einer "moralized geography" als "inherently and axiomatically corrupt" (S. 49–50)

präsentiert, ist London als korruptierte und korumpierende Stadt ein Ort der Bewährung, an dem es gilt, den verlockenden weltlichen Versuchungen (des Fleisches und des Marktes, die in eins zu setzen sind) zu widerstehen und den christlichen Heilsweg nicht zu verlassen.

Erst mit der Entstehung fest gebauter und etablierter Londoner Theater zum Ende des 16. Jahrhunderts gewinnen die London-Bezüge an Spezifik. Es geht nicht mehr um die Stadt *in toto* als Allegorie bzw. Chiffre, sondern zunehmend um genau identifizierbare Orte und Räume innerhalb der Stadt. Die elisabethanischen Theaterstücke, für ein ortskundiges und sozial ausdifferenziertes Publikum geschrieben und vor diesem ausagiert, sind ein definierender Teil des sozialen Mikrokosmos, den sie beschreiben. Sie dienen der Selbstvergewisserung eines zunehmend lokalpatriotischen Publikums, das auch an der durch bürgerliche Helden überhöhten Stadtgeschichte interessiert ist – wie sie etwa Dekkers *The Shoemaker's Holiday* bietet. Hinzu kommt, daß insbesondere nach dem Sieg über die Armada nationalistische und xenophobe Szenarien der Einwanderungsstadt London durchgespielt werden – das William Haughton zugeschriebene *Englishmen for My Money* ist hier ein Gelenkstück. Shakespeare dramatisiert London (wenn er es nicht gerade als Wien verkleidet) bekanntlich nur in den Historien, also im Zuge der nationalen Aufwallung der 1590er Jahre – besonders in *1* und *2 Henry IV* mit den lebensprall-komischen Szenen des Alltagslebens in Eastcheap. Die spätelisabethanische Selbstfeier des aufstrebenden London als triumphales bourgeoises Drama wird schon bald satirisch in Beaumonts und Fletchers *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* verabschiedet.

Die jakobäische Dramenwelt ist in ihrem Blick auf London weiterhin auf die Komödie konzentriert, doch zunehmend komplexer und skeptischer in ihren Befragungen der Stadt. Ihre eindrucksvollsten Ausprägungen erfährt die *city comedy* durch Jonson und Middleton, die einen von merkantilen Geistern, Gier und Großtuerei durchzogenen Stadtkörper sezieren. Das karolinische Drama treibt die dramatische Ausdifferenzierung Londons weiter voran, isoliert mit Vorliebe lokale Charakteristika, die das urbane Leben typisieren, und zeigt deren Gefährdung durch die sich rapide ändernden materiellen Lebensbedingungen in der Stadt (vgl. S. 184–185). In seinem Detailreichtum und seinen lokalspezifischen *plots* verdichtet es sich allerdings nicht mehr zu den umfassenden Panoramen Jonsons und Middletons. Im Umgang mit seinem Material unternimmt Grantley eine Gratwanderung, indem er sowohl die Vielzahl von Dramen berücksichtigen als auch die einzelnen Dramen in ihrer Spezifik diskutieren will. Da viele der Dramen selbst kundigen LeserInnen nicht vertraut sein werden, bietet er zugleich Inhaltsangaben. An einigen Stellen wird all dies zu viel, und die Diskussion der einzelnen Dramen gerät einigermaßen reduktiv. Ein theoretischer Kerntext ist Henri Lefebvres *The Production of Space* (1991), der allerdings nicht immer erhellend gebraucht wird und zuweilen durch seinen abstrakt kategorisierenden Gestus von interessanteren Gesichtspunkten in einzelnen Dramendiskussionen ablenkt.

Hopkins beginnt seine Studie mit einem Foto von Süd-Manhattan vom 12. September 2001 und einem Kommentar der *New York Times* vom 11. September 2002 zu diesem desolaten Stadtraum. Diese thematische Grenzüberschreitung gegenüber dem Titel der Studie ist typisch für Hopkins' Gestus: Er versucht, die Raumkonstrukte des frühmodernen (er selbst bevorzugt die Bezeichnung "postmedieval") London theoretisch-methodisch neu anzugehen. Die beiden Leitbegriffe *Text* und *Repräsentation*, wie sie in der neueren Literatur- und Kulturtheorie vielfach im Zentrum stehen, werden von ihm kritisiert und sollen durch zwei weitere Begriffe bzw.

methodische Ansätze, nämlich Performance Theory und Kartographie, ergänzt werden. Daß die ersten beiden Kapitel nicht ganz frei von theoretisch eher vagen und repetitiven Äußerungen sind, sei nur am Rande vermerkt. Ausgehend von einem Zitat de Certeaus, das ihn wegen seiner mangelnden historischen Spezifik irritiert, will Hopkins historisch akkurat die residualen, dominanten und emergenten Raumkonstrukte der neuen Kartographie, der Stadt und ihrer Theater erschließen und dies, mit Blick auf die Dynamik der Prozesse, gerade auch über deren performative Aktualisierungen, insbesondere in Shakespeares Theaterwelt: "Shakespeare's theatre had the capacity to generate material change: to produce space. [...] this is not just a study of the ways in which spatial change informed Shakespeare's plays, but of the ways that Shakespeare's plays were themselves productive of the spatial changes in which they participated." (S. 18)

Mit diesem doppelten Fokus auf London und auf Shakespeare verfolgt Hopkins ein überaus ehrgeiziges Programm, und man kann ihm kaum vorwerfen, daß er es nur exemplarisch durch insgesamt klug gewählte Fallstudien und *close readings* umsetzen will und kann. Einen großen Raum nimmt der historische Moment ein, in dem der neue König 1604 in London Einzug hält. Um diesen Moment gruppieren sich die verschiedensten kulturellen Praktiken, die den Stadt-raum London als Herrschaftsraum und Großbühne (nicht nur) der Monarchie performativ entwerfen bzw. aktualisieren (vgl. bes. S. 103–146), und Shakespeare ist nicht nur als King's Man involviert. Allen Interessierten sei die theoretisch traditionellere und deutlicher literaturwissenschaftlich orientierte Studie von Grantley als Grundlage für die kritischen und ambitionierten Einzelstudien von Hopkins empfohlen – letztere sind meist stimulierend, wenn auch nicht in allen Punkten überzeugend. Die beiden Bände ergänzen sich gut, und Erkenntnisgewinn wie Lesevergnügen sind erfreulich hoch.

Joachim Frenk (Saarbrücken)

Alan Stewart, *Shakespeare's Letters*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008. xvi, 405 S. – ISBN 978-0-19-954927-6 – £ 26.00 (hb.).

The cover of this book, graced with a signet ring bearing the initials WS, signals the approach for a witty, densely researched and highly insightful study that succeeds in excavating the historical and theatrical conditions of Shakespeare's letters. The object of investigation, however, is not the private epistolary communication of the dramatist, but the 111 letters that appear in his plays. As Alan Stewart reminds us at the outset, it is only on the stage that "Shakespeare's" letters survive (p. 4). What follows is a detailed analysis of the cultural practices of early modern epistolary culture and the materiality of letters, their performance, production, carriers, and reception onstage, including extended readings of individual plays such as *The Merchant of Venice*, *King Lear*, and *Hamlet*. Exceeding mere prop devices, Shakespeare's letters are part of a complex network of communication and transaction. They are forged, delayed, or mis-delivered, but also serve as documentary evidence; they are folded, sealed, received and archived, and they sometimes show an "innate theatricality" (p. 300), which is realized on stage. Proposing a "new grammar of stage letters" (p. 160), Stewart examines the vocabulary and imagery borrowed from early modern letter-writing culture as well as the

processes of transmission, “from whom they come, to whom they go, and how they make that journey” (p. 23).

The first chapters explore the ways in which Shakespeare plays on the material conditions, protocols and etiquettes of letter-writing, -folding, and -sealing of his time, conventions that are adhered to even in his Roman plays – a striking anachronism that favours theatrical effectiveness over historical accuracy. As well as travelling across time, Shakespeare’s letters overcome great distances. The important role of carriers, their legal status, social network, and especially the inns between London and Stratford that sustain this carrier system are explored in the third chapter as well as their representation in the plays. As suggested by Stewart’s extended analyses, different plays focus on different aspects of epistolary culture: *The Merchant of Venice* revolves around “letters of credit” (chapter 4), which do not simply point to, but which *are* transactions. Taking a letter by Richard Quiney to Shakespeare as a starting point, Stewart offers a striking example of the intertwining of the social and the stage life of letters, culminating in the claim that “Shakespeare is Shylock” (p. 155). In both cases, letters serve as “instruments of financial credit and as forensic proof of credibility” (p. 165), a common practice in early modern mercantile culture. In *King Lear*, “the most advanced exploration [...] of the myriad problems and challenges facing communication via letters in the early modern world” (p. 230), the “messengers *are* the matter” (p. 193), while in *Hamlet* it is the exchange of letters that is of crucial importance. In his reading of *Hamlet*, Stewart goes beyond the much-discussed connections between writing and technologies of memory. The exchange of letters between Hamlet, “the most prolific letter-writer in Shakespeare’s drama” (p. 261), and Ophelia, he argues, implicates a clandestine marital bond, which Ophelia is forced to break. Her return of Hamlet’s letters leads to madness, then to suicide, and further letters in *Hamlet* cause death. With regard to *Shakespeare’s Letters*, however, the rest is not silence. This highly recommendable, finely argued and lucidly written book does not only spark off new research approaches but may change the ways in which we read Shakespeare’s plays, and, if they are ever found, perhaps also his letters.

Sibylle Baumbach (Gießen)

Brinda Charry / Gitanjali Shahani eds., *Emissaries in Early Modern Literature and Culture: Mediation, Transmission, Traffic, 1550–1700*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. xii, 278 S. – ISBN 978-0-7546-6207-5 – £ 55.00 (hb.).

Dieser Sammelband vereint elf meist substanzielle Aufsätze über frühneuzeitliche Zwischengänger zwischen den Kulturen und ihre literarischen Spuren, gegliedert in vier Themenbereiche: “Discourses of Diplomacy”, “Agents of Exchange”, “Language and Technologies of Mediation” sowie “Transmission and Transformation”. Neben den Beiträgen von Ania Loomba (“Diplomacy, Exchange, and Difference in Early Modern India”), Pompa Banerjee (“Abbé Carré, Spy, Harem-lord, and ‘made in France’”) und Hannah Chapelle Wojciehowski (“The Queen of Onor and her Emissaries: Fernão Mendes Pinto’s Dialogue with India”) ist Jonathan Burton’s “The Shah’s Two Ambassadors” besonders hervorhebenswert, da er zugleich den theoretischen Rahmen absteckt, in dem der gesamte Band operiert: “a mode of ‘reciprocal’

analysis where materials from multiple sources – domestic and foreign – inform and modify each other” (S. 16). Daraus ergibt sich ein Vorgehen, wie es später heißt, “that seeks to expand upon the current practice of reading early modern literature in terms of a wider global experience, a practice that has not, for the most part, been accompanied by a corresponding turn to global material. [...] In the case of Muslim cultures [...], this tendency has nourished a misconception of a culture aloof to and fatally uninterested in the West. This is a fallacy that even today continues to support arguments concerning the absolute difference of Islam and the West.” (S. 25–26)

Eine solche bilaterale bzw. multilaterale Sicht auf kulturelle Austauschprozesse ist zwar *per se* nicht neu und in anderen Bereichen wie den Cultural Studies oder den New Literatures in English längst etabliert. Für den Kontext des vorliegenden Bandes – der ausschließlich Kulturkontakt-Studien aus den USA vereint – spiegelt sie jedoch aktuell den Selbstwahrnehmungs-Wandel gerade auch der amerikanischen Gesellschaft wider, der in letzter Zeit verstärkt bemerkt worden ist: den Trend, die vorgeblich selbstverständliche Fixierung auf die eigene Kultur ebenso zu relativieren wie die Aktivierung neuer Feindbilder, die insbesondere in der Politik der Bush-Administration nach den Anschlägen vom 11. September stattgefunden hat. Dieser Kontext wird jedenfalls durch die Einleitungs-Anekdote über den Vorschlag Hillary Clintons aufgerufen, den entstandenen Gesichtverlust der Vereinigten Staaten vor der Welt dadurch zu überwinden, daß ihr Ehemann zum Kulturbotschafter und Repräsentant eines freizügig-kosmopolitischen Staatsverständnisses ernannt werden solle.

Sei es in Bezug auf die gegenwärtige Identitätskrise der USA oder im Hinblick auf die thematische Ausrichtung des Bandes auf frühneuzeitliche *go-between*s zwischen ‘Orient’ und ‘Okzident’ – die durch die Wechselbezüglichkeit der Perspektiven entstehende Materialfülle und Heterogenität, die bei Aufsatzsammlungen oftmals irritiert, erweist sich im vorliegenden Falle als besondere Stärke: *Emissaries* aus England, Holland, Frankreich und Portugal, die als Botschafter, Fernhändler, Geistliche, Gelehrte, Dolmetscher, Spione oder Abenteurer die Welt durchquerten, werden im wechselseitigen Quellendialog betrachtet. Der Materialfundus umfaßt neben europäischen Quellen auch solche aus dem Osmanischen Reich, den nordafrikanischen *Barbary States*, aus Persien und Indien. Überwiegend werden hier Journale, Reiseberichte oder auch Bildquellen wie Gemälde herangezogen, während – im engeren Sinn – literarische Texte eine eher beigeordnete Rolle spielen. Dies erklärt sich aus der kulturwissenschaftlichen Ausrichtung des Bandes, Literatur nicht isoliert von weiteren Zeichensystemen zu betrachten. Dennoch bietet der Band für literarisch interessierte Leser ebenfalls sehr Einschlägiges mit Lektüren von Shakespeares *The Tempest* und *The Merchant of Venice*, Heywoods *The Fair Maid of the West* und *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody*, Middletons *No Wit, No Help Like a Woman’s*, Rowleys und Middletons *All’s Lost by Lust*, Rowleys *The Travels of the Three English Brothers* und (obschon in der Bibliographie unberücksichtigt) Lady Mary Wroths *Urania*. Insgesamt empfiehlt der Sammelband sich daher nicht nur durch die Qualität der meisten dort vereinten Beiträge; da er neben wohlbekannten Quellen auch Materialien außerhalb des etablierten Textfundus berücksichtigt, eignet er sich zudem als Ausgangspunkt für neue, komparatistisch orientierte Forschungsfragen und Fallstudien zur Interkulturalität.

Dieter Fuchs (Wien)

Glotzt nicht so pedantisch! Blick, Regie und Körperinszenierungen

Stuart Clark, *Vanities of the Eye: Vision in Early Modern European Culture*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. xii, 448 S. – ISBN 978-0-19-954160-7 – £ 43.00 (hb.) – ISBN 978-0-19-954160-7 – £ 22.00 (pb.).

Richard Meek, *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2009. viii, 222 S. – ISBN 978-0-7546-5775-0 – £ 55.00 (hb.).

Daß das Sehen durch kulturelle Bedingungen konstruiert ist, gehört zu den Grundannahmen, welche die heutige Kulturwissenschaft als selbstverständlich voraussetzt. Jede Kultur besitzt eine dominante Epistemologie, die leitet, was wir für vertrauenswürdige Wahrnehmung halten und was nicht. Doch die Geschichte der Diskurse, die in der europäischen Kultur dem Sehsinn einen besonderen Zusammenhang zum Wissen und damit eine herausragende Stellung in den Naturwissenschaften, der Politik, der Psychologie und der Gesellschaft zuerkennen, muß noch aufgearbeitet werden. Erst ein genaues Verständnis dieser Geschichte könnte eigentlich die ikonoklastische Skepsis rechtfertigen, mit der das 20. Jahrhundert die Privilegierung einer bestimmten Art perspektivischen Sehens als Rationalisierungsvorgang verabschiedet hat. Im Anschluß an die proliferierende Visual Culture Literatur der letzten Jahre liegen jetzt zwei Publikationen vor, die mit detailgenauen Fallbeispielen eine solche Geschichte der Wahrnehmung in der frühen Neuzeit ergänzen wollen. Stuart Clarks *Vanities of the Eye* ist eine Großuntersuchung der Visualitätsdiskurse im Zeitraum von 1400 bis 1650, und Richard Meeks *Narrating the Visual in Shakespeare* beschäftigt sich mit den Besonderheiten der bildlichen Evokation in Shakespeares Werk. Hier enden aber auch schon die Gemeinsamkeiten, denn sowohl die Herangehensweise wie auch die Leistungen dieser beiden Werke sind sehr unterschiedlich zu beurteilen.

Clark verfolgt in diversen Diskursen einen Wandel der Vorstellungen von Wahrnehmung und Erkenntnis, den er als erkenntnisskeptische Krise wertet. Er nähert sich dem Thema mit einer Darstellung der Aristotelischen Konzepte als Folie für die weitere Entwicklung. Sein wichtigster Gewährsmann ist George Hakewill, dessen Titel aus dem Jahr 1608 Clark übernimmt. Hakewills umfassender Angriff auf die Irreführungen des Sehsinns bestimmt auch die Struktur der ersten drei Kapitel, die medizinische und moralische Studien der Melancholie (Beeinträchtigung des Realitätssinns), Abhandlungen über die malerische Perspektive sowie dämonologische Debatten unter dem Aspekt der Veränderung der Wahrnehmung zusammenfassen. Die weiteren Kapitel verfolgen chronologisch weitere historische Schritte in der Rekonzeptualisierung des Verhältnisses von Sehen und Erkenntnis: religiöse Kontroversen über das Abbildungsverbot, philosophische Zweifel an der Verlässlichkeit der Sinne von den griechischen Skeptikern bis zu Montaigne und Descartes und schließlich die Aufwertung von Traum- und Halluzinationserfahrungen. Das abschließende Kapitel bildet einen Kontrapunkt zum ersten, indem es in Philosophien des 17. Jahrhunderts (Descartes, Hobbes und Joseph Glanvill) den Versuch sieht, die Rationalität des Augenscheins erneut in Kraft zu setzen. Insgesamt können diese breit gefächerten Fallstudien detailgenau aufzeigen, wie die Idee einer kulturellen Determiniertheit des Sehens in die Wissenskultur der frühen Neuzeit Eingang fand bzw. wie eine Epistemologie der augenscheinlichen Evidenz von einer Epistemologie der verhandelbaren Bedeutung abgelöst wurde.

Die elegante Strukturierung ist typisch für die Leichtigkeit, mit der hier eine stupende Gelehrsamkeit ausgebreitet wird. Dies ist ein großartiges Buch; seine präzise formulierte Argumentation unterzieht den oftmals pauschal wiederholten Konsens der Visualitätsliteratur, daß sich nämlich mit der Erfindung der geometrischen Perspektive in der Renaissance eine Rationalisierung nicht nur des Sehens, sondern auch des Denkens durchsetzte, einer notwendigen Differenzierung. Obwohl Clark bewußt darauf verzichtet, das Theater zum Gegenstand seiner Untersuchung zu machen, kann das Buch dennoch von großem Wert für die Shakespeare-Forschung sein, da es zu der oft bemerkten Ambivalenz Shakespeares gegenüber Wert und Wahrheit der Wahrnehmung reichlich Material zur Kontextualisierung und eine überzeugende kulturhistorische Einordnung bereitstellt.

Im Gegensatz dazu reiht sich das Buch von Richard Meek in die seit einiger Zeit expandierenden Visualitätstheorien ein, indem es sich auf die gängigen Theoretisierungen von Ekphrasis bzw. des Verhältnisses von Text und Bild stützt. Der Autor setzt sich jedoch in bewußten Gegensatz zu neuhistorischen Ansätzen und zum Performance Criticism. Nach seiner Einschätzung haben diese beiden Ansätze zu einer Schiefelage der Forschung geführt, da sie zu sehr von der Bestimmung der Dramen für die Bühne ausgegangen seien und damit die Ähnlichkeiten zwischen den dramatischen und den narrativen Dichtungen aus dem Blick verloren hätten; schließlich müßten, so Meek, beide sich auf die Imagination des Rezipienten verlassen. Seine ausführlichen Analysen der narrativen Gedichte *Venus and Adonis* und *The Rape of Lucrece* sowie der Dramen *Hamlet*, *The Winter's Tale* und *King Lear* wollen zeigen, daß es für Shakespeare selbst keine Hierarchie der Darstellungsformen gab. Es gehört zum etablierten Verständnis von Ekphrasis, daß sie das Verhältnis der beiden beteiligten Repräsentationssysteme, des visuellen zum verbalen, thematisiert und selbstreflexiv die zugrundeliegenden Konzepte von Ästhetik, Mimesis und Referenz befragt. Daher wird es weder Kenner der Shakespeare- noch der Visual Culture-Forschung sonderlich verwundern, wenn Shakespeares Beschreibungen von Sichtbarem, wie Meek feststellt, mit der Spannung zwischen visuellen und verbalen Darstellungsmodi aufgeladen sind. Was diese Studie von den vielen Publikationen unterscheidet, die seit dem *iconic turn* die impliziten Machtverhältnisse in der Konkurrenz der 'Schwesterkünste' ausgemacht haben, ist, daß sie weitgehend auf politisch-ideologische Kontextualisierung verzichtet. Meek wendet sich programmatisch von der an Machtpolitik interessierten, diskursanalytischen Shakespeare-Kritik ab und möchte die ästhetische Dimension des Werkes wieder zu ihrem Recht kommen lassen. Er beschränkt seine Analyse auf genaue Textlektüren im Kontext von anderen literarischen oder bildlichen Aktualisierungen des jeweiligen Themas. Doch führt seine Fokusverlagerung auf das spezifisch Literarische nicht wirklich zu neuen Lesarten der kanonischen Werke und ihrer viel beachteten ekphrastischen Passagen. Meeks Lektüren sind jedoch leicht zugänglich und bieten gesicherte Interpretationen der Fallbeispiele mit vielen wissenswerten Details auch für Leser, die sich bisher noch nicht mit Text-Bild-Beziehungen befaßt haben.

Renate Brosch (Stuttgart)

Dennis Kennedy, *The Spectator and the Spectacle: Audiences in Modernity and Postmodernity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009. x, 260 S. – ISBN 978-0-521-89976-5 – £ 50.00 (hb.).

John Russell Brown ed., *The Routledge Companion to Directors' Shakespeare*. London: Routledge, 2008. xiii, 608 S. – ISBN 978-0-415-40044-2 – £ 85.00 (hb.).

Adrian Noble, *How to Do Shakespeare*. London: Routledge, 2009. ix, 262 S. – ISBN 978-0-415-54926-4 – £ 50.00 (hb.) – ISBN 978-0-415-54927-1 – £ 14.99 (pb.).

The three books under review represent strikingly different approaches to Shakespeare, although they are connected by their focus on theatrical and performative aspects of the plays. *The Routledge Companion to Directors' Shakespeare* edited by veteran Shakespearean scholar John Russell Brown defines, as the title suggests, a particular genre of Shakespearean production while raising the implicit question what Shakespeare may *not* be a 'Director's Shakespeare'? Adrian Noble's *How to Do Shakespeare* is a hands-on, 'eye-witness' account of analysing and directing the bard by the former artistic director and CEO of the Royal Shakespeare Company.

The most innovative of the three books is by far Dennis Kennedy's *The Spectator and the Spectacle*, which certainly foregrounds Shakespeare – as one would expect from one of the leading scholars in the field –, but actually deals with a far wider remit. As the title suggests, Kennedy is grappling with one of the thorniest problems of theatre and performance studies: the spectator. Although "the spectator" and his or her collective cousin, "the audience", are regularly invoked as being at the 'heart', 'centre' or otherwise spatially located in the vicinity of the theatrical event, the amount of serious scholarship available stands in stark disproportion to these ritualised rhetorical enunciations. One can literally count on the fingers of one hand the list of titles in theatre studies that centrally engage with the spectator and spectatorship, as Kennedy's own list of references verifies. The introduction skilfully adumbrates this elusive phenomenon which oscillates between an empirical, psychological or social entity that most scholars in the humanities have neither the training nor the inclination to investigate on the one hand, and a theoretical construct, "a pale hypothetical inference of the commentator's imagination" (p. 11), on the other. Kennedy's most important insight – at least for this reviewer – is to remind us of the historical contingency of spectatorship; above all that the model of spectatorship we implicitly assume (the more or less intense, corporeally immobilised concentration in a darkened auditorium) is a recent invention – not much older than a century or so. He reminds us that pre-modern spectators "often attended the theatre without attending to the play" (p. 12). In a wide-ranging chapter on spectacle and sport he controversially designates modern spectators as being "deprived" in comparison to their sporting cousins and unable to "write themselves into the event" (p. 158). And in the light of the multifarious, mostly mediatised competitors for spectatorial attention, he argues that "theatre in the twenty-first century looks like a cul-de-sac off the Infobahn" (p. 154). But if theatre and, by extension, staged Shakespeare is indeed stuck in a cul-de-sac, where does this leave Shakespearean production?

The second part of the three-part book is in fact entitled 'Shakespeare and the Politics of Spectation' and deals with different aspects of the modernist reforms in respect to audiences of and for Shakespeare in the post-World War II period. Quite apart from the author's own scholarly

expertise, Shakespeare with his synecdochal relationship to Western theatre is a better authorial example than most to study the wider questions of the book. Kennedy's discussion of Shakespeare's Globe in London in the context of cultural tourism examines this hugely popular attempt to recreate a pre-modern audience in the context of postmodern tourist commodification. The chapter on "Shakespeare and the Cold War" places the reconstruction of Europe ("spectators in the ruins") and the revival of Shakespeare in direct dialogue with one another. Kennedy notes the coincidence that both Rudolf Bing in Edinburgh and Jean Vilar in Avignon opened their new festivals with *Richard II* in ancient ruins side by side with new beginnings: "dependence on artifice and ceremony amid cold-blooded politics" (p. 78). He moves to the rapid expansion in this period not only of Shakespearean productions, which came to be almost synonymous with publicly funded highbrow art, but also Shakespearean studies, especially in the US, where Kennedy detects a congruity between Shakespeare discourse and American Cold War discourse: "Shakespeare was a cultural Marshall plan" (p. 81). In an unusual argument he then looks at the imbrication between Shakespeare and the move to public funding of the arts as a kind of counter-propaganda in view of developments in Eastern Europe. He of course notes Jan Kott's critical interventions and Peter Brook's 1962 *King Lear*, but the main conclusion seems to be that the Cold War is to be seen as a historical epoch displaying a social and political commitment to the bard and unprecedented levels of public subsidy to enable his performance.

The centrality of Shakespeare that Kennedy's book assumes and indeed explains is the backstory to *The Routledge Companion to Directors' Shakespeare*. Weighing in at 600 pages, this is an impressive achievement, not least because it brings together an "eclectic band of authors" (p. xii) ranging from Shakespeare scholars to translators to dramaturges and former assistant directors of their respective maestros. Most of the directors portrayed here belong to the post-war generations (there are several), but their range begins already in the nineteenth century with Henry Irving, William Poel and Harley Granville Barker, thereby historicising the term 'director's Shakespeare' which refers to the historical emergence of the director as an artistic force. In his introduction Brown argues that "directors can serve as uniquely informed critics of Shakespeare's plays" (p. x) so that they become important contributors to our understanding of the playwright and his work. The initial question such a volume poses is of course: who's in and who's out? Brown identifies three criteria guiding his final choice: innovation, time-span (Adriane Mnouchkine's engagement with Shakespearean drama, for example, has been deemed too short) and influence (i.e. ruling out young contemporaries). The youngest director to be included is in fact Mark Rylance (born in 1960). Ultimately there are few surprises, although the inclusion of Barry Rutter instead of Michael Bogdanov will no doubt cause some puzzled frowns; to cite the former's "consistent North Country dialect and a more constant company membership" (p. xi) as an argument over the latter is, from an international perspective, debatable to say the least. Sadly, for financial reasons the volume contains no visual material, justified editorially by the somewhat lame hope that the book will contribute to "a verbal understanding or theorization of the practice of this art and profession" (p. xiii).

The chapters are arranged alphabetically, not chronologically, so there is no attempt made to construct a developmental narrative of Shakespearean directing. In terms of structure there is no clear schema for the contributors to follow in their chapters, but on the whole they all combine

narration with analysis of central productions, thus offering a series of self-contained biographical and analytical essays and emphasising, wherever possible, the commonalities and traces of artistic coherence (with some directors a difficult task indeed). Because of the sheer body of work available in some cases, radical selection is necessary. In her article on Peter Brook, Maria Shevtsova wisely concentrates on the post-1970 period, as the earlier phases of Brook's work on Shakespeare have been thoroughly examined elsewhere. At the end of Michael Patterson's insightful article on Peter Stein, however, one does wonder why Stein was included at all, since his contribution at least to Shakespearean production history is clearly somewhat marginal. The volume also contains some true revelations – at least for this reader. Franklin Hildy's account of the remarkable career of B. Iden Payne, whose active directorial career spanned sixty-nine years (1899 to 1968) from the early Abbey Theatre via Broadway to the US Shakespeare festivals and university theatre. Although the book has a clear European and US focus it does include valuable essays on Ninagawa Yukio and Deguchi Norio. The latter is little known outside Japan, but has been a driving force behind innovative Shakespearean productions in Japan over a thirty-year period. Ninagawa, on the other hand, is a major player in the global Shakespeare circuit.

Interestingly enough, Adrian Noble, artistic director of the RSC for thirteen years, does not make it into John Russell Brown's collection of thirty-one, although he would seem to fit criteria such as age and body of work, though not perhaps the influence. This may change with his own vademecum *How to Do Shakespeare*, which appears to be directed at non-specific "students of Shakespeare", although acting students would seem to be the first addressees. Despite the allusive title, Noble's book is unencumbered by theory, performative or otherwise, preferring instead to gloss the "perennial issues" of Shakespearean performance: dialogue and verse on the one hand and characterisation ("building a character") on the other. In terms of its rhetorical framework, this belongs very much to the 'bringing the bard to life'-genre. Yet Noble's approach is close-reading at its best. He examines Shakespearean verse as a challenge for performers and spectators alike in a world he defines as predominantly visual in contrast to the aurality of the Elizabethan world: the challenge is therefore to render texts written for the ear comprehensible to audiences attuned to the eye. This is a book devoid of any scholarly apparatus, there is not a single note or reference. Still, it is stimulating and full of micro-insights into the textual fabric of key Shakespearean plays. Although the reference point for the discussion lies in the spoken delivery on stage, Noble's analytical eye does in fact alight on numerous questions of interpretation. The detailed commentaries spring from the author's intensive and sustained work on the texts with actors, including the likes of Kenneth Branagh and Ralph Fiennes, as well as with school pupils.

The book is organised around fifteen short chapters, the titles of which signal Noble's intrinsic approach, e.g., "Apposition", "Metaphor", "Metre and pulse", "Shape, structure and meaning". The opening chapter on apposition, by which he means the juxtaposition of words and phrases in a speech, identifies not just a recurrent pattern in much Shakespearean language but something like the guiding and distinguishing principle: "This rubbing together of words and ideas [...] gives energy to the language. It is a basic tool [...]. I am convinced that this is the most important idea to get hold of" (p. 17). His advice is not only analytical but eminently practical and haptic. Taking Friar Laurence's opening speech and the lines "With baleful weeds and pre-

cious-juiced flowers" (*Romeo and Juliet*, 2.2.8) as an example, he recommends: "Try saying these phrases out loud. Try balancing them in your imaginary pair of scales. Try using your two hands as the pans of each scale. Contrast the words 'baleful' and 'precious-juiced'. Do they have different weights?" (p. 19) Although directed at the practitioner, as this example illustrates, the book is replete with finely observed insights drawn from intensive and well-argued textual analysis and so truly deserves wide attention.

Christopher Balme (München)

Elizabeth Klett, *Cross-Gender Shakespeare and English National Identity: Wearing the Codpiece*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. x, 220 S. – ISBN 978-0-230-61632-5 – £ 50.00 (hb.).

When years ago I assisted an elderly professor in an oral exam, he posed a tricky question to his anxious student: why can present-day performances of *Antony and Cleopatra* never achieve the dazzling impact they had on the early modern stage? The student tried her best, but the requested answer was as simple as unexpected: because female performers cannot embody the character of Cleopatra as convincingly as early modern boy actors could. Unfortunately, the professor's argument did not make a case for a male performer's capacity to lay bare the patriarchal construction of femininity at the heart of the Cleopatra figure. Instead, it was simply a misogynist denial of the competence of female actors. He would surely not have liked the kind of performances Elizabeth Klett eloquently writes about in her study, nor the constructivist readings which she offers: Shakespeare performances in which female actors do not just perform famous heroines, but even usurp the most celebrated male parts, such as Richard II and Richard III, King Lear and Prospero.

After an introduction, in which Klett outlines the theoretical premises of her project – poststructuralist gender theory and equally constructivist thought on the establishment of a sense of nation, she looks closely at seven performances from the mid-1990s to the mid-2000s in which one or several male roles were played by women. Her choice of terminology, "cross-gender" rather than "androgynous" or "transvestite", is meant to highlight the multiplicity of meanings triggered by the gap between the performers' and the performed bodies – an ambiguity which leads to complex academic readings and indeed provoked rather contrasting reviews of all productions, as Klett shows in each chapter. She offers plenty of material on the performances and their reception, with additional information in an appendix – regrettably, the book does not include photographs of the performances that are often described in some detail. Klett shows how the cross-gender casting can work as a Brechtian *Verfremdungseffekt* which undercuts conventional notions of gender identity and which provides for queer, uncertain sexual meanings within the character constellations. It is one of the more surprising claims of her study that the all-female performances of *Richard III*, *The Taming of the Shrew* and *Much Ado about Nothing*, all staged during Mark Rylance's direction of the Globe, had a less challenging impact than those which casted only one female performer in a male role, such as Fiona Shaw's Richard II at the National Theatre in 1995, directed by Deborah Warner, or Kathryn Hunter's King Lear at Leicester's Haymarket Theatre in 1997, directed by Helena Kaut-Howson. This is also due to

the Globe's dedication to 'original' staging practices which arguably promote a nostalgic turn to England's 'golden age'.

While all of her readings are offered in an accessible and engaging style, some of the arguments about the denaturalisation of gender are quite predictable. To me, the more innovative and more fascinating aspect of the study is its interconnection of gender, sexuality and nationality. Making a convincing case for Shakespeare's special status as a national icon, Klett probes into the nostalgic but also iconoclastic tendencies of cross-cast performances. While her comparison between the Puritan anti-theatrical pamphleteers and today's reviewers defending Shakespeare as the epitome of Englishness may be somewhat strained, she convincingly traces, for example, how Shaw's femininity and Irishness complicated and enriched the portrayal of Richard II, the English King at war with Ireland as much as with his own masculine power. Hunter's performance of King Lear presented the king as a dying mother figure. Framed by an action set in a contemporary hospital room, Hunter's Lear combined paternal and maternal sides in a hallucinatory wartime-world which fused references to World War II, the civil war in Bosnia, and Lear's fantasies of revenge on her daughters. Vanessa Redgrave's Prospero in Lenka Udovicki's production of *The Tempest* at the Globe was presented as a refugee who compensates for his exile by subduing others, but also by creating a community – an approach which sidesteps the postcolonial critique of the magician. Dawn French's performance as Bottom in Matthew Francis's *A Midsummer Night Dream* at the Albery was divided: playing Mrs Bottom in an England during World War II, when housewives turned into mechanics, she was magically transformed into a male ass. Although the production, whose pictorial aesthetics created nostalgia for England united at war, thus defused the lesbian encounter between Bottom and Titania, the hermaphroditic appearance of the ass with enormous breasts and a giant phallus nonetheless introduced gender trouble into the fairy world.

Klett closes her study with the observation that cross-gender casting seems to have receded on the English stage – this is not the case in Germany, however, in which Susanne Wolff's Othello at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin and Barbara Nüsse's Lear at the Schauspiel Köln have recently attracted attention. The ongoing interest in cross-gender performance on both contemporary stages and in persuasive studies like Klett's will hopefully lead to more research and teaching on the topic, as well as to more rewarding oral exams in the future.

Christina Wald (Augsburg)

Anzeigen

Richard Dutton ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. xxvi, 716 S. – ISBN 978-0-19-9288724-6 – £ 85.00 (hb.).

Dieses schwergewichtige Handbuch, das man in einer Hand kaum halten kann, unternimmt eine umfassende Bestandsaufnahme englischer Theaterpraxis in der Frühen Neuzeit. (Das Adjektiv *English* ist unbedingt in den Titel einzufügen: kein einziger Beitrag schaut über England hinaus – fast so, als habe es andernorts keine Theaterkultur gegeben.) 35 Fachleute bieten in ebenso

vielen Beiträgen Forschungsberichte und Diskussionen zu fünf übergreifenden Kategorien: "Theatre Companies" (Part I), "London Playhouses" (Part II), "Other Playing Spaces" (Part III), "Social Practices" (Part IV) und "Evidence of Theatrical Practices" (Part V). Die Kapitel behandeln beispielsweise Fragen wie "Why the Globe Is Famous", "Women in the Theater" oder "Eyewitness to History: Visual Evidence for Theater" und bieten insgesamt sehr material- und detailreiche Einlassungen mit vielen Aspekten und Archivalien englischer Theatergeschichte in ihrer wohl wichtigsten Epoche. Was sie dagegen kaum bieten, sind übergreifende Thesen oder stärker inhaltliche Bezüge zu den Dramentexten, die aus der Zeit überliefert sind und deretwegen man sich doch zumindest meist so eingehend mit der Theaterhistorie dieser Epoche beschäftigt. Im Einleitungskapitel grenzt William Ingram solche Bezüge als 'philologisch' oder 'theoretisch' aus dem Forschungskanon aus und setzt einen Akzent auf den Realien, dem die meisten Beiträge in ausgedehnten Einzelstudien folgen. Daß zwischen historischem, theoretischem und literarischem Interesse gleichwohl kein Gegensatz bestehen muß, zeigt immer noch *A New History of Early English Drama*, 1997 von J. D. Cox und D. S. Kastan herausgegeben, wo es den Beiträgen durch größere Argumentationsbögen und mehr reflexive Arbeit gelingt, bei nur halbem Umfang im Vergleich zum neuen Handbuch teilweise deutlich ergiebiger zu sein. Den Zugängen des New Historicism, die damals dominierten, setzt das Oxford-Handbuch einen Historismus entgegen, der eher traditionell positivistisch anmutet. Spannende Fragen wie die nach den Zusammenhängen zwischen Theatermacht und Religionskultur, Politik, Zuschauerschaft, Zensur oder Literaturmarkt kommen hier jedenfalls kaum in den Blick.

Tobias Döring (München)

Simon Williams / Maik Hamburger eds., *A History of German Theatre*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008. xvii, 445 S. – ISBN 978-0-521-83369-1 – £ 65.00 (hb.).

Theater lebt ganz durch die Kunst der Perspektivik: Es vollzieht sich stets in einer Vielzahl von Sicht- und Erlebnisweisen, die schon allein daraus entstehen, daß es sich immer kollektiv ereignet. Niemand kann ein Theaterereignis allumfassend wahrnehmen, weil es sich in den verschiedenen Akteurs- oder Beobachterpositionen je unterschiedlich darstellt. Genauso wie keine zwei Vorstellungen derselben Produktion und erst recht keine zwei Produktionen desselben Stücks je völlig übereinstimmen, sehen keine zwei Zuschauer derselben Vorstellung jemals ganz genau dasselbe. Ein Unterschied zum Erzählen von Geschichten liegt just darin, daß beim Theater immer mehr als eine einzige Stimme oder eine einzige Sicht im Spiel sein müssen. Es ist deshalb ein interessantes Experiment, Theatergeschichte selbst kollektiv zu erzählen. 15 Beiträgerinnen und Beiträger, darunter vier deutsche, unternehmen es hier, die Entwicklung des etablierten Theaters auf deutschsprachigen Bühnen vom späten 10. bis zum frühen 21. Jahrhundert darzustellen, wobei der historische Schwerpunkt deutlich auf den letzten 120 Jahren liegt. Allerdings verfährt der Band nicht vorrangig chronologisch, sondern fokussiert die meisten Kapitel auf thematische Aspekte wie "The theatre of dissent", "The rise of the director", "Nationalism and its effects", "Experiments with architectural space" oder "Revolutions in scenography". Auf diese Weise wird dasselbe Material oft mehrfach behandelt und in unter-

schiedlichen Perspektiven jeweils neu betrachtet. Selbst ein und dieselbe Inszenierung, wie z. B. Grübers *Hamlet* 1982 an der Berliner Schaubühne, wird mal als "mythic grandeur" (S. 271), mal als "profoundly postmodernist" (S. 295) gesehen. Das ist durchaus stimmig und hat seinen Reiz, macht aber das (leider sehr auf Eigennamen angelegte und selbst da nicht wirklich vollständige) Register am Schluß unentbehrlich. Daß in diesem mit zwölf Dutzend Nennungen "Shakespeare, William" den ersten Rang belegt, wird niemanden verwundern: kein anderer Name stünde prominenter für die Bildungsmission, für die deutsche Bühnen seit 250 Jahren gern bemüht werden, wie sich hier immer wieder zeigt. Die überwiegend anglophonen Beiträger des Bandes quittieren diesen theatralischen Sendungsdrang der Deutschen mit einer Mischung aus Respekt und spürbarer Verwunderung – andernorts macht man einfach Theater, um das Publikum zu amüsieren, und bittet es dafür zur Kasse. Für indigene Leser liegt so der Gewinn dieser Lektüre auch darin, die heimische Theaterkultur einmal aus anderer Sicht zu sehen. In solcher Perspektivik liegt eben die Kunst.

Tobias Döring (München)

Matthias Bauer / Angelika Zirker eds., *Drama and Cultural Change: Turning Around Shakespeare*. Trier: Wissenschaftlicher Verlag Trier, 2009. 224 S. – ISBN 978-3-86821-194-8 – € 23,50 (pb.).

This attractively designed paperback volume gathers together twelve essays on cultural change(s) and on Shakespeare in all shapes and sizes, from Shakespeare's own plays to, say, *Second Generation*, a 2003 BBC production that locates King Lear in a postcolonial Indian context. Four essays do not discuss Shakespearean plays or their adaptations but focus on other issues of cultural change, such as "The Appearance of the Commonwealth and the People in Tudor Drama" (Joerg Fichte) or "Cultural Change and Genre Change in English Comedy 1660–1800: Economy, Politeness, and the Social Logic of Desire" (Ralf Schneider). This is of course not to say that they should be of no interest to Shakespeareans. On the contrary, they throw the Shakespeare essays into relief through their *other* views on drama and cultural change. Most of the contributions are revised versions of papers given at a symposium held in honour of Eckhard Auberlen, professor emeritus of Tübingen university. The volume is therefore close to a *Festschrift* in character, and Auberlen is among the contributors. The fluid concept of cultural change, not theorized *a priori* but rather evidenced in the critical investigations of the contributors, does not serve as a clear-cut focal point for all essays but rather allows for the conceptual leeway necessary for the diversity of approaches and interests within a group of scholars who have gathered together to honour a colleague. The collection makes for pleasant and interesting reading, and the standard of scholarly expertise is high. The length of the essays varies somewhat between Lothar Fietz's "A Chapter in the History of Ideas and Drama: Shakespeare's Dramatizations of the Clash of Antithetical World-Views in the Sixteenth Century" with 26 pages and Christopher Harvie's "John Arden and the Matter of Britain" with just six pages. With a view to the diversity on offer, an index would have stood the book in good stead.

Redaktion der Bücherschau

Martin Procházka / Jan Čermák eds., *Shakespeare between the Middle Ages and Modernism: From Translator's Art to Academic Discourse. A Tribute to Professor Martin Hilský, MBE*. Prague: Charles University, Faculty of Arts, 2008. – 267 S. – ISBN 978-80-7308-244-4 – € 16,00 (pb.).

This handsome volume, presented to Martin Hilský on the occasion of his sixty-fifth birthday, brings together work by nineteen contributors from seven countries, several of them based at Charles University, Prague, where he used to be Director of the Department of English and American Studies. The thematic spectrum, in accordance with Hilský's own established research interests, is remarkably wide-ranging, from medieval to modernist writing and including linguistic as well as literary perspectives. But many of the contributions, again following Hilský's example, do indeed focus on Shakespeare, early modern texts and their further fate in later periods or other countries. Thus we find Shakespearean essays, among others, on "War and Warriors", "Honour and Sexuality", on Sonnet 20 as a "Game of Intrasexuality", on Welles's film version of *Henry IV*, on Spanish canon-formation, Canadian indigenous adaptations or on the position of Shakespeare in the age of globalisation. Another focus lies on issues of translation – particularly fitting for a scholar who has produced a full translation of Shakespeare's complete works into Czech, many of them in extremely successful and well-known versions which have been popularised through stage productions by the Czech National Theatre or through daily broadcasts on the radio. As a tribute to the translator's invaluable, though often invisible and sometimes sceptically regarded art, the collection opens with a series of four elegant sonnets by Justin Quinn, contemplating the function and cultural reputation of translators: "Turncoats, traitors: they turn words inside out. / They know more than the critic or the theorist. / They check the stitching and the seams. Each doubt / And each decision shows they see clear-est." (pp. 8–9) Such critical clear-sightedness, however, can also be claimed for quite a few contributions to this volume. Grounded in the academic community of Charles University, Prague, they offer a fine welcome to the World Shakespeare Congress, which will convene there in July this year.

Redaktion der Bücherschau