

Among the main strengths of the collection are the lively style of most of the essays and the authors' efforts to locate their Shakespearean case studies in relation to a range of contemporary and historical cinematic counterparts. The collection covers a lot of ground in terms of its range of examples, including some staples of similar collections and undergraduate courses and other works that are, refreshingly, less familiar. Films discussed include *'Macbeth': The Witches' Scene*, *The Angelic Conversation*, *Titus*, *The Postman*, *William Shakespeare's Romeo + Juliet*, Jean-Luc Godard's *King Lear*, Michael Almereyda's *Hamlet*, *The Lion King*, *The Children's Midsummer Night's Dream* and *The King is Alive*, among others. This generic range is welcome, as is the inclusion of films that might variously fall under the rubric of adaptations and appropriations of Shakespeare, such as *The Postman* and *The King Is Alive*. The collection also seeks to widen the Shakespearean frame of reference through Gretchen E. Minton's chapter on Alex Cox's *Revengers Tragedy* (132–47), which situates this film's concerns with 'intersections between the camera, God, and the apocalypse' in relation to 'Shakespearean and non-Shakespearean films' (134). Overall, this collection opens up a productive area of analysis for considerations of Shakespeare on film and many of the individual chapters will prove useful to students working on particular films, especially where these have received limited critical attention. However, given the exciting premise of the book I would have liked an even sharper focus in the selection of chapters in order to offer the kind of 'in depth' examination of 'the increasingly apocalyptic investments and concerns prevalent in contemporary Shakespearean cinema' (2) that the editors sought to provide.

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**Jane Hwang Degenhardt and Elizabeth Williamson (eds). *Religion and Drama in Early Modern England: The Performance of Religion on the Renaissance Stage*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2011. Pp 275.**

The fourteen scholars who contributed to this collection (including the two editors) offer a variety of arguments about how religion and drama interrelate. Readers will find innovative analyses of highly canonical texts — including Marlowe's *Tamburlaine*, Jonson's *Sejanus*, and ten plays

by Shakespeare — as well as thoughtful discussion of less-studied plays ranging from Lyly's *Midas* and Nashe's *Summer's Last Will and Testament* to anonymous works like *Solyman and Perseda* and *A Knack to Know a Knave*. More importantly, these essays acknowledge the intersections between early modern drama and religious culture in ways that will inspire and lay the foundation for future study.

The editors' excellent introduction provides a thoughtful survey of existing criticism along with a brief overview of the structure and contents of the volume. More interestingly, Degenhardt and Williamson offer as instances of theatre's engagement with early modern religious culture Tamburlaine burning the Qur'an and the first entrance of Romans, Goths, and additional 'others' in *Titus Andronicus*, scenes that through their theatrical representation of individual religious experiences trouble clear distinctions between Christian and non-Christian as well as between stage fiction and offstage religiously inspired social practice. The richness of the questions Degenhardt and Williamson raise about 'the dynamic relationship between religion and drama ... focusing on the difference theatrical representation makes' (10) is reflected in the fact that all of the essays speak to similarly fraught moments but never offer a totalizing theory.

The book's first section, entitled 'Theatrical Materiality and Religious Effects', offers a series of case studies of the conventions through which plays staged religious identities and experiences. Holly Crawford Pickett's 'The Idolatrous Nose: Incense on the Early Modern Stage' considers how olfaction might encourage audiences to engage with polemical debates. Demonstrating that references to and the use of incense were widespread in early modern plays, Pickett argues that Middleton's *Women Beware Women* links the substance to Catholic corruption while Jonson's *Sejanus* associates it with reverent ceremonial rituals. The first essay in this volume thus exemplifies a refusal to associate drama, or even the works of one playwright, with a simple confessional position. Jacqueline Wyld's 'Singing a New Song in *The Shoemaker's Holiday*' argues that the correct placement of the three-man song printed at the beginning of the playbook of Dekker's comedy is at the end of the performance. She teases out the implications of this hypothesis by establishing that the song's form echoed the metrical psalms and demanded communal performance linked to both religious ritual and celebrations of Elizabeth's ascension day. It can, then, be inferred that the song would mark the play's end as a celebration of Englishness associated with nationalism, protestantism, and inclusivity. Both Peter Berek's "Looking Jewish" on the

Early Modern Stage' and Dennis Britton's 'Muslim Conversion and Circumcision as Theatre' explore the staging of non-Christian religious identity. Berek tracks the large nose as a stage prop, demonstrating that this supposed signifier of Jewishness appears in a number of plays as a sign of foreignness more generally, of moneylenders as a profession, and, crucially, of comic figures. Ultimately arguing that the exaggerated nose is a means of managing anxiety about otherness through comedy, Berek's essay wittily ranges from discussion of Mel Brooks's films to Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice* to a variety of city comedies in ways that show the nose to be anything but a simple prop. Britton's essay focuses on another source of humour in a number of early modern plays, the Islamic practice of circumcision. While circumcision outwardly signified religious identity in the early modern period, it could not readily be staged at that time. Instead, Britton argues, by referring to the practice and associating it with other signs of conversion (such as wearing turbans), plays simultaneously stage Muslim belief and suggest that religious positions (including Christianity) might be empty shows made up of theatricalized words, actions, and props.

This section lays a solid foundation for the more abstract discussions found in the next group of essays, presented under the heading 'Intersections of Popular Theater and Religious Culture'. The essay 'Popular Worship and Visual Paradigms in *Love's Labor's Lost*' by Erika Lin offers an exciting reading of the scene that requires Berowne and three other lords sequentially to declare love, hide, and overhear one another until the violation of each man's vow to forswear women is discovered. Lin shows that while it is nearly impossible to stage the multiple entries, hiding places, and revelations of this scene realistically, the lords might be arranged in a symbolic pattern in keeping with the complex ways of seeing associated with reformed eucharistic piety. In this way, she links theatrical practice to religious worldview in a deeply historicized way. Lin's essay demonstrates that her call to other scholars interested in religion and drama to attend more closely to comedies is one that should be heeded. Susannah Brietz Monta's "'It is requir'd you do awake your faith": Belief in Shakespeare's Theatre' questions what it means to have faith in a theatrical event, particularly in the apparent resurrection of Hermione in the final scene of *The Winter's Tale*. Monta's survey of early modern pastoral manuals establishes that a cross-confessional tendency to associate true faith with experiences of doubt existed in the period. *The Winter's Tale*, she argues, creates such an experience of 'mingled faith' by forcing its audience to be aware of its theatricality. In the next essay,

Paul Whitfield White presents a micro-history of *Summer's Last Will and Testament* as performed in Archbishop Whitgift's household during a time of plague. In the process, he reminds us of the importance of attending to household and occasional drama when considering questions about religion and theatre. White's insistence that many types of festivity, not merely plays, need to be considered when asking questions about engagements with religious culture is one that could spark another collection of essays. Joseph L. Black then focuses on style in an essay that convincingly suggests that while there are no clear surviving examples of anti-Martinist drama, the stylistic and rhetorical conventions of the polemical Marprelate tracts (and satirical responses to them) had a significant impact on drama from the 1590s well into the seventeenth century.

The final section, 'Beyond Allusion and Ideology', features three essays that demonstrate how even seemingly straightforward religious language or subject matter becomes ambiguous when appropriated into early modern drama. Musa Gurnis-Farrell's 'Martyr Acts: Playing with Foxe's Martyrs on the Public Stage' shows through insightful readings of *Sir Thomas Wyatt* and *Sir John Oldcastle* that plays featuring figures venerated in *Acts and Monuments* actually disrupt protestant providential historical narratives. In his "'The Juice of Egypt's Grape": Plutarch, Syncretism, and *Antony and Cleopatra*' Michael O'Connell argues that a biblical allusion in Cleopatra's final speech, along with other scriptural passages in the play, could be evidence of religious open-mindedness rather than a Christian worldview. Specifically, O'Connell proposes that Shakespeare might have read Plutarch's treatise 'On Isis and Osiris', taking from it an idea of religious syncretism that allowed him to recognize and imaginatively represent overlapping relationships between pagan (both Egyptian and classical) and Christian as well as protestant and Roman Catholic positions. This essay not only explains the complex scriptural allusions in *Antony and Cleopatra* but also reads other post-gunpowder plot romances as expressions of a syncretic outlook on religious controversy. Last, Julia Reinhard Lupton offers a range of ways of understanding Pauline scriptural thought — Roman Catholic, protestant, Jewish, and philosophical — by inventing a character named Paul Shakespeare and noting that all of these ways of reading Paul appear in Shakespeare's plays. Lupton reminds readers that understandings of religious thought always exceed simple dichotomies and distinctions so that they will recognize the challenge of theorizing relationships between religion and drama.

A notable strength across several of the essays is their direct engagement with one another. For example, Berek and Britton open a fruitful dialogue about the ways in which costumes and props signify and destabilize religious otherness. This trend culminates in the coda offered by Anthony Dawson, which correctly identifies the importance of questions of particular (even individual) religious experience, metatheatricality, and the idea of the audience across the collection. Dawson's own argument in this section offers new ways of understanding the dynamics of the scene in which Claudius attempts prayerful repentance in *Hamlet*. My desire to see Dawson's brief argument expanded to wrestle in even more complex ways with questions about the religious implications of *Hamlet* derives not from a sense of lack but from the wish to hear what this critic who has so long written about related questions might say were he to engage even more directly with the full range of ideas in this volume.

This survey of contents reveals some of the limits of the collection's scope. Readers of *Early Theatre* with an interest in drama across the medieval and early modern periods might find the focus on late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century commercial London theatres somewhat frustrating, but it seems unfair to judge a volume over two hundred and fifty pages in length not comprehensive enough. The range of approaches and types of evidence brought to bear on the question of how religion and drama intersect should inspire those who wish to extend the work of this volume in new directions. Holly Crawford Pickett's use of electronic databases and performance-based research practices, Paul Whitfield White's reliance on performance records, Susannah Brietz Monta's consideration of devotional and anti-theatrical tracts, Joseph Black's discussion of stylistics, and Julia Lupton's engagement with contemporary theology and philosophy offer particularly promising models for exploring medieval cycles, Tudor protestant interludes, and Stuart household entertainments — if only to make even more nuanced the picture this volume offers of the myriad ways in which the stage not only relied on and responded to, but also helped to shape, religious experience.

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