

in secondary literature but is a misreading of the title of James Montagu, Bishop of Winchester. In discussing the contradictions between poetry and annotations in *Poly-Olbion*, Dobin appears unaware that the notes were by Selden, not Drayton. A minor point in itself, but it indicates a methodological factor: Dobin is little interested in authorial intention, and rather than locating critical, independent discourse as a possibility for individual agents, he finds subversion at a deeper, pre-intentional level. In equating the quest for correct interpretation with political absolutism, he flattens all distinctions between contending political stances.

Here he differs sharply from Donna Hamilton, whose study of *The Tempest* takes for granted the possibility of reconstructing some at least of Shakespeare's dramatic and political intentions; and she focuses on the differences between absolutist and constitutionalist positions. Shakespeare, as has often been noted, draws on the courtly discourses of epic, masque, and romance, and on the language of colonization; but he qualifies those discourses, insisting on the need for constitutional constraints on authority. Hamilton's main focus is on the Virgilian allusions; with a well-documented and extremely interesting discussion of Renaissance commentaries and theories of imitation, she brings out how complex an allusion might be expected to be. Shakespeare emerges as making subtle qualifications of courtly positions by some of his departures from Virgil. Hamilton offers a close analysis of Parliamentary debates around the time of the play's composition to demonstrate the possibility of more complex positions than the stock new historicist antithesis of subversion and containment. While recent political readings of the play have concentrated on 'colonial discourse', Hamilton tellingly demonstrates that that discourse was not monolithic and could on some occasions involve challenging royal power; she brings out this point by looking at the issues raised by colonies not in the New World but in Ireland.

Hamilton offers a far richer political contextualization of the play than any previous critic. The relations between text and context must still, of course, raise some difficult questions. She proposes that the characters' political references be read 'relationally, not allegorically': roles are redistributed between different figures, so that both Prospero and Ferdinand represent different aspects of Aeneas, and Caliban may on occasion represent not illegitimate rebellion but the kind of legitimate resistance to tyranny currently being championed by some Parliamentarians. Hamilton is thus able to avoid the rigidly referential readings of some earlier critics such as Frances Yates. The difficulty she then faces is that of the limits of interpretation: at what point does a departure from Virgil become so radical that the model is no longer relevant? Such a central device as the magic island is not particularly Virgilian. If, in fact, the play's stance is not as strongly monarchist as has sometimes been assumed—and if, as Hamilton shows, Renaissance poets' attitudes to Aeneas were not uniformly reverential—then why should we privilege *The Aeneid* over all other sources as the primary frame of reference? Dobin might argue that any such privileging is ultimately reductive; it can at least be pointed out that the play invokes Utopian as well as courtly discourses. Even those who may want to question some of her emphases, however, will find the book a stimulating and informative contribution.

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Shakespeare: A Bibliographical Guide. New Edition. Edited by STANLEY WELLS. Pp. viii+432. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990. Cloth, £35; paper, £10.95.

This is a revised version of a guide to Shakespeare studies published in 1973. The first edition had seventeen contributors and ran to 300 pages; in its revised version it has two additional chapters and is 131 pages longer. Ten of the chapters have been

updated by the original authors; nine are new, as a result of death or of unwillingness to do the necessary reading to report on nearly two decades of Shakespeare scholarship and criticism. Three of these new chapters, by David Daniell, R. J. A. Weis, and Richard Dutton, are excellent; while two, by Michael Taylor and Jonathan Dollimore, are most disappointing.

Stanley Wells contributes an introductory chapter on 'The Study of Shakespeare' which is knowledgeable and fair-minded. It is extremely brief, however (9 pages), and leaves out many important topics not discussed anywhere else in the book: Shakespeare's skill in dramatic structure, his verse-styles, use of rhetoric, knowledge of classical thought, awareness of Renaissance aesthetic and literary theory—the whole dimension of Shakespeare as a Renaissance writer is missing here. In her (new) chapter on 'The Non-dramatic poems' Katherine Duncan-Jones refers to modern editors' objections to rhetoric in *The Rape of Lucrece* without either defending the poem or referring to more helpful modern approaches to rhetoric in Elizabethan poetry. That parochial tendency long affecting Shakespeare studies, detaching the poet and dramatist from his intellectual climate, is still visible.

While most users will turn to this volume for specific study-purposes, the Shakespeare specialist will also notice the degree to which it reflects recent changes in fashion. In 1973 Norman Sanders received 10 pages for his account of textual criticism and editing, while Michael Jamieson discussing theatrical performance received 14 pages. In 1990 the amounts are 15 and 25, respectively, reflecting the increased prominence now given to theatrical approaches at the Shakespeare Institute and elsewhere. But Sanders seems cramped, not having nearly enough space for the complex issues he must deal with, while Jamieson seems diffuse. Both authors pay their tribute to recent work, Sanders hailing the Stanley Wells–Gary Taylor Oxford edition as demonstrating 'originality' in every aspect, facing all problems with 'a mental freshness and scholarly honesty', as in 'the digesting anew of the vast amount of previous scholarship on matters such as canon and chronology' (p. 29). Unfortunately, as I briefly indicated in reviewing their edition for this journal (Vol. 40, 1989, pp. 402–11), it is precisely in these areas that Taylor showed little originality, rehashing the conclusions of E. K. Chambers (themselves based on nineteenth-century German analyses of Shakespeare's blank verse development, outmoded theories based on outmoded texts), often in virtually the same words, and overlaying the whole with a mass of imperfectly understood modern statistics. More considered judgements of this edition are likely to be less favourable. Jamieson gives approving reference to the latest schools or labels but seems rather out of touch with recent intellectual history in remarking that '*Semiotics* had become a key-word by 1984' (p. 50), its vogue having passed a decade or more earlier. Sanders is also unsure of recent history, ascribing 'the new doubt' in textual criticism, incarnated in the Wells–Taylor edition's 'whole-hearted embracing of the indeterminacy of Shakespeare's text', to ideas derived from 'contemporary physicists and psychologists', rather than to literary theory.

The fifteen chapters on the plays display a rather uneven range. Of the original, now revised essays, despite the editor's declaration that contributors 'have been encouraged to recommend the good rather than to castigate the bad', D. J. Palmer on the early comedies gives too much attention to the less good, spending unnecessary energy attacking H. B. Charlton's superseded work; his two quotations from G. K. Hunter, however, brighten up the page. The first version of John Wilders's survey of the problem plays omitted several important books, and for the revision he seems to have done little fresh reading, adding fewer new essays than any other contributor. Since Wilders withholds explicit evaluation of the works he cites it is impossible to know whether he is recommending or castigating them. I can only hope that his

extensive summary of D. J. Gless's work on *Measure for Measure*—which aligns Isabella with 'Protestant anti-monastic satire' criticizing religious orders for abiding by 'the letter of their man-made laws', and sees the Duke as analogous to God, 'delegating to Angelo gifts that heaven first delegated to him'—does not imply that he thinks it important, nor that he endorses Marilyn French's view that marriage in this play is seen as a punishment. Kenneth Muir's chapter on *King Lear* retains the format and much of the contents of its 1973 version, not having searched through the new publications list. Still, it remains an eminently sane and helpful starting-point.

Robert Hapgood, revising his chapter on *Othello*, has now adopted the Wells-Taylor spelling for Brabantio, and has dropped a helpful discussion of the play's sources—the authors discussed have even disappeared from the bibliography. (It is regrettable that the editor did not make comment on source-study, a key resource for understanding Shakespeare, a uniform requirement: most of the contributors omit it.) While reproving the 'excessive amount of gossip' recently produced as to whether Othello and Desdemona consummated their marriage or not, Hapgood gives a blanket approval to discussions of the play in 'almost all the books concerning gender in Shakespeare', not warning readers about the many distortions that occur in discussions that make men, or patriarchy the cause of tragedy. Hapgood belongs to the tactful school of reviewers, criticizing obvious excesses in some critics but adding soothing words of praise ('the influential and otherwise estimable work of Cavell and of Greenblatt'). He actually believes that 'new approaches and attitudes have developed that are more congenial to the play than before', not wanting to see the violence done to *Othello* by those who have appropriated it for psychoanalytical, feminist, or political readings, to which his summaries bear eloquent evidence.

Shakespearians working in America are obviously exposed to these approaches with much more intensity than is felt in Europe, and risk losing the independence needed to judge the paradigms of the moment. Since contributing his chapter on *Macbeth* R. A. Foakes has moved from the University of Kent to UCLA, and in an added passage he now welcomes those critics who explore 'the relation of "manliness" to sexual potency or impotence, femininity, motherhood, and the nursing infant'. He endorses both Berger's view that 'the basic theme of the text' is 'Man's fear of being unmanned', and Adelman's account of 'the play's central fantasy of escape from woman' which only leads to a final 'consolidation of male power'. Such approaches, it seems to me, are just as schematic as those to image-patterns or themes, now demonized, and destroy both the individuality and the ethics of the play. Having approved so much work in this vein, Foakes nevertheless ends by rebuking 'Deconstructionist, feminist, Marxist, and new historicist critics' for ignoring the "'formal coherence" in the play's scenic design' by 'emphasizing transgression, disorder, violence, and subversion'. Some aesthetic principles, it seems, still stand.

Maurice Charney (revising his essay on *Coriolanus* and *Timon of Athens*), like Hapgood, is a master of the tactful qualifying sentence ('Even if we disagree with . . . we are still indebted to . . .'), and like him is quite uncritical of psychoanalytic approaches. He is happy to think that Coriolanus is 'infantile', Volumnia a 'castrating . . . non-nurturant mother who has not fed her children enough'; and that the play 'reveals a deep fantasy of maternal destructiveness'. These clichés of American Freud-dominated thinking reduce the great variety of world literature to the same few patterns. Charney naturally welcomes the psycho-feminist approach to *Timon of Athens*, and has incorporated it into his new Signet edition of the play. As for scholarly approaches, where beginning readers are especially reliant on informed guidance, Charney surveys the rival theories that *Timon* is either an unfinished play (propounded by Una Ellis-Fermor with 'a most pernicious effect', he claims) or one of joint authorship. The fact that the text ascribes inconsistent values to the Greek talent

was taken by Terence Spencer to prove the former thesis, and Charney agrees: yet ironically on the same page (305) he merely mentions the Wells–Taylor *Textual Companion* for the argument ascribing the play to Shakespeare and Middleton. There, Roger Holdsworth's convincing division of responsibilities shows that the confusion about the coin's value is due not to Shakespeare's carelessness but corresponds to a plausible division of the play between two dramatists.

Joint authorship is a major issue in Richard Proudfoot's revised chapter on *Henry VIII*, *The Two Noble Kinsmen* (in both of which Fletcher's hand is suspected), and other apocryphal plays. Proudfoot's judgements, both scholarly and critical, are unimpeachable, but one could wish that he had cited more of the recent scholarship on joint composition, and had discussed the criteria, internal and external, by which Cyrus Hoy and others have divided up the 'Fletcher plays' among three or four collaborators. Issues of such importance to the canon deserve to be widely discussed, and the principles at stake generally understood.

Of the nine new contributors, R. L. Smallwood's account of the Middle Comedies summarizes a bewildering diversity of recent criticism with either no critical comments or at most terribly polite ones ('perhaps slightly over-earnest essay', 'perhaps a little less persuasive'). The quantity and range of modern Shakespeare study are both so troubling that readers would welcome more incisive evaluations, rather than such bland comments (as on patriarchal-deconstructive criticism: 'certainly one of the liveliest areas of critical debate'). Michael Hattaway's chapter on *Henry VI*, *Richard III*, and *King John* also sits on the fence on some key issues. Some scholars, he reports, claim that *The Troublesome Raigne* is a source for *King John*, others that it is a Bad Quarto of the play. Well, the reader may ask, who is right? Or, what are the criteria by which one could judge? Hattaway summarizes critical descriptions of these plays as ranging from sceptical Machiavellianism to Christian humanism. Where, and how, can a reader strike a balance? Hattaway commits himself on one issue, however, denouncing the 'disintegrationism' of the Wells–Taylor edition of the *Henry VI* plays, its 'contentiously high degree of editorial interventionism in the text', deriving from 'the results of statistical analysis' and ignoring the unity felt by both theatre audiences and critics. Hattaway here judges as an editor with first-hand experience of textual problems.

R. S. White's survey of *Titus Andronicus* and *Romeo and Juliet* gives rather dull and unhelpful summaries, a complete contrast to Richard Dutton's account of 'The Second Tetralogy', whose summaries are pointed, not predictable, supplying enough detail for us to judge each work's specific approach. This is an admirably well-organized, detailed account, with a bibliography running to fifteen pages. Dutton shows a commendable independence of fashion by taking seriously the pioneering work done on the Histories by J. Dover Wilson, Lily B. Campbell, and E. M. W. Tillyard, whose views—'widely challenged, and arguably superseded'—still remain 'the most influential single' source, setting much of the agenda for later critics. R. J. A. Weis, discussing *Julius Caesar* and *Antony and Cleopatra*, has a similar independence, praising A. W. MacCallum's book on the Roman plays (1910) as 'a model of scholarly investigation' with 'unrivalled authority' in its evaluation of Plutarch's histories and the prose styles of Amyot and North. Weis also quotes some illuminating sentences from Edward Dowden on Brutus as using abstract ideals to countenance murder ('It is idealists who create a political terror; they are free from all desire for blood'). Not only alert to past excellence, Weis is a stimulating guide to modern criticism.

Weis ably summarizes a great amount of material, but still only a fraction of that dealt with by David Daniell on *Hamlet*, for which the MLA bibliography lists 1,200 books and articles since 1960, 700 since 1975. No doubt helped by his long stint

contributing the Shakespeare chapter to *The Year's Work in English Studies*, Daniell has produced a fair-minded, freshly written account which discusses a lot of material that is new to me, and I suspect to many others. He gives the best historical survey of earlier criticism, with perceptive comments on Hazlitt and Bradley, and describes Dover Wilson's work on the play as 'very properly influential'. Daniell also reviews some 'pleasingly dotty' nineteenth-century interpretations, including E. P. Vining's in 1881, where 'Hamlet in the course of the play becomes a woman in love with Horatio and jealous of Ophelia', but adds: 'it is not for us to feel smug, however, when 1984 can produce J. A. Bryant Jr.'s nonsense of a Hamlet as Christ, with a holy Ghost, and much else'. Daniell is the only author to recognize the importance of rhetoric, recording George T. Wright's pioneering study of hendiadys in *Hamlet* and linking it with the 'trick of doubleness and multiplicity in the play', which extends from the linguistic level to that of plot, where 'there are in all four sons impelled to avenge fathers (Hamlet, Fortinbras, Laertes, Pyrrhus)'. He also intelligently observes the possible disadvantages of such a structure, 'a multiplication which gives repetition instead of exploration'. Daniell manages to say several interesting things about the play, seeing its universality as 'a tribute to its generosity: it patiently seems to survive mishandlings'. This is generous criticism, discriminating and encouraging, the most helpful contribution in the volume.

Michael Taylor's survey of 'The Late Comedies' has few of these virtues. Although referring several times to critics who relate them to the Greek romance, he never bothers to explain what that genre consisted of, nor to describe its typical plot-patterns of separation, search, reunion, and the recurrent motif of women being put to cruel tests. Instead Taylor emphasizes 'the importance of the visionary response, . . . primarily the Christian and the anthropological', summed up in the work of Northrop Frye. Taylor endorses a whole range of recent approaches, some of them contradictory: an interest in 'the social status of words' on the one hand (on which, he surprisingly claims, the Oxford editions give reliable information), yet on the other a belief in 'language's dramatized inadequacy'. Instead of evaluation we get a kind of knowing endorsement, approving several psychocritics (who find in these plays sexual disgust at 'desire, female sexuality', procreation, or describe Ferdinand as a 'violently libidized adolescent'), while still reproving their 'waywardness and cocksurenness'. On the politicizing readings, which accuse Shakespeare of colonialism, with Prospero as 'a kind of Kurtzian figure dispossessing Caliban', and where 'Caliban's swooning raptures over the island's sweet airs' represent, as one critic puts it, "'a utopian moment where powerlessness expresses a *desire for powerlessness*'", Taylor has no reservations.

Jonathan Dollimore's survey of recent 'Critical Developments' has no reservations at all about the three 'critical movements' he discusses: feminism, new historicism, and cultural materialism (excluding deconstruction). All three, he claims, are engaged in 'a cultural struggle' in which 'real power is at stake'—that is, in the academy. Dollimore represents the currently embattled reaction against 'the demonizing of minorities', such as women, homosexuals, and blacks, and he waxes indignant at 'conventional Shakespearian criticism' for 'ignoring gender', endorsing punitive attitudes to 'the sexually unconventional', even seeing 'sexual deviance as a metaphor for evil'. Such attitudes, Dollimore proclaims, 'reveal critics to be up-market moral hacks, giving a certain academic respectability to conventional wisdom, that is, bigotry'. Unfortunately, he makes no attempt to document these violent accusations, and they seem to be aggressively paranoid, creating illusory enemies in order to give those who feel persecuted a sense of solidarity. Dollimore's essay is rambling, incoherent, uncritical, and self-serving. He cites his own work about nine times (referring twice to his essay claiming a significance for the fact that the prostitutes in

Measure for Measure do not get to speak), and praises unreservedly the work of close associates like Alan Sinfield and all who contributed to their co-edited collection, *Political Shakespeare*. Among the work 'highly recommended to all Shakespearians' are two books claiming that Shakespeare's sonnets are explicitly homosexual. Dollimore does not tell his readers that the one by Joseph Pequigney contains a disturbing number of readings in which a cant modern term in gay slang (such as 'ride') is assumed to have the same sense in Shakespeare's text. One of the ironies of Shakespearean criticism at present is that work labelled as historical can be profoundly anachronistic, such as Walter Cohen's claim, here endorsed, that in Renaissance England 'the absolutist state . . . first fostered and then undermined the public theatre' (when? how? why?), or Dollimore's belief that Elizabethan society 'was obsessed with sexual difference and gender'. Dollimore's essay, which includes lumps of simple-minded explanations of such political terms as class-struggle, gender, and dialectic, set out between rules and in italic type (like an elementary Marxist manual or a newspaper colour supplement), is less interested in discussing Shakespeare than in defining the current political preoccupations of this group of critics and listing its membership. The cultural materialist claim that 'the way a particular culture reads Shakespeare reveals the "nature" of that same culture' is certainly borne out by this essay, but that is hardly surprising, since it simply projects the attitudes of a small group of supposedly 'radical activists' back on to a remote period and reads them out again in self-confirmation. That is not much of an achievement. Students approaching this essay will get no clear idea of where these recent critical trends came from, nor what their strengths and weaknesses might be. A new contribution should be commissioned if this book is ever revised again.

In sum, with the exception of Dollimore's essay, this is a useful book which deserves to be widely used. Although there are some unfortunate omissions* it is a helpful guide to the existence of much important work, if not to be trusted in all its evaluations, or lack of them.

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* Among the more notable missing titles are: W. R. Elton, *Shakespeare's World: Renaissance Intellectual Contexts. A Selective, Annotated Guide, 1666-1971* (New York, 1979); Richard D. Fly, *Shakespeare's Mediated World* (Amherst, MA, 1976), on the go-between figure; Robert Kimbrough, *Shakespeare's 'Troilus and Cressida' and Its Setting* (Cambridge, MA, 1964); Mary Lascelles, *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'* (London, 1953); Lachlan Mackinnon, *Shakespeare the Aesthete* (London, 1988); R. K. Presson, *Shakespeare's 'Troilus and Cressida' and the Legend of Troy* (Madison, Wis., 1953); Henry L. Snuggs, *Shakespeare and Five Acts: Studies in a Dramatic Convention* (New York, 1960); D. L. Stevenson, *The Achievement of 'Measure for Measure'* (Ithaca, NY, 1966); John W. Velz, *Shakespeare and the Classical Tradition: A Critical Guide to Commentary, 1660-1960* (Minneapolis, MN, 1968); Brian Vickers, 'Bibliography' to the *Age of Shakespeare* volume in *The New Pelican Guide to English Literature*, ed. B. Ford (latest revision, 1991); Brian Vickers, *Shakespeare: Coriolanus*, Studies in English Literature series (London, 1976; Boston, 1980; revised as '*Coriolanus* and the demons of politics', in *Returning to Shakespeare*, London, 1979, pp. 135-93); *Shakespeare Survey* 25 (1972), on the problem plays.

Shakespeare's Dramatic Transactions. By MICHAEL MOONEY. Pp. xvi+228. Durham, NC and London: Duke University Press, 1990. £30.90.

Michael Mooney's book, as the author explains, is heavily indebted to the notions of *locus*, *platea*, and *Figurenpositionen* developed in Robert Weimann's *Shakespeare and the Popular Tradition in the Theater* (1978). Unfortunately, Mr Mooney has underestimated the problematic features of Weimann's theories.