

Joseph M. Ortiz, ed., *Shakespeare and the Culture of Romanticism*. Farnham, Surrey and Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013. Pp 306. £70. ISBN 9781409455813.

In the 1790s, John Boydell assembled what is now a famous collection of paintings of Shakespearian scenes to accompany an illustrated edition of the works. Paintings in Boydell's collection were added, rearranged, removed, retouched, and altered according to prevailing tastes. The 'volatile, fragmentary nature' (5) of the Boydell project suggests an inherent instability to Romantic Shakespeare.

In a wide-ranging and thought-provoking collection of essays, Joseph M. Ortiz assembles a wealth of evidence to unsettle the image of 'a Romantic culture drunk on the liquor of Bardolatry' (7). Through twelve essays, contributors successfully demonstrate that what 'Shakespeare' means is 'hardly more stable in the Romantic period than at any other time' (7). Covering directors, actors, writers, philosophers, gallery owners, entrepreneurs, and (notably) a number of women authors, this collection complicates the concept of 'Romantic Shakespeare' by bringing in new voices and re-examining the old ones. The result is a complementary supplement to Jonathan Bate's *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination* (Oxford, 1986). Furthermore, this volume extends its range to contend that debates over art and drama more generally were influenced by visual and theatrical depictions of Shakespeare in the nineteenth century.

Contributors show that rather than a monolithic 'genius,' Shakespeare was 'a powerful medium' for writers of various political persuasions, both male and female, Whig and Tory, to 'claim authority for their particular interests' (3). In order to make this overall argument, Ortiz assembles a highly respectable cadre of international authors into four categories organized around the critic, the poet, the theater, and the marketplace.

Part I, 'Rethinking the Romantic Critic,' supplements Romantic critic William Hazlitt, whose views are usually taken as representative of the period. In the lead essay of this section, David Chandler focusses on Walter Savage Landor's *Citation and Examination of William Shakespeare* (1834) to illustrate the political possibilities of Romantic Shakespeare criticism in the period. Likewise, Karen Bloom Gevirtz adds Elizabeth Inchbald to the mix, particularly her role as an actress and playwright who contributed a woman's perspective to Romantic Shakespeare criticism. Along similar lines, Karen Britland examines the Romantic idea of 'genius' in connection with Sarah Siddons's performance of Ophelia to argue that earlier uses of the term in connection with Ophelia reveal a later nineteenth-century campaign to downplay Ophelia's intelligence in favor of a masculine association with the concept of genius.

The second part, 'Shakespeare and the Making of the Romantic Poet,' expands the conversation to reconsider canonical writers such as Coleridge, Wordsworth, Blake, and Keats, and to include lesser-known writers. Thomas Festa argues that reception of Shakespeare 'becomes an enabling—or better, an "authorizing"—condition of Wordsworth's poetic imagination' (79). Joy Currie looks at the poetry of Charlotte Smith, who used Shakespeare to support her own political views, but also to claim equality for women writers. Another woman writer, American poet Emily Dickinson, is the subject of Marianne Noble's excellent essay, which looks at Dickinson's emulation of Shakespeare's 'mingling of sound and sense' (9).

Part III, 'The Romantic Stage,' focusses on Romantic playwrights and theatre productions of Shakespeare. Paola Degli Esposti argues that Coleridge's play *Zapolya*, based on *The Winter's Tale* and *Cymbeline*, entails a larger political commentary where Shakespeare lends a universality to ideas of historical truth. Another little-discussed play, James Boaden's

Fontainville Forest (1794), based on Ann Radcliffe's novel *The Romance of the Forest*, is the topic of Francesca Saggini's essay. Saggini argues that Boaden's use of a stage ghost invokes Romantic visual depictions of Shakespeare's works. Suddhaseel Sen examines Ambroise Thomas's French opera *Hamlet* as a response to debates about neoclassical aesthetics, in a fitting conclusion to one of the more original sections of this volume.

Part IV, 'Harnessing the Renaissance: Markets, Religion, Politics' moves beyond literature to discuss the influence of Shakespeare on Romantic culture and ideas of history more generally. Ann R. Hawkins's fascinating essay on the Boydell Gallery shows that the collection was actually in flux throughout most of its fifteen-year period, and that the gallery itself adapted to changing public taste. Marjean D. Purinton and Marliiss C. Desens combine analysis of *Pericles* with Scottish dramatist Joanna Baillie's sacred dramas *The Martyr* (1812) and *The Bride* (1826), using ideas of the feminine sacred from Catherine Clément and Julia Kristeva. The final essay in this collection, Leigh Wetherall-Dickson's 'A Written Warning: Lady Caroline Lamb, Noblesse Oblige, and Works of John Ford', departs from the volume's focus on Shakespeare, arguing that Lady Caroline Lamb's Gothic novel *Glenarvon* relies on Ford's work for political arguments. An extensive bibliography further underscores this volume's place as a significant contribution to nineteenth-century studies of Shakespeare. In his introduction, Ortiz notes that this collection owes a debt to the late Douglas A. Brooks, who initially solicited the essays for a volume on Shakespeare and Romanticism, but did not live to see the project to fruition. The persuasive result of Ortiz's labors is a fitting tribute to the project's initial genesis.

Katherine Scheil
University of Minnesota