



Book Reviews

Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Visul unei nopți de vară, Cum vă place by Adrian Papahagi [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: A Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It*]. Iași: Editura Polirom, 2020. Pp. 132.

Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Sonete, Romeo și Julieta [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: Sonnets, Romeo and Juliet*]. Iași: Editura Polirom, 2020. Pp. 141.

Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Titus Andronicus, Hamlet [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: Titus Andronicus, Hamlet*]. Iași: Editura Polirom, 2021. Pp. 268.

Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Totu-i bine când se sfârșește cu bine, Măsură pentru măsură. [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: All's Well that Ends Well, Measure for Measure*]. Iași: Editura Polirom, 2021. Pp. 178.

Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Troilus și Cresida, Timon din Atena. [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: Troilus and Cressida, Timon of Athens*]. Iași: Editura Polirom, 2022. Pp. 135.

Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Othello, Poveste de iarnă. [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: Othello, The Winter's Tale*]. Iași: Editura Polirom, 2022. Pp. 175.

Reviewed by *Monica Matei-Chesnoiu**

Of volumes introducing students and the general reader to Shakespeare, there is no scarcity. What is rare, however, is one that is not only exceptionally readable (in Romanian) but also well informed and sensible rather than eccentric. Papahagi's collection of *Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi* meets precisely those criteria. Papahagi continues his eminent career as a medievalist, a Shakespeare scholar and professor at Babeș-Bolyai University of Cluj-Napoca

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(Romania) with this excellent new study. This series of critical studies in Romanian dedicated to Shakespeare's plays is part of an ongoing, ambitious, and well-timed project—initiated in collaboration with the prestigious publishing house Editura Polirom of Iași, Romania—of analysing the entire Shakespearean dramatic and lyrical corpus. Modelled on traditional university lectures published by the author at a later time (Harold Bloom, Tony Tanner, Giorgio Melchiori), Papahagi's exceptional project is a valuable addition to Romanian Shakespeare scholarship. The plays are grouped according to generic, thematic and chronological sequences, and the sonnets are dealt with cogently and intelligently. The translations of the Shakespearean plays used for citation belong to the most recent and accurate collection of Shakespeare's complete works in Romanian, edited (and, for certain plays, translated) by George Volceanov. The author compares extant modern Romanian translation of each play discussed. Throughout the texts, Papahagi carries his learning lightly, but to the experienced eye the learning is ever present; whereas the less-experienced eye is not burdened with a surplus of footnotes, endnotes, or scholarly digressions.

The central idea of the series is to look at Shakespeare's writing career as a mirror of human life, as experienced by the author whom we have learned to name "Shakespeare"—in an endearing title suggesting the multiple meanings that this name and the plays can take. The series of booklets is meant to be accessible to any Romanian reader or, as the author modestly mentions in "Lămurire preliminară" ["Preliminary Note"] (1-9), appended to each volume, "The size of the volumes is sufficiently small to accompany the reader to the theatre, in the lecture hall, or in a not-too-long voyage, associated with unavoidable waiting times in railway stations and airports" (Papahagi 6-7).¹ I really appreciate the author's pragmatic sincerity, which relates to the now-common idea that our "Shakespeare" has become suitable for expressing coherent thoughts in all cultures and spaces.

The volume entitled *Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Visul unei nopți de vară, Cum vă place* [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: A Midsummer Night's Dream, As You Like It*] (2020) discusses these comedies, focusing on similar dramatic schemes (refuge to the woods, conflict resolution, restoring civilization, and multiple weddings), as well as the plays' symbolism. The author argues that the theatre's therapeutic value celebrates the tropes of fantastic comedy, resorting to the medieval carnivalesque tradition. In a multi-media combination, the volume is illustrated with the "suave" (53) representation of Bottom and Titania in the painting by Edwin Landseer or the sphynx guarding the entrance of *Parco dei Mostri* in the Gardens of Bomarzo, with the suitable quotation in Italian of the riddle engraved at the base of the statue (67). As Papahagi observes, "In the *Dream*, the symmetrical structure of

¹ All translations from Romanian are mine.

the Renaissance cosmos is deformed, scrambled. Overlapping worlds (spirits, kings, young lovers, clowns, vegetal and animal regnum) intersect or even blend, metamorphosing one into the other” (67). As for the “pastoral symphony” (77-78) in *As You like It*, Papahagi does justice to Rosalind by observing her “intelligence and charm” (78), as well as her “lucid antifeminism” (80) in the prose exchanges with Orlando, which contrast with her lover’s “lame” (81) poetry. Indeed, this volume achieves the rare accomplishment of persuading Romanian readers that there is still a lot to say about these two plays.

In *Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Sonete, Romeo și Julieta* [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: Sonnets, Romeo and Juliet*] (2020), the author focuses on the idea of love as a combination of carnal pleasure and sublime desire, common to Shakespeare’s *Sonnets* and *Romeo and Juliet*, arguing that the play should be read “in tandem” (13) with the *Sonnets*. Papahagi correctly observes the play’s Petrarchan sonnet structure and the concept of formalized love in the sonneteering mode. As for Shakespeare’s sonnets, Papahagi cites and comments comparatively two Romanian translations (by Cristina Tătaru and Violeta Popa), discussing the subtleties of translation. An erudite medievalist and connoisseur of classical Greek and Latin, Old French and Chaucer’s English (as well as Italian), Papahagi moves freely through these languages and clears a way through the thicket of medieval and early modern perceptions of love, highlighting the concept’s equivocal attribute. As Papahagi observes, “Love’s ambiguous nature, the combination of its lofty and low status, is reflected in its literary management. Culture carries counter-culture within itself, tradition cannot be separated from anti-tradition, the worm resides from the beginning in the apple of the sublime, unfortunate, ethereal, Platonic courtly love” (17). Various Romanian translations of *Romeo and Juliet* (by Anca Ignat and Alexandru M. Călin, as well as the version by nineteenth-century poet Șt. O. Iosif) are analysed in this part of the study, focusing on their legibility and accuracy. Papahagi concludes this excellent and unconventional volume about love in the same contrastive manner in which it started, addressing both lay and erudite reader: “As a rule, students, who are unaccustomed with textual perversions, read the play as a poem of romantic love, projecting their own joy and suffering on the star-crossed lovers. Ultimately, it is the purest effect of major art: it troubles us because it is about us. The rest is philological subtlety, which is also some sort of parasitic discourse. Irony goes on beyond text” (130).

In the volume entitled *Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Titus Andronicus, Hamlet* [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: Titus Andronicus, Hamlet*] (2021) Papahagi discusses issues of revenge in *Titus Andronicus* and *Hamlet* and boldly states that Western culture can be divided into periods “before and after Hamlet” (16), while “the incredible art of Shakespearean tragedy begins with *Titus Andronicus*” (16). Indeed, there is no way of treating such a bloody revenge play as *Titus Andronicus* but lightly and self-ironically,

just as Shakespeare does. Nor can a critic say anything more about the revenge play where revenge does not happen (*Hamlet*), except by looking at it from the angle of self-irony, just as Hamlet does. As Papahagi concludes, in a unifying symmetry about the ending of *Hamlet*, closing all narrative threads, “The usurper is punished with the price of the philosopher prince’s life, and of so many collateral victims, the gravedigger continues his activity, Old Hamlet’s ghost is lost in oblivion, while Fortinbras’s ghost takes shape and sits on the throne. The king is dead, long live the king! *Long live the King!* We come back from where we started” (229). As an auspicious afterthought, the volume contains an Appendix commenting on the textual variants of *Hamlet* (Q1, Q2, the 1623 Folio, but also information about the *Ur-Hamlet*), as well as variants of Romanian translations of *Hamlet* (for scholarly or theatre use). As Papahagi observes, “What the philologist (an endangered species, cannibalized by critics, meta-critics, psychoanalysts and ideologists) questions is lost in popular editions, or on stage, especially when the play is performed on stage” (233). Papahagi ends this erudite textual reading of *Hamlet* self-referentially, with submerged allusions to the poem *L’infinito* by Giacomo Leopardi or to *Pequeño poema infinito* by Federico García Lorca: “Infinitely versatile, the text eludes us even when we seem to have grasped it: no edition can place it absolutely, just as no translation, no production and no book, like this one, which ends here, can grasp anything more than nuances of the ‘infinite poem’” (249).

Based on generic, thematic and chronological evidence, *Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Totu-i bine când se sfârșește cu bine, Măsură pentru măsură* [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: All’s Well that Ends Well, Measure for Measure*] (2021) examines these “problem” plays to show their “ambiguities” (19) and “symmetries” (103). The author mentions critical controversies generated by these plays, focusing on textual analysis and eruditely discussing the Italian sources, with comments and quotations from Italian critics (Giuseppe Petronio, Mariella Cavalchini), among others (E. M. W. Tillyard, Joseph G. Price, A. P. Rossiter, David M. Bergeron). Glossy illustrations visualize for the reader the Renaissance metaphors of love in Italian Renaissance frescos and paintings, as well as the painting *Helena and Bertram before the King of France* by Francis Wheatley, or frescoes and icons from Romanian monasteries. As for *All’s Well That Ends Well*, Papahagi reviews critical opinions about Helena’s name (Laurie Maguire, Alistair Fowler or Robert Grams Hunter), but also alludes to the name of the wife of the Romanian dictator, Elena Ceaușescu, as a contemporary link to famous (or notorious) women in history who had that name. As Papahagi writes, “Therefore, Helena’s name invokes at once *luxuria* and saintliness, damnation and redemption, marriage between sacred and profane love. *Nomen omen*: several ill-fated women, but one who is almost holy, have had this name in Romanian politics of

the past century” (37).² As concerns *Measure for Measure*, Papahagi restores the play to its well-deserved status, by saying that “Shakespeare transforms a fairly good story into a masterpiece” (94). Consulting modern Romanian translations by Leon Leviṭchi and George Volceanov, Papahagi comments intelligently on several translation choices. Concerning the multiply-mirroring effects in the play, Papahagi cogently observes: “Shakespeare gives us the feeling that he has discovered another dimension, which lacked in the art before him” (104).

In the volume *Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Troilus și Cresida, Timon din Atena*. [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: Troilus and Cressida, Timon of Athens*] (2022) Papahagi is equally astute and insightful concerning his analyses of the two plays. As he has accustomed readers in the previous series, Papahagi starts with an eminent catch phrase, which is, in this case, “*Troilus and Cressida* (c. 1601) and *Timon of Athens* (c. 1605-1607) are Shakespeare’s anti-*Iliad* and anti-*Symposium*. Even if he probably read only fragments from Homer and ignored Plato, Shakespeare succeeds in giving these authors an anti-heroic and anti-idealistic replica or, more exactly, to revive Troy and Athens in a misanthropic and nihilistic mood” (13). The more “direct” (28) Romanian translation of *Timon of Athens* by Lucia Verona is preferred to the earlier one by Leon Leviṭchi. Papahagi manages to make this difficult Shakespearean play accessible to Romanian readers by discussing intelligently the play’s sexual puns and the ambivalent and cynical issues about war. As Papahagi rightfully observes about this play, “Venereal debauchery is accompanied by the decline of martial virtues” (61). For *Timon of Athens* (ideally matched with *Troilus and Cressida* in this volume), Papahagi’s catchphrase is: “*Timon of Athens* is the misanthropic and nihilistic antithesis between the Last Supper and Plato’s *Symposium*” (75). In a footnote, Papahagi ironically observes that this does not mean that Shakespeare knew Plato’s dialogue (75n1). Papahagi extends his argument as follows: “Shakespeare’s *Symposium* does not celebrate the love for the human race of the one who offers himself in Eucharistic communion, and it is not even agape or philosophical symposium dedicated to eros, but it is a merciless x-ray of atavistic, cannibalistic hunger” (77). “At Timon’s table,” as Papahagi smartly observes, “they do not devour ideas, as in Plato, but people, beginning with their opulent host, attacked by dozens of hungry mouths ...” (77). The discussion about the fickleness of Fortune is illustrated with a drawing by Jean Cousin from *Liber Fortunae*

² The author makes no specific reference to famous women in Romanian politics named Helena or Elena, implicitly inviting readers to do their own research. My estimation is that, apart from the notorious Elena Ceaușescu, Papahagi may refer to Elena Udrea or Elena Băsescu. None of these women, however, deserve to be noted in the Pantheon of famous Romanian female politicians, and this is why Papahagi keeps an ironic, wise, and reserved silence.

(1568) (86). There is also a photograph taken from the 1978 Romanian Production of *Timon of Athens* directed by Mihai Măniuțiu (118), sensibly commented upon (117).

In *Shakespeare interpretat de Adrian Papahagi: Othello, Poveste de iarnă*. [*Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi: Othello, The Winter's Tale*] (2022) the author couples the two plays about male jealousy astutely, integrating spatial and racial issues cogently. As Papahagi observes about Shakespeare's imaginary spaces, "In the European imaginary of the time, Africa, the homeland of the witch Sycorax in *The Tempest*, is the continent of magic" (19). The opposition between Venice and Cyprus in *Othello* is seen as a *descensus ad inferus*, a place of individual demarcation: "The voyage from Venice to Cyprus (island of Aphrodite-Venus, aurally associated with funeral cypresses, *cypressus*) is a true catabasis, the Fall of the human race, the return to the heart of darkness, that *heart of darkness* from which Othello hardly escaped" (20). As Papahagi continues his argument, "As in *The Tempest*, whose island is closer to Tunis than to Naples or, as in *Antony and Cleopatra*, where Alexandria represents disintegrating passion and Rome is structured reason, the road from the European centre to the Oriental periphery is equivalent to the fall from reason and order into passion and chaos" (20). Although I am unable to contest Papahagi's spatial argument here, I cannot but notice his male Eurocentric perspective. Yet Papahagi rebounds in the next statement: "We should note, incidentally, that Othello's and Desdemona's alienation begins with the voyage from Venice to Cyprus, which they take on separate ships" (20). Therefore, Papahagi does acknowledge, like Shakespeare, that there are several perspectives about the world, and they are conditioned by geography and space. In the section about *The Winter's Tale*, Papahagi starts from the play's source and correlates Hermione's name with the *hermae*, the sculpture-columns usually associated with Hermes. As Papahagi observes, "Pandosto is renamed Leontes, in order to suggest the king's leonine, violent and dominating character; the queen is given the name Hermione, which invokes the *trickster* and psychopomp Hermes, but also the *hermae*, in the shape of a column, as remarked by John Ruskin" (97). Interesting association, yet the queen's name might also have been inspired from the ancient Greek city of Hermion, in Argolis.

Tempting as it may be to compare *Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi* to Harold Bloom's *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, I will resist, except to say that where Bloom offers brilliant insights along with some exaggerations or overstatements, Papahagi's series of booklets is far more consistent. Romanian teachers and scholars will likely regard *Shakespeare Interpreted by Adrian Papahagi* as a reliable introduction for their students. Romanian doctoral students will welcome this series as an inspirational start for their research. The volumes include a brief and selected bibliography intended not only as suggestions for "Further Reading" but also as acknowledgements of

critical indebtedness. Papahagi's Romanian collection of critical texts has the potential to change the way we relate to a Shakespearean play—both to its texts and its subsequent critical interpretations. It may do so, however, at the expense of precisely those energies that have given international Shakespeare so much currency, inside and outside academia, over the past few decades especially.

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Chris Thurman and Sandra Young (eds.), *Global Shakespeare and Social Injustice. Towards a Transformative Encounter. The Arden Shakespeare.* London, New York: Bloomsbury, 2023. Pp. 269.

Reviewed by *Coen Heijes**

One of the latest publications diving into the relationship between Shakespeare and the topic of social (in)justice, bears as its subtitle “towards a transformative encounter.” It is an intriguing subtitle as it indicates on the one hand a process, a movement towards an encounter which has perhaps not yet fully materialized, if ever it will. Although we’re not there yet, the subtitle also suggests that the transformative encounter seems a possibility and that this publication may open up vistas of a fruitful encounter between Shakespeare and social injustice. This encounter then may somehow result in a transformation of Shakespeare theatre, pedagogy and scholarship. It is an ambitious subtitle and it most definitely wettened my appetite for a transformative encounter with the publication itself.

The publication had its roots in the eleventh Triennial Congress of the Shakespeare Society of Southern Africa, which took place in Cape Town in May 2019 and which included the academic conference, “Shakespeare and Social Justice: Scholarship and Performance in an Unequal World.” The two editors are likewise South African based, Chris Thurman at the University of the Witwatersrand and Sandra Young at the University of Cape Town. While the publication aims to address Global Shakespeare, the risk of basing oneself on post-conference essays inevitably means limiting oneself, which the editors also gracefully acknowledge. The authors of the eleven chapters comprising the volume are based at institutions in respectively South Africa (1), Canada (1), the United States (6), the United Kingdom (2) and Germany (1), which means that the traditional dominance of Anglophone academic institutions is, unfortunately, perpetuated in a volume dedicated to “Global” Shakespeare.

Through the essay in the volume, the editors aim at demonstrating “the potential for radically transformative work that more recent trends in Shakespeare studies and innovative theatre-making invite and enable” (p. 5). After a general introduction, the editors have organised the eleven essays in four different sections. The first part is titled “Scholarship and social justice. Questions for the field” and it comprises three essays, the first of which is by

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Susan Bennett (Rethinking “Global Shakespeare” for social justice). In it, she criticizes the Anglocentric approach to Global Shakespeare and its almost consumerist approach to non-English Shakespeare activities and challenges Shakespeareans to become more inclusive in confronting the challenges of our times. One of these challenges, the increased displacement of persons on account of climate change, war, persecution or poverty, is explored in the second chapter, in an essay by Linda Gregerson (Caliban in an era of mass migration). Gregerson explores the theme of Caliban, Sycorax, migration, postcolonialism, ownership and resistance by way of two twentieth-century novels which build upon *The Tempest: Water with Berries* by George Lamming (1971) and *Indigo* by Marina Warner (1992). Gregerson argues that Lamming’s novel replicates and intensifies the racial anxieties, the paranoia and brutality of colonized and colonizers and after the experience there is no way back to the previous “state of innocence or origin” (p. 46). In *Indigo*, where Warner changes the scene between the sixteenth and seventeenth century fictional Caribbean island of Liamuiga and twentieth century London, the tone is slightly more optimistic, Gregerson argues, although the themes of coming to terms with the disruptive and oppressive effects of colonial settlement and postcolonial sentiment are strongly felt. For Gregerson, the strength of these novels lies in moving beyond “polemically driven analysis [which] is unlikely to capture the full critical or contestatory powers of novels, plays and other literary form or performative modes of engagement” (p. 55). The essay by Alexa Alice Joubin (What makes Global Shakespeare an exercise in ethics) rounds off the first section by providing a wide overview of Shakespearean productions and arguing the necessity of context-based cultural meaning. Joubin rightfully argues against the problematic notion that the “global is imagined to be whatever the United States and the United Kingdom is not” (p. 71), a statement which gains even more strength in a volume dominated by academic institutions from these two countries.

The next three sections of the volume each engage with Shakespeare within a specific context related to social (in)justice. Part two is called “resisting racial logics” part three “imagining freedom with Shakespeare” and part four bears the title “scrutinizing gender and sexual violence.” Part two kicks off with an essay by Dyese Elliott-Newton, “Making whiteness out of ‘nothing’: The recurring comedic torture of (pregnant) Black women from medieval to modern.” The starting point of her essay lies in the treatment of a Black woman, eight months pregnant, who was arrested in 2015 in a parking lot after bringing her second grader to school. The officer forced her to the concrete, stomach first, ignoring her screams that she was pregnant. It’s a horrific image and Elliott-Newton draws upon medieval texts, in particular *Morkinskinna* (1220) as the birthplace of these stories and early modern texts as instruments of their propagation. Basing herself largely on Ben Jonson’s *Masque of Blackness* and

Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*, in particular Act 3, scene 5, where Lancelot is accused of making a Black woman pregnant, Elliott-Newton argues how the Black woman's body "functions as a safe and useful space to bury the various social anxieties that challenge the 'perfection' and 'supremacy' of whiteness" (p. 83). The next two chapters in this section likewise build upon *Merchant of Venice* and link its characters and themes with present-day events to argue how and why the play still resonates so much across time and audiences. In chapter five (Feeling in justice. Racecraft and *The Merchant of Venice*), Derrick Higginbotham focuses in particular on the generally underexplored characters of Antonio and Gratiano to explore the topic of white fragility and white rage in their treatment of Shylock. In the final chapter of this section (Marking Muslims. The Prince of Morocco and the racialization of Islam in *The Merchant of Venice*) Hassana Moosa aims at demonstrating how Shakespeare racializes Islam by replacing the "theological essence with a series of cultural non-religious characteristics to produce the image of a 'Muslim'" (p. 121). In doing so, Moosa traces present-day Islamophobia back to Shakespeare's representation on the early modern stage of the Prince of Morocco. While one might argue that other Shakespeare plays should have been included as well in a section on racial logics, the bundling of the analysis around *The Merchant of Venice* does provide a clear focus and allows for cross-comparison, which helps tighten the argument.

Part three of the volume, engaging with imprisonment and Shakespeare, starts with an essay by Kai Wiegandt (Shakespeare in and on exile. Politicized reading and performative writing in the Robben Island Shakespeare) which discusses a series of markings made by the political prisoners on Robben Island to the secretly circulated copy of Shakespeare's works which was smuggled into the prison. Highlighting marked passages from *The Tempest*, *As You Like It*, *King Lear*, *Henry V* and *Hamlet* Wiegandt explores the interaction between exile, banishment, nationalism and colonization within the context of apartheid and South Africa. In the second essay of part three ("Men at some time are masters of their fates." The Gallowfield Players perform *Julius Caesar*) Rowan Mackenzie reveals the potential for healing and moving beyond the designated prisoner role that acting can have on inmates, in this specific case by zooming in on the production by a prison-group company in 2019 of *Julius Caesar*. While fully aware that Shakespeare is far from a panacea, Mackenzie highlights the joy and pride the production brought to actors and audiences.

The final part of the volume, engaging with gender and sexual violence in relation to Shakespeare's plays, starts with an essay by Kirsten Dey (The "sign and semblance of her honour." Petrarchan slander and gender-based violence in three Shakespearean plays) which discusses the potential for destructiveness in Petrarchan rhetoric and gendered romantic idealization. In doing so, Dey bases herself on *Much Ado about Nothing*, *Cymbeline* and *Othello*. In this comedy, romance and tragedy, Dey argues, Shakespeare created

disenchanted and (potentially) violent Petrarchan lovers and ultimately “makes a case for justice for women, thereby calling upon the audience—then and now—to take urgent action” (p. 190). In chapter 10 (Open-gendered casting in Shakespeare performance), Abraham Stoll explores the increasing normalization of open-gendered casting by discussing two productions of the University of San Diego Shiley Graduate Theatre Program, *Julius Caesar* in 2018 and *Twelfth Night* in 2019. In a detailed case-study, he discusses the casting, dramaturgical and acting choices and how they worked at being more than “mere commentaries on gender politics but as productions that engaged with the full gamut of emotions and ideas that are to be found in such great plays” (p. 220). In the final chapter of the volume (Teaching *Titus Andronicus* and Ovidian myth when sexual violence is on the public stage) Wendy Beth Hyman explores another case study, this time that of a classroom working on *Titus Andronicus* at the time when the controversial Brett Kavanaugh hearings for the Supreme Court took place. It is an impressive essay, in which the voices of students themselves are also heard, that touches upon tough questions revolving around whether or not we ought to teach works of art that dramatize rape and brutality, and if so, how. Hyman offers her essay as an encouragement to her “fellow teacher-scholars who are never sure whether to avoid or dive into these really tough issues—the deaths, the national tragedies, the scandals, the crises on-campus and off” (p. 245). Her answer to the question is an unequivocal yes and it is fitting that a volume dedicated to social (in)justice should end with this essay. If there’s any place in which we, as Shakespearean scholars, can make a difference, it would be in the intimacy of the classroom tackling beauty and ugliness head-on. And while I might argue this volume as a whole has caveats, such as the lack of non-Anglophone institutions, most of these caveats are unavoidable in publications on Shakespeare and social (in)justice. The terrain covered is so wide and diverse that it is virtually impossible to be complete and coherent. Having said that, this is a vibrant, relevant and thoughtful selection of essays which highlight both the potential and the pitfalls in working with Shakespeare to address the challenges that face us today. We need many more of these books.