experience" (110). In the third and final section, Bowers homes in on concepts of time—contrasting the labor-intensive and sometimes convoluted process of following recipe instructions with the rapid cures they are meant to bring about. Meanwhile, boundaries are crossed—marvelous and mundane, natural and supernatural, licit and illicit. Temporal and imaginative flexibility gave medical recipes a "shifting, metamorphic quality" (183) that, she contends, acted as playful stimulants for writers and readers alike.

Bowers urges us to look beyond medical recipes' practical, conventional nature, insisting that we be open to their purposeful aesthetics, imaginary value, and, most importantly, their emotional and physical effects on people's minds and bodies. Her literary and linguistic approach to discursive boundaries and connections may not appeal to those who are interested what the recipes reveal about medieval healing practices and networks. Most medical recipes are, after all, simply practical instructions, and Bowers admits that her corpus is limited. Nevertheless, her work could influence the way we reread historical recipes for wounds, apostemes, broken bones, worms, aches, and fevers.

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Shakespeare, Violence and Early Modern Europe. Andrew Hiscock.
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With extraordinary range of reference, Andrew Hiscock's *Shakespeare, Violence, and Early Modern Europe* examines early modern debates about the functions of violence in the construction of national identity and national memory from both English and continental perspectives. Though assembled around readings of Shakespeare's history plays, the book encompasses discussions of warfare, ambition, territorial expansion, militarization, and the uses of history, impressively documented in English and Continental print culture from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. If one result of this range is that the book's unifying insights sometimes avoid coming into clear view, Hiscock nonetheless achieves a rare combination of documentary richness and conceptual reflection.

The introduction—the most energizing part of the book—brings the insights of modern cultural theorists to bear on early modern discussions of war. Thus, missives from Phillip II appear alongside Arendt, Sontag, Levinas, Michaud, and Butler. One of Hiscock's aims is to underscore the evasive role of violence in the negotiation of national identities. The reassuring notion that violence is a tool wielded by others comes under review in English texts in which "political and theatrical audiences" were "repeatedly urged to scrutinize the assertion of English sovereignty in response to scenes of violence and trauma unfolding across the seas" (3). Hiscock demonstrates

that the violence exercised by English monarchs in the Shakespearean playhouse and by ambitious favorites of Elizabeth I abroad became both a mode and a subject of self-examination. Through advice books, dedications, correspondence, translations and drama, Hiscock analyzes the "construction of Self and Other through the enactment, narration and remembering of violence" that played a pivotal role in early modern English nation-building (6).

The core of the book consists of three chapters examining Shakespeare's history plays. Chapter 2 treats the cramped imaginations of the failing rulers in the *Henry VI* plays, for whom "the only means by which to affirm selfhood, to win political recognition and to subjugate others is through the perplexingly creative power to violate" (57). The result, for the plays' audiences, is a diminishing ability "to ascribe moral probity or justness of cause to either warring party" (68). Chapter 3 extends a similar critique to Henry IV in Shakespeare's second Henriad. Though the *Henry IV* plays query and "review the esteem in which the performance of violence is held," the Lancastrians wield brutality as "a tactical instrument of political authority," strategically deflecting attention away from the ways such violence raises "questions of analogy and reversibility" with their enemies (117, 87, 89). Chapter 4 argues that Shakespeare's Henry V promotes himself in violent terms "because he appears to have at his disposal no alternative scheme of governance with which to restrain his unruly realm" (124). The chapters are rich with documentation from the many genres of Elizabethan print culture, and part of Hiscock's point is to show that the multivocal conversation about the legitimacy and inner workings of a militarized society that unfolds in these documents is also articulated within the plays. Shakespeare rehearses fifteenth-century history for a 1590s audience as a way of examining the continued role of violence in English nation-building. In these core chapters, the plays at times seem to be held at arm's length, resulting in occasional errors. This is not so much a close reading as a conceptual reading, and for this reason some of the most persuasive (if abstracted) passages are those in which Hiscock integrates contemporary theorists.

The Shakespeare chapters are bookended by biographical chapters examining the lives of Sir Walter Raleigh and Robert Devereux. Both favorites of Elizabeth I who met violent ends, these men represent the connection between violence and ambition in a period in which courtiers were preoccupied with war whether in antiquity or their present. Focusing on Continental representations of the Essex rebellion in chapter 6 is a way of turning the tables: if England had observed the violence of the Continent, Hiscock shows that the European Continent was also watchful of potential broils in England. The last chapters would benefit from clearly articulated connections to the core project; still, they demonstrate the historical and documentary range through which Hiscock interrogates the appetite for violence in historical narratives from the early modern period to today.

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