

---

## Renaissance and Reformation Renaissance et Réforme



### Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Ed. Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman.

Jonathan Locke Hart

---

Volume 43, Number 1, Winter 2020

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1070218ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v43i1.34138>

[See table of contents](#)

---

Publisher(s)

Iter Press

ISSN

0034-429X (print)

2293-7374 (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

---

Cite this review

Hart, J. (2020). Review of [Shakespeare, William. *The Tempest*. Ed. Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman.] *Renaissance and Reformation / Renaissance et Réforme*, 43(1), 287–289. <https://doi.org/10.33137/rr.v43i1.34138>

Miola's critical edition provides a considered editorial and critical apparatus with a strong Introduction. Its international scope should appeal to scholars, teachers, students, actors, directors, and others globally.

JONATHAN LOCKE HART

Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies

Victoria College, University of Toronto

### **Shakespeare, William.**

***The Tempest*. Ed. Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman.**

A Norton Critical Edition. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. New York: W.W. Norton, 2019. Pp. xii, 375. ISBN 978-0-393-26542-2 (paperback) US\$18.75.

Peter Hulme and William H. Sherman's latest Norton Critical Edition of *The Tempest* has much to recommend it. The Preface is brief and helpful (vii–xii). Here, the editors set out the earliest performance of the play on the night of 1 November 1611 before King James at court and note that the play was also performed before the king on 20 May 1613 in the festivities before the marriage of his daughter. Hulme and Sherman assume that the play was also performed at Blackfriars Theatre or The Globe Theatre under the patronage of James I by the “King’s Men” (vii). The editors also remark that *The Tempest* was one of about half of Shakespeare’s plays to be printed for the first time in the First Folio of 1623 and appeared there as a comedy—not in the other two categories in that volume, history and tragedy (vii). They mention that the play is probably the last Shakespeare wrote alone and that it has been taken as a farewell to his art but also a beginning. Moreover, it is a play about the life-cycles: death, regeneration, “bondage and release” (vii). For Hulme and Sherman, although the First Folio presents the play as a comedy, it has other dimensions; it shares with *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* an “otherworldly setting and romantic playfulness,” and with Shakespeare’s other comedies a movement to marriage and reconciliation (vii). Its serious tone, its themes of morality, enslavement, and exile, and the suffering of the characters have prompted some to deem the play a tragicomedy, romance, or problem play (vii).

The editors state that *The Tempest* has no ready historical or literary source, which makes it less usual in Shakespeare’s oeuvre (viii). References, allusions,

and quotations occur from Virgil's *Aeneid*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Montaigne's "Of Cannibals," and some accounts of the shipwreck of the *Sea Venture* near Bermuda in July 1609. There is an echo of "Setebos" from Antonio Pigafetta's account of Ferdinand Magellan's voyage around the world, and there are echoes of the Bible, especially Isaiah 29. Hume and Sherman hear resonances in the works of contemporaries such as Samuel Purchas and Gabriel Naudé (viii). The Preface recounts the action of the play at key moments (viii–x). The editors then observe that "*The Tempest* is, after *The Comedy of Errors*, Shakespeare's shortest play, and it is full of loose ends and open questions," some of which they proceed to ask (x). Hulme and Sherman refer to the lively criticism over the ages, including that by Dryden, Coleridge, and Henry James (x). They talk of universals, when many in literary studies and humanities have challenged this notion: "The universality of *The Tempest*'s relationships (father and daughter, husband and wife, older brother and younger brother, king and subject, master and servant, colonizer and colonized) has helped to make it one of the most adaptable texts of the entire literary canon, and it has been reread and rewritten more radically than any of Shakespeare's other works" (xi). Hulme and Sherman use the example of Dryden's and Davenant's adaptation, *The Enchanted Island* (1667), which was parodied, spawned other forms like pantomime, burlesque, and comic opera, and also endured, despite the restoration of the original to the stage in 1838, throughout the nineteenth century (xi). Shakespeare's play, as the editors maintain, inspired and provoked many poets, including Shelley, Browning, Rilke, and Ted Hughes (xi).

"A Note on the Text" is also clear and helpful (75–76). The editors say they have followed other modern editors in adhering to the text from the First Folio; yet they remind the reader that, as with all Shakespeare's plays, there is no text in Shakespeare's hand, and that about half the plays were first printed in 1623 and therefore did not appear in the playwright's life. They mention intermediaries (as well as the playwright's own death) coming between Shakespeare and the printed text: for example, Ralph Crane, a scrivener experienced in legal and theatrical manuscripts, whom the printers of the Folio *Tempest* engaged. Hulme and Sherman, too, have modernized the text: "We have tried to provide an edition of the play that makes the text as accessible to modern readers as possible without sacrificing the linguistic and rhetorical complexity of the original" (75). Furthermore, they warn that the length and format of a Norton Critical Edition does not allow for a discussion of all textual

uncertainties and ambiguities, and they produce some examples to give readers a sense of the challenges editors face: for instance, in the division of prose and verse, the cruxes, and multiple meanings in the play (76). For a fuller discussion of textual matters, the editors refer the reader to the identical text of the play in the third edition of *The Norton Shakespeare* (2016), to David Lindley's "Textual Analysis" in the New Cambridge *The Tempest*, and to John Jowett's notes on the play in *William Shakespeare: A Textual Companion*, published by Norton in 1997.

The other sections are also useful to students, scholars, teachers, actors, directors, and others. "Sources and Contexts" (81–120) includes the sub-sections "Magic and Witchcraft," "Politics and Religion," and "Geography and Travel," ranging from Ovid, Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, and Montaigne to Richard Eden and William Strachey. "Criticism" is one long section that includes Nicholas Rowe, Ludwig Tieck, Lytton Strachey, Octave Mannoni, George Lamming, and Hulme and Sherman themselves (121–303). The section "Rewritings and Appropriations" includes discussions of plays from John Fletcher and Philip Massinger to Aimé Césaire, and poets from Shelley, H. D., Kamau Brathwaite, and Lemuel Johnson to Robin Kirkpatrick (305–68). This is a rich and measured edition that will yield much for a wide variety of readers.

JONATHAN LOCKE HART

Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies

Victoria College, University of Toronto

**Terruggia, Angela Maria (†), Francesco Santucci, Gina Scentoni, and Daniele Sini.**

***Il laudario "Illuminati" e la costellazione assisiata, con un saggio di Mara Nerbano.***

Testi e documenti della Fraternita dei Disciplinati di S. Stefano di Assisi 3. Perugia: Deputazione di storia patria per l'Umbria / Assisi: Accademia Properziana del Subasio, 2017. Pp. 317 + 55 b/w ill. ISBN 978-88-95331-32-4 / 978-88-88661-32-2 (paperback) n.p.

After Pope Alexander IV (r. 1254–61) banned any unregulated form of procession or spectacle performed by flagellant bands (1261), the tumultuous