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## 00 Preface

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## Preface

Clifford Davidson

The essays in this online collection are mainly a selection of reprinted articles from the *EDAM Newsletter* (1978–88) and its successor, *The Early Drama, Art, and Music Review*, published between 1989 and 2002, by Medieval Institute Publications at Western Michigan University. They were brought together originally for publication in a projected book contracted to AMS Press, Inc., of New York, and thus were to form a companion to *The Dramatic Tradition of the Middle Ages* (2005). This plan was ultimately not carried out on account of the death of the publisher, Gabriel Hornstein, and the subsequent bankruptcy of AMS Press, a venerable firm that had been founded in the nineteenth century. Happily, the Medieval Institute offered to post the essays online as a way to give them larger currency. This solution also allowed some of the authors to revise their work and one, Peter Happé, to complete his article on “Drama and Authority in the Reign of Queen Mary,” sadly before seeing his article thus online before his death in February 2021.

The selection begins with John Marlin’s contextualizing of liturgical drama’s Herod character against the troubled political background of the twelfth century, providing a view of this archetypal figure of tyrannical rule whose power is based on violence. Following is the late Lynette Muir’s essay, focusing on the collegiate church of St-Omer, which maintained its liturgical Easter play over a centuries-long time span, extending into the eighteenth century. Nils Holger Petersen’s work turns to Venice and its liturgical rites, in which political power joined with the sacred. Central to this union was the *doge*, by whom the city was connected by ceremonies to its patron St. Mark. Palm Sunday processions are the subject of Teresa Bela’s article. She describes a long-lasting tradition of such processions that have continued, albeit with

modifications, until the present in Poland. The centerpiece of such rites is the Palm Sunday ass with its seated image of Christ being paraded to the doors of the church as Jesus once, according to the scriptures, went in procession to the gates of Jerusalem.

Hans Jürgen Diller gives detailed attention to Middle English drama and its use of the Four Daughters of God, which, while based on Psalm 84:11–12 (AV 85:10-12), was invoked to illuminate the irreconcilable aspects of judgment in this world (how can Mercy, Truth, Justice, and Peace be reconciled?) and the perfect resolution expected to be performed in God's judgment at the end of time. The debate as it survived in the course of development in Tudor drama is a study in secularization.

Karen Sawyer Marsalek discusses the role of saints named in the *Second Shepherds' Play* in the Towneley collection. She shows that these are saints associated with Christian liturgy and who were connected in the Church year with Advent and Christmas, each with special meaning for the play. The contribution of the late John Velz recalls schema applied by Wyndham Lewis in the study of Shakespeare to demonstrate a division between “medieval” and “Renaissance”—schema, based on the iconography of the lion and the fox as character types that, along with the bull, was instead very much alive and understood in earlier centuries. Professor Velz references the Towneley *Coliphizacio*, uncovering patterns of coercion well understood by citizens and non-citizens of the early Tudor period, especially with regard to persons having pretensions to authority. Such a person was Herod, also discussed by Carolyn Coulson, surely a favorite character for actors to play then as now, albeit a stock figure ridiculed in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* as ripe for overacting. She demonstrates that each of the Herods dramatized in the English cycles and drama collections are distinctive, presenting the villain in differing ways. To her study she

brings a sensitivity of a talented theater director's deep experience and knowledge of the conditions of the medieval stage.

The East Anglian parochial context of the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament* is taken up by Ann Eljenholm Nichols, who studies the drama in relation to devotion to the Instruments of the Passion, a major feature of religion in this region in the fifteenth century. Drawing on her deep knowledge of iconography of that area, she provides an approach to the *Play of the Sacrament* that explores an important dimension of study that was encouraged by the EDAM project. The props in this Host-desecration play are more than mere objects for display, but have deep resonance in the religious culture of the area around the village of Croxton and indeed of the counties of Suffolk and Norfolk generally.

The sophisticated technologies that underlay medieval play production have too often been neglected, none more so than the use of color by painters, whose work was verifiably critical to the visual effects that were produced. In her revised and expanded paper, Jon Terry Wade offers an introduction to the painters' guilds and provides essential information about the availability and kinds of pigments they used for pageant wagons, props, and costumes. In contrast, it is a revolutionary new technology that is discussed by the late Graham A. Runnalls, whose scholarship remains well known and admired by students of the early French theater. The invention of printing in the fifteenth century, while never used to disseminate the great Middle English drama texts, in France deeply affected the performance of plays wherever playbooks became available. Nevertheless, the possession of printed books seems to have had a negative effect on creativity in that they obviated the need to write new plays and hence may have led to "the death of mystery plays as a creative genre."

Martin W. Walsh studies an accretion to the saint's life of St. Martin of Tours in which a cripple and a blind man team up to beg, apparently lucratively, but are healed against their will when they are surprised by the appearance of the relics of the saint carried in procession. Naturally, they are not grateful for being healed, and the story has the making of a delightful subject for a comic episode, as in the *mystère* based on the saint's legend by André la Vigne to which Professor Walsh calls attention.

The final papers in this selection turn to early Tudor plays. Mary Remnant supplements her work on instruments in early English drama in a contribution originally published in a volume in the EDAM Monograph series. As a highly respected specialist with an intimate knowledge of the field, she provides a reliable guide to early sixteenth-century instruments. Peter Happé studies the relation between drama and the regime in a time of shifting religious ideologies—the reign of Queen Mary Tudor, when England was briefly returned to Roman Catholicism. The plays he examines were written, performed, and published within a conflicted period when religious views could be a matter of life and death.

Gratitude must be expressed to those authors who agreed to have their articles reprinted, in their original or revised form, and for cooperation by holders of copyright for those who are deceased. Others provided essential assistance, earlier and later in the process of bringing this project into being, of course beginning with Gabe Hornstein of AMS Press. Those who need to be named include Patricia Hollohan, formerly managing editor of Medieval Institute Publications; Thomas Krol, for technical assistance; Audrey Davidson, who was long involved medieval drama production until her health declined, for support; and most especially Elizabeth Teviotdale, who helped crucially to rescue the project and prepared these essays to appear online.

*Clifford Davidson, director of the Early Drama, Art, and Music project, 1976-2003*

Preface

The Investiture Contest and the Rise of Herod Plays in the Twelfth Century

John Marlin

Liturgy and Drama at St-Omer in the Thirteenth through Sixteenth Centuries

Lynette R. Muir

Il Doge and the Liturgical Drama in Late Medieval Venice

Nils Holger Petersen

Palm Sunday Ceremonies in Poland: The Past and the Present

Teresa Bela

From Synthesis to Compromise: The Four Daughters of God in Early English Drama

Hans-Jürgen Diller

“Lyst ye saynt?” Saints in the *Second Shepherds’ Play*

Karen Sawyer Marsalek

Fox, Bull, and Lion in the Towneley *Coliphizacio*

John W. Velz

Embodying Text: Reassessing Characterization and Performance in the Medieval English Herod Plays

Carolyn Coulson

The *Arma Christi* and the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*: A Prolegomenon to Regional Iconographic History

Ann Eljenholm Nichols

The “Stuff” of the Medieval Palette: Paint, Painters, and the Dramatic Records

Jon Terry Wade

Medieval Actors and the Invention of Printing in Late Medieval France

Graham A. Runnalls

St. Martin's Clowns: The Miracle of the Blind Man and the Cripple in Art and Drama

Martin W. Walsh

Musical Instruments in Early Drama: Tudor Plays

Mary Remnant

Drama and Authority during the Reign of Queen Mary

Peter Happé