

in *The Merchant of Venice*. Brett Gamboa also discusses *Merchant*, in a refreshingly honest argument that the best productions of this play neither smooth out the rough edges nor excessively darken it, but rather embrace the anxieties and ambiguities embodied in all of the characters, especially Shylock. The last pair of essays in this section by Dan Donohue and coeditor Michael Shurgot deal with *Othello*. Donohue offers another insider's look at how an actor makes the transition from text to performance by recounting how his experience playing Iago was determined by psychological motivation and by audience response. Shurgot's bold reading of the scene in which Iago recounts Cassio's dream to Othello exposes the episode's divisive potential and furthers our understanding of both characters.

The essays in the volume's final section examine the intersection between theory and practice. Eunice Roberts, an advocate of a mindful, analytical approach to the acting process, explains how actors can put the abstract idea of liminality—that moment of transformation from one point or state to another—to practical use. Lina Perkins Wilder's essay, "Playing Sodomites," builds on Roberts's idea of liminality in her analysis of the Rosalind/Ganymede role in *As You Like It*. Wilder explores the construction of character in light of early modern views of theatre and gender fluidity. Travis Curtwright's essay on early modern acting styles provides an interesting complication of the alleged binary between "naturalism" and "formalism." Curtwright argues for a performance of Iago that adheres to both expectations of "type" and to a more naturalistic and expansive concept of character.

James Wells's essay on *Henry V* takes on an issue that vexes narrative fiction as well as Shakespeare studies: the differentiation we must make between "real people" and "fictional characters in plays." Wells argues that Shakespeare deliberately and effectively confuses this distinction and that our fullest understanding of the plays is grounded in this "experience of confusion."

The virtues of this volume are many: this is not just a collection of articles gathered under a broadly defined common topic, but a venue for a group of academics and practitioners to engage in scholarly conversations. This dialogue is not serendipitous, but a result of editorial care. The essays also demonstrate that academic prose can be smart, stimulating, and pleasurable; that scholarly debates can be passionate but civil; and above all, that character-based approaches are integral to our engagement with Shakespearean selves in a postmodern world.



#### **New Approaches to Naples c. 1500–c. 1800: The Power of Place.**

Ed. Melissa Calaresu and Helen Hills.

Farnham: Ashgate, 2013. 260 pp. \$119.95. ISBN 978-1-4094-2943-2.

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Current scholarship on early modern Naples emphasizes how its historical development mirrored that of other Italian cities, but notes the city's particular links to Spain, Europe, and the Mediterranean. *New Approaches to Naples* exemplifies this school of thought, now the fruit of scholars working together on both sides of the Atlantic. Fundamentally, this anthology dispels the historical formula—itsself a vestige—focused on determining when and why Naples deviated from the supposedly normative development of northern Italy and northwestern Europe. In these essays, the city becomes an influential locus of exchanges within a set of larger contexts. Editors Melissa Calaresu and Helen Hills write that the importance of their subject should not "require insistence" (3). Calaresu and

Hills wish to “challenge and to interpret both the glamorization of Naples as excessive, dangerous and exotic, and its related scholarly neglect” (1). The anthology they have assembled contains historical studies of culture and its production. The nine authors make deep forays into art, literature, music, and history.

Early modern Naples underwent dynamic transformation. The city became a protagonist in the vast Habsburg empire beginning in the early 1500s. As a result of Spanish rule, it entered into a system of imperial exchanges and experienced hypertrophic population growth. Resources, people, and information moved between Naples, Rome, and Madrid, flowed across the western and eastern Mediterranean, and connected that sea to the western shores of the Atlantic. By rejecting the view that the early modern metropolis was an obstacle to the political development of the peninsula, *New Approaches* explores Naples from the perspective of its role as a “hinge” operating wide-ranging effects. The authors replace inertia and passivity with influence. They inflect debates, for example, about the costs and benefits of Spanish colonialism, or about the Grand Tour’s construction of an exotic place, with attention to cultural production in the urban space, where Neapolitans were actors and participants rather than passive colonized subjects. This shift in perspective is significant. Naples, argue the authors, was a laboratory of cultural experimentation.

Part 1, “Disaster,” explores historiography, architectural space, and print culture in ways that freshly illuminate the city’s long-recited litany of calamities. John Marino deconstructs the narrative of Neapolitan history as a failure to achieve modernization and integration into unified Italy. He argues that a deeper set of commonalities located in the dynamics of property and labor, on the exchange of goods and ideas, and on the inheritance of antiquity, put Naples on a continuum with the rest of the peninsula, with the differences between north and south only widening in the modern period (26). Hills’s essay rethinks approaches to Neapolitan architecture that reduce, she argues, material and ideated or symbolic complexity (in this case, the accretion of different sculpted spaces in the Treasury Chapel of San Gennaro) to the outcome of a supposedly external context linked to patronage. Similarly, Rose Marie San Juan’s essay on print views of the 1656 plague destabilizes the boundaries between cultural production and physical Naples, integrating views of materiality and symbolism within complex interrelationships where citizens confronted death and reconstructed the city’s contaminated body in image.

In part 2, “Topographies,” Harald Hendrix examines how poems and engraved depictions conveyed the cultural and political shifts occurring in the Spanish period, manifesting a changing standard for the depiction of the urban environs that identified a predilection for travelers’ firsthand experience. Dinko Fabris investigates the curious absence of major music collections in early modern Naples, first by explaining how scores were produced in the famed musical city, then by illuminating their collection and dispersal. Helena Hammond expands the analysis past the city into the landed estates of the Bourbons. She shows that landscape paintings commissioned by the Neapolitan monarchy met the expectations of Grand Tour audiences, but also demonstrates that the depiction of hunting encoded the monarchy’s unstable claim to large tracts of feudal land.

In part 3, “Exceptionalities,” Calaresu makes the case that Neapolitans actively constructed, consumed, and enjoyed the Grand Tour stereotype that played up their exotic theatricality and difference from northern Europeans. Difference appears again in Paola Bertucci’s essay on the curiosity cabinets and experimental spaces sponsored by Ferdinando Spinelli, Prince of Tarsia, since sites of knowledge production like the Palazzo Tarsia failed to achieve the longevity of counterparts in other European capitals. Bertucci’s case

study reveals the tensions within the Neapolitan scientific community, especially the gaps between patrons and practitioners, and fundamentally evinces the fact that science reflected the social and political framework of an urban milieu that had its own distinct but not fundamentally abnormal features. Anna Maria Rao addresses historiography and closes the loop by identifying the events, like those in 1647 and 1799, and the problems, such as the achievements of the southern Enlightenment, that have freighted the history of Naples with the idea that succession failures steered southern Italy from the path toward modernity.

Together, the authors continue to draw from the deep well of Neapolitan historiography, much of it a dialogue with the ideas of Benedetto Croce and Antonio Gramsci in the last century. They complement other groundbreaking work, such as Barbara Ann Naddeo's studies of urbanization and social theory, as well. Lacunae are, however, evident. Environmental history is absent from the anthology, although it would surely expand understanding of what the editors term the power of place. An integrative view of the natural environment and urban culture could complement the methodological awareness of historical complexity displayed in Hills's and San Juan's essays on architecture and print, where the authors seemingly ponder material and ideated structures as continuous and interrelated. Sustained engagement with the Mediterranean still seems an unfilled promise as well, particularly if one considers developments in the historiography of Venice, Genoa, and more recently Florence.

While *New Approaches to Naples* is meant to appeal to non-Neapolitan specialists, it feels less like an introduction for the nonspecialist than a display of methodological sophistication applied to a fabulously rich urban context. A few of the authors in this anthology have different essays appearing in Tommaso Astarita's edited collection, *A Companion to Early Modern Naples* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), so there is ample companionship in the laudable enterprise of drawing more scholars to Naples. This excellent book benefits from a high production value, including seven color plates, and that is likely to contribute to its deserved success.



**Roman Antiquities in Renaissance France, 1515–65.** Richard Cooper.

Farnham: Ashgate Press, 2013. x + 433 pp. \$144.00. ISBN 978-1-4094-5265-2.

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The French vogue for collecting Roman antiquities is the focus of Richard Cooper's latest book, in which he incorporates new research, very helpfully presented, on antiquarian interests in France and Italy in the first decades following the Italian Wars. He argues that this period has been neglected. Such interest was then at its height, before the Civil Wars of Religion and the anti-Italianism of the second half of the century had taken hold. The first chapters introduce the travels and discoveries of French and other enthusiasts for Roman and French antiquities, though the latter had been explored at first by foreigners. Arles as a site of predilection receives attention, and the volume does service to synthesize the antiquarian work and subsequent publications of Geoffroy Tory, author of *Le Champfleury*. Cooper devotes equal attention to the work of Claude de Belèvre. He describes in a very useful way the cross-fertilization of ideas and findings of French and Italian humanists, such as in the continued attention accorded to the works of Vitruvius. The influence of the Italian Academies is also discussed. In particular, kings, ecclesiastics, and nobles acquired Roman coins, which could be the bulk of a collection or could be given as gifts by a great person