Alan C. Dessen, editor. *Renaissance Drama*, New Series, VI. Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1975. Pp. ix, 250. \$11.50.

On its front cover this volume displays a bust of Seneca, and on its back a woodcut of two allegorical figures from a Tudor interlude, labeled Charitie and Youth. Sandwiched between the two pictures are a dozen essays on various aspects of the two main traditions behind the Renaissance drama, the classical and the medieval, so arranged by the editor that in reading through the volume one continually oscillates between them. By now the term "post-Shakespearean" is properly regarded as an inadequate and condescending label for the medieval and Tudor drama. As Stanley J. Kahrl points out in his review article on the subject, recent scholarship has increasingly emphasized the intrinsic virtues of the morality and mystery plays, and also has given us a more precise understanding of what they contribute to the drama of Shakespeare and his contemporaries. The influence of the Roman playwrights, especially Seneca, has been similarly reassessed. In their review article, Anna Lydell Motto and John R. Clark show that while Seneca's influence was originally overestimated then minimized or disparaged (by Eliot), it is now seen more accurately as cooperating fruitfully with elements from the native tradition.

The essays on the classical antecedents suggest that "confluence" would indeed be a more useful critical term than "influence." In examining the revival of Plautus and Terence in late fifteenth-century Italy and at the court of Henry VIII, Bruce R. Smith finds that rather than being presented in pure form, the comedies were intermixed with other, less erudite kinds of entertainment—with interludes depending heavily on medieval romance and mythological spectacle. This syncretizing tendency persisted in the Elizabethan drama, most notably in Shakespeare's adaptation of the *Menaechmi* in *The Comedy of Errors*, with its romance frame and heightened love interest. Comparing the city comedies of Plautus and Middleton, Gail Kern Paster shows that while both playwrights employ the city as a complex social context for the comic action, and while both demonstrate the dehumanizing effects of competitive urban attitudes, Middleton is more concerned than his predecessor with the perversion and breakdown of family relationships. Catherine Belsey finds an example of confluence in the soliloquies of Marlowe, Shakespeare, and Chapman. In dramatizing inner moral debate they derive ultimately from the psychomachia, while to Seneca they owe their emotional and rhetorical intensity, the passionate grandeur of the tragic hero.

In a wide-ranging and stimulating essay on the prodigal son play, Ervin Beck sees a radical difference between the treatments of the son in Roman and English Renaissance comedy. In the former he is ultimately triumphant in his rebellion against the father; in the latter, in keeping with the biblical paradigm, he finally repents and accepts the conservative ideas of the older generation. Since this is redemptive comedy, "it is concerned with getting rid of a different kind of senex—the internalized 'old man' of the New Testament." In a chronological list of thirty-nine plays, including six by Shakespeare, Beck shows how popular and durable the prodigal son play was from 1513 to 1635. In "'Plot' and 'Episode' in Early Neoclassical Criticism," David Riggs demonstrates that the Italian critics distorted the strictures of Aristotle, Horace, and Donatus so as to accommodate them to the loose episodic structures of the native drama. Through a liberal interpretation of the Aristotelian "episode" or middle portion of a play, they were able to replace "unity of action" with

the "multiple unity" familiar to modern criticism—the unity that depends not on causal sequence but on figural and thematic analogies.

Among the authors who focus primarily on the native drama, Robert C. Jones in "Dangerous Sport: The Audience's Engagement with the Vice in the Moral Interludes" considers the paradox that the Vice, as the most entertaining figure in a morality play, is at odds with its serious didactic purpose. He resolves it by showing how in the course of a play such as *Mankind* the audience's response to the Vice is shifted from positive to negative; at first amused by him, it is later made uncomfortably aware of the wrongness of its amusement. Rosemary Woolf examines the influence of the mystery plays on three popular tragedies of the 1560's, *Apilus and Virginia*, *Cambises*, and *Horestes*, and discovers antecedents to some of their episodes in plays on the Sacrifice of Isaac and the Massacre of the Innocents. In "Italian Tragicomedy on the English Stage," G. K. Hunter suggests that certain plays of the early 1600's, including Marston's *Malcontent* and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well*, can be seen as responses to the recently-imported genre of tragicomedy. In the English plays the setting is changed from pastoral to urban, and the moral and political atmosphere becomes correspondingly uneasy and ambiguous. Some detailed parallels between *Measure for Measure* and *All's Well* on the one hand, and Guarini's *Il Pastor Fido* on the other, prompt Hunter to conjecture that Shakespeare was directly influenced by the latter.

Two final essays deal with topics that, although not directly relevant to the English drama, are of considerable interest in themselves. Drawing on the aesthetic theories of Suzanne Langer, Charlotte Stern traces the development of the medieval Spanish drama from its earlier ritualistic to its later literary forms, or from the audience's full participation in the rite as a present reality, to its separation from the illusion of reality created on the stage. Franco Fido provides an introduction to the plays of Angelo Beolco, the early sixteenth-century Italian playwright who, although neglected until the twentieth century, deserves to be called "the greatest Italian playwright" of his period.

As the editor of this volume candidly admits, "none of the essays is revolutionary; few are controversial." Their scholarly tone is generally sober, scrupulous, and undogmatic. The larger areas having been already mapped out by Wickham, Bevington, Kolve, and others, these essays patiently carry out the useful task of filling in the topographical details. They do so in a consistently interesting and informative way.

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John P. Cutts, editor. *Loves Changelinges Change*. Fennimore, Wisconsin: John Westburg and Associates, 1974. Pp. xix, 82. \$10.

It is a rare and pleasant experience to see a hitherto unpublished manuscript come into print, especially when the manuscript was one which the rest of us would have been loathe to tackle, and for this we are very much in Mr. Cutts' debt. The play is based on Sidney's *Arcadia*, and is anonymous. I must concur with Bullen's contention that as a play it is rather dull. The main reason, to my mind, is that the author has simply lifted passages