



Marlowe, Christopher. The Jew of Malta. Ed. Lloyd Kermode

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[Aller au sommaire du numéro](#)

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Marlowe, Christopher.

***The Jew of Malta*. Ed. Lloyd Kermode.**

Norton Critical Editions. New York: W.W. Norton, 2021. Pp. 576. ISBN 978-0-393-64335-0 (paperback) US\$18.75.

Lloyd Edward Kermode's Norton Critical Edition of *The Jew of Malta* is a solid teaching edition of this important English Renaissance play. In keeping with the Norton Critical Edition format, the modernized text of Christopher Marlowe's play is followed by full selections of contextual and critical material. To suit the needs of student readers, the text has been edited conservatively, as the editor explains: "I have endeavoured to be conservative in my editorial changes and kept the text closely aligned with previous editions. This is designed to make moving between editions and from play text to critical text as seamless as possible" (xv–xvi). Accordingly, the brief but accurate collation notes come after the play text, providing a record of the editor's minimal editorial intervention while not encumbering the notes with the details found in a variorum edition. Accompanying the text of the play are the commentary notes, which are written in a clear, lively, and engaging style, unintimidating but nonetheless scholarly. The notes run the standard gamut found in student editions: glosses of obsolete or difficult words, explanations of allusions and historical context, notes on the staging, and a few textual notes on emendations and other textual cruces that significantly affect the reading of the play. As an example of this last type, the note to 5.1.86 alerts the modern reader to the instability of early modern printed texts by briefly detailing the different emendations by which modern editors have attempted to cope with the seeming nonsense of the 1633 quarto's version of the line's last word. On the whole, the notes render the play accessible and enjoyable to the modern reader and provide both student and instructor with a comprehensive set of starting points for the further critical exploration of the play.

The text of the play is followed by collections of contextual and critical material. The contextual material is divided into three sections: "Theater and Marlowe," "Machiavelli and Mediterranean Identities," and "Ideas of the Jew." With two well-chosen exceptions, the contextual material comprises relevant and accessible excerpts from a range of medieval and early modern literary, dramatic, theological, and historical documents from Chaucer to Thomas Browne. A small sampling of the early modern material includes excerpts from

Robert Wilson's *The Three Ladies of London*, Stow's *The Chronicles of England*, Luther's *On the Jews and Their Lies*, and Thomas Nashe's *The Unfortunate Traveller*. The two exceptions are the two modern essays at the head of the first two sections: Julian Bowsher's "Marlowe and the Rose" and Daniel Vitkus's "Turks and Jews in *The Jew of Malta*." These two pieces provide excellent introductions to their respective sections.

The critical material has been equally well chosen and divides into four sections: "Nineteenth-Century Criticism," "Twentieth-Century Criticism," "Twenty-First-Century Critical Directions," and "*The Jew of Malta* and Performance." While this breakdown of the criticism is, as the section titles indicate, generally chronological, there is a rough correlation between the major themes of the material in each section and the corresponding section in the previous contextual material collection. The "Nineteenth-Century Criticism" section focuses on Marlowe himself and the reputation he acquired as playwright and atheist, providing illuminating modern commentary on the material found in the "Theater and Marlowe" section of the contextual material collection. Similarly, the major themes of the criticism in the "Twentieth-Century Criticism" and "Twenty-First-Century Critical Directions" sections are Machiavellianism (and its Marlovian overreaching dramatic equivalents), race, and imperialism, rendering these two sections productive extensions of the second and third sections of the contextual material collection. The scholarship excerpted in the critical material includes such landmarks of Marlowe criticism as Harry Levin's *The Overreacher*, Stephen Greenblatt's "Marlowe and the Will to Absolute Play," and Emily Bartel's *Spectacles of Strangeness*, along with more recent scholarship on the play, such as Michelle Ephraim's chapter on "Abigail's Roles in *The Jew of Malta*" in her book *Reading the Jewish Woman on the Elizabethan Stage*. The edition also contains a selected bibliography of further criticism on the play. "*The Jew of Malta* and Performance" section commences with an essay by Sarah Munson Deats on the play's performance history from its 1818 London revival to the first decade of the twenty-first century, and contains relevant material spanning this period of almost two centuries.

It is to be regretted that the Norton Critical Edition format did not permit Kermode to include a substantial introduction to the play. The three-page preface is largely concerned with explaining the textual apparatus. Arguably, the lack of an introduction is compensated for by the many introductory notes distributed throughout the edition, but this reader, at least, would have welcomed the

opportunity to learn from the editor in the sustained and concentrated fashion afforded by an introduction. Nonetheless, the many strengths of this edition far outweigh this limitation. “This Norton Critical Edition of *The Jew of Malta* has been compiled with the classroom and the undergraduate student in mind at all times,” (xii) Kermode states in the preface, and it solidly achieves its goal.

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Mazzanti, Giuseppe.

Un imperatore musulmano. Il Liber de sceleribus et infelicitate perfidi turchi ac de spurcitia et feditate gentis et secte sue (1467/1468) di Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo.

Diritto Cultura Società 15. Bologna: Bononia University Press, 2020. 214 p. ISBN 978-8-8692-3604-4 (relié) 30€.

Giuseppe Mazzanti, professeur associé en histoire du droit médiéval et moderne à l’Université d’Udine, offre dans ce beau volume une édition critique impeccable du *Liber de sceleribus* du juriste, historien et théologien espagnol Rodrigo Sánchez de Arévalo (1404–1470). Cette édition, avec présentation des variantes et *apparatus fontium* (56–197), est précédée par une solide introduction (9–47) et suivie par deux index utiles des passages cités et des noms (199–214).

Prélat typique dont l’essentiel de la carrière se déroula dans les États pontificaux, Sánchez de Arévalo est évêque de Calahorra et *alcaide*, c’est-à-dire commandant, du Château Saint-Ange quand il compose le *Liber de sceleribus*. De ce texte longtemps oublié ne nous sont parvenus que deux copies manuscrites : dans son ouvrage, Giuseppe Mazzanti fonde son édition sur le ms. Vat. Lat. 971, après une minutieuse et convaincante comparaison avec le ms. Vat. Lat. 972 (4752). Comme son titre l’indique, le *Livre des crimes et de la méchanceté du Turc perfide, ainsi que de l’impureté et de la laideur de son peuple et de sa secte* relève de l’abondante polémique antiottomane et antimusulmane qui fleurit en Italie à partir de 1453. Mais son intérêt tient moins dans son propos sur l’islam, dont Giuseppe Mazzanti montre bien le caractère stéréotypé, que dans