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Jean Mairet: Théâtre complet. Tome I. La Sophonisbe -- Le  
Marc-Antoine ou la Cléopâtre -- Le Grand et Dernier  
Solyman; ou, la mort de Mustapha (review)

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on a number of *idées reçues*. One will suffice by way of illustration. It is now dogma that actors came to the front of the stage to perform. Pasquier shows that there is no evidence to support this view, but a considerable amount of evidence to show that they performed just about everywhere else. This work constitutes a major revision of many time-honoured claims in Scherer's *La Dramaturgie classique*.

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JEAN MAIRET: *Théâtre complet*. Tome I. *La Sophonisbe* — *Le Marc-Antoine ou la Cléopâtre* — *Le Grand et Dernier Soliman; ou, la mort de Mustapha*. Textes établis et commentés par BÉNÉDICTE LOUVAT, ALAIN RIFFAUD et MARC VUILLERMOZ. Paris, Champion, 2004. 611 pp. Hb €80.00.

Here is scholarship of truly outstanding quality, and a telling reminder of everything that separates a scholarly critical edition from what we too readily call critical editions, but that are in fact reprints of a pre-established text with the addition of a literary critical introduction and some explanatory notes. Little known today outside seventeenth-century circles, Jean Mairet is the author of twelve plays, first performed between 1630 and 1640. He is important because he is one of a handful of dramatists, including Pierre Corneille, who together, in that decisive decade, by a mixture of theory and practice, inflected the course of French drama for the next two hundred years. This is the first of four volumes that will constitute the first ever collected edition of Mairet's theatre, because he himself only published his plays separately. For most of the plays, this will be their first ever critical edition. This volume contains his three tragedies, including *La Sophonisbe*, with its claim to being the first regular modern French tragedy. Each of the three editors is responsible for a single play, but the volume as a whole is a team effort, as there is much cross-referencing, and Alain Riffaud's exceptional skills as a material bibliographer have explicitly shaped and contributed to the editorial work of his two colleagues. It is no exaggeration to say that, if the remaining volumes of the edition are completed to the same standards as this one, Mairet will be the seventeenth-century dramatist whose *œuvre* has been best served by modern critical editions. The reason is that Riffaud is tireless in his pursuit and scrutiny of copies of what appear to be the same edition. It is a duty that all critical editors are aware of, but that most shy away from, partly because of time constraints, partly because the rewards are not always commensurate with the effort expended. However, such work is crucial unless we want to close our eyes to complex historical truths, as it reveals the aleatory nature of the text, always subject to the competing and contradictory forces of authors, publishers, printers, composers and markets. Establishing a text for a modern readership that might want to read works like these for a whole range of reasons is a perilous activity, as it can make them look definitive, when historically they never were. But when the work of material bibliography has been done and its findings presented, as here, with thoroughness and scrupulous care and with the help of photographs of title pages and examples of *mise en page*, readers have all the evidence with which to assess the provisional nature of the texts presented by the editors and the complex evolutionary processes to which the early editions

were subjected. Not that Mairet is as difficult in bibliographical terms as Rotrou, Corneille or Molière. And not that the editors limit themselves to matters of bibliography. Their introductions explain fully all that they have discovered about conditions of first performance; and the genesis or fabrication of the plays is explored by analysis of sources and dramaturgy, as one might expect from a team working under the direction of Georges Forestier. Bibliography, biography, lists of other treatments of the same subjects in French and other European languages all help to make this volume an indispensable tool for future research on Mairet and the theatre of the 1630s. It will stimulate many instances of critical discourse, but it will long outlive them.

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*Theatrum mundi: Studies in Honour of Ronald W. Tobin.* Edited by CLAIRE L. CARLIN and KATHLEEN WINE. Charlottesville, Rookwood Press, 2003. 280 pp.

Twenty-seven short essays address that commonplace of early modern culture, namely that all the world is a stage; three introductory essays summarize the essays in the volume, the career of Ronald W. Tobin, and provide a selected list of his publications. Seven essays are devoted to Molière's theatre (in particular, *Dom Juan*, *Le Tartuffe*, *Les Plaisirs de l'île enchantée*, *Monsieur de Pourceaugnac*), six to Racine (in particular, *Iphigénie* and *Phèdre*), and four to Corneille (in particular, *L'Illusion comique*, *Médée*, *Polyeucte* and *Cinna*). These and other essays consider questions of dramaturgy, dramatic themes, and theatre and society (love, passion and desire; women in the theatre of Molière and Corneille; horror and monsters; satire, flattery and the burlesque; witches, impotence, wealth and class; rhetoric, oratory and theatrical form; theatrical illusion). Three essays adopt modern perspectives: Racine and the moderns, *Tartuffe* on screen, and productions of Molière by the Comédie-française in the year 2000. Five essays, more loosely connected to the general theme, study Poussin's *Confirmation* (regrettably without accompanying illustration), dramatized eclogues in Occitan, *Les Entre-tiens d'Ariste et d'Eugène*, Villedieu's Henriette-Sylvie de Molière as actress, and the comedy *L'Avocat Patelin* (1706), a reworking of the medieval farce. The first and last essays in the volume are more directly concerned with the commonplace of the *theatrum mundi*.

Many of the essays rework well-worn themes or re-read well-known plays, but for the most part cleverly, providing fresh perspectives. Other essays ask questions or address themes that invite new research. Jean Emelina argues cogently for the addition of 'horror' to the emotions of pity and fear, which tragedy was to provoke, demonstrating the connection between horror and the sublime, and the way the staging of horror evolved from mimesis to diegesis in the course of the century. John Lyons evokes a triptych of Medeas — Seneca, Euripides, Corneille — revealing how the latter creates a fearsome and tragic Médée in a play peopled with characters more appropriate to tragic-comedy, and thereby brings tragedy to the French stage. John Campbell interrogates the critical consensus that makes Racine's *Iphigénie* a 'tragédie heureuse' because of the ending, and restores to the play its tragic themes, patterns, plot and evocation of the tragic in the human condition. William Cloonan defies the