

Introduction

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For the last few decades, Cultural Studies have been steadily replacing English Studies, in a global scale, and Shakespeare and Renaissance Studies were no exception.¹ Cultural Studies, with its fundamental concerns with power

¹ A comprehensive list itself will require a book-length study, but the following publications, just to name a few earlier ones, must be included in any list of influential studies which prompted and sustained this steady paradigm shift in Shakespearean Studies since the late 1970s: Stephen Orgel, *The Illusion of Power: Political Theater in the English Renaissance* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1975); Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980); Murray M. Schwartz and Coppelia Kahn eds., *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980); Coppelia Kahn, *Man's Estate: Masculine Identity in Shakespeare* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1981); Lisa Jardine, *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* (Brighton: Harvester Press; Totawa: Barnes and Noble, 1983); Jonathan Dollimore, *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries* (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1984); Linda Woodbridge, *Women and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womanhood, 1540-1620* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1984); Catherine Belsey, *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985); Michael D. Bristol, *Carnival and Theater: Plebeian Culture and the Structure of Authority in Renaissance England* (New York and London: Methuen, 1985); Walter Cohen, *Drama of a Nation: Public Theater in Renaissance England and Spain* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1985); Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield eds., *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985); John Drakakis eds., *Alternative Shakespeares* (London and New York: Methuen, 1985); Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman eds., *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory* (New York and London: Routledge, 1985); Leonard Tennenhouse, *Power on Display: The Politics of Shakespeare's Genres* (New York and London: Methuen, 1986); Terence Hawkes, *That Shakespeherian Rag: Essays on a Critical Process* (London and New York: Methuen, 1986); Terry Eagleton, *William Shakespeare* (Oxford and New York, Basil Blackwell, 1986); Joel Fineman, *Shakespeare's Perjured Eye: The Invention of Poetic Subjectivity in the Sonnets* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1986); Malcolm Evans, *Signifying Nothing: Truth's True Contents in Shakespeare's Text* (Brighton, Harvester, 1986); Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan and Nancy J. Vickers eds., *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986); Marjorie Garber, *Shakespeare's Ghost Writers: Literature as Uncanny Causality* (New York and London: Methuen, 1987); Jean E. Howard and Marion F. O'Connor, *Shakespeare Reproduced: The Text in History and Ideology* (New York and London: 1987); Arthur F. Kinney and Dan S. Collins eds., *Renaissance Historicism: Selections from English Literary Renaissance* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1987); Stephen

relations involved in everyday practices, localized political contexts, globalised historical consciousness, bottom-up (rather than top-down) structures of decision making, positive and transformative attitudes of audience and readers, close analyses of textual and discursive representations, fundamental longings for justice and retribution, and collective will to question and redraw the existing boundaries whether cultural, national or personal, have radically transformed what to study and teach in Shakespeare.

Although in many historical accounts the point of origin of Cultural Studies is usually located geopolitically in Great Britain, and more precisely with the foundation of the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (CCCS) in 1964 at the University of Birmingham, Stuart Hall, one of its founding and most influential members, has always emphasized the various intellectual and cultural

Greenblatt, *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988); Stephen Greenblatt ed., *Representing the English Renaissance* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1988); Steven Mullaney, *The Place of the Stage: License, Play, and Power in Renaissance England* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1988); Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature: Jonson, Shakespeare, Donne, and Their Contemporaries* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1989); Lawrence Venuti, *Our Halcyon Days: English Prerevolutionary Texts and Postmodern Culture* (Madison and London: University of Wisconsin Press, 1989); Annabel Patterson, *Shakespeare and the Popular Voice* (Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, 1989); Jonathan Goldberg, *Writing Matter: From the Hands of the English Renaissance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990); Timothy Hampton, *Writing from History: The Rhetoric of Exemplarity in Renaissance Literature* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1990); Christopher Pye, *The Regal Phantasm: Shakespeare and the Politics of Spectacle* (London and New York: Routledge, 1990); Lucy Gent and Nigel Llewellyn eds., *Renaissance Bodies: The Human Figure in English Culture c. 1540-1660* (London: Reaktion Books, 1990); David Scott Kastan and Peter Stallybrass eds., *Staging the Renaissance: Reinterpretations of Elizabethan and Jacobean Drama* (New York and London: Routledge, 1991); Joel Fineman, *The Subjectivity in Western Literary Tradition: Essays Toward the Release of Shakespeare's Will* (Cambridge, Mass and London: MIT Press, 1991); Valerie Wayne, *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare* (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991); Karen Newman, *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1991); Barbara Freedman, *Staging the Gaze: Postmodernism, Psychoanalysis, and Shakespearean Comedy* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991); Richard Halpern, *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation: English Renaissance Culture and the Genealogy of Capital* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1991); Alan Sinfield, *Faultlines: Cultural Materialism and the Politics of Dissident Reading* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Terence Hawkes, *Meaning by Shakespeare* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992); Richard Helgerson, *Forms of Nationhood: The Elizabethan Writing of England* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago press, 1992); Susan Zimmerman, *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage* (New York and London: 1992); Richard Wilson, *Will Power: Essays on Shakespearean Authority* (New York, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1993); Jean E. Howard, *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994); Terence Hawkes ed., *Alternative Shakespeares vol. 2* (London and New York, 1996); Margareta de Grazia, Maureen Quilligan and Peter Stallybrass, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture* (Cambridge University Press, 1996); Ania Loomba and Martin Orkin eds., *Post-Colonial Shakespeares* (London and New York, 1998).

trajectories and contexts that were of crucial importance for the formation of “British” Cultural Studies. The early texts by Jamaica-born Stuart Hall and Welshman Raymond Williams, another influential figure, were written under their own subjective experiences of a hybrid insider/outsider status within the British society and white upper-class academia in particular. Accordingly, their outsider perspectives, which were partly based on Williams’s and Richard Hoggart’s working-class background and on Hall’s experience of being “non-white”, crucially embraced a theoretical and methodological openness, which was reflected in a consistently trans-boundary search for philosophical and sociological approaches of other national heritages of thought. Thus, as Hall has emphasized on various occasions, the project of Cultural Studies from its beginnings was basically not just a trans-disciplinary but also a transnational intellectual undertaking.²

Lawrence Grossberg tries to recapitulate the contemporary formation of Cultural Studies against the background of its growing academization and depoliticization in the USA since the late 1980s. In his attempt to define Cultural Studies, Grossberg emphasizes that “this is not matter of a proprietary definition, or of “the proper” form of cultural studies, but of holding on to the specificity of particular intellectual trajectories” (245).³ As a matter of principle, Cultural Studies cannot be equated to critical theory or cultural theory, but primarily constitutes “a particular way of contextualizing and politicizing intellectual practices”, nor is it “a paradigm attempting to displace all competitors” (246). In other words, according to Grossberg, Cultural Studies is radically contextual because it considers culture and knowledge produced by it as related to politics and power, “where power is understood not necessarily in the form of domination, but always as an unequal relation of forces, in the interests of particular fractions of the population” (248).

Cultural Studies does not derive its topics from academic or theoretical discussions, but from within the everyday life of the people, made accessible through theory and then subsequently researched by means of qualitative methods adequate for that particular research topic. Furthermore, proponents of Cultural Studies always need to include their own subject position as researchers, because “the analyst is also a participant in the very practices, formations, and contexts he or she is analyzing”, as the intellectual practice of Cultural Studies is “politically driven” and “committed to producing knowledge

² See, among others, Stuart Hall, *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State, and Law and Order* (New York: Holmes and Meier, 1978); Stuart Hall, “Cultural Studies and the Centre: Some Problematics and Problems”, in S. Hall, D. Hobson, A. Lowe and P. Willis eds., *Culture, Media, Language*, (London: Routledge, 1980), pp. 15–47; Stuart Hall, “Cultural Studies and the Politics of Internationalization: An Interview with Stuart Hall by Kuan-Hsing Chen”, in D. Morley and K.-H. Chen eds., *Stuart Hall: Critical Dialogues in Cultural Studies* (London: Routledge, 1996).

³ See also Lawrence Grossberg, “The Circulation of Cultural Studies”, *Critical Studies in Mass Communications* vol.6, 1989), pp.413–21, especially p.414.

that both helps people understand that the world is changeable and that offers some direction for how to change it” (267-8, 264).

As the present reviewer of *Multicultural Shakespeare* is an academic intellectual located geographically and culturally in East Asia, here it may not be amiss to briefly consider the socio-political contexts involved in the introduction of Cultural Studies into Japan, and the gradual replacement of English Studies by Cultural Studies in its academy, which has been steadily going on since the 1980s. It now seems an undeniable fact that in Japanese academic milieu literary studies have been increasingly, if not totally, displaced by cultural studies. The number of those who publicly profess themselves as “literary scholars” has shrunk dramatically, and that was undoubtedly influenced by the restructuring and abolishing of literature departments in many Japanese universities.

Since 1980s, literary studies in Japan have steadily been intervened by various critical theories, and one of the reasons was the fact that the major theorists of New Historicism, Feminism and Postcolonialism and so forth were literary scholars majoring in English Literature. Many of them were educated in institutions informed by English academic traditions, and by choosing diasporic careers reflecting over their own scholastic origins as students of English Literature, they have established themselves as multi- or counter-disciplinary practitioners of cultural studies, while appropriating literary techniques of close and subtle textual analysis. From their pioneering works, a number of new political, economic and cultural themes have emerged as topics in cultural studies, including critique of nationalism and colonialism, perspectives on gender and sexuality, globalization studies, just to name a few, and as they were also eye-opening phenomena for literary scholars living within Japanese linguistic and cultural community, the expanding new arena for studies involved with teachers, students and publishers, have dramatically opened up.

At the same time, however, the 1980s saw the emergence of neoliberal reforms in politico-economic establishments in Japan and East Asia. Neoliberalism’s devastating effects have been felt worldwide most acutely in the fields of economy, nature and education, and in Japan too, they have drastically revealed themselves in the disparity in wealth as a result of economic deregulation and restructuring of labour force, the drastic deterioration of natural environment due to intense capital investments, and the radical degradation of public education that has brought about a gradual ruin of middle classes which have been a traditional lynchpin of this country’s intellectual backbone. Especially, the sudden increase of young people who cannot afford reading books in terms of time, revenue and ability is alarming enough in terms of the sheer marginalisation of humanities education. However, it was only after 2000 that those neoliberal “reforms” manifested themselves in the administrative arena of higher education in this country, in the form of restructurization of residual departments and cooperatization (i.e. privatization) of the hitherto national public universities. Here, one question inevitably arises as to how we should interpret the time gap between the start of “importing” critical theories in

the 1980s and the actual institutional depreciation of literary studies in the universities. To put it briefly, were the Japanese literary scholars including myself somehow blind to the impending dynamics of neoliberal reformation at our own feet being too excited about extra-disciplinary possibilities that critical literary theories brought about?

To respond to this question, it is vital to reflect upon the circumstances around which cultural studies were introduced in this country. Cultural studies in Japan have been developed in a two-fold path; on one hand, they have learned from the activities of British practitioners like Williams, Hoggart and Hall, and on the other, they have revived experiences of uniquely Japanese attempts in ethnology, anthropology and historical studies since 1950s, such as activities of Tsurumi Shunsuke and his “Science of Thought” group, the grass-roots level practices of Hanasaki Kohei, Ueno Eishin, Morisaki Kazue and others, and South-East Asian studies by Tsurumi Yoshiyuki, Matsui Yayori and so on. One remarkable occasion to tie up these two trends was a large-scale symposium in Tokyo in 1996, in which Hall and Hanasaki were invited as plenary speakers.⁴ From those multi-faceted movements, there have been a real prospect of critical project of the “glocalized” cultural studies, where the various new waves of inter-disciplinary knowledge and intellectual endeavour emerge, such as the critique of Japanese own colonialism and exclusionary ethnic identities, and the examination of communicative dynamics in the highly developed information society.

Nevertheless, the point has to be rearticulated as to how many of us who have been keen to import critical literary theories into Japan were alert to the fact that the practices of British Cultural Studies were a conscious attempt to resist Thatcherite neoliberal experiments, and if we were trying to understand them in our own Japanese contexts of attempted “reforms” by then Prime-Minister Nakasone and the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations. It will not distort the basic facts if I state that within our lack of understanding such local political contexts, the cruel realities steadily progressed during what we may call “the lost decade of displacing literary studies by cultural studies”. If we may crudely diagram chronically as; the import of critical literary theories in 1980s, the full-scale introduction of cultural studies in 1990s, and the neoliberal restructuring of academic institutions in 2000s, we may still find ourselves in the present quandary in which the critical and emancipatory capacities of cultural studies (as I summarized in the first few paragraphs of this essay) have not been fully developed.

In my immediate environment of Renaissance and Shakespeare Studies, since the late 1980s, those who ardently appropriated Western literary theories regarded those who stuck to “traditional literary studies” as “conservative

⁴ Hanada Tatsuro, Yoshimi Shunya, Colin Sparks eds., *Karuchuraru sutadizu to no taiwa* (A Dialogue with Cultural Studies; Tokyo: Shinyosha, 1999) is a seminal and comprehensive record of this event.

reactionary forces”, and amid pseudo-generational struggles there have been somewhat interesting and vigorous debates within academic circles and journals. On one hand, since the late 1990s an increasing number of young Japanese scholars who were “theoretically baptized” in Western universities came back to Japan with their Ph.D degrees; on the other hand, there have been steady drops in number of those who specialize in literary studies in Japanese universities, until the neoliberal storms literally devastated the literature departments in universities since the turn of the century. Within this two-fold phenomenon, as if to make amends of the depreciation of literary studies, the university administrators have replaced the literary courses with cultural studies programs typically named as “Media and Communication Studies”, “Cross-Cultural Studies”, “Studies of Anglo-American Culture” and so forth.

However, the question still remains as to if their so-called “Cultural Programs” have already ceased to be a creative, hybridized trans-boundary endeavours that should provide critical insights against the pre-existing disciplinary structures, undermine the exclusive rhetoric of national languages and histories, and re-examine the canonical authorities. This restructurization of humanities departments may be the manifest symptom of absolutist intellectualism characterized by the lack of critical consciousness.

Perhaps it may have a universal appeal to ask ourselves as practitioners of multi-cultural and multi-disciplinary scholars of Shakespeare a question as to whether, how much and why we literary scholars being sensitive to the Anglo-American movements of critical theories were somewhat unable to create moments of resistance against neoliberal tides which were at the root of those movements. To take Japanese instance for a referential framework, if one reason for such failure lay in suppression of, or indifference to the political contexts in the traditional literary studies in that country, how can we unite ourselves under the banner of anti-neoliberalism at the present height of neoliberal globalization? Obviously we cannot answer this question in a simple dualistic format, conservative or radical, research or education, literature or culture, macro structural investigation or micro textual analysis etc, but as far as the present reviewer of this volume is concerned, it is certain that within these shifts of focus from the literary to the cultural, one of the most productive and controversial fields of Shakespearean studies has been those of appropriations, receptions, translations, performances in multi- and cross-cultural, transnational contexts. On one hand, as mentioned above, in any country of the world, under the neoliberalistic political and economic climate, there has been a steady decline in the number of academic posts and students majoring in English Literature in general, and many teachers and students, forcedly or willingly, have opted for studies of literature with elements of cultural studies which would have given them an edge in the shrinking job market. On the other hand, the fundamentally multi- and trans-disciplinary character of cultural studies has opened up a vast spectrum of fields of study that was suppressed and somehow discouraged in the traditional, elitist, Anglo-centric English Studies. The main

purpose of this “Introduction” is to offer the present reviewer’s personal observations of the circumstances that have contributed to the paradigm shifts in Shakespearean scholarship, in which *Multicultural Shakespeare* is inevitably involved, and has a vital role to play. It now follows that I should like to comment, albeit briefly, each contribution in this volume, in order to present some perspectives from which the readers of this volume would hopefully participate in this debate around Shakespeare in multi-cultural and trans-national environments.

The essays in this volume might be broadly divided in three categories, each of which represent a few dominant currents of the multicultural Shakespearean scholarship—cultural criticism informed by contemporary literary theories, translation studies with local and historical concerns, and performance studies dealing with specific representations in particular socio-cultural contexts.

Our first contribution in the present volume makes a link between linguistic approach to the text and translation studies. In “Shakespeare in Galician and Spanish: On the Translation of Puns in Hamlet”, Díaz Pérez attempts a comprehensive study of the problematics involved with translation of puns that are so prominent and linguistically ambivalent in the text of Hamlet. As puns’ linguistic effects depend on the “anisomorphism” or differences in the range of meaning between signifier and signified, the translation of puns tend to encounter difficulties, mainly because the semantic effects of wordplay in source texts are often unable to be reproduced in the target language. Díaz Pérez takes examples from Hamlet, and first distinguish them in several types: “vertical puns” where the relationship between the component words is paradigmatic; “horizontal puns” where the relationship is syntagmatic; “phonologic puns” such as “homophony” (identical pronunciation, different spelling), “homonymy” (identical both in pronunciation and spelling) in which words share same phonemes, and “paronyms” (similar—but not identical—in spelling and pronunciation); “polysemic puns” which involves the juxtaposition of different meanings in one word; “idiomatic puns” which is formed by idiomatic expressions with semantic ambiguity; “syntactic puns” which is constituted by phrases that can be interpreted in different ways; and “morphological puns” which is composed by words related to other words by derivation or compounding.

Then this essay goes on to examine one Galician and four Spanish versions of *Hamlet*, in order to identify strategies involved in the translation of puns. In most cases Díaz Pérez discusses, the process of translation contains a change in linguistic mechanism, and in many instances shifts of typologies. But the tactics employed by various translators to make the puns in the original text still viable in the translations are quite remarkable, and this reviewer read those accounts with fascination. The author puts forward a strong argument to counter the position that defends the “untranslatability” of puns, which, according to Pérez, are “based on an ideal and preconceived notion of what a translation

should be". This article by amply supplying feasible instances of translated puns with a newly layered linguistic nuance can make the punning characters of Hamlet veritably proud.

Another piece on translation is the essay by Aleksandra Budrewicz-Beratan, "The Comedy of Madness: On a Polish Translation of *The Comedy of Errors*", which takes *Komedia obłądów* ("comedy of delusion or madness"), a translation of *The Comedy of Errors* by Apollo Nałęcz Korzeniowski (nineteenth-century dramatist and Josef Conrad's father) published in 1866. First, the author argues that Korzeniowski, like many of his contemporary writers, believed that only popular and respected writers like Shakespeare deserve to be translated, because that would not only enrich literature in the translator's language, but also "serve as a cultural guide of good taste". However, if there are flaws in the original, these should be faithfully "copied" in order to preserve the textual form as well as the philosophical spirit. Then the essay proceeds with some detailed passage by passage examination of the translated text comparing with the original. It concludes with an observation that even if Korzeniowski's version may not be the best Polish translation of *The Comedy of Errors*, it certainly keeps the general mood of the play very well with elements of irrational madness and depersonalization, as symbolized in the keyword "obłąd" that invokes chaotic visions of a troubled and distorted mind and world. Again, this reviewer with an element of Oriental minds and worlds vainly wishes if the article could contain some discussions of another version of the play in Polish translation from a different period, in order to make this essay into translation studies more "multicultural" even within the specific national boundary.

The next piece in this volume, George Volceanov's "From Printed Text to Stage Version: Reshaping Shakespeare for Performance—*Edward III* at the National Theatre in Bucharest" is another contribution to translation studies, but this article's main concern lies in the actual performance, and editorial and directorial decisions taken by the theatre practitioners during the rehearsal. The text chosen in this study is the author's own Romanian translation of *Edward III*, which was of course only recently added to the Shakespearean canon. Volceanov examines in detail the director Alexandru Tocilescu's choices (with helps of course from the actors including the leading actor Ion Caramitru) in the textual cuts and alterations in the stage version in order to bring out problematics involved with literary translation and theatrical presentation in general. In this sense, this article makes an intriguing intervention into the complex relationship between the whole idea of translation and the actual effect in representation in multicultural contexts. Some of the author's conclusions make this point clear: a translated version and theatrical performance of Shakespearean text could create more than just a local cultural event, because the actors and directors in a foreign country are licensed somehow to reshape the original text, while the English counterparts tend to be bound eternally by the rigidity of the original. For, in order to make the inevitably multicultural setting in which Shakespeare is

taught, studied and performed truly “multicultural”, this reviewer, for one, firmly believes that we should “provincialize non-Europe” (to rephrase Dipesh Chakravarty’s call for redressing the balance in the discursive process of producing knowledge), for the purpose of pluralization of global knowledge circulation, rather than that of cultural relativism stressing on the particularity of local, regional, ethnic or national traditions of thought.

Mark Sokolyansky’s “The Half-Forbidden Play in Soviet Shakespeare Criticism of the 1920-50s” is focused on the critical insights by several prominent writers of these eras into *The Merchant of Venice*. Why the play is “half-forbidden” is made clear by the author, as the play’s ethnic and religious dimensions was problematic enough to stir critical controversies in the mainstream Marxist thought in the Soviet Union. The essay also presents interesting perspectives into the performative aspects of the play, which reveals some tensions and contradictions between criticism and performance. Perhaps the article may gain more critical edge if it discusses in a little more theoretical detail how much those Shakespearean criticism were influenced by the dominant trend of literary criticism, and how it could be situated within the cultural and literary theories in general of the age.

The essay “‘Brief candle’?: Shakespeare in Afghanistan” by Irena Makaryk examines the process of the creation (translation and adaptation) and the reception (in the international media and by local audiences) of a production of Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* in Afghanistan in 2005-2006 -- the first Shakespeare play staged there since the Soviet invasion of 1978. Shakespeare’s return seemed to follow a familiar pattern established in previous periods of Afghan history: Western values and aesthetic forms brought into alliance with reformist powers. With its equal number of roles for men and women, and hence its “model” of normalized gender relations, *Love’s Labour’s Lost* could be regarded as part of the larger project of “beneficial” propaganda waged during those years. However, in examining the active engagement of Afghan theatre artists and translators in the whole process, the essay argues that such a political interpretation is insufficient in explaining the production’s immediate and generally enthusiastic reception. It was a “domesticated” Shakespeare, drawing upon the strength of local cultural traditions, familiar conventions, as well as simple affect, that bestowed upon the play its immediate resonance. Any lasting impact of the production, however, will likely rest less on any interest in Shakespeare’s poetry or theatre than on that particular theatre event’s function as a symbolic moment of openness marking a short-lived period of optimism in Afghan history.

Another essay in the field of performance studies is Rosemary Gaby’s “Open-air Appropriations: Shakespeare from Sand Harbor to Balmoral Beach”. As the title indicates, this is geographically specific, or outer-spaced version of analyses of a few Shakespearean comedies. The author’s interest in the open-air performances derives from her socio-cultural concern in that “Open-air Shakespeares are inevitably shaped by the local physical and social environment,

and often in more obvious ways than productions staged in indoor venues”. They are suitable examples of Shakespearean representations in the global and multicultural contexts, as they “can tell us a lot about how Shakespeare is viewed and valued within particular communities, and about the extent to which Shakespeare is performed to edify or to entertain”. This reviewer agrees that analyses of outdoor performances would provide viable perspectives in the sociological and economic aspects of globalization of Shakespeare, and is enlightened by the essay’s fresh insights, but probably the essay might be benefited more by socio-economic examinations of the audience (large part of which is consisted by tourists) as well by textual interpretations of particular scenes.

Monika Sosnowska’s comparative study, “Reflecting upon *Hamlet of Gliwice. The Rehearsal or the Touch Through the Screen*”, belongs to the increasing popular current of Appropriation Studies in Shakespeare. This particular piece of “videotheatre”, by “a self-searching, creative theatre director, poet, essayist and translator”, Peter-Piotr Lachmann, was first performed in Gliwice and Warsaw in 2006, and the author of this essay was fortunate enough to watch the performance in December 2008 in Lachmann’s own Videotheatre “Poza”. Therefore the article is not only an academically comparative study of a Hamletian appropriation but also an interesting document of a contemporary theatrical event in this multicultural world in which Shakespeare remains a vital force both commercially and artistically. According to the author, Lachmann’s play, which is not only the playwright’s personal reflection of himself and his life but also “a parody of *Hamlet*”, is centred on tragic flows of the protagonist, whose traces Lachmann finds in himself. This subversive piece in a multi-media setting could make another fruitful contribution to the inevitably global environments in which Shakespeare is and will be involved, and this reviewer for one is very pleased and fascinated by the essay’s detailed introduction of the play, which obviously whets his appetite for more information.

The last contribution in this volume is Cristiane Busato Smith’s “Ophelia and the Perils of the Sacred Feminine”, a good example of feminist intervention into the historically rich heritage of representing Ophelia as “the archetypal doomed virgin-heroine, ‘the young, the beautiful, the harmless and the pious’, in Samuel Johnson’s words”. This predominant image in the cult of “love-crazed self-sacrificial Ophelia as a fetish for the sadistic Victorian men” established itself in the nineteenth century, as illustrated by such Victorian critics as Anna Jameson and Bram Dijkstra. Smith argues, persuasively, that principal reasons why Ophelia, among other Shakespearean heroines, has gained “the status of a paradigmatic figure for female self-sacrifice in Western literature and culture” are not only artistic but also sociological. Referring to Michel Foucault’s concept of discursive practices, Smith regards the self-sacrificial figures of Ophelia dominant since the nineteenth century as “being ‘normalized’ and domesticated through the circulation and reproduction of images” in the contemporary ideologies informed by gendered division of subjective

identifications. This essay situates the visual and literary representations of Ophelia as a self-sacrificial icon in the historically long psychic chain of signification in the Western culture that juxtaposes feminine beauty and feminine death, and argues that the poetic description of Ophelia's dying scene by Gertrude consolidates that particular connection. Thus, the author's stance in analyzing Ophelia is overtly visual rather than theatrical, as the essay's main concern seems not to lie in her own subjectivity or desire to write her own scenario in dramatic contexts of the play. That stance reveals itself in the final intriguing section of the article which features two contemporary representations of Ophelia, Gregory Crewdson's photograph *Untitled* (Ophelia, 2001) and Linda Stark's painting *Ophelia* (1999), which presents, according to Smith, the instances of "reversing the gaze", the masculine gaze manifested in classic paintings by Arthur Hughes, Eugene Delacroix and John Everett Millais. Overall, this is a fascinating and theoretically well informed essay, but, if this reviewer, perhaps in passing, extends his privilege to allow himself to express a personal interest, the essay might have gained more critical range if the author includes other contemporary theatrical and filmic representations of Ophelia such as Kate Winslet's sexually mature figure of the "non-sacred feminine" in Kenneth Branagh's hugely popular film (1996).

To conclude this rather lengthy meandering as an "Introduction" to this collection of essays, I would again like to emphasize that if *Multicultural Shakespeare* continues to play, as it must, a vital role in this globalized, neo-liberalistic world in which academic institutions and public intellectuals currently inhabit, it should further enhance and sustain the project of decentralizing the universalistic theoretical position of "Western" modernity by relearning and unlearning our own localized heritages of thought and representation.

Works Cited

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