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Introduction

A Short History of *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*

Toshikazu Oyama, the President of Seijo University in Japan, chaired the Investigative Committee on Shakespeare Translation at the First World Shakespeare Congress held in Vancouver, August 1971. On the plane to Vancouver, he gave me a pamphlet prepared for the Committee and asked me to listen to the discussion carefully. Something important was going to happen, that was obvious.

It was indeed an important discussion. What emerged – what I was asked to listen for – was the birth of a publication that would someday become important on the world stage. The members at that important meeting were: Hans W. Gabler (I shall omit professional titles), Jagannath Chakravorthy, Pierre Spriet and Toshikazu's wife, Toshiko Oyama, who was my teacher at Tsuda College.

In the editorial "Preface" of volume 1, Oyama stated:

> Could Shakespeare have imagined that his plays would be read and performed in many languages other than his own, after hundreds of years? It is easily conceivable that William Shakespeare would today be astonished at the universal acceptance of his creative genius.

It was certainly the mission of the original editorial board to offer *Shakespeare Translation* to English speaking as well as non-English speaking readers. Through the cooperation of the readers who are interested in *Shakespeare Translation*, we were optimistic that we could offer Shakespeare on a global scale.

The publication board has since undergone many changes. A brief history includes Oyama becoming the chairman in 1975, with Chakravorthy, Gabler,

Toshiko Oyama and Kristian Smidt subsequently joining. In 1977, Gabler resigned and Werner Habicht and Terence J. B. Spencer joined as members. With the premature deaths of Oyama and Spencer in 1978, the board accepted Muriel C. Bradbrook and Angela Mirenda as new members.

Before Oyama passed away in 1983, he invited me to visit him in hospital where he encouraged me to take over as board chairperson and to continue his work in making *Shakespeare Translation*, a truly international forum for the exchange of ideas about the questions and problems of translating Shakespeare. I promised to continue his valuable work, and I began my own editorial work with Volume 10. About that time, Mirenda resigned her membership on the board and Samuel Schoenbaum took over her place.

During the Fourth World Shakespeare Congress held in West Berlin, April 1986, I chaired the Special Session on Shakespeare Translation. A change of the publication's title was agreed upon then by those attending that session. It emerged as *Shakespeare Worldwide: Translation and Adaptation.* The previous title, *Shakespeare Translation*, allowed for coverage of various fields of Shakespeare in translation: theory and principle, practice and methodology. However, *Shakespeare Worldwide: Translation and Adaptation* was to have a more extensive and perhaps broader coverage of issues. In addition to the regular features on translation problematics, this revised journal would add discussions of stage and film adaptations, the ontology of the playtexts, and other pertinent subjects.

In 1986, *Shakespeare Worldwide: Translation and Adaptation*, Volume 11, focused on *Hamlet*. In 1989, Volume 12 offered a special edition focusing exclusively on *King Lear*. Board changes in that year included the resignation of Chakravorty. In 1991, Rupin W. Desai joined the board, and the publication brought out an issue devoted to *Othello*. In 1993, Bradbrook passed away. In 1995, Volume 14 was devoted to *Macbeth*, and Volume 15 was a special issue on the comedies and histories.

Over the period of almost twenty years of my chairing the editorial board, I collected articles from many countries (e.g. Australia, Brazil, China, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Greece, Holland, Hungary, India, Israel, Japan, Korea, Norway, Poland, Romania, Russia, Spain, Switzerland, USA). Many outstanding Shakespeare scholars have contributed their challenging and learned articles of Shakespeare translation and adaptation in their respective countries. They include Mr. and Mrs. Oyama, Pierre Spriet, Werner Habicht, M. C. Bradbrook, Rudolf Stamm, Kristian Smidt, Jae-Nam Kim, Joo-Hyon Kim, Marvin Rosenberg, Manuel C. Conejero, Avraham Oz, Jagannath Chakravorty, Panos Karagiorgos, Jerzy S. Sito, Virginia V. Vaughan, A. J. Hoenselaars, Kenneth S. Rothwell, Lois Potter, J. L. Styan, Michael Mullin, J. R. Mulryne, Margaret

Shewring, Shen Lin, Krystyna Kujawiska-Courtney, Yoshiko Kawachi, and others.

We know that Shakespeare wrote for the English Renaissance stage, but it is well known that his language and themes are cross-cultural and universal. Shakespeare scholars in so many countries have provided enormously valuable insights into Shakespeare's work, illuminating the transcendental and the local values therein. Also, *Shakespeare Translation* and later *Shakespeare Worldwide* were the only publishing forums of this nature in existence. Without question, these journals evoked great interest and had wide distribution throughout the world.

More recently, in 2001 at the Seventh International World Shakespeare Congress in Valencia, I invited Krystyna Kujawiska-Courtney, my colleague of many years, to help me chair this journal. We decided to move the place of publication to the University of d, Poland, where Krystyna works. I am frankly delighted that it is published now in Europe, especially in Poland, the country that after many years of various political upheavals has again become democratic and is on the verge of becoming a full-fledged member of an Integrated Europe.

The other important decision that we made was yet another alteration of the publication's title. It is now known as *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*. We believe that these changes will greatly contribute to the growing interest in our work, the success of which depends entirely upon our contributors and the work of the editorial board.

Yoshiko Kawachi

The Editorial Policy of *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*

It is with great trepidation that Professor Kawachi and I present this first issue of *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*. I am especially anxious about this event since it is the first issue published in Poland. When Ben Jonson said of Shakespeare in 1623 that "he was not of an age but for all time," he probably did not fully realize the implication of his words. While he wrote these lines to praise Shakespeare's timeless appeal, they are appropriate words to describe the process of literary and cultural appropriation of Shakespeare and his works all over the world. The nations of the world and all ethnic groups have

been redefining and interpreting Shakespeare's genius by projecting and injecting their local issues and problems into his works.

It is therefore the Editorial Board, Professor Kawachi and my mission to offer *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance* as an intellectual vehicle dedicated to responding to the needs of a strikingly heterogeneous Shakespeare and to a multicultural community that can accommodate both the localizing postmodern interpretations and the globalizing historical studies of translation, appropriation and performance. Since cultural studies have introduced the problematics of various marginalized groups, we hope that our publication ultimately will teach us how to "read" the signs of different cultures and their ways of life, offering us a unique lens for reviewing variegated critical paradigms.

Our general publishing and editorial policy includes creating an annual forum of Shakespeare scholarship on his works in translation as well as the history and challenges, both theoretical and practical, of selected performances and adaptations. We hope that our publication will demonstrate that Shakespeare has not only been a major figure in the Anglo-American culture, but that his plays and poetry also have had major impact on a significant number of cultures of the world.

The essays presented here were selected for publication by Professor Kawachi. They were peer reviewed by two independent scholars, and we intend to keep this peer review policy to insure the highest standard for our publication. We also intend in the nearest future to include two regular features: a section titled "Book Reviews," presenting reviews of books about Shakespeare in non-English languages. In addition, we will soon offer a section of "Theatre Reviews" with specific information on eminent productions of his works in various locations and cultures throughout the world. Also, the annual manuscript deadline for submission of material for publication has been fixed at January 30. (Style sheet information is printed on the back cover of this issue.)

The fact that *Multicultural Shakespeare* answers to the need of the world Shakespeare community is confirmed by the great enthusiasm for this project by eminent academics who have kindly agreed to serve on our Advisory Board. Professor Kawachi and I are very grateful for their willingness to help us in our endeavor. The prestige of their academic positions reminds us of our editorial responsibilities. For my part, I would like to thank Professor Wanda Krajewska, the Pro-Rector for the Academic Affairs of the University of d (1998–2002) who assisted me with her gracious encouragement and personal involvement to relocate *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance* within the University of d Publishing House.

John Heminge and Henry Condell promoted their publication of Shakespeare's First Folio (1623) as:

> Well! It is now public, and you will stand for your privileges we know: to read, and censure. Do so, but buy it first. That doth best commend a book, the stationer says.

We hope that you will follow Heminge and Condell's advice, and in this commercial world buy (subscribe to) our publication. We invite reader comments and ideas, and solicit your scholarly articles which will ultimately prove and maintain the worth of this publication.

Krystyna Kujawiska-Courtney