Addressing both theoretical and practical questions surrounding Shakespeare in contemporary Asia, this book asks why Shakespeare has been of use in these vast regions of the world that have no need to call on him. By investigating some of the ways Shakespeare has been reinvented and deployed, the study notes the differences between standard western approaches and those that can be seen in Japan, China, India, and Southeast Asia. The contributors come from a wide variety of backgrounds and traditions, West and East, and present distinctive, and sometimes conflicting, views on topics as diverse as speaking Shakespeare in Japanese, the importation and exportation of Shakespeare in Asia and the uses of the English national poet in Indian film and Japanese popular culture. The debates which occur within the book highlight the diversity of production and reception for the world’s most popular playwright, whose work is now global cultural capital.

DENNIS KENNEDY is Beckett Professor of Drama Emeritus in Trinity College Dublin.

YONG LI LAN is associate professor and coordinator of the Theatre Studies Programme, National University of Singapore.
Cambridge University Press
978-0-521-51552-8 - Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance
Edited by Dennis Kennedy and Yong Li Lan
Frontmatter
More information
Contents

List of illustrations page vii
Notes on contributors ix
Preface xiii

1 Introduction: Why Shakespeare? 1
  Dennis Kennedy and Yong Li Lan

PART I  VOICE AND BODY

2 Shakespeare and the Natyasastra 27
  John Russell Brown

3 Speaking Shakespeare in Japanese: voicing the foreign 42
  Daniel Gallimore

4 Shakespeare and Beijing opera: two cases of appropriation 57
  Fei Chunfang and Sun Huizhu

PART II  SHAKESPEARE IN ASIAN POPULAR CULTURES

5 All that remains of Shakespeare in Indian film 73
  Richard Burt

6 Shakespeare for Japanese popular culture: Shojo Manga, Takarazuka and Twelfth Night 109
  Minami Ryuta

7 Shakespeare’s villains in Japan 132
  Kumiko Hilberdink-Sakamoto
Contents

PART III TRANSACTING CULTURES

8 Import/export: Japanizing Shakespeare 155
   Suematsu Michiko

9 Millennium Shashibiya: Shakespeare in the Chinese-speaking world 170
   Li Ruru

10 Shakespeare here and elsewhere: Ong Keng Sen’s intercultural Shakespeare 188
   Yong Li Lan

PART IV INTERCULTURAL POLITICS

11 What use Shakespeare? China and globalization 219
   Shen Lin

12 Shakespeare and the question of intercultural performance 234
   John W. P. Phillips

13 Foreign Asia/foreign Shakespeare: dissenting notes on New Asian interculturality, postcoloniality and re-colonization 253
   Rustom Bharucha

Index 283
Illustrations

1. Shakespeare in the Merchant-Ivory film *Shakespeare Wallah* (1965)  
2. Female celebrity and the male gaze in *Shakespeare Wallah*  
3. Mimicry of *Othello* and the responsive filmed audience in Kar’s *Saptapadi* (1961)  
5. Reading Shakespeare in Sen’s *Chowringhee Lane* (1980)  
6. Teaching *Romeo and Juliet* in Johar’s *Kuch Kuch Hota Hai* (1998); Shakespeare as Indian guru in Gulzar’s *Anoor* (1982)  
9. Olivia with a similar problem over Viola  
10. Viola as Cesario sings Feste’s song ‘Come away, death’  
11. Viola caught between Olivia and Orsino  
14. The duel scene in Fukuda’s *Hamlet* (Tokyo 1955), a copy of the Old Vic production of 1954  
15. The final battle in *Ninagawa Macbeth* (Tokyo 1980)  
16. Lin Zhaohua’s *Richard III* (Beijing 2001); Richard interrogates the princes  
17. Wu Hsing-Kuo as Lear in his one-man version, *Lear is Here* (Taipei 2001)
List of illustrations

18. The King and the Older Daughter in Ong Keng Sen’s
    LEAR (Tokyo 1997) 194
19. A screen image is created on stage in Ong’s Desdemona
    (Adelaide and Singapore 2000) 201
20. The Narrator in Ong’s Search: Hamlet (Elsinore 2002) 208

Credits  Thanks to the following, who have generously supplied
the illustrations. 8–11: Morikawa Kumi. 12: Toho Company Ltd.
13: Ryuzanji Jimusho. 14–15: Tsubouchi Memorial Theatre Museum,
Waseda University, Tokyo. 16: Lin Zhaohua Drama Studio, Beijing.
17: Contemporary Legend Theatre, Taipei. 18–20: TheatreWorks
Singapore.
Notes on contributors

Rustom Bharucha is an independent writer, director, and cultural critic based in Calcutta. He is the author of many books, including Theatre and the World, In the Name of the Secular, The Politics of Cultural Practice, Rajasthan: an oral history, and Another Asia: Rabindranath Tagore and Okakura Tenshin. A leading interlocutor in the field of interculturalism, he has lectured widely across the world and intervened in cultural and theatrical forums on issues relating to diversity, the politics of identity, and globalization.

John Russell Brown is visiting professor of English, University College London. He has been an associate director of the National Theatre in London and artistic director of Project Theatre in Ann Arbor, Michigan. Recent books include Shakespeare Dancing: a theatrical study of the plays and New Sites for Shakespeare: theatre, the audience and Asia. He is editor of The Oxford Illustrated History of Theatre and general editor of the series Theatres of the World (Routledge).

Richard Burt is professor of English, Film, and Media Studies at the University of Florida. He is the author of Medieval and Early Modern Film and Media, Unspeakable ShaXXXpeare: queer theory and American kiddie culture, and Licensed by Authority: Ben Jonson and the discourses of censorship. He is the editor of several books, including Shakespeare's After Shakespeare and Shakespeare after Mass Media, and the co-editor of Enclosure Acts and Shakespeare, the Movie.

Fei Chunfang (Faye C. Fei), an internationally produced playwright, is professor of English and drama at East China Normal University, Shanghai, having earlier taught in the US for nine years. Her numerous scholarly publications include Chinese Theories of Theater and Performance from Confucius to the Present. She has held fellowships from NEH (USA), the British Academy, and ALFP (Japan).
Notes on contributors

**Daniel Gallimore** has lived in Tokyo since 2003, where he is now associate professor at Japan Women’s University. He has published articles in English and Japanese on the translation and reception of Shakespeare’s works in Japan. He also reviews Japanese productions of Shakespeare at http://momi.jwu.ac.jp/~shirazus/.

**Kumiko Hilberdink-Sakamoto** is associate professor of English at Nihon University, Japan. She has contributed to *Shakespeare without English*, is working on a study of acting techniques for the fool character in modern performances, and is also researching cross-gender casting in intercultural theatre.

**Dennis Kennedy** is Beckett Professor of Drama Emeritus in Trinity College Dublin. His books, translated into languages as diverse as Chinese, Japanese, and Estonian, include *The Spectator and the Spectacle*, *Looking at Shakespeare*, and *Granville Barker and the Dream of Theatre*. He is the editor of *Foreign Shakespeare* and *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Theatre and Performance*, among other works. He has held distinguished visiting professorships in Asia, Europe, and North America. Also a playwright and director, he staged *As You Like It* in Beijing in Chinese in 2005.

**Li Ruru** is senior lecturer of East Asian Studies and associate lecturer in the Workshop Theatre at Leeds University. She has written extensively on Shakespeare performance in China (including *Shashibiya: Staging Shakespeare in China*) and on both modern and traditional Chinese theatre. She has recently completed a new book on performer and performance in Beijing Opera.

**Minami Ryuta**, professor of English at Aichi University of Education in Japan, co-edited *Performing Shakespeare in Japan* and *English Studies in Asia*. He has contributed to numerous books and encyclopedias, including *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage* and *Shakespeares after Shakespeare*. His current research involves Shakespeare in Asia, Restoration and eighteenth-century English drama, and Manga (comic-book) Shakespeare.

**John W. P. Phillips** teaches in the department of English at the National University of Singapore. He is author of *Contested Knowledge: a guide to critical theory* and co-editor of several books, including *Postcolonial Urbanism: Southeast Asian cities and global processes* and *Beyond Description: space historicity Singapore*. He is also one of the
editors of the *New Encyclopaedia Project*. His most recent book, which examines the philosophy of Jacques Derrida, will be published in 2009.

**Shen Lin** is associate professor and director of the Institute for Study in Theatre Art at the Central Academy of Drama in Beijing. A translator of western plays and operas, he has also published essays in English and Chinese on intercultural theatre, dramatic translation, Shakespeare and contemporary Chinese theatre. His other work includes *Documents on Avant-garde Theatre, Bootleg Faust* (an original play), and *The City* (a dance script). He is the editor of the Chinese journals *Drama* and *Theatrum Mundi* and has served on the editorial board of *Theatre Research International*.


**Sun Huizhu** (William H. Sun), well known as a playwright in the East and West, is professor and vice president of the Shanghai Theatre Academy. He is the editor of *Theatre Arts* (Shanghai), a contributing editor to *TDR*, and director of the Asia Pacific Bureau of Theatre Schools-UNESCO Chair ITI. He taught at universities in North America for ten years before returning to Shanghai in 1999. Research interests include social performance studies, intercultural theatre, and theatre narratology. Recent publications in Chinese include *Theatre in Construction and Deconstruction and Conflicts on Stage and the Clash of Civilizations*.

**Yong Li Lan** is associate professor and coordinator of the Theatre Studies Programme, National University of Singapore. She has published several essays on Shakespeare and intercultural performativity in theatre, film, and on the internet. She is collaborating with scholars from Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, Korea, and the US in developing an online archive of Asian Shakespeare performance, the Asian Shakespeare Intercultural Archive (ASIA), which will contain video recordings, multilingual translated scripts, detailed data on each production, and interactive tools for comparative and collaborative research.
Preface

The aim of this collection is to expand theoretical and functional discussion about the condition and significance of Shakespeare performance in contemporary Asia. As we explain in the introduction, we do not pretend to a comprehensive view of the topic, or allot an equivalent number of essays to competing regions, or suggest that our examples are necessarily representative of national or international trends. Any such approaches would distort the topic, given the size of Asia and the diversity of approaches to Shakespeare and performance found there. Instead we have tried to focus attention on why Shakespeare has been of use in an area of the world that has no inherent reason to call on him, investigating some of the ways his work has been reinvented and deployed. Inside of that general principle, the essayists – who come from a variety of backgrounds, countries, and linguistic traditions – have been encouraged to offer their own views, even when they challenge or contradict one another. Rather than force the chapters into a single theoretical position we have encouraged divergent opinions, since they are indicative of the substantially different cultural histories and positions through which people approach Asian handling of Shakespeare, interculturalism, and the use of the ‘foreign’ in performance. For example, the book is framed by opposing approaches: after our introduction, John Russell Brown takes a position that is disputed by Rustom Bharucha in the final chapter. Li Ruru’s view of the work of the Chinese director Lin Zhaohua is substantially different to that of Shen Lin’s later in the collection, while the significance and value of intercultural performance is argued a number of times from divergent standpoints.

We have taken a broad view of what constitutes performance of Shakespeare, incorporating into the book examples of cinema, Japanese Shojo Manga (comic books for girls), as well as live theatre work of many types, from Beijing Opera and verse recital to avant-garde performance and popular musical comedy.
Regarding proper names, we have maintained the order customary in the country or language concerned. Chinese, Japanese, and Korean names are romanized with the family name first followed without comma by the given name or names, even if the person sometimes reverses this order when working in the West: thus we write Ninagawa Yukio, Gao Xingjian, Wu Hsing-Kuo. To be clear about the names of our essayists, we have capitalized their family names in the list of contributors.

We are grateful to a number of people and institutions for help. We particularly thank Thomas Rimer for advice and Trinity College Dublin for travel and research funds over some time. Grants from the Shaw Foundation, the Lee Foundation, and the National University of Singapore (Research Project R-103-000-027-112), together with the invaluable help of Marcus Tan, enabled us to host the preparatory workshop ‘Shakespeare Performance in the New Asias’ at that institution. At Cambridge University Press we are indebted to the persistently encouraging Sarah Stanton.

Three of these essays have appeared before in different versions, chapter 2 in *New Theatre Quarterly* 21 (2005), chapter 4 in *TDR* 50 (2006), and chapter 11 in *Theatre Journal* 56 (2004).