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SHAKESPEARE IN PRODUCTION

OTHELLO

This second edition of *Othello* updates the first (Bristol Classical Press, 1987), both chronologically and conceptually. It includes consideration of productions from the last seventeen years, and reconsiders earlier material in the light of more recent critical attitudes. Post-colonial and feminist studies have had an impact on the way *Othello* is perceived and interpreted. The question of blacked-up/black/colour-blind casting and the significance of white and/or black audiences in different political and racial contexts have recently become much more clearly articulated. In the process, Shakespeare himself has not escaped the charge of racism. Equally, the position of Desdemona has received more focused attention, both as the forbidden object of desire within a racial framework and as a woman in her own right. This edition takes account of these developments in criticism, in the theatre, on film and in the adaptations which set out to interrogate Shakespeare's text.

JULIE HANKEY is a freelance writer and one of the General Editors of the 'Shakespeare in Production' series. She contributed the theatre-historical editions of *Richard III* and *Othello*, before the series was adopted by Cambridge University Press, and has also contributed articles to *Shakespeare Quarterly* and *New Theatre Quarterly*.

SHAKESPEARE IN PRODUCTION

SERIES EDITORS: J. S. BRATTON AND JULIE HANKEY

This series offers students and researchers the fullest possible stage histories of individual Shakespearean texts. In each volume a substantial introduction presents a conceptual overview of the play, marking out the major stages of its representation and reception. The commentary, presented alongside the New Cambridge Shakespeare edition of the text itself, offers detailed, line-by-line evidence for the overview presented in the introduction, making the volume a flexible tool for further research. The editors have selected interesting and vivid evocations of settings, acting and stage presentation, and range widely in time and space.

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SERIES EDITORS' PREFACE

It is no longer necessary to stress that the text of a play is only its starting-point, and that only in production is its potential realised and capable of being appreciated fully. Since the coming-of-age of Theatre Studies as an academic discipline, we now understand that even Shakespeare is only one collaborator in the creation and infinite recreation of his play upon the stage. And just as we now agree that no play is complete until it is produced, so we have become interested in the way in which plays often produced – and pre-eminently the plays of the national Bard, William Shakespeare – acquire a life history of their own, after they leave the hands of their first maker.

Since the eighteenth century Shakespeare has become a cultural construct: sometimes the guarantor of nationhood, heritage and the status quo, sometimes seized and transformed to be its critic and antidote. This latter role has been particularly evident in countries where Shakespeare has to be translated. The irony is that while his status as national icon grows in the English-speaking world, his language is both lost and renewed, so that for good or ill, Shakespeare can be made to seem more urgently 'relevant' than in England or America, and may become the one dissenting voice that the censors mistake as harmless.

'Shakespeare in Production' gives the reader, the student and the scholar a comprehensive dossier of materials – eye-witness accounts, contemporary criticism, promptbook marginalia, stage business, cuts, additions and rewritings – from which to construct an understanding of the many meanings that the plays have carried down the ages and across the world. These materials are organised alongside the New Cambridge Shakespeare text of the play, line by line and scene by scene, while a substantial introduction in each volume offers a guide to their interpretation. One may trace an argument about, for example, the many ways of playing Queen Gertrude, or the political transmutations of the text of *Henry V*; or take a scene, an act, or a whole play, and work out how it has succeeded or failed in presentation over four hundred years.

For, despite our insistence that the plays are endlessly made and remade by history, Shakespeare is not a blank, scribbled upon by the age. Theatre history charts changes, but also registers something in spite of those changes. Some productions work and others do not. Two interpretations may be entirely

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different, and yet both will bring the play to life. Why? Without setting out to give absolute answers, the history of a play in the theatre can often show where the energy and shape of it lie, what has made it tick, through many permutations. In this way theatre history can find common ground with literary criticism. Both will find suggestive directions in the introductions to these volumes, while the commentaries provide raw material for readers to recreate the living experience of theatre, and become their own eye-witness.

*J. S. Bratton
Julie Hankey*

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>A</i>	<i>Athenaeum</i>
Bell	<i>Bell's Edition of Shakespeare's plays</i> , ed. Francis Gentleman, vol. 1. <i>Othello</i> , as Performed at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane. Regulated from the Prompt-Book . . . by Mr Hopkins, Prompter, London, 1774
<i>BM</i>	<i>Blackwood's Magazine</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>Century</i>
Carroll	Janet Barton Carroll, 'A Promptbook Study of Margaret Webster's Production of Othello', PhD dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1977
Cumberland	Cumberland edition. <i>Othello, a Tragedy</i> . Printed from the Acting Copy with Remarks by D-G [George Daniel]. (Issued as part of <i>Cumberland's British Theatre</i> , vol. 11), 1829
<i>DT</i>	<i>Daily Telegraph</i>
<i>EIM</i>	<i>English Illustrated Magazine</i>
<i>EN</i>	<i>Evening News</i>
<i>ES</i>	<i>Evening Standard</i>
<i>FT</i>	<i>Financial Times</i>
<i>G</i>	<i>Guardian</i>
Hazlitt	William Hazlitt, <i>The Complete Works of William Hazlitt</i> , ed. P. P. Howe, 21 vols., London and Toronto, 1930–4, vols. v and xviii
<i>I</i>	<i>Independent</i>
<i>IHT</i>	<i>International Herald Tribune</i>
<i>ILN</i>	<i>Illustrated London News</i>
<i>IoS</i>	<i>Independent on Sunday</i>
<i>L</i>	<i>Listener</i>
<i>LI</i>	<i>Life International</i>
<i>LM</i>	<i>Lippincott's Magazine</i>
<i>LR</i>	<i>Literary Review</i>
Mason	E. T. Mason, <i>The Othello of Tommaso Salvini</i> , New York: Putnam's, 1890

x *List of abbreviations*

<i>MG</i>	<i>Manchester Guardian</i>
<i>MM</i>	<i>Macmillan's Magazine</i>
<i>MoS</i>	<i>Mail on Sunday</i>
<i>MS</i>	<i>Morning Star</i>
<i>NS</i>	<i>New Statesman</i>
<i>NS and N</i>	<i>New Statesman and National</i>
<i>NYT</i>	<i>New York Times</i>
<i>O</i>	<i>Observer</i>
Ottley	Henry Ottley, <i>Fechter's Version of Othello Critically Analysed</i> , London, 1861
<i>P and P</i>	<i>Plays and Players</i>
<i>PQ</i>	<i>Philological Quarterly</i>
<i>S</i>	<i>Spectator</i>
<i>SB</i>	<i>Shakespeare Bulletin</i>
<i>Sh. S</i>	<i>Shakespeare Survey</i>
Sprague	A. C. Sprague, <i>Shakespeare and the Actors: The Stage Business in His Plays (1660–1905)</i> , Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1945
<i>SQ</i>	<i>Shakespeare Quarterly</i>
<i>ST</i>	<i>Sunday Times</i>
<i>STel</i>	<i>Sunday Telegraph</i>
<i>T</i>	<i>The Times</i>
<i>TB</i>	<i>Temple Bar</i>
<i>TJ</i>	<i>Theatrical Journal</i>
<i>TLS</i>	<i>Times Literary Supplement</i>
<i>TO</i>	<i>Time Out</i>
<i>TQ</i>	<i>Theatre Quarterly</i>
<i>Variorum</i>	Horace Howard Furness, <i>Othello: A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare</i> , Philadelphia, 1886, vol. VI
<i>F1</i>	The first Folio, published in 1623
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>Q1</i>	The first quarto, published in 1622
<i>Q2</i>	The second quarto, published in 1630
RSC	Royal Shakespeare Company
<i>WP</i>	<i>Washington Post</i>

PRODUCTIONS

Location is London unless otherwise noted.

Date	Actor(s)/Director	Theatre/medium
?1603–18	Richard Burbage	Globe/Blackfriars
1618–42	Ellyeaert Swanston Joseph Taylor: Iago	Globe/Blackfriars
1660–9	Nicholas Burt Walter Clun (died 1664): Iago Michael Mohun (after 1664): Iago	The Cockpit, Drury Lane The Bridges Street Theatre (from 1663)
?1674–82	Charles Hart Michael Mohun: Iago	The Theatre Royal (hereafter Drury Lane)
1682–1709	Thomas Betterton Samuel Sandford: Iago (until 1702)	Drury Lane
1710–27	Barton Booth	Drury Lane
1720–51	James Quin Colley Cibber: Iago	Lincoln's Inn Fields
1734–77	Charles Macklin: Iago	Haymarket
1745–6	David Garrick (3 performances)	Drury Lane
1747–75	Spranger Barry Macklin, Garrick, Ryan, Bensley: Iago Susanna Cibber: Desdemona	Drury Lane (Barry was at the Smock Alley Theatre, Dublin, 1744–6)
1771–94	Robert Bensley: Iago	Covent Garden
1780–5	John Henderson: Iago	Covent Garden
1785–1805	J. P. Kemble Sarah Siddons: Desdemona Charles Kemble: Cassio	Drury Lane
1792	Francois-Joseph Talma in Ducis's transl./version	Théâtre-Français
1803	G. F. Cooke: Iago	Covent Garden

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Date	Actor(s)/Director	Theatre/medium
1814–33	Edmund Kean J. B. Booth, W. C. Macready, Edwin Forrest: Iago	Drury Lane
1816–51	W. C. Macready George Vandenhoff, C. M. Young: Iago Fanny Kemble, Helena Faucit: Desdemona	Covent Garden
1827–8	Edmund Kean Macready: Iago	Théâtre Favert, Paris
1829	Joanny in Alfred de Vigny's translation Mlle Mars: Desdemona	La Comédie Française
1833, 1858, 1865	Ira Aldridge Ellen Tree, Madge Kendal: Desdemona	Covent Garden, Lyceum, Haymarket
1826–71	Edwin Forrest	The Bowery, New York Drury Lane (1836)
1834, 1836	<i>Othello Travestie: an operatic burlesque</i> , by Maurice G. Dowling	The Liver Theatre (Liverpool); The Strand
1837–72	Samuel Phelps	Haymarket Sadlers Wells (1844–61)
1848	Gustavus Vaughan Brooke	Olympic Theatre Queens' Theatre, Melbourne (1855)
1856	Charles Dillon	Lyceum
1861–2	Charles Fechter/John Ryder (alternating Othello and Iago)	The Princess's Theatre
1860–9	Edwin Booth	Winter Garden, New York; Booth's Theatre, New York (1869–73)
1875, 1884	Tommaso Salvini	Drury Lane; Covent Garden
1876	Henry Irving Isabel Bateman: Desdemona	Lyceum
1881	Henry Irving/Edwin Booth (alternating Othello and Iago) Ellen Terry: Desdemona	Lyceum

List of productions xiii

Date	Actor(s)/Director	Theatre/medium
1881	Ernesto Rossi	Booth's Theatre, New York (in 1876 Rossi did extracts from <i>Othello</i> at Drury Lane)
1886–1921	Frank Benson	Shakespeare Memorial Theatre (hereafter Stratford)
1889	<i>Otello</i> by Verdi	Covent Garden (English debut)
1898	Ellen Terry: Desdemona Frank Cooper: Othello	Grand Theatre, Fulham
1902	Johnston Forbes-Robertson	Lyric
1907, 1908, 1911	Oscar Asche Alfred Brydone: Iago	His Majesty's Theatre
1907	Ermete Novelli	Lyric Theatre, New York
1910	Giovanni Grasso	Lyric
1912	Herbert Beerbohm Tree Laurence Irving: Iago Phyllis Neilson-Terry: Desdemona	His Majesty's Theatre
1921, 1948, 1949	Godfrey Tearle	Court Theatre (1921); Stratford
1922, 1927, 1943	Baliol Holloway (alternating Othello/Iago with Abraham Sofaer, 1943)	Stratford
1924	Ion Swinley	Old Vic
1929	H. K. Ayliffe (director)	Birmingham Repertory
1930	Paul Robeson Peggy Ashcroft: Desdemona Sybil Thorndyke: Emilia	The Savoy Theatre
1930, 1932	Wilfred Walter George Hayes: Iago (1930) Ralph Richardson: Iago (1932)	Stratford (1930) Old Vic (1932)
1931	Edmund Willard	Arts Theatre
1932	Ernest Milton	St James's
1935	Abraham Sofaer Maurice Evans: Iago	Old Vic
1938	Ralph Richardson Laurence Olivier: Iago Tyrone Guthrie (director)	Old Vic

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Date	Actor(s)/Director	Theatre/medium
1940, 1944	Donald Wolfit	Kingsway (1940) Scala (1944)
1942, 1947	Frederic Valk Bernard Miles: Iago (1942) Donald Wolfit: Iago (1947)	The New Theatre (1942) Savoy (1947)
1943	Paul Robeson José Ferrer: Iago Uta Hagen: Desdemona Margaret Webster (director)	Shubert Theatre, New York
1947	Jack Hawkins Anthony Quayle: Iago	Piccadilly
1950, 1952, 1954	Anthony Quayle	Stratford (and on tour in Australia)
1951	Orson Welles	St James's
1952, 1956	Orson Welles Michael MacLiammoir: Iago Suzanne Cloutier: Desdemona Fay Compton: Emilia	Film (1952, USA 1956, UK)
1953, 1957	Earle Hyman	Jan Hus Auditorium, New York (1953) Shakespeare Festival, Stratford, Connecticut (1957)
1956	Richard Burton/John Neville (alternating Othello and Iago)	Old Vic
1959	Paul Robeson	Stratford
1964	Laurence Olivier Frank Finlay: Iago Maggie Smith: Desdemona John Dexter (director)	Old Vic
1964	James Earl Jones	The New York Shakespeare Festival, Central Park; The Martinique
1965	Olivier/Finlay/Smith Stuart Burge (director)	Film of 1964 Old Vic production
1968	<i>Not Now, Sweet Desdemona</i> , by Murray Carlin	Makarere University College
1970–1	<i>Catch My Soul</i> (Rock musical version of <i>Othello</i>)	The Roundhouse

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Date	Actor(s)/Director	Theatre/medium
1971, 1972	Brewster Mason	Stratford (1971)
	Emrys James: Iago	Aldwych (1972)
	Lisa Harrow: Desdemona	
	Elizabeth Spriggs: Emilia	
	John Barton (director)	
1971	Bruce Purchase	Mermaid Theatre
	Bernard Miles: Iago	
1972	<i>An Othello</i> , by Charles Marowitz	Open Space Theatre
1979, 1980	Donald Sinden	Stratford (1979)
	Bob Peck: Iago	Aldwych (1980)
	Ronald Eyre (director)	
1980	Paul Scofield	The National Theatre
	Michael Bryant: Iago	
	Felicity Kendal: Desdemona	
	Yvonne Bryceland: Emilia	
	Peter Hall (director)	
1981	Anthony Hopkins	Television film: BBC (available on video)
	Bob Hoskins: Iago	
	Penelope Wilton: Desdemona	
	Jonathan Miller (director)	
1982	James Earl Jones	Winter Garden, New York
	Christopher Plummer: Iago	
1985, 1986	Ben Kingsley	Stratford (1985)
	David Suchet: Iago	Barbican (1986)
	Terry Hands (director)	
1987	John Kani	The Market Theatre, Johannesberg, South Africa
	Richard Haines: Iago	
	Joanna Weinberg: Desdemona	
	Janet Suzman (director)	
1988	Kani/Haines/Weinberg (as above)	Television film: ITV/Channel 4 (available on video)
	Janet Suzman (director)	
1989	Willard White	The Other Place, Stratford
	Ian McKellen: Iago	
	Imogen Stubbs: Desdemona	
	Zoë Wanamaker: Emilia	
	Trevor Nunn (director)	

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Date	Actor(s)/Director	Theatre/medium
1990	White/McKellen/Stubbs/Wanamaker (as above) Trevor Nunn (director)	Television film: BBC (available on video)
1990	Avery Brooks Andre Braugher: Iago Franchelle Stewart-Dorn: Emilia Hal Scott (director)	Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC
1995	Laurence Fishburne Kenneth Branagh: Iago Irene Jacob: Desdemona Anna Patrick: Emilia Oliver Parker (director)	Film
1996, 1998	<i>Castings Othello</i> , by Calleen Sinnette Jennings	Washington Summer Theatre Festival (1996) Folger Shakespeare Theatre, Washington DC (1998)
1997	Patrick Stewart Ron Canada: Iago Patrice Johnson: Desdemona Franchelle Stewart-Dorn: Emilia Jude Kelly (director)	The Shakespeare Theatre, Washington DC
1997	David Harewood Simon Russell Beale: Iago Claire Skinner: Desdemona Maureen Beattie: Emilia Sam Mendes (director)	The National Theatre
1999	Ray Fearon Richard McCabe: Iago Zoë Waites: Dsdemona Rachel Joyce: Emilia Michael Attenborough (director)	Stratford
2001	<i>Othello</i> adapted by Andrew Davies Eamonn Walker Christopher Ecclestone: Ben Jago Keeley Hawes: Dessie	Television film: LWT (available on video)