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Introduction

Ella Hawkins (Editor), Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

Over the past five years, the Shakespeare Institute Library has seen a dramatic increase in the quantity of its holdings relating to Shakespeare and performance. Metres of shelving dedicated to this subject area brim with an ever-growing collection of titles, and a clutch of carefully-labelled archive boxes welcome new acquisitions from actors, directors, and theatre companies on a regular basis. The thriving nature of this field at the Shakespeare Institute is representative of a far broader trend in Shakespeare Studies. The intangible relationship between text and performance has attracted the attention of countless scholars in recent decades, and has formed the focus of multiple dedicated book series (including *Shakespeare in Performance* [Manchester University Press] and *Shakespeare in the Theatre* [The Arden Shakespeare, Bloomsbury]) and events (*Shakespeare in Practice* [April 2018], *Radical Mischief* [July 2018], and more). The increasing proximity of academia and professional theatre is indicative of a future ripe with opportunity for further collaboration and exploration.

This edition of *The Shakespeare Institute Review* comprises a collection of contributions from the next generation of Shakespeare and performance scholars. Representing postgraduate programmes around the globe, the authors featured each offer a unique insight into a particular area of this field. Collectively this research encompasses film, intercultural theatre, historical editing practices, and textual analysis. Ben Broadribb focuses his attention on BBC screen adaptations of *1 Henry VI* to elucidate the ongoing relationship between Shakespeare and contemporary socio-political events. Examining four representations of the funeral of King Henry V in productions broadcast between 1960 and 2016, Broadribb considers how each adaptation reflects the (often troubled) British national identity of its time. The article concludes with a stark reminder of the identity crisis triggered by Britain's 2016 EU

Referendum and an insight into how Shakespearean performance on screen has already begun to reflect the rhetoric around these divisive uncertainties. Caitlin West similarly conducts a close reading of particular moments in Shakespeare's plays, but does so by exploring performance possibilities indicated by the texts. West investigates the role of the abject body as a response to instances of verbal excess in *King Lear* and *Timon of Athens* by identifying implicit stage directions and positioning each text in relation to (what is known of) early modern performance practices. Ziyi Su's article discusses the realisation of Shakespearean performance possibilities in late-twentieth-century Shanghai and Taiwan. Ziyi provides a detailed study of how two intercultural stage interpretations of *Macbeth* (*Bloody Hand* [1986] and *The Kingdom of Desire* [1986]) negotiated the cultural conflicts that inevitably arise when elements of Shakespeare and Chinese Opera are combined in practice. In the Notes section, Sara Marie Westh gives an intriguing insight into the workings of the notorious notebooks compiled by James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps during the nineteenth century. Led by the notion that each Shakespeare text is 'a dynamic *process* that evolves over time in response to the needs and sensibilities of its users',¹ Westh highlights the value of this enormous collection of cuttings as a document of a significant moment in editorial history.

The final section of this edition features production and publication reviews. Elizabeth Moroney reports on a 2017 staging of *Much Ado About Nothing* at Aotearoa-New Zealand's Pop-up Globe (dir. Miriama McDowell), and Diane Meyer Lowman shares details of the Royal Shakespeare Company's 2018 staging of *The Duchess of Malfi* (by John Webster; dir. Maria Aberg). Rachael Nicholas reviews Peter Kirwan's *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Cheek by Jowl*² – the most recent publication in The Arden Shakespeare series mentioned above.

¹ Margaret Jane Kidnie, *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), p. 2.

² Peter Kirwan, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Cheek by Jowl* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019).

It has been a privilege to captain *The Shakespeare Institute Review* through the process of bringing this edition to fruition. I am proud to showcase the work of my peers, and grateful to the many people who have willingly given their time, energy, and support. Working with you all has only increased my confidence in our generation of scholars.

‘Henry the Fifth, thy ghost I invoke’: The many funerals of King Henry V in BBC adaptations of *1 Henry VI*

Ben Broadribb, Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

Shakespeare’s first tetralogy of English history plays – the three parts of *Henry VI* and *Richard III* – are overtly political in the historical power struggles they dramatize. Significantly, they have also been reflective of contemporary politics since they were first written and performed. It is likely no accident that *Richard III* concludes with a period of monarchical instability being ended through the crowning of Henry VII, the grandfather of Elizabeth I, as Shakespeare and his collaborators were writing at a time when questions were increasingly being asked of what would happen in England upon the death of the aging, childless queen. As the plays have been adapted in successive centuries, they have continually been reshaped to comment on the politics of the time. John Crowne has been cited as the first to do this: Crowne’s 1680 play *The Misery of Civil War* adapted *Henry VI Parts 2 and 3* to comment on both the English Civil War and more recent fears of extremism; and his 1681 play *Henry the Sixth, the First Part* used the first three acts of *2 Henry VI* to draw on national fear of Catholicism following Titus Oates’ Popish Plot of 1679 to 1681.³

Moving ahead to the twentieth century, Stuart Hampton-Reeves and Carol Chillington Rutter note ‘the strange, certainly unexpected revival of the *Henry VI* plays in the 1950s after centuries of neglect’, which they attribute to the plays’ correlation with ‘a wider anxiety about the nature and authenticity of Englishness itself, which . . . has been in crisis since the *de facto* end of Empire after the Second World War’.⁴ Roger Warren similarly finds that the *Henry VI* plays

³ Annalisa Castaldo, ‘Introduction to the Focus Edition’, in *King Henry VI Parts I, II and III*, ed. by Annalisa Castaldo (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing, 2015), pp. ix-xviii (p. xvi).

⁴ Stuart Hampton-Reeves and Carol Chillington Rutter, *The Henry VI Plays* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006), p. 1.

‘have come fully into their own since the end of the Second World War’ due to their ‘uncompromising violence . . . from which earlier generations had shrunk’, and that they ‘dramatize contemporary as much as Elizabethan issues: the struggle for power, the manoeuvres of politicians [and] social unrest’.⁵ This post-war surge in both popularity and socio-political relevance for the *Henry VI* plays is borne out through the four distinct small-screen adaptations that have been commissioned and broadcast by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) since 1960 (the year in which the earliest was broadcast). As cultural artefacts of the times in which they were filmed and broadcast, each of the BBC’s adaptations can be considered a reflection of the socio-political makeup of contemporary Britain, and of England in particular, offering insight into the changing national identity across the past six decades.

The funeral of Henry V as presented in Act 1, Scene 1 of *1 Henry VI* is an important touchstone in understanding how each adaptation reflects the British national identity of its time. This is firstly because it appears in all four BBC versions, and therefore provides a convenient point of comparison. Second, the manner in which a ceremonial scene such as this might be adapted for television will inherently differ from the way in which it would be brought to life on stage, offering insight into how the play has been shaped for the small screen. Finally, being as it is the first scene of the first act of the first part of the *Henry VI* plays, the handling of the funeral by both director and screenwriter is essential in giving early insight into the nature of their adaptation of the plays as a whole. Writing about the opening scene of *1 Henry VI* in his Arden edition of the play, Edward Burns notes that ‘[i]t is not completely clear whether we see the delayed and disrupted beginning of the funeral . . . or the end of the funeral as the coffin leaves Westminster Abbey’, but argues that ‘[i]t is an important irony in the scene that the very

⁵ Roger Warren, ‘Introduction’, in *Henry VI Part Two*, ed. by Roger Warren, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), pp. 1-74 (p. 1).

concerns raised by the death of Henry prevent a properly respectful completion of the ritual of his funeral'.⁶ It is not only the director's creation of the funeral itself that is important therefore, but also to what extent the ceremony is disrupted and in what manner this disruption takes place.

The earliest BBC version of the funeral is found at the start of *The Red Rose and the White*, the ninth episode of *An Age of Kings* (a fifteen-part serialisation of the first and second tetralogies).⁷ The synopsis of the episode in the published screenplay states that '[t]he dissension that is to dominate the reign of this youthful Henry [VI] is evident even before his father has been laid to rest in Westminster Abbey',⁸ suggesting an adaptation in line with Burns' reading of the funeral scene. This is evident in director Michael Hayes' choice to begin the episode *in media res* with Henry V's funeral already underway as Bedford (Patrick Garland) begins his opening speech. The director places Henry's coffin at the centre of the set, allowing Gloucester (John Ringham) and Winchester (Robert Lang) to bicker across the dead king's body.

An Age of Kings was originally broadcast in 1960, temporally placing it midway between the BBC televising the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 and the state funeral of Sir Winston Churchill twelve years later in 1965. The series' adaptation of the *Henry VI* plays in particular also seems to sit aesthetically and politically between these two events, creating what Patricia Lennox describes as 'a post-World War II celebration of national idealism moderated by knowledge of the human cost of war'.⁹ Consequently, this early version of Act 1, Scene 1

⁶ William Shakespeare, *King Henry VI Part 1*, ed. by Edward Burns (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2000), p. 115.

⁷ *An Age Of Kings*, dir. by Michael Hayes (BBC, 1960).

⁸ Nathan Keats and An Keats, '9. The Red Rose and the White', in *An Age Of Kings: The Historical Plays of William Shakespeare as Presented on the British Broadcasting Corporation Television Series 'An Age of Kings'*, ed. by Nathan Keats and An Keats (New York: Pyramid Books, 1961), pp. 310-311 (p. 310).

⁹ Patricia Lennox, 'Henry VI: A Television History in Four Parts', in *Henry VI: Critical Essays*, ed. by Thomas A. Pendleton (London: Routledge, 2001), pp. 235-252 (p. 237).

proves to be the least chaotic of the funeral scenes across the four BBC adaptations of the play, imbued as it is with clear reverence towards Henry V as monarch and dignified solemnity at his passing. Both the director's choices and those of screenwriter Eric Crozier demonstrate a more measured approach to the funeral scene, capturing the restrained optimism and nostalgia of British national identity during the post-war period.

In the play, Bedford's prayer to the ghost of Henry V (1.1.44-56) is interrupted by the entrance of the first messenger, breaking off mid-sentence: 'A far more glorious star thy soul will make / Than Julius Caesar, or bright –' (1.1.56)¹⁰ – his incomplete speech emphasising the disruption of the funeral. By cutting short Bedford's line as he begins to eulogise his late brother and king through comparison to great leaders of the past, Shakespeare also suggests the abrupt end of an era of such leadership through Henry V's premature death, as well as foreshadowing the troubled reigns of both Henry VI and those who will follow him until Richmond claims the throne at the end of *Richard III*. Adapting the scene for *An Age of Kings*, Crozier removes not only Bedford's final incomplete line but every line other than his first, reducing both the sense of disruption and the suggestion of the turmoil to come. As such, Bedford simply urges his fellow nobles to 'Cease, cease these jars and rest your minds in peace' (1.1.44), bringing his hands together in prayer as he speaks, with Gloucester and Winchester following his reverent example by crossing themselves at Henry's coffin as if in apology to the dead king for their argument. Whilst the director has an ominous drumbeat sound as the first messenger enters following this, the messenger then stands respectfully at the head of Henry's coffin and crosses himself before speaking – an action repeated by the second and third messengers. Not only does this further the reverential actions of Bedford, Gloucester, and Winchester, but it also adds

¹⁰ William Shakespeare, *King Henry VI Part 1*, ed. by Edward Burns (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2000). All citations of *1 Henry VI* in this article are taken from this edition of the play.

a pause of several seconds between Bedford's line and the first messenger's speech, reducing further still the sense of disruption to Henry's funeral.

Despite being transmitted only five years after *An Age of Kings*, the BBC's filmed version of Peter Hall and John Barton's *The Wars of the Roses*¹¹ trilogy represents a significant shift away from the post-war nostalgia and nationalism which underpinned the earlier series. Instead, *The Wars of the Roses* moves towards a postmodern cynicism stemming from a national identity disenchanted by the political world. The Royal Shakespeare Company's 1963 stage production of *The Wars of the Roses* has been described as reflecting 'the decline of post-war Europe into the disillusionment of Cold War as bleakly illustrated in Jan Kott's existentialist reading of Shakespeare'.¹² This is translated into the dark, oppressive, and claustrophobic shooting style of Michael Hayes and Robin Midgley, who together directed the television adaptation of the production. Michael Manheim describes the televised version as presenting 'a senseless political maelstrom' populated by '[t]ouchy, arrogant noblemen (and women)' who make 'little attempt . . . to understand the meaning of what is going on – politically or morally'.¹³ The approach of Hayes and Midgley foreshadows the Kott-influenced nihilism of Peter Brook's 1971 film of *King Lear* – another screen adaptation with its roots in an RSC production from the same period.

The funeral of Henry V in the BBC's *The Wars of the Roses* feels considerably more chaotic than it did in *An Age of Kings*, evidenced immediately through both Hall and Barton's adaptation of *1 Henry VI* Act 1, Scene 1 and the way in which Hayes and Midgley chose to shoot it. The choice by Hall and Barton to truncate the scene considerably – through reducing

¹¹ *The Wars Of The Roses*, dir. by Michael Hayes and Robin Midgley (BBC/Royal Shakespeare Company, 1965).

¹² Robert Potter, 'The Rediscovery of Queen Margaret: "The Wars of the Roses", 1963', in *New Theatre Quarterly*, 4:14 (1988), pp. 105-119 (p. 111).

¹³ Michael Manheim, 'The English History Play on Screen', in *Shakespeare and the Moving Image: the plays on film and television*, ed. by Anthony Davies and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), pp. 121-145 (pp. 131-132).

the number of messengers interrupting the funeral from three to one, for example – increases the sense of urgency in the nobles’ abandonment of the funeral. The opening image of the first part of the television adaptation (simply titled *Henry VI*) offers a long shot of the empty throne silhouetted against an iron lattice and shot through the bars of a similar grille in the foreground. The camerawork by Hayes and Midgley immediately highlights the sense of their adaptation being encased in a prison cell, foreshadowing Henry VI’s feelings of being trapped upon the throne: ‘Was never subject long’d to be a king / As I do long and wish to be a subject’ (*2H6*, 4.9.5-6).¹⁴

Perhaps more notable in Hayes and Midgley’s filming of Hall and Barton’s adaptation of Act 1, Scene 1 are the elements not taken directly from the play, and the ways in which they ironically anticipate the events set to unfold over the first tetralogy. Just as in the stage version of *The Wars of the Roses*, Barton opens his adaptation of Act 1, Scene 1 with the prologue-like ‘latest will and testament’ of Henry V (taken from Edward Hall’s *Chronicle*, one of Shakespeare’s sources for the *Henry VI* plays) and spoken by ‘the voice of King Henry V’ as a voiceover.¹⁵ From beyond the grave, Henry instructs his noblemen ‘to love and join together in one league and one unfeigned amity’, making the rapid descent of his funeral into arguments between the same nobles all the more poignant in their betrayal of the late king’s wishes. As Henry speaks, the camera pans across the faces of the nobles kneeling around the king’s body lying in state, the use of close-up – verging on extreme close-up in the case of some of the characters, their faces barely fitting the screen – emphasising the egocentricity of each man. Hayes and Midgley introduce these men to the audience as separate individuals, complete with

¹⁴ William Shakespeare, *King Henry VI Part 2*, ed. by Ronald Knowles (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 1999).

¹⁵ John Barton and Peter Hall, *The Wars Of The Roses* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1970), p. 3.

identities and ambitions that the camera can barely contain, rather than the unified group Henry wills them to be.

Broadcast in 1983, Jane Howell's sequence of four adaptations reflect not only a significant shift in British national identity during the 1980s, but also the BBC's need to redefine its identity at the time of their broadcasting. Howell's productions were transmitted as part of the *BBC Television Shakespeare* – a series which had gained a reputation for being 'dull' and 'a lost opportunity' since its inception in 1978.¹⁶ Howell's first tetralogy was in part a direct reaction to this, creating productions which '[launched] an all-out assault on the assumption that televised Shakespeare must use "realistic" film techniques and naturalistic production designs'.¹⁷ The four episodes were originally transmitted on BBC Two over four Sunday evenings in January 1983, only two months after the launch of Channel 4 in November 1982. The new commercial channel had been '[c]harged by Parliament . . . "to be innovative and experimental in content and form", and "to disseminate education and educational programmes"'.¹⁸ The broadcast of *An Age Of Kings* in 1960 had been commissioned partly to win the BBC the rights to launch BBC Two in 1964 as the UK's third television channel;¹⁹ Howell's radical approach to televising Shakespeare's histories can similarly be seen as a reaction to new competition. The initial remit of Channel 4 was similar in many ways to that which had defined BBC Two at its inception nearly two decades earlier.

Where *The Wars of the Roses* reflected the politically-numbed national identity of the mid 1960s, Howell's productions tap into the active contempt for politics and authority which

¹⁶ Martin Banham, 'BBC Television's dull Shakespeares', in *Critical Quarterly*, 22:1 (1980), pp. 31-40.

¹⁷ Hardy M. Cook, 'Jane Howell's BBC First Tetralogy: Theatrical and Televisual Manipulation', in *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 20:4 (1992), pp. 326-331 (p. 330).

¹⁸ Dorothy Hobson, *Channel 4: The Early Years and the Jeremy Isaacs Legacy* (London: I.B.Tauris & Co., 2008), p. vii.

¹⁹ John Wyver, *Adapting the Histories: An Age Of Kings on screen* (booklet accompanying DVD release; London: Illuminations Media, 2013), p. 20.

characterised British counterculture during the late 1970s and early 1980s. The clearest example of Howell's progressive approach to staging the first tetralogy is what she describes as the 'adventure playground set'²⁰ – an edifice of wooden ramps, rope ladders, and swinging doors upon which all four plays are enacted. The set is brightly painted in blocks of colour at the beginning of the cycle, but gradually becomes ravaged and blackened by the events of the plays. Howell sees the nobility in the *Henry VI* plays as being 'like a lot of children – prep-school children',²¹ who she costumes in dressing-up-box style attire which similarly begins brightly coloured but grows increasingly dull and worn out across the tetralogy.

Howell's version of Act 1, Scene 1 at the start of *The First Part of Henry the Sixth*²² offers perhaps the greatest sense of ceremony of all the BBC adaptations: accompanied by occasional chants and drum beats from the cortège of black-robed figures, a lone soldier sings a lament as Henry V's crown and coffin are ceremonially carried onto the set. However, the sincerity of the funeral procession and soldier's song are soon undermined as the lighting gradually brightens to reveal the multi-coloured adventure playground set; the crudely painted structure causes the solemnity of the actors to seem somewhat ridiculous. The pageantry of the scene is also contrasted by Henry's coffin: an uncovered wooden box with a simple painted skeleton adorning the lid. The juxtaposition of this imagery simultaneously defines the funeral as a significant historical moment and the modest burial of a human body following death.

Much like Hall and Barton's adaptation of Act 1, Scene 1 at the beginning of *The Wars of the Roses*, Howell opens her version of the funeral scene with lines that historically predate Shakespeare's play. The lyrics of the soldier's lament are closely adapted from a fifteenth-century prayer originally composed not for the historical Henry V, but in honour of Henry VI

²⁰ Jane Howell, qtd in 'The Production', in *The BBC TV Shakespeare: Henry VI Part 1*, ed. by Peter Alexander (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 2013), p. 23.

²¹ *Ibid.*

²² *The First Part of Henry the Sixth*, dir. by Jane Howell (BBC/Time Life, 1983).

in the years following the later king's death.²³ Moreover, the soldier is played by Peter Benson, who also plays Henry VI across Howell's four adaptations. This choice of doubling lends the opening song an additional haunting nature, as if the adult Henry VI is paradoxically mourning his father whilst also singing an elegy for himself, foreshadowing his own troubled reign and bloody end. Howell makes shrewd use of doubling throughout all four episodes of her adaptation of the first tetralogy, also cleverly choosing who to cast in the messenger roles in her version of the funeral scene. The three messengers are played by Brian Protheroe, Paul Jesson and Ron Cook – the actors who also play Edward IV, George Plantagenet, and Richard III respectively in later episodes – as if the disorder yet to come has uncannily managed to intrude upon the funeral of Henry V.

More than thirty years separate the broadcast of Howell's adaptations and *The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses*²⁴ – the first episode of which adapts material from the first two *Henry VI* plays, including the funeral scene. However, an intertitle preceding director Dominic Cooke's version of the scene informs us that the action takes place '[j]ust after the funeral of Henry V', differing from both the play and previous BBC adaptations. The reason for this could simply be one of continuity, as director Thea Sharrock included invented scenes from the king's funeral in her adaptation of *Henry V* for the first series of *The Hollow Crown*, broadcast in 2012. Nonetheless, Cooke's choice to allow the funeral to go uninterrupted goes against Burns' idea that the prevention of the king's burial is an important irony at the start of the play, thereby giving *The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses* a notably different character from the BBC adaptations which preceded it.

²³ David Grummit, *Henry VI*. (Abingdon: Routledge, 2015), p. 240.

²⁴ *The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses*, dir. by Dominic Cooke (Neal Street Productions/NBCUniversal/WNET, 2016).

With the ceremony over, Gloucester (Hugh Bonneville) removes the crown from Henry's coffin and carries it to an area at the side of the cathedral. A door is closed behind him, and the dialogue begins. The play calls for Bedford, Gloucester, Exeter, Warwick, Winchester, and Somerset to be present at the start of the scene as well as 'the funeral' (1.1.0.1), which potentially adds a further six extras,²⁵ with the three messengers entering and exiting at points throughout. In contrast to the play, Cooke makes the opening scene a distinctly intimate discussion between Gloucester, Winchester (Samuel West), Exeter (Anton Lesser), and the arriving Sir William Lucy (Tom Beard), who performs the function of the first (and here, only) messenger. This becomes an even more conspicuous choice when considering that the funeral during Sharrock's *Henry V* at the end of the first series is well attended at Westminster Abbey, with people also seen lining the streets outside the church. By setting the scene after the funeral rather than during it, and having the dialogue happen in an enclosed room between just three nobles and Lucy, Cooke makes the events of the scene much more private, even clandestine in nature. This version of Act 1, Scene 1 sets out the director's overall approach to adapting the first tetralogy: the separation of public and private, of the lower classes and nobility, is a feature which permeates *The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses*. This becomes most noticeable later in the first episode through the sizeable cuts to *2 Henry VI* – a play populated by a great many lower-class characters, all of whom are entirely excised.

2016 marked the four-hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's death, with *The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses* commissioned as part of the BBC's celebration of this milestone. Politically, however, it will be remembered for the referendum which saw the British public vote to leave the European Union – an event which provided 'a test of Britain's, and specifically England's, faith and identity'.²⁶ If the *Henry VI* plays are linked to crises of English and British

²⁵ Burns, *King Henry VI Part 1*, p. 115.

²⁶ Robert Foster, "'I Want My Country Back': Emotion and Englishness at the Brexit Ballotbox – EU Referendum Analysis 2016", *Referendum Analysis 2016* <<http://www.referendumanalysis.eu/eu-referendum->

national identity, then the timeliness of broadcasting the most recent BBC version of the first tetralogy in the same year as the EU referendum cannot be denied. Political journalist Matthew d’Ancona has identified ‘the constant supplication to “the people”’ within political lexis following the Brexit vote.²⁷ This use of ‘the people’ is evidenced in the regular description of the vote to Leave as embodying ‘the will of the people’.²⁸ Moreover, headlines such as ‘Enemies of the people’ and ‘The judges versus the people’ were seen on the front pages of the *Daily Mail* and the *Daily Telegraph* respectively after a high court ruling in November 2016 that parliament, rather than the Prime Minister alone, would need to formally trigger the UK’s exit from the EU.²⁹

The choice to shift the focus of the first tetralogy as adapted in *The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses* by entirely removing ‘the people’, as represented by the lower-class characters seen throughout the *Henry VI* plays in particular, therefore feels increasingly conspicuous in a time where what ‘the people’ want has become a central element in political discourse. If we consider the BBC’s adaptations of the *Henry VI* plays as reflective of times of national identity crises, then Cooke’s version appears to suggest that Britishness (or perhaps just Englishness) in the 2010s is something which is purported to be shaped by ‘the people’ but is in reality formed through a struggle for power between those at the top of the social hierarchy. Henry V’s funeral at the start of the series therefore becomes an exercise in public deception: as far as the commoners are concerned, the ceremony happened without incident; the nobles

[analysis-2016/section-8-voters/i-want-my-country-back-emotion-and-englishness-at-the-brexit-ballotbox/](https://www.theguardian.com/analysis-2016/section-8-voters/i-want-my-country-back-emotion-and-englishness-at-the-brexit-ballotbox/) [accessed 6 April 2019].

²⁷ Matthew D’Ancona, ‘Brexit Is Putting Me off This Whole “Will of the People” Idea’, *The Guardian*, 17 Dec. 2018 <<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/dec/17/brexit-will-of-the-people-vassal-state-populism>> [accessed 6 April 2019].

²⁸ Valentino Larcinese, ‘There Is No Such Thing as the “Will of the People” – Brexit Needs the Involvement of Parliament’, *LSE Brexit*, 2017 <<https://blogs.lse.ac.uk/brexit/2016/10/17/there-is-no-such-thing-as-the-will-of-the-people-brexit-needs-the-involvement-of-parliament/>> [accessed 6 April 2019].

²⁹ Claire Phipps, ‘British Newspapers React to Judges’ Brexit Ruling: “Enemies of the People”’, *The Guardian*, 4 Nov. 2016, section Politics <<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/nov/04/enemies-of-the-people-british-newspapers-react-judges-brexit-ruling>> [accessed 6 April 2019].

meanwhile discuss the truth behind closed doors in a conversation reminiscent of contemporary political dramas such as Netflix's *House Of Cards*.

Television adaptations of Shakespeare's first tetralogy exist as significant cultural artefacts of the times in which they were made, and any screen adaptations in the years ahead will undoubtedly continue to do so. Just as Shakespeare used the past to reflect upon his own time through his history plays, the myriad ways in which directors and screenwriters adapt Shakespeare can be seen as attempts to crystallise particular cultural, historical, or political moments. They give both artist and audience the opportunity to make sense of the present by looking through the prism of the past offered by Shakespeare, ultimately in the hope of understanding a perpetually unpredictable future. As I write, British national identity is still in a period of considerable flux, with the country's future outside the EU likely to remain uncertain in many ways for at least a few years from now. The twentieth-century BBC adaptations of the first tetralogy have become increasingly recognisable as cultural mirrors of the times in which they were made. Similarly, the importance of *The Hollow Crown: The Wars of the Roses* as an artefact of British culture in the second decade of the twenty-first century is likely to come into focus ever more acutely as the country's future – and identity – becomes clearer.

Performing nothing: The abject body in response to exaggerated speech and action in *King Lear* and *Timon of Athens*

Caitlin West, University of Sydney (graduate)

In his analysis of Goneril's 'bout of severe linguistic inflation' in the opening scene of *King Lear*, Terry Eagleton points out that Goneril's love for her father 'is inarticulate not because it transcends meaning but because it has none'.³⁰ He then goes on to contrast this with and to defend Cordelia's utterance of 'nothing' (1.1.87),³¹ which follows her sisters' speeches. Eagleton argues that 'when meaning has been inflated beyond measure, nothing *but* nothing, a drastic reduction of signs to cyphers, will be enough to restabilize the verbal coinage'.³² This idea, that excessive and overblown language ultimately amounts to nothing, and needs to be, or can only be counteracted by a simpler, clearer form of communication, can be seen exemplified throughout *King Lear*. The text features multiple moments in which excessive speech and the over-inflation of meaning is responded to by a physical or linguistic representation of 'nothing', which serves as the basis and catalyst for an eventual recovery or return to order. Eagleton's example of 'nothing' is one of linguistic simplification – that is, a reduction of language to its most basic utterances. However, if we consider the implicit stage directions in the text, as well as what we know of the conventions of early modern performance, it becomes clear that there is another form of 'nothingness' that pervades the text and that may be brought out in its performance. This sense of nothingness is created not by the words of the characters, but by their physicality – their nakedness or isolation – which contrasts directly with prior or simultaneous verbal excesses. Similar examples can likewise be found in *Timon*

³⁰ Terry Eagleton, 'Value: "King Lear", "Timon of Athens", "Antony and Cleopatra"', in *Shakespearean Tragedy*, ed. by John Drakakis (Harlow: Longman, 1991), pp. 388-398 (p. 389).

³¹ William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. by R.A. Foakes (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 1997).

³² Eagleton, p. 390.

of *Athens*, in which the abject body has the potential to act as a simplified sign that contrasts with linguistic and behavioural excess. However, the physical representation of ‘nothingness’ is used in these plays to different ends. In *King Lear*, the abject body as it is implied in the text stands for a productive ‘nothing’, from which ‘something’ may eventually emerge. In contrast to this, *Timon of Athens* implies a physical representation of ‘nothing’ that does not have the capacity to serve as an antidote to excess; it reacts to it but cannot restabilise it. *Timon of Athens* thus provides a rebuttal to Eagleton’s assertion that ‘a drastic reduction of signs [...] will be enough’ to bring about a return to equilibrium,³³ by demonstrating how at times this reduction to ‘nothing’ may act as an inhibiting, rather than productive, response.

In Act 3, Scene 2 of *King Lear*, the king, having been rejected by his two eldest daughters, wanders into a vast, empty space and delivers an impassioned speech to the heavens. Lear uses hyperbolic language as a way of responding to the deception of his ‘two pernicious daughters’ (3.2.22), who have betrayed him in a manner made more radical by the fact that their original expressions of love were so exaggerated. He uses a litany of onomatopoeic verbs (‘blow’, ‘crack’, ‘rage’, ‘spout’, ‘sing’, ‘spill’, ‘rumble’, ‘spit’, ‘spout’ [3.2.1-14]) to command the heavens and express his agony. His words pour out of him in stormy incoherence, each new phrase surpassing in its exaggerated imagery the one that came before it. Lear uses language in this scene not only as a tool for self-expression, but also as a tool for action. By his speech he attempts to provoke some response in the elements that will counteract or (literally) drown out the betrayal of his daughters. Lear uses personification (‘Blow winds and crack your cheeks’ [3.2.1], and ‘Rumble thy bellyful! Spit fire[...]!’ [3.2.14]), to endow the elements with a sense of agency, as if they are able to respond to him and obey his commands. He entreats the weather in all its extremes – ‘winds [...] cataracts and hurricanoes [...] fires [...]

³³ Eagleton, p. 390.

thunderbolts’ – to destroy the world and its inhabitants, including himself (3.2.1-7), and invites ‘thought-executing fires’ to ‘Singe my white head!’ (3.2.4-6). However, as with Goneril, his language in this scene is overinflated to the point of cancelling itself out. Lear’s words eventually become illogical and almost incoherent: he begins accusing Kent (who is disguised as a stranger) of being a ‘wretch / That has within thee undivulged crimes’ (3.2.52) before announcing ‘my wits begin to turn’ (3.2.67). At the same time the storm in its intensity rages above him, yet for all its ‘bursts of horrid thunder’ (3.2.46) and ‘groans of roaring wind and rain’ (3.2.47) it does not obey Lear’s commands to destroy the world or to harm him or his daughters. Instead, it combines with Lear’s words to create an essentially empty clamour that expresses his pain but cannot resolve it.

As with the example of Goneril and Regan, the excesses of overinflated language are met with a resounding ‘nothing’, represented in this scene by Lear’s isolated and abject body. While Lear is not entirely alone on stage during Act 3, Scene 2, those who share the space with him in fact serve to reinforce his isolation. The stage is occupied by the bodies of Lear, the Fool, Edgar, and later, Kent. However, for the first sixty lines of the scene, Lear offers no verbal acknowledgement of his companions, who are pleading with him to come inside, but instead continues to rage at the elements (3.2.10-14). Henry S. Turner tells us that the ‘heath’³⁴ on which the scene occurs suggests an emptiness that ‘seems to exceed the stage, filling it with a looming and unrepresentable significance’.³⁵ It is in this emptiness that Lear places himself. Through his isolation, Lear physically manifests a kind of ‘nothingness’; he has gone from being a king with apparently limitless land and people at his disposal to a lonely and forsaken

³⁴ It is worth noting here that, although many more recent editions of *King Lear* describe the setting of Act 3, Scene 2 as a heath, it is not necessarily one. Henry S. Turner points out that no mention of a heath appears in the 1608 Quarto or 1623 Folio editions, but that this was an addition of editors some two hundred years later. In fact, he argues that the sense of expansive, overwhelming emptiness in this scene is perhaps more obvious and powerful when the space is not defined (p. 164).

³⁵ H. S. Turner, “‘King Lear’ Without: The Heath”, in *Renaissance Drama*, 28 (1997), pp. 161-193 (p. 161).

physical body, cut off from humanity and alone in a desolate space. Later, the implicit stage direction in Lear's line 'Off, off, you lendings: come, unbutton here' (3.4.106-107) directs him to remove his clothes; this sense of 'nothingness' is then further accentuated by his nakedness. It may help here to consider how this scene may have looked when performed in its original context – particularly given that early modern play scripts were not taken from the author's written drafts, but were, according to Marvin Carlson, 'a recording of a specific real performance at a certain historical moment'.³⁶ David Bevington tells us that early modern theatre performances are thought to have made almost no use of sound effects or set,³⁷ and Andrew Sofer points out that they usually took place during the day.³⁸ With this in mind, we can imagine that a performance of the play in its original context would have emphasised the emptiness of the space and thus Lear's loneliness even further. His description of a raging thunderstorm would have called the audience's attention to Lear's surroundings, and to the fact that he was standing almost completely alone and, in total contrast to his words, in a silent, day-lit space. While Lear's words in Act 3, Scene 2 reach the point of total and radical excess, his body, literally stripped of everything, is reduced to its most simplified state. However, it is from this abject state of 'nothingness' that 'something' (i.e. his relationship with his youngest daughter) is rebuilt.

Just as Lear's nothingness is represented with physical signs, so his return to equilibrium is. Destitute and insensible, he is brought to Cordelia, who restores him to his senses. This restoration – a literal reawakening – begins with a kiss, indicated by Cordelia's words, 'let this kiss / Repair those violent harms that my two sisters / Have in thy reverence made' (4.7.27-29). Her physical touch seems instantly to bring Lear back to himself, and he speaks as though

³⁶ Marvin Carlson, 'The Status of Stage Directions', in *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, 24.2 (1991), pp. 37.

³⁷ David Bevington, *This wide and universal theater: Shakespeare in performance, then and now* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), p. 28.

³⁸ Andrew Sofer, "'Take up the Bodies": Shakespeare's Body Parts, Babies, and Corpses', in *Theatre Symposium: A Journal of the Southeastern Theatre Conference*, 18 (2010), pp. 135-148 (p. 139).

awakening from a dream, asking, ‘Where have I been? Where am I?’ (4.7.52). Lear has been clothed in ‘fresh garments’ (4.7.22) and immediately seems in command of his senses. His use of language in this scene, though emotionally charged (‘I am bound / Upon a wheel of fire that mine own tears / Do scald like molten lead.’ [4.7.46-48]), is much more concise and controlled, and does not, as Eagleton puts it, ‘[outrun] the confines of the body’.³⁹ He is coherent as he apologises to Cordelia and asks for her forgiveness, saying ‘You must bear with me. Pray you now, forget and / forgive; I am old and foolish.’ (4.7.83-84). There is a sense, moreover, that what was lost in the opening scene of the play is restored, as Cordelia begs her father to ‘look upon me, sir, / And hold your hands in benediction o’er me!’ (4.7.57-58) and assures him that she has ‘no cause’ to hate him (4.7.75). The rupture between Lear and Cordelia is thus healed, and although their happiness is short-lived, they die in harmony with each other, as evidenced by the fact that Lear dies holding Cordelia in his arms.

Timon of Athens presents a very different set of possibilities for the performance of physical nothingness as a response to excess. Although Timon is reduced to the same state of isolation and poverty as King Lear, he unequivocally rejects the possibility of reconnecting or restoring what he lost with his original excesses. Timon’s loneliness and nakedness represent a form of ‘nothing’ that does not lead to restoration or renewal. Timon’s words show a total rejection not only of the people who have betrayed him, but also of his own humanity. His nakedness does not so much represent the potential for regrowth as it does a rejection of all that is human. His isolation from and rejection of others is more complete than that of Lear, and his death does not leave us with a sense of a physical restoration of order. As with *King Lear*, an analysis of the implicit stage directions in the written text provides insight into how the abject body acts as a responsive sign to verbal or behavioural excess.

³⁹ Eagleton, p. 394.

Timon's reduction to nothingness comes about in response to radical excess. His generosity with his friends is similar to Goneril and Regan's expressions of filial love in that it is inflated to the point of losing all sense. Timon gives far beyond his means, and his generosity overflows to the point where it no longer has any logic to it. This is noted in Act 2, Scene 2, when Flavius remarks that Timon's generosity has '[no] care, no stop' and is 'so senseless of expense / That he will neither know how to maintain it / Nor cease his flow of riot' (2.2.1-3).⁴⁰ This extravagant excess results in a 'drastic reduction' to nothing,⁴¹ as Timon, like Lear, is betrayed by those who once flattered him. Left with nothing, he flees in anger and despair to the wilderness.

In the scenes following his betrayal, Timon's body, through its isolation and nakedness, is reduced to a simplified sign that signals 'nothingness'. In Act 4, Scene 1, Timon stands outside the walls of Athens and calls down a shower of curses on 'the whole race of mankind' (4.1.40), naming matrons, children, slaves, fools, senators, ministers, money-lenders, servants, maids, masters, mistresses, sons, and many others besides (4.1.1-41). Timon evokes the idea of a vast crowd while standing alone, and later naked, on stage. The excesses of Timon's language in this scene thus serve to emphasise the character's total isolation. Later in the scene, Timon cries 'Nothing I'll bear from thee / But nakedness, thou detestable town' (4.1.32-33), implying that he removes his clothes before going naked into the wild. Timon's nakedness emphasises his absolute poverty, and, combined with his loneliness, depicts him as having been reduced to absolute nothingness.

However, Timon's abject state does not have the potential to act as a basis for restoration or reconnection. This is seen in his unequivocal rejection of all humankind, which is implied in

⁴⁰ William Shakespeare, *Timon of Athens*, ed. by Anthony Dawson and Gretchen Minton (London: Bloomsbury, 2008).

⁴¹ Eagleton, p. 390.

his words and may be emphasised in his performance. When Timon first enters to deliver his soliloquy in Act 4, Scene 1, he begins with the line ‘Let me look back upon thee. Thou wall [...] fence not Athens!’ (4.1.1-3). Tim Fitzpatrick asserts that, in early modern England, on-stage space was often defined in relation to the spaces offstage, and that the backstage space was often used to signify wherever the character had just come from.⁴² Bevington gives multiple examples of evidence that there was usually only one back wall, from which the stage jutted out.⁴³ With this in mind, we could imagine that Timon would have originally had to turn his back to the audience on stage in order to deliver at least the first lines of this soliloquy. Later in the play, when Timon enters to deliver another soliloquy, he begins it by addressing the sun (4.3.1). Both of these acts not only suggest Timon’s deliberate attempt to isolate himself from other characters in the play, but also undermine the conventions of a soliloquy, cutting off avenues of sympathy and connection with the audience. Bridget Escolme tells us that an actor performing on stage, particularly during a soliloquy, was expected to ‘want the audience to listen to them, notice them, approve their performance’.⁴⁴ The rejection of the audience in these two scenes – particularly during a soliloquy – would thus emphasise Timon’s misanthropy and the fact that he wishes to cut himself off from all humankind. Moreover, later in this scene Timon cries: ‘Therefore be abhorred / All feasts, societies and throngs of men! His semblables, yea himself, Timon disdains’ (4.3.20-22). In this moment, Timon distances himself not only from humankind, but from his own body. This complete and unequivocal rejection of humanity itself, including his own humanity, leaves no room for reconnection or regrowth. It thus cuts off the potential for his nothingness to act as a productive precursor to restoration. Later in the scene Timon says ‘I am sick of this false world and will love naught [...] Then, Timon, presently prepare thy grave [...] make thine epitaph, / That death in me at

⁴² Tim Fitzpatrick, *Playwright, space and place in early modern performance: Shakespeare and company* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2011), p. 5.

⁴³ Bevington, p. 22.

⁴⁴ Bridget Escolme, *Talking to the audience: Shakespeare, performance, self* (New York: Routledge, 2005), p. 16.

others' lives may laugh' (4.3.371-376). Here, Timon rejects not only the earth and all its inhabitants, but life itself. This signalling of his future death, as well as his disdain for the lives of others, indicates a finality that does not leave any opening for a return to order and affinity with the world he has spurned.

Having rejected humanity, Timon is thrust further into total abjection by being himself rejected by nature. Following his flight to the wilderness, Timon attempts to align himself more closely with nature and digs in the ground for roots to eat, crying 'Destruction fang mankind! Earth, yield me roots' (4.3.23). However, instead of finding roots, he digs up gold (4.3.25-26). Seeking to be nurtured by the Earth, he has instead been presented by it with the thing he professes most to abhor. The significance of Timon digging up gold, following his denouncement of this very object as the cause of his hatred for and desire to cut himself off from mankind, is particularly striking. Gold is, of course, not the first thing one would expect a man digging for roots to find, and its appearance is incongruous. In addition to this, its appearance acts as a visual reminder of everything Timon is trying to run from, it being the initial cause of his undoing. Bevington remarks on the symbolic importance of props for an early modern audience, and for a theatre in which there were few set pieces, stating that 'the absence of scenery gives a specially marked visual and symbolic importance to [...] props'.⁴⁵ We can thus imagine that in an early modern setting in particular, the appearance of gold in this context would have been powerfully symbolic, and would act as an overt signal of nature's refusal to nourish and support Timon. Elizabeth Gruber asserts that '[r]ather than embracing affinities with nature, early modern texts speak endlessly and mournfully of separation or estrangement'.⁴⁶ This scene is an example of how such estrangement may be physically expressed and used to emphasise nothingness as a response to excess. Having rejected

⁴⁵ Bevington, p. 28.

⁴⁶ Elizabeth D. Gruber, 'Nature on the Verge: Confronting "Bare Life" in Arden of Faversham and King Lear', in *Isle: Interdisciplinary Studies in Literature and Environment*, 22.1 (2015), pp. 98-114 (p. 103).

humankind, Timon is now rejected by nature, which refuses to nourish him, and instead provides him with something that is worth nothing outside the context of human society. He is totally alone and abject with no potential for remedy or reconstruction.

Timon, like *King Lear*, dies at the close of the play; unlike *Lear*, his death occurs offstage and the audience is not permitted to see it, or his body. Robert Pierce tells us that the death of the lead character at the close of a tragic play is one of the basic tenets of tragedy,⁴⁷ but *Timon of Athens* breaks with convention by not allowing the audience to see this death. In his examples of tragic deaths in early modern plays, Mariko Ichikawa suggests that the bodies of characters who had died in early modern tragedies were almost always displayed on stage at some point.⁴⁸ In *Timon of Athens*, however, an anonymous soldier enters to announce Timon's death and burial, bringing with him a wax impression of the epitaph on his gravestone (5.5.66-69). This cuts off the possibility for the audience even to see his grave, let alone his death or his body. Sofer claims that 'the Elizabethan audience [...] would no doubt have felt cheated not to witness the death of its tragic hero'.⁴⁹ Withholding the image of Timon's body from the audience would have a jarring effect, and would close off the possibility of a physical representation of healing or closure. Timon's excessive behaviours and language are responded to by a resounding and unproductive 'nothing', represented physically by nakedness and isolation, and culminating in the total absence of a physical body in a situation where one would most expect to see one. This unproductive, empty nothingness bars the way for a restoration of order and cuts off the potential for the rebuilding of 'something'.

Both *King Lear* and *Timon of Athens* present significant possibilities for engagement in performance with ideas of physical representations of nothingness as a response to excess. In

⁴⁷ Robert B. Pierce, 'Tragedy and *Timon of Athens*', in *Comparative Drama*, 36.1-2 (2002), pp. 75-90 (p. 83).

⁴⁸ Mariko Ichikawa, 'What to do with a corpse? Physical reality and the fictional world in Shakespearean theatre', in *Theatre Research International*, 29.3 (2004), pp. 201-215 (pp. 201-202).

⁴⁹ Sofer, p. 140.

both plays, nakedness and physical isolation occur in direct response to situations where language or behaviour has become overblown to the point of losing coherence or meaning. Although King Lear's story ends in his death, his physical descent into 'nothingness' acts as a counterbalancing force to the excesses of his actions and language, and ultimately makes it possible for order to re-emerge. *Timon of Athens*, on the other hand, closes off the possibility for the simplified sign of the abject body to act as an answer to and remedy for excess. Instead, the human body is stripped bare and cut off from the world in a manner that precludes the re-establishment of the connections that have been broken by excess. While, as *King Lear* exemplifies, responding to hyperbole and exaggeration with a 'drastic reduction of signs' may be enough to restore equilibrium, *Timon of Athens* reminds us that this is not always the case. Rather, at times, nothing in fact does come of nothing.

Negotiating cultural conflicts in Chinese Opera adaptations of *Macbeth*

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Shakespeare played an extraordinarily prominent part in the events surrounding the 2012 London Olympic Games.⁵⁰ Chinese Opera similarly had a central role in the Opening and Closing Ceremonies of the 2008 Beijing Games. Shakespeare and Chinese Opera are seen as cultural icons of Britain and China respectively. The process of adapting Shakespeare's works into Chinese Opera requires not only a communion between a renowned literary work and a stylised performance practice, but also a conflict between two influential cultures.⁵¹ Many changes must happen to both Shakespeare and Chinese Opera in this cultural conflict. In this article, I examine two operatic adaptations of *Macbeth – Bloody Hand* (1986) and *The Kingdom of Desire* (1986) – to explore how each production negotiated the profound differences between these artistic mediums. While these adaptations premiered in the same year, they were developed with distinct aims, featured fundamentally different operatic forms (*kunqu* and *jingju*),⁵² and were staged in regions with contrasting political regimes (Shanghai and Taiwan).⁵³ It is striking that, despite their significant contextual differences, *Bloody Hand* and *The Kingdom of Desire* involved comparable changes being made to Shakespeare's text and

⁵⁰ Paul Prescott, 'Shakespeare and the Dream of Olympism', in *Shakespeare on the Global Stage: Performance and Festivity in the Olympic Year*, ed. by Erin Sullivan and Paul Prescott (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2015), pp. 1–38 (p. 3).

⁵¹ Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural production: essays on art and literature*, ed. by Randal Johnson (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1993), pp. 29–30.

⁵² *Jingju* and *kunqu* are typical genres of Chinese Opera. *Jingju* is associated with Northern China and is now the most dominant form of Chinese Opera. *Jingju* is also translated as 'National opera' in Taiwan. Modern *jingju* performers perform in the dialect of Beijing, which is almost the same as Standard Mandarin. *Kunqu* is of Southern China, and is one of the oldest extant forms of Chinese opera. *Kunqu* dominated Chinese theatre from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries but declined in popularity during the late nineteenth century. The songs of *kunqu* are based on Suzhounese (Suzhou dialect), which was widely used by intellectuals during the Ming Dynasty (1368–1644). However, it is not mutually intelligible with Standard Mandarin, making *kunqu* inaccessible to audiences who cannot speak Suzhounese. In terms of body movement, *kunqu* performance is much more abstract in style than *jingju*.

⁵³ *Bloody Hand* was a *kunqu* adaptation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, staged in Shanghai (dir. Huang Zuolin). *The Kingdom of Desire* took place in Taiwan and featured *jingju* techniques (dir. Wu Hsing-kuo).

the practices of Chinese Opera. These alterations were made primarily to overcome language barriers and to ensure that ideas around morality were presented appropriately. The practical difficulties and negative critical responses encountered by the adaptors illustrate the dilemmas that inevitably arise when Shakespeare and *jingju* or *kunqu* are combined within a single production. These dilemmas, caused by the clash in cultures between Shakespeare and the techniques of Chinese Opera, force the adaptors to mediate between two deeply contrasting cultures. This article offers an insight into the challenges faced and solutions found by practitioners who have engaged with this complex process of intercultural adaptation.

Differing attitudes towards adaptation: rapprochement and strangeness

In the 1980s, director Huang Zuolin and actor-director Wu Hsing-kuo each adapted Shakespeare's *Macbeth* into Chinese Opera. Huang's production was titled *Bloody Hand*, Wu's *The Kingdom of Desire*. Both adaptations proved popular with local playgoers and were invited to tour Europe in the years after they premiered. These two adaptors did not initially know of each other's productions, and had different intentions in weaving Shakespeare into their traditional artistic heritage. Because Huang's and Wu's adaptational strategies were so affected by their individual situations, it is necessary to introduce the circumstances surrounding each project before analysing the resulting productions.

Huang was already a respected English literary scholar, a *huaju* (modern spoken drama, in contrast to traditional opera in China) director and, most importantly, a powerful Officer in China in the 1980s.⁵⁴ He was a leader in both theatre and cultural diplomacy, particularly in cultural communication with Britain; he had lived in England for more than six years and

⁵⁴ Huang Zuolin was the representative of the first, second, and third session of the National People's Congress (NPC) of the People's Republic of China. He was also a member of the fifth session of the Chinese People's Political Consultative Congress (CPPCC), vice president of China Theater Association, and vice chairman of Shanghai People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. See Ji Yu, *A Life of Comedy: Huang Zuolin* (Shandong Pictorial Publishing House, 1996).

completed an M.A. degree at the University of Cambridge. Interestingly, the topic of his dissertation was the history of Shakespeare in performance. Two noteworthy political events happened in the years preceding Huang's *Bloody Hand: the Open Door Policy*⁵⁵ and the Sino-British Joint Declaration on the Question of Hong Kong on 19 December 1984.⁵⁶ Sixteen days before the Declaration, Huang and his colleagues (including artists, scholars and some Officers) established The Shakespeare Society of China. Although they claimed that the aim of the Society was to 'create a system of Shakespeare Study with Chinese features',⁵⁷ ⁵⁸ The Shakespeare Society of China was responsible not only for introducing Shakespeare to Chinese citizens but also for improving the Sino-British relationship. This development would demonstrate to the world the Chinese government's determination to accept Multiculturalism instead of single Red Culture and reduce worries about The Handover in Hong Kong.⁵⁹ In the first meeting of the Shakespeare Society, Huang had proposed his plan to produce Chinese versions of Shakespeare. In addition to the political purposes outlined above, Huang also had the ambition to promote Chinese Opera to Anglophone audiences by adapting Shakespeare. He explained that 'our (Chinese) traditional opera was better than Western drama at some point but was seldom praised [...] also as a part of East-Asian culture, Japanese traditional forms

⁵⁵ The Open Door Policy was announced in 1978 by Deng Xiaoping, then-leader of the People's Republic of China, to open the door for foreign capital to be invested in China. It also ended the formal rejection of Western culture.

⁵⁶ The Sino-British Joint Declaration was signed by Premier Zhao Ziyang of the People's Republic of China and UK Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher on behalf of their respective governments. It declared that the UK government would hand over Hong Kong to the PRC from 1 July 1997. Because of the uncertain future after the Handover, this declaration triggered a wave of mass emigration in Hong Kong. According to *Report of the Task Force on Population Policy* released by Hong Kong, 'very significant emigration took place during the period 1987-1996, when perhaps a total of 503[,],800 Hong Kong residents left'. (*Report of the Task Force on Population Policy*, https://www.info.gov.hk/info/population/eng/pdf/report_eng.pdf, p. 28.)

⁵⁷ 'With Chinese features' was a popular political term in the 1980s, which actually emphasised socialism rather than Chinese culture. For further details, see Ezra Vogel, *Deng Xiaoping and the Transformation of China* (Harvard University Press, 2011).

⁵⁸ Huang Zuolin. 'The Prospects of the Shakespeare's Plays on the Chinese Stage - a Speech at the Seminar of China's First Shakespeare Festival', in *Shakespeare in China*, ed. by Shakespeare Association of China (Shanghai: Shanghai Literature and Art Publishing House, 1987), pp. 1-17 (p. 8).

⁵⁹ The term 'Red Culture' refers to the Culture of Revolution and Communism, which dominated Mainland China from 1966 until 1976. 'The Handover' refers to the transfer of sovereignty over Hong Kong from the United Kingdom to China.

like Noh and Kabuki earned a great reputation because they had a better strategy of propaganda; we should learn from them today'.⁶⁰ Considering the political aims behind Huang's production, it follows that he decided to try his best to preserve both the authenticity of *kunqu*, which is introduced in the programme for the European tour as 'the oldest surviving form of theatre in China and is at the root of all its other theatrical arts',⁶¹ and the essence of Shakespeare. Huang felt that *kunqu* and Shakespeare have many similarities.⁶² Therefore this adaptation became a rapprochement between two cultural elements, made easier by the investigation of common elements or of adaptors of reception.⁶³

In comparison to the 80-year-old, widely-respected Huang, Wu Hsing-kuo was a young *jingju* actor who had just finished his apprenticeship around the time of *The Kingdom of Desire*. In 1986, he left the troupe with which he had trained and founded the Contemporary Legend Theatre with other young but ambitious actors. His aim was in doing so was to 'get rid of the burden of tradition'⁶⁴ and 'revive the popularity of Peking Opera in Taiwan'.⁶⁵ When asked about this period of his life in a 2005 interview, Wu said that 'the young actors didn't know that we were going to do some productions lying to teachers and destroying progenitors; they just followed me and knew we would do something new'. He also explained:

I have never seen traditional (theatrical) conventions as dregs. Those conventions we inherited from ancestors are evidently good. However, when fewer and fewer teenagers

⁶⁰ Huang Zuolin, p. 12.

⁶¹ Shanghai Kunju Theatre. *Programme: Shanghai Kunju Theatre with the dark and magnificent adaptation of Macbeth, the beautiful and romantic operetta The Peony Pavilion and the furiously exciting acrobatics of The Woman Warrior* (Cardiff: Cardiff Laboratory Theatre, 1987), p. 4.

⁶² Huang Zuolin, p. 4.

⁶³ Patrice Pavis, 'Introduction: Towards a Theory of Interculturalism in Theatre?', in *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, ed. by Patrice Pavis (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 1-26 (p. 63).

⁶⁴ Li Ruru, "'A Drum, a Drum – Macbeth Doth Come": When Birnam Wood Moved to China', in *Shakespeare Survey: An Annual Survey of Shakespeare Studies and Production* 57 (2004): pp. 169-185 (p. 180).

⁶⁵ Wu Hsing-kuo, 'From Traditional to Shakespeare's World', in *Chung-wai Literary Monthly* 11 (1987): pp. 50-51 (p. 50).

would like to listen to *jingju*; when everyone tells me *jingju* is out of fashion and will be replaced by pop music, I think we should rethink what we should do for it.⁶⁶

These words suggest that Wu faced two difficulties when approaching *The Kingdom of Desire*. First, although he felt that conventions should be broken to revitalise *jingju*, it was unclear which parts of the form should be given up and what should be their replacement. Second, the actor-director had to consider how to deal with suspicions and censures from older actors and playgoers. For Wu, Shakespeare was the answer. Shakespeare is, in Peter Brook's words, the 'third culture': a 'living' culture (distinct from individual or official state cultures) with the singular goal of truth.⁶⁷ This 'third culture' of the Shakespeare canon could thus help Wu to ascertain the differences between his own individual culture and the traditional one he had inherited. As a universal cultural brand, Shakespeare could simultaneously attract younger audiences and entice older artists. Adapting Shakespeare into *jingju* gave Wu a feeling of strangeness, making him feel free and not bound by a pontificating tradition.⁶⁸ Moreover, he was not bound by Shakespeare either; his only goal was to recreate a new and fashionable *jingju*.

Conventions: the number 'three' and role-types on the Chinese stage

Whether because of his political aims or bicultural educational background, Huang showed great confidence in the universality and continuity of *kunqu* and Shakespeare.⁶⁹ He usually tried to mediate (or, indeed, conceal) conflicts between these two forms. The first and most significant difficulty Huang faced in his adaptation of *Macbeth* was how to present Shakespeare's iconic witches. The director decided to present the three witches as two shorter

⁶⁶ 'Video Recording: The Kingdom of Desire', dir. by Wu Hsing-kuo (Taipei City: Contemporary Legend Theatre, 2005).

⁶⁷ According to Peter Brook, the first and the second cultures are the culture of the state (an 'official culture') and that of the individual. See Peter Brook, 'The Culture of Links', in *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, ed. by Patrice Pavis (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 63-66 (pp. 63-64).

⁶⁸ Pavis, p. 10.

⁶⁹ Huang Zuolin, p. 10.

figures and one tall one. While these figures might appear simply as stylised characters, this representation is in fact the result of a clash between cultures. Huang understood the significance of the three witches in Shakespeare's text. He told his actors that 'three witches is an important symbol in this psychological tragedy; they were designed for Macbeth by Shakespeare deliberately'.⁷⁰ The number 'three' has specific meanings in China. In Chinese Opera, any number higher than two indicates a far larger number, such as hundreds or thousands. For example, in *Kongchengji* (Story of Empty City),⁷¹ the audience sees a military strategist with two boys on one side of the stage and a general with four soldiers on the other side. While the general, the strategist, and the two boys are understood to signify a general, a strategist, and two boys, the four actors playing soldiers represent thousands of soldiers following the general. Similarly, the final scene of *The Kingdom of Desire* featured eight soldiers to represent Malcolm's entire army. The significance of numbers in Chinese Opera is connected to Taoism. In *Tao Te Ching* – the Taoist equivalent of the Bible – 'One created Two, Twoness created Threeness, Threeness created the myriads of things' (*Tao Te Ching*, 42.01-4).⁷² In *Bloody Hand*, having three witches on the stage would suggest the presence of hundreds of witches all around the mountain. Representing Shakespeare's characters as they appear in the text would result in audience members interpreting meanings that deviate significantly from the play's narrative. Huang resolved this conflict by altering the appearance of the three witches. By reimagining the trio as a single tall figure positioned between two noticeably shorter figures, audience members would recognise the witches as having a particular

⁷⁰ Li, J.-Y. 'Shakespearean Plays and I', in *Selection of theses from Shanghai International Shakespeare Festival*, ed. by Sun Fuliang, Cao Shujun, and Liu Minghou (Shanghai: Shanghai Art Publisher, 1996), p. 105.

⁷¹ *Kongchengji* is a fictional incident in the novel *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, which is widely adapted into Chinese Opera. It tells how the strategist Zhuge Liang used a ploy to hold off the approaching army with few soldiers. Zhuge ordered all gates to be opened and sat on the platform above the main gate with two boys flanking him. When the general Sima Yi arrived with his army, he suspected that there was an ambush inside the city and ordered a retreat.

⁷² In Chinese: 一生二， 二生三， 三生万物. Translated by Hilmar Alquiros. It is also translated as 'the one has brought forth the two; the two have brought forth the three; and the three have produced the whole world'. See <http://www.tao-te-king.org/42.htm>.

relationship to one another. Understood through the lens of traditional Chinese theatre, these figures could be seen as two servants and a master, two apprentices and a tutor, or twins with their mother. Regardless of which of these relationships audience members understood the figures to represent, the trio would be read as three rather than hundreds of witches. Consequently, Huang preserved the iconic three witches of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* without breaking the traditional conventions of Chinese Opera. Wu instead reduced the number of witches from three to one. He knew the significance of the number in Chinese Opera, and decided that this convention was not one that he wanted to break. Although it could be argued that Wu had less knowledge of English culture and Shakespeare than Huang, it has been suggested that Wu replaced three witches with one because his adaption draws some content from *Throne of Blood*⁷³ – a Japanese film adaptation of *Macbeth*. The meaning of the number three was therefore the first problem encountered by Wu and Huang. Both changed the way in which these characters were represented to avoid the complications caused by Chinese Opera conventions, but did so using different solutions.

In addition to the complications caused by the number of witches in *Macbeth*, a further problem existed in the fact that the nature of these characters fell outside of *kunqu* conventions entirely. Every role in *kunqu* has to conform to a set role-type (similar to a stock character). Each role-type has its own particular costume, make-up, voice, and performance routine. Significantly, there is no role-type that fits 'witch'. The closest options were *wuchou* (martial joker), who is supernatural but male, or *caidan* (colourful woman) who is female with mysterious make-up but not magical. This reveals the absence of witches in ancient Chinese stories; it was impossible for Huang to find an existing appropriate role-type for his 'two and one' (rather than three) witches. Huang decided to have three actresses play the witches without a role-type,

⁷³ *Throne of Blood* is a 1957 Japanese samurai film co-written and directed by Akira Kurosawa. It adapted the plot of *Macbeth* into a feudal Japanese story.

which made his *kunqu* appear less authentic. However, the director found his own explanation to placate conservative *kunqu* artists and critics. He positioned these roles as spirits without a specific gender identity rather than witches, and told his actors:

the rule of Chinese Opera is formulated and accumulated according to the precise needs of shaping the character gradually by historical artists. So, a combination of old conventions with some creative additions according to changes and development of context is still ‘free movements with rules’⁷⁴ to a certain extent [...] it is fair to say that those three special characters are made up of the essence of Shakespeare’s work and codes of Chinese traditional opera.⁷⁵

This was not the only problem relating to role-type conventions that arose during the development process for *Bloody Hand*. Ji Zhenhua, the actor who played Macbeth, admitted that ‘it is a pity that we couldn’t find [a] ready-made role-type and mode of facial makeup for Macbeth’.⁷⁶ From the Chinese Opera performers’ point of view, roles usually belong to one ready-made role-type. Many performers therefore focus on training for a single role-type. In this case, Ji has been titled as ‘The best *Laosheng* in *Kunqu*’ and almost always acted in *Laosheng* roles.⁷⁷ The performers realised that the complexity of Shakespearean characters such as Macbeth went beyond all traditional role-types – including *Laosheng*. This meant that the production not only broke the rule of role-types in Chinese Opera, but also forced famous performers to step outside of the practices in which they were most skilled.

⁷⁴ This is one of the definitions of Chinese Opera in Chinese mainland. See Luo, Z., ‘The features and typical plays of Beijing Opera’ in *Twenty Lessons of Beijing Opera* (Beijing: Guangxi Normal University Press, 2004).

⁷⁵ Li, J.-Y., p. 105.

⁷⁶ Li, J.-Y., p. 104.

⁷⁷ *Laosheng*, *Xiaosheng*, and *Huadan* are three of the main role-types of Chinese Opera, which include old and powerful male characters, young and handsome male characters, and beautiful ladies respectively. See Ji Zhenhua: *The Best Laosheng in Kunqu, who chose to focus on Laosheng because ‘cannot understand the love between Xiaosheng and Huadan’* on https://www.sohu.com/a/146823262_701640.

Characterisation is an area that always merits attention in Chinese Opera adaptation. Behind the difficulty of finding suitable role-types for Shakespearean characters is the relative flatness of those in Chinese Opera. As suggested by scholar Perng Ching-Hsi,⁷⁸

more often than not, protagonists in *xiqu* (Chinese Opera) are flatly one-dimensional: a feature closely connected to the convention of the actor's *hang-dang* (professional role-type) or the set role-type, which tends to make a character either good or bad, with little ambiguity. Thus, in Chinese traditional theatre, it is often clear where the playwright's sympathy lies – and hence also the audience's.⁷⁹

Conversely, a great deal of attention has been paid to the perceived complexity of Shakespeare's works. The playwright's renown is widely attributed to his ability to create characters and weave narratives that are deeply nuanced and multifaceted. Huang developed a compromise: simplifying Macbeth into a good man who does bad things with wild ambitions, the director chose a mode of facial make-up called *hongsheng* (man with a red face). This make-up is usually used for loyal generals, thus implying that Macbeth was ultimately kind and had been a loyal subject before meeting the three spirits. Macbeth's actions were then performed using the convention of *baimian* (man with a white face) – a mode usually used to represent evil roles – to suit his immoral act of regicide.⁸⁰

In *The Kingdom of Desire*, Wu tried his best to preserve the complexity of Macbeth. The dogmatic convention of role-types was something he intended to break away from in his adaptation, as this practice was (in Wu's view) partly responsible for the monotony of traditional *jingju*. None of the make-up used in *The Kingdom of Desire* followed the rules of conventional role-types. All of the facial make-up worn in the adaptation was relatively realistic,

⁷⁸ Perng is an emeritus professor at National Taiwan University, studying the translation and adaptation of Shakespeare in Asia.

⁷⁹ C. H. Perng, 'Bonding, *Bangzi* and the Bard', in *Shakespeare in culture*, ed. by Bi-qi Beatrice Lei and Ching-Hsi Perng (Taipei: National Taiwan University Press, 2012), p. 149.

⁸⁰ Li, J.-Y., p. 104.

inspired by *huaju* (modern spoken drama), and the costumes were in *jingju*'s old-fashioned style but were not limited to traditional role-types. Moving away from the confines of *jingju* conventions in this way gave the actors more freedom to express their interpretations of Shakespeare's characters, and encouraged the audience to engage with the multifaceted nature of the play. Regarding other aspects of performance, Wu applied established conventions of actions and arias from many role-types instead of being limited to those that related to particular costuming styles. The production also referenced many contexts from classic and popular segments of Chinese Opera, including not only *jingju* but other local operas. For example, experienced playgoers would have recognised *wusheng* (martial man) in Wu's somersault and *xiaosheng* (young man) in his arias, and might also have noticed that the style of singing in the fourth scene was similar to classic segments in *bangzi* (梆子, a Chinese local opera) – particularly the use of *gadio* (a singing technique which expresses violent emotion by suddenly changing the tone to a higher octave) at the ending. Essentially, Wu did not make adjustments based on any single ready-made role-type. He incorporated eye-catching, intense *jingju* acting skills into his performance which would individually seem too one-dimensional for the character of Macbeth. Combined, these techniques made Wu's Macbeth appear both ambitious and sensitive.

Translation, body language, and universality

Translation is a worldwide issue in cross-linguistic adaptations of Shakespeare; China is of course no exception. To accommodate operatic arias which are usually slow, Chinese Opera has to condense the dialogues and soliloquies. This makes the translation process more difficult.⁸¹ Hu Yaoheng – a radical westernized scholar – puts forward a controversial question: 'Is it suitable to use the Chinese language to compose a play in this period?' Although the vivid

⁸¹ Alexa Huang, *Chinese Shakespeares: Two Centuries of Cultural Exchange* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009), p. 170.

sentences in Chinese are suitable for reading, they are difficult to listen to.⁸² This article is not going to discuss literary translation because, in the last fifty years, most adaptors (including Huang and Wu) chose to translate Shakespeare's English words into visual actions – body language that might have universal meaning. As Chinese Opera is an art form filled with rules and conventions, action is the freest area for artists working in this medium. Moreover, Mei Lanfang's⁸³ world tour in the 1930s had proven that 'the dance is more important than songs in Chinese Opera from the global perspective'.⁸⁴ In a similar vein, Alexa Huang believes that 'xiqu's detached relationship with Shakespeare's text seems to invite the audience to see the text through the visualization of metaphors, emotion, and motifs'.⁸⁵ In the Banquet scene of *Bloody Hand*, where Macbeth sees the ghost of Banquo, the actor playing Macbeth (Ji Zhenhua) used a swaying dance to replace the original soliloquy. This moment was appreciated by Chinese scholar Ruru Li, who wrote that 'the scene formed an astounding synthesis of the rich and powerfully externalized Chinese stage conventions and the Shakespearian psychological dimension'.⁸⁶ Critic Fernau Hall (*Daily Telegraph*) also praised Huang's visual translation:

Macbeth is shown as a complex character. In the *Kunju* equivalent of a soliloquy, he has a long solo scene in which he tries to work himself up to murdering Duncan, but is constantly overcome with trembling – and he uses long 'water sleeves' as well as his bare hands to show Macbeth in fear and indecision.⁸⁷

⁸² Hu, Y.-H, 'Problems in Adapting Western Drama into Peking Opera: The Case of Yuwang Ch'eng-kuo', in *Chung-wai Literary Monthly* 15 (1987): pp. 77-81 (p. 81).

⁸³ Mei Lanfang was a notable Peking Opera artist in modern Chinese theatre. He was the first artist to spread Chinese Opera to foreign countries. He toured many European cities, including Berlin and Moscow, in 1935. This tour influenced Bertold Brecht and his concept of the alienation effect. See Mei Lanfang, *Forty Years as A Performer: Memoir of Mei Lanfang* (Beijing: New Star Press, 2017).

⁸⁴ Mei, L.-F, 'Sword dancing in Farewell My Concubine', in *Complete of Mei Lanfang* (Beijing: Chinese Opera Publisher, 2016), p. 69.

⁸⁵ Alexa Huang, p. 71.

⁸⁶ Li Ruru, p. 179.

⁸⁷ Fernau Hall, in *Daily Telegraph* (London), 27 August 1987 (p. 33).

Kunju actions are evidently abstract enough to rouse audiences' – especially foreign critics' – imaginations. Macbeth's long sleeves could be seen as a symbol to show his fear, joy, or anything else, making Macbeth appear a so-called 'complex character'. In contrast, English critics appear to have enjoyed exercising their metaphorically-minded wit in describing Wu's actions as Macbeth and Wei Haimin's (Lady Macbeth's) singing. In the scene where they plotted the death of Duncan, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth bumped into each other, back-to-back, indicating in *jingju* conventions that they are talking in darkness. This moment was ridiculed as 'seem[ing] inappropriately like *Laurel and Hardy*' by Alastair Macaulay (*Financial Times*),⁸⁸ leading him to ask: 'do the Taiwanese find this to be tragic drama?'⁸⁹ Charles Spencer (*Daily Telegraph*) wrote that 'the sing-song voice [of Lady Macbeth], was like a meowing cat in a Disney cartoon'.⁹⁰ Wu's Macbeth was also seen by some as an amusing acrobat because of his use of martial arts actions (the somersault, for example).⁹¹ While Catherine Diamond attributes these responses to critics' ignorance and arrogance,⁹² Taiwanese scholar Hu Yaoheng gives an alternative explanation. Hu believes that Wu's adaption had many merits, but 'unfortunately, those merits in performance made the production lose the depth and dimensions of psychology, morality and philosophy in the original' because those merits were relatively superficial and entertaining.⁹³ I would argue instead that Wu was trapped in a dilemma between two contradictory aims. He replied to negative reviews, saying 'we wanted to preserve the accuracy and precision of Chinese opera language, but at the same time we wanted to improve on the opera characterization'.⁹⁴ Wu then admitted that the language of

⁸⁸ Catherine Diamond, 'Kingdom of Desire: The Three Faces of Macbeth', in *Asian Theatre Journal* 11.1 (1994): pp. 114-33 (p. 128).

⁸⁹ Alastair Macaulay, 'The Kingdom of Desire', in *Financial Times* (London), 16 November 1990.

⁹⁰ Charles Spencer, 'A Macbeth Made in Taiwan', in *Daily Telegraph* (London), 16 November 1990.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² Diamond, p. 130.

⁹³ Hu, p. 78.

⁹⁴ Wu, p. 50.

Chinese Opera is unable to show fully the tragic core of Shakespeare's work: 'ironically, it is sometimes more tortuous to adapt an existing work than to create a new one from scratch'.⁹⁵

Although body language might seem a more universally-understandable form of communication (as opposed to language or traditional costuming and make-up), this element of *The Kingdom of Desire* had strong foundations in the cultural context in which it was first staged. When Macbeth and Lady Macbeth bumped into each other, back-to-back, some Western critics used their own culture (like the television comedy *Laurel and Hardy*) to understand it, and thus thought it ridiculous. Most Chinese playgoers would instead be reminded of a classical Chinese mime, *Sanchakou*,⁹⁶ and therefore understand what Wu intended to express. The dance elements of Huang's adaptation were evidently too strange and unfamiliar for foreign critics to use their own culture to interpret or explain it. Russell Davies (*The Observer*) admitted that he could not understand the intended significance of the dance in Huang's *Bloody Hand*. He said: 'in Kunju drama, even the movements of sleeves are allotted meaning in terms of emotion, intention or status, and spotting these being correctly done must offer a special pleasure to the experienced Chinese playgoer'.⁹⁷ Reviewers like Davies evidently expect Chinese audience members to take particular pleasure in understanding layers of meaning inaccessible to those unfamiliar with Chinese Opera forms. Interestingly, while many Chinese playgoers would have identified a sense of Macbeth's desperation in Wu's somersault, they might have felt confused about the dance in *Bloody Hand*. Moreover, it is possible that the reason for their misunderstanding of Huang's dance is the same as why English critics were amused by Wu's somersault. As discussed above, Huang adapted *Macbeth* into *kunqu*, which is the oldest extant form of Chinese opera. It declined in popularity during

⁹⁵ Ibid.

⁹⁶ A story about two kind men who want to protect the same general, but mistake each other for assassins. They fight silently in the dark until the general appears and clears the misunderstanding.

⁹⁷ Russell Davies, in *Observer*, 30 August 1987.

the late nineteenth century; *jingju* dominated the Chinese commercial theatre at that time. Although *kunqu* and *jingju* performance are closely related, they are nevertheless different genres. The former is less vulgar and popular than the latter. While both are forms of Chinese Opera, playgoers in China today are far more familiar with *jingju* than *kunqu*. Because *kunqu* and *jingju* are closely related, Chinese playgoers are likely to have interpreted the dance in Huang's *kunqu* via the culture of *jingju*, leading to confusion as to the meaning of the dance. Ultimately, body language relies on cultural background knowledge for intended meanings to be understood. Interestingly, a little knowledge of culture is perhaps more dangerous than none: when the movement on the stage was too strange for the audience to understand, confused audience members could make thoughtful conjectures about possible meanings; those who had a small degree of knowledge of the culture might instead misunderstand the performance and mock the performers. Although body language is sometimes an effective form of communication in this context, a literal translation is still an inevitable process in intercultural productions.

Plot: Chinese Opera and morality

For many scholars, the slowness of operatic arias and dance mean that the plot has to be changed when foreign plays are adapted into Chinese Opera.⁹⁸ In fact, a complete *jingju* usually lasts for half a day; it is therefore unnecessary to condense the plot for reasons relating to length. In practice, plots are amended primarily because of traditional Chinese morality. Chang Chen-Hsien, a Chinese postgraduate of the University of Birmingham, described the first production of the complete text of *Hamlet* in China (1942, Chongqing) in his dissertation: 'Many [audience members] believed [Hamlet's rudeness to his mother] was that crime that caused his death. Being rude to his mother, Hamlet died. Being unfaithful to her husband,

⁹⁸ See Meng X. Q., *A Historical Survey of Shakespeare in China* (Changchun: Shakespeare Research Centre of Northeast Normal University, 1996).

Gertrude died. Being a villain, Claudius died'.⁹⁹ Although Chinese playgoers tried to find poetic justice for Ophelia's death, 'the production still failed' because they wondered 'what was the moral purpose behind all these deaths?'¹⁰⁰ Chang's account seems questionable in its assumptions about audience responses to the production. However, considering Chang's dissertation was written in 1951 – only nine years after the production was staged – it is possible that the scholar witnessed the audience's reaction to that production himself, or perhaps interviewed some audience members. Interestingly, the 1942 *Hamlet* did not alter the plot of Shakespeare's text and was performed in a modern style without stylized Chinese conventions. Audiences at that time seemingly accepted the show without Chinese costuming and without operatic arias and dance, but still interpreted the plot with the rationality and morality of Chinese Opera.

In the cases of *Bloody Hand* and *The Kingdom of Desire*, it is striking that both adaptations changed Duncan from a wise king to a suspicious and useless tyrant. Also, Macbeth's motivation was seemingly not an ambition to be king, but instead to protect his family and soldiers from Banquo and Duncan. These alterations to the plot indicated to the audience particular moral purposes for the deaths of these characters. Malcolm, despite having few lines, became innocent and pure in both productions, resulting in a happy ending with 'triumph of the good and defeat of the evil' [*sic*].¹⁰¹ Even so, older audience members complained that the plot of *Bloody Hand* was immoral and harmful to the young.¹⁰² In the 2000's revival, the new director (Li Jiayao) added a scene at the end of the production in which the three spirits return to the stage and preach the importance of self-regulation to conform to some audience members' moral standards. Besides the expectations of conservative playgoers, this change of

⁹⁹ Chang Chen-Hsien, 'Shakespeare in China', M.A. thesis, University of Birmingham, 1951 (p. 4).

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Han, S, 'On the Progress of Opera Adaptation of the Shakespearean Opera in the New Era', in *Theatre Arts* 5 (2016): pp. 36-48 (p. 38).

plot should also be attributed to the nature of the form itself. Although it seems feasible to separate Chinese Opera performing techniques from the dated morality advocated by Hu Shih in the New Culture Movement in the 1920s,¹⁰³ actors (including Wu) still insisted in the 1980s that moralisation is a vital part of their work. In Wu's adaption, the soldiers' mutiny and Macbeth's suicide were both abrupt and ascribed to the supernatural spirit; Lady Macbeth's death was caused by an accident during childbirth rather than fear and self-accusation. This adapted plot followed the rationality of Chinese Opera and proved *shan'eyoubao* (the bad will be punished by gods – a key idea in Chinese ethics) to the audience. Huang and Wu thus simplified a classic Shakespearean tragedy to a common fable to comfort the audience by changing the plot, making it more accessible and acceptable for Chinese playgoers. In other words, the adaptors not only transposed the story of *Macbeth* to China, but also asked Macbeth and other characters to observe traditional Chinese morality.

Conclusion

From these two examples, it is clear that those who adapt Shakespeare into Chinese Opera usually have to simplify Shakespeare's characters, language, and plots when conflicts between conventions arise. Although sometimes adaptors can locate a workable compromise between these contrasting conventions, these cases are rare. It is worth noting that after *The Kingdom of Desire*, Wu prioritised Shakespeare's complexity by producing *Lear is Here* (2001) and *The Tempest* (2004, 2008, 2009) without the conventions and label of *jingju*. As a result, these adaptations are not recognised as Chinese Opera. The strict conventions of Chinese Opera, language barriers, and expectations of local playgoers mean that careful consideration and

¹⁰³ The New Culture Movement, or in Hu Shih's view, the Chinese Cultural Renaissance, first sprung up in 1915, symbolised by the establishment of the magazine *Youth*. It called for democracy and science, promoted new literature, and opposed monarchy, superstition, and the old formalities and morals that were represented by Confucius. As one of the most significant sponsors, Hu Shih argued strongly against the conformism of Chinese traditional opera.

detailed work is required to resolve the conflicts that inevitably arise when adapting Shakespeare into these forms. It is striking that both *Bloody Hand* and *The Kingdom of Desire* are both extremely popular productions of Shakespeare in China, and thus have likely had an impact on how Shakespeare is understood in this cultural context. Correspondingly, Shakespeare can be seen to have helped or pushed Chinese theatre practitioners to break away from operatic conventions – a process which has enhanced the popularity of traditional forms and revitalised their role in 21st-century culture.

Ostensibly, it might seem easy to produce a work which is both Chinese Opera and Shakespeare. The Olympics Opening and Closing Ceremonies of 2008 and 2012 attest to the enormous, complex, and ongoing cultural significances of these two contrasting forms. If the depth of culture behind each form was ignored, Chinese Opera would have been performed by four costumed puppets in Beijing 2008, and Shakespeare would be nothing but words spoken in London 2012 by an actor playing the part of Isambard Kingdom Brunel. In fact, the four Beijing puppets (representing generals) signified triumph through their costume and movements, and Brunel's speech ('Be not afeard' [3.2.93]) captured the feeling of a particular moment in British history. Bringing these two forms – each fundamental to the heritage and national identity of its origin culture – into conversation with one another will inevitably result in cultural conflicts. Though there may be no optimal solution for negotiating these cultural conflicts, the productions discussed in this article provided accessible opportunities for audiences to engage with Shakespeare and Chinese Opera simultaneously.

Glossary

This article features several Chinese terms and names. Most were translated by the system of Romanization. Because the systems in mainland and Taiwan have some differences, I followed the principles below: If he or she has a frequently-used English name, I used the English name (such as Alexa Huang instead of Huang Chengyuan). If he or she did not, I chose a Romanization system depending on his or her birthplace. However, they might be mentioned in other books with other translated names. In case of that, I attach this short glossary.

In this article	In Mainland China	In Taiwan	Chinese
Wu Hsing-kuo	Wu Xingguo	Wu Hsing-kuo	吴兴国
<i>The Kingdom of Desire</i>	Yuwang Chengguo	Yuwang Ch'eng-kuo	欲望城国
<i>Jingju</i> Beijing opera	<i>Jingju</i> Beijing opera	<i>Pingju, guoju,</i> Peking opera Or National opera	京剧 (in Mainland China) 国剧 or 平剧 (in Taiwan)
<i>Kunqu</i>	<i>Kunqu</i>	<i>Kunqu</i> Or <i>kuencheu</i>	昆曲

Halliwell-Phillipps' Scissors

Sara Marie Westh, Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

An edition of a text never exists in a vacuum. Its original author is subject to recreations, as Graham Holderness argues in a special journal issue on 'Creating and Re-creating Shakespeare': 'Shakespeare criticism and scholarship is tending increasingly towards the view that every act of scholarly reproduction, critical interpretation, theatrical performance, stage and screen adaptation, or fictional appropriation produces a new and hitherto unconceived Shakespeare'.¹⁰⁴ Focusing specifically on the form(s) in which the playwright's works live on today, Margaret Jane Kidnie considers each Shakespeare text to be 'a dynamic *process* that evolves over time in response to the needs and sensibilities of its users'.¹⁰⁵ As the author and their works are remade according to the external pressures of audience, readership, and scholarly endeavour, it follows that an *edition* of a text is similarly dynamic. It becomes, then, a form of performance of authority and authoriality.

If an edition constitutes a mode of performance, James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps' compilation of cuttings from Renaissance books offers a glance into both the groundwork that precedes staging on the page, and the highly interconnected nature of the cultural currents that shape academic discourse surrounding Shakespeare. In collecting snippets of text that intersect with, comment upon, and frame Shakespeare's writings, Halliwell-Phillipps staged a performance of textual proximity. Yet, due to the sheer number of cuttings they contain, the notebooks ultimately achieve not situation and definition of Shakespeare's text, but instead the revelation of how truly vast the network of discourse it forms part of is.

¹⁰⁴ Graham Holderness, 'Introduction: Creating Shakespeare', in *Critical Survey* 25.3 (2013), pp. 1-3 (p. 1).

¹⁰⁵ Margaret Jane Kidnie, *Shakespeare and the Problem of Adaptation* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2009), p. 2.

According to the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Halliwell-Phillipps was the son of a Lancashire draper and grew up to become a preeminent antiquary and literary scholar.¹⁰⁶ His crowning achievement was editing the definitive Shakespearean Works of the Victorian age.¹⁰⁷ Printed in 16 volumes of impressive Folio between 1853 and 1865 and costing 2 guineas per volume, the edition remains an overwhelming achievement of Shakespearean scholarship as well as a striking testament to the printer's craft. Lithographic reprints of the verified Shakespeare Quartos appeared in 1861 to 1871, compiled by Halliwell-Phillipps for the more affluent readers capable of meeting the exorbitant price of 5 guineas each. The edition was an immense success, lauded by William Jaggard in his 1911 *Shakespeare Bibliography* as 'the most extensive repository of literary, historical, and archaeological information regarding Shakespeare and his writings to be found in any single work, and, typographically, the most sumptuous edition' – in short, 'the largest form in which the bard has yet appeared'.¹⁰⁸

The annotation of Halliwell-Phillipps' Shakespearean Works edition is of particular interest here. In contrast to his scrupulously thorough work with the main texts of the edition, his practices in collecting the background materials that form the bulk of annotations for his Works is what causes us to pause today. In editing any early modern text a wealth of information must be collated – relating not only to differences between multiple iterations of a given text, but also any material information which might help to situate the text within a particular cultural matrix. This type of information aims to enrich the reader's understanding of the text by opening a window to the wider intellectual and historical environment with which it originally

¹⁰⁶ 'James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps', *The Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. by Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman, DOI: doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/12020 23.09.2004 [accessed 26 March 2018].

¹⁰⁷ James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps, ed., *The Works of William Shakespeare: the Text Formed from a New Collation of the Early Editions: to which are Added all the Original Novels and Tales on which the Plays are Founded; Copious Archaeological Annotations on Each Play; an Essay on the Formation of the Text; and a Life of the Poet*, Vol. 16 (London, 1865).

¹⁰⁸ Qtd. in Arthur Freeman and Janet Ing Freeman, *John Payne Collier: Scholarship & Forgery in the Nineteenth Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 648.

engaged. For example, an editor might chose to cross-reference the Raven's bill in *The Phoenix and the Turtle*¹⁰⁹ with Philemon Holland's 1601 translation of the famous Roman natural philosopher Pliny's *Natural History of the World* to clarify what can be meant by the poem's final lines.¹¹⁰ It is not at all clear to a modern reader what is meant in the concluding couplet of the poem: 'And thou, treble dated crow, | That thy sable gender maks't | With the breath thou giv'st and tak'st' (ll. 17-19); annotation helps to clarify the history of the notion behind crows giving and taking breath. The annotation might point to Book X, Chapter XII 'Of unluckie birds, and namely, the Crow, Raven, and Scritch-owle', highlighting a common belief in times past that ravens 'conceive and engender at the bill or lay their eggs by it', and that, therefore, if a pregnant woman eats a raven's egg, she too 'shall be delivered [...] at the mouth'.¹¹¹ This belief was debunked, Pliny reports, by Aristotle, and contemporary readers would supposedly have been familiar with this network of meaning surrounding the crow. This background adds depth as well as meaning to the passage – we now know that crows giving and taking breath is part of an older belief, but that educated contemporary readers were unlikely to take it seriously – and must therefore be made available to the current readers.

Halliwell-Phillipps approached the task of gathering a web of information through which to read Shakespeare's Works in an unusually practical and now infamous manner. Cutting the relevant pages out of selected volumes and pasting them into his growing collection of notebooks, Halliwell-Phillipps compiled a library of snippets to underpin his notes. Due to their often unstructured collection of a vast swathe of material, as well as Halliwell-Phillipps' tendency to leave out full bibliographic references to the volume they were cut from, the

¹⁰⁹ William Shakespeare, 'Let the Bird of the Loudest Lay', ed. by Frances X. Connor, in *The New Oxford Shakespeare* (Oxford Scholarly Editions Online), www.oxfordscholarlyeditions.com/view/10.1093/acrade/9780199591152.book.1/acrade-9780199591152-647-div1-5?product=nos [accessed 5 April 2018].

¹¹⁰ Philemon Holland, ed. and translator, *The Historie of the World. Commonly called, The Naturall Historie of C. Plinius Secundus* (1601), 48olland48.uchicago.edu/48olland/, [accessed 26 March 2018].

¹¹¹ Ibid.

notebooks are somewhat difficult to interpret. However, having formed part of the team tasked with copying out the notes of former editors for the recent *New Oxford Shakespeare* editions, I found the overall system of collecting background matter familiar if less stringently structured. Driven by curiosity as well as the irresistible challenge of a treasure-trove of unidentified bibliographic material, I decided to attempt a categorisation of the cuttings in the *Sonnets* notebook.¹¹² I chose this particular notebook as it is the only collection confined to a single book, and therefore appeared an appropriately contained instance for a preliminary study. Similarly to a modern editor, Halliwell-Phillipps consulted a breadth of material in attempting to identify the origins and possible meanings of words and sentences that would have been unfamiliar to the readers of his edition.

In this short survey, I give a brief insight into the enormous span of (mostly uncategorised) materials that Halliwell-Phillipps pasted onto the pages of his notebooks.¹¹³ When leafing through the jungle of documents that make up Halliwell-Phillipps' notebooks – religious pamphlets, famous and forgotten plays, autobiographical pieces – the intermediary nature of the collection soon becomes clear. The bits and pieces of texts that are gathered here obey a larger organisational purpose – commenting directly on Shakespearean passages, tracing their influence in contemporary literature, or serving to untangle their compiler's thoughts on a specific subject. The first two functions are to be expected of the raw material underlying annotation, but the latter use was a surprise to me. Halliwell-Phillipps' excursions in attempting to affix the meaning of the word 'twire' from Sonnet 28,¹¹⁴ l. 12 provides an example of the

¹¹² James Orchard Halliwell-Phillipps, compiler, [Notebook on Shakespeare's Sonnets and Poems], The Shakespeare Birthplace Trust Archives.

¹¹³ I have thus far identified cuttings from volumes spanning just over a century, from Barnaby Riche's preface 'to the right courteous gentlewomen bothe of Englande and Irelande' in the 1581 *Rich his farewell to militarie profession*, to the Chapter 'Of the Mayor and the Kings Ape' in the 1630 compilation of amusing anecdotes that forms part of *All the vorkes of Iohn Taylor the water-poet*. Halliwell-Phillipps' unflinching book-cutting places passages from Spenser and Sydney next to Dekker, Bacon, and the unknown M.S. Elwin, whose thoughts on *The Phoenix and the Turtle* Halliwell-Phillipps recorded in handwriting.

¹¹⁴ William Shakespeare, 'Shakespeare's Sonnets Including a Louer's Complaint', ed. by Frances X. Connor, in *The New Oxford Shakespeare* (Oxford Scholarly Editions Online),

way his notebooks serve not only as a hoard of information, but as a space for seeking definition by compiling a record of past usage.

‘*Twire* is a very uncommon word’, a cutting of Peter Whalley and Francis Godolphin Waldron’s notes to their edition of Jonson’s *The Sad Shepherd* informs. The editors highlight that:

I have met with it only in this Pastoral, in Chaucer, and Shakespeare’s 28th Sonnet, and in Steele’s Comedy of the Conscious Lovers. In Mr. Tyrwhitt’s Glossary to Chaucer, it is said that *Twireth* seems to be the translation of *Susurrat*; spoken of a bird. SUSURRO, the dictionaries say, is *to whisper, to speak softly, or to mutter*; SUSURRUS a *whispering, a whistling of the wind, the murmuring of a stream; a soft still noise, as of bees, trees, &c.* *Twireth* occurs in Boecius. Speght’s Chaucer, 1602. fol. 208. Speaking of a bird that has been carefully kept, attended, and fed in a cage; having regained her liberty, it is said, she ‘seeketh on morning only the wood, and *twireth* desiring the woode with her swete voice.’ In the Glossary to which, *twireth* is said to mean *singeth*.¹¹⁵

Whalley and Waldron conclude in the immediately following line that neither of these definitions are appropriate in the Sonnet’s context. Instead they suggest a reading based on reported conversation with David Garrick, where the renowned actor, who ‘probably [...] had it from Colley Cibber’, ‘understood the word *twire* [...] meant *to simper*’.¹¹⁶ The excerpt Halliwell-Phillips chose from Whalley and Waldron, in other words, misrepresents their argument by curtailing it. It strikes me, however, that the cutting contains a larger number of cross-references related to the subject than do the paragraphs not included by Halliwell-

www.oxfordscholarlyeditions.com/view/10.1093/actrade/9780198759553.book.1/actrade-9780198759553-553-div1-17?product=nos [accessed 5 April 2018].

¹¹⁵ Peter Whalley and Francis Godolphin Waldron, eds., *The Sad Shepherd: or, A Tale of Robin Hood, a Fragment*, by Ben Jonson (London, 1783), p. 128.

¹¹⁶ Whalley and Waldron, p. 129.

Phillipps. In cutting out the first part of Whalley and Waldron's note, then, Halliwell-Phillipps chose a specific part of the argument and a particular set of additional references.

The above cutting appears on page 23 of Halliwell-Phillipps' *Sonnets* notebook. Later, however, on page 39, the debate surrounding 'twire' continues with an excerpt from footnote 5 of William Gifford's annotation to his 1816 edition of *The Works of Ben Jonson*. Gifford comments that:

To twire is to leer affectedly, to glance at obliquely, or surreptitiously, at intervals &c. It is frequent in our old writers. Thus Marston: "I saw a thing stir under a hedge, and I peeped, and I peeped, and I twired underneath, &c. Ant. And Mellida. And Fletcher. "I saw the wench that twired and twinkled at thee the other day, the young smug wench," &c. Women Pleased. It occurs also in Shakespeare: "When sparkling stars twire not, thou gildst the even." Son. Xxviii.v.12 i.e. when stars do not gleam, or appear at intervals.¹¹⁷

On the page following the excerpt Gifford goes on to comment on Edmund Malone's suggestion from his *Supplement* that 'twire' be emended to 'twirl', which he characterises as 'exquisite', in contrast to George Steeven's reading in his *Works*, where 'twire' is translated as 'singing' in the notes.¹¹⁸ Gifford concludes with a lament at the obsolescence of 'twire' which has robbed the English language of an exact synonym: 'leer and twinkle', he notes, 'are merely shades of it'.¹¹⁹ Similarly to his treatment of the cutting from Whalley and Waldron, then, Halliwell-Phillipps chooses the part of the Gifford note that offers a large number of references to parallel Renaissance instances, and curtails the argument before it departs from bibliography. In other words, the two cuttings constitute a collection of similar instances that would have

¹¹⁷ William Gifford, ed., *The Works of Ben Jonson in Nine Volumes. With notes critical and explanatory, and a biographical memoir*, Vol. 6 (London, 1816), p. 280.

¹¹⁸ Edmond Malone, *Supplement to the Edition of Shakespeare's Plays Published in 1778 by Samuel Johnson and George Steevens* (London, 1780).

¹¹⁹ Gifford, p. 281.

permitted Halliwell-Phillipps to weigh the different interpretations against each other primarily on context and history of use.

A further example of this usage is evident in the disparate cuttings concerning the ‘jacks’ in Sonnet 128 (ll. 5 and 13). The first cutting appears on page 21 in the notebook and is taken from *All the vvorkes of Iohn Taylor the water-poet*, from the *Pennilese Pilgrimage*, where Taylor describes a mountain top he traversed on his journey from London to Edinburgh as being so chilly his teeth ‘beganne to dance in my head with cold, like Virginals iacks’.¹²⁰ Halliwell-Phillipps has underlined ‘Virginals iacks’ in brown ink and marked the margin of the cutting with ‘WT’, which he then crossed out. The deleted ‘WT’ could indicate a cross-reference to Leontes’ ‘virginalling’ in *The Winter’s Tale* (1.2.125).¹²¹ The investigation into ‘jacks’ continues on page 25, with a handwritten copy of Richard Braithwait’s 1635 edition of the *Essaies upon the Five Senses* (specifically the third essay, ‘Of Touching’). Here the reader is warned that honour ‘is quickly fading, I an aspiring spirit, like the loftie cedar, is ever subject to most danger, when, like jacks in a virginal, or nails in a wheele, the fall of one is the rising of another’.¹²² Once again the word ‘jacks’ is underlined in brown ink. The next ‘jacks’ cutting is on page 27, taken from the short narrative ‘Toy to Mocke an Ape’ from Taylor’s *Wit and Mirth*. Here, an ape is punished for ignoring the mayor of Cornwall’s wife:

I will not put it vp. *Iacks* tutor replied, Sir, I will presently giue him condigne punishment: and straight hee tooke his Flanders blade, his Whip, and holding his *Ape*

¹²⁰ John Taylor, *All the vvorkes of Iohn Taylor the water-poet Beeing sixty and three in number. Collected into one volume by the author: vvith sundry new additions corrected, revised, and newly imprinted* (1630), EEBO TCP, DOI: name.umd.umich.edu/A13415.0001.001 [accessed 5 April 2018], sig. N1v.

¹²¹ William Shakespeare, ‘The Winter’s Tale’, ed. by Terri Borous, in *The New Oxford Shakespeare* (Oxford Scholarly Editions Online), www.oxfordscholarlyeditions.com/view/10.1093/actrade/9780199591152.book.1/actrade-9780199591152-671-div1-4?product=nos [accessed 6 April 2018].

¹²² Richard Brathwaite, *Essaies upon the Five Senses*, 2nd edition (1635), EEBO, gateway.proquest.com/openurl?ctx_ver=Z39.88-2003&res_id=xri:eebo&rft_id=xri:eebo:image:6474:2. [accessed 6 April 2018], sig. C10r.

by the chaine, hee gaue him halfe a dozen ierks, which made his teeth daunce in his head like so many Virginall Iackes.¹²³

Curiously, ‘put it up’ has been underlined in the familiar brown ink, but this combination of words does not appear in the Sonnets or shorter poems. The story of the ape and the Mayor reproduces Taylor’s description of teeth chattering like virginal jacks, a sense further determined by the cutting immediately following (from Richard Perceval’s updated 1599 *Dictionarie in Spanish and English*) where a ‘Martinéte’ is glossed as ‘a high standing feather in the hat. Also the iack of a virginall that striketh vp the string. Also a kinde of Instrument vsed in warre’.¹²⁴ The image of ‘virginal jacks’ that emerges from this cluster of cuttings appears closely related to their function as mountings for the plectra that pluck the strings inside a virginal. However, ‘jacks’ in isolation – as in the Sonnet’s ‘Do I envy those jacks that nimble leap’ (l. 5) and ‘Since saucy jacks so happy are in this’ (l. 13) – appears less directly related to the instrument metaphor, and more accurately encompassed by ‘*Jack an Apes*’ in the narrative preceding the ape’s punishment, designating its master. Here, as in example above, the cuttings gather different definitions together to permit their compiler to weigh the evidence in favour of a particular interpretation.

As these notebooks offer a window into the emerging ideas that underpinned Halliwell-Phillipps’ editorial decisions, their intended use imbues the cuttings with particular significance. Unfortunately, in the case of the *Sonnets*, although the secondary material Halliwell-Phillipps gathered take up an entire notebook of cuttings, the annotation in his edition

¹²³ Taylor, sig. Rr4r.

¹²⁴ Richard Perceval, *A dictionarie in Spanish and English, first published into the English tongue by Ric. Perciuale Gent. Now enlarged and amplified with many thousand words, as by this marke* to each of them prefixed may appeere; together with the accenting of euery wordethroughout the whole dictionarie, for the true pronounciation of the language, as also for the diuers signification of one and the selfsame word: and for the learners ease and furtherance, the declining of all hard and irregular verbs; and for the same cause the former order of the alphabet is altered, diuers hard and vncouth phrases and speeches out of sundry of the best authors explained, with diuers necessarie notes and especialldirections for all such as shall be desirous to attaine the perfection of the Spanish tongue* (London, 1599), sig. P1v.

is remarkably scarce. This leads me to suspect that for the larger part of the *Sonnets* cuttings the use their compiler envisioned can be conceptualised in more abstract terms than the comfortably concrete endpoint of annotation. I suggest that where the cuttings do not result in notes, they nevertheless inform Halliwell-Phillipps' editorial habits.

It is incredibly rare for the raw material underlying editorial work to be readily available for study, and it is equally rare to be able to witness the development of an editorial method at such close quarters. The passages Halliwell-Phillipps took his scissors to shed light on very specific aspects of the terms he was attempting to define, and, as such, they lay bare the gradual and selective process of turning background material into annotation. Since the vast majority of matter in Halliwell-Phillipps' notebooks remains uncategorised, careful investigation into the remaining 124 notebooks, and an in-depth comparison between these sources and the editor's 1865 edition of Shakespeare's *Complete Works*, will reveal the development of his landmark method. Thereby, the history of editing Shakespeare at a time when Romanticist notions of authorship and textual stability found themselves opposed by a strict bibliographic method will be revealed. The focus of Halliwell-Phillipps' notebooks is to open the text up through its interconnection to early modern literature, and their value to current scholarship lies in their existence as instances of editorial history, and as roadmaps to the cultural matrix they reveal. As I have outlined here, Halliwell-Phillipps' notebooks bear witness to a long and careful research process, and exist as a significant bank of knowledge. Their decline into obscurity threatens a loss only a concerted scholarly effort can remedy.

***Much Ado About Nothing* at Aotearoa-New Zealand's Pop-up Globe**

Reviewed by Elizabeth Moroney, Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

Pop-up Globe's (PuG) recent production of *Much Ado About Nothing* (2017; dir. Miriama McDowell) featured a dynamic yet sensitive fusion of three distinct cultures: early modern English, modern Western, and Pasifika. From costume design to music and dance choices, and extending to the languages in which the play was performed, this production blended elements from three seemingly disparate societies to create a playful, energetic, and meaningful night of theatre.

PuG came into existence in 2016 under the directorship of Dr Miles Gregory, and is hailed as the first ever replica of the second Globe playhouse (which was constructed in London in 1614). Research into early modern performance practices – both in terms of the ways in which Shakespeare's plays were constructed and how they originally interacted with their audiences – lies at the heart of the company's endeavours. The theatre is committed to creating a theatrical experience that is 'Shakespeare like it's 1614'. PuG seeks to recreate the construction of the 1614 Globe as exactly as possible and often uses techniques bordering on 'original practices' in its costume design, whilst conjuring for its audiences an atmosphere that responds to the 'immersive experience of seeing Shakespeare performed in the space for which it was written'.¹²⁵ The theatre hosted its first international season in Melbourne in 2017 – a reprisal of the productions previously staged for PuG's second season in Auckland, of which *Much Ado* was a central component. The theatre structure itself is ornately decorated, aiming to recreate early modern great halls and indoor playing spaces such as the Blackfriars, where the King's Men performed in the latter part of Shakespeare's career. As such, for *Much Ado*, very

¹²⁵ Qtd. in 'Overview', *Pop-up Globe*, <<https://popupglobe.co.nz/about/overview/>> [accessed 9 December 2017].

little was added to this backdrop by ways of set dressing. A few carefully-placed banana crates and native plants were enough to indicate the production's Pasifika setting.

Gregory has stated that '[t]his isn't dusty Shakespeare. This is now. Alive. Like a party'.¹²⁶ This sentiment can certainly be applied to McDowell's *Much Ado*. After opening with a harmonious full-company song infused with distinctive Pasifika rhythms (by music director Paul McLaney), creating the warm, open atmosphere of the South Pacific 'where life is slow, hot, and you can't do anything without the locals knowing about it',¹²⁷ the Queen's Company performed Shakespeare's comedy to great effect.¹²⁸ All the different design elements melded together to create a complete, if slightly hedonistic, world.

Asalemo Tofete and Jacque Drew excelled as a feisty (yet ultimately tender) Benedick and Beatrice, and were complimented by the quiet sweetness of Theo David and Victoria Abbott as Claudio and Hero.¹²⁹ Comedy duo Dogberry and Verges, played by Kieran Mortell and Johnny Light, provided superb comic timing and high-energy interactions with the audience. From the offset these figures demanded a great deal of engagement: they led us all in a rousing rendition of the Banana Boat Song (which I am still humming), with two unfortunate souls from the yard dancing along with them on stage.

The costumes (designed by Chantelle Gerrard) beautifully blended together recognisable early modern aesthetics with elements of both modern Western and Polynesian culture. The women wore sizeable skirts and fitted bodices, the men open-collared shirts and sashes. These outfits were complimented by modern shoes (Beatrice wore Converse-esque sneakers) and shell

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Miriama McDowell, 'Much Ado About Nothing', *Pop-up Globe Melbourne season official programme*, p. 29.

¹²⁸ Each season PuG forms up to three ensemble of actors to perform. Alongside *Much Ado About Nothing*, the Queen's Company also performed *Othello*, whilst the King's Company performed *As You Like It*, and *Henry V*. The Admiral's Company performed *Around the Globe in 60 Minutes* by Tom Mallaburn.

¹²⁹ Tofete took over the role from Semu Filipino on 28 November 2017; all performance references in this review relate to Tofete.

jewellery. For the more formal moments of the play – the wedding, for example – the costumes incorporated even more South Pacific elements: the women were adorned with native flower garlands, and the men wore typical long skirts that were open at the side. The wedding was also preceded by a traditional song and dance through the yard as the men and women came together for the intended celebration. The evening culminated in an equally powerful multicultural dance (choreographed by Megan Adams) which blended traditional Pasifika dance with movements inspired by early modern jigs and contemporary culture.

Although Gregory has claimed elsewhere that PuG is not interested in creating a ‘History Channel documentary where pre-European New Zealand is presented on stage’, one cannot watch a production where such a profound meeting of cultures takes place and not be aware of the postcolonial discussions that underpin it. Pasifika culture was not only woven into the visual fabric of the play but also its soundscape – not just in the music but in the character of George Seacole (also played by Tofete). Once given his charge by Dogberry, Seacole launched into an incensed tirade against the audience members sat in the boxes closest to the stage, telling them off for talking or being drunk – all in a Polynesian dialect. This moment added additional humour to the scene and worked to truly concretise the world of the play. Importantly, it also served as a reminder of the history of the region; Dogberry, played by a white man and despite his own inadequacies, exerted power over the seemingly ignorant native.

The audience took on a notable role in this production; as Drew has stated, ‘They are another character in the play’.¹³⁰ As well as responding enthusiastically to the cues given to them by the cast, fulfilling the role of the watch when bid, the audience behaved in a manner that was seemingly shaped by the venue itself. The space practically demands of its audiences a certain

¹³⁰ Qtd. in Amy Baker, ‘Comedy and tragedy all in a day’s work in pop-up [sic] Globe’s second season’, *Stuff* <<https://www.stuff.co.nz/auckland/local-news/north-harbour-news/89250590/Comedy-and-tragedy-all-in-a-days-work-at-pop-up-Globes-second-season>> [accessed 25 February 2018].

degree of participation. Much has been written about the role and ‘character’ of the audiences at the Shakespeare’s Globe reconstruction on the south bank of the Thames, and PuG spectators further exemplify this peculiar relationship between the audience and the stage. As mentioned above, a reciprocal dialogue – which continued throughout – was established almost immediately as Dogberry and Verges moved through the gathering crowd in the yard to select their unsuspecting victims to perform the Banana Boat Song. Seeing a production at PuG is an ‘immersive experience’ that facilitates an immediate connection between the actors and the audience, and a dissolution of the barriers that often separate them.¹³¹ PuG productions are immersive through their metatheatricality; we, the audience, enjoy partaking in the acknowledged game of theatre as much as the actors do.

The infectious energy with which this production of *Much Ado* was expertly imbued left little room for criticism. All theatrical components supported one other to create an incandescent evening that was unabashedly funny, and which engaged with the nuances of the text as well as the unique space in which it was performed.

¹³¹ Qtd. in ‘Overview’, *Pop up Globe* <<https://popupglobe.co.nz/about/overview/>> [accessed 9 December 2017].

***The Duchess of Malfi*, directed by Maria Aberg for the Royal Shakespeare Company,
designed by Naomi Dawson, 2 March 2018**

Reviewed by Diane Meyer Lowman, Shakespeare Institute, University of Birmingham

The Duchess is in the house, or more specifically in the Swan Theatre at the Royal Shakespeare Company. This love-story-turned-tragedy starts boldly but slowly, and leaves us exhaustedly exhilarated by the end.

The modern set vaguely resembles a gymnasium, with the light blue non-slip floor showing basketball court markings. Heavy metal bars and beams later serve as gym equipment for the buff, athletically-clad court (in both the royal and athletic sense) posse that initially accompanies and protects the Duchess, and which later threatens and assaults her. Two rows of faded orange molded plastic chairs at the back of the stage could have come from a New York subway car or a local laundrette. They are generic, damaged, and look like they offer little comfort. A grid of three by twelve stadium-style lighting fixtures face the audience, virtually blinding viewers as they periodically illuminate the stage from behind.

Only two other pieces of scenery appear; both are dragged on seemingly unwillingly and with great effort. The play opens with the Duchess – adeptly played by Joan Iyiola, clad in jeans and a white tank top with her hair tied up in a bandana headband – dragging a large carcass across the empty, quiet stage. She sweats and struggles as she tugs at the bulky, headless and hoof-less torso to its resting place in the upstage right corner. She attaches it to a meat hook at the bottom of a heavy chain so an unseen winch can hoist it up just above the surface of the stage where it will hang, distractingly and disturbingly, for the duration of the play.

In a Director Talk, Maria Aberg explained that the torso was meant to be that of a bull, but it could just as easily have been a turkey or hog. She demurred when asked what she meant the

corpse to represent, saying it was ‘open to interpretation’, and that she intended to ‘raise questions without necessarily providing answers’. For me, it was a constant reminder of subjugation, sacrifice, and death.

The effort exhausts the Duchess, but it also reveals her strength. We see that again the next time she enters, couture-clad, leading the pumped-up hardbodies that accompany her. Aberg explained that she chose to represent the Duchess’s court in this way – all male, full of testosterone – to represent power via gender. She purposely did not cross-gender cast this production because she wanted the focus on ‘the dominance of the masculine bodies in the space’. Yet although the Duchess is small in stature compared to the masculine, athletic figures that surround her, she radiates power herself. Her tailored dress, high heels, and sculpted muscles leave little room for doubt that she is fully in command of her retinue.

Despite her brothers’ warnings and admonitions, the Duchess woos and weds her clerk – a socially subservient but emotionally equal and empathetic character. The marriage takes place on a second significant piece of scenery – a white-sheeted, large, low bed on a metallic grey platform, dragged on stage by the Duchess’s waiting-woman and friend Cariola (Amanda Hadingue). It would be equally at home in a military barracks or a prison. The Duchess consummates her clandestine marriage, and dies, on this bed. It remains front and centre for the remainder of the production.

Things take a turn for the decidedly sinister once the Duchess’ brothers, who had hoped to inherit her wealth and status in the absence of a husband and heir, learn that she has married and given birth to three children. Ferdinand (Alexander Cobb) is jittery and unstable, and clearly has more than a brotherly love for his twin sister. He is slick in peachy hipster suits, while her other brother, the twisted Cardinal (Chris New), dons an oddly disturbing ensemble of sky blue golf pants and white golf shoes, belt, shirt, and gloves. The only nod to his vocation

is his white dog collar; there is not a cross nor bible in sight. The dog collar seems to represent his character more than his religion. The way he violates his mistress Julia (Aretha Ayeh) on that same bed is difficult to watch.

Once the brothers discover the Duchess' secret, they set about to destroy her. The body-builders morph into a more militaristic militia that come not to protect, but to attack her. Fatigues replace the tracksuits, and masks make the figures more menacing.

The stark lack of colour on the set quickly changes as the gang stabs the hanging cadaver, letting loose a literal and figurative bloodbath of epic proportions. Aberg joked that in this production she 'learned more about artificial blood than [she] ever wanted to'. As we exited the theatre, an usher explained that the air smelled sickly sweet because the blood is colored sugar water. 'You could eat it', she said. No thank you, I thought. I lost my appetite watching the carnage, which left most of the characters swimming in their sins, covered completely in crimson.

The intentionally modern but nonspecific setting, dress, and music made this play feel timeless. Webster may have written it in the early 1600s, but the themes of love, power, betrayal, and violence remain relevant today.

Book Review: *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Cheek by Jowl*, by Peter Kirwan, Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2019

Rachael Nicholas, University of Roehampton

Despite the fact that Cheek by Jowl have been producing Shakespearean and classical theatre since 1981, this international touring company is still seen as relatively new to the game and is often sidelined in discussions of contemporary Shakespearean performance. In *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Cheek by Jowl*, Peter Kirwan redresses this by offering the first book-length academic study focused solely on this company and its work. Deftly bringing together close readings of key productions with material drawn from interviews and the company's archives, Kirwan's overview makes the case for Cheek by Jowl's ongoing and international significance as one of the most important producers of Shakespeare on stage today.

The book's approach is deliberately neither chronological nor comprehensive, with each chapter taking two key productions from across the company's history as case studies, allowing Kirwan to explore a particular aspect of Cheek by Jowl's work in depth. It also takes a fluid approach to 'Shakespeare' by discussing the company's productions of the author's works alongside those of other early modern and newer plays. As Kirwan writes, this is a study of 'the symbiotic relationship between Cheek by Jowl and Shakespeare', focusing on 'what the company's productions of early modern drama illustrate of the company's practice, and what in turn Cheek by Jowl's work reveals about the plays of Shakespeare and his contemporaries'.¹³² Setting productions of different kinds from different periods alongside each other has a range of benefits, not least in that it highlights the way that Cheek by Jowl themselves constantly resist the traditionally linear chronologies of theatre production.

¹³² Peter Kirwan, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Cheek by Jowl* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019), p. 12.

Throughout the book, Kirwan destabilises his own (incredibly useful) chronological appendix of Cheek by Jowl productions, describing how the company constantly revise and revisit productions, even within the course of a run, keeping some productions in repertoire for a number of years. The book's movement back and forth across time is effective in mirroring what Kirwan describes as the 'constant motion' of Cheek by Jowl, both physically from theatre to theatre and from country to country, and in their theatre-making process.¹³³

Kirwan is careful, however, to highlight how the 'constant motion' of Cheek by Jowl has been made possible by the curation of an established, permanent, and reliable team. The book is part of Bloomsbury Arden's *Shakespeare in the Theatre* series, and the ten books published in the series to date have focused mostly on individuals, so far all of whom have been men.¹³⁴ Although it necessarily deals with the leadership and influence of Declan Donnellan and Nick Ormerod, Kirwan's book never loses sight of the importance of partnership and collaboration to Cheek by Jowl's ethos and practices. Interviewing members of the administrative and production teams as well as Donnellan, Ormerod, and a number of actors allows Kirwan to create a picture of Cheek by Jowl that makes visible the logistical and executive labour required to orchestrate international touring, and to consider how this unseen work has also made significant contributions to Shakespeare production.

Kirwan's meticulous and innovative research into the company also provides important insights that clearly demonstrate how what happens on stage in a Cheek by Jowl production is deeply connected and influenced by what happens offstage. In his first chapter, Kirwan draws on the experience of observing a week's worth of rehearsals for *The Winter's Tale* in order to set out and examine how the company approaches and develops a production. These ideas

¹³³ Kirwan, p. 3.

¹³⁴ Exceptions to this in the series include Lucy Munro's book on The King's Men and Paul Menzer's book on the American Shakespeare Centre.

frame subsequent chapters, such as in Chapter Two where Kirwan draws on interviews with movement director Jane Gibson and actor Anastasia Hille, as well as providing an intensely close reading of a sequence of *Macbeth* (2009-11), to argue that the company's distinctive use of space focuses attention on the body of the actor. The body, and how it signifies on stage, undergoes further scrutiny in Chapter Three: this chapter takes two of Cheek by Jowl's all-male productions as its focus, exploring how the company have developed approaches to performing gender and influenced other all-male Shakespeare productions.

In the fourth chapter, Kirwan draws on moments from productions of *Cymbeline* (2007) and *The Tempest* (2011-) to argue that Cheek by Jowl take a filmic approach to text. The analysis of how – and how much of – the text is cut in these productions is particularly illuminating, demonstrating how the company's strategies for adaptation are about what is seen on stage as much as what is said. Although this book does not consider the company's online broadcasts of their most recent productions in any great detail, this chapter offers insight into how Cheek by Jowl's cutting of the text sets their productions up for mediation by the camera.¹³⁵ The use of the camera *on stage* is explored in Kirwan's fifth chapter, which looks at the design of two Shakespeare-related productions. Kirwan argues that *'Tis Pity She's a Whore* (2011-14) and *Ubu Roi* (2013-15) mark an evolution in the company's approach to design, prompted by a change in touring practices that meant productions visited fewer venues but remained in each for a longer period, enabling them to explore more elaborate sets. Returning again to ideas about space and the body, Kirwan aptly demonstrates how simple set designs and the use of live camera feeds intervened in these productions, with stage architecture becoming an instrument of personal and political violence.

¹³⁵ Cheek by Jowl's livestreaming is discussed in further detail in Peter Kirwan, 'Cheek by Jowl: Reframing Complicity in Web-Streams of *Measure for Measure*', *Shakespeare and the 'Live' Theatre Broadcast Experience*, eds. Pascale Aebischer, Suzanne Greenhalgh and Laurie E. Osborne (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), pp. 161-73.

The final chapter of the book brings together insights from the previous chapters to examine ideas of empathy and loneliness as key aspects of Cheek by Jowl's work through vivid descriptions of *Much Ado About Nothing* (1998) and *Measure for Measure* (2013). A real strength of this book is its ability to provide original insight into Cheek by Jowl's productions by grounding performance analysis in the working practices of the company, demonstrating that if we are to fully understand the contributions that theatre companies make, we need to draw on an innovative blend of research methods to understand the connection between what happens offstage and what we see on stage. It feels slightly anticlimactic, then, that the final chapter returns to close reading alone to explore these more abstract elements of Cheek by Jowl's work, missing out on the forcefulness of the insight gained from this grounding in the previous chapters. Nevertheless, the chapter is full of rich, evocative description and sharp performance analysis that makes important points about the ensemble ethos of the company and the focus on empathy in their working methods and performances.

This is a book that is necessarily read through the lens of the reader's own experience with Cheek by Jowl. Glancing through the list of productions in the appendix I was surprised by how much of the company's work I had seen, and how influential they had been to my own experiences with Shakespeare in performance. The fact that the company tour and (more recently) livestream their productions means that I have seen almost every Cheek by Jowl production available since 2011. This book allowed me to revisit some of those productions vividly, to view my memories of them in a new light, and to experience for the first time those productions that I did not have the chance to see. This is a book that provides invaluable insight, both for readers familiar with Cheek by Jowl, and for those new to the company. It prompts reflection about how important the company is to personal tapestries of theatre experience and to the theatrical landscape more widely.

The book concludes by emphasising the ways in which the company continues to evolve; as it does so, there is no doubt that this book will prove to be the solid base needed to understand that evolution. This is a foundational and vital text which provides a much-needed overview of this company's pioneering approach and commitment to their audiences, underscoring the significance of their contribution to contemporary Shakespeare performance. For students and scholars it will be an important cornerstone for future studies of the company and the reception of their work, but it is also an incredibly enjoyable read that will reframe the way that I, and other readers, will watch and understand Cheek by Jowl productions in the future. I will certainly approach the forthcoming production of *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* with renewed insight into Cheek by Jowl's practices and processes, and look forward to bearing witness to another moment in this exciting company's constant motion.