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Kennedy, Dennis and Yong Li Lan (eds.).
Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance.
New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010. Pp. xiv, 287. ISBN 978-0-521-51552-8 (hardcover) $95.

Dennis Kennedy and Yong Li Lan's edited volume of essays, *Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance*, brings together highly informative and divergent readings of Shakespearean productions from different parts of Asia. In a concise "Introduction" to the volume, Kennedy and Lan not only contextualize the arrival of Shakespeare in China, Japan, and India, but also explain the challenges of "intercultural" revisions which the plays undergo in the continent. Unlike a series of studies of Shakespeare in the Asian context, especially in the field of Postcolonial studies, which tend to homogenize the "East," Kennedy and Lan lucidly articulate that it is challenging to define the term "Asia," and therefore the volume does not attempt to capture an essential Asian Shakespeare but explores diverse productions and approaches to performing Shakespeare in Asia.

Part 1, "Voice and Body," appropriately begins with issues related to the tradition of performance practices in India, Japan, and China respectively. John Russell Brown explores the possibility of performing Shakespearean drama in relation to the rules outlined in the Indian text *Natyashastra*. Daniel Gallimore's essay, while explaining how several contemporary productions are an extension of the existing traditions of Japanese theatre, provides an excellent analysis of the ways in which Japanese translations manipulate prosody to capture the essence of Shakespearean verse. The challenges of "intercultural" productions are taken a step further by Fei Chunfang and Sun Huizhu, who persuasively argue that internationally successful adaptations by Beijing Opera cannot be pigeonholed as examples of colonial/postcolonial power relationships.

In part 2, which deals with popular cultures, Richard Burt analyzes the unexplored area of what he calls the "Shakespeare-play-within-the-film genre." He uses the genre to argue that the representations of Shakespeare in Indian cinema undermine the distinction between "Bollywood film as low and Shakespeare as high" (80). Burt's excellent model of investigation can be further developed not only by problematizing the term "Bollywood," but also by using more examples of references to Shakespearean drama in several other mainstream Hindi films. Using Douglas Lanier's significant concept of the capacity of the "radical mobility" (110) of Shakespearean films, Minami

Ryuta's essay makes a significant contribution by illustrating the rewriting of *The Twelfth Night* in Japanese Shojo Manga comics in which the visuals powerfully convey the verbal. Kumiko Hilberdink-Sakamoto's essay analyzes the significance of the Shogekijo movement which lets directors such as Noda Hideki and Ryuzanji Jimus use Shakespeare's villains to comment on contemporary social and economic realities of Japan. The essay provides a good summary of various commercial adaptations, which undermined the binary between elitist and popular Shakespeare, but a more detailed analysis is required to explain the influence of the "bubble economy" (132) on these Japanese productions. However, Suematsu Michiko's essay, in the next section of the book (part 3: "Transacting Cultures"), admirably complements Hilberdink-Sakamoto's argument, since it explains in greater depth the influence of the economic boom on the commercialization of Japanese productions. The process of commercialization also led to a wide exportation of diverse Shakespeares from Japan, but contemporary "intercultural" collaborations collapsed the distinction between imported and exported Shakespeare in Japan. Coming back to China, Li Ruru's essay successfully explains the distinct uses of Shakespeare's foreignness in three 2001 adaptations in Hong Kong, Beijing, and Taipei by tracing an effective historical trajectory of the Chinese Shakespeare: the opposing approaches of the "reformists" and the "radicals" followed by the fluctuating use of Shakespeare from the founding of the People's Republic of China in 1949 to the Postmodern period. In contrast to Ruru's analysis, Yong Li Lan's readings of Ong Keng Sen's "intercultural" adaptations of Chinese Shakespeare are trapped in homogeneous categories which juxtapose "Asia" and "Western" — an approach which has been justifiably criticized by Rustom Bharucha.

The essays in the concluding section,"Intercultural Politics," catch the spirit of the book by analyzing diverse historical and theoretical models for an understanding of "intercultural" productions of Shakespeare in Asia. The history of Shakespeare in China in Shen Lin's essay echoes some of the historical linkages of Li Ruru's analysis, but Lin explains how the desire for an "authentic" English-language Shakespeare was related to the globalization of China which necessitated the mastering of the international English language. However, according to John W. P. Phillips, in the globalized world the "fixity" of an "authentic" Shakespearean text is challenged by "intercultural" performances, and he rightly argues that these issues have not been addressed in postcolonial

criticism which continues to perceive Shakespeare as a static symbol of colonial subjugation. The concluding essay by Rustom Bharucha provides an extremely well-articulated and a highly persuasive critique of current critical readings of Shakespearean productions in Asia, particularly postcolonial critiques, which ironically become "recolonizing exercises" (254). In contrast to Yong Li Lan, Bharucha demonstrates that Ong's *Desdemona* misuses the model of an "intercultural" adaptation, since instead of problematizing the "East-West" binary, it reconstructs "Asia" as the "Other" of Europe. Similarly, the postcolonial glorification of the Kathakali *Othello* is highly simplistic because the traditional dance form is not suitable for expressing the complexities of Shakespeare's text. Bharucha's astute and rigorous critique of postcolonial theory, even while agreeing with the political thrust of Ania Loomba's reading of the play, comes across as a bit harsh on Loomba whose work should not portrayed as the epitome of postcolonial theory. In his conclusion, Bharucha undermines John Russell Brown's ahistorical and homogenizing readings of Shakespearean adaptations, and argues for a subtle model of translations to question the "Foreign Asia/Foreign Shakespeare" deadlock in theatrical productions (277). Bharucha's essay, which eloquently critiques several models of adaptations, is an example of the richness of *Shakespeare in Asia*, a collection that does not approach the subject from a preconceived point of view, but provides the reader with a wide variety of information and analyses to generate a healthy debate regarding multiple and alternate models of readings of the contemporary Asian adaptations of Shakespeare.

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Klassen, Peter J.
Mennonites in Early Modern Poland & Prussia.
Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2009. Pp. xviii, 260. ISBN 978-0-8018-9113-7 (hardcover) $50.

The story of Mennonites in Poland and Prussia often receives short shrift in a historiography that has tended to emphasize their Anabaptist beginnings over their sojourns in Russia and America. In this welcome study, noted Reformation