ACCESSING THE POWER OF THE PLAY: THOUGHTS ON INTERCULTURAL SHAKESPEARE FROM EXAMINING *HAMLET* IN JAPAN

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ABSTRACT

This thesis explores some key areas of intercultural Shakespeare through Shakespeare translation and performance in Japanese. It argues that some cultures outside the West, such as Japan, may be able to provide access to and even augment the power of Shakespeare's plays in certain important ways. After detailing some of the history of Shakespeare in Japan, especially the contribution of the Shakespeare scholar, translator and director Tsubouchi Shôyô, the paper examines three areas of Japanese translation and production that may allow for this type of augmentation, especially through productions and translations of *Hamlet*. These areas are as follows: firstly, the socio-religious fabric of Japanese society; secondly, certain aspects of the Japanese language including the use of *kanji* characters and *furigana* gloss; and finally, the often visual nature of Japanese Shakespeare productions. Throughout, metaphor is found to be a useful tool for accessing Japanese Shakespeare and intercultural theatre. Within the central argument that certain parts of Shakespeare's work may fit better today in other cultures than in the West, some of the key findings include: the distance between Shakespeare's original work and productions in the present day West is, in certain ways, bigger than the distance between Shakespeare's original work and present day Japan; certain types of intercultural theatre may be better framed as acts of intercultural communication, especially as a type of conversation; and that native English speakers may actually translate Shakespeare using Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) in a fashion similar, although clearly not identical, to how non-native speakers of English must translate Shakespeare.

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INTRODUCTION

Exploring foreign Shakespeare

The plays of William Shakespeare are performed today in various forms, and in a range of languages and theatrical spaces all around the world. Accompanying these performances there is an ever-growing body of scholarship available on the globalisation of Shakespeare in performance. Some of these studies explore general ideas surrounding international Shakespeare.[1] Some are country specific, highlighting particular aspects that relate to a national theatre culture such as *Shakespeare and South Africa, Shakespeare in China,* or *Shakespeare in Japan,* to name but a few examples.[2] This interest in global Shakespeare is not entirely new: one thinks, for instance, of the editorial work of Israel Gollancz (1863–1930) bringing together a vast range of multi-cultural perspectives in *A Book of Homage to Shakespeare*. Among others, these included insights from a Chinese poet, a Persian scholar, and an Armenian translator.[3] However, it is also true that recent developments in technology have increased access to foreign Shakespeare productions. From the 1980s, cheaper and more efficient air travel contributed substantially to the U.K. being able to receive innovative foreign performances such as the *NINAGAWA Macbeth*, directed by Yukio Ninagawa (1935–2016), staged at the Edinburgh Festival in 1985 and then at the National Theatre in London in 1987. This production heralded a fruitful relationship of bringing Japanese Shakespeare to the U.K. which continues in ways that are less widely reported or commercially centred. For instance, *Ainu Othello* by The Shakespeare Company Japan, directed by Kazumi Shimodate of Tohoku Gakuin University, was brought to the 98 seat Tara Arts Theatre in Earlsfield, London in 2019. Along with elements such as easier and cheaper air travel, the growing number of Shakespeare adaptations on film that can be easily exported around the world has made a difference; further to this,

[1] John Russell Brown, *New Sites for Shakespeare: Theatre, the Audience and Asia* (London: Routledge, 1999); Anthony B. Dawson, 'International Shakespeare', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Sarah Stanton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 174–93; *Foreign Shakespeare: Contemporary Performance*, ed. by Dennis Kennedy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
[2] David Johnson, *Shakespeare and South Africa* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996); Tetsuo Kishi and Graham Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan* (London: Continuum, 2005); Murray Levith, *Shakespeare in China* (London: Continuum, 2006).
[3] *A Book of Homage to Shakespeare*, ed. by Israel Gollancz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, H. Milford, 1916).

websites such as the 'MIT Global Shakespeare Project' that can host videos of performances in other languages have done a great deal to introduce new audiences to a variety of different Shakespeare productions.[4]

Although theatres such as Shakespeare's Globe in London have received foreign Shakespeare performances for many years, there was renewed interest in these productions after the theatre was used as a forum for international Shakespeare performance as part of London's 2012 Cultural Olympiad. The Globe to Globe Festival ran from 23 April 2012 to 9 June 2012 and allowed the theatre to host all 37 of Shakespeare's plays, each one in a different language, sparking further literature examining Shakespeare's position in other cultures.[5] (Although it could be argued that the hip-hop production of *Othello*, performed by the Q Brothers: Chicago Shakespeare Theater, was technically in English, making English the language of two productions.) As an umbrella festival above this, the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) organised the World Shakespeare Festival (WSF), produced in collaboration with almost 60 partners from the U.K. and abroad. This drive to present intercultural Shakespeare rewarded the theatres, in the case of the Globe to Globe Festival at least, by attracting an unprecedented number of new and diverse audience members. Tom Bird tells us,

> Well over 80 per cent of those who attended had never been to the Globe before, and a huge number of native speakers of each language who told us they were not regular theatregoers joined us for 'their' show.[6]

[4] Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 'MIT Global Shakespeare Project', ed. by Peter S. Donaldson (1992) <https://shakespeareproject.mit.edu> [accessed 13 July 2020]
[5] Amy Kenny, '"A Feast of Languages": The Role of Language in the Globe to Globe Festival', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 11.26 (2014), 31–44 <https://doi.org/10.2478/mstap-2014-0004>; Paul Prescott and Erin Sullivan, *Shakespeare on the Global Stage: Performance and Festivity in the Olympic Year* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015).
[6] Tom Bird, 'The Globe to Globe Festival: An Introduction', in *Shakespeare Beyond English: A Global Experiment*, ed. by Susan Bennett and Christie Carson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), pp. 13–18 (p. 16).

Whilst we may legitimately wonder how many of these audience members returned to see another production at Shakespeare's Globe after the festival had finished, such an increase in the size and range of audience is to be applauded. The increase in variety and number of international Shakespeare productions in the past thirty years or so has led some scholars to conclude that not only is this good for audiences but it is also beneficial to the artists involved, now constituting an essential element of creativity. Some have claimed that 'transnational connections and touring have become not only more desirable but necessary for artistic inspiration and success'.[7] To claim these connections as necessary may be a little extreme: there are many Shakespeare companies producing inspired work without any transnational influence or capacity to tour internationally. Nevertheless, this comment reveals the extent to which Shakespeare within an international context has become a part of the performance culture of many of today's larger theatre companies in the West.

Nearly a decade on from the Globe to Globe Festival and the World Shakespeare Festival, Shakespeare in translation or adaptation remains an area of interest for scholars as well as artists and audiences. Although this scholarship is varied, it is united by a clear purpose: it aims to highlight in a way that can be understood by a (predominantly) Western readership how other cultures interpret and perform Shakespeare. This present study contributes to this interest by focusing on intercultural theatre through the lens of Shakespeare's plays, primarily *Hamlet,* in the country of Japan. Through this examination it aims to provide new evidence that will reinforce the argument articulated by Dennis Kennedy who suggests that certain foreign performances 'may have a more direct access to the power of the plays' in a way that may be impossible for modern, native English speaking audiences to access in English speaking productions.[8] By presenting some of the evidence for this in Japan, the thesis will highlight some possible

[7] Alexa Huang, 'Shakespeare Performance as a Multilingual Event: Alterity, Authenticity, Liminality', in *Interlinguicity, Internationality and Shakespeare*, ed. by Michael Saenger (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014), pp. 190–208 (p. 190).
[8] Dennis Kennedy, 'Introduction: Shakespeare without his Language', in *Foreign Shakespeare: Contemporary Performance,* ed. by Dennis Kennedy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp. 1–18 (p. 5).

reasons why this is the case, and it will demonstrate why an appreciation of this argument is so important for the future of Shakespeare studies internationally.

There is certainly now in the West a greater acceptance of foreign Shakespeare as a valuable addition to Shakespeare studies; nevertheless, it is also fair to say that for many in the West, especially in the U.K., there remains an axiomatic belief that we have a — or possibly even *the* — direct access to the power of Shakespeare's work due to his position in British society. Shakespeare is thought of as our theatrical, literary, linguistic, and cultural ancestor: as such, whilst perhaps not often stated overtly, it is often implicitly maintained that our Shakespeare productions, by the fact that they are produced in what we may consider to be the original language and in the same country in which Shakespeare lived, necessarily retain a greater authenticity than foreign productions produced in other languages. With regards to Shakespeare in Japanese, which this thesis will mainly explore, there is a hint of Edward Said's Orientalism in this attitude, although the focus on Shakespeare's ineffable brilliance, rather than on the inability of another culture to do justice to this brilliance, does much to mask it.[9] This can be seen, for instance, in some of the reviews of the restaging of the *NINAGAWA Macbeth* that played at the Barbican from 5 November to 8 November 2017. This production was praised by many reviewers for its spectacle and beauty: nevertheless, Ann Treneman in *The Times* begins her review with the qualifying comment, 'This is Shakespeare, Japanese style.' It could be argued that Treneman is referring to the setting of Japan where this *Macbeth* takes place: but the word 'style' gives away the truth, which is the belief that, whilst it may be a good production in some ways, the 'Shakespeare' has been modified and the show is therefore something different to what most people in the U.K. consider to be real Shakespeare. This is a subtle example of Bi-Qi Beatrice Lei's point that 'Anglocentrism is quite typical in discourses on Asian and global Shakespeare'.[10] For Treneman, this difference, and therefore the underlying question of

[9] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2014).
[10] Bi-Qi Beatrice Lei, 'Decentering Asian Shakespeare: Approaching Intercultural Theatre as a Living Organism', in *The Methuen Drama Handbook of Interculturalism and Performance*, ed. by Daphne Lei and Charlotte McIvor (London: Methuen, 2020), pp. 63–77 (p. 63). Ebook.

authenticity, stems from the need to translate Shakespeare's words and the consequent loss to the show: she continues, 'There is no mellifluousness in the lines, no beauty in language. This is the bard shouting Japanese in a cherry blossom haze.'[11] One may believe that the mellifluousness in the lines and the beauty in the language is reduced when Shakespeare is translated into Japanese and performed by these actors in this specific production; but to suggest that there was no mellifluousness or beauty at all in the Japanese spoken on stage in the entire production says a great deal about Treneman's true feelings about Shakespeare in another language.

Writing in *The Telegraph* about Ninagawa's *Cymbeline*, which ran at the Barbican from 29 May to 2 June 2012, Jane Shilling tells us,

> In a disconcertingly humble programme note, Ninagawa writes: 'Whenever I direct Shakespeare, I always feel a small sense of shame… Do I really understand a culture that is so very different from my own?' It is hard to imagine a British director of Chekhov or Ibsen feeling a similar compunction.[12]

This line tells us a lot, primarily by what it does not say. Ninagawa's self-doubt is evident, as is the suggestion that a typical British director does not feel that the staging of the plays of another European playwright requires them to understand a completely different culture. It is striking that Shilling writes about a British director's relationship with the cultures of non-British playwrights rather than a British director's relationship with Shakespeare's work. This is because there is no need to question whether a modern-day British director has the cultural understanding to stage Shakespeare: the answer is self-evident to Shilling and to many others in the U.K. today. Whilst Ninagawa perceives Shakespeare as

[11] Ann Treneman, 'Theatre review: *Macbeth* at the Barbican', *The Times*, 9 October 2017 <https://www.thetimes.co.uk/article/theatre-review-macbeth-at-the-barbican7j508qqhl?msclkid=ef425adca5fe11ec85cae43e915e241a> [accessed 17 March 2022]
[12] Jane Shilling, '*Cymbeline*, Barbican, review', *The Telegraph*, 30 May 2012 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/9300758/Cymbeline-Barbican-review.html> [accessed 17 March 2022]

foreign and therefore different, Shilling's comments reveal that she does not perceive the same issue for a British theatre director, reinforcing the sense of implicit authenticity that so many in the U.K. maintain when it comes to staging Shakespeare's plays. Foreign Shakespeare can be beautiful and even interesting; but such subtle allusions to British theatre's comparative relationship with Shakespeare demonstrate that, for many in the U.K., Shakespeare productions without his words will always remain 'almost' Shakespeare.

This does not mean that every production staged in the West is successful and contains exquisite performances that use Shakespeare's language effectively; nor does it mean that every single academic, theatre practitioner or audience member in the West conceptualises foreign Shakespeare in this way. But from these comments, it is clear that there are plenty of people in the U.K. who believe the productions in the original language are more authentically Shakespearean. Abigail Rokison-Woodall tells us that, 'A proximity to the Shakespearean text, the Shakespearean stage or even the man himself has been cited as a measure of authority and seen as providing a stamp of validation.'[13] Although unconvincing when teased apart, a deeply embedded logic exists here, which 'defines Shakespeare as the best poet, and then banishes from the canon whatever is considered insufficiently excellent'.[14] If the starting point is that Shakespeare is the best poet, then it follows that the closer one gets to whatever is considered the authentic Shakespearean text, the closer one is to the inimitable brilliance of Shakespeare's mind; the inverse is also true, for as we move further away from Shakespeare's words, the further we are from the 'best poet'. Following this logic, it is this original 'best poet' textual authenticity that allows for the optimum access to the power of the plays. The aim of this thesis is to show — in a number of ways that have not been explored using these details before — that this is not necessarily the case. In fact, the culture and language of a country such as Japan may offer not only a different view of a piece of theatre,

[13] Abigail Rokison, 'Special Issue on Shakespeare, Performance and Authenticity: An Introduction', *Shakespeare*, 10.4 (2014), 359–362 (p. 359) <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450918.2014.963659>
[14] Stephen Orgel, 'The Authentic Shakespeare', *Representations*, 21 (1988), 1–25 (p. 2) <https://doi.org/10.2307/2928374>

as is often suggested, but may even allow for the reframing of a Shakespeare play in ways that can augment its power both on the stage and possibly even on the page.

It is important to define some terms and intentions at the outset. Whilst it would be a wonderful experiment, this thesis will not measure and compare the specific levels of enjoyment of different audiences: this is not a quantitative analysis or a series of surveys, although I will refer to some valuable neuroscientific studies. Whilst not claiming to be conclusive, the neuroscientific data adds to the argument for the simple reason that we are learning more and more about how little we know ourselves and how unconscious our thoughts often are. The scholarship in the areas of decision making and unconscious bias are testament to this idea: irrespective of our views on the pollical dimensions of these investigations, the results show that there is value in examining how the brain and body respond to something, especially because a participant or audience member may not be fully aware of that response.[15] To give one example, fMRI scanning can inform us about how the brain responds to certain Japanese scripts, which is something that participants would be unable to report themselves in any real detail.[16] In this instance, adding such information to our analysis allows us to draw more accurate conclusions about how the language functions when people engage with it, the value of which I explore later in this thesis.

The term the 'power of the plays' should be taken to mean the intellectual and emotional impact on a reader or audience when witnessing vivid characters (originally created by Shakespeare) within their imaginative and challenging circumstances expressed through language that evokes both and intellectual and emotional response. This combination provokes questions in the minds of the readers or an audience that many consider to be some of the most pertinent to us as human beings, and these questions are

[15] Pragya Agarwal, *Sway: Unravelling Unconscious Bias* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2020); Daniel Kahneman, *Thinking, Fast and Slow* (London: Penguin, 2012).
[16] D. H. Thuy and others, 'Implicit and Explicit Processing of Kanji and Kana Words and Non-Words Studied with Fmri', *NeuroImage*, 23 (2004), 878–889.

consequently asked in a highly memorable way. To a large extent, this definition aligns with W. B. Worthen's idea that,

> Dramatic performance is conditioned not only from within the theatre, requiring an understanding of the conventional performance practices of a given culture, but also from without: the institutions of performance arise in relation to social and cultural factors, other institutions which define the categories and meanings of performance.[17]

The power of the play and the force of modern performance are therefore constructed in similar ways, which must be affected by aspects of a culture outside the theatre itself: these will be shown to be revealing in their function within intercultural theatre. Related to this, the concept of 'direct access' should be held to mean how accessible we rationally consider a Shakespeare play to be to a reader or audience, taking into account what we may assume to be the main barriers to comprehension, such as linguistic difficulties and an understanding of the historical world being portrayed within a text. These two are clearly aligned with the component parts that constitute the power of a play also going some way to ensuring it is accessible to an audience. With these terms in mind, three aspects of Shakespeare in Japan (and in Japanese) that allow for increasing the power of a play will be explored: namely, the socio-religious fabric of Japanese society, certain key elements of the Japanese language and their function, and the often-foregrounded visual elements of Japanese productions.

This framework gives a natural structure to the argument overall. Along with defining the key terms and the outline of the argument, this Introduction will aim to counter some of the possible objections to such a study of culture and intercultural theatre, before detailing some of the scholarship on Shakespeare in Japan up to now. Chapter One will begin by asking some key questions about the purpose

[17] W. B. Worthen, 'Introduction: Dramatic Performativity and the Force of Performance', in *Shakespeare and the Force of Modern Performance*, ed. by W. B. Worthen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 1–27 (pp. 1–2).

of translation and will challenge the idea of authenticity and authority that scholars and theatre practitioners in the West may often assume regarding their Shakespeare productions.[18] Chapter Two will offer an account of the arrival of Shakespeare's work in Japan after the Meiji Restoration of 1868. This will include examining in greater depth the life and work of one of the earliest contributors to Shakespeare in Japan, the translator, academic, and theatre practitioner Tsubouchi Shôyô (1859–1935). Chapter Three will unpack the socio-religious elements of Japanese culture, particularly Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism, which have long influenced the beliefs and behaviour of many Japanese. By highlighting important parts of these, and how their effects are often retained in Japanese society even today, the chapter will demonstrate how the socio-religious fabric of Japan acts as a fertile environment into which Shakespeare's work has been planted and has subsequently grown. At the heart of this specific argument is the contention that the Japanese socio-religious environment of the past 150 years and even in the twenty-first century is closer to that of late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century England in some ways, especially when compared to the distance between the early seventeenth-century England and the U.K. today: consequently, many of Shakespeare's stories and his characters' actions feel far more relevant to the issues of contemporary society when performed within a culture such as Japan. In other words, many of the imaginative and challenging circumstances detailed in Shakespeare's plays are more instantly and powerfully resonant when presented in Japanese society to a Japanese audience than they are when presented to a modern Western audience in a linguistic form perhaps more closely resembling the original. This constitutes an important part of how the power of the plays has been and continues to be conveyed to a Japanese audience.

Chapter Four will explore translation into another culture by examining briefly Japanese translations of Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' (III.1.56).[19] *Hamlet* is perhaps the most celebrated

[18] Roman Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', in *On Translation*, ed. by Reuben Arthur Brower (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1959), pp. 232–39.
[19] William Shakespeare, 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', in *Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. by Peter Alexander (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1994).

Shakespeare play in the West, and it maintains a similar position in Japan (and Asia more widely), making it a valuable play to examine in this way. By analysing the opening line of this soliloquy as translated by four different translators, the differences in style and the possible objectives will be displayed. Following this, two translations of the entire speech will be examined, one by Shôyô and the other by Yushi Odashima (b. 1930). The comparison will pay particular attention to the choices of each translator to use the different Japanese written scripts, especially with regards to *kanji* characters and the use of a *furigana* gloss, to create meaning. Central to this chapter will be the exploration of the poetic tensions created from these decisions, following the linguistic ideas of Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908) and subsequently Ezra Pound (1885–1972) who argued that pictographic or ideographic languages are inherently more poetic that our arbitrary English phonetic script.[20] By examining the two different translations of Hamlet's famous soliloquy, the function of the Japanese language will be shown in greater detail to vary depending on the intention of the author; I will also demonstrate how the *kanji* character, as a medium for poetry, can work as a type of metaphor, possibly enhancing the poetic power of Shakespeare's original script, and even creating a more stimulating intellectual and emotional response in its readers. There have been studies already conducted comparing translations such as this, most notably the work of Daniel Gallimore; however, they are rare, especially in English.[21] Even with the present author's limited Japanese language ability, this type of close linguistic analysis yields very interesting insights and suggests another key reason why a thesis such as this may be beneficial for prompting conversations about areas of future research combining different academic disciples. Continuing to explore how metaphor contributes to our understanding of Shakespeare in different ways, it will then be shown how Cognitive Metaphor Theory (CMT) functions, and from this, the suggestion follows that a more powerful line of communication can be created between a script and a reader, or even between a performance and an audience. This discussion will also demonstrate through the formidable work of

[20] Ernest Fenollosa, *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry* (London: City Lights, 1936); Ezra Pound, *ABC of Reading* (New York: New Directions, 1987).
[21] Daniel Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream* (Hyogo: Kwansei Gakuin University Press, 2012).

George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, and through that of Charles Fillmore, perhaps the most potent argument against native English speakers having a more direct access to the power of the plays: namely, that we in the U.K. may need to translate subconsciously Shakespeare's work in a similar, though clearly not identical way, to non-native English speakers.[22]

Staying with the idea of metaphor, Chapter Five will use specific examples of visual communication on stage to interrogate the possibility that such a channel of communication may contribute more to the power of a Shakespeare play in Japan. By looking at the neuroscience studies available, it will show how a culture such as that in Japan may well prioritise the language of a play to a lesser extent, and value far more visual and aural elements when attempting to create and understand meaning. The work of Yukio Ninagawa, especially his visual metaphors and his use of aural texture, will be used to demonstrate this. A small amendment to a definition of intercultural theatre is suggested, by framing such performances as acts of intercultural communication. Finally, the conclusion will summarise the new evidence presented throughout supporting Kennedy's claim and return to the central question as to whether Shakespeare in Japan (or in Japanese) can augment the power of the play, as hopefully will have been shown. It will ask what exactly this can tell us about the assumptions we have regarding our own relationship with Shakespeare's plays in the West, especially in the U.K. It concludes by challenging some of these more ingrained beliefs, and by suggesting metaphor as key to intercultural theatre, and as essential to reframing the important questions this theatre genre encourages us to ask.

[22] Gilles Fauconnier and George Lakoff, 'On Metaphor and Blending', *Cognitive Semiotics*, 5 (2009), 393–99 <https://doi.org/10.1515/cogsem.2013.5.12.393>; Charles J. Fillmore, 'Frame Semantics and the Nature of Language', *Annals of the New York Academy of Sciences*, 280 (1976), 20–32 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1749-6632.1976.tb25467.x>; George Lakoff, 'The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor', in *Metaphor and Thought*, ed. by Andrew Ortony (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 202–51; George Lakoff, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1987); George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago press, 1980); George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, 'The Metaphorical Structure of the Human Conceptual System', *Cognitive Science*, 4 (1980), 195–208 <https://doi.org/10.1016/S0364-0213(80)80017-6>; George Lakoff and Mark Tuner, *More Than Cool Reason: A Field Guide to Poetic Metaphor* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1989).

Some notes on this thesis specifically. It is acknowledged that the author's Japanese language ability is not fluent. This limited knowledge of Japanese will be used to add briefly to the discussions on Japanese translations; but this thesis relies to a large extent on the Japanese language abilities and the existing translations of other scholars. For the translations analysed in this paper, I have relied on assistance from native Japanese speakers, and the use of a dictionary and translation software. Therefore, there will be plenty that has been missed without a deeper linguistic skill including, but not limited to, a fuller engagement with the translations of Shakespeare being examined as well as insights of Japanese scholars who have written about Shakespeare in their own language. Instantly, Toshio Kawatake's full length study *Nihon no Hamuretto* (often translated as *Hamlet in Japan*) springs to mind as this is regularly mentioned as invaluable by other scholars in the field.[23] However, Julie Iezzi pointed out in 2004 that due to the growing body of excellent work written in English it was 'no longer necessary to spend years learning the Japanese language in order to carry out research into *kabuki* theatre'.[24] This study follows in that vein, hoping to add value through the outsider's view from the inside, albeit it whilst remaining an outsider from a linguistic point of view. With apologies to native Japanese speakers, this thesis will treat Japanese full names in the Western fashion (first name followed by surname) for the ease of the expected Western reader; except, that is, for Tsubouchi Shôyô and Sôseki Natsume, whose positions in the theatrical and literary landscape of Japan make them exceptions. The Japanese terms will be written in *romaji* (the spelling in the Roman alphabet of the sounds of Japanese words) for the most part. That said, there are aspects of this thesis that require analysis of the original Japanese: at these points will the words be written in their original Japanese script.

Possible objections

Before moving on, let us deal briefly with two of the possible objections that may arise from the argument already begun. Firstly, I have suggested that the Japanese socio-religious environment of the past 150

[23] Toshio Kawatake, *Nihon No Hamuretto (Hamlet in Japan)* (Tokyo: Nan'undo, 1972).
[24] Julie A. Iezzi, 'Frozen Moments: Writings on Kabuki, 1966–2001. By Samuel L. Leiter (review). East Asia Series No. 111. Ithaca: Cornell University, 2002', *Theatre Survey*, 45 (2004), 321.

years and even today is, in certain ways, closer to that of late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth century-England; by this, one may think that I am proposing that modern day Japanese society has not progressed as much as modern society in the U.K. This is certainly not the case, nor is it the argument being made here. Such a conclusion relies on the false belief that all movement away from a system of values or thought from the past constitutes progress. As may be discovered from even a brief look at the literature on measuring the progress of societies, a central theme of this topic is the debate surrounding what constitutes progress and whether a definition can ever be agreed upon.[25] Such relativity instantly allows for different interpretations of progress, and so negates the concept that a continued adherence to an idea that originated in the past necessarily reveals a lack of forward movement. British neuroscientist Iain McGilchrist's superb study of the brain makes this clear: in a section subtitled *What we might learn from Oriental Culture* he writes of the Japanese,

> We should be careful before we patronise or dismiss any element of this sophisticated culture, in which there have been high standards of education and literacy for centuries during which half our populations could barely sign their name.[26]

Even regarding the modern standards by which many people judge a society, such as an advanced economic system, or the development and use of technology, Japan is held in high regard today; accordingly, we should not dismiss other aspects of Japanese society as lacking in progress merely because large numbers in the West may have moved away from similar beliefs.

The second objection that may be raised at this early stage is the following: a study of national culture such as this necessarily requires generalisations. It therefore risks losing the sense of individuality within a population and may gloss over the differences between members of a culture in order to make its

[25] Jon Hall and others., 'A Framework to Measure the Progress of Societies', *OECD Statistics Working Papers*, 05 (2010), Paris: OECD Publishing, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/economics/a-framework-to-measure-the-progress-of-societies_5km4k7mnrkzw-en> [accessed 4 August 2021]
[26] Iain McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), p. 453.

argument, thereby leaving it overly exposed to false conclusions. This is a perennial debate in cultural studies, as Zhu Hua's succinct analysis of the various arguments demonstrates.[27] It must be taken seriously for the tendency to generalise without proper scrutiny is an easy trap into which to fall, especially when examining things that are foreign to us and of which our experienced is consequently limited. Culture is complex, often inviting competing definitions depending on the purpose one has when defining it. The compositional approach, for example, treats culture as a collection of things, including values and beliefs, which of course must reveal cultural paradoxes when an individual supposedly belonging to a national culture does not hold the expected values or beliefs. Alternatively, the action approach specifies that culture itself is a process, specifically a 'meaning making process' that is constantly evolving.[28] We may look at historical models, such as Arnold Toynbee's concept of a culture as a living organism, or the thoughts of Karl Jaspers who suggested that China was the making force behind Japan's cultural history as useful models of examining culture.[29] Yet, as becomes obvious, each model is different and therefore each places a different value on different aspects within a culture. That is, the breadth of the subject can lead to the accusation that cultural studies can encompass just about anything; yet despite this, the discipline does not pay similar attention to every aspect of culture within this breadth, resulting in a range of foci that cannot help but stir political feelings about class, race and society at large.[30] The debate about what culture is, followed by the debate about what should be studied within that definition, followed by the debate over the methodology of studying these things, followed by the debate about who is in a legitimate position to carry out such studies, can lead to real confusion. The result is often a blurry picture of what is the ultimate objective of the pursuit; consequently, one can be left with different but equally accurate conclusions to the same questions, which may even contradict each other.

[27] Zhu Hua, *Exploring Intercultural Communication: Language in Action* (Oxford: Routledge, 2014), pp. 186–200.
[28] Ibid., p. 196.
[29] Roger J. Davies, *Japanese Culture: The Religious and Philosophical Foundations* (Tokyo: Tuttle Publishing, 2016), (pp. 24–25). Ebook.
[30] Simon During, *Cultural Studies: A Critical Introduction* (Oxford: Routledge, 2005), p. 7.

Any analysis of culture must fall short of certainty due to the variable nature of human beings. Nevertheless, there is value in assessing and interpreting national culture, especially with regards to beliefs, in a study such as this for two primary reasons. Firstly, I am in accord with Ron Scollon, Suzanne Wong Scollon and Rodney H. Jones, who argue that, if pushed for a definition, they would say that culture may be best described as a verb; that people 'do' culture in different ways at different times with different ends in mind.[31] In this case, we can look at the behaviour of much of the population of Japan to gain insight into what they have done and what they continue to do; consequently we can try to analyse the motivation, rather than begin with the suggestion that they are the way they are because they are Japanese and then backdate the evidence at hand. Extrapolating from this, we may be able to see how specific behaviour may suggest particular beliefs, and then how those beliefs may influence the production and reception of Shakespeare's plays.

Secondly, if we do not use the best evidence to inform sensible deductions about a culture then we risk missing far more than we stand to lose if we engage in such an analysis. At the very least, studies such as the present one draw attention to how a researcher has investigated and analysed evidence and how a research question has been approached; it will likely point to some of the key factors that contribute to cultural differences and, of course, the similarities, even if some aspects are likely to fall within a margin of error. It is also worth reminding ourselves that any study of Shakespeare must be subjective to some degree, for such are the very nature of the plays. No two individuals respond to a reading or performance of a Shakespeare play in exactly the same way; yet this does not preclude scholars from making what often appear to be sweeping arguments about the meaning or effect of his work overall. The evidence being used when studying Shakespeare is (normally) qualitative to at least some

[31] Ron Scollon, Suzanne Wong Scollon, and Rodney H. Jones, *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach*, 3rd edn (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), p. 5.

degree. Provided we remain cautious in our conclusions, we stand to gain insight that is valuable: this is preferable to avoiding cultural analysis due to the unavoidable imperfection of the methodology.

The challenge of how to analyse culture fairly and effectively extends also to theatre. The world of intercultural theatre (and the similarly contested names such as trans-cultural or multi-cultural) is an immensely challenging space to examine with any degree of certainty. Patrice Pavis is correct to assert that 'this new "genre", with which one immediately associates the names of Brook, Barba, and Mnouchkine, has not managed to find its own identity'.[32] Despite making this comment in 1996, it holds a large degree of truth today for the same reason as expressed above regarding culture: that is, defining the terms and objectives, and therefore measuring success and value remain elusive and often subjective. Julie Holledge and Joanne Tompkins use the following definition in their book: 'Interculturalism is the meeting in the moment of performance of two or more cultural traditions, a temporary fusing of styles and/or techniques and/or cultures.'[33] This definition has been adopted by others such as Ric Knowles, who claims it is 'as clear a definition as any'.[34] He may well be right; but unfortunately that does not help us a great deal for the definition of what constitutes a cultural tradition can be immensely varied. Knowles adds a little clarity to the issue of definition by telling us,

> Intercultural theatre and performance, then, I understand to be a site for the continuing renegotiation of cultural values and the reconstitution of individual and community identities and subject positions.[35]

Again, this is valuable to some extent; but still begs the question how should we define cultural values? One way of explaining this is to say that something becomes a cultural value when a certain number of

[32] 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. 1).
[33] Julie Holledge and Joanne Tompkins, *Women's Intercultural Performance: Cultural Double Cross* (London: Routledge, 2000), p. 7.
[34] Richard Paul Knowles, *Theatre & Interculturalism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), p. 4. Ebook.
[35] Ibid., pp. 4–5.

people believe in it or perform it if it is an action or ritual: this fits quite nicely to the second part of Knowles' definition above that focuses on individual and community identities. But who decides the number of people required to transform something from a minor fad into a cultural value that is representative of the larger group identity?

Perhaps the most obvious demarcation in such a definition is that of a national performance tradition, for we may be inclined to believe that we can define certain theatrical and performance traditions as relating specifically to one country or another with relative ease. Yet, we also read intercultural theatre scholars telling us that intercultural theatre is not new. Knowles argues that although studying such theatre is a relatively recent activity, it is still the case that, 'For thousands of years the Indigenous peoples of the world negotiated difference and facilitated trade in part through performance forms.'[36] Even only going back to the first half of the twentieth century, Erika Fischer-Lichte's survey details some of the theatrical blending that has occurred internationally.[37] Such a point of view encourages us to ask questions about the performance traditions in various countries today, and specifically whether our own limited view, however understandable it may be, could actually preclude us from appreciating how international a single national culture may actually already be, particularly in its theatrical and performance traditions. The idea that the national culture is the clearer demarcation of theatrical tradition provokes other challenges including, for example, the political questions that arise regarding cultural appropriation and power relationships. Some scholars have reminded us that the unquestionably admirable tendency for sensitivity when examining intercultural theatre (and, presumably, when making intercultural theatre) can result in the inability to do anything:

[36] Ibid., p. 6.
[37] Erika Fischer-Lichte, 'Theatre, Own and Foreign, the Intercultural Trend in Contemporary Theatre', in *The Dramatic Touch of Difference: Theatre Own and Foreign*, ed. by Erika Fischer-Lichte, Josephine Riley, and Michael Gissenwehrer (Tubigen Forum modernes theatrer schriftenreihe Band 2: Gunter Narr Verlag, 1990) pp. 11–20.

> Such moral critiques, while absolutely essential to the politicizing of interculturalism, risk instigating a kind of paralysis insofar as they suggest that virtually no form of theatrical exchange can be ethical.[38]

An analysis of culture that can be described as essentialist in any way, especially with regards to national culture, is open to the criticism that the field is not level. Certain scholars allude to this when they tell us that within this position, 'There is a necessary theoretical move, then from 'culture' to 'ideology', or from understanding culture as a neutral, innocent place, to one always and already implicated in power relations.'[39] Even the method of creating meaning in a culture may be subject to power struggles: if one adheres to such a view, it becomes important to keep in mind the possible aims of the dominant structures in a culture when meaning is being created. Yet we must ask if critics studying interculturalism in the theatre such as Rustom Bharucha are right to make claims along the lines of, 'the larger economic and political domination of the West has clearly constrained, if not negated the possibilities of genuine exchange'.[40] Whilst it is easy to accept this idea for much of what we may call intercultural theatre, does such a statement apply to all intercultural exchange within the theatre space? Although Bharucha is focusing on 'Euro-American uses and constructions of the Indian theatre', does such a claim extend elsewhere?[41] If one suspects so, is it not challenged at least a little when we think of an intercultural theatre exchange between a single country in the West such as the U.K. and Japan, seeing as Japan has had, for some time now, a larger economy than the U.K.? Moreover, the politics of a country and even a region of the globe change over time. As we shall see in the case of Japan, politics undeniably played a large role in the first intercultural theatrical experiences of performing Shakespeare plays, but that drive to

[38] Jacqueline Lo and Helen Gilbert, 'Toward a Topography of Cross-Cultural Theatre Praxis', *TDR*, 46 (2002), 31–53 (p. 41).
[39] Thomas K. Nakayama and Rona Tamiko Halualani, 'Critical Intercultural Communication Studies: At a Crossroads', in *The Handbook of Critical Intercultural Communication* (London: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), pp. 1–16 (p. 6).
[40] Rustom Bharucha, *Theatre and the World: Performance and the Politics of Culture* (London: Routledge, 1993), p. 2.
[41] Ibid., p. 2.

use Western theatre forms to modernise a nation has now altered considerably or perhaps disappeared completely. In response, I would argue that Bharucha's ideal hope of interculturalism as a 'two-way street' that offers an equal exchange is necessarily doomed in the theatre for a number of reasons: the first among them is the practical reason that it must take place in a specific location, even if this location is changeable, at a finite point in time, and in the majority of examples, in a commercial setting.[42]

No study of intercultural theatre can escape the shadow of the 'hourglass' metaphor coined by Patrice Pavis.[43] This enduring analogy is effective in helping us appreciate the filters necessarily put in place between a source and target culture; the image of the grains of sand being necessarily transferred is evocative, as is the idea that each stage of the passing through of the hourglass can be identified as a stage of the creation of an intercultural theatre experience. Pavis' concept has received its fair share of criticism due largely to the perception of the singular direction of cultural exchange (though it should be added that Pavis himself noted certain risks immediately inherent to the function of the hourglass model). Adding to this, I would argue that it also relies on what is now surely an outdated notion that the source and target cultures are clearly defined and stable in themselves when they are transferred in the hourglass. This seems too simplistic, especially with the recent globalisation of the theatre world that we have already begun to discuss. It is suggestive of the idea that the culture in question is largely national: that is, the culture involved in a Japanese Shakespeare production is that 'of Japan', whatever that means. This is a highly debateable field, not only because of the historical similarities between certain elements of Japanese and other Asian cultures such as Chinese and Korean (part of the written language, for instance, maintains a closeness to Chinese, as will be demonstrated later) but also because it fails to account for the aspects of theatre traditions that must also constitute the culture. Even definitions of intercultural theatre are debated with good reason. The idea of intercultural hints at relationships between cultures, and especially allows for the possibility that more than two cultures can be brought together in a theatrical

[42] Ibid., p. 2.
[43] Patrice Pavis, *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*, trans. by Loren Kruger (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 4.

experience.[44] To some extent, the argument that will be progressed in this thesis relies on the destabilisation of the definitions of authenticity regarding the interchange of the ideas converging on the site of Japanese Shakespeare: as such, an avoidance of such binary positions suits well what is being expressed. The gradient of exchange and degree of exposure within a production was noted by Marvin Carlson in his essay *Brook and Mnouchkine: Passage to India?* In this, Carlson details a seven-level system of evaluation to analyse the extent of intercultural assimilation in a production. But, once again, the statements feel a little too sweeping in their description: Level 1, for example, describes a 'totally familiar tradition of regular performance, in its most regular form institutionalised, either by the profession or by the regulating culture'.[45] Even looking at only Shakespeare in the U.K. (which one must feel is part of this level) one struggles to fit productions into this description. For example, would Ed Hall's all male Propeller Shakespeare Company performances fit the description of 'totally familiar tradition of regular performance' in the U.K.'s contemporary traditional national theatre landscape? Or what about a five-person theatre-in-education production such as the excellent work of the Young Shakespeare Company? These productions often have an off-script narrator interacting with the audience and can regularly be found performing in a primary school hall. Does this type of work constitute the familiar tradition of regular performance? It could be argued that these two examples do not really challenge the core idea Carlson is expressing here, which is that of national cultures and exchange, especially regarding the contentious idea of using elements of Asian theatre. But if it is indeed national theatre traditions being evaluated, then we must ask about a British RSC production in Stratford-upon-Avon. For instance, the 2017 RSC production of *Julius Caesar* had the actors clothed in laurel wreaths and togas in what many would think of as the traditional attire for ancient Rome, and so appropriate for this particular play. Does this then become Step 2 on Carlson's scale where 'Foreign elements are assimilated into the tradition and absorbed by it' but where the audience 'are not challenged' by these

[44] Knowles, *Theatre & Interculturalism*, p. 4.
[45] Marvin Carlson, 'Brook and Mnouchkine: Passage to India?', in *The Intercultural Performance Reader*, ed. by Patrice Pavis (London: Routledge, 1996), pp. 79–93 (p. 82).

elements?[46] Admittedly, Carlson appears more interested in theatrical form and the traditions of performance art so it could be claimed that the more superficial aspects such as set and costume design do not constitute a true blending of cultures. Plus, we read elsewhere regarding the label of intercultural theatre that, 'Performances that match this description most readily involve artists from different parts of the world coming together.'[47] The 'most readily' here allows us to question the specific idea that it is the participants that make theatre intercultural; either way, this approach is a little short-sighted, for the introduction of intercultural aesthetics or linguistic aspects even in the smallest quantities can add enormously to the cultural texture of productions and, if done well, to any sort of intercultural meaning desired by the director, thereby challenging the audience (something that won't happen in Level 2). The debate, then, turns to some extent on how people now choose to define culture beyond only the national or within a particular theatrical tradition. With regards to this *Julius Caesar*, perhaps we can question whether there is something intercultural in a British show produced in 2017, written in the Early Modern world of the late sixteenth century, about Italian politics c. 44BC? Carlson is right to identify that there are varying levels of intercultural input in different productions; but it is too simplistic to attempt to grade them in this way as the variables are too numerous and too difficult to define in today's globalised world.

Bi-Qi Beatrice Lei's recent article regarding Asian Shakespeare argues that intercultural performances should be treated as a living organism, with the possibility of being more forcefully separated from the Shakespearean source material in the eyes of academics. She writes,

[46] Marvin Carlson, 'Brook and Mnouchkine: Passage to India?', pp. 79–93 (p. 82).
[47] Paul Rae, *A Concise Introduction to Intercultural Theatre* (Digital Theatre+), p. 4 <https://edu-digitaltheatreplus-com.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/content/guides/intercultural-theatre> [accessed 30 Oct 2021]

> To have an insightful and in-depth discussion of any Shakespearean production or adaptation, the theatre being discussed must be treated as a subject, as the center and not an offshoot of London.[48]

The idea of an intercultural performance as a living organism is a useful simile: it gives intercultural theatre, and in this context especially Asian Shakespeare performance, a life of its own. It hints at it being born from other living organisms, but also that a production subsequently has its own existence with its own needs to ensure it develops as an entity not reliant on those that beget its existence. This concept quite rightly advocates for a more balanced view when analysing intercultural performance; and the essay serves to remind us also that there is a huge variety of Asian Shakespeare productions that include shows that are rarely analysed by Western scholars. The example of the Japanese all-female musical revue group *Takarazuka* is a fitting choice to demonstrate the sheer variety of Shakespeare productions in Japan and Asia at large. However, one may feel that the incredible popularity of this performance group reduces the importance of Shakespeare as the source material: that is, the fame of this group in Japan, the popularity of their singing and dancing style, and the celebrity status of the star performers mean that whilst their Shakespeare productions may be popular, almost anything they do is revered by their many diehard fans. More importantly, though, Lei's point is that each intercultural Shakespeare performance should be viewed as an entity in and of itself with the Shakespearean source material not necessarily central to its identity as a performance. She tells us,

> Contrary to an Anglocentric mindset, performing Shakespeare in Asia does not necessarily suggest reverence, rivalry or deliberate revision — Shakespeare does not always act as an authority to be obeyed or overthrown, or a center to turn to or away from.[49]

[48] Bi-Qi Beatrice Lei, 'Decentering Asian Shakespeare: Approaching Intercultural Theatre as a Living Organism', pp. 63–77 (p. 74).
[49] Ibid., p. 64.

There is great value in attempting to rebalance the specific locus of examination; or, put another way, to reframe how we view intercultural Shakespeare performances in Asia, and indeed elsewhere around the world, so as to include other inputs that have contributed to the creation of a performance. Doing so should allow us to build in our minds a more detailed and, hopefully, a more accurate picture of the theatrical event overall. However, even if we agree that the binary positions of Shakespeare and a single foreign culture may be limiting, we should accept that any Asian Shakespeare performance did indeed choose a Shakespeare source to work from or with. That they did this deliberately is key, irrespective of whether we can be fully aware of the reasons why. The reasons may be complex and many, and they may well have nothing to do with the brilliance of Shakespeare in the way that many Western theatre practitioners hold. They may be more commercial, historical, personal, or cultural, or to do with a tiny piece of narrative, or a key piece casting, or an infinite number of other options. But, from all the various choices of source material available, Shakespeare was the one selected, at least in some form, for every Shakespeare performance in Asia; and to dismiss such as choice simply as 'why not?' ignores the importance of this decision. This dismissal limits any investigation into the possible reasons how and why Shakespeare has blended within a country with the commercial, historical, personal or any of the other potential reasons.[50] I agree that performing Shakespeare in Asia may not necessarily suggest reverence, rivalry or deliberate revision: but it does suggest Shakespeare, and, therefore, determining why this was the case remains of interest. In this way, the living organism simile and subsequent argument falls short of allowing us to make such investigations completely. Nevertheless, Lei is right to argue that an Anglocentric view often believes it can deduce the reasons by poring over Shakespeare and taking only a swift glance or two at the other national culture involved: the core of this present thesis is to challenge that view and show the ways in which it falls short to the detriment of many scholars and theatre practitioners in the West.

[50] Ibid., p. 74.

Therefore, whilst there is clearly a connection, the precise relationship between what we may term a national culture and intercultural theatre may not be instantly clear. What a study such as the present one helps to illuminate is whether Japanese translations and productions of Shakespeare as sites of intercultural theatre have contributed to a greater understanding of the cultures involved. We know that Shakespeare's plays were used after 1868 by certain Japanese theatre practitioners who had the specific aim of modernising Japanese theatre through a deeper appreciation of Western theatre. With hindsight, was this appreciation truly achieved? Similarly, when we think of the more recent productions famously exported from Japan, such as the already mentioned *NINAGAWA Macbeth* that premiered in the U.K. in Edinburgh in 1985 and returned to the Barbican more recently in 2017, we recall that some productions have been set in what many perceive to be a strikingly Japanese cultural environ, such as the Azuchi-Momoyama Era (1568–1603). But have such productions really shone any light on Japanese culture for the Western audiences watching in Edinburgh or London? Indeed, should this be a purpose of such intercultural theatre? Or are the criticisms from scholars such as Dennis Kennedy, who has referred to Ninagawa's 'japaning of Shakespeare' as 'incomplete and illusory' accurate?[51] If we believe such criticism are astute in their depiction of such effects, how much does this matter when we are judging the quality of an intercultural theatre production? Further to this, if some sort of cultural education is part of the purpose of intercultural theatre, there must be a debate regarding whose responsibility is it to ensure this occurs. This thesis, therefore, challenges some of ideas around interculturalism contained Pavis' Hourglass notion, with the claim that the source culture of 'authentic' Shakespeare is far more fluid than many believe, and possibly even non-existent.[52]

James R. Brandon has described three types of Shakespeare in Japan, including the canonical, the indigenous (or localised) and the intercultural. Of this last form he writes, 'Intercultural productions of

[51] Dennis Kennedy, *Looking at Shakespeare: A Visual History of Twentieth-Century Performance*, 2nd edn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 317.
[52] Pavis, *Theatre at the Crossroads of Culture*, p. 4

Shakespeare in Asia can take a number of forms, but they all appeal to audiences by honouring local and often theatrical traditions.' He then cites some specifically Japanese examples such as a *bunraku* puppet production of *Hamlet* in 1956 and the famous *kyogen* actor Mansaku Nomura playing Falstaff in an adaptation of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* entitled *The Braggart Samurai* in 1991.[53] It is not entirely clear what Brandon means by the term 'honouring' beyond the idea of inclusion, which he also suggests is not necessarily sufficient when it comes to people. He asserts that 'Productions are not necessarily intercultural, in my sense of the term, just because Asians and non-Asians work together.'[54] If it is enough to insert other cultural elements into a foreign source material for a production to be considered truly intercultural, then we may be forgiven for believing that there are two forms of Shakespeare in Japan, the canonical and the localised, and both are forms of intercultural theatre. The concept of honouring cultural and theatrical traditions remains problematic for the reasons regarding authenticity that we have already begun to explore. As such, it may not be accurate to speak of balancing authenticity in any theatrical exchange within an intercultural context in the traditional ways. This echoes Kennedy's idea of 'Shakespearean orientalism' which is the controversial 'importation of eastern modalities into Shakespeare performance in the west'.[55]

With the idea of authority challenged, we may have to search for a new model to describe and examine intercultural performance in an effective way, even with the expectation that any new model or method will also lack in some way due to the impossibility of an encompassing definition. The concept of intercultural theatre and its concerns will be revisited later, yet at this stage one key point should be borne in mind: whilst it is essential to be sensitive to the cultural positions being explored in any theatrical event, as well as to the danger of uncritical generalisations, being overly fearful of informed

[53] James R. Brandon, 'Other Shakespeares in Asia — an Overview', in *Re-Playing Shakespeare in Asia*, ed. by Poonam Trivedi and Minami Ryuta (Oxford: Routledge, 2010), pp. 21–41 (p. 32).
[54] Ibid., p. 35.
[55] Dennis Kennedy, 'Afterword: Shakespearean Orientalism', in *Foreign Shakespeare: Contemporary Performance* ed. by Dennis Kennedy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 290–303 (p. 294).

generalisations ends finally with being completely unable to justify any analysis of what can be seen as different. Provided that we are critical with our evidence and cautious in our conclusions, we stand to gain more than we risk losing by identifying and analysing culture and intercultural theatre in this way.

Shakespeare in Japan — the scholarship so far

Japan has for the past few decades been a country of interest to Shakespeare scholars, although as Poonam Trivedi writes, whilst scholars in theatre departments in the USA began exploring Asian Shakespeare in the 1950s, it was the popularity of the films of Akira Kurosawa (1910–1998), especially *Kumonosu–jo (Throne of Blood*) in 1957 that prompted English departments to take real notice of intercultural Shakespeare.[56] Theatre directors such as Yukio Ninagawa, Tadashi Suzuki (b. 1939), and Noda Hideki (b. 1955) have become widely known in the West; they have, through producing relationships with Western counterparties, brought their shows to the U.K. on numerous occasions since 1980s. The impact of Ninagawa's work on the U.K. was highlighted especially after his death, when a new production of *NINAGAWA Macbeth* was brought to the Barbican in 2017 in part as an homage to the influential director international career.

In the 1990s and early 2000s texts such as *Shakespeare in Japan, Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage,* and *Performing Shakespeare in Japan* laid a firm foundation for the category of Japanese Shakespeare scholarship and associated interests.[57] These remain valuable texts despite now — as Rosalind Jane Fielding tells us — seeming a little dated in parts and perhaps a little narrow in focus.[58] With individual chapters often looking at a particular individual or production, or at a certain idea such as

[56] Poonam Trivedi, 'Re-Playing Shakespeare in Asia: An Introduction', in *Re-Playing Shakespeare in Asia*, ed. by Poonam Trivedi and Minami Ryuta (Oxford: Routledge, 2010), pp. 1–20 (p. 4).
[57] *Performing Shakespeare in Japan* ed. by Minami Ryuta, Ian Carruthers and John Gillies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan; Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage*, ed. by Takashi Sasayama, J. R. Mulryne, and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).
[58] Rosalind Fielding, 'Embodying Dialogue: Hybridity and Identity in Japanese and British Shakespeare Productions' (Unpublished doctorate thesis, University of Birmingham, 2018), p. 4.

types of translation, or period of history, they are useful in establishing the theories that have become prevalent since. Dennis Kennedy included Andrea J. Nouryeh's essay 'Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage' in his editing of *Foreign Shakespeare: Contemporary Performance*.[59] Just over a decade later, in *Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance* edited by Dennis Kennedy and Yong Li Lan, we find four chapters that deal explicitly with Japan.[60] One can find commentary on Japanese theatre and Shakespeare from theatre practitioners in books such as John Russell Brown's *New Sites for Shakespeare: Theatre, the Audience and Asia.* He noticed, for instance, the concept of ceremony in a country such as Japan and convincingly suggested how this can give performances more expression in certain circumstances.[61] The 1995 the book *Hamlet and Japan,* edited by Yoshiko Uéno, was published as part of The Hamlet Collection. It is striking that most of these essays are written by Japanese scholars, offering us insight into how these academics have thought about *Hamlet*, but not particularly offering insights into anything we would term Japanese *Hamlet*. However, the final few essays are revealing in this regard, with details such as how the now celebrated female translator, Kazuko Matsuoka, responded to the numerous productions of *Hamlet* (seventeen in total, including six productions from abroad) that played in Tokyo in 1990.[62]

Narrowing the focus to Japanese theatre, some space has been allotted to the study of Shakespeare. *The Japanese Theatre: from Shamanistic Ritual to Contemporary Pluralism* details the history of Japanese theatre helping the reader understand briefly where, when and how Shakespeare's drama fits in through the work of practitioners such as Tsubouchi Shôyô and another famous director of

[59] Andrea J. Nouryeh,'Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage', in *Foreign Shakespeare: Contemporary Performance*, ed. by Dennis Kennedy (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp. 254–70.
[60] *Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance*, ed. by Dennis Kennedy and Yong Li Lan (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010).
[61] Brown, *New Sites for Shakespeare: Theatre, the Audience and Asia*, p. 55.
[62] Kazuko Matsuoka, 'Metamorphosis of Hamlet in Tokyo', in *Hamlet and Japan*, ed. by Yoshiko Uéno (New York: AMS Press, 1995), pp. 227–38.

the time, Kaoru Osanai (1881–1928).[63] Brian Powell's comprehensive book *Japan's Modern Theatre: a Century of Continuity and Change* expands on his earlier paper detailing the famous Tsukiji Little Theatre company of the Meiji period (run by Kaoru Osanai) and their relationship with Western dramas such as the plays of Shakespeare.[64] Daniel Gallimore and Ryuta Minami have outlined what they perceive as the seven stages of Shakespeare reception in Japan, starting with 'prehistory' and ending with 'reinvention', which is a comprehensible system of demarcation, despite the undoubted overlaps that the authors themselves acknowledge.[65]

Alexander C. Y. Huang's chapter on Ninagawa is included in *Great Shakespearean XVIII* alongside celebrated Western directors held in esteem by many in the U.K. such as Peter Brook and Peter Hall. This again suggests how strongly felt is Ninagawa's presence in the world of Western Shakespeare.[66] Ninagawa's productions have stimulated further examination from academics such as Jon M. Brokering and theatre practitioners such as Conor Hanratty who have made astute comments on the style of Ninagawa's work, drawing attention especially to the exceptional aesthetic production values.[67] There is a chapter dedicated to Ninagawa in *The Routledge Companion to Directors' Shakespeare* that expounds upon his life and work: here Shoichiro Kawai denies Kennedy's accusation of Ninagawa's 'japaning' of his productions especially for Western audiences, reminding us that Ninagawa used iconic Japanese cultural images and stage settings in his work that only played in Japan.[68] Arthur Horowitz dedicates a chapter to Ninagawa's work on *The Tempest* staged in 1988 suggesting that the framing

[63] Benito Ortolani, *Japanese Theatre: From Shamanistic Ritual to Contemporary Pluralism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), pp. 244–247.
[64] Brian Powell, *Japan's Modern Theatre: A Century of Change and Continuity* (Oxford: Routledge, 2002).
[65] Daniel Gallimore and Minami Ryuta, 'Seven Stages of Shakespeare Reception', in *A History of Japanese Theatre*, ed. by Jonah Salz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 484–96.
[66] Alexander C. Y. Huang, 'Yukio Ninagawa', in *Great Shakespeareans XVIII: Brook, Hall, Ninagawa, Lepage*, ed. by Peter Holland (London: Bloomsbury, 2013), pp. 79–112.
[67] Jon M. Brokering, 'Ninagawa Yukio's Intercultural "Hamlet": Parsing Japanese Iconography', *Asian Theatre Journal*, 24 (2007), 370–396; Conor Hanratty, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Yukio Ninagawa* (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2020). Ebook.
[68] Shoichiro Kawai, 'Yukio Ninagawa', in *The Routledge Companion to Directors' Shakespeare*, ed. by John Russell Brown (New York: Routledge, 2008), pp. 269–83 (p. 274). Ebook.

device of the shattered mirrors which the director incorporated 'reflects and refracts' the scattered tapestry of 'adaptation, transformation, distillation and transmutation' of Shakespeare's production history in Japan.[69]

Certain scholars have focused on the prolific Shakespearean translator and theatre practitioner of the Meiji period, Tsubouchi Shôyô, exploring his use of Shakespeare in academia and in the reforming of traditional Japanese theatre such as *kabuki* and *noh*.[70] Daniel Gallimore is at the forefront of this type of scholarship in English, and the present author acknowledges the debt owed to Gallimore's comprehensive work, especially regarding his translations of Japanese texts.[71] His book *Sounding like Shakespeare: a Study in Prosody of Four Japanese Translations of A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a rare instance of the valuable type of close reading that a fully bi-lingual scholar can perform, and the book yields interesting insights: the comparison of translations within this present thesis is a humble attempt by a much poorer Japanese linguist to examine a fraction of text in a similar way, albeit it without focusing on the sound of the language to any real degree.[72] Gallimore's recent article *Canonising Shakespeare in 1920s Japan: Tsubouchi Shôyô and the Translator's Choice* goes some way towards helping us understand how Shôyô

[69] Arthur Horowitz, 'The No Tempest: Yukio Ninagawa, 1988', in *Prospero's "True Preservers": Peter Brook, Yukio Ninagawa, and Giorgio Strehler: Twentieth-Century Directors Approach Shakespeare's the Tempest*, (London: Associated University Presses, 2004), pp. 113–142 (p. 141).
[70] James Brandon, 'Shakespeare in Kabuki', in *Performing Shakespeare in Japan*, ed. by Minami Ryuta, Ian Carruthers, and John Gillies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 33–51; Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, pp. 1-29; Brian Powell, 'One Man's *Hamlet* in 1911 Japan: The Bungei Kyokai Production in the Imperial Theatre', in *Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage*, ed. by Takashi Sasayama, J. R. Mulryne, and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 38–52; J. Thomas Rimer, *Towards a Modern Japanese Theatre: Kishida Kunio* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1974), pp. 16–27.
[71] Daniel Gallimore, 'Shôyô, Sôseki, and Shakespeare: Translations of Three Key Texts', *Japan Women's University Faculty of Humanities Journal*, 59 (2010), 41–61; Daniel Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi Shôyô and the Beauty of Shakespeare Translation in 1900s Japan', in *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 13.28 (2016), 69–85 <https://doi.org/10.1515/mstap-2016-0006>; Daniel Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi, Dryden and Global Shakespeare', *Alicante Journal of English Studies*, 25 (2012), 81–96 <https://doi.org/10.14198/raei.2012.25.07>; Daniel Gallimore and Minami Ryuta, 'Seven Stages of Shakespeare Reception', in *A History of Japanese Theatre*, ed. by Jonah Salz (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), pp. 484–96.
[72] Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream.*

had come to feel about Shakespeare after he had completed his translations.[73] Yukari Yoshihara, staying within the Meiji period, has written on Shakespeare's texts in Japan, attempting to show how *The Merchant of Venice* was used to forge a type of Japanese national identity in a time of distinct industrial and political change. Yoshihara tells us that,

> The reception of Shakespeare's works contributed, in its small way, to the construction of the modern Japanese nation-state, for it offered opportunities to invent an imaginary Japaneseness through partial and often mutually contradictory identification with and differentiation from the west, as represented by Shakespeare.[74]

Aragon Quinn has taken *Julius Caesar* and focused on how the Meiji period political influences exerted themselves on two translations, one from Shôyô and another from Keizô Kawashima. Quinn's paper demonstrates how two interpretations of the same source play can conflict with each other with regards to interpretation of a political message. Perhaps most interesting of all is the conclusion of just how useful and relevant a Shakespeare text was at this time: he writes of the two translations that, 'their diametrically opposed interpretations are both inscribed in the source text and manifest themselves in ways that address political and historical conditions specific to the early Meiji period (1868–1912).'[75] Writing of Shôyô's 1907 staging of *Hamlet*, Brian Powell informs us that for this event the play was performed with all of the soliloquies included, which had not happened in Japan until that point. Of the reception of this production Powell tells us,

[73] Daniel Gallimore, 'Canonising Shakespeare in 1920s Japan', *Critical Survey*, 33.1 (2021), 8–22 <https://doi.org/10.3167/cs.2021.330102>
[74] Yukari Yoshihara, 'Japan as "Half Civilized": An Early Adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and Japan's Construction of its National Image in the Late Nineteenth Century', in *Performing Shakespeare in Japan*, ed. by Minami Ryuta, Ian Carruthers, and John Gillies (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 21–32 (p. 21).
[75] Aragorn Quinn, 'Political Theatre: "The Rise and Fall of Rome and the Sword of Freedom", Two Translations Of "Julius Caesar" in Meiji Japan by Kawashima Keizô and Tsubouchi Shôyô', *Asian Theatre Journal*, 28 (2011), 168–183 (p. 168).

> Hamlet's musing on his own individual inner being and his metaphysical linking of this with the workings of an active godhead were strikingly modern to nineteenth — and early twentieth — century Japanese.[76]

This concept is ripe for further exploration. Shakespeare as a modernising force in Japan is a very interesting idea and something to which this thesis will return in more detail. A. Horie-Webber comprehensively accounts for the influence of Tusbouchi Shôyô's *Bungei Kyokai* (Literary Society) at Waseda University within the *shingeki* (new theatre) movement born during the Meiji period. Horie-Webber is clear regarding the influence of the society's 1911 production of *Hamlet,* which is suggested as being the first full length production of Shakespeare in translation rather than adaptation.[77]

Western Shakespeare academics teaching at universities in Japan, such as Peter Milward and Thomas Dabbs, have highlighted elements such as how they teach the plays to students, comparing Shakespeare's reception to other writers, and the capacity for the teaching of morality through the plays.[78] Shakespeare in Japan has also been explored in literature, with several scholars in the Meiji Period and afterwards writing novels that were inspired by Shakespeare's plays. Hiroshi Izubuchi writes about *The Diary of Claudius* (*Kurodiasu no Nikki*) by Naoya Shiga (1883–1971), and *The New Hamlet* (*Shin Hamuretto*) by Osamu Dazai (1909–48) which although technically a play, the author suggested should be read as a novel. Alongside these, he details some other short stories and novels that treat Hamlet as a side figure in their plot.[79] Other literary adaptations have been critiqued with insightful results. More recently Mori Nakatani found that Hideo Kobayashi's revisions of his novella *Ophelia's Will* revealed

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[76] Powell, 'One Man's *Hamlet* in 1911 Japan: The Bungei Kyokai Production in the Imperial Theatre', pp. 38–52 (p. 44).
[77] A. Horie-Webber, 'The Modernisation of Japanese Theatre', in *Modern Japan: Aspects of History, Literature and Society*, ed. by W. G. Beasley (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1975), pp. 147–65.
[78] Thomas Dabbs, 'Fusion of Horizons: Teaching Shakespeare in Japan', *Language and Culture Studies*, 22 (1996), 25-38; Peter Milward, 'Teaching Shakespeare in Japan', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 25 (1974), 228–233 <https://doi.org/10.2307/2868465>
[79] Hiroshi Izubuchi, 'A Hamlet of Our Own: Some Japanese Adaptations', in *Hamlet and Japan*, ed. by Yoshiko Uéno (New York: AMS Press, 1995), pp. 187–204.

significant changes in how this writer interpreted Shakespeare.[80] Yoshiko Kawachi has detailed the different attempts to novelise *Hamlet* during the Meiji period, concluding with an appreciation of the sizeable impact the play had on literature in Japan as well as theatre. She writes, 'I consider the process of its growing popularity is roughly parallel to the modernization of Japanese literature as well as that of Japanese theatre.'[81] This sentiment has echoes of Toshio Kawatake's larger idea, quoted by Yoshiko Uéno, that 'the history of importing *Hamlet* is nothing but an epitome of the modernization of Japan'.[82]

Along with literature that focuses on the generalised genre of Japanese Shakespeare, that which examines the key players throughout its history, and that which sheds light on the reception of Shakespeare during the Meiji era, there are two more core areas of investigation that are worth mentioning briefly. The first is the significant focus on how Shakespeare fits into extant Japanese theatre forms such as *kabuki*, *noh* and *bunraku*. For example, James Brandon has written extensively on *kabuki* and *noh*, and uses this detailed knowledge to reflect on how such genres of theatre can accommodate Shakespeare's work, including looking at the most obvious comparison between the boy players of Shakespeare's time and the *onnagata* (males who perform female roles) that are still used in *kabuki* to this day.[83] Books such as *Transvestism and the Onnagata Traditions in Shakespeare and Kabuki* interrogate the similarities, although, as has been noted, the collected essays are accounts mostly of Elizabethan theatre practices rather than Shakespeare specifically.[84] In what may be viewed as a statement prescient to

[80] Mori Nakatani, 'The Shifting Appreciation of "Hamlet" in its Japanese Novelizations: Hideo Kobayashi's "Ophelia's Will" and its Revisions', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 21.36 (2020), 69-83 <http://dx.doi.org/10.18778/2083-8530.21.05>
[81] Yoshiko Kawachi, '*Hamlet* and Japanese Men of Letters', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 14.29 (2016), 123–35 (p. 134) <https://doi.org/10.1515/mstap-2016-0020>
[82] Yoshiko Uéno, 'Introduction', in *Hamlet and Japan*, ed. by Yoshiko Uéno (New York: AMS Press, 1995), pp. iv-xiii (p. ix).
[83] James R. Brandon, 'Kabuki and Shakespeare: Balancing Yin and Yang', *TDR*, 43 (1999), 15–53; James R. Brandon, 'Reflections on the Onnagata', *Asian Theatre Journal*, 29 (2012), 122–125. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/23359548> [accessed 2 March 2020]; Brandon, 'Other Shakespeares in Asia — an Overview', pp. 21–41 (p. 24).
[84] *Transvestism and the Onnagata Traditions in Shakespeare and Kabuki*, ed. by Minoru Fujita and Michael Shapiro (Kent: Global Oriental, 2006).

the wider debate on gender and rights that has erupted in the U.K. and elsewhere in the past few years, Yoko Takakuwa concludes her 1998 essay on gendered identity in Shakespeare and *kabuki* thus:

> Both the onnagata and the boy actor bring into relief the fictionality of gendered identity, which can be reproduced *citationally* even by the 'opposite' sex, and thus, open up radical possibilities of *fictioning* our own identity of 'man' or 'woman', by challenging the ideological meaning of masculinity or femininity.[85]

The work of Leonard Pronko and of Samuel Leiter must also be mentioned here. The collection of essays edited by Pronko and Minoru Fujita, *Shakespeare East and West,* although written in the mid-1990s, is still valuable in helping readers appreciate how Shakespeare in performance was developing in Asia during this time.[86] Similarly, Samuel Leiter has written on how *kabuki* stars began to perform in Shakespeare adaptations and other productions from originally foreign source material during the *shingeki* period.[87] Exploring a *noh* adaptation of *King Lear,* Ken Takiguchi argues that a specific translation selected can, in certain circumstance, exert a powerful influence on a production, sometimes even in tension with the performance style. He tells us of this production that, 'even when incorporated into the Noh aesthetics, the text created the impression of Western-oriented Shingeki rather than Noh performance.'[88] Akiko Sano touches on interesting ideas regarding Japanese translation: for instance, she details how certain translators use the more masculine forms of the Japanese language for the speech of female characters who are normally seen as particularly strong such as Queen Margaret and Lady Macbeth, and so points to the linguistic and dramatic advantages and disadvantages that result.[89] Other scholars have paid particular attention to the recent work of Kazuko Matsuoka who has become known

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[85] Yoko Takakuwa, 'The Performance of Gendered Identity in Shakespeare and Kabuki', in *Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage*, ed. by Takashi Sasayama, J. R. Mulryne, and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 197–213 (p. 212).
[86] *Shakespeare East and West*, ed. by Minoru Fujita and Leonard C. Pronko (Oxford: Routledge, 1996).
[87] Samuel L. Leiter, *Kabuki at the Crossroads Years of Crisis, 1952–1965* (Leiden: Global Oriental, 2013).
[88] Ken Takiguchi, 'Translating Canons: Shakespeare on the Noh Stage', *Shakespeare*, 9 (2013), 448–61 (p. 459).
[89] Akiko Sano, 'Shakespeare Translation in Japan: 1868–1998', *Ilha do Desterro A Journal of English Language, Literatures in English and Cultural Studies*, 36 (1999), 337-369 (pp. 363–365).

for a more feminist approach to translating Shakespeare in Japan, with Hiroyuki Kondo calling Matsuoka's work a 'feminist corrective to the previous masculine translations'.[90]

This scholarship does much to enlighten readers on the fascinating ways in which Shakespeare in Japan is formulated on the page and stage. However, it does less to further our understanding of the reasons why Shakespeare has stimulated such a powerful response in Japanese audiences since the introduction of his work. One recurring argument is that there are similarities in the traditional genres of Japanese theatre and Shakespeare's contemporary theatre, thereby allowing for a transplantation that appears relatively simple, even if it cannot be described as easy. Within the first of their seven stages of Shakespeare reception, Gallimore and Minami tell us of a certain plot line in Japanese drama that was strikingly similar to Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. They are adamant that this is purely coincidental and not a result of any exposure to Shakespeare: therefore we may be tempted to believe that the theatrical forms of performance in Japan were similarly suited to a story of such tragedy, confirming to a larger extent the similarities in how the dramatic was expressed in the Early Modern periods of both counties.[91] There are certain historical circumstances that reinforce the potential for similarity in this way: for instance, although the time periods do not overlap exactly, women were banned from performing on stage in Japan between 1629–1891: this was largely due to the connection between female actors and prostitution, and so ensured that all-male *kabuki* and *noh* companies became the norm. Initially, boy actors, called *wakashu*, were employed to take the female roles, much like in Shakespeare's day; but as Ayako Kano informs us, these boy actors were just as likely to cause scandals of a similarly sexual nature, so were soon replaced by older male actors who came to specialise in acting female roles (*onnagata*).[92] Beyond these ideas, little is written about why Shakespeare was and remains so popular, at least not a

[90] Hiroyuki Kondo, 'Matsuoka's Japanese Translation of Shakespeare: A Feminist Revision', *Joint English Laboratory, Tokyo Gakugei University*, 39 (2010), 3–18 (p. 7).
[91] Gallimore and Minami, 'Seven Stages of Shakespeare Reception', pp. 484–96 (p. 486).
[92] Ayako Kano, *Acting Like a Woman in Modern Japan: Theater, Gender and Nationalism* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001), p. 5.

huge amount is written in English. As we have begun to unpack, perhaps this is understandable. There is sometimes an assumption in the West that Shakespeare's universal appeal transcends cultural and linguistic barriers (although, as Kennedy informs us, a large part of the globe does not study or perform Shakespeare with any degree of enthusiasm, such as significant portions of the Middle East and Africa).[93] One claim is that it is the universal humanity found in his plays that makes him so popular, irrespective of the language and country in which his work is performed. Although eloquently challenging and amending the idea of Shakespeare's universality, Kiernan Ryan begins his book by informing the reader why his argument is necessary: 'The grip of this explanation on the minds of most students, teachers and lovers of Shakespeare across the globe remains, for want of a more compelling reason, tenacious to this day.'[94] If Shakespeare did indeed invent the human, as Harold Bloom so boldly claims, then we should expect the impact of his plays in translation to be felt on humans of all nationalities in all countries around the world.[95] Yet, by exploring more deeply the target culture of a translated play we can gain significant insight into how a Japanese audience may have received his work initially and may continue to do so to this day. This target culture must certainly include the theatrical traditions already present, but also the social, religious and even anthropological and linguistic aspects of a society: by understanding how these component parts influence the values and beliefs of Japanese theatre practitioners and a Japanese audience it becomes easier to see how playing Shakespeare in a culture such as Japan may heighten the power of the plays by their immediate relevance to society being increased. In some ways, this position challenges Jan Kott's suggestion that Shakespeare is our contemporary.[96] Inclining towards the conversations stimulated by Laura Bohannan's conclusions in her essay *Shakespeare in the Bush*, my contention is that certain cultural differences have a specific influence on the appreciation of Shakespeare, and that it is through these differences in key areas that other cultures may be closer to Shakespeare's

[93] Kennedy, 'Afterword: Shakespeare Orientalism', pp. 290–303 (p. 290).
[94] Kiernan Ryan, *Shakespeare's Universality: Here's Fine Revolution* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), p. x.
[95] Harold Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (London: Fourth Estate Ltd, 1999).
[96] Jan Kott, *Shakespeare Our Contemporary*, trans. by Boleslaw Taborski, 2nd edn (London: Methuen, 1967).

contemporary world than we are now in the twenty-first century West.[97] Much of the relevant scholarship on Shakespeare in Japan has focused on the history of Shakespeare in Japan, the relationship between Shakespeare and Japanese theatre, and, separately, between Japanese theatre and Japanese culture: this is undoubtably valuable work, yet along with this I propose examining the relationship between Shakespeare's plays and their presentation within Japanese culture in a more direct fashion. This will result also in a clearer and more revealing framework through which to examine intercultural theatre, as will be shown.

[97] Laura Bohannan, 'Shakespeare in the Bush: An American Anthropologist Set out to Study the Tiv of West Africa and Was Taught the True Meaning of *Hamlet*', *Natural History*, 75 (1966), 28–33.

CHAPTER ONE

Translation – what's the point?

With translation in its various guises central to many Japanese Shakespeare studies, it is useful to pause at this point to ask what may at first seem like an obvious question: what exactly is the point of translating Shakespeare into another language? Our answer will offer us greater insight into the challenges and the resulting impact of the work of Japanese translators. We are told over and over by many academics working in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century of the exceptional quality of Shakespeare's language. Printed on the cover of Frank Kermode's *Shakespeare's Language* is the statement that 'his words, Shakespeare's revolutionary use of language is where the true power of his plays lies'. Russ McDonald, in *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language,* tells us that 'his control of language — more than, plot, characterization, theme — gives his work its distinctive qualities and underwrites his demonstrated theatrical sovereignty'.[1] Any attempt to translate a Shakespeare text into a different language, then, would surely lose a key part of what makes his work so powerful. If this is the case, is there any point in attempting to translate rather than adapt, or is the resulting loss so great that there can be no worthwhile compensation?

There exists a comprehensive body of literature on translation and translation theory. Whilst it would be wonderful to believe that a fascination with international Shakespeare has been the driver for this interest, the commercial importance of this subject in today's global economy has helped increase this field of study over the past few decades. There is fascinating research, for example, that looks at how branding may be lost in translation, the issues that can arise within multinational companies, and the changing role of the translator in business setting.[2] Yet along with the commercial world, we find the

[1] Frank Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language* (London: Penguin, 2000), back cover; Russ McDonald, *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), p. 1.
[2] John Blenkinsopp and Maryam Shademan-Pajouh, 'Lost in Translation? Culture, Language and the Role of the Translator in International Business', *Critical Perspectives on International Business,* 6 (2010), 38–52; Rebecca Lowery, 'Speaking Your Customer's Language', *Manager: British Journal of Administrative Management, (*2010), 18–19; Padma Nagappan, 'For Brands Moving to Asia, Ensuring Sizing Isn't Lost in Translation', *Apparel*

range of approaches and the evolution of the key ideas in translation theories more generally have led to numerous collected volumes such as *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies* and useful introductions such as the *Critical Introduction to Translation Studies*, and Matthew Reynolds' *Translation: A Very Short Introduction*.[3] These serve to outline lightly the movement from early examiners of the linguistics of translation such as Eugene Nida and Russell Taber, Roman Jakobson and George Steiner, through to the more modern appreciation of the importance of culture in these studies, where the likes of Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere have done much to forward our thinking.[4] Bassnett, of course, has helped us understand the further layers required in the more complex area of translating texts for theatrical performance; although it has been noted that her approach to translating dramatic texts has altered over her career, as described by Paula Baldwin Lind, who writes that Bassnett's recent work has suggested leaving some of the integration of the performance signs in a text to the director and actors themselves.[5]

Regarding translating Shakespeare into Japanese there are some very valuable resources. Hisae Niki's excellent 1984 book *Shakespeare Translation in Japanese Culture* is informative as a full-length history in English of the challenges and success stories of translating Shakespeare in Japan, including a

Magazine, 53 (2012), 43–45 <https://risnews.com/brands-moving-asia-ensuring-sizing-isnt-lost-translation> [accessed 30 Oct 2021]; Rebecca Piekkari and others, 'Translation Behaviour: An Exploratory Study within a Service Multinational', *International Business Review*, 22 (2013), 771–83 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ibusrev.2012.12.004>

[3] Jean Boase-Beier, *Critical Introduction to Translation Studies* (London: Continuum, 2011); Carmen Millán and Francesca Bartrina, *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies* (London: Routledge, 2013); Matthew Reynolds, *Translation: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[4] Susan Bassnett, 'Still Trapped in the Labyrinth: Further Reflections on Translations and Theatre', in *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation*, ed. by Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1998); Susan Bassnett, *Translation* (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2014); Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere, *Constructing Cultures: Essays on Literary Translation* (Clevedon: Multilingual matters, 1998); Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', pp. 232–39; Eugene Albert Nida and Charles Russell Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation* (Leiden: E. J. Brill for the United Bibles Societies, 1969); George Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1975).

[5] Paula Baldwin Lind, 'Translating Shakespeare, Translating Culture: Text, Paratext, and the Challenges of Recreating Cultural Meanings in Text and on Stage', *Studia Litteraria Universitatis Iagellonicae Cracoviensis*, 13 (2018), 219–35 (p. 220).

valuable chapter on the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy in the country.[6] Similarly, Friederike von Schwerin-High's full length examination of Shakespeare's early reception and translation in Germany and Japan is enlightening and helps us understand to a greater depth the world into which Shakespeare's work was imported.[7] This book focuses primarily on different translations of *The Tempest*, but looks in detail at translations from Shôyô, Odashima and Fukuda in a way not entirely dissimilar to the approach of Chapter Four of this thesis. In addition, there have been plenty of articles and chapters dedicated to the subject, where the challenges of translating into Japanese and the consequent strategies used by translators have been articulated. Along with the plentiful work of Daniel Gallimore detailed above, other scholars such as Akiko Sano, Tetsuo Anzai, Miki Eglinton, Ted Motohashi, Andre Haag, Alexander C. Y. Huang, Beverley Curran, and Jessica Chiba have all made significant contributions.[8] Recently, although not its primary focus, Alexa Alice Joubin's *Shakespeare in East Asia* has looked at how translations of Shakespeare fit into the three approaches that evolved historically within the genre of Japanese Shakespeare: namely, localisation and assimilation, followed by using Shakespeare as a cultural catalyst, and followed, finally, by the fusion approach.[9] Another interesting recent addition to the field has been the book *Re-Imagining Shakespeare in Contemporary Japan: A Selection of Japanese Theatrical*

[6] Hisae Niki, *Shakespeare Translation in Japanese Culture* (Tokyo: Kenseisha, 1984), pp. 98–111.
[7] Friederike Von Schwerin-High, *Shakespeare, Reception and Translation: Germany and Japan* (London: Continuum, 2004).
[8] Akiko Sano, 'Shakespeare Translation in Japan: 1868–1998'; Tetsuo Anzai, 'Directing *King Lear* in Japanese Translation', in *Shakespeare and the Japanese Stage*, ed. by Takashi Sasayama, J. R. Mulryne, and Margaret Shewring (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), pp. 124–137; Jessica Chiba, 'Lost and Found in Translation: Hybridity in Kurosawa's *Ran*', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 36.4 (2018), 599–633 <https://doi.org/10.1353/shb.2018.0059>; Beverley Curran, 'Invisible Indigeneity: First Nations and Aboriginal Theatre in Japanese Translation and Performance', *Theatre Journal* (Washington, D.C.), 59 (2007), 449–65; Beverley Curran, *Theatre Translation Theory and Performance in Contemporary Japan: Native Voices, Foreign Bodies* (Oxford: Routledge, 2014); Mika Eglinton, '"Thou Art Translated": Remapping Hideki Noda and Satoshi Miyagi's a Midsummer Night's Dream in Post-March 11 Japan', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 14 (2016), 51–72; Andre Haag, 'Maruyama Masao and Kato Shuichi on Translation and Japanese Modernity', ed. by Indra Levy (Abington: Routledge, 2011), pp. 15–43; Alexander C. Y. Huang, 'Shakespeare and Translation', in *The Edinburgh Companion to Shakespeare and the Arts*, ed. by Mark Thornton Burnett, Adrian Streete, and Ramona Wray (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), pp. 68–87; Ted Motohashi, '"I Saw Othello's Visage in His Mind", or "White Mask, Black Handkerchif": Satoshi Miyagi's Mugen-Noh Othello and Translation Theory', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 14 (2016), 43–50.
[9] Alexa Alice Joubin, *Shakespeare and East Asia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2021), pp. 29–31.

Adaptations of Shakespeare edited by Tetsuhito Motoyama, Rosalind Fielding, and Fumiaki Konno.[10] This fascinating book translates back into English certain Japanese adaptations of Shakespeare's plays, illuminating for non-Japanese speakers how some theatre companies in Japan have chosen to tell the stories contained within Shakespeare's famous narratives.

But to return to the question posed here: what exactly is the point of attempting to translate a playwright such as Shakespeare? Upon greater examination, perhaps there is a common thread that joins all attempts to move a text into the language of another nation. Roman Jakobson's seminal work offers a valuable distinction between the different types of translation highlighting interlingual translation — that is, translation into the languages of other nations — as the interpretation of verbal signs by means of another language.[11] Jakobson's choice of words is informative, as he suggests that the purpose is to interpret the signs rather than the more concrete elements to which the signs point. In many ways this seems a straightforward and revealing definition: it suggests that the role of the translator is to create a text as aligned as possible to the original linguistic codes. More than merely obvious, we may even think this an admirable definition, for straying too far from the original words may be said to be no longer translation. However, it becomes clear with only a little thought that linguistic equivalence is practically impossible in many circumstances not only due to the difference in languages, but also due to the differences in culture. We may also assume that the more distant the target culture from the source culture within which the original material was created, the greater the difference in most regards. The task, then, is really an act of what we could perhaps call 'cultural connecting' rather than merely linguistic matching. Of course, how the words are used is still key. Matthew Reynolds reminds us of J. C. Catford's suggestion that a translator should find the words that are interchangeable in a given situation and argues

[10] *Re-Imagining Shakespeare in Contemporary Japan: A Selection of Japanese Theatrical Adaptations of Shakespeare*, ed. by Tetsuhito Motoyama, Rosalind Fielding, and Fumiaki Konno (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021).
[11] Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', pp. 232–39.

that, 'This way of looking at translation helps us see how to handle all the grammatical divergences which, even more than differences between words, prevent languages from neatly lining up.'[12]

Useful as this may be in liberating a translator to some extent, the next challenge is to determine what the given situation is, especially when translating for the theatre. This is even more pressing when a translator is attempting to translate from verse drama such as Shakespeare. Does the situation refer to the original source material, and therefore if the original is in verse, then the verse must remain part of it, at least to some extent? Or does it refer to the specifics of the character interaction being presented on the stage? Or perhaps to the purpose and politics surrounding the occurring act of translation in the late twentieth or early twenty-first century? Translating interlingually necessarily requires choices on the part of the translator but every choice must result in certain ways of interpreting the meaning of the words that may have been present in Shakespeare's original becoming closed off. This can be a strength and a weakness. An effective translation may offer new ways of thinking about Shakespeare's characters and their actions by offering the audience interpretations of the text that may not be instantly obvious in English; certain effective translations may be able to do this whilst maintaining an authentic connection to the spirit of the play and avoiding gimmicks. Susan Bassnett remarks,

> The task of translation is to allow readers to have access to texts that would otherwise be incomprehensible to them. The complexity of that task is all too obvious, for texts come into being in a particular place and at a particular time, both of which are unique, and so can never be identically reproduced. This is a task, as we have seen, that carries great responsibility. What the translator provides, however, is his or her reading of a text or, as we have seen in case of translating for the theatre, a reading devised in collaboration with the other participants in the staging of a work.[13]

[12] Reynolds, *Translation: A Very Short Introduction,* p. 32.
[13] Bassnett, *Translation*, p. 169.

Although highlighting time and place as central to the forces of original creation, Bassnett suggests here that translation can give birth to a new piece of work through a translator's reading of a text. Rather than try to maintain a sense only of the meaning of each linguistic word or phrase, a translator should attempt to keep the intention of the author and create as new the work for the target culture. Huang echoes this sentiment: 'Translation involves artistic creativity, not a workshop of equivalences.'[14] Whilst I agree with the essence of these comments, they are perhaps aspirational rather than an accurate description of all translation for not all linguistic creation is necessarily artistic. It is surely legitimate to ask just how creative can a translator be? Is there a clear line where a translation crosses over to adaptation? If direct linguistic reflection into another language is impossible then offering a new angle from which to view a text through the creative choices of a translator is certainly of value, especially to the target audience: perhaps linguistic refraction is, then, the suitable metaphor. A less skilful translation may do the opposite, perhaps slavishly attempting to replicate and so closing off the more interesting perspectives for a target audience in order to follow the versions of Shakespeare's characters that may be less resonant. Such a style may well adhere, for instance, to the Early Modern English nomenclature and humour, much of which will surely be lost on a target audience (indeed, much of which is surely lost on today's Western audiences even when performed in the original language). This is what Lawrence Raw and Tony Gurr have in mind when they tell us that translators,

> should question the way things look on a page and not worry about keeping close to what the source text's author wants to say; instead, they should concentrate on what the author implies, even if that means going against what he or she holds most sacred. They should look beneath the source text's surface to discover what they believe is its basic meaning.[15]

[14] Huang, 'Shakespeare and Translation', pp. 68–87 (p. 68).
[15] Lawrence Raw and Tony Gurr, 'Bridging the Translation/Adaptation Divide: A Pedagogical View', in *Translation and Adaptation in Theatre and Film*, ed. by Katja Krebs (New York: Routledge, 2013), pp. 307–37 (p. 318). Ebook.

Raw and Gurr go on to quote Douglas Robinson's idea of 'imaginative construction': the term is revealing and so it is worth looking at Robinson's text in a little more detail. In his account of a piece of translation, Robinson writes, 'What I have offered in my translation is an interpretation, an imaginative construction of the hidden "part" of Guillén's text that I believe truly represents the whole.'[16] Several things stand out here. Firstly, we begin to form a clear picture that the idea of being able simply to transfer linguistic information from one language to another is impossible; that is, according to these scholars, all translation must be adaptation to some degree, and it is now accepted to a far greater extent that, 'The question of whether a translation is 'free' or 'faithful' no longer occupies centre-stage, the very legitimacy and usefulness of such a question having come under suspicion.[17] But what is perhaps more challenging to accept in the above argument is the idea that a translator can determine what the author wants to say or what is hidden by the author, then either attempt to follow or challenge these discoveries. Even if we agree that this should be part of the aim of translation, and possibly even necessary, this is a difficult if not impossible task to achieve. One thinks of the size of this challenge with a writer such as Shakespeare, whose lines often contain several interpretations at once, interpretations that may be hidden from some characters but clear to others, and especially clear for an attentive audience due to their blending of concepts in their creation of meaning. Elsewhere it cannot hold for many other writers, especially those that use linguistic strategies to challenge the very idea that language is a stable method of information transfer. Imagine, for example, the flattening of a Pinter, Beckett or Genet play if a translator aimed at revealing the 'hidden' part of the text that 'truly represents that whole'. An 'imaginative construction' is indeed to be sought when translating due to the recognition that it must be an interpretation. That said, it should not be, I would argue, aimed at uncovering what has necessarily been hidden. Further to all this, as pointed out by Bassnett and others, a dramatic text translated and then presented on a stage acquires a further layer of context and direction of meaning that

[16] Douglas Robinson, *The Translator's Turn* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1991), p. 156.
[17] Von Schwerin-High, *Shakespeare, Reception and Translation: Germany and Japan*, p. 14.

must be thought about when translating so as to appreciate the meaning of the text at that precise moment in time when it is played out on stage. [18]

Underpinning the now more commonly accepted idea that translation is at least as much about culture as language, there is a broader concept regarding interlingual translation that must be stated. This notion interrogates the process particularly effectively when attempting to translate into a language and culture far removed from the original the source text, such as that of a country like Japan: namely, the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis, and the idea of linguistic relativity.[19] Edward Sapir (1884–1939) suggested that no language possessed enough similarities to another language so as to be able to represent the same reality. His student, Benjamin Whorf (1897–1941) also came to a similar conclusion. By studying the Hopi Indians and their language, he found elements lacking (such as the vocabulary and syntax of 'time') and deduced that without the linguistic ability to represent such an idea, the idea itself may not exist in the same way as it does for others with the linguistic resources to represent the concept. For Whorf, linguistic relativity meant that people who spoke different languages were using different tools to observe the world; they would therefore come to different conclusions about what they found in those observations, and therefore come to see the world in a different way.[20] The concept of linguistic determinism suggests this to the extreme: that is, a person or even an entire people cannot conceive of something if the language for it does not exists. This is a misunderstanding of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis that became popular despite not being what the theory advocates (the insightful work of Claire Kramsch highlights where the lack of specificity in Sapir's statements may have given birth to such a concept).[21] We do not need to be told now that this is not true: there are many things for which we do not have the language, yet we do not

[18] Jean-Michel Deprats, 'Translating Shakespeare's Stagecraft', in *Shakespeare and the Language of Translation*, ed. by Ton Hoenselaars (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), pp. 133–47 (p. 137).
[19] Benjamin Lee Whorf, *Language, Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2011).
[20] Ibid., p. 221.
[21] Claire Kramsch, 'Language, Thought and Culture', in *The Handbook of Applied Linguistics*, ed. by Alan Davies and Catherine Elder (Malden: Blackwell, 2004), pp. 235–62.

struggle to conceive of in thought. That said, the idea of linguistic relativity is more persuasive than linguistic determinism: this is the idea that a language '*influences* thought and worldviews, and therefore difference among language cause differences in the thought of their speakers'.[22] This concept has further significance in the world of translation primarily because it reminds us of the binding nature of a written text where the language is inextricably connected to thought and to culture. These binds may be loose enough that language influences rather than controls the other two elements; but there is always a link between the three, and any movement of one text into another cannot help but be affected by this concatenation. In sum, the questions one must contend with when attempting any sort of interlingual translation necessarily involve some sort of cultural translation; but this cultural translation is, to a large extent, reliant on the linguistic capability of the target language. Despite being a relatively old theory now, it fits with the more recent developments in translation studies that argue that culture and translation are inescapably linked, even if we continue to debate exactly how these links are formed and the results that are brought about by their various joins. The Equivalence Paradigm that was suggested early in the study of translation has been replaced as scholars realize that 'equivalence is untenable as there are no clearly separate linguistic and cultural spaces in the contemporary world'.[23] This has distinct echoes of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis in its less stringent form.

Consideration of these ideas is the clearly the starting point for producing Japanese versions of Shakespeare's texts, but it is certainly not the end. In addition, there are aspects of the Japanese language — that uses three different scripts that are significantly removed from English — that add new challenges, and that are explored in greater detail below. Along with this, there are the questions of selecting the desired diction in the target language (formal v informal, or verse v prose, or the extent of gendered language etc). As Shakespeare's work did not arrive in Japan until after the Meiji Restoration of

[22] Hua, *Exploring Intercultural Communication: Language in Action*, p. 176.
[23] G. Edzordzi Agbozo, 'Translation as Rewriting: Cultural Theoretical Appraisal of Shakespeare's "Macbeth" in the Ewe Language of West Africa', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 18.33 (2018), 43–56 (p. 44) <https://doi.org/10.18778/2083-8530.18.04>

1868, translators since then have had to determine some sort of linguistic equivalence (that is, understand the original Early Modern English meaning) before deciding how to recreate that meaning within their own selected lexical framework. Tsubouchi Shôyô, as will be seen, often chose to employ archaic *kanji* characters in his translation to emphasise the formal and historic qualities in a play such as *Hamlet*; whereas, in contrast, Yushi Odashima, a more recent translator, uses a more modern and colloquial linguistic register in a deliberate attempt to offer modern audiences greater access to the plays. As has been argued already, no translation can be completely literal. The difficulties of remaining close to the text, whatever that means in practice, become considerably greater when translating into a language as far removed from Early Modern English as Meiji Era Japanese, especially as Meiji Era Japanese was undergoing great change itself. Even with a very basic understanding of the Japanese language the difficulties of translating Shakespeare into this language are obvious. The translator and director Tetsuo Anzai tells us,

> Any translation, especially that of poetry, however skillfully and scrupulously done, cannot but be a pale and feeble imitation of the original, but in the case of the Japanese translation of Shakespeare, in which the distance between the background of the original and that of the translation is linguistically, dramatically, culturally and historically so great, the difficulty is overwhelming. To put it bluntly, it is simply impossible to re-create in Japanese the power and subtlety, depth and wealth of Shakespeare's language.[24]

Anzai's words appear to make a lot of sense at first glance. The linguistic quality of Shakespeare's texts is undeniably exceptional, making good translation supremely difficult, even before a translator grapples with the obvious cultural mismatches contained within the metaphors, characters and narratives. Whilst the intertextuality of previous translations in a target language may well influence a translator, it is also reasonable to assume that the cultural appropriation of Shakespeare in the West adds to the perceived

[24] Anzai, 'Directing *King Lear* in Japanese Translation', pp. 124–137 (p. 124).

difficulty of translating. The reputation of Shakespeare is so revered by so many in the West that it is taken almost as indisputable that he cannot be improved upon. This may or may not be the case; but just as many a modern British or American Shakespearean actor may describe the intimidating shadow of Laurence Olivier, Ian Holm, Harriet Walter or Judi Dench hovering over their performance, a translator must surely feel that any attempt to equal the source text with which they are initially presented is futile. By being the original, it is seen by many as definitive; by being definitive, it can take on a character of its own, at times imposing and intimidating. A translator also feels the influence of previous translations already written in their own language. Nevertheless, Anzai's final comment regarding the impossibility of recreating the power, subtlety, depth and wealth of Shakespeare's original may be moderated slightly, for Japanese allows for certain linguistic choices that may offer something that is not there in Shakespeare's original text, as we shall see below.

Gallimore quotes Toshikazu Oyama's idea that sometimes a translator should add 10%, and he concludes that 'translation is at once objective interpretation and subjective recreation'.[25] This concept, he tells us, was originated by Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) and serves to maintain balance between 'literalism and adaptation' as well as providing insights into Shakespeare and his world, despite the risk that a formula such as this may become prescriptive to the detriment of how the language can be used in practice.[26] As a model, this is as sensible as any, for such a middle ground is imperative to achieving the various goals of translating a play; but it still relies on a large degree of subjectivity regarding interpretation, and we may well believe that to describe large parts of a Shakespearean text as 'literal' is problematic.

[25] Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 28.
[26] Ibid., p. 28.

The above idea that the Shakespeare text is seen by many as definitive can be developed. Although it is likely that the novelist and critic as Sôseki Natsume (1867–1916) had not formulated such a corollary explicitly in his mind, this concept is at the heart of the idea that translating Shakespeare into Japanese is impossible and that, if it is to be staged for a Japanese audience, the translator must consider 'being unfaithful' to the original text.[27] In a similar vein, we read from Shôyô's own hand that the academic Lafcadio Hearn (1959–1904) suggested to him that Shakespeare should really only be translated into colloquial Japanese, hinting that Shôyô should stop his attempts at literal translation that seemed to render his work a vague, poetic nonsense.[28] It is not my intention to highlight the numerous linguistic differences between the Japanese language and English, and the consequent challenges for a translator (for a fuller discussion see Tetsuo Kishi's essay 'Our Language of Love: Shakespeare in Japanese Translation' in *Shakespeare and the Language of Translation)* but Anzai's choice here of the word 'imitation' is telling for, as discussed above, perhaps imitation should not be the intention of a good translator.[29] Whilst there are undoubtedly things lost in any Japanese translation, it is also true that the Japanese language can add layers to Shakespeare's work.

We begin to appreciate that translators working in Japanese are forced to make very distinct choices regarding their translations, often more so than translators working in Romance languages, as Shôyô's work demonstrates. The environment in which he was working is summed up by Von Schwerin-High as follows:

> When Shakespeare was first introduced to Japanese audiences, the norms that governed the translators' and adaptors' choices were very diverse, as can sometimes be seen in their introductory statements of intent. What had to be determined in the decision process was, among

[27] Gallimore, 'Shôyô, Sôseki, and Shakespeare: Translations of Three Key Texts', 41–61 (p. 48).
[28] Ibid., p. 50.
[29] Tetsuo Kishi, '"Our Language of Love": Shakespeare in Japanese Translation', in *Shakespeare and the Language of Translation,* ed. by Ton Hoenselaars (London: Bloomsbury, 2004), pp. 68–81.

> other things, the genre (narrative or drama), the subgenre (*jôruri* or *nô* style, for example), and the diction in which the text should be represented (contemporary or archaic, colloquial or elevated, prosaic or lyrical, or some combination of these characteristics). Moreover, the translator had to decide the degree to which the text should be domesticated and the type of audience (general readers, theatre patrons, or students of English) to which the translation was addressed.[30]

Von Schwerin-High is not wrong, and these ideas are present in the changes Japanese theatre underwent during the Meiji period. Interestingly, the introduction of Shakespeare's work into Japan at this point may remind us of some of the issues that arose when Shakespeare's work was reintroduced to the English theatre scene during the Restoration period. The perception at that time by many was that Shakespeare's plays were old fashioned from both a linguistic and narrative point of view.[31] This led famously to the various adaptations that aimed to simplify Shakespeare's plays, editing the parts thought to be gratuitous and even changing the plots to create clearer lessons of morality and happy endings. Nahum Tate (1652–1715), for example, famously rewrote Shakespeare's *King Lear*: his version *The History of King Lear* had an ending that allowed Lear and Cordelia to live, and, moreover, allowed the king to reclaim his throne and his favourite daughter to be happily married. Of this period, Jean I. Marsden tells us,

> Authors such as Shakespeare and Milton might be revered, but their genius was situated not in the words they wrote but in larger issues such as character, plots, and even ideas — and these elements needed a bit of refurbishing so that the overall performance would be more effective.[32]

Foregrounding Shakespeare's characters and plots rather than the language in the texts as evidence of the author's talent is a view very different to the present appreciation of Shakespeare by many the West, indicating how much has changed in our view of Shakespeare. This also evidences that all views are

[30] Von Schwerin-High, *Shakespeare, Reception and Translation: Germany and Japan*, p. 64.
[31] Jean I. Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory* (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1995), p. 13.
[32] Ibid., p. 13.

mutable, and whilst it may be fashionable now, English speaking audiences, watching Shakespeare only three or four generations after he wrote, did not see his language as particularly key to his dramas. We have in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century placed much of our reverence of his work on his language, although it could be argued that Shakespeare's characters, plots and his themes, are wrapped up in his words. Whether one believes that Shakespeare's language can be separated from these aspects informs greatly one's ideas regarding how translations and adaptations of Shakespeare should be approached. If, for instance, a translator agrees that the two can be separated with relative ease, they are likely to cling less to the desire to find an equivalence to Shakespeare's verse and other linguistical elements in their target language; whereas, if they hold the opposite view, they may place more value on aligning in a closer way their own linguistic choices to those made by Shakespeare's in the original.

Related to this is an important idea: translation in the theatre takes place on many levels along with the (traditionally) linguistic, which influence both the creation and reception of a piece of theatre. I disagree with the perhaps overly simple point from Ted Motohashi that 'the task of the translated performance of Shakespearean plays must be a liberation from Shakespearean language'.[33] This is a language, he continues, that carries connotations of the British Empire, and will do so always; his point about Shakespeare's language is made even more confusing by the use of a quote from Antonio de Nebrija's introduction to his *Gramatica Castellana* dedicated to the Queen Isabela of Castile in 1492; this was clearly written some years before Shakespeare was using any sort of language, let alone writing plays. In addition, if Shakespeare's original language was and continues to be perceived as a 'consort of Empire' one wonders if this would always have been taken in the negative sense Motohashi implies. After all, we have seen how following the Meiji Restoration, Japan actively sought what they considered to be the best of Western culture; Shakespeare's work was included and scholars often suggest that

[33] Motohashi, '"I Saw Othello's Visage in His Mind", or "White Mask, Black Handkerchif": Satoshi Miyagi's Mugen-Noh Othello and Translation Theory', 43–50 (p. 49).

Shakespeare was regarded as the height of cultural sophistication in Japan since his work arrived.[34] However, Motohashi is right in his wider point that Shakespeare in translation invites intercultural explorations of more than language: 'studies of translation in the theatre would be an appropriate place to include the wider cultural issues of textual production and consumption and to disturb the accepted boundaries between the "original" and "adaptation"'.[35] It is clear that Japanese socio-religious culture has much within it that make it — and therefore a Japanese audience — especially receptive to Shakespeare's original stories. But of course, theatre translators and directors would also be affected by these influences and these effects must almost certainly come out in the work they create even before it reaches an audience. Such practitioners are likely not even to be aware of how they are being influenced in this way, as we are all as blissfully ignorant. Here recent developments in neuroscience aid us for increasingly we are learning just how little of our thought is conscious: current estimates from the research suggest that at least 95% and possibly even up to 99% of our thought is unconscious, with scholars such as Julian Jaynes cogently demonstrating that our conscious thought is unnecessary for learning, thinking or, perhaps most surprisingly, for reasoning.[36] The consequence of this is that any cultural influences will have a real and substantial impact on translators, theatre practitioners, readers and audiences in ways in which they may be completely oblivious. A small but excellent example of this very point stands out in the panel discussion between academic Daniel Gallimore and translator Kazuko Matsuoka: Gallimore praised Matsuoka's use of Japanese idiomatic and mimetic expressions (including the onomatopoeia so ubiquitous in the Japanese language); however, in response, Matsuoka said that she did not realise that she had used such expressions.[37] This debate has been projected onto Shakespeare

[34] Ryuta Minami, 'Finding a Style for Presenting Shakespeare on the Japanese Stage', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 14 (2016), 29–42 (p. 30).
[35] Motohashi, '"I Saw Othello's Visage in His Mind", or "White Mask, Black Handkerchif": Satoshi Miyagi's Mugen-Noh Othello and Translation Theory', 43–50 (p. 44).
[36] Iain McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*, p. 87; Julian Jaynes, *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1976).
[37] 'Turning up the Drama in Ninagawa's Shakespearean Plays', (Waseda University Website, 2017) <https://www.waseda.jp/top/en/news/47747> [accessed 19 December 2019]

himself, including the question of how aware he was of what he was writing, and therefore the degree to which we may believe his brilliance to be deliberate: see *Shakespeare's Brain: Reading with Cognitive Theory* for some of this debate.[38]

The idea that a translated text has numerous influences that contribute to its creation has slight echoes of the cultural materialists who argued that literature could not be distinguished from other kinds of social practice. They claimed that these social practices, which make up a specific culture, are hugely complex, intertwined and in constant movement. Raymond Williams, along with Richard Hoggart and E. P. Thompson are often cited as the first movers of this theory, followed by the likes of Terry Eagleton, Stuart Hall and Francis Barker who all developed it. Alan Sinfield, Jonathan Dollimore and Catherine Belsey moved the theory forward in a 'more specific, more defined, and more self-conscious form' particularly with regards to Shakespeare, by refining the theory yet also relaxing it from some of its more restrictive original aspects.[39] Literature, the cultural materialists suggested, was a product of the various influences that had been brought to bear on the author in their specific context and not an expression of the universal. Brannigan sums up nicely when he tells us that, for Williams, 'Literature represented the social and cultural values of certain sections of people, and not, as in the humanist criticism, the great universal truths of human nature.'[40] Along with the similar new historicist perspective (see, for instance, the work of Stephen Greenblatt) Shakespeare's plays have been read through this cultural materialist lens with very interesting results.[41] Dollimore and Sinfield are open about their intention in doing so, writing that the purpose is 'to give not so much new readings of Shakespeare's texts as a historical relocation of them, one which radically alters the meanings traditionally ascribed to them by a criticism preoccupied by

[38] Mary Thomas Crane, *Shakespeare's Brain: Reading with Cognitive Theory* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003).
[39] John Brannigan, *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998), p. 96.
[40] Ibid., p. 37.
[41] Stephen Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare* (London: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

their textual integrity'.[42] Stemming as it does from variants of Marxism, cultural materialism in Shakespeare studies in the West maintains its political motivation to a greater or lesser extent, for it is interested in the power struggles within and around the text and how they relate to the world which we inhabit. The key, however, is that the text works in a cyclical way: it is created in part by the influence on the author of real world within which it was written (although this influence is often unconscious); it can then be read in a way that can inform us substantially about that world should we care to look effectively for those clues.

The argument here is not that translated texts should be exclusively and definitively read through the cultural materialist lens to understand better the power conflicts or how texts have been appropriated. There has been some study of that sort in Japanese Shakespeare that aimed to provide a 'dialogue between the age of Shakespeare and the Japanese present' which has led to Japanese Shakespeareans becoming 'more fully aware of their own historical context' with the focus being, understandably, on the power relationships and political issues so prevalent to these movements.[43] But away from such a particular focus, I am simply arguing that there is clear precedent in Shakespeare studies for texts to be interpreted with the social and political context in which they were constructed being foregrounded as essential to a full appreciation of both the meaning and the value of the work. For this to apply to translated texts, as I believe it should, we must move completely beyond the idea that translation is merely an attempt at linguistic replication in another language, or even only the systematic mirroring of specific ideas in another language. This is one way in which a translation of a Shakespeare play can gain something despite the inevitable loss; it becomes a creative endeavour that will lose things, but that can also add to Shakespeare's original in ways that any interpretation in the staging or performance of Shakespeare's Early Modern English text

[42] Jonathan Dollimore, 'Introduction: Shakespeare, Cultural Materialism and the New Historicism', in *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, 2nd edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 2–17 (p. 10).
[43] Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 8.

cannot possess. We may even be tempted to borrow at least part of Dollimore and Sinfield's definition of cultural materialism for, in a similar fashion, a good translation does not seek to offer new readings of Shakespeare's text specifically, but rather it relocates the text in a way that can radically alter the meanings traditionally ascribed to them. When understood this way, translation becomes immensely valuable to Shakespeare scholarship, particularly if we remember the argument above: namely, that these forces — let us call them frames of cultura- artistic influence — apply to the translator (the subjective frame), the actors, director and producers, if they are involved in staging (the performative frame), and finally the audience (the receptive frame). This idea echoes Patrice Pavis' discussion of the problems of translating for the stage, where he tells us that there are more aspects than only the words being articulated in performance. He writes about,

> the situation of enunciation of a text presented by the actor in a specific time and place, to an audience receiving both text and *mise-en-scène*. In order to conceptualize the act of theatre translation, we must consult the literary translator *and* the director and actor.[44]

Pavis correctly brings to light the performative frame as an additional layer, and rightly claims that this should be acknowledged and even incorporated in any conceptualization of translation for the stage. But beyond this, we should remain aware also of the receptive frame, despite this frame being the hardest to define in many cases and so remaining the most challenging to work with. Together these various frames of cultural-artistic influence are instrumental in helping us fully understand what is contained within an original Shakespeare text, and what we may have projected into a text through historic repetition, assumption or simply a lack cultural sensitivity. This links back to Gallimore's point that, since Shakespeare's work arrived in Japan, the balance of literalism and adaptation within the translations of his plays have provided a reader or audience with information about Shakespeare, the Early Modern period

[44] Patrice Pavis, 'Problems of Translation for the Stage: Interculturalism and Post-Modern Theatre', in *The Play Out of Context: Transferring Plays from Culture to Culture*, ed. by Hanna Scolnicov and Peter Holland (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 25–44 (p. 25).

and the history of English literature.[45] Whilst we should be wary of drawing too forceful conclusions from any such examination, any creative pursuit such as playwrighting cannot help but offer us clues about the life and times of the playwright himself, whether Shakespeare was conscious of leaving such clues or not.

Authority and Authenticity

This discussion about translation and adaptation into other languages and cultures forms part of the wider debate about the authority of performing Shakespeare and, closely associated with that, the important concept of authenticity in Shakespeare performance. Whilst restricting his critique to Western theatre, W. B. Worthen challenges what he perceives as the claims of contemporary performance criticism, for he regards,

> the stage, and stage practices like acting and directing, not as the natural venue where Shakespeare's imagined meanings become realized, but one site among many where 'Shakespearean' meanings are produced in contemporary culture.[46]

This argument holds for the translated text and even the translated text staged in foreign performance, for as soon as our assumptions regarding authority are demonstrated to be reliant on certain implicit yet mutable factors, the site of Shakespearean authority itself becomes elusive and often comes to depend on the objectives one holds. (Worthen even makes this point, without having the space to unpack it in his book, remarking that 'asking these questions of other Shakespeares — in Tokyo […] would lead to a richer understanding of the regulatory and contestatory uses of Shakespearean authority than I have been able to pursue here.')[47] The idea of being 'faithful' to Shakespeare's text, and even, as is sometimes championed, to his intention, is based on spurious notions now quite ingrained in Western theatrical

[45] Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 28.
[46] W. B. Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 38.
[47] Ibid., p. 41.

tradition, despite appearing only relatively recently. Stephen Orgel does a good job of revealing the assumptions on which many in the West base their concept of authenticity in Shakespeare: it is a relatively simple step to appreciate how these assumptions apply to many perceptions cross-culturally and therefore how the interrogation of these assumptions can yield similar conclusions regarding authenticity.[48]

One key idea within this interrogation of authenticity is as follows: whilst many of the great struggles of humanity may not have evolved substantially, and therefore the stories of Shakespeare can be said to be still relevant to a large extent, the specific tools we have as actors to tell these stories in the theatre in the West have been altered. There is nothing especially novel in this argument: Worthen himself has articulated it, referring to the insights of acclaimed voice teachers such as Kristin Linklater and Cicely Berry.[49] It has been highlighted in this important area of actor training because the constant need to address the adequacy of the performer for the texts being performed keeps such questions pertinent. Kristin Linklater, for instance, is adamant that, 'The Western human behaves, thinks and speaks quite differently now from the days four hundred years ago when Shakespeare's classics were contemporary.'[50] Speaking of the difference now in voice training, especially with regards to a possible erroneous belief about the delivery of Shakespeare's text historically, Cicely Berry, formerly Head of Voice at the RSC, comments that,

> from our modern perspective we perhaps wrongly classify that declamatory style as being false, untruthful — I know I have thought so in the past — but perhaps it was not so to the actor or audience of then.[51]

[48] Stephen Orgel, 'The Authentic Shakespeare', 1–25.
[49] Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance*, pp. 103–09.
[50] Kristin Linklater, *Freeing Shakespeare's Voice: The Actor's Guide to Talking the Text* (New York: Theatre Communications Group, 1992), p. 3.
[51] Cicely Berry, *Text in Action: A Definitive Guide to Exploring Text in Rehearsals for Actors and Directors* (London: Virgin, 2001), p. 29.

Patsy Rodenburg, another highly accomplished vocal expert, suggests that we no longer have the same relationship with Shakespeare as those that came before us. She remarks, 'We have ceased being an oral culture.'[52] Within the same theme, in another of her books, she informs us that she would have been out of a job in the Early Modern period.

> I do not believe that you would have needed a voice coach in Shakespeare's time. He lived and worked in a supremely oral society full of verbal flourish and daring. I imagine that Shakespeare and his actors (remember that he himself was one) would have had no problems using their voices and enjoying words. The audience equally would have been more able to listen. Fashion and social conditioning dictate how we work.[53]

These vocal experts have a point, and their conclusion adds weight to the argument that our distance from the present era to Shakespeare's original world is becoming greater every day. Furthermore, these theatre practitioners are writing books largely for and about individuals who wish to devote their lives to the craft of acting; the readers of these books are, then, people who are more likely to be aware of that distance. But we can legitimately ask how conscious are the general theatre going public of this growing gap? As these comments (and those from many others engaged in training people in the theatre) remind us, the instrument we have now as humans has been moulded by various forces that have altered its behaviour significantly compared to the Early Modern period, and it is usually required to undergo a degree of formal training to compensate for this. They agree that the distance between us and Shakespeare's world of performance has grown and continues to grow. What I am suggesting is that along with reading this as evidence for the need to appreciate and commit to a type of acting training to be able to master the capacity to perform Shakespearean drama, we can also read it as evidence that a number of the assumptions about the axiomatic authority of a contemporary Western Shakespeare

[52] Patsy Rodenburg, *The Need for Words: Voice and the Text* (London: Bloomsbury Methuen Drama, 1993), p. 21.
[53] Patsy Rodenburg, *The Actor Speaks: Voice and the Performer* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2015), p. 263. Ebook.

production today should invite challenge. Worthen further explores how Shakespeare's plays are communicated through the body, and suggests that although the removal of the intrinsic ability that Linklater and Rodenburg point to is undoubtedly true, the human body 'remains nonetheless a seductively "human instrument", Shakespeare's instrument'.[54] On this point I would contend that while there may be some sort of underlying universal humanity in all people that the body can reclaim when trained, the type of acting training required to do this in the fields of voice, speech and movement is becoming rarer. One undeniable cultural force on the body of actors, and therefore on our contemporary ability to perform Shakespeare, is monetary: the performing arts are ultimately a commercial industry in the West and elsewhere, and those involved can earn a substantial amount of money from T.V. and film, where the vocal and physical skills being described here are considered far less important. The contact time for teaching voice and speech is today often being eroded in favour of other pursuits at many drama schools. With the training of actors paying less and less attention to the skills required for the full engagement in classical texts, whether the natural state of our body unencumbered by the cultural influences is available or not ceases to be as relevant; even if the state is accessible, it will not be found without the skilful removal of the restrictive layers that our society has clothed us in, and we may well see the results of this in more and more Western actors unable to do justice to the emotional, textual and linguistic complexities of Shakespeare's drama.

It could be argued that the professionals that are at the supposed top of their game in the U.K. — that is, those performing at the RSC, the National Theatre, or at Shakespeare's Globe, for instance — must have received this type of training and this may negate at least some of this argument regarding authority. In other words, the professionals who have been employed to perform Shakespeare to the highest standard should have, by this stage in their professional development, an instrument suitable for performing this type of drama effectively. Admittedly, this is more likely to be the case, but it is certainly

[54] Ibid., p. 104.

not true for every individual employed to work on these stages, as any audience member who has seen a show at one of these theatres can testify. Moreover, the point that we are no longer an oral culture extends further than merely to the physical tools we use to breathe effectively, to speak clearly, and to communicate with the appropriate degree of emotional connection with other actors and an audience that is usually sat in a relatively large auditorium. It also includes an effective understanding of language and an aptitude for using language well. Shakespeare's plays were undoubtedly influenced by his understanding of rhetoric; we see this in the formal sense when we hear the political speeches of *Troilus and Cressida,* for instance, and in less formal ways, such as the exploration of expression in *Love's Labour's Lost,* or when the structure of play feels like a rhetorical exchange that explores language in new ways, such as *The Taming of the Shrew*. Where precisely he learnt this skill may remain debatable, but what is not in question is the deep and intricate understanding that Shakespeare had regarding the possibilities and power of spoken language, and that such knowledge was gleaned from his formal education.[55] Although we cannot know the precise nature of acting technique in the Early Modern period, it is a fair assumption that the players for whom Shakespeare wrote originally had also an advanced understanding of rhetoric, and so they were able to perform the type of drama that Shakespeare was creating. B. L. Joseph makes this point when he argues that the orator and the actor in the Elizabethan period shared many of the same skills.[56] John H. Astington likewise refers to the teachings of Quintilian as informing the 'action and accent' of the players at this time.[57] It is also fair to assume that the vast majority of educational institutions in the West in the twentieth and twenty-first century no longer pay the same attention to the skills of rhetoric. The Oracy Cambridge project established by Professor Neil Mercer and others at Cambridge University was set up in 2016 to combat this very issue, identifying the

[55] Russ McDonald, *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language,* p. 48.
[56] B. L. Joseph, *Elizabethan Acting,* 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964).
[57] John H. Astington, *Actors and Acting in Shakespeare's Time: The Art of Stage Playing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), p. 24.

problems that arise in education, in the workplace, and even in democracy when oracy skills are not taught. They lament that,

> it is very unfortunate that, unlike literacy and numeracy, oracy is rarely taught in schools. Government educational policy in the UK accords little value to teaching talk skills. This is also the case in most other countries.[58]

Therefore, while it is certainly possible that a professional actor today performing in a Shakespeare play has the talent, the theatre training and an educational background that championed oracy skills, it is also certainly possible that they arrive on the professional stage without at least one of these influences supporting their ability to perform Shakespeare's texts.

We may be tempted to add one further small point to the argument for the interrogation of authenticity, albeit a less compelling one than that those already mentioned: that is, the idea of the 'original text' can be challenged. Even just within the play *Hamlet*, we are aware that there are small differences between the three extant texts of the First Quarto (Q1) believed to be of 1603, the Second Quarto (Q2) believed to be of 1604 or 1605, and the Folio edition (F) of 1623. Michael Hattaway has unpacked these discrepancies and the accompanying problems they pose in his book *Hamlet*: *The Critics Debate*.[59] Of the more recent explorations of these differences, Zachary Lesser's book *Hamlet After Q1* sums up nicely the impact of the differences between these texts, and concludes by telling us that 'they remain stubbornly disjunct'.[60] One interesting thought on this instability is Saul Frampton's paper which argues for Montaigne's influence on the second quarto version of Hamlet's famous 'To be or not to be' soliloquy. In some ways, these differences are irrelevant: an actor today playing the part of Hamlet need

[58] Neil Mercer, 'Oracy Cambridge: Hughes Hall Centre of Effective Spoken Communication', (2018). <https://oracycambridge.org/> [accessed 7 June 2021]
[59] Michael Hattaway, *Hamlet* (London: Macmillan, 1987).
[60] Zachary Lesser, *Hamlet After Q1: An Uncanny History of the Shakespearean Text* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2015), p. 211.

not worry themselves about what may or may not be in the other editions of the play. Their job is simply to make sense of and then 'speak the speech' using the text they have in their rehearsal room right there and then. We may also believe that such mild inconsistencies are not really of any concern to an audience watching the drama unfold on the stage. Philip Edwards makes the point regarding the textual problems in his introduction to the 1985 Cambridge edition of *Hamlet*, which claimed that we are likely never to have a complete and final version and, importantly, 'what is written for the theatre often undergoes considerable modification as it moves from the writer's desk towards performance on the stage and also during performance'.[61]

We may feel that such textual instability is all part and parcel of the cutting and presenting of a text for performance, and even that the textual differences are often small enough to be glossed over, if not ignored completely. But underneath this the question remains whether this type of textual divergence can call into question some of the certainty we may have in the West about Shakespeare. If we cannot ascertain with clarity which are the original words that Shakespeare wrote (perhaps 'definitive' is better than 'original', for they may all be original in some sense) then we must be allowed to admit that perhaps the very idea of the original does not matter beyond a point of highly specialised academic interest. Scholars and editors will study and analyse all of the texts and make choices about what to put down in the scripts; subsequently, actors and directors will use these to their own purposes. But these theatre practitioners will select what text they want from the words available, depending on their intention and beliefs. The almost always necessary task of reducing the length of the text for performance, a job that is done by editors and then also by directors and producers before and during rehearsals, is performed to best fulfil the intention and needs of that particular theatrical event. With this textual instability established, we must allow ourselves at least to ask whether the idea of authenticity in Shakespeare's original scripts is perhaps a little more mutable than many appreciate; and if the establishing of such

[61] Philip Edwards, 'Introduction', in *Hamlet, Prince of Denmark* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 1–83 (p. 8).

authority is, in reality, only a matter of academic concern, the door is a little more ajar for other versions — such as translations and adaptations — to claim a similar type of authority in the world of Shakespeare performance.

We can see here a number of historical and contemporary precedents that may encourage us to think about translation in a new way. Firstly, we have the history of re-writing Shakespeare in the U.K. when it did not fit an intended purpose or cultural zeitgeist; secondly, we can see the developments in both concepts of performance and in society and education at large since Shakespeare's work was first created and performed; and, finally, we may be tempted to feel that what we may call Shakespeare's original texts perhaps cannot be labelled as such without challenge, due to the textual instability and subsequent choices necessarily made by editors and performers. All of these issues combine to suggest a substantial distance between Shakespeare's original work and our Shakespeare performances today in the West. Contemplating the above points should at the very least open up the discussion on authority than can be extended to foreign Shakespeare: when we couple this with the idea that good translation should not slavishly imitate but should actively look to connect culturally and employ a degree of creativity, we may reasonably question whether the authority of Japanese Shakespeare translations and productions performed today may be perhaps just as legitimate as a twenty-first century RSC production performed in Stratford-Upon-Avon, or by Michelle Terry's company performing at Shakespeare's Globe on the Southbank.

CHAPTER TWO

Shakespeare's arrival in Japan

I have begun to argue for the value of the translated text; subsequently, I have contested the idea of the axiomatic authority of present-day Western productions. The possibility then arises that this may allow foreign Shakespeare to claim a different but equally valid type of authority in today's theatre world, adding weight to the idea that foreign Shakespeare may be able to offer access to the power of the play in certain ways unavailable to Western readers or audiences. It is sensible now to look at the history of Shakespeare in Japan to attempt to determine with more certainty whether this could be true. Subsequently, if we accept it to be the case, it will then show us how Japanese Shakespeare, as a site of intercultural theatre, may to be able to augment the power of a Shakespeare play. Whilst there have been numerous English language productions of Shakespeare in Japan the vast majority of Shakespeare presented in the country is Shakespeare in Japanese translation or adaptation. Scholars such as Shoichiro Kawai, and Daniel Gallimore with Ryuta Minami detail the popularity of Shakespeare work historically in the country, especially since the 1960s.[1] To understand Shakespeare's position in Japan's cultural landscape, including within the culture of its theatre scene, one must firstly appreciate the impact of the period preceding the arrival of his work.

Japan's *sakoku* period (meaning 'closed country') arose from the isolationist policy of the Tokugawa Shogunate that began in 1635. After the seventeen articles of the *sakoku* edicts were issued by the government, Japan turned inward during a sustained period of isolation lasting for over 200 years. The reasons for this are complex but, on the surface, the intention was to guard against a literal invasion of the Portuguese and to shield the country against the spread of Catholicism. Scholars have successfully dispelled the once prevalent idea that *sakoku* allowed Japan zero influence from the outside world,

[1] Gallimore and Minami, 'Seven Stages of Shakespeare Reception'; Shoichiro Kawai, 'More Japanized, Casual and Transgender Shakespeares', *Shakespeare Survey 62* (2009), 261–72.

pointing out the continued trade with the Dutch, and relations with China and Korea.[2] Ronald P. Toby has gone so far as to suggest that *sakoku* was in fact a deliberate strategy of the Tokugawa government to attempt to legitimise both their power and the consequent governing of a unified Japan; in addition, this was a country that already prioritised political and trade relations with nations in Asia rather than Europe, as these were perceived as being closer aligned to Japan ideologically and culturally.[3] Brett L. Walker has made the convincing argument that the Tokugawa government sought trade with the island north of Japan (Ezo) adding further weight to the argument that there was a political motivation behind the precision of the policy.[4] Others have even suggested why the mistaken perception of utter isolation became so entrenched in the academic discourse of the country's history, highlighting the dominant Eurocentric framework through which the period has been viewed since.[5] Nevertheless, it is true that the policy severely limited Japan's exposure to other countries for over 200 years. Subsequently, when the Meiji Emperor was restored to rule in 1868, Japan actively sought to regain its international standing. The perception within the country by many in the political and intellectual classes was that the traditional Japanese theatrical forms of *noh*, *kabuki* and *bunraku* were now out of date compared with the more modern theatre forms of other countries, and so needed to be modernised.

It is certainly the case that interaction with other European countries was restricted, as were, consequently, European cultural influences on Japanese society. This must be relevant regarding influences on aspects of culture such as theatre practices: even if trade and politics remained open to some degree, we may well question exactly what import of foreign theatre and drama would this have brought?

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[2] Tashiro Kazui, 'Foreign Relations During the Edo Period: Sakoku Reexamined', trans. by Susan Downing Videen, *Journal of Japanese Studies*, 8.2 (1982), 283–306 <https://doi.org/10.2307/132341>; Michael S. Laver, *The Sakoku Edicts and the Politics of Tokugawa Hegemony* (Amherst: Cambria Press, 2011).

[3] Ronald P. Toby, 'Reopening the Question Of "Sakoku": Diplomacy in the Legitimation of the Tokugawa Bakufu', *The Journal of Japanese Studies*, 3.2 (1977), 323–63 (p. 327) <https://doi.org/10.2307/132115>

[4] Brett L. Walker, 'Reappraising the Sakoku Paradigm: The Ezo Trade and the Extension of Tokugawa Political Space into Hokkaido', *The Journal of Asian History*, 30 (1996), 169–92 (p. 172) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41931039> [accessed 4 Oct 2021]

[5] Arano Yasunori, 'The Formation of a Japanocentric World Order', *International Journal of Asian Studies*, 2.2 (2005), 185–216 <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1479591405000094>

When we read C. R. Boxer's account of the Dutch influence, we hear that the reports and books brought by the Dutch to the Tokugawa government included accounts of advances in medicine, foreign relations, military techniques and even, by the 1700s, of Dutch art: yet no mention is made or drama or theatre.[6] This is, of course, a sample of one, but the omission of theatre is striking next to the mention of other creative pursuits such as art.

The Americans first arrived in Japan in the shape of Commodore Matthew C. Perry and his 'black ships' on 8 July 1853; Perry carried a letter from the US President Millard Fillmore that requested the two countries 'live in friendship and have commercial intercourse with each other'.[7] Aware of the military might of the West, Japan struggled internally as to what course of action to take: some of the Shogun's advisors believed that an armed resistance was necessary, others thought this too risky and advocated negotiating the desired trade deals with the West. The Shogun himself claimed that he was troubled at the thought of the barbarians on the soil of his ancestors.[8] Ultimately, when Perry returned the following year with a far larger force, Japan had to open itself to larger amounts of foreign trade with a wider range of partners than during its period of *sakoku* which had been brought now to its end. Some critics have noted that there is evidence of Japan's limited exposure to the West provoking fear of invasion from as far back as 1780s; as such, there was 'an evolution of study of the outside world and a constantly changing framework for foreign policy'.[9] This resulted in an administration that was in reality more capable of dealing with foreign threats, even in 1854 when Perry returned with a larger military force. Concessions given by the country were kept to a minimum with the expectation within Japan that the unwanted treaties could be renegotiated more in their favour in the future. A more detailed

[6] C. R. Boxer, 'Sakoku or the Closed Country', *History Today*, 7.2 (1957), 80–88 (p. 82). <https://www.historytoday.com/archive/sakoku-or-closed-country-1640-1854> [accessed 4 Oct 2021]
[7] Anne Walthall and M. William Steele, *Politics and Society in Japan's Meiji Restoration: Brief History with Documents* (Boston: Bedford/ St Martin's, 2017), p. 50.
[8] Ibid., p. 12.
[9] L. M. Cullen, 'Introduction: Japan's Internal and External Worlds, 1582–1941', in *A History of Japan, 1582–194: Internal and External Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp. 1–17 (p. 4).

examination of Western countries conducted by the Japanese in the years following 1868 suggested that the sheer military power of the West would make future negotiations more challenging for the Japanese than they had hoped.

During the Meiji Restoration the idea of modernisation became synonymous with Westernisation, for upon finding itself thrust more conspicuously among its European and American contemporaries on the world stage, many in Japan now saw the country as lagging behind due to its centuries of seclusion. Therefore, the move towards this modernisation was fully supported and even propelled by the government, firstly as a way to present itself as an equal on the global stage and secondly to ward off subtly the threat of a full invasion or of being colonized. *Bunmei kaika* meaning 'civilization and enlightenment' became the new goal: this was aimed at primarily through adopting a variety of Western cultural elements. Japanese government officials went abroad through The Iwakura Mission (1871–73) with the express intention to learning about foreign countries and their cultures. The purpose was for these officials to return to Japan and share such knowledge with their own population, the hope being that the Japanese population could then adopt (or imitate?) the customs and behavior of Europeans, thereby ostensibly becoming modern. This modernisation therefore took a variety of forms, including everything from a new legal constitution and political institutions, to trams and railways, to aspects of Christianity (that would eventually be deemed to be tolerable), and even to new hair styles. Yet underpinning this drive for change there was certainly a political intent. Yukari Yoshihara argues that this compulsion may have served the Japanese government in their desire to retain political independence during a period when China and Korea were at risk of being colonised.[10] China's opium wars (1839–42) remained in recent memory and many Japanese believed that if a country as powerful as China could be vanquished by the British, other Asian countries should be highly vigilant regarding possible invasions.

[10] Yoshihara, 'Japan as "Half Civilised"': An Early Adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* and Japan's Construction of its National Image in the Late Nineteenth Century', pp. 21–32 (p. 24).

For Kumiko Hilberdink-Sakamoto, politics are core to the modernisation of the period but for slightly different reasons, for she sums up the period thus, with an emphasis on trade deals:

> The government believed the adoption of Western culture would be a shortcut to modernization, prosperity, and in particular, the amendment of the unequal trade treaties forcibly urged on Japan by the United States and some European nations during the Civil War period, towards the end of the previous Tokugawa regime.[11]

Some scholars have suggested that the idea of an entire population embracing such foreign influence with only positive attitudes is surely a myth, especially in the early stages of the Meiji period.[12] It is easy to forget the fact that if the country had been essentially closed for over two hundred years, there was nobody alive in the Meiji period who had experienced anything before *sakoku*. However, most agree that in the later period, the majority of the population was more or less convinced that the need to modernise was in their interests and that the need to be seen as modern from both a domestic and an international viewpoint was essentially political.

The initial impulse to reform Japanese theatre seems to have stemmed from the same bud. For instance, Yoshiaki Fuhara emphasizes the political essence of theatre reform by reminding us that the lead player in *The Society for Theatre Improvement* (established in August 1886 and dismantled in April 1888) was a young politician called Kencho Suematsu.[13] Suematsu also happened to be the son-in-law of the Prime Minster at that time, Hirobumi Ito. The link is even more relevant when we realise that Ito lost his seat of power in April 1888, precisely the same month as the dissolution of the society. With such strong

[11] Kumiko Hilberdink-Sakamoto, '"Why Shakespeare in Japan?": Resituating the Japanese Shakespeare', in *Shakespeare without English: The Reception of Shakespeare in Non-Anglophone Countries*, ed. by Sukanta Chaudhuri and Chee Seng Lim (Delhi: Pearson Longman, 2006), pp. 67–85 (p. 77).
[12] Haag, 'Maruyama Masao and Kato Shuichi on Translation and Japanese Modernity', pp. 15–43 (pp. 36–37).
[13] Yoshiaki Fuhara, 'The Theatre Reformation Movement in the Early Meiji Era (About 1886) of Japan: A Preliminary Sketch', *Hitotsubashi Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 6 (1965), 25–33 (p. 27).

associations, it is extremely probable that politics played a substantial part in defining the intentions of the society. Writing on *The Society for Theatre Improvement*, Fuhara tells us,

> Ito's Government had special reasons to be eager to promote any movement that would help to make Japan look like a modernized country. It had much to negotiate with some Western countries. In particular, there were some treaties Japan wanted revised, treaties which had been concluded previously and unfavourably to Japan. But, it was thought, before entering into talks with those Western countries about that matter Japan should give them an impression that she had now become a much more 'civilized' country than when those treaties were concluded.[14]

Ayako Kano informs us that *The Society for Theatre Improvement* knew that traditional Japanese theatre forms were perceived to be unsuited to the new aims of the modern Japanese theatre. *Noh*, for example, would be considered too slow and stylized to be enjoyed by a non-Japanese audience; similarly, the more bawdy nature of *kabuki* at this time is well documented and therefore this was also an unsuitable form through which to raise the status of theatre as a creative art and a profession.[15] *Noh*, *kabuki*, along with *kyogen* and *bunraku* were all stylized to such an extent that they were considered by many as unsuitable also for the contemporary style of Western dramas that many in Japan wanted to explore. For example, as Michael Ingham and Kaoru Nakao tell us, 'The austerity of classical *nô* makes it a challenging form in which to present Western plays that tend to be plot-driven and dramatically immediate.'[16] The *Society* therefore was tasked with creating a new theatre form and even a new theatre space that would raise the idea of performing on stage in the estimation of both domestic and foreign audiences, including visiting foreign dignitaries. In 1871 the government altered their position on the legal status of actors as outcasts in Japan, and then, just over a decade later, actors were legally required

[14] Ibid., p. 27.
[15] Kano, *Acting Like a Woman in Modern Japan: Theater, Gender and Nationalism*, p. 6.
[16] Michael Ingham and Kaoru Nakao, '"Come, You Spirits": An Alternative Afterlife to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *Othello*, as Mediated through Japanese Classical Nô and Kyôgen Theatre', *Asian Theatre Journal*, 35 (2018), 112–32 (p. 114) <doi:10.1353/atj.2018.0016>

to be licensed by the state and to pay taxes, thereby completing the reinstating of the profession into the legitimate world of work.[17] Following suit, the *Society* was requested to help to establish the respectability of the profession in the eyes of the Japanese people, this would necessarily entail raising the status of those involved in it as well. Yoshiaki Fuhara quotes the prospectus of the *Society* itself,

> The purposes of the Society are:
>
> 1. To improve upon the bad conventions of our theatre so that dramatic works of better quality than we have now may actually be brought forth.
>
> 2. To make the writing of plays an honourable profession.
>
> 3. To construct a new performance hall that will be so structured and equipped that it can be used not only for dramas but also for concerts and recitals.
>
> As these three purposes are, needless to say, all related and inseparable, the lack of any one of them would lead to a defeat of our hope. That is why we put up all these three items together at once as the Society's purposes.[18]

The *Society* received plenty of support for its desire to make improvements: it was made up of 23 regular members with many other dignitaries, including the Prime Minister himself, adding their names as supporting members. In spite of this, it failed to gather support from some key members of the Japanese artistic community. Tsubouchi Shôyô and writer Ôgai Mori, for example, did not join and even went so far as to criticise its objectives. Specifically, the concept of constructing new theatre buildings in the style of European theatres rather than reforming the style of Japanese drama produced in the country seems to have caused the most concern. Only one month before the *Society* disbanded in 1888, another society sprung up calling itself *Engei Kyofu—kai* (*The Society for the Correction of Theatricals*, although a year later it was adapted into *The Japanese Theatre Society*).[19] Shôyô was one of the leaders of this group and

[17] Kano, *Acting Like a Woman in Modern Japan: Theater, Gender and Nationalism*, p. 7.
[18] Fuhara, 'The Theatre Reformation Movement in the Early Meiji Era (About 1886) of Japan: A Preliminary Sketch', 25–33 (pp. 25–26).
[19] Ibid., p. 32.

strove to make the changes to playwriting, acting training, and theatrical culture he saw as more potent in driving the reform needed.

There are evident parallels here with theatre histories in other parts of the world. Maybe the most useful comparisons are with the Abbey Theatre in Dublin at the turn of the twentieth century and the creation of the Group Theatre in New York a few decades later. In the case of the Abbey Theatre, which began as The Irish Literary Theatre with its inaugural performance in 1899, we see a prominent playwright of national esteem, W. B. Yeats, desirous of a theatre that would showcase his work and that of other Irish playwrights such as Edward Martyn. Robert Welch articulates the similarities, reminding us that there was already Irish theatre being seen in Dublin, at The Queens Theatre; but before the Abbey, there was something lacking:

> There were Irish plays, therefore, alongside rival pieces designed to appeal to British or Imperial patriotism; but what Dublin did not have was a living theatre reflecting the literary and artistic developments of the day, such as Jack Thomas Grein's Independent Theatre Club in London (founded 1891), which championed Ibsen and first staged G. B. Shaw; or the Théatre Libre of André Antoine, founded in 1887 in Paris.[20]

Over in New York in the 1920s, the type of vaudeville and melodrama being shown on Broadway was unsatisfying to the founders of the Group Theatre, including Cheryl Crawford, Harold Clurman, and Lee Strasberg. The plays presented at that time were often imports from Europe; and although they were not always performed by visiting European theatre companies, they were perceived by many as less relevant to the American audiences attempting to define their own identities during this period, especially when combined with their melodramatic style of performance. Having been inspired by the work of Konstantin Stanislavski's Moscow Art Theatre, the Group Theatre was established in 1931 (in the middle of the

[20] Robert Welch, *The Abbey Theatre, 1899-1999: Form and Pressure* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 5.

Great Depression beginning in 1929); they wished to achieve a similar style of acting that aimed at effective ensemble work and greater realism on stage. In addition, they wished to tell the stories of modern America through new plays that would resonate with ordinary Americans, especially those living through the challenges of the Depression. As such, they formed the ensemble company that included many practitioners who would go on to transform the performance style and dramatic writings of the next few generations of American theatre practitioners: Stella Adler, Robert Lewis, Elia Kazan, Sandford Meisner and Clifford Odets.[21]

Although the details of the politics behind the founding of The Abbey Theatre and the Group Theatre are different to those within the political landscape of Japan after the Meiji Restoration, the desire to reestablish the art form of theatrical performance as something representative of the modern nation and its new identity in an increasingly globalized world was at the heart of these drives for transformation. But one further difference should be acknowledged. Theatres and theatre companies in Europe were created at this time usually in response to the development of the drama and literature of the country; the Group Theatre in America were the same, for they deliberately eschewed the European classical plays and turned to new American drama, even using the work of their own member, Clifford Odets. In Japan this was not the case: the theatres and the theatre companies of the *shinpa* and *shingeki* periods came before any modern Japanese playwright was writing new drama of significance.[22] It was the entire world of theatre (the forms, the buildings, the perception of the art form, and the plays) that was seen as needing updating, but the plays themselves were perceived, by most, as the least important on this list. The circuitous influence of the societies within which these theatrical reformations took place is important. Politically and socially, many different countries aimed at using drama and the theatres as both a tool for modernisation and as evidence of the success of this modernisation. Japan was no different with its

[21] Helen Krich Chinoy, *The Group Theatre: Passion, Politics and Performance in the Depression Era*, ed. by Don B. Wilmeth and Milly S. Barranger (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2013).
[22] Rimer, *Towards a Modern Japanese Theatre: Kishida Kunio*, p. 7.

intention, even if, as noted above, the exact driving force was not exactly the same. This is an important part of the artistic and political background into which Shakespeare's work was transplanted. The key point here is that, for political reasons, the drive to modernise Japanese theatre was felt strongly; and that many in the Japanese government and beyond at that time believed that adopting Western elements in the performing arts could bring about the modernisation desired. Yet, what was different from many drives in other countries was the perception in Japan, by a certain number of important figures, that Shakespearean drama was a suitable form of theatre to achieve this modernisation.

Shôyô was perhaps the most ardent champion of Shakespeare in this way. That is not to say that other dramatists dismissed Shakespeare's plays, or even that Shôyô was dismissive of more modern European writers; rather, we should appreciate that many in the *shingeki* movement understood that Shakespeare's plays were considerably older than the other works being imported from writers such as Ibsen or Chekhov and, as such, did not believe them to be suitable for the purposes of modernising Japanese theatre. Kaoru Osanai, for example, is often thought of as an important driving force behind the early *shingeki* movement, along with Shôyô. However, the two men had quite different ideas about what the aim of the country's new theatre should be. Osanai and the actor Ichikawa Sadanji II (1880–1940) established the *Jiyû Gekijô* (Free Theatre) in 1909, noticeably in between Shôyô's 1907 and 1911 staging of *Hamlet;* and later, after travelling through Europe, Osanai founded the *Tsukiji Shôgekijô* (the Tsukiji Little theatre) in 1924 with Yoshi Hijikata. The purpose of this first venue was to present new plays, including Western drama such as Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman*, which was the theatre's inaugural production after censorship issues arose with their original choice, *Before the Dawn* by Gerhart Hauptmann. Despite both wishing to modernise Japanese theatre, Shôyô and Osanai clearly had quite different ideas about how to do this. Shôyô famously wanted to use amateur performers in his productions, using students from the Literary Society of the university where he taught; by contrast, Osanai often used actors trained in *kabuki* in a seemingly contradictory stance to that of breaking free from the traditions of established Japanese theatre forms. These performers included Enjaku Ichikawa

who was a professional *onnagata*, although it must be said that Osanai stated publicly that he wished them to unlearn their training and turn from professional performers into a type of amateur again.[23] Other academics have noted the discrepancy in Osanai's approach, especially when compared with Shôyô. On one hand Shôyô appears old fashioned as he wished to use Shakespeare's plays as much as the new Western dramas to modernise Japanese theatre. However, he also used female actors in his production of *Hamlet* (a modern move) and refrained from employing professional actors trained in the *kabuki* or *noh* styles. Maki Isaka Morinaga is unpersuaded by Osanai's list of reasons for why he wanted to turn professionals into amateurs, but believes the stance is important in and of itself and suggests the division between amateurity and an amateur. She writes,

> What makes it possible for amateurity to be divorced from an amateur? It is the possibility of earning an income from one's practice. Amateurity, which I previously defined as the denial of dominant institutions and value systems, defines its practitioners as those who do not belong to the establishment, those who are outsiders. And as an outsider, one cannot expect a financial reward from the institutionalized economy.[24]

We may disagree with the precise definition of the terms, and quibble over the actual realisation of the idea, especially if professional *kabuki* actors were cast in the productions; but the key here is that Osanai's aim was to achieve a degree of freedom away from financial restraints that would thereby allow for a complete focus on the creation of theatre for the purpose solely of creating theatre. The echoes of André Antoine's Free Theatre (Théâtre Libre) are deliberate, of course, in the name and the intent. Osanai believed that it was only away from the commercialism of the theatre that a truly innovative form of modern Japanese theatre could be born. If we return to Shôyô's desires once more, we may be tempted to speculate that his choice to use students in a literary society had a similar driving force (although Shunsho

[23] Gioia Ottaviani, ""Difference" and "Reflexivity": Osanai Kaoru and the Shingeki Movement', *Asian Theatre Journal*, 11.2 (1994), 213–230 <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1124229> [accessed 25 Feb 2018]
[24] Maki Isaka Morinaga, 'Osanai Kaoru's Dilemma: "Amateurism by Professionals" in Modern Japanese Theatre', *TDR*, 49.1 (2005), 119–33 (p. 122–23) <https://doi.org/10.1162/1054204053327978>

Doi, who played Hamlet in 1911, was a professional actor who was also the assistant director of the *Bungei Kyokai*). Any new genre of theatre that was truly appropriate for the new purposes desired of theatre in the Meiji period must have the malleability to be moulded to the newly desired form, whatever form that may eventually take. Osanai is a fascinating man whose influence on *shingeki* is certainly worth exploring further (his use of *onnagata* compared to Shôyô's use of female actresses is but one fascinating area worthy of further exploration); but he is worth mentioning briefly here primarily as evidence that many in Japan at that time did not share Shôyô's view that Shakespeare and Japanese dramatic forms could ask the questions relevant to Japanese society in the Meiji period. Nevertheless, when a respected theatre practitioner such as Shôyô, who was already steeped in Japanese theatre forms and Japanese literature, recommended Shakespeare as a tool for this type of modernisation, a good number in the Japanese artistic world and in society at large took notice. Within this context, it would be unfair to say that Shôyô was the reason for Shakespeare's initial popularity, but even less fair to ignore the substantial part that he played in this movement.

Tsubouchi Shôyô

With this in mind, let us now take a more focused look at the first person to translate all of Shakespeare's plays into Japanese.[25] With his balance of skills, Shôyô helped greatly to establish Shakespeare as drama to be performed on stage as well as literature that could be read. Shôyô knew and loved the existing Japanese theatre forms: indeed, he wrote *kabuki* plays himself. As such, he did not agree with the idea that these genres of performance should be discontinued completely: as mentioned, he is conspicuously absent from *The Society for Theatre Improvement* that originally saw the imitation of Western theatre traditions as the way to improve Japanese theatre and raise it to the necessary status as an art form and as a political tool. Nevertheless, he believed strongly that a new form of Japanese drama was necessary, and he thought that the most effective way to create this was to blend the old forms and those newly imported

[25] Minoru Toyoda, *Shakespeare in Japan: An Historical Survey* (London: Pub. for the Shakespeare Association of Japan by the Iwanami Shoten, 1940).

from the West. Shôyô's desire to make new drama by using Shakespeare feels slightly contradictory, especially when we compare his thoughts to other practitioners in the *shingeki* movement who were eager to use the work of contemporary Western dramatists who were writing new plays. For Shôyô, this new theatre form in Japan included Shakespeare, although how these Western dramas should be translated and presented was a question with which he wrestled throughout his career.

Born on 22 May 1859, Shôyô grew up in the transition between the feudal Japan of the Tokugawa Shogunate era (1603–1868) and the distinctly altered Meiji period (1868–1912). He began his education with classical Chinese studies as was common for the warrior class, his father being a low-ranking samurai. After 1868 his father moved the family to Nagoya, where Shôyô switched to Western studies and attended the Nagoya English school.[26] Although formally taking classes in politics and economics with the expectation from his family that he would go into the civil service, his talent and passion for literature was apparent from his student days. Shôyô's translations remain to this day seminal in the history of the acceptance of Shakespeare in Asia. In recent years, Daniel Gallimore has done much to explain Shôyô's influences, and others have also helped position Shôyô's work and highlight his aims and achievements.[27] Shôyô himself, followed by other scholars, has outlined the different chapters of his career as a translator as his style progressed to serve his intention at each stage, and this development is also worthy of further investigation. A summary of Von Schwerin-High's concise outline reads as follows: in the first period, beginning with *Julius Caesar* in 1884, he used the *joruri* style of traditional Japanese ballad drama; when he translated *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* for academic purposes, semantic precision was central to his thoughts (his *Hamlet* was serialized in 1896 in the Waseda Literature

[26] Izumi Yanagida, 'Pioneers of Modern Japan III: Tsubouchi Shoyo', *Japan Quarterly*, 11.3 (1964), 352–60 (p. 352).
[27] Gallimore, 'Shôyô, Sôseki, and Shakespeare: Translations of Three Key Texts', 41–61; Daniel Gallimore, 'Shôyô at Sea: Shakespeare Translation as a Site for Maritime Exchange in Meiji and Taishô Japan', *Shakespeare*, 9.4 (2013), 428–47 <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450918.2013.810663>; Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi Shôyô and the Beauty of Shakespeare Translation in 1900s Japan'; Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi, Dryden and Global Shakespeare'; Gallimore and Minami, 'Seven Stages of Shakespeare Reception', pp. 484–96; Niki, *Shakespeare Translation in Japanese Culture*; Powell, 'One Man's *Hamlet* in 1911 Japan: The Bungei Kyokai Production in the Imperial Theatre', pp. 38–52.

magazine, although unfinished); his 1907 *Hamlet* performance forced him to consider to a greater extent how translations could be performed on stage; after this, the fourth stage found him attempting to do justice to the polyformity found in Shakespeare's text with a better balance of literary and colloquial; and finally, he emphasized the colloquial capacity of his translations, and focused to a greater degree on the vocabulary in Shakespeare's original texts.[28]

Shôyô's experience of seeing Western productions of Shakespeare is worth examining as it may tell us something about Shôyô's desire to stage Shakespeare rather than only read him, and also something of his aims when putting on the plays. The first 'full' productions of Shakespeare in English performed in Japan were that of the Miln Company (1891) and the Alan Wilkie company (1912). Shôyô saw both productions and wrote subsequently that his preference was for Miln's for he perceived that one as the more 'authentic' Shakespeare production. In her paper, Kaori Kobayashi reminds us of Shôyô's thoughts: 'Tsubouchi regards the Miln Company as more "authentic" than the Allan Wilkie Company, because Miln's productions followed the "old-style productions of Shakespearean plays."'[29] Kobayashi goes on to suggest a possible reason why Shôyô found Miln's production more agreeable than Wilkie's. She states,

> Perhaps the main reason for Tsubouchi's preference for Miln was that Miln's productions were the very first performances by foreign actors he saw on stage. It is hardly surprising Tsubouchi was deeply moved by Shakespearean productions performed by Westerners, a form of theatre he had never seen before. Moreover Western art of any kind was the 'model' for Japanese intellectuals since the 1860s. Westernization was considered modernization. In order to be a

[28] Von Schwerin-High, *Shakespeare, Reception and Translation: Germany and Japan*, p. 65.
[29] Kaori Kobayashi, 'Shakespeare and National Identity: Tsubouchi Shoyo and His "Authentic" Shakespeare Productions in Japan', *Shakespeare*, 2.1 (2006), 59–76 (p. 60) <https://doi.org/10.1080/17450910600662919>

> nation state on an equal footing with Western powers, the Japanese believed it was essential to imitate Western culture and society.[30]

There is a gap in Kobayashi's logic here. If any Western performance of Shakespeare in Japan in the 1890s was seen as 'modern' — which is likely, as per our discussion above — this hardly makes a strong argument for it being 'old style' and 'authentic'. It is more likely that either Shôyô enjoyed them because they seemed modern (due to being Western) or he preferred them because they seemed old style and authentic, given that Shakespeare's plays were written and originally produced nearly 300 years earlier: but these two descriptions are hard to reconcile.

Perhaps Shôyô feared some companies would alter their 'authentic' state when touring abroad and believed that Miln's production did not do so, thereby favouring it? This seems unlikely when we read that Shôyô also preferred Miln's oratory style due to it being 'similar to traditional forms of artificial acting in Kabuki'.[31] *Kabuki*'s traditional forms are anything but modern, so again it is hard to match Kobayashi's suggestions. Kobayashi is not the only critic to struggle with reconciling these two aspects. Kishi and Bradshaw write of Shôyô,

> Clearly his command of the English language and his understanding of Shakespeare were exceptional, and even by today's standards he can be regarded as a very formidable Shakespearean scholar. Thus Tsubouchi Shôyô was one of the most Westernized Japanese intellectuals of the time. Since to many Japanese of the day Westernization was, rightly or wrongly, almost synonymous with modernization, we can safely regard him as one of the most modernized writers of the time.[32]

[30] Ibid., 62.
[31] Ibid., 62.
[32] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, p. 2.

But the idea that Shôyô was a 'modernized' writer because he was a 'Westernized' writer is challenged when we examine his 1911 production of *Hamlet* at the Imperial Theatre. Shôyô translated the text and directed the performance for the *Bungei Kyokai*, a literary society at what was to become Waseda University, that he established in 1906. The purpose of the *Bungei Kyokai* was to help to modernise the theatre, and to elevate the purpose of drama to interrogate effectively the social, political and behavioural aspects of contemporary life in Japan. Although the production was a box office success, Shôyô's translation, and accordingly the show itself, was criticised by many as being old fashioned and too difficult to understand.[33] Shôyô used extensive amounts of archaic *kanji*, so much so that it necessitated the insertion of *furigana* (a phonetic script that acts as a gloss next to certain *kanji* characters) into the text to help the actors understand the meaning and guide the pronunciation of the *kanji*. This reading gloss alongside the character (or above depending on whether the text runs right to left or vertically) is sometimes called *rubi* after the typeface Ruby (5.5) that was used extensively in Britain. Whilst it was not uncommon to add *furigana* to texts at this period, the choice to employ deliberately archaic *kanji* does not announce Shôyô as a 'modernised' writer as argued above. Many of the reviews at the time criticised the translation for being too difficult to follow due to the arcane language and claimed that, to keep up, one would have to have read the text before attending the performance.[34] Famously, the acclaimed novelist Sôseki Natsume criticised the production. Although praising Shôyô's efforts, Sôseki clearly believed that the text was too faithfully rendered and so was not accessible to the contemporary Japanese audience.[35] Sôseki suggested that faithful translations such as Shôyô's were fitting for the page but not the stage. This, of course, is reminiscent of some of the key questions already explored regarding the translating of Shakespeare, including whether there is a difference in translating for the stage or translating for the page.

[33] Powell, 'One Man's *Hamlet* in 1911 Japan: The Bungei Kyokai Production in the Imperial Theatre', pp. 38–52 (p. 48).
[34] Ibid., p. 48.
[35] Gallimore, 'Shôyô, Sôseki, and Shakespeare: Translations of Three Key Texts', 41–61.

Perhaps we can understand a little more of Shôyô's production through the lens of his preference for 'authentic' Western Shakespeare that, at the same time, had clear similarities to *kabuki* performance. Rather than a binary distinction such as old or modern, it is possible that Shôyô's translation was both modern and old fashioned at the same time. This fits well a Shakespeare translation, as the original plays are so heavily influenced by Shakespeare's own understanding of *Disputatio in utramque partem.*[36] Perhaps Shôyô believed the modern elements of Shakespeare's dramas did not come primarily from the presentation of the form: that is, gesture, movement, even text and diction that may have been out of date and closer to *kabuki* performance did not preclude a production from being modern if the world and the ideas a play interrogated were new and relevant to the emerging Japanese society of the Meiji Period. It is possible that such an approach offered access to the power of the play of which Kennedy speaks, even if it was not in the way most people expected. Shôyô's work remains hugely influential in the world of Japanese Shakespeare for various reasons, but likely at the heart of this is the immense commitment he had to Shakespeare, and the intense desire to ensure that Shakespeare became a firmly embedded part of Japanese theatre.

[36] McDonald, *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language*, p. 48.

CHAPTER THREE

Japanese socio-religious culture

We are reminded by the discussion regarding the politics at play during the Meiji period and even of the preference that Shôyô had for the Miln production, that no writer works in isolation, and this includes translators. Rather, there are numerous cultural forces that influence the choices they make, often at a subconscious level. The same is true of any group of actors and directors that present a performance, and even the audience who watches it. As highlighted above, there is literature that has unpacked how Japanese theatrical traditions have influenced how Japanese translators approached Shakespeare, and we have begun to explain how elements such as *The Society for the Improvement of Theatre* would have impacted on people such as Shôyô and his work. We should now highlight certain aspects of the socio-religious culture of Japan that are less often considered in this context and establish how they have may have framed how both practitioners and audiences have approached, and continue to approach, the work of Shakespeare. The purpose of the following outline is not to provide a detailed history of every religious movement in the country; rather, it aims to highlight some of the key points that have led to certain beliefs, for by doing so we may perceive how well Shakespeare's work fits into Japanese society and how these systems and beliefs can therefore augment the power of the plays and the access a Japanese audience may have to that power. The socio-religious elements of Japanese culture were, and continue to be, a large part of the frames of cultural-artistic influence (subjective, performative and receptive) that I have already suggested as essential to understanding foreign Shakespeare: I will unpack these in detail before exploring some specific examples of how Shakespeare's plays fit very well into these socio-religious elements yielding highly relevant and interesting interpretations.

Japanese socio-religious culture is formed primarily of three core parts: Shintoism, Buddhism and Confucianism (although it could be argued Confucianism forms less of a formal religion these days, its influence is clearly still present). This nebulous culture has been described as a large tree with Shinto

forming the roots (the national character and traditions), Confucianism the trunk (which provided the structure of Japanese society through ethics and institutions such as education and the law), and Buddhism the flowers (which represent much of the country's spiritual life).[1] This rather elegant metaphor is usually attributed to Prince Shotoku (574–622 CE), a regent Prince of Japan who did much to import and spread elements of Chinese culture in Japan. He is often known as the father of Japanese Buddhism, and he wrote the *Seventeen Articles Constitution* that outlined the position of a central government rather than the more disparate clan system, with the philosophies of Buddhism and Confucianism written down as important to the country, along with Shintoism. The articles articulated the importance of harmony (*wa)* and especially that the synthesis of ideas and beliefs is essential.[2] There is no doubt that this tree image simplifies a great deal and so inevitably omits some intricate amendments such as Taoism and Zen, and even Christianity which has grown since the Meiji Restoration; however, the metaphor accurately enforces the important idea that these various aspects of religion coexist harmoniously and that the Japanese may hold beliefs taken from each area simultaneously. Of the three religions Shinto is only one indigenous to Japan and so worth unpacking in the most detail at the outset.

Defining Shinto is a challenge for scholars. Most attempts to offer some sort of definition include a caveat along the lines of, 'Shinto is particularly difficult to explain, even for most Japanese' or, 'It is not easy to provide a neutral and historically accurate definition of Shinto.'[3] This difficulty is due to a number of reasons: primarily this is because of its age as a system of religious thought, its origins being a little hazy, and the fact that it has assimilated certain ideas recognisably belonging to other religions or cultures. Some scholars challenge the view that Shinto is a religion at all, arguing that conceptualizing it in that way makes understanding its influence in Japanese history more challenging, as it does not share

[1] Carlo Caldarola, 'Japan: Religious Syncretism in a Secular Society', in *Religions and Societies, Asia and the Middle East*, ed. by Carlo Caldarola (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter & Co., 1982), pp. 629–50 (p. 630). Google book.
[2] *Japan: Selected Readings*, ed. by Hyman Kublin (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1968), pp. 31–34.
[3] Thomas P. Kasulis, *Shinto: The Way Home* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2004), p. 1; Aike P. Rots, *Shinto, Nature and Ideology in Contemporary Japan: Making Sacred Forests* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), p. 25.

several of the characteristics usually associated with religions. One recent survey has indicated a separation between whether the Japanese believe themselves to belong to a specific religion, and what we would term the performing of religious acts. In constructing a survey to gain data on religious beliefs in Japan, Michael K. Roemer added a specific box to be ticked if a participant took part in rituals but was not religious, which proved a very popular choice. In explaining this he writes, 'In Japan, rituals are often interpreted as "traditions" or "cultural" and not explicitly referred to by respondents as "religious."'[4] Other academics go further to help us understand why this discrepancy exists at a subconscious level in the minds of many Japanese: 'Because its basic values and patterns of behaviour have filtered into Japanese culture as part of tradition, most Japanese seldom reflect on Shinto as a "religion" in which they consciously participate.'[5] As has been noted elsewhere regarding followers of religion in Japan, 'in surveys of Japanese religion the number of believers of the various religions is generally twice the actual population of Japan.'[6] John Breen and Mark Teeuwen tell us,

> According to official statistics, Shinto is Japan's largest religion, with more than a hundred million 'adherents', a number that amounts to well over 80 percent of all Japanese. Yet only a small percentage of the populace identify themselves as 'Shintoists' in questionnaires conducted by the media or by Shinto organizations.[7]

This reflects the notion that the shrine culture of Japan is seen more as an inherently Japanese activity rather than an overtly religious one. By this I do not mean it relates to nationalism only, but rather that there is very little consciously perceived as relating to one specific religious system of belief. This of course is not specific only to Shinto: the same is true of the Buddhist rituals and the Confucian influences.

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[4] Michael K. Roemer, 'Japanese Survey Data on Religious Attitudes, Beliefs and Practices in the Twenty First Century', in *Handbook of Contemporary Japanese Religions*, ed. by Inken Prohl and John K. Nelson (Leiden: Brill, 2012), pp. 23–58 (p. 34). Ebook.
[5] Kasulis, *Shinto: The Way Home*, p. 1.
[6] Stephen Covell, 'Religious Culture', in *The Cambridge Companion to Modern Japanese Culture*, ed. by Yoshio Sugimoto (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 147–48.
[7] John Breen and Mark Teeuwen, *A New History of Shinto* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), p. 1.

An essential point to remember is what Kenneth G. Henshall refers to as Japanese 'pragmatic religiosity' as he tells us that, 'To this day the Japanese continue to particularise religion, following one religion in one context and another religion in another context.'[8] Therefore the apparent demarcation in the tree metaphor can appear a little extreme, for the separation is not nearly as clear. For example, Shinto's influence can be felt in aspects of the population's spiritual beliefs including how they think and feel about spirituality itself. One reason why the Japanese even today do not struggle to partake of both Shinto and Buddhist rituals is that 'the doctrines of the two religions complement each other so neatly'.[9] Shinto's inability to be defined too precisely allows for a significant amount of flexibility in how individuals react to its teachings; after the introduction to Japan of other religions, this lack of clear definition also allowed Shinto to absorb and assimilate new influences, so as to allow for co-existence. In short, most Japanese would likely bundle together all the different Shinto, Buddhist, Confucian and even, at a push, some of the adapted Christian activities in which they engage throughout their lives, and think of them merely as stemming from the same world of Japanese culture.

The direct translation of the word *Shinto* is 'The Way of the Spirits' and one of its key tenets is the worship of *kami,* especially those of the natural world. Before the shrines were constructed, worship in Shinto was directed at nature itself, with mountains, rivers, forests, seas, the sun, the moon and other natural elements being revered. Mankind and nature are thought to be closely related, or even component parts of the same entity. *Kami* are spirits who live in, are, and also represent elements in the world: for example, there are *kami* of water, fire, rice, ancestors and even more abstract ideas such as business success and fertility are conceptualized in this way. There is, in fact, no formal way of identifying the full number of *kami* for anything that exists can be animated and so can be said to have or be a *kami*. These *kami* are accommodated in shrines. If the proper respects are paid to these spirits through specific

[8] Kenneth G. Henshall, *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*, 3rd edn (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), p. 22.
[9] H. Paul Varney, *Japanese Culture*, 3rd edn (Honolulu: University of Hawaii press, 1984), p. 20.

ceremonies they can serve to improve a person's happiness, health, wealth and other human needs and desires: indeed, much of the interaction between humans and the *kami* through rituals is designed to help with daily life.[10] The two central *Shinto* texts were written in the eighth century: the *Kojiki (Records of Ancient Matters)* in 712 A.D, and the *Nihongi (Chronicles of Japan)* in around 720 A.D. These detail beliefs such as the original *kami* and the creation of the islands of Japan. Whilst clearly mythology, they have been — like many national myths in the world — treated as history at certain times in Japan, and especially influenced the heightened nationalism that led in a large way to the Japanese invasions heralding their involvement in the Second World War. For example, the claim that the Japanese were racially superior on account of their unique creation, and that the Emperor was descended from the Sun Goddess (*Amaterasu-omikami*) are found in the texts; such narratives consequently played a part in the start of the Sino-Japanese war (1937–1945) and the Second World War. Among its teachings, Shinto specifies a devotion to nature through worship of the *kami* often through specific national or regional festivals (*matsuri*)*;* it also promotes a devout reverence to one's family and ancestors, who must be respected and who watch over and aid the living. The physical expression of Shinto as seen in Japan are the shrines wherein these *kami* are said to reside (as opposed to the many temples throughout the country, which are Buddhist). There are c.100,000 shrines, with c. 20,000 Shinto priests who attend to these. The concept of purity, so prevalent in Shinto, can be seen at these shrines with water (and sometimes salt) being used in the rituals. Despite its age and the ways in which it has changed over the years, there is little doubt that Shintoism remains an important influence on how the Japanese think and behave: as we are told, 'the belief in ancestor worship, the spirits of the dead, and the idea of an intimate connection between men and *kami* remains widespread in modern Japan'.[11]

[10] Roger J. Davies, *Japanese Culture: The Religious and Philosophical Foundations* (Tokyo: Tuttle Publishing, 2016), p. 40. Ebook.
[11] Ibid., p. 53.

Nevertheless, Shintoism during the beginning of the Meiji period underwent significant change; this change is influential to our understanding of Shakespeare's reception in the country. As discussed, one drive of the government during the early part of that period was to reinvent Japan as worthy of international respect, especially in the eyes of the West. A component part of this was a reassertion of nationalism, based on refocusing the nation to a large extent away from religions that originated elsewhere, such as Buddhism, back onto Shintoism. This was part of a wider nostalgia that was driven by the state, a feeling that Japan should return to a past where its purity, innocence and strength were greater, often termed the *kokugaku* movement (translated as the 'nativism' movement). As such, on 6 April 1868, the new Meiji government decreed that Shinto rituals were to be reintroduced formally throughout the country. The Shinto shrines were appropriated by the government as sites of specific government rites where reverence for the *kami* and the state could overlap. It is fair to say that between 1868 and 1900, there was some back and forth between Shintoism and Buddhism regarding the importance of each religion to the nation, but from 1900 to 1945, State Shintoism and emperor worship was central to the rising nationalism within the country. There was discussion and disagreement about which particular rituals and concepts from Shinto should be reintroduced, for without a more formal system of teaching, Shinto was open to this type of cherry-picking to suit the government's needs. One area that stood out was the following: Shinto had adapted by expanding its own original premise with an adopted tenet of Confucianism, of taking the idea of ancestor worship and applying it to the entire country. That is, citizens were encouraged to worship emperor as the father of the nation, who was descended from the Sun Goddess; the citizens, of course, had only recently returned to being ruled by a single emperor after years of more disparate rule by the Shogunate. After the Sino-Japanese war (1894–95) and the Russo-Japanese war (1904–5), Shinto grew further in national importance. This was due to the newly created military shrines, where the Japanese killed in these wars would be enshrined, and this relationship between militarisation and Shinto would continue to develop up to the Second World War. Despite the scholarly

debate as to exact degree of influence, 'State Shinto' played a real part in the lead up to the Second World War.[12]

Unlike religions such as Christianity or Islam, Shinto does not teach that there is a perfect deity. Like the Gods of ancient Greece or Rome, the *kami* are flawed in a similar way to humans. This, coupled with the fact that there are no texts directly from the spirits themselves, means that Shinto does not teach moral absolutes. It can profess different views simultaneously, and these may be hard to reconcile; therefore, holding opposing views at the same time can be quite natural to many Japanese, albeit on a subconscious level. When comparing Oriental perspectives with those of Europeans and Americans, McGilchrist notes that the research has pointed to this. He writes,

> East Asians use a more 'dialectical' mode of reasoning: they are more willing to accept, to entertain or even seek out contradictory perspectives on the same issue. They see the world in which they live as complex, containing inherently conflicting elements.[13]

Such a concept fits excellently with the various worlds of Shakespeare's plays which often highlight a similar duality. Audiences can have different ideas about many of Shakespeare's characters and narratives. For example, is King Lear deserving of pity or disdain? Are Romeo and Juliet hopeless romantics devoted to love or merely petulant children? Is Henry V a marauding invader or a patriotic defender? Is Macbeth responsible for his actions or is he being controlled by external forces? Or can all these suggestions be true, to some degree, at the same time? Different productions have emphasised different answers to these questions; but the competing perspectives are accessible when one reads Shakespeare because the plays can be interpreted from different points of view. Scholars have pointed to this idea: Russ McDonald talks of 'perspectivism' and Jonathan Bate calls it the 'aspectuality of truth'.[14]

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[12] Helen Hardacre, *Shinto: A History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), pp. 355–402.
[13] McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*, p. 455.
[14] Jonathan Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare* (London: Picador, 1997), p. 327; McDonald, *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language*, p. 49.

When seen through the lens of Shintoism, this type of duality exists in the world itself, irrespective of one's perspective or aspect. If Japanese readers and audiences are more likely to see conflicting elements in the world, then Shakespeare's plays, that so often contain 'an awareness of the competing claims of incompatible interpretations' are well suited to their implicit understanding of existence: namely, that more than one point of view can be true simultaneously, despite being conflicting at times.[15]

This idea is related to the Japanese sense of harmony (*wa*), and the consequent need to accept different ideas to maintain this harmony. But within Shinto it can be seen in the way that the *kami* developed over the years to often have different roles that can seem incompatible; this is accentuated when compared to the Christian teachings of a perfect deity that maintains his divinity in everything he does. For example, W. G. Aston tells us of the sun goddess,

> The Sun is not only the brilliant heavenly being whose retirement to a cave leaves the world to darkness, she is a queen, a child, and a mother — in a miraculous fashion. She speaks, weaves, wears armour, sows seed, and does many other things which have nothing to do with her solar quality.[16]

Here different truths exist simultaneously: the sun goddess remains a heavenly being with immense power, able to plunge the world into darkness; but she is also a female with a simple life who plants crops and weaves ornaments, utterly removed, as Aston writes, from her essence as the sun goddess. Similarly, she is 'much the most prominent member of the Shinto Pantheon, and is described as the Ruler of Heaven and unrivalled in dignity'.[17] Yet this powerful goddess also feels fear and is not all-knowing, for she was famously tricked by other *kami* into coming out of the cave in which she hid.[18] This differs from

[15] McDonald, *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language*, p. 49.
[16] W. G. Aston, *Shinto: The Ancient Religion of Japan* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 12. Ebook.
[17] Ibid., p. 36.
[18] Toshio Akima, 'The Origins of the Grand Shrine of Ise and the Cult of the Sun Goddess Amaterasu Ômikami', *Japan Review*, 4 (1993), 141–198.

Christianity, for even though Jesus took a human form, his divinity is constantly emphasised as his defining characteristic.[19] With these apparent contradictions being central in Shinto, seeing Shylock as both a victim and an exploiter in equal measure in *The Merchant of Venice,* or understanding that Kate may genuinely love and not love Petruchio at the end of *The Taming of the Shrew*, may be simpler to accept for many Japanese. W. G. Aston argues further that the *kami* are like the Greek and Roman Gods in their duality of being (that is, being both an entity in nature and an independent god that represents that entity); he tells us that Shakespeare inherited and used such figures in his work. Aston writes, 'In Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Iris is at once the rainbow and an anthropomorphic messenger of the gods. Phoebus is not only the sun but a deity distinct from that luminary, though associated with it, as in the story of Phaeton.'[20] The similarity with the *kami* is clear. Through informing us of the presence of these entities in Shakespeare's work, Aston shows another way in which the influence of Shinto gives a Japanese audience the ability to understand aspects of Shakespeare's drama, despite the probability that this audience is not intimately aware of the Greek and Roman gods.

As the tree metaphor implies, Buddhism and Confucianism are not completely separate elements in the overall religious culture of Japan, but rather are attached or even intertwined with Shintoism in numerous ways. Originating in India in the fifth century and migrating through China and Korea, Buddhism has been a powerful influence on Japan, especially on the thoughts and rituals surrounding death. Despite the differences between countries and sects, at the heart of Buddhism are the four Holy Truths: firstly, that pain and suffering (called *dukkha* in Sanskrit) are present in the very fabric of human existence; secondly, that this pain is caused by man's unyielding worldly desires; thirdly, that the cessation of this pain only comes from the cessation of this desire; fourthly, there is a specific path that one can follow away from the pain by applying the Buddhist teachings. The very idea of truth in Buddhism, however, is one that cannot be understood by rational thought, but rather it can only be arrived

[19] *The Holy Bible: Revised Standard Version* (Glasgow: William Collins Sons & Co. Ltd, 1971).
[20] Aston, *Shinto: The Ancient Religion of Japan*, p. 12–13.

at by someone who has experienced life and followed the path set by Buddha to reject material and other worldly ideals as transitory. The ultimate state of *nirvana*, and therefore the end of the never-ending cyclical system of rebirth, is the goal of existence.

When Buddhism arrived in Japan in the sixth century, Shinto was dominant but not formally acknowledged as the religion of Japan, for the reasons discussed above. There was dispute in the Yamato Court over the degree of influence that each religion should be able to exert, and when the court accepted Buddhism formally, this set up a rivalry between those supporting the indigenous religion of Shinto ('champions of the kami') and those who favoured the new ways of thinking that had arrived recently from the continent ('Buddhism's advocates').[21] The Buddhist temples are usually bigger than the shrines of Shinto, and there are four times as many Buddhist clerics compared with Shinto clerics in the country.[22]

I am in accord with William E. Deal and Brian Ruppert who argue that most scholars have, in their explorations of the Meiji Period, underestimated or even ignored the influence of religion in the formation of the social and cultural lives of the Japanese population since the Meiji period. They further contend that perhaps one of the most potent influences of Buddhism was the anti-Buddhist sentiment that drove a great deal of change in how Buddhism was enacted.[23] Yet, despite elements such as the decree in 1868 specifying the formal separation of Shinto and Buddhism, the deep nature of the belief system that began taking root in the country in the sixth century could not be eradicated by removing the physical representations of Buddhist life. These Fundamental Truths of Buddhism are essential to the Japanese appreciation of Shakespeare. James Howe has articulated some of the ways in which Shakespeare's plays

[21] Helen Hardacre, *Shinto: A History*, p. 24.
[22] Bernhard Scheid, 'Shinto Shrines: Traditions and Transformations', in *Handbook of Contemporary Japanese Religions*, ed. by Inken Prohl and John K. Nelson (Brill: Leiden, 2012), pp. 75–106 (p. 81). Ebook.
[23] William E. Deal and Brian Ruppert, *Buddhism in Japan: A Cultural History* (Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell, 2015), p. 209.

can be read through the lens of Buddhist teachings, especially the idea of the self and one's identity as explored through the various challenges and struggles that Shakespeare's characters undergo.[24] One can see instantly how the Fundamental Truths of Buddhism would frame Shakespeare's tragedies perfectly and allow them even more direct relevance to the everyday existence of the audience. Melvin Sterne argues that Buddhism is a very fitting lens through which to read *King Lear* and to receive the moral teachings that can be found in the religion itself.[25] In the same way that many Japanese are unconscious of their religious affinity overall, the same lack of specific knowledge can be found within the world of Japanese Buddhism. Even though there are various schools of Buddhism within Japan, most Japanese do not notice these in their lives nor in the rituals they perform, or perhaps it is fairer to say that they do not pay any heed to these differences particularly.

Finally, any exploration of the socio-religious fabric of Japanese society must include at least a brief discussion of Confucianism. During the Zhou Dynasty, Confucius (551–479 BCE), was a teacher of socio-politics and philosophy. Despite not being particularly popular during his lifetime, his teachings were collected and written down by his disciples into a book called *The Analects.*[26] There is no deity in the teaching of Confucius; the teaching are more a moral code and suggestions on how best to organise society. In this way, Confucianism pays specific regard to ethics, how to be a good person, and how governments can rule well. Confucianism concerns itself with 'only right thinking and right living, as shown particularly through loyalty to the ruler, filial piety to one's father, and strict observance of proper social ritual and etiquette'.[27] The ideas came through China and Korea to Japan in sixth century and much of the thinking, such as how political rulers should rule by example or how family relationships should be

[24] James Howe, *A Buddhist's Shakespeare: Affirming Self-Deconstructions* (Rutherford: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1994).
[25] Melvin Sterne, 'Shakespeare, Buddha, and *King Lear*', *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 14 (2007) https://blogs.dickinson.edu/buddhistethics/2010/05/10/buddhist-lessons-from-king-lear/ [accessed 20 Jan 2021]
[26] Confucius, *The Analects*, trans. by Edward Gilman Slingerland (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 2003).
[27] Edwin O. Reischauer and Marius B. Jansen, *The Japanese Today: Change and Continuity*, Enlarged edn (Cambridge: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1988), p. 203.

respected, became prominent in Japan, especially during the Edo Period (1603–1868). Like Shinto and Buddhism, Confucianism underwent many changes and was adapted over the years into the formal schooling systems, as well as legal and civil service education of China and Korea before Japan. Upon arriving in Japan, Confucianism found that it blended well with the established concepts of Shintoism, and some of the Buddhist ideas, although some have argued that it adapted itself to Japan in particular. Henshall writes on Confucianism and its place in the country,

> Confucianists were very much concerned with knowing one's place, honouring relationships, respecting order and doing one's duty. Because of these values, Confucianism was revived and promoted by the Tokugawa shôgunate. In some aspects, however, it was modified to suit Japan. For example, Chinese Confucianism allowed for showing loyalty to conscience, but in Japan this became narrowed to loyalty to one's superior.[28]

After the Meiji Restoration of 1868, there was a sustained and organised assault on Confucianism, as the State strove to establish Shinto (the indigenous religion of the country) as the true and only religion of Japan. This included removing 'former Tokugawa and domanial institutions of Confucian religious practice and education' and 'the suppression of religious activity across the board'.[29] Despite the Treaty of Amity and Commerce signed with the U.S.A in 1858, Christianity remained outlawed; although by 1873 a 'tacit toleration of Christianity' was present in Japan.[30] Nevertheless, much like Buddhism, Confucianism had become so ingrained onto the Japanese psyche that many of the beliefs and values continue to influence Japan to this day. As some scholars writing on modern Japan have noted 'Almost no one considers himself a Confucianist today, but in a sense almost all Japanese are.'[31]

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[28] Henshall, *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*, p. 63.
[29] Kiri Paramore, *Japanese Confucianism: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 141.
[30] Jun'ichi Isomae, 'The Conceptual Formation of the Category 'Religion' in Modern Japan: Religion, State, Shintō', *Journal of Religion in Japan*, 1 (2012), 226–45 (p. 231) <10.1163/22118349-12341236> [accessed 13 Oct 2021]
[31] Reischauer and Jansen, *The Japanese Today: Change and Continuity*, p. 204.

Perhaps the most important remaining influences of Confucianism for this argument are those of filial piety and family devotion, including to one's ancestors, and the maintaining of harmony in relationships, including the relationship between rulers and subjects. These are instincts that are still felt strongly in the population of much of the country. Some studies have demonstrated already how Shakespeare's plays resonate with Confucian values, such as the Three Cardinal Guides (a ruler guides their subjects, a father guides his sons, and a husband guides his wife) and the Five Constant Virtues that influence such relationships, which are benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom, and faithfulness. For example, seen through a Confucian lens, *The Winter's Tale* foregrounds the relationship between Leontes' behaviour as a husband and his ability as a king, and the play, therefore, interrogates this connection to a greater extent than we usually find in productions or critical readings in the West.

> According to the Confucian values, it is the ruler who guides the subject. But when the ruler is dictatorial and cannot distinguish wrong from right, it must lead to the worsening of the relationship between the ruler and his subjects, or when the king lacks of the necessary qualities to rule his country, such as benevolence, the loyal subjects would flee to other countries. This is very true in *The Winter's Tale*. According to the Confucian values, it is the husband who guides the wife. If the family lives in harmony, all business and family affairs will prosper. The husband is in the guiding position, he plays a very important role in handing [sic] the family ethical relations, but once he does something wrong and cannot distinguish right from wrong and treats his wife bad, it will surely damage the family and cause troubles. If the king himself has a bad relation [sic] with his wife, then he sets a bad example for his people, and it will lead to the instability of the whole country.[32]

[32] Z. F. Qian and L. L. Han, '*The Winter's Tale* by Shakespeare and the Confucian Values', *Journal of Literature and Art Studies*, 3.6 (2013), 333–43 (p. 340–341) <10.17265/2159-5836/2013.06.001> [accessed 13 Oct 2021]

Such a reading allows *The Winter's Tale* to be about both jealousy in personal relationships, and also about kingship and the ability to rule, because the two things are intimately connected. We in the West may question whether Leontes' jealous treatment of his wife bears any relation to his ability to rule a country well, but we can easily conclude that the two are not necessarily connected: however, his inability to rule well becomes obvious when framed through a Confucian lens, and therefore his actions have far greater consequences for more people in the world of the play.

The argument I am making here about Japanese socio-religious culture can be summed up in the following way. Firstly, although the religions of Japan can be separated and defined, they have adapted and blended with each other for so long that it is, in reality, almost impossible to separate them in practice. Although it may seem initially like a reductive generalisation, for most purposes it is legitimate to talk of Japanese religious or cultural practices that encompass these various influences so firmly established in the society. Secondly, whilst I am in no way suggesting that every single person in Japan believes in and behaves according to these ideas, the combination of religious strands does ensure that many Japanese today adhere to what we would term religious beliefs and actions, without conceptualizing these beliefs and actions as overtly religious. Thirdly, the mixing of these religious influences has resulted in a number of key tenets that are emphasised by one and then reinforced by another of these individual religious strands; these blended strands still permeate society in subtle but definite ways in the present day. They include, but aren't limited to:

1. A strong and often personal relationship with the natural world,
2. Filial piety and ancestor worship, including both within the family and relating to the nation more widely,
3. Ideas such as harmony (*wa*), indebtedness or obligation (*on*), or nothingness (*mu*) that pervade both personal relationships and more formal and wider relationships within society.

There is one particular result of this that is worth noting regarding Shakespeare studies. We can see from the expanding scholarship that the interest in Shakespeare and Buddhism is growing, as is the interest in

Shakespeare and Confucianism. Yet Buddhism and Shakespeare together as a single area of exploration stands alone; and the studies relating to Confucius and Shakespeare pertain largely to China. It seems that, possibly due to the blend of the various religious schools and the lack of explicit religious following, few scholars are willing to make the fuller connection with Shakespeare and Japan. Once more, we need to be sensitive to generalisations; but as has been described above, the socio-religious fabric of Japanese culture is evident in the daily existence of many Japanese, even without the consciousness of a specific belief system. With this fuller appreciation it becomes clear that Shakespeare's work can resonate vibrantly within these frameworks, in ways in which we in the West may not be able to appreciate to the same extent. Therefore, let us concisely explore some examples to understand better how a Japanese audience may relate strongly to certain aspects of Shakespeare's narratives through such a point of view.

There are many instances in Shakespeare's plays where these key ideas within of Japanese religious culture are interrogated; these instances often allow for an increase in the resonance of some part of the story and so offer greater access to the power of the play in certain ways for a Japanese audience. For instance, filial piety is interrogated, especially a child's devotion and duty to their parents, on numerous occasions. Think of King Lear and his treatment by his daughters, or Leonato's excessive reaction to Hero's supposed infidelity before her wedding in *Much Ado About Nothing*. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Egeus demands that his daughter Hermia marry the man he has picked rather than Lysander, the man she loves; Duke Theseus' subsequent comments to Hermia highlight the force of this request in Athenian society, for he says, 'To you your father should be as a god.'[33] Theseus' strength of feeling is reminiscent of the teachings of the religions within Japan, and it by this strength of feeling that the stakes of the drama are increased. When we hear the line in English, we recognise the point, but we also hear the hyperbole; but to a Japanese audience, this degree of devotion to a father feels closer to the everyday reality taught to many, and this makes Hermia's dilemma more distressing. Staying with *A*

[33] William Shakespeare, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', in *Complete Works*, ed. by Peter Alexander (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1994). I. 1. 47.

Midsummer Night's Dream, we may think how the Shinto teachings regarding the closeness of man to the natural world and the *kami*, and their celebratory festivals (*matsuri*), fit perfectly with the fairies, forest adventures, and the nuptial celebrations of Duke Theseus and Hippolyta. Reminiscent of the public nature of these Shinto festivals, Theseus tells us that his wedding should be a celebration for everyone in Athens, saying to Philostrate, 'Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments' and in the following line he orders him to 'Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth.'[34] (Is it too far a stretch in interpretation to conceptualise the 'pert and nimble spirit of mirth' as a *kami*?) In addition, *matsuri* occur in different parts of Japan to celebrate crops and agriculture: the *Otaue matsuri*, for example, is a festival that celebrates the planting of rice, a food of immense importance throughout Japan. That this type of *matsuri* is firmly embedded in Japanese culture allows for substantial resonance when we remember Titania's accusation that Oberon has caused an imbalance in nature, and we can imagine the suffering that the human population will endure because of it:

> The ox hath therefore stretched his yoke in vain
> The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
> Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard;
> The folds stand empty in the drowned field
> And crows are fatted with the murrion flock[35]

The connection between the human world and the spiritual world of the *kami* is emphasised in many *matsuri*: communities create parades, stalls, and enjoy music and dancing, to celebrate the *kami* and what they represent. In the final scene of the play, the fairies — many of whom are also spirits of things found in nature such as Cobweb, Moth and Mustardseed — come to the Court to dance and sing in celebration of the wedding and to bless the children of Theseus and Hippolyta. Titania commands her train, 'Hand in

[34] Shakespeare, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', I. 1. 13–14.
[35] Ibid., II. 1. 93–97.

hand with fairy grace, we will sing and bless this place.'[36] This feels very much as if the fairies are celebrating their own *matsuri* with a similar focus on the processes of the natural world being central to their festivities.

Man's relationship with the natural world is examined in the Forest of Arden, for instance, in *As You Like It*, or in *The Tempest*, the play that Tom MacFaul argues is 'Shakespeare's crowning contemplation of the natural world as a whole'.[37] *Wa* (harmony) is essential to the narrative of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*: the four lovers imbalance of affection is central to the plot, and the quarrel between Oberon and Titania reveals a lack of harmony and its consequences, with Titania admitting, 'And this same progeny of evils comes / From our debate, from our dissension.'[38] Gallimore tells us that Shôyô himself noted the similarities between this play and Shinto and Buddhist influences on *bunraku* plays; Gallimore writes that Shôyô suggests 'the play's hybridity of folklore and classical mythology is comparable to the mixing of animist Shinto and Buddhist elements in *bunraku*, the classical puppet plays that are closely related to *kabuki*'.[39] The connections between *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and the socio-religious society of Japan are apparent: in his essay *Teaching Shakespeare in Japan*, Peter Milward writes that this play was his students' favourite comedy; it is highly probably that the numerous resonances with the socio-religious culture of Japan are the core reason why.[40]

The list of resonances that strike us in this way continues, especially when considering the Meiji Period when Shakespeare's work arrived in Japan. Think, for instance, how *Richard II* can take on new layers of meaning if an audience believes not only in the divine right of kings (a concept that we have in

[36] Ibid., V. 1. 388–389.
[37] Tom MacFaul, *Shakespeare and the Natural World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), p. 43.
[38] Shakespeare, 'A Midsummer Night's Dream', II. 1. 115–116.
[39] Gallimore, 'Canonising Shakespeare in 1920s Japan', 8–22 (p. 15).
[40] Milward, 'Teaching Shakespeare in Japan', 228–33 (p. 231).

the West) but more than this, that the country's ruler is a god himself, being descended from the sun goddess. In this play, Bolingbroke remarks,

> See, see, King Richard doth himself appear,
> As doth the blushing discontented sun
> From out the fiery portal of the east,
> When he perceives the envious clouds are bent
> To dim his glory and to stain the track
> Of his bright passage to the occident.[41]

This personification of the sun is an effective metaphor; we can imagine Richard comporting himself in a way that invites comparison with the sun's perceived emotion when clouds appear and block the rays. But more impactful layers are added to the metaphor when an audience is familiar with the story of *Amaterasu-omikami* (the sun goddess) whose supposed descendants include the line of Emperors that ruled Japan. Richard's behaviour and Bolingbroke's subsequent remarks draw attention to this supernatural lineage. This interrogates more directly (and more interestingly) the idea of the right of an individual to rule, but also the right of a people to remove a king who does not rule well, even if he is descended from the sun goddess.

The Buddhist idea of nothingness (*mu*) as spiritual enlightenment can also be seen in Shakespeare plays. For example, King Lear states, 'Nothing will come of nothing.'[42] This line is layered with irony when read this way. On the surface, Lear is suggesting that there will be nothing given to Cordelia by her claim that she has nothing to say; yet when seen as the Buddhist idea that 'nothing' offers enlightenment, Lear is telling the audience that the truth and revelation will come from Cordelia's response, despite this

[41] William Shakespeare, 'King Richard the Second', in *Complete Works*, ed. by Peter Alexander (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1994), III. 3. 62–67.
[42] William Shakespeare, 'King Lear', in *Complete Works*, ed. by Peter Alexander (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1994), I. 1. 89.

meaning being hidden from Lear when he speaks. This, of course, is exactly what happens in the play, as Cordelia's line sets in motion the entire drama. In *Timon of Athens,* Timon tells us, 'And nothing brings me all things.'[43] We can debate the meaning of 'nothing' in this context and it is often thought to relate to death, but it can also be read that it is only by embracing the rejection of material goods such as gold and riches that Timon can be fulfilled. Hamlet famously toys linguistically with 'nothing' throughout the play and all of these instances hint at a similar exploration of this concept.[44] Indeed, the idea is so prevalent in *Hamlet* that Amy Cook claims that, in this play, 'few things are as powerful as nothing'.[45] Cook's argument that the power of 'nothing' in *Hamlet* relies on Cognitive Blending Theory is persuasive, and also points to the Buddhist teachings that 'nothing' can offer us a great deal depending on how we exactly we choose to conceptualise it. Further to what is in the language of the plays, we also see how specific visual aspects of these socio-religious beliefs have been used to help frame Japanese productions, which work especially well: for instance, the *NINAGAWA Macbeth* placed the entirety of the action within a large *butsudan*, (a Buddhist shrine often found within the home for praying to ancestors). Such a theatrical framework drew explicit attention to the abstract ideas that were, quite literally, now within the setting of the play, such as agency, destiny and family relationships.

In the West there are inevitably aspects of Shakespeare's plays that no longer fit easily into our modern society: whether these are jokes that no longer make sense or the particular treatment of individuals or outdated social pressures that demand behaviour that the majority of Western society no longer deems necessary. Yet we often see these as part of the rich fabric of Shakespeare's work, and we accept them for we often feel that there is a point being made in the drama which still applies despite the outdated way in which it may be presented. For example, when watching the incident already described in

[43] William Shakespeare, 'Timon of Athens', in *Complete Works*, ed. by Peter Alexander (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1994), V. 1. 186.
[44] Shakespeare, 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', II. 2. 248–249; III. 2. 64; III. 2. 93–116.
[45] Amy Cook, 'Staging Nothing: "Hamlet" and Cognitive Science', *SubStance*, 35 (2006), 83–99 (p. 83) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/415288> [accessed 4 Oct 2021]

A Midsummer Night's Dream, we do not dwell on Egeus' demand that Hermia marry a man he chooses or she must die as being wholly incompatible with the norms of British culture in the twenty-first century, even if the production is set in the present-day; this is because the points being made, about choosing whom you love and being willing to make sacrifices for that relationship, still strike the vast majority of an audience as pertinent. We identify the extreme nature of Egeus' demand as foreign to the culture in which we live now in the U.K., yet we accept it (or perhaps ignore it) as part of the overall packaging within which something else of relevance is being presented. But these very bits may, in fact, be highly resonant to another culture and so offer new layers of relevance and, accordingly, the possibility of a greater emotional impact on a reader or audience. As discussed, a Japanese audience witnessing this scene in a Japanese production may have quite a different response to the Western counterparts. (This point is clearly relevant to all cultures that continue to have a large number of arranged marriages; detailed discussions about the other national cultures within the U.K. where arranged marriage continues as a practice, are important also, with scholars such as Varsha Panjwani, for instance, exploring arranged marriage and its perception in British-Asian Shakespeare productions.)[46] The distance between Shakespeare's original work and the present-day U.K. is larger than we often realise, especially when compared to certain other present-day cultures. Even if some scholarship recognises this, I have already argued why there are plenty of people in the U.K. still likely to believe that Shakespeare's original plays are indeed closer to our present-day culture in the U.K. than they are to the present-day culture of other countries, even if they recognise that the language he uses and the worlds Shakespeare's writes about are no longer modern. Yet, as can be seen, presenting Shakespeare in another culture creates new meanings from Shakespeare's original script that cannot be accessed by most of the modern audiences in the West when watching a production in English. Many in the U.K. are aware of arranged marriages and can easily sympathise with Hermia to some extent; yet there is no doubt that the closer one gets to the lived

[46] Varsha Panjwani, 'Much Ado About Knotting: Arranged Marriages in British-Asian Shakespeare Productions', in *Shakespeare, Race and Performance: The Diverse Bard*, ed. by Delia Jarrett-Macauley (London: Routledge, 2017), pp. 96–109. Ebook.

experience of arranged marriage and its consequences, the more one can truly empathise with Hermia and the more impactful this part of the story becomes.

The above section begins to detail some of the specific beliefs of Japanese socio-religious cultures, and some of their startlingly direct explorations in Shakespeare's texts, be they lines from the plays, or moments within the narratives. I am not in any way suggesting that everything found in Shakespeare's texts fits effortlessly into Japanese socio-religious traditions for this certainly is not the case; and we must of course remain aware of those within the Japanese population who are less influenced by the socio-religious forces. There are other religious influences in the country too, such as Christianity, that have had an impact on the culture and other strands of religious thought less prevalent in Japanese society. There are also non-religious influences on Japanese, society especially since the end of the Second World War.[47] Additionally, the three key areas of religion in Japan that I have detailed here do not always offer the most accommodating platforms for Shakespeare: in Confucianism, for instance, certain texts detail the 'five infirmities of women' (indocility, discontent, slander, jealousy, and silliness), which accounts to some extent for the highly unfortunate perception of the inferiority of women by many in societies still influenced by Confucianism.[48] Yet we would surely struggle to reconcile such descriptions with the brilliant independence and wit of Beatrice in *Much Ado About Nothing*, or the manic and manipulative power of Lady Macbeth (although it could be argued that 'discontent' could fit quite nicely). Confucianism also contains a degree of didacticism in its teachings that appear at odds with the more interpretable morality and humanity of Shakespeare's dramas, although, as noted, Shintoism is capable of dealing with this more effectively. However, even this didacticism was found to be useful to understanding the value of Shakespeare by some during the Meiji Period, as the religious teachings could serve as a foil in that sense. For instance, Shôyô found Shakespeare's plays 'less judgmental' and believe they contained a 'more thoroughly artistic view of human affairs the Confucian didacticism of Tokugawa

[47] Michio Nagai, 'Social Change in Postwar Japan' in *The Developing Economies*, 7.4 (1969), pp. 395–405.
[48] Henshall, *A History of Japan: From Stone Age to Superpower*, p. 63.

literature'.[49] This challenge to the Tokugawa literature perhaps supports the aforementioned idea that Shakespeare was a 'modern' playwright to be spoken of and performed alongside the likes of Ibsen, despite clearly being from a bygone era. Irrespective of the language being far from contemporary and the worlds depicted being from the past, how the drama asked questions of the audience and their society may have been considered important in Japan. In certain ways, the balance of apparent relevance in the plot and characters was coupled with a new way of conceptualizing society that was appealing to the likes of Shôyô, and so considered by him and a few others as being modern.

Hamlet within the socio-religious culture of Japan

Maintaining the caveat that a complete cut-and-paste job of Shakespeare into Japanese culture is not possible, there are plenty of aspects of the plays that can work particularly well in Japan. Most enlightening for our discussion here is how these influences add specific layers to *Hamlet* which, if we return to Kennedy's statement once more, makes clear two things. Firstly, whatever type of direct access is lost from a linguistic point of view can be compensated for by a more relevant socio-religious framework in Japan. Secondly, it may even be that the power of the plays can be heightened if a translation and production can deliberately conceptualize elements of a play through key parts of this framework. The heightening of the resonance (possibly even the relevance) of *Hamlet* when framed by such a socio-religious culture may provide evidence as to why this play has been so popular in Japan throughout the years. Let us now explore *Hamlet* in greater detail in order to demonstrate these points.

The first appearance of anything *Hamlet* related in Japan is thought to be a translation of Polonius' line 'Neither a borrower nor a lender be' that appeared in an adaptation of *Self-Help* by Samuel Smiles, published in Japan in 1871 and written by Nakamura Masanao (1832–1891), whose pen name was Kieu.[50] In 1874, the English newspaper correspondent Charles Wirgam wrote a translation of 'To be

[49] Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi Shôyô and the Beauty of Shakespeare Translation in 1900s Japan', 69–85 (p. 71).
[50] Gallimore and Minami, 'Seven Stages of Shakespeare Reception', p. 486.

or not to be' and drew a Japanese Hamlet: this was published in the *The Japan Punch*. From this point on *Hamlet* was adapted and translated in various ways, including into novellas and unfinished works.[51] The intellectual movements of the Meiji Period were significant in their pace of change, and drama — especially *Hamlet* — was a substantial part of that. Critic Toshio Kawatake, translated and quoted by Saburo Sato, claims that, 'the process of modernization in Japanese poetry, fiction, and drama can be traced through the successive ways in which *Hamlet* was accepted and emulated by Meiji intellectuals'.[52] Akimasa Minamitani's informative essay *Hamlet in Japan* argues this point well, detailing the progression of *Hamlet* beyond this period; he also draws attention to the impact that Shakespeare's work had on Tsubouchi Shôyô and his appreciation of elements such as 'character' which were not thought of in the same way in Japanese drama.[53] That said, Minamitani's valuable sketch of the life of the play in Japan goes too far when he writes that,

> any Japanese that claims that he is moved to the core of his soul by Shakespeare may be a creature of overly cerebral impulses, for it is doubtful that even the 'myriad minded' Shakespeare ever really touched the deepest cords that awkwardly resonate in the Japanese soul.[54]

This does both Shakespeare and the Japanese a disservice. The suggestion that Shakespeare's universality must speak to all cultures throughout time is too sweeping these days; however, to dismiss every individual in a whole nation as incapable of reacting in this way to Shakespeare strikes me as hyperbole. This is especially true in Japan, for although cultural display rules may ensure that the Japanese often present less emotion in public than many people in the West, this does not in any way preclude them from feeling such strong emotions within themselves.

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[51] Yoshiko Kawachi, '*Hamlet* and Japanese Men of Letters', 123–35.
[52] Saburo Sato, 'Hamlet, Polonius, and Ophelia in Meiji Japan', *Comparative Literature Studies*, 22.1 (1985), 23–33 (p. 23) <http://www.jstor.org/stable/40246513> [accessed 19 March 2018]
[53] Akimasa Minamitani, 'Hamlet in Japan', *Japan Quarterly*, 37.2 (1990), 176–193 (p. 176).
[54] Ibid., p. 176.

The popularity of *Hamlet* in Japan was due in part to the existence of the traditional revenge story that was already prevalent in the country. For instance, *Chûshingura* (*The Treasury of the Loyal Retainers*) is a famous story in Japanese culture, inspired by the historical events of forty-seven *ronin* in the early eighteenth century. It recounts their mission to avenge their lord and their subsequent mass suicide. The tale has been adapted many times for *kabuki* and *bunraku* performance, in literature and in film, and remains popular in Japan to this day. *Hamlet* and *Chûshingura* have distinct similarities, suggesting that *Hamlet* would have been thought of in a similar way by the Japanese in the Meiji Period: that is, as a type of revenge drama that interrogated ideas of loyalty, perseverance, and honour. This would have undoubtedly contributed to the popularity of the play.[55]

However, I would also contend that there are some key aspects of *Hamlet* that fit exceptionally well into the socio-religious culture of Japan that has been already discussed: this also contributed to the play's popularity. Perhaps the most powerful of these is the interrogation of filial piety that is evident when the ghost of Hamlet's father implores his son to avenge his death. That Shintoism, Buddhism, and Confucianism taught such devotion, albeit slightly differently, is clear; what is striking, though, is the extent of devotion required within the culture. This obedience to parental authority does not stop when the parents are dead: speaking of the binding nature of this duty in Confucianism, it has been noted that, 'True filiality requires that the child behave throughout his entire life just as his parents would wish.'[56] Shakespeare's *Hamlet* makes this dilemma apparent by having prince Hamlet's father return as a ghost after he is dead. The play combines the ideas of filial piety with ancestor worship (the father being a ghost) as well as interrogating the concept of duty to the state, for Hamlet must decide whether he can kill a king who he knows to be the illegitimate ruler of the country. Ancestor worship could be found in ethics books taught in schools, and even to adults, during the Meiji period and into the reign of the Emperor

[55] Graham Holderness, '*Hamlet* and the 47 Ronin: Did Shakespeare Read *Chûshingura?*', *Critical Survey*, 33.1 (2021), 48–58.
[56] Daniel K. Gardner, *Confucianism: A Very Short Introduction* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 31.

Taishô beginning in 1912; and Shinto stands apart as marrying the familial and the state in its teachings of this veneration. As Kiyomi Morioka has shown in a succinct but informative article, these writings that were taught in schools and to adults included how to venerate your family ancestors as well as how to understand the Emperor as the ancestor of Japan (further evidence, it could be said, of the religious influence on what was to become the excessive reverence to the State in the lead up to the Second World War).

> With the ancestor rites as a support, and by means of the family-state ideology, an emotional unity was fostered in the original power relationship between the constitutional monarch and his people. Such was the social background of the period in which 'ancestor religion' was taken into public education.[57]

We can see, then, how the young Prince Hamlet has double the pressure to adhere to the wishes of the Ghost. Certainly, we may perceive a dutiful obligation to the father in Western productions, but the obligation to venerate his father as a King, and the confusion this produces in the instruction to murder the current king, is accentuated when read within a Shinto context.

Related to this, *Hamlet* evokes the Japanese idea of *on*. *On* is the concept of obligation or a type of moral debt: it can be said to relate especially to the relationship between a parent and child, and results in the requirement within society for the child to adhere to the wishes of the parents to a large extent. Explicitly, the child is obliged to their parents for being conceived by and (normally) being raised by them.

[57] Kiyomi Morioka, 'The Appearance Of "Ancestor Religion" in Modern Japan: The Years of Transition from the Meiji to the Taishô Periods', *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies*, 4 (1977), 183–212 (p. 203) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/30233138> [accessed 5 October 2021]

> The child is then forever indebted to the parents, and the child's behaviour patterns, which are directed towards returning this debt, are what is indicated by the concept of filial piety (oya kôkô).[58]

This adds real emphasis to the Ghost's line, 'If thou didst ever thy dear father love—' and Hamlet's subsequent exclamation, 'O God', immediately before the Ghost's instruction that Hamlet avenge him.[59] This obligation is at the heart of Hamlet's dilemma and the drama is intensified by the delay in action that Hamlet subsequently chooses. As expressed, this type of filial piety is no longer present in most Western cultures to the same extent as it is in Japan, where it often persists even when family members have passed on. For instance, the almost tangible presence of the ancestor (brought about through worship) is an entity that can help the living.

> A Third characteristic is the *religious significance of the family and ancestors.* Unlike the Western world, where religion is considered to be a private matter in which the individual is the judge, religious practice in Japan is largely centred on the family as a unit. This can be traced to the clan structure of ancient society and also to Confucianism with its insistence on filial piety and hierarchical order within the family. Dead members of the family are venerated as ancestors who guard over and bring happiness and prosperity to the household.[60]

If the ghost of Hamlet's father can be perceived in this way, the instruction to kill Claudius takes on yet another layer as an action that may guard over and bring prosperity to the young prince Hamlet. The death of Hamlet and his mother at the end of the play, therefore, can be seen as being caused by his delay in taking revenge, a delay that continues even after a subsequent visit of the Ghost 'to whet thy almost

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[58] Harumi Befu, 'Normative Values: On, Giri, Ninjô', in *Japanese Religions: Past and Present*, ed. by Ian Reader, Esben Andreasen, and Finn Stefansson (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 25–27 (p. 26).
[59] Shakespeare, 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', I. 1. 23–24.
[60] Esben Andreasen, 'Japanese Religions: An Introduction', in *Japanese Religions: Past and Present*, ed. by Ian Reader, Esben Andreasen, and Finn Stefansson (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 33–43 (p. 40).

blunted purpose.'[61] If the Ghost is indeed guarding over Hamlet as in the Japanese tradition, it makes perfect sense that great tragedy follows when Hamlet continues to ignore the Ghost's instruction. Despite focusing on China's relationship with Shakespeare's work, Murray Levith has outlined clearly some of the more tangible Confucian echoes in *Hamlet* by quoting the Analects directly and matching them to the aspect of the play that explores each instruction: these include the importance of conducting your father's funeral with care (matched with the fact that Hamlet is so perturbed at his father's funeral being so close to his mother's marriage), and the dictate that when you have sinned there is no place for your prayer to go (matched with Claudius being unable to pray due to his guilt). Levith further informs us, 'The prince's struggle to understand himself and his duty — even to madness — and the connection between the external world and his essential self yield a kind of Confucian enlightenment by the end of the drama.' All of which leads Levith to conclude that, although the character of Hamlet is certainly no Confucian hero, 'There is no doubt that *Hamlet* can be seen as reverberating with Confucian echoes.'[62]

Other scholars have noted these themes in *Hamlet*, but not only to do with the father-son relationship. For instance, the relationship between a King or Emperor and his people is also governed by the Three Cardinal Guides and Five Virtues. The ruler of a nation has certain responsibilities and should behave with integrity for the good of his subjects; in return, the subjects should respect and obey a ruler who strives to serve the people. Such a relationship is distorted in *Hamlet* when Claudius, a subject, murders the old King Hamlet and takes the throne. This leads ultimately to his death, the death of his queen and, with Fortinbras' arrival, the possible destruction of the state. Zhi-fu Qian and Li-li Han argue that, 'What Shakespeare wants to tell us is that only when the relationship between the king and his subjects is well coped with, is it possible to build a safe kingdom.'[63] To argue that this is what Shakespeare wants to tell us may feel a little too simplistic; it relies to a large extent on some assumptions

[61] Shakespeare, 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark', III. 4. 111.
[62] Levith, *Shakespeare in China*, p. 119.
[63] Qian and Han, '*The Winter's Tale* by Shakespeare and the Confucian Values', 333–343 (p. 339).

that are not quite as conclusive, such as King Hamlet was a definitely a good King and, by contrast, Claudius is necessarily a bad king, and therefore Prince Hamlet is behaving correctly when he avenges his father. Perhaps it would be more appropriate to write that Shakespeare wants to *ask* us about the relationship between a king, his subjects, and a safe kingdom. We may feel that such a definitive conclusion chimes with the more didactic sense of Confucian beliefs that Shôyô struggled to apply to Shakespeare's plays throughout his career. Nevertheless, Qian and Han are right to point out that questions about good governance are key themes in *Hamlet* and they are expressly dealt with in the teaching of Confucius, thereby making the play highly revealing when viewed through such a lens by foregrounding certain key questions (such as how exactly the personal lives of those in court can affect the population they are ruling) that are often less obvious in Western readings or productions.

We see evidence of the socio-religious culture influencing how one conceptualizes Shakespeare's plays on not only Japanese audiences but also Japanese theatre practitioners working in the traditional forms. For example, in *mugen noh* plays the action that takes place is usually within a dream or illusion: in this type of drama, the *shite* (main character) is often a spirit or a ghost who tells his tale of the past to the *waki* (secondary or supporting) character who visits the *shite*. This has hints of Hamlet's father, of course, telling his tale of the past to Hamlet, who comes to him on the battlements of Elsinore castle. Even linguistically we can see pieces of evidence of the socio-religious worlds influencing theatre practitioners is interesting ways. For example, despite not being used often today in performance, Shôyô's translation incorporates the traditional Buddhist idea of suffering, *kataku* (火宅), and enlightenment, *ha te* (果), when he translates Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' soliloquy, thereby drawing attention expressly to the predicament of Hamlet by referring to a religious idea belonging to Japanese Buddhism.[64]

[64] Tsubouchi Shôyô trans, *Hamuretto* (*Hamlet)* (Tokyo: Daisan Shokan, 2007), p. 733.

Hamlet's soliloquies

One element that has been touched upon above briefly must be discussed further regarding *Hamlet* in Japan: that is, the presentation of the soliloquies, especially Hamlet's most famous 'To be or not to be'. Exploring this shows us an important way in which Japanese theatre practitioners may have responded to Shakespeare's text when they were originally encountered, thereby reinforcing certain ideas about the frames of cultural-artistic influence I am suggesting. The Japanese theatre world was less enthusiastic to embrace this soliloquy in the Meiji period, and indeed Shakespeare's soliloquies more generally. As has been noted,

> Although soliloquies occur in traditional Japanese drama, they are usually functional, introducing a character or explaining a situation. They are not inward in the manner of the soliloquizing Hamlet, or indeed Brutus, and Japanese actors, as well as audiences, were ill at ease with this unfamiliar and artificial convention. However, astonishing this may be to Western actors, several of the thirteen adaptations of *Hamlet* that preceded Shoyo's own 1907 Bungei Kyokai production actually omitted Hamlet's most famous soliloquy.[65]

Why was this? It has been suggested that traditional Japanese *kabuki* training did not equip Japanese actors with the technical vocal skills to deliver such a soliloquy effectively, nor did it train actors to speak for so long without musical accompaniment. As Kishi and Bradshaw highlight above, the *kabuki* theatrical culture was very different to that of the British theatre regarding the soliloquy. James. R. Brandon is clear that 'the kabuki monologue is a public declaration'.[66] Following this idea, in discussing why Otojiro Kawakawi's 1903 production of *Hamlet* (an adaptation, certainly, but nevertheless the first production to be staged under the title of Shakespeare's original play) did not include the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy, Yoshiko Kawachi

[65] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, pp. 7–8.
[66] James R. Brandon, 'Performance and Text in Kabuki', in *Japanese Theatre and the International Stage*, ed. by Stanca Scholz-Cionca and Samuel L. Leiter (Leiden: Brill, 2001), pp. 176–92 (p. 178).

suggests that this was 'perhaps because the actors were unskilled at elocution in those days'.[67] Although it is not entirely clear what is meant here by 'elocution', it must surely be related to the actors ability to deliver this particular type of soliloquy in a manner that would land effectively with their audience.

Perhaps the core reason why so many soliloquies were omitted was that although Japanese theatre practitioners recognised the capacity of the speech to help the audience 'know Hamlet as he really is' they did not fully value this psychological aspect of the play.[68] J. Thomas Rimer sums up nicely the approach to any sort of interiority within *kabuki* at this time:

> It is true, of course, that the *jidaimono* (historical plays) were often based on famous historical incidents, and that the *sewamono* (domestic dramas) were dramatizations of recent incidents; but the manner in which the materials were ordered within the play shows that the major effect aimed at was the theatricalization of emotion and action rather than any psychological analysis.[69]

Kabuki paid very little heed to psychological examination, with the difference between soliloquies in *kabuki* (often public declarations to drive plot) and in Shakespeare (often private reflections to illustrate character and what we now consider an emotional interiority) becoming clear. The origins of this divide are articulated by Dorothy Blair Shimer who reminds us that, not having evolved from Aristotle's most famous treatise on drama, Asian performance has quite different priorities in its storytelling.

> Aristotle's precepts concerning character — that it must be good, true to life, appropriate and consistent — bring interesting results when applied to Asia drama. In the first place, undoubtedly nothing could be of less concern to an Asian audience than the reality of character. Contrary to the

[67] Yoshiko Kawachi, 'Shakespeare in Nineteenth Century Japan', in *The Globalisation of Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Krystyna Kujawińska Courtney and John Mercer (Lewiston: Edwin Mellen Press, 2003), pp. 69–82 (p. 78).
[68] Wolfgang Clemen, *Shakespeare's Soliloquies*, trans. by Charity Scott Stokes (London: Methuen & Co., 1987), p. 120.
[69] Rimer, *Towards a Modern Japanese Theatre: Kishida Kunio*, p. 8.

> Western viewer's expectation that the dramatic presentation will expose strengths and weaknesses in an imitation of real life in a moment of stress or conflict, the theatre-goer of Asia enters a 'world of theatre' in which he enjoys giving his imagination free rein.[70]

Whilst we can debate whether the soliloquy as a dramatic device in Shakespeare is representative of reality, it certainly exposes a character's strengths and weakness in a moment of stress or conflict by offering us some sort of insight into the interiority of the speaker. This is true, whether or not we believe that the character we are listening to is conscious of addressing others at that moment in time.[71] Hamlet's soliloquies are often considered to be the apotheosis of the exploration of interiority. If this area of dramatic exploration was not considered relevant within the framework of the Japanese theatrical traditions of *kabuki*, *noh* and *bunraku*, it would be very hard for actors and directors presenting a Shakespeare play to believe that an audience could suddenly accept the soliloquy as valuable. 'To be or not to be' is a huge challenge to translate into Japanese, as I explore below: however, the idea that Shakespeare's soliloquies were not recognised as valuable forms the heart, I believe, of the decision to omit so many, and especially the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy, for such a long period.

Shôyô completed his translation of *Hamlet* in 1909, although he presented some of his translated text in 1907; unlike many of his translations, he did not revise the text a great deal after this point, although he did make certain minor alterations to the 'To be or not to be' soliloquy, including the very first line.[72] The lexical accuracy of Shôyô's translations has long been praised and the translations of the soliloquies are no exception: it was for this reason that he received criticism for writing translations which sounded archaic.[73] Shôyô used a large number of old *kanji* characters in his translations which even his contemporary Japanese struggled to read; he therefore added *furigana* (a key to guide pronunciation and meaning) to

[70] Dorothy Shimer, 'Asian Drama via Aristotle', *Western Humanities Review*, 21.1 (1967), 37–46 (p. 40).
[71] James E. Hirsh, *Shakespeare and the History of Soliloquies* (Madison: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2003), p. 14.
[72] Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi Shôyô and the Beauty of Shakespeare Translation in 1900s Japan', 69–85 (p. 79).
[73] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, p. 23.

guide his performers, as we shall explore later. Yet although he used archaic language and adopted a style that seemed more literary than performative, Shôyô's inclusion and translation of the soliloquy can be read as a distinctly modernising aspect of theatrical performance in the following ways.

The soliloquy in the form in which Shakespeare wrote was not valued particularly by Japanese theatre practitioners when they first came across Shakespeare's plays; but Shôyô had a different approach for he valued the soliloquies in *Hamlet*, especially the 'To be or not to be' speech, enough to reinsert them into the first full-length production of a Shakespeare translation in 1911. Why did he believe these speeches valuable to the Meiji audience for whom he was writing? What did he see or hear in them that he thought integral to his aim to modernize Japanese theatre by reconciling traditional and modern forms? There are several parts to this answer.

Firstly, along with being famed for his Shakespeare translations, Shôyô is often called 'the father of the modern novel' in Japan. In 1885 he published his most famous work of criticism, *Shôsetu Shinzui* (*The Essence of the Novel*).[74] In spite of the title, within this seminal book he writes also about drama and its development arguing. 'Thus clearly, it is human nature and behaviour that form the stuff of drama.' He suggests a demarcation between the interiority of a person and their outward presentation to the world, telling us,

> In the human animal, then, there exists a dichotomy between outward behaviour and inner thoughts, with as many variations of both as there are faces. Histories and biographies usually deal with the former; a man's secret thoughts can seldom be described therein, because of their rambling nature. It falls to the novelist to plumb the depths of human nature, to reveal it in meticulous detail, omitting nothing in his portrayal of the inner workings of all types of minds, not merely those of the wise,

[74] Tsubouchi Shôyô, *Shôsetsu Shinzui (The Essence of the Novel)*, trans. by Nanette Twine, ed. by J. I. Ackroyd (New York: New York University archive, 1981) <https://archive.nyu.edu/html/2451/14945/shoyo.htm> [accessed 13 July 2021]

> regardless of age, sex and moral character. The true novel is not satisfied with a merely superficial account of human nature. It lays it bare. [75]

Shôyô evidently believes in a division between 'outward behavior and inner thoughts' and sees great benefit in a deeper exploration of the human interior: the unpacking, if you will, of their inner thoughts that can be at odds with what is presented externally is an aspect of literature that he values highly as one way of interrogating the truth of human existence. He suggests that until this point Japanese theatre could not achieve this, yet he makes the point that novels have this latent capacity, although novelists in Japan have not done so effectively up to the time when he is writing. In the above section one is struck especially by the line that describes the rambling nature of men's secret thoughts precluding their inclusion in certain books, for this was contrary to how traditional Japanese theatre had presented and used soliloquies. Shôyô is hinting at his desire for the secret thoughts of man to play a larger role in how writers present fictitious characters presented in various forms of literature, so as to imbue a greater degree of what we may term naturalism. Izumi Yanagida articulates the content of Shôyô's book nicely:

> Its proposed reforms can be summed up as an attempt to increase the element of human truth by rejecting the prevailing, unpractical feudal didacticism and vulgar, scurrilous pseudo-realism in favour of a greater artistic dignity and a more truly realistic technique aimed at the faithful portrayal of human nature.[76]

These words pertain primarily to Shôyô's thoughts on the novel; yet, Shôyô's desire to find a technique aimed at the faithful portrayal of human nature would surely extend to the stage also, especially with the noticeable difference between the soliloquies in Japanese drama and those Shôyô found in Shakespeare's texts. Shôyô championed the idea of treating drama and novels equally as literature, something that was practically unheard of at this time in Japan, the majority of scholars believing that Japanese theatre was not

[75] Ibid., chap 3, paragraph 3.
[76] Yanagida, 'Pioneers of Modern Japan III: Tsubouchi Shoyo', 352–360 (p. 354).

comparable and far lower in status. Whilst aiming at the same goal of examining the thoughts and actions of human beings, each artistic form must clearly use a different method of doing so. The novel can present the inner thoughts of a character through its narrative style; it is highly likely that by 1911 Shôyô would have perceived that the Shakespearean soliloquies, although certainly varied and stylized in their own ways, had the capacity to do the same thing.

At the time of publishing *The Essence of the Novel* Shôyô was only 25 but it is important to remember that he had completed already one translation of a Shakespeare play, his 1884 *Julius Caesar*. In reality, this was an adaptation, and the title became *The Amazing Story of Caesar: the Lingering Sharpness of the Sword of Freedom.*[77] It was written in the *joruri* style of traditional Japanese drama and by Shôyô's own later admission was 'slovenly in the extreme'.[78] But all the same, we have a theatre critic and practitioner well aware of the dramatic value and potential modernity of examining the interior psyche of characters; this same man of the theatre knew that the traditional Japanese theatre forms did not have the necessary performance framework to examine effectively the interiority of its characters due to how the soliloquies functioned within these dramas; and finally, it is clear that having only translated one play, he had not fully established Shakespeare as part of the contemporary theatre scene in Japan. But the exploration of psychology was surely the idea of the modern that he wished to pursue, and his ongoing translation work in his later years led to the conclusion in 1911 that the soliloquies were invaluable to the type of modern theatrical performance he wished to stage.

The argument that Shôyô valued the presentation of the interiority of characters gains force when we look at some other evidence, the most striking piece being from the pen of Shôyô himself writing about a test given to him by his teacher.

[77] Quinn, 'Political Theatre: "The Rise and Fall of Rome and the Sword of Freedom", Two Translations Of "Julius Caesar" in Meiji Japan by Kawashima Keizô and Tsubouchi Shôyô', 168–183 (p. 168).
[78] Shôyô cited in Gallimore, 'Shôyô, Sôseki, and Shakespeare: Translations of Three Key Texts', 41–61 (p. 50).

> In a test on *Hamlet* he once required us to analyze the character of Gertrude, but I was so ignorant then that I could not see what I was really asked to do, and interpreting the phrase 'comment on the character' in the question in my own way I wrote a criticism of Gertrude mainly from the moral point of view, and got a very bad mark. It was a lesson to me, however, and I began to hunt in the library of the university for European literary studies and criticisms, which I read with some ardour.[79]

It is significant that it is with a character from *Hamlet* that Shôyô encounters this particular stumbling block. Following this incident, it is far more likely that he would associate the need to explore the psychology of a character with this particular play, perhaps Shakespeare's most powerful invitation to do so in his entire body of work. Further to this, exploring the psychology of characters on stage was something that Shôyô became interested in doing in his own plays. J. Thomas Rimer tells us of one of Shôyô's own dramas entitled *En no Gyôja* (*The Hermit*) written in 1914 and revised subsequently, that, 'Although the play deals with characters and incidents shrouded in myth and legend, Shôyô, perhaps under the influence of Ibsen, gave full play to the psychological rather than the merely colorful aspects of the story.'[80] Whilst Ibsen surely exerted an influence, by 1914 Shôyô had also discovered the value of the Shakespearean soliloquy as a psychological exploration on the page and stage.

This sheds light on why the audience may have been unfamiliar with Shakespearean soliloquies, and it suggests why Shôyô may have wanted to reinstate the soliloquies. However, it still does not quite explain why the soliloquy, as a device to present interiority, was so hard to appreciate for the Meiji audience when they were presented in Shôyô's 1911 production of *Hamlet*.[81] The biggest obstacle for the Japanese

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[79] Shôyô cited in Yoshiaki Fuhara, '*The Caesar Kidan* – the Earliest Japanese Translation of Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and its Performance', *Hitotsubashi Journal of Arts and Sciences*, 4.1 (1964), 22–38 (p. 29) <http://doi.org/10.15057/4592>

[80] Rimer, *Towards a Modern Japanese Theatre: Kishida Kunio*, p. 20.

[81] Powell, 'One Man's *Hamlet* in 1911 Japan: The Bungei Kyokai Production in the Imperial Theatre', pp. 38–52 (pp. 51–52).

audience in understanding Hamlet's soliloquies as an expression of the self may have been that the very self being expressed by Hamlet did not look or sound like any sort of self which a Japanese Meiji audience would recognise at that time. This Westernised version of the self (by geographical default, if nothing else) was an early example of what can be termed the modern concept of self that has since become an archetypal construction in Europe and the USA. This construction has arrived also in Japan in the present day, although not nearly to the same degree. Yasunari Takahashi's informative essay argues that *Hamlet* has interrogated (and continues to ask questions of) the self in Japan, writing that, 'A new Hamlet must and will keep emerging, embodying the perennial and specific anxieties of contemporary self.'[82] Perhaps Hamlet's soliloquies in the early twentieth century, therefore, heralded a modern way of understanding the self in Japan, a way that continues to have a subtle influence on how the Japanese see themselves today.

To understand this in greater depth, we must first appreciate that the Japanese self can be, and has been for centuries, divided into parts. The general concept exists more widely than merely in people: the two parts are what we in the West would term inner or hidden (*ura*) and the surface or visible (*omote*). (Interestingly for this discussion the term *ura* can also be used to describe 'behind the scenes' or 'offstage'.) When applied to people and their behaviour, the usual terms are 本音 (*honne)* which translates as true opinion (literally the *kanji* mean 'real' and 'sound') and 建前 (*tatemae)* which means 'public position' or 'official stance'.

This division guides the appropriate interactions in society and contributes to the necessary display rules. Harmony (*wa*) within social and professional relationships is hugely important and holds a far more revered position than in Western society. There are several theories why this is so. The most likely is that, as Japanese society evolved under many of the Buddhist and Confucian influences already

[82] Yasunari Takahashi, '*Hamlet* and the Anxiety of Modern Japan', *Shakespeare Survey 48*, (1996) p. 99–112 (p. 111) <doi:10.1017/CCOL0521550300.008>

discussed rather than under Utilitarianism as prescribed by John Stuart Mill (1806–1873) and Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832), it places a greater importance on the happiness of society more generally.[83] Utilitarianism argued that the freedom of expression of the individual was key because 'the individual, not the community, was the basis of society'.[84] Such beliefs are quite different to those found in Confucianism and Buddhism. Because *honne* and *tatamae* are so deeply embedded in Japanese society, the Japanese can maintain a high degree of social harmony whilst, at the same time, not completely sacrificing their personal opinion or their sense of self. Takeo Doi's work *The Anatomy of Self: The Individual Versus Society* unpacks these concepts. He explains that whilst there is no direct correspondence in the West, perhaps the closest philosophical equivalent is that of phenomenon and essence. He informs us how the dual structure of *honne* and *tatemae* are formed in the individual:

> Essentially, it develops in the home environment during infancy and childhood and, later, through human relations developed in school and social situations outside the home. Seen in this light, *tatemae* and *honne* overlap with the psychological concepts of socialization and self-consciousness. *Tatemae* is precisely a product of socialization, and *honne* is the expression of self-consciousness.[85]

This highlights how the two concepts are at the same time both opposing and part of the same aspect of psychology: that is, how the self is brought into perception by an individual through presenting it to others, especially in social interaction most likely involving verbal communication.

The fact that *tatemae* exists so clearly defined and understood, and is used so often, indicates that *honne* is often kept inside when communicating with others: it often contains elements that the individual believes should not be shared in order to maintain the necessary harmony of relationship, irrespective of

[83] Scollon, Scollon, and Jones, *Intercultural Communication: A Discourse Approach*, pp. 114–128.
[84] Ibid., p. 116.
[85] Takeo Doi, *The Anatomy of Self: The Individual Versus Society*, trans. by Mark A. Harbison (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1985), p. 46.

the 'truth' of such inner feelings. This interiority is referred to as *kokoro* which translates literally as 'heart'. In a fascinating point, Doi uses Shakespeare to demonstrate this referring to the beginning of *King Lear* to help us understand how misreading the need to display *tatemae* — and therefore revealing *kokoro* — rips apart once firm and fond relationships.[86] When Lear aims to solicit a particular response from his daughters, Goneril and Regan display the necessary *tatemae*, offering up the acceptable platitudes that Lear wishes to hear, whilst concealing their true opinion (*kokoro*). In this way, they achieve their objective through what we may see as a form of deception. Cordelia does not do this. Instead, she offers Lear her *honne* specifying the precise nature of her affection for Lear and questioning how her sisters can claim any greater love. The result is catastrophic for both her and the king. We may debate whether the fault lies with Cordelia (who either cannot or chooses not to adhere to the rules of *tatemae*) or with Lear (who either cannot or chooses not to appreciate the rules of *tatemae*); yet, what is clear is Cordelia's opinion of words and their application in this instance. She states,

> I yet beseech your Majesty —
> If for I want that glib and oily art
> to speak and purpose not, since what I well
> intend
> I'll do't before I speak[87]

This 'glib and oily art' hides Goneril and Regan's *kokoro* from Lear and in doing so hides the truth about themselves, hence Cordelia's line. Whilst not the only culture to appreciate this, the Japanese have long been very familiar with the idea; it has taught that words are not necessarily the conduits of truth that we can often take them for in the West. This, of course, is especially true with regards to psychological interiority. Unpacking further the *kokoro* and the difficulty in its expression we learn:

> At the center of the inner self is the *kokoro* which stands for heart, sentiment, spirit, will, or mind. While the outer self is socially circumscribed, the *kokoro* can be free, spontaneous, and even asocial. Further, the *kokoro* claims moral superiority over the outer self in that it is a reservoir of

[86] Ibid., p. 72-74.
[87] Shakespeare, 'King Lear', I. 1. 223–26.

> truthfulness and purity, uncontaminated by circumspections and contrivances to which the outer self is subject. This association of the *kokoro* (or inner self) with truthfulness gives rise to the paradoxical notion that the 'real' truth is inexpressible. Thus words and speech as means of expression are often regarded as potentially deceptive and false, and silence as indicative of the true *kokoro*.[88]

The Japanese have a term for this silence: *chinmoku*. Whilst not strictly 'silence' in its traditional sense, we may be tempted to read the famous 'Nothing' declared by Cordelia — which Lear refuses accept in this scene — as the same idea.

From all of the above, it becomes easier to understand why soliloquies in Japanese drama had not developed into the unsolicited expression of thoughts and feelings we usually associate with Shakespeare: words are thought to conceal, or at least are thought to have the ability to conceal, as much as they reveal. Much has been written on how Shakespeare inherited the form of the soliloquy in Western drama and propelled it into the exploration of the psyche that we continue to laud so highly. James Shapiro is clear about this: 'The sense of inwardness that Shakespeare creates by allowing us to hear a character as intelligent as Hamlet wrestle with his thoughts is something that no dramatist had yet achieved.'[89] But we appreciate his soliloquies precisely because we believe we are being offered an unprecedented insight into the workings of the human mind; we believe that Hamlet reveals his *kokoro* to us and we therefore gain a fuller comprehension of the character and of humanity in general. A well-established line of thought in the West is that someone delivering a soliloquy in a Shakespeare play freely elects to reveal *kokoro* and does not display *tatemae*: it is said that 'a Shakespearean soliloquiser never lies. What would be the

[88] Takie Sugiyama Lebra, 'Self in Japanese Culture', in *Japanese Sense of Self*, ed. by Nancy R. Rosenberger (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 105–120 (p. 112).
[89] James Shapiro, *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (London: Faber and Faber, 2005), p. 328.

point?'[90] Yet the Meiji Japanese audience may well have struggled to accept this idea. In the first place the presentation of *kokoro* delivered through a soliloquy would be highly strange: after all, by sharing his 'To be or not to be' speech with over 1000 audience members, the audience may have doubted if what was being revealed was Hamlet's true *honne* and not the necessary *tatemae*. Along with this, a distrust of the use of words to express such deep interiority could have also been part of the audience's perception. Whilst Western studies of linguistics and literature certainly interrogate the idea that words can conceal as much as they reveal, this philosophical idea was far more resonant throughout Japanese social culture in the Meiji Restoration. Placing a greater value on the absence of speech, for the reasons highlighted, neatly sums up a potential difficulty with the Meiji audience accepting Hamlet's lengthy explorations of his self-perception.

The second related part of this argument is that the voluntary exploration of the interiority of self as presented on stage in the form of a Shakespearean soliloquy was a modern phenomenon more generally. Harold Bloom calls Hamlet Shakespeare's 'least archaic role' due largely to this presentation of interiority.[91] This perception of modernity is due to *Hamlet* being written before the advent of modern psychology, especially the work of Freud and William James' pioneering 1890 work *The Principles of Psychology*.[92] However, whilst this discourse on the individual has become relatively widely understood as axiomatic in the West, this idea has not followed the same trajectory in countries such as Japan. Although there is no doubt that this concept has gained momentum since the end of the Second World War and the subsequent influx of American culture into the country, there can also be little doubt that the Meiji audience in 1911 would not have seen the self in this way, despite the recent importing of so many Western cultural elements. Adding weight to this, the idea that the self in Japan does not mirror that of the individual in the West becomes more apparent when we examine the *kanji* characters for 'myself' — 自分

[90] Michael Pennington, *Sweet William: Twenty Thousand Hours with Shakespeare* (London: Nick Hearn Books, 2012), p. 63.
[91] Bloom, *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human*, p. 385.
[92] William James, *The Principles of Psychology*, Vol.1, (London: Macmillan, 1918).

(*ji bun*). The first character 自 means 'self' whereas the second character 分 means 'part'. This emphasizes the point that in Japan the self is often thought to be constructed by its relationship to society: the self is only brought into being truly by being part of a wider community. Historically, and even today, many in Japan have never placed the same importance on the individual as we have in the West.

> Jibun literally means 'self part' — a part of a larger whole that consists of groups and relationships. Jibun is always valued in relation to that larger whole.[93]

Reading further, it becomes clear that this idea was widely understood during the Tokugawa Period leading up to the Meiji Restoration. The Japanese self as outlined in *Psychology of the Japanese People* was taught in the following way:

> Books of *shingaku* (popular ethics), which taught a philosophy of life to the masses of the Tokugawa period, always encouraged the people to have no self. The purport of the term is not to act as one pleases, forgetting who one is, but to serve one's superiors dutifully.[94]

This service may be to parents, to elders, to superiors in your profession, to people of authority such as the police, army etc. We see again the socio-religious influences on society further contributing to the understanding of the individual. The main point being that the self is constructed by being part of a society where the duty to others does much to create the individual. Hamlet's soliloquies appear to prioritise his feelings above those of others; and they can even be read as ignoring his duty to his father and mother, and even his duty as a Prince to his position of the state. Such an exploration of the individual drove toward a modern sense of self that prioritized the individual as a single entity of isolated importance. In this way, *Hamlet* could be said to have provided a clear rejection of the idea of 'no self' taught in the Tokugawa period, and so displayed a modern way of thinking about the self in Japan.

[93] Nancy R. Rosenberger, 'Introduction' in *Japanese Sense of Self*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), pp. 1–20 (p. 4).
[94] Hiroshi Minami, *Psychology of the Japanese People* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971), p. 11.

Returning to the idea of *kokoro*, Doi claims that whilst the literature from almost every culture on the globe shows us that the human *kokoro* is often hidden, the world today also dictates that nothing should 'transcend human understanding', and this must include the interiority of human beings. He reflects that these days, 'We are driven — compelled — to make clear anything, everything, that is said to be "secret". I believe that it is from this that the modern spirit was born.'[95] Hamlet's soliloquies are propelled by his internal and inescapable desire to reveal his *kokoro* to us: he discusses the inner workings of his mind, sometimes revealing things that only he has known until that point. He does this to find an understanding of his sense of self, to try to define himself against the emotional backdrop of pain and confusion which he is experiencing. This compulsion to make things clearer is satisfied by his soliloquies, even if the precise understanding about himself that he seeks by speaking the soliloquies remains elusive. He talks to the audience (although this can be debated), prompted by circumstance but never directedly solicited — when he is compelled to attempt to distil and clarify his thoughts. Perhaps this, to steal Doi's phrase, was part of the birth of a modern spirit in Japan; a spirit that, as has been documented by the critical reception of the production, arrived as too modern for the audience and country at that time.[96] Although more research into this area would be welcome, we may feel that Shakespeare's *Hamlet* could have been an important catalyst that subtly encouraged Japanese society to conceptualise the self in a new way.

Whilst the Shakespearean soliloquies are hugely variable within their own form, they certainly offered Shôyô a remarkable opportunity to explore the idea of a modern self. By including the soliloquies, especially Hamlet's famous fourth soliloquy, Shôyô finally presents a dramatic device on the Japanese stage that allows for the exploration and presentation of the interior psyche that is both modern and cross cultural in its execution and results. Reflecting on the development of his translating, Shôyô writes,

The third feature of Shakespeare's plays are those complicated soliloquies. They are more than

[95] Doi, *The Anatomy of Self: The Individual Versus Society*, p. 109
[96] Brian Powell, 'One Man's *Hamlet* in 1911 Japan: The Bungei Kyokai Production in the Imperial Theatre', pp. 38–52 (pp. 51–52).

> isolated speeches but serve a rhetorical function within the rest of the play. To apply Macaulay's distinction, the same content may be expressed abstractly or in an immediate concrete way, or to bring out the jargon, or else emphasizing the metaphors. The same thought or feeling is subject to diverse interpretations.[97]

What the appreciation that Shôyô demonstrates here shows us is that he understood soliloquies as a dramatic device to be far removed from the purpose they have in the traditional Japanese theatre forms, especially for their ability to offer a chance to interpret the interior 'thought or feeling' of a character. A Japanese audience in 1911 would have recognised the form of the soliloquy from their well-established theatre culture; however, the same audience would have likely been less familiar with the content, a new exploration of thought and feeling being shared by Hamlet within a direct address to the audience. Without being present for the 1911 performances of *Hamlet*, and with my reliance on other people's translations of the text, it is impossible to qualify completely the statements that Shôyô's *Hamlet* was old fashioned. By his own admission Shôyô was during this stage of his translating evolution,

> fastidious in my use of vocabulary, so too was I restricted in my use of Japanese grammar, so that without hardly realising it I tended towards an ornate style. My vocabulary was cramped, losing the warmth and style of the original poetry, and even as plain writing it tended to sound quite peculiar.[98]

While his choices regarding the language of translation may have been old fashioned, Shôyô evidently saw in the soliloquy an important element of the modernisation he so desired the theatre to reflect. Through the history of *Hamlet*, including the omittance and reinsertion of the soliloquies on stage, we can see more clearly certain influences at work. The socio-religious culture clearly impacts on how the action and characters of the play can be conceived by translators and audiences, with striking effects that

[97] Shôyô cited in Gallimore, 'Shôyô, Sôseki, and Shakespeare: Translations of Three Key Texts', 41–61 (p. 53).
[98] Ibid., p. 50.

highlight very well important parts of the play. This seems inescapable, even if we agree that there are probably varying levels of consciousness of this in the respective subjective, performative and receptive frames of cultural-artistic influence (the translator, performers, and audience respectively). From these socio-religious influences we can also see how Japanese society received and moulded *Hamlet* when it first arrived in Japan*;* following this, we can see further into the way in which Shôyô attempted to break that mould especially with regards to the soliloquies and the possible modernisation of the concept of the self.

CHAPTER FOUR

Translation into Japanese

Shôyô's reflections above on his translations are informative. They help us to understand the numerous difficulties that he experienced on a practical level, rather than merely discussing them within the realms of linguistic theory. Japanese is a hugely different language to English, and it is even more different to Early Modern English, especially when a good deal of that Early Modern English is written in blank verse. It is not my intention now to highlight the great range of linguistic differences between English and Japanese nor to explain every challenge that Japanese possesses for a translator working on Shakespeare's plays. For a fuller discussion of the common pitfalls see the essay by Tetsuo Kishi entitled 'Our Language of Love: Shakespeare in Japanese Translation' or for a more practical analysis of various types of translation see Yoko Hasegawa's *The Routledge Course in Japanese Translation.*[1] Yet it must be understood that the differences between the languages are numerous and significant. Of the many problems that translators encounter, there are two core obstacles that are worth unpacking further, for appreciating these in greater depth will help us to understand to a larger extent the ways in which Japanese Shakespeare translations and productions may be able to augment the power of the plays.

The first area on which to focus is the nature of poetry. When discussing Shakespeare in Japanese translation, Jessica Chiba sensibly asks us to consider 'whether what constitutes "poetry" in English is equally poetic in the translated language'.[2] There is a deeper point here regarding how an accentual-syllabic poetic text such as much of Shakespeare's plays can be translated and still retain any aspect of the metre and its function, especially when translated into a language such as Japanese where traditionally the classical poetic form is syllabic. That is, in classical Japanese poetry the important measurement is the number of syllables, not the number of stresses, in the line. On the surface, this may sound like a pretty

[1] Yoko Hasegawa, *The Routledge Course in Japanese Translation* (Oxford: Routledge, 2012); Kishi, '"Our Language of Love": Shakespeare in Japanese Translation', pp. 68–81.
[2] Chiba, 'Lost and Found in Translation: Hybridity in Kurosawa's *Ran*', 599–633 (p. 601).

good match, for accentual-syllabic verse such as Shakespeare's is constructed and measured in part through the number of syllables; yet, as Kishi and Bradshaw point out in some detail (some key points of which I explore below), this is not actually the case due to the nature of the Japanese language.[3]

Firstly, there is always a change in pitch between the first and second syllable in every polysyllabic Japanese word which, if not vocalised properly, can alter the meaning of a particular word. Whilst this pitch change can often be so subtle as to be imperceptible to non-Japanese speakers, it is there.[4] The vocal tools for emphasising the metre of Shakespeare's accentual-syllabic lines include pitch, volume, duration, pace, and more rarely, resonance. (Vocal 'intensity' is occasionally spoken about as a way of emphasising the poetic stresses in Shakespeare, but it is rarely given a specific definition. In truth, vocal 'intensity' is constructed by increasing, or sometimes decreasing, one or more of these variables, usually in combination.) In comparison, in Japanese poetry the vocal emphasis must stay on the lexical stress within the words themselves, otherwise meaning can be altered completely, and is often created necessarily by changing pitch. This is not to say that speakers of Japanese cannot change pace or volume within a line; however, the changing of pitch for emphasis is a necessary vocal inflection for specific linguistic purposes, as such a pitch change can create meaning. This difference guarantees that what may initially appear a simple transplant from one poetic form to another an immense challenge.

A second but equally important aspect to consider is the following. Almost all syllables in Japanese (except 'n' and the sole vowel sounds of a, i, u, e, o) consists of a consonant and a vowel together, the result being that they are often longer than English syllables. The length of each of these sounds in Japanese is called *haku* (or mora, in English) and they are more or less identical. Overall, therefore, Japanese syllables can make English words in translation slightly longer.[5] To give some examples, let us take the names of the

[3] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, pp. 34–45.
[4] Ibid., p. 37.
[5] Ibid., p. 37.

three central characters in *Hamlet*. Hamlet becomes ハムレット(Ha-mu-re-(t)-to), Gertrude becomes ガートルード(Ga(a)-to-ru(u)-do), and Claudius becomes クローディアス (Ku-ro-de(i)-a-su). Hamlet and Gertrude have only two syllables in English, yet these increase to five and four syllables respectively in Japanese; Claudius goes from three syllables to five. The result is twofold: firstly, any attempt to match syllables in the two languages becomes incredibly fraught; and perhaps even more obvious is the fact that the overall length of a translated text becomes much longer than the original if a translator attempts to use a verse equivalent.[6]

This leads to Japanese translators being forced to make very distinct choices in their translations, far more so than translators working in Romance languages. But to tease out Chiba's question a little further, why should that which is considered poetry in English stand as poetry in Japanese? It is regularly argued that the metre of Shakespeare's verse gives the plays a type of energy or drive: it is 'the emotional pulse of the speech'.[7] It is talked of by actors as guidance for interpretating meaning and consequently as an aid for the delivery of lines; the use of metre is championed by many scholars as one key part of Shakespeare's inimitable poetic skill. The English language that Shakespeare used naturally contained lots of lexical stress; but if the linguistic utterances of a Shakespeare play in Japanese lose many of these, then is there any point in attempting to reconstruct some type of poetic form in Japanese, if one of the most dynamic and important elements of Shakespeare poetry must inevitably be absent? This makes translating Shakespeare, with the intention of maintaining some sort of poetic equivalence, incredibly difficult. (Nevertheless, some translators, such as Shoichiro Kawai continue to attempt this challenging feat.)[8] That translating into Japanese is supremely difficult is not news — we have been told this on

[6] Ibid., p. 39.
[7] Cicely Berry, *The Actor and the Text*, rev. edn (London: Virgin, 1993), p. 53.
[8] Shoichiro Kawai, 'Translating the Rhythm in "Hamlet"', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 3.7 (2006), 39–44; Shoichiro Kawai, 'Some Japanese Shakespeare Productions in 2014–15', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 14.29 (2016), 13–28 <https://doi.org/10.1515/mstap-2016-0013>

numerous occasions. These points were articulated more fully by Kishi and Bradshaw some years ago; and Gallimore dedicates a chapter to the issue of 'Stress and Accent' in his book comparing different Japanese translations of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.[9] Yet, more important than merely understanding what the technical problems are, we must also understand what this difficulty means for a translator. From this, we begin to appreciate that a translator must decide for themselves what is the *purpose* of Shakespeare's use of poetry in his plays, rather than only what is the poetic form and its function. Once they have decided upon this purpose, they must then choose to what extent they want to serve that same purpose, if at all.

The poetry in Shakespeare's plays operates as a bridge between the characters and the playwright; it serves as a heightened linguistic representation of the human drama being presented. After all, it is not in any way naturalistic, yet most readers or audiences can recognise questions about life and the world within the verbal interactions of the characters and the linguistic expressions they use. We recognise the importance of asking questions such as why Othello becomes jealous, or why Hamlet does not avenge his father straight after seeing his father's ghost. By asking such questions, and analysing our answers, we can learn about ourselves and others. Shakespeare's characters do not choose to speak in poetry; they usually do not even know they are speaking in a poetic form, if indeed one can argue that a character knows they are speaking at all.[10] This can present a real challenge for many Western actors today trained in systems that focus on realism to a greater extent than much of the theatre training in the past. But key to comprehension here is the understanding that if the target language functions so differently to the source language regarding poetry, then that which is considered poetry in the target language must also be reconsidered. In *The Theory and Practice of Translation* Eugene Albert Nida and Charles Russell Taber make the following relevant claim: 'Anything that can be said in one language can be said in another,

[9] Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 35–63; Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, pp. 34–45.
[10] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, p. 69.

unless the form is an essential element of the message.'[11] Form can be said to be part of the message in much of Shakespeare's poetic drama, and thus moving such a text into Japanese is accompanied by this specific obstacle that may, by this definition, render the task impossible.

These challenges did not prevent some translators from attempting to use Japanese verse for their translations. Shôyô did so, especially at the beginning of his translating career. Knowing some of the details outlined above may help us understand why Shôyô's attempts received so much criticism. Here was the supposedly new Western drama, within which audiences expected a new Western style of acting; yet when Japanese actors attempted to act this way with Shôyô's 'kabuki–ish phraseology and style' the results seemed clunky and unconvincing.[12] Whilst important, versification is only one part of poetry. Admittedly, some of the power of the plays comes from the structure and metre of Shakespeare's verse; therefore, losing this key part of versification surely diminishes one area of its impact. Yet, it is worth recalling that the Russian Formalists, particularly Jakobson, suggested that the linguistic analysis of poetry that approached understanding a poem through the examination of language, rather than the wider theories and existing relationships in literature, was both separate and contributary to these more traditional avenues of literary analysis. Despite the pluralism of its methodologies and aims, it can be said that the Formalists placed value on 'the principle that literature should be treated as a specific series of facts', although even this is not enough to separate it from all other schools of literary thought.[13]

> Although that poetics which interprets the work of a poet through the prism of language and which studies the dominant function in poetry represents, by definition, the starting point in the explication of poems, it is self-evident that their documentary value, be it psychological, psychoanalytical, or sociological, remains open to investigation — of course, by true experts in

[11] Nida and Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, p. 4.
[12] Minami, 'Finding a Style for Presenting Shakespeare on the Japanese Stage', 29–42 (p. 33).
[13] Peter Steiner, 'Who Is Formalism, What Is She?', in *Russian Formalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1984), pp. 15–43 (p. 23).

> the named disciplines. Nevertheless, those specialists must take into account the fact that the dominant exerts its influence upon the other functions of the work and that all the other prisms are subordinated to that of the *poetic* texture of the *poem*. This italicized tautology retains all of its persuasive eloquence.[14]

We may discuss what precisely is meant by texture in this context, but clearly it refers in some way to how a reader may experience a poetic text in more ways than only the emotion it may stimulate. Put another way, by Jakobson once more: 'The object of literary science is not literature but literariness, i.e. what makes a given work a literary work.'[15] This allows for a far wider interpretive scope when assessing what is and is not poetic, and encourages readers and audiences to move beyond the redundant simplicity of believing poetry can be defined as anything that is similar to what is already thought of as poetry, or anything that is not prose, or even relying on the rather simplistic notion that the layout of a text on a page defines its genre. This viewpoint is particularly pertinent to what we may term latent poetry in Shôyô's scripts, for the Japanese language can function in a way that compensates to some extent for this loss of Shakespeare verse, and can be considered highly poetic.

'To be or not to be' in Japanese

This famous line is a real challenge for translators, but it is precisely for this reason that it is worthwhile exploring. The line's linguistic simplicity in English is deceptive: semantically it is far from obvious what exactly it means. The line may be described as simple, but it is certainly not easy to understand. Let us now examine some Japanese translations of 'To be or not to be that is the question' (III.1.56) as exploring this famous line will demonstrate some of these choices and highlight the difference in function of the two languages described above.[16] I am indebted to Daniel Gallimore's book *Sounding Like Shakespeare:*

[14] Roman Jakobson, 'A Postscript to the Discussion on Grammar of Poetry', *Diacritics*, 10.1 (1980), 22–35 (p. 23) <https://doi.org/10.2307/465038>
[15] Roman Jakobson quoted in Steiner, 'Who Is Formalism, What Is She?', pp. 1–-43 (p. 23).
[16] William Shakespeare, 'Hamlet, Prince of Denmark'

a Study of Prosody in Four Translations of A Midsummer Night's Dream, for he pointed to some of the key ideas regarding how to approach the four translators below.[17] The text has been rearranged from the original vertical printed form; the *furigana* that were included as a much smaller script alongside the *kanji* characters in the original texts are in brackets after the *kanji* in the versions below.

Shôyô's 1909 translation reads as follows:

存(ながら)ふる? 存(ながら)へぬ? それが疑問(ぎもん)ぢゃ..... (Nagarauru, nagaraenu, sore ga gimon ja)[18]

= [To exist or not to exist, that is the question.]

This changes in Shôyô's revisions by 1933 to:

世に在る、世に在らぬ、それが疑問ぢゃ。 (Yoni aru, yoni aranu, sore ga gimon ja)

= [To exist in the world or not to exist in the world, that is the question.][19]

Daniel Gallimore has made certain arguments about this line in one particular article, but it should be noted that he suggests there is a (*ka*) in both versions after what he translates as 'Nagaraeru' then again after 'nagaraenu'; and after 'Yoni aru' and again after 'yoni aranu' which are not in my version of Shôyô's text, nor in the 1909 version I have seen.[20] However, Gallimore also makes reference to the recording the Shôyô made of this speech, so we should accept perhaps that (*ka)* was reflected in the questions marks that Shôyô added in the 1909 version, at least, the inclusion of which make the phrase more questioning overall. Irrespective of this, what this slight textual instability certainly does demonstrate is the challenge of the line and the ongoing desire for those engaging with it to revisit it. More importantly, Gallimore has highlighted the difference between these two suggesting that the first version 'is more suggestive in its archaisms and open vowels of the mystery that Hamlet ponders'.[21] I

[17] Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream*.
[18] Tsubouchi Shôyô trans, *Hamuretto* (*Hamlet*) (Tokyo: Waseda University Press, 1909), p. 110.
[19] Tsubouchi Shôyô trans, *Hamuretto* (*Hamlet*) (Tokyo: Daisan Shokan, 2007), p. 733.
[20] Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi Shôyô and the Beauty of Shakespeare Translation in 1900s Japan', 69–85 (p. 79).
[21] Ibid., 79.

agree; but unpacking a bit further we can see more here that creates such an effect within the 'archaisms and open vowels' noticed by Gallimore's useful critique. Along with the apparent removal of the question marks within the line and the ellipsis at the end, the key difference in the translations turns on two similar *kanji* characters: 存 in the first version, and 在 in the revised edition. The first three strokes on the left of each character are the same: however, the radical (main component) in the 1909 version is 子 which translates as 'child' or 'descendant'; whereas the radical in 1933 version is 土, which means 'soil or earth'. In addition, Shôyô added 世 (*yo*) which translates as 'the world'. These revisions hint at a more direct choice regarding Hamlet's predicament in the time and space in which he is presently: should he exist in that particular world, within the circumstances that the world has presented to him or not. The choice becomes more directly about him in that specific environment and so more dichotomous. The revised line also draws more attention to the physicality of Hamlet's existence. This notion is strengthened further when we read that for his 1907 staged production Shôyô entrusted the coaching of 'Westernized' gestures and vocal work to a native English speaker, only to return to rehearsals before opening when he directed his actors to revert back to the older style of movement on stage reminiscent of *kabuki*. The same woman helped Shôyô in rehearsals for his 1911 production and he was 'less inflexible towards the results of her instruction'.[22] It is impossible to say for certain, but it may be that in his textual revisions Shôyô found himself being drawn to the more modern notion of Shakespeare as being expressed through the body of the performer in the moment. Underpinning both the wider point of this thesis and the specific idea here about the more embodied experience of both the actor and of Hamlet, W. B. Worthen writes, 'Culture passes through the body and into history. Shakespeare, however, remains present in the body, speaks most directly through the body.'[23] Further to this, it has been claimed that,

[22] Powell, 'One Man's *Hamlet* in 1911 Japan: The Bungei Kyokai Production in the Imperial Theatre', pp. 38–52 (p. 47).
[23] Worthen, *Shakespeare and the Authority of Performance*, p. 105.

> It seems that not only was Hamlet's question 'To be, or not to be' unfamiliar as a subject of soliloquy for Meiji audiences when Tsubouchi and others first translated it, but that having made the subject plausible, the further problem remained of finding an equivalent for 'to be' that contained the dual meanings of physical 'live' and abstract 'exist'.[24]

This dilemma is evident in the revisions that Shôyô made, as these move the translation further away from the generalized concept of existence.

It is impossible to claim with any certainty how conscious Shôyô was of the linguistic detail regarding the etymology of the specific radicals within the *kanji* characters. We do know that Shôyô was a very conscientious translator and was aware of the issue of 'actability'. He had, for example, translated small extracts from *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* in the 1890s but these he thought of as, to quote Gallimore once more, 'academic and unsuited for performance'.[25] Shôyô, as an academic as well and a theatre practitioner, understood that Shakespeare was dramatic literature; he believed Shakespeare could and should be read as well as seen on stage. Shôyô's translation above retains for both the reader and the listener a more metaphysical question about the nature of human existence; the *kanji* used subtly alludes to Hamlet's life as existing within the human cycle of birth and death. Shôyô himself outlined his five stages of translation, demonstrating an awareness of the development he had undergone whilst writing these various works. Even from the very beginning of the history of this line's translation in Japan we can see precisely what Huang is referring to when claiming,

[24] Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream*, pp. 30–31.
[25] Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi Shôyô and the Beauty of Shakespeare Translation in 1900s Japan', 69–85 (p. 7).

> Translation creates new vernaculars and gives rise to local literary canons. Translating Hamlet's 'to be or not to be' speech into Japanese, for example, will require substantial rewriting, because Japanese does not have the verb to be without semantic contexts.[26]

As mentioned, whether Shôyô was conscious or not of the linguistic details we cannot be completely certain; yet what we are definitely left with is the sense that Shôyô was not happy with his earlier version of this line presumably because he felt he had not encapsulated the essence of what Hamlet's 'to be' really meant for him. Writing in 1928 about the play, seventeen years after the 1911 production, Shôyô remarked,

> when I came to direct *Hamlet* a powerful awareness of what Shakespeare meant gradually dawned on me. It was with only a rather vague idea of what lay ahead that I started to translate the play. Things are different now: I could not have hoped for the rise of *shimpa* and the free and natural rhetoric of the *shingeki*. The language of my *Hamlet* was inevitably touched by the *kabuki* and seven-five syllabic meter of traditional Japanese poetics.[27]

The physicality that is highlighted in the revision focuses our attention on Hamlet's corporeal presence in the world. I would therefore further contend that this may suggest Shôyô's greater trust and acceptance of the actors performing the part of Hamlet, and the importance of their physical presence on the stage. This is surely part of what Shôyô is talking about when he refers to understanding the 'powerful awareness of what Shakespeare meant'. We know that his original production of *Hamlet* was criticized for being too literary by many. Whilst we should be wary of being overly committed to this conclusion on the basis on such a small piece of evidence, these changes hint that Shôyô certainly appreciated the literary nature of the plays, and by the latter stages of his translating career he may have understood better

[26] Huang, 'Ninagawa', pp. 79–112 (p. 82).
[27] Gallimore, 'Shôyô, Sôseki, and Shakespeare: Translations of Three Key Texts', 41–61 (p. 50).

the need for the immediacy of the actor's body to be part of the communication of the human conditions being explored within a Shakespeare play.

Let us turn now to a later version — another 'substantial rewriting' as alluded to by Huang — and bring the same attention to bear on the linguistic choices.[28] Tsuneari Fukuda (1912–1994) was a translator and director who was a major player in the *shingeki* movement in Japan. Fukuda famously produced a production of *Hamlet* in Japanese in 1955 which was almost a scene-by-scene visual recreation of Michael Benthall's production he had seen at the Old Vic in 1953 staring Richard Burton. His take on 'To be or not to be' reads as follows:

生か、死か、それが疑問だ、 (Se-i ka, shi ka, sore ga gimon da) = [Life or death, that is the question.][29]

Instantly it becomes obvious that Fukuda has selected a tighter, more instantly obvious interpretation. Contrasting 生か (*se-i ka*) with 死か (*shi ka*) he seems to eschew the more metaphysical suggestions that Shôyô wished to retain, and so presents a binary question of apparently more simple biological choice. In doing so, he highlights to a greater extent the immediacy of the decision that Hamlet is attempting to make and the physical nature of any choice to end a life. Along with this, the punchy, staccato rhythm of this line makes for a Hamlet that is more energised and driven rather than internally contemplative. Ryuta Minami supports this interpretation remarking of this *Hamlet* that, 'Fukuda's translation is often claimed to have its own style with masculine musicality and rhythm, assertive brevity and loftiness.'[30] Other scholars have noted this trend in Fukuda's translations more generally. Niki tells us that Fukuda 'succeeded in assigning fresh, colloquial, fast-moving language to Shakespearean characters so that they might be better appreciated by the public in modern Japan'.[31] Kishi and Bradshaw state specifically of

[28] Huang, 'Ninagawa', pp. 79–112 (p. 82).
[29] Tsuneari Fukuda, trans, *Hamuretto* (*Hamlet*), (Tokyo: Shinchosha, 2018) p. 94.
[30] Minami, 'Finding a Style for Presenting Shakespeare on the Japanese Stage', 29–42 (p. 34).
[31] Niki, *Shakespeare Translation in Japanese Culture*, p. 26.

Fukuda's *Hamlet* that, 'The Prince was a man actively coping with his own situation rather than the melancholic and indecisive sceptic the audience no doubt expected to see.'[32] This sense is supported further when we look at the next line in Fukuda's translation. He turns 'whether it is nobler in the mind' into 'which is the manly way to live…?' (どちらが男らしい生きかたか).[33] Again, we see a distinct choice to highlight one element of Hamlet's personality and circumstance which, as soon as it is written down, precludes an audience from easily accessing other ideas. However, this may tell us more about Japanese society in the 1950s than anything else. Recovering from the physical and psychological devastation of the Second World War, the concept of Japanese male identity, especially regarding male family relationships (such as how a son should behave towards his uncle, and towards the wishes of his dead father, perhaps) was likely to be less secure. Supporting this idea, Haruo Matsubara tells us of the legal changes to the family system after the Second World War. The Civil Code of 1947 abolished patriarchal rights and exclusive inheritance by the eldest son; regulations for caring for elderly parents and laws regarding marriage were also altered.[34] Yasunari Takahashi writes that in this *Hamlet*, Fukuda 'saw through the insufficiency of modernization, the fragile fashioning of modern self in Japanese theatre and society'.[35] Aligning 'noble' with 'manly', therefore, helps to frame the Japanese male self in a positive fashion. Perhaps Fukuda drew inspiration from the negative backlash Shôyô received from many in his audience: whereas a contemplative Hamlet who spoke poetically may have appealed to some of the academic men of letters in the Meiji Era, it did not strike such a favourable chord with the population more generally. Fukuda may have had that in mind when he approached his own version. The actor who played Hamlet in Fukuda's 1955 production was Hiroshi Akutagawa (1920–1981). Akutagawa was an established actor on both stage and screen; he is known in Japan for films such as *Entotsu no Mieru Basho* (*Where Chimneys are Seen)* in 1953 and, a little after he played Hamlet, for *Ikiteiru Koheiji* (*The*

[32] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, p. 31.
[33] Fukuda, *Hamuretto* (*Hamlet*) p. 94.
[34] Haruo Matsubara, 'The Family and Japanese Society after World War II', in *Developing Economies*, 7.4 (1969), 499–527.
[35] Takahashi, '*Hamlet* and the Anxiety of Modern Japan', 99–112 (p. 108).

Living Koheiji) in 1957. Akutagawa was a founder member of the *Gekidan Kumo* (Cloud Theatre Company) established in 1963, of which Fukuda was the founder Artistic Director. Akutagawa has been described as bringing to his performance of Hamlet 'youthful, speedy, dynamic movements and the type of rhymical speech new to the Japanese stage'.[36] Fukuda believed strongly that any translation of a Shakespeare play had to be rendered specially for performance on stage, and so he chose language that would allow actors to bring the characters and stories to life in an immediate and physical way.[37] Yet, despite the praising of Fukuda's 1955 production, we should recall that this was an imitation in many ways. Having discussed this term with regards to translating a text, it perhaps does not dawn on too many scholars of translation to extend their thinking to a production in this way. We must then interrogate any idea of authenticity of such a production, and the importance of determining that authenticity. We can assume with relative confidence that it was this type of replication that Ninagawa found so difficult to accept during his career: for all its evident excitement and action on stage, it almost denies that Japan had anything really to offer *Hamlet* or to offer its Japanese audience through the presentation of Shakespeare's work. Fukuda's choice to replicate in this fashion the production that he saw was due to the immediacy of the performance that he experienced in London, which he did not find in the existing translations of Shakespeare in Japan. He claimed publicly that he had seen the play in London several times with a script in hand, in order to take accurate notes to inform the staging (or restaging, perhaps?) of his own production. There are, of course, questions to be asked here about intercultural theatre and the concept of cultural exchange. Notable is Ryuta Minami's argument that 'A style of translation defines an acting style.'[38] This has a rather fatalistic sense to it: by suggesting the acting style is 'defined' by the translation implies it is dominated almost completely by the choices a translator makes regarding their texts. I would prefer 'influences' rather than defines, which feels easier to accept: after all, in the West we

[36] Suematsu Michiko, 'Import/Export: Japanizing Shakespeare', in *Shakespeare in Asia: Contemporary Performance*, ed. by Dennis Kennedy and Li Lan Yong (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), pp. 155–69 (p. 158).
[37] Yoshiko Kawachi, '"*Macbeth*" in Japanese Culture', *Multicultural Shakespeare: Translation, Appropriation and Performance*, 1 (2004), 127–138 (p. 133) <http://hdl.handle.net/11089/1398> [accessed 12 April 2022]
[38] Minami, 'Finding a Style for Presenting Shakespeare on the Japanese Stage', 29–42 (p. 32).

have seen different acting styles employed to perform Shakespeare even only during the past 150 years or so, and while throughout this history we can claim the text influenced how the performances were delivered, we cannot claim that they were defined by the style of words to be spoken unless we concede that the definition is subject to change every time a new style of acting arrives. It is striking, though, that here we see the inversion of Minami's point: rather than a translated text exerting its influence on a style of acting, it was the style of acting that Fukuda saw on stage at the Old Vic that influenced his translation in what is evidently a novel type of intercultural theatrical exchange.

Fukuda began the trend to help the contemporary audience access *Hamlet.* Yushi Odashima followed in these footsteps: he translated *Hamlet* in the late 1970s and had translated Shakespeare's complete works by the 1981. Impressively, he supplied one translation per month to Norio Deguchi's Shakespeare Theatre Company so that they could stage every play from 1975–81. Odashima made explicit reference to the fact that he wanted to make Shakespeare accessible and enjoyable to a modern audience, and it is beyond doubt that his translations contributed substantially to the increase in popularity of Shakespeare productions in Japan. He translates 'To be or not to be' like this:

このままでいいのか、いけないのか、それが問題だ。 (Kono mama de î no ka, ikenai no ka, sore ga mondai da) = [Whether this is ok as it is or not, that is the question.] [39]

Niki suggests that this version highlights the precariousness of Hamlet's condition and argues that this would appeal to the modern-day Japanese audience.[40] This may be true; it is certainly the case that it becomes hard to put Odashima's translation back into English due to the rather colloquial nature of the Japanese used. But the now wider generality of Hamlet's statement reduces the intensity of the moment. To remove the very specific talk of existence and of life in this line appears to lower the stakes of

[39] Yushi Odashima trans, *Hamuretto* (*Hamlet*) (Tokyo: Hakusuisha, 2011), p. 110.
[40] Niki, *Shakespeare Translation in Japanese Culture*, p. 28.

Hamlet's decision. Of course, one interpretation of this could be that Hamlet cannot say those words: he uses '*kono mama'* ('as it is') as a euphemism. This is unconvincing. Hamlet may struggle to act; and even if his words are vague at times, he does not struggle to talk about his feelings (whether honestly or not), irrespective of the language he is speaking. If we deprive him of that ability, we strip him of the essence of his personality. Yet even within this short sentence we see evidence of Odashima's intention to help younger actors and actresses to speak a text that was accessible to a modern-day audience in Japan.

Odashima's translation of this particular line almost completely avoids *kanji* characters. Whilst this could be said to fit with his intention to 'assign fresh and colloquial language to his characters with topical words', the text loses something at the same time.[41] The linguistic texture of his translation (especially visually) feels reduced. This has echoes of Takashi Murakami's notion of Japan's 'superflat' culture after the Second World War, which laments the Japanese *kawaii* (cutesy) culture, and suggested that certain elements of Japanese society, including social mores, and certain arts and culture, are only two dimensional.[42] Murakami argues that, after the tragic and literal flattening of Hiroshima and Nagasaki due to the atom bombs, much of the youth of the country has embraced a flatness metaphorically; he details different *anime* films, songs and pop-culture references to evidence this. If *kanji* characters, as either pictograms or ideograms, offer different layers of meaning, as I will argue later that they do, Odashima reduces those possibilities by avoiding them in his translation of this line. One may believe this to be purely an argument that holds when reading Shakespeare; but an actor and director must read the text to create and play the scene. If they are denied the textual richness provided by *kanji* characters when reading and learning the lines, it follows that the subsequent performance may well lack something in the same way. If this is the case, the great popularity of Odashima's translations seems to fit into Murakami's criticism that much of contemporary Japanese youth culture is desirous of (and satisfied with) such

[41] Ibid., p. 28.
[42] Takashi Murakami, 'Earth in My Window', in *Little Boy: The Arts of Japan's Exploding Subculture*, trans. by Linda Hoaglund, ed. by Takashi Murakami (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), pp. 98–149.

flatness. We can develop this idea further when we think of the character of Hamlet speaking these lines. Thomas Looser claims that in the Superflat world 'precisely because identity is emergent and exists only at the surface, there is no single point of depth by which to locate a unitary subject'.[43] Looser is here discussing art forms in Japan in the 1990s compared to the Western perspectival space, yet the comparison makes sense for the art form of the theatre and especially that of the Shakespearean soliloquy that has been developed from that of *kabuki* and *noh.* It is through the text that the character of Hamlet is attempting to project his own identity, yet the struggle that he is facing appears to be the very one that the world of Superflat highlights: his identity exists only at a surface level, he plays the parts needed when conversing with different people and his incapacity to take action comes from an absence of the 'unitary subject' within him. From one point of view, of course, there is no Hamlet. As David Mamet argues, 'There *is* no character. There are only lines upon a page.'[44] But Mamet is, quite rightly, railing against the idea that an actor must undergo the same emotional trials as the character they are playing. As soon as someone reads *Hamlet*, they see and hear characters interacting, even if only in the mind of the reader. The characters exist: how the lines are constructed on the page and then delivered by these characters (either in the reader's mind or on the stage) are how they are brought to life. Odashima's choices on the page are part of this process, as indeed are the choices of every translator.

The *kanji* that Odashima keeps are those for the translation of 'question', yet he opts for a different interpretation to those of Shôyô and Fukuda. Odashima uses 問題 (*mondai*) rather than 疑問 (*gimon*) as per Fukuda and Shôyô. The difference is subtle but important. Whilst *gimon* translates as 'question', but the dictionary informs us that the meanings include 'doubt; question; suspicion; dubiousness' but Odashima's choice of *mondai* translates as:

1. question (e.g. on a test); problem

[43] Thomas Looser, 'Superflat and the Layers of Image and History in 1990s Japan', *Mechademia*, 1 (2006), 92–109 (p. 98).
[44] David Mamet, *True and False: Heresy and Common Sense for the Actor* (London: Faber and Faber, 1998), p. 9.

2. problem (e.g. societal, political); question; issue.[45]

Odashima's choice emphasises the problematic nature of Hamlet's decision: whether he should leave things as they are or act to change them is something to be solved. This implies to a greater extent that there is a right answer to the puzzle; a solution exists, and Hamlet must find it. However, both Shôyô and Fukuda employ *kanji* characters that shine light on the doubt and suspicion within the question: this points to Hamlet being unsure as to whether there is an answer, a position that many would argue is supported by the rest of his soliloquy. One could contend that Odashima's choice coincides with Takeo Doi's argument already expounded upon, namely that we now choose to believe there is an answer to everything. Nothing can transcend human intellect in the post-modern world: if we don't know something it is simply that we have yet to discover it, not that it is essentially unknowable. Doi tells us, 'We are driven — compelled — to make clear anything, everything, that is said to be "secret". I believe that it is from this that the modern spirit was born.'[46] Subsequent translators have opted for *mondai* rather than *gimon*, furthering the argument that Odashima's translation heralded the modern-day Hamlet in Japan. In this way, whether deliberately or not, Odashima's choices modernise Hamlet in this moment of the drama.

Since Odashima, the most prolific translator has been Kazuko Matsuoka. She is the first female to have translated *Hamlet*, which she did in 1996, having begun translating Shakespeare's plays in 1993. In his later years, Ninagawa often used Matsuoka's translations for his productions at the Saitama Arts Centre and on tour. Having finished her translation of *All's Well that Ends Well* in 2021, she became only the third person in Japan to translate the entire canon. Despite the limited amount of time since Odashima's translations, Matsuoka has stated that she felt that a new translation style was necessary due

[45] Kim Ahlström, Miwa Ahlström, and Andrew Plummer, *Jisho (Dictionary)*, (2015) <https://jisho.org/> [accessed 17 September 2018]
[46] Doi, *The Anatomy of Self: The Individual Versus Society*, p. 109.

to the fact that the Japanese language had changed substantially since the 1970s, especially with regards to male-female relationships and social hierarchy.[47]

Although less pertinent to the line we are examining here, it is worth mentioning that what has resulted has been a set of Shakespeare translations that raise more issues of gender and even incline towards a feminist reading. This is important not only for the relevant political questions circulating in today's global societies with regards the gender debate, but also as a key part of the performances being constructed within the texts. Shakespeare is, after all, also concerned with gender and a variety of male-female relationships in his plays: Matsuoka's translations channel these ideas distinctly onto the page and then the stage in ways that had not been explored before in Japan, giving greater status to the female characters through their use of language than has normally been afforded to them in earlier Japanese translations. What is also relevant about Matsuoka's work is her tendency to remain in the rehearsal room with the actors and directors during key productions that use her translation. Her awareness of the translation being performed as theatre is evident. (The present author first met Matsuoka in the rehearsal room of Ninagawa's all-male *Troilus and Cressida* in July 2012.) This type of awareness, that ensures her texts are 'actable', has meant she continues to revisit her translations making alterations. This has helped her translations remain popular with directors and audiences alike. Matsuoka translated the line as this:

生きてこうあるか、消えてなくなるか、それが問題だ。 (Ikite kô aru ka, kiete nakunaru ka, sore ga mondai da) = [To live like this or to disappear into nothingness, that is the question.] [48]

Matsuoka translates using *kanji*, one of which (生) we have seen in Fukuda's version, although here it is used in a slightly different way. By having Hamlet say 'To live like this' rather than just 'Life' she

[47] Gallimore, *Sounding Like Shakespeare: A Study of Prosody in Four Translations of a Midsummer Night's Dream*, p. 25.
[48] Kazuko Matsuoka trans, *Hamuretto (Hamlet)* (Tokyo: Chikumashobo, 1996), p. 119.

highlights the act of living rather than the more objective state of simply being alive. By employing 消え て ('to disappear or vanish') she draws greater attention to the philosophical nature of Hamlet's existence, prompting questions about what death actually means. Matsuoka also inserts a footnote on this line in her translation. She clarifies that 'to be' in this instance means 'to exist' and that as Hamlet only uses the personal pronoun 'I' at the very end, he is talking of existence generally rather than only his life.[49] This conclusion feels likely and the specificity that we can read in original lines such as 'that is the question' rather than 'that is my question' and 'to say we end the heartache' rather than 'to say I end the heartache' support Matsuoka's point of view. Nevertheless, the need for such clarification demonstrates the loss to which we have already alluded: within the Japanese language, there is no verb that can encapsulate both the greater philosophical question and the specific immediate question in the way that 'to be' is able to do in English. It is necessary also for Matsuoka to retain the accessibility that has become so important to modern translations of Shakespeare in Japan. This means not only a capacity to understand linguistically the text, but also that it is understood as relevant to a modern-day audience and their interests, concerns and lives in general. This is surely what she means when, in an essay on *Hamlet*, she tells us:

> Modern, colloquial translations make for easy access to Shakespeare, making it easy for us to identify with the characters. A Hamlet who speaks contemporary Japanese is a mirror which can well reflect the troubles of our own world.[50]

The discussions about the relevance of Shakespeare abound today in the West and Shakespeare's relevance beyond the academic is questioned perennially. As a result of such discussions, many productions attempt, with varying degrees of success, to make Shakespeare more relevant to a modern-day audience through elements of staging. Usually this means updating the world of the play, setting it in a modern era (or, at least, a more recent era than the play's original setting) and often localising it to a

[49] Ibid., p. 119.
[50] Matsuoka, 'Metamorphosis of Hamlet', pp. 227–38 (p. 233).

larger extent. We accept this as part of the myriad of choices a director can make: Matsuoka here reminds us that a translator can also add to that myriad of choice to achieve a similar purpose.

These various translations show how small alterations can have substantial effects on interpretation. Li Ruru has performed a similar examination of Chinese translations of 'To be or not to be' and found an interesting result regarding the different interpretations which,

> illustrate that staging Shakespeare is most dynamic, because not only the Chinese theatre, either modern or traditional, has to negotiate with the alien elements, but the components within the target culture itself also start reacting and transforming under the influence of the outside intruder.[51]

There is a similar effect in these Japanese translations. Each translator is clearly influenced by the contemporary context, including the theatrical context, in which they are writing; but they are also influenced by the translations that have come before, even reacting against them, such as reducing the number of *kanji* characters or using a more colloquial language. The intertextuality of translations is a further layer of intercultural theatre. By exploring these translations, even of such a small piece of text, we can see the variety within *Hamlet* and it is fascinating to perceive how a translator attempts to guide Hamlet towards a particular version of himself. There are, of course, many other translations each with particular emphasis. For instance, Shoichiro Kawai claims that his translation in 2003 prepared for Jonathan Kent's all-male production in Tokyo is a rare attempt to translate the original sound structure by transplanting the rhythm of the text into Japanese.[52] Elsewhere Kinoshita Junji is famed for respecting 'more than anything else what he calls "the energy" of Shakespeare's language'.[53] However, after Shôyô's original translation, perhaps most striking of those examined above is Odashima's as it strays the

[51] Li Ruru, 'Six People in Search Of "To Be or Not to Be..."', in *Re-Playing Shakespeare in Asia*, ed. by Poonam Trivedi and Minami Ryuta (Oxford: Routledge, 2010), pp. 119–40 (p. 138).
[52] Shoichiro Kawai, 'Translating the Rhythm in "Hamlet"', 39–44 (p. 39).
[53] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, p. 54.

furthest from the original text in certain ways. In comparison with the others, we may legitimately ask of his at what point translation ends and adaptation begins. Reading Odashima's line, one can almost see a side of Hamlet that belongs entirely to modern Japanese society, with the ambiguity of the English verb 'to be' in this context being reflected by the sense of vagueness created by Odashima's corresponding word choice. Whilst the other translations are of great interest as they highlight elements we already know about the character, Odashima's 'flatter' translation offers us something through not only what the language means but also how it is constructed on the page: this tells us a great deal about the world in which this Hamlet was created and now exists.

Whilst revealing, it is difficult to draw comprehensive conclusions from such as small piece of text. With the acknowledgement that only by reading the complete text in Japanese, and being completely fluent in the language, will leads us anywhere near a conclusive response, it is nevertheless worth looking at some further translation, albeit in a limited quantity. As Shôyô's and Odashima's proved to be the most striking in their differences so far, we shall now examine more of their text. For this we will take Shôyô's 1933 text complete with revisions, although as has been stated, the revisions by this stage in Shôyô's career were minimal. As the *kanji* characters are of particular interest for reasons that will become clear, they are numbered in the translations below so as to demonstrate more clearly how they function. I am grateful to Mariko Keith for her assistance in translating these.

1**世**に 2**在**る、世に在らぬ、それが 3**疑問**ぢゃ。= 2To **exist** or not to exist in the **1world**, that is the 3**question.**

1**残忍**な 2**運命**の 3**矢**や 4**石投**を、5**只管**（ひたすら）6**堪**へ**忍**んでをるが 7**男子**の 8**本意**か、9**或**は 10**海**なす 11**艱難**を 12**逆**（むか）へ 13**撃**って、14**戦**うて 15**根**を 16**絶**つが 17**大丈夫**の 18**志**か？ = Is it the 8**true intention** of the 7**young man** to 5**single-mindedly** 6**endure** the 3**arrows** and the **4throwing of stones** of a 1**brutal** 2**fate**? 9**Or** is it the 18**will** that it is 17**ok** to 13**shoot** the 11**hardships** of the 10**sea** 12**in(to) reverse** and to 14**fight** and 16**cut** off the 15**root**?

1**死**は・・・・・・2 ねむり・・・・・・に 3**過**ぎぬ。= 1**Death** is…… 3**no more than** a 2**sleep.**

1 **眠**って 2 **心**の 3 **痛**（いたみ）が 4 **去**り、11 **此** 5 **肉**に 6 **附纏**うてをる 7 **千** 8 **百**の 9 **苦**（くるしみ）が 10 **除**かるゝものならば・・・・・・それこそ 15 **上**もなう 12 **願**はしい 13 **大** 14 **終焉**ぢゃが。
= If the 3**pain** of the 2**heart** 4**leaves** when 1**asleep** and the 8**hundreds** and 7**thousands** of 9**struggles** that are 6**tied** to 11**this** 5**flesh** are 10**removed**, that is the 12**desired** 13**great** 14**end** that could not be 15**better**.

・・・・・・1 **死**は・・・・・・2 ねむり・・・・・・3 **眠**る！ = …..**1Death** is…… 2**sleep**……an 3 **(eternal) sleep**!

あゝ、おそらくは 1 **夢**を 2 **見**よう！= Oh, probably I shall 2**see** a 1**dream**!

・・・・・・そこに 1 **故障**（さはり）があるわ。= There's the 1**fault** there.

11 **此** 1 **形骸**の 2 **煩累**（わづらひ）を 3 **悉**く 4 **脱**した 5 **時**に、12 **其** 6 **醒**めぬ 7 **眠**の 10 **中**に、どのやうな 8 **夢**を 9 **見**るやら？= What kind of 8**dream** will you 9**see** 10**inside** 12**that** 6**never—waking** 7**sleep** 5when you 4**escape** from all the 2**troubles** of 11**this** 1**mere skeleton** ('bone frame') 3**entirely**?

それが 1 **心懸**りぢゃ。= That is the 1**concern** ('suspended heart').

1 **憂世**の 2 **苦厄**（くるしみ）を 3 **自分**（われ）と 4 **長**びかずも、5 **畢竟**は 6 **是**が 7 **為**ぢゃ。= Even if I do 4**not prolong** the 2**hardship and misfortune** of 1**this fleeting life** with 3**myself**, it is for 6**this** 7**advantage** 5**after all**.

1 **短剣**の 2 **只** 9 **一突**で、3 **易々**と 4 **此** 5 **生**（よ）が 6 **去**らぬゝものを、7 **誰**（た）がおめくと 8 **忍**んでをらうぞ？= With **2only** a 9**single stab** of a 1**dagger**, 7**who** will not be able to 6**leave** 4**this** 5**life** 3**easily**, will you 8**endure** it?

1 **世**の 2 **凌虐**や 3 **侮辱**（はづかしめ）を、4 **虐主**の 5 **非道**や 6 **驕**る 7 **奴輩**（ばら）の 8 **横柄**や、10 **成就**（かな）はぬ 11 **恋**の 9 **切**なさ、14 **長**びく 13 **裁判**の 12 もどかしさ、15 **官吏**（やくにん）らの 16 **尊大**を、17 **堪忍**すればよいことにして 18 **君子**、19 **大人**（だいじん）をも 20 **虐**（しへた）ぐる 21 **小人共**が 22 **無礼**などを= One is supposed to17**endure** the1**world's** 2**assaults** and 3**insults**, the 5**inhuman behaviours** of the 4**cruel masters** and 8**arrogance** of the 6**proud** 7**fellows**, the 9**misery** of 10**unfulfilled** 11**romantic love**, the 12**frustration** of 14**delayed** 13**judgement**, the 16**haughtiness** of the 15**polititians**, 21**narrow—minded people** who 20**abuse** even 18**men of virtue,** 19 **high ranking men** are 22**discourteous** and so on

・・・・・・もし 23 **死後**の 24 **危惧**（あやぶみ）がなくば = ... If there is no 24**fear** of 23**after death**

・・・・・・32 **誰**が**此** 25 **厭**な 26 **世**に、27 **汗**を**流**して 28 **呻吟**（うめ）きながら、29 **斯様**な 30 **重荷**を 31 **忍**んでをらうぞ？=... ... In this 25**unpleasant** 26**world**, 32**who** would 31**endure** 29**this kind of** 30**burden** while 27**sweating** and 28**moaning**?

1 **曾**て 4 **一人**の 2 **旅人**（りよじん）すらも 5 **帰って来**ぬ 3 **国**が 11 **心元**ないによって、12 **知**らぬ 6 **火宅**に*7 **往**くよりはと 8 **現在**の 9 **苦**を 10 **忍**ぶのであらう。= They must 10**endure** the 8**present** 9**pain** rather than see the 3**country** (from) where not even a 4 **single** 2**traveler** 1**ever** 5**returned** (after) 7**going** to the 12**unknown** 6**world of suffering** because of the 11**heartlessness**.

... ...ま、18 **其様**に、1 **良心**が 3 **人**を 2 **臆病者**にならせをる、また 4 **決心**の 5 **本来** 6 **色**が 7 **蒼白**い 8 **憂慮の為**に 9 **白**ちゃけ、10 **重**大 11 **緊要**な 12 **企図**（くはだて）も、そのために 13 **逸**（そ）れ、14 **果**は 15 **実行**の 16 **名**を 17 **失**ふ。= So, 18**in that way**, 1**conscience** makes 3**people** 2**cowards**, and the 5**original** 6**colour** of the 4 **determination** 9**fades** ('becomes white') to 7**pale** 8**because of the anxiety**, even the 10 **serious** and 11**momentous** 12**plan** 13 **turns away** because of that, 14**enlightenment** (as the fruits of one's Buddhist practice/ Buddhist term) 17**loses** its 16**name** of 15**action**.[54]

Before delving into the text in more detail let us also look at how Odashima continues this famous speech.

このままでいいのか、 いけないのか、それか問題だ。 = Whether this is ok as it is or not, that is the question.

どちらがりっぱな 1 **生き方**か、このまま 2 **心**のうちに 3 **暴虐**な 13 **運命**の 4 **矢弾**をじっと 5 **耐**えしのぶことか、それとも 6 **寄**せくる 7 **怒濤**(どとう)の 8 **苦難**に 9 **敢然**と 10 **立**ちむか い、11 **闘**ってそれに 12 **終止符**をうつことか。= Which is 1**the more worthy way to live**, 5**to endure** the 3**extremely violent** 13**fate** of 4**arrows and bullets** in my 2**heart**, or to 9**bravely** 10**stand up** against the 6**oncoming** 7**surging waves** of 8**suffering**, and 11**by fighting** 12**end them**?

1 **死**ぬ、2 **眠**る、それだけだ。= 1**To die**, 2**to sleep**, that's it.

1 **眠**ることによって 2 **終止符**はうてる、 3 **心の悩**みにも、4 **肉体**につきまとうかずかずの 5 **苦**しみにも。= 1**By sleeping**, 2 **bring an end** (to it), ending the 3**concerns in the heart**, and the numerous 5**sufferings** haunting 4**my body**.

それこそ 1 **願**ってもない 2 **終**わりではないか。= Isn't that the 2**end** 1**I was not even hoping for**?

1 死ぬ、2 **眠**る、 1**To die**, 2**to sleep**,

1 眠る、おそらくは 2 **夢を見**る。そこだ、 つまずくのは。= 1**To sleep**, probably 2**to see a dream**. There, the stumbling block.

この 1 **世**のわずらいからかろうじてのがれ、2 **永**の 3 **眠**りにつき、 そこでどんな 4 **夢**を 5 **見**る? = I can only just escape from this 1**world's** troubles, I will have 2**eternal** 3**sleep**, (but) what 4**dreams** will 5**I see**?

それがあるからためらうのだ、それを 1 **思**うから 2 **苦**しい 3 **人生**をいつまでも 4 **長**びかすのだ。= I hesitate because of this, because 1**I think of** that I will 4**prolong** my 2**painful** 3**human life** no matter what.

でなければだれががまんするか、/1 **世間**の 2 **鞭**うつ 3 **非難**、 = Otherwise who would endure / 1**society**'s 2**whip** and 3**blame**, /

/ 1 **権力者**の 2 **無法**な 3 **行為**、/ おごるものの 4 **侮蔑**、/
= 2**the unjust 3deeds** of 1**those in power**, the 4**scorn** of proud people/

さげすまれた 1 **恋**の 2 **痛**み、/ 3 **裁判**のひきのばし、

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[54] Shôyô trans, *Hamuretto* (*Hamlet*), p. 733.

= The 2**pain** of being deprived of 1**romantic love** / the drawn out 3**legal judgement**

1**役人**どもの 2**横柄**さ、りっぱな 3**人物**が
= The 2**arrogance** of 1**officials**, / a decent 3**person**

くだらぬやつ 1**相手**にじっとしのぶ 2**屈辱**、
= Being 2**humiliated** by a worthless person as a 1**companion** you must patiently endure

このような 1**重荷**をだれががまんするか、 この 2**世**から 3**短剣**のただ 4**一突**きでのがれることができるのに。 = Who would be burdened with this 1**weight**, you can escape from this 2**world** with just 4**one stab** of a 3**dagger**, I can get out.

つらい 1**人生**をうめきながら 2**汗水流**して 5**歩**むのも、ただ 3**死後**にくるものを 4**恐**れるためだ。= You 5**lead** this harsh 1**human life** groaning and 2**drenched with sweat**, just because you 4**fear** what comes 3**after death**.

1死後の 2**世界**は 3**未知**の 4**国**だ、5**旅立**ったものは 6一**人**として
もどったためしがない。 = The 2**world** 1**after death** is a 3**yet unknown** 4**country,** from which not a 6**single person** who has 5**departed** has ever returned.

それで 1**決心**がにぶるのだ、 2**見**も 3**知**らぬあの 4**世**の 5**苦労**に 6**飛**びこむよりは、
7慣れたこの 8**世**のわずらいをがまんしようと 9**思**うのだ。 = That's why the 1**decision** is unmade, rather than 6**jumping** into the 5**hardship** of an 2**unseen and** 3**unknown** 4**world**, 9**I think** I prefer to cope with the worries of the 8**world** 7**I am used to**.

このようにもの 1**思う心**がわれわれを 2**臆病**にする、このように 3**決意**のもって 4**生**まれた 5**血の色**が **分別**の 9**病**み 8**蒼**ざめた 12**塗料**にぬりつぶされる、
そして、10**生死**にかかわるほどの 11**大事業**も= This 1**thoughtful mind** makes us 2**cowardly**, in this way 5**the color of the blood** that 4**was born** with 3**determination** is painted over with 8**pale** and 9**sickly** 12**paint**,
and so 10**life and death** are determined by this 11**great act**

そのためにいつしか 1**進**むべき 2**道**を 3**失**い、= because of that it 3**loses** the 2**direction** one 1**should advance towards** suddenly before we know it,

1 行動をおこすにいたらず 2 **終**わる(—**待**て)、= it 2**ends** before taking 1**action (**Wait),[55]

It is worthwhile comparing, briefly, certain parts of these translations. For instance, the choices of 'brutal fate' and 'extremely violent fate' stand out. Whilst Shôyô's decision to use a *kanji* character that translates as 'brutal' suggest the cruelty of fate, the character that Odashima elects to use that translates as

[55] Odashima trans, *Hamuretto* (*Hamlet*) pp. 110–12.

‘extremely violent’ (the characters 暴虐 can even be translated as ‘tyrannical’). This hints at a more visceral, active and physical pain being inflicted on the individual. Whilst we should be wary of dismissing the significance of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894–95 and the Russo-Japanese war of 1904–05 during the Meiji period, we may be tempted to speculate that the stronger overt references of violence and fate in Odashima’s translation are due to the impact of the Second World War. Being born in Tokyo in 1930, Odashima would have been aware of the horrendous violence during this period. That is not to say that Shôyô is oblivious to the idea of violence in pain and suffering, but he seems to suggest this in more general terms about the world at large towards the end of the soliloquy; whereas Odashima’s Hamlet makes this a more personal reflection on his own existence. With the American occupation only ending in 1952, the idea of a violent force that exerts control over your destiny may have been a formative influence on the young translator.

Shôyô continues throughout the speech to use plenty of *kanji* characters and, perhaps more importantly, *furigana* or *rubi*, to explain at times the characters that he chooses. What is important here is not the precise numbers of *kanji* in comparison for the way *kanji* work sometimes requires the use of one or two characters together (*kanji* compounds) or the need for a particular *hiragana* character next to it to create a particular meaning: therefore, a direct character-to-character comparison is not hugely helpful. Rather, a more general quantitative investigation reveals that Shôyô uses roughly just over 20% more *kanji* than Odashima. This perhaps this is not quite the size of difference that the opening line of the soliloquy may have led us to believe would be the case; it also may show us albeit in a microcosm at least one of the issues with Ninagawa’s 1988 production of *Hamlet* where he chose to combine Shôyô’s text and Odashima’s. Characters in the court spoke the more archaic and stylised text of Shôyô; those outside the court spoke Odashima’s lines. According to Minami, the production was not perceived to be that successful,

in part due to a lack of real distinction between the two texts when spoken on stage by the actors.[56] Nevertheless, even if the difference in *kanji* use is smaller than we may have anticipated, it is still significant.

It is important to understand that pronunciation of the *kanji* in Japanese is not identical to the same (or very similar) characters in the original Chinese. As the Chinese written script was introduced to and adopted in Japan in the fifth century, it brought with it the Chinese pronunciations of the characters. Yet the Japanese already had a spoken language, and so there evolved (often, though not always) at least two pronunciations for a *kanji* character, the *on* pronunciation, and the *kun* pronunciation. The *on* pronunciations adhere more or less to the (supposed) original Chinese, and the *kun* to the Japanese pronunciation of the existing word already present in the spoken language.[57] Further to this, it is usual for the *on* pronunciation to be used when *kanji* are written in compounds, directly alongside other *kanji* to form a word. Indra Levy writes that this history of linguistic blending could be classed as a form of ideal translation in its capacity to preserve 'the foreign character of the source text in a way that radically expand the horizon language'.[58] This is immensely valuable to the argument I am making, and a point to which it will be necessary to return. But for now, it is essential to appreciate that there exists in the written Japanese script a type of blend where a word (that is, a *kanji* character) can be read in more than one way, and which can certainly have more than one specific and definitive meaning.

This is especially relevant when we examine Shôyô use of *kanji* a little more. *Kanji* is reflective of an older written Japanese language, and Shôyô famously often chose archaic *kanji* that needed the *furigana* gloss for his readers and actors to understand what was being said. For instance, when we look up 只管 meaning 'single mindedly' in the dictionary it tells us that the word is usually written using *kana* (that is, *hiragana*) alone. The *furigana* Shôyô supplies alongside this *kanji* compound matches the usual

[56] Minami, 'Finding a Style for Presenting Shakespeare on the Japanese Stage', 29–42 (pp. 34–35).
[57] Joseph F. Kess, 'On the History, Use, and Structure of Japanese Kanji' *Glottometrics*, 10 (2005), 1–15.
[58] Indra A. Levy, 'Introduction: Modern Japan and the Trialectics of Translation', in *Translation in Modern Japan*, ed. by Indra A. Levy (Oxford: Routledge, 2010), pp. 1–12 (p. 3). Ebook.

pronunciation of the *kanji* in this context (ひたすら) and from this we can deduce that Shôyô chose a *kanji* character that may have been rare or challenging even for some of his Meiji period readers. Using the gloss for clarity in this way was standard practice in Japanese writing, especially during the Meiji period; such *furigana* could be found in 'Publications, including newspapers, magazines, government documents, official proclamations, and literary works'.[59]

Yet closer inspection reveals that although Shôyô glossed a certain number of archaic or possibly challenging *kanji* he also glossed some of what must be considered the more well-known *kanji* where the *furigana* acted as a guide to how he wished the word to be interpreted, and even actually spoken. We are told that,

> Traditionally written in hiragana or katakana, furigana are annotations serving a metalingual function, and are primarily used to give the pronunciations of unknown or obscure kanji that the reader might not recognize. A less-frequently employed secondary purpose is giving a non-standard reading to a kanji character or series of characters.[60]

It is this less-frequently employed secondary purpose that is particularly interesting here, for characters such as 自分 meaning 'myself' or 生 meaning 'life' seen above are relatively simple to read and understand, even for those with limited Japanese language ability. Shôyô, nevertheless, added *furigana* to advise on how the word should interpreted when encountered on the page: that is, he suggested a pronunciation that was different to the standard pronunciation of the character in the context he had chosen for the translation in the main text, thereby adding a further layer of interpretation. We may debate in the West how specific words in Shakespeare should be pronounced and we can look at a pronunciation dictionary for assistance;

[59] Chieko Ariga, 'The Playful Gloss: Rubi in Japanese Literature', *Monumenta Nipponica*, 44 (1989), 309–35 (p. 317) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2384611> [accessed 13 April 2021]
[60] Ryan C. Redmond, 'Kanji and Non-Homophonous Furigana: Foreign Language Readings and Character (Stereo)Types in Manga', *Discourse, Context & Media*, 32 (2019), 1–8 (p. 1) <https://doiorg.ezproxye.bham.ac.uk/10.1016/j.dcm.2019.100323> [accessed 03 April 2021]

but this usually involves elements such as the accuracy of vowel sounds or the lexical stress within an older polysyllabic word. What Shôyô is doing is suggesting what are aurally different words yet that are the same written down and have a similar if not the exact same semantic meaning. In this instance, the most common pronunciation of 自分 (meaning 'myself') is *ji-bun;* yet the *furigana* Shôyô uses tells a reader it should be read as *wa-re.* To be clear, *wa-re* does mean 'me' or 'oneself' in a specific context. But there is a *kanji* character for *wa-re* (我) which Shôyô could have chosen if he so desired. Likewise, the character 生 meaning 'life' is suggested at one point to be pronounced 'yo' (よ); yet the usual character for 'life' that is pronounced 'yo' is 世: this character can also mean 'life', although it is probably more common to use it in the context of 'world' or 'society'.

Gallimore gives us a note on *furigana* in his discussion of Shôyô's translation of Hamlet's 'To be or not to be' speech, yet he focusses almost completely on the historical use of *furigana* and the explication of the difficult *kanji* that would have 'enabled readers with only an elementary knowledge of kanji to read Shôyô's Shakespeare translations'.[61] Laudable as this is on the part of Shôyô, this is not the most interesting or, I would argue, most valuable use of *furigana* by Shôyô in his translations. That Shôyô wrote one character then sometimes guided his readers and/or actors to say a different word (or at least consider a different version of the meaning of the word) tells us a great deal: primarily, it suggests that Shôyô was translating for both the reader who would see the words on the page and the audience who would hear the words spoken out loud when performed on stage, and, by necessity, the actors who would do both, as they speak the lines out loud. Although writing about *The Tempest,* Von Schwerin-High clearly articulates the benefit of the *furigana* being used in this way and is worth quoting at length:

> The most striking literary device that Shôyô employs in his translation practice is the glossing of kanji (Sino-Japanese characters) with phonetic readings (*furigana*) that are surprising, because they

[61] Gallimore, 'Tsubouchi Shôyô and the Beauty of Shakespeare Translation in 1900s Japan', 69–85 (p. 82).

> are customarily not used in connection with the kanji in question. He thereby immeasurably enriches the text. Already carrying etymological freight for which there is no equivalent in Western languages, kanji become even more loaded by being assigned yet another way of reading. It is surprising that Shôyô, for whom the performability of his translations was so important, should have made his translations so polyvalent and multi-layered. On the other hand, one might argue, that Shôyô, by providing his readers with *furigana* for almost every kanji in his text, makes his text easier to read and therefore easier to speak and to perform. Thus, paradoxically, the provided *furigana* make the text both more and less transparent.[62]

This type of multi-layered text may well have been a challenge for the actors who had to make specific decisions regarding the lines that they needed to say: nevertheless, the layers can inform a performance a great deal, although perhaps the actors Shôyô cast in his 1911 staging did not possess the necessary technique to fully exploit this aspect of the text. Somebody reading the play, however, can certainly indulge in the blend of both the *kanji* character in the body of the text and the *furigana* gloss. Despite discussing specifically 'playful' glossing, Chieko Ariga is correct to conclude that this type of *furigana*,

> are vital in the creation of compounded images and semantic space, and thus make the reading process far more complex. By examining the function of such glosses, we come to understand the intricate polyphonic and polysemic interplay found in Japanese literature.[63]

Blending of this type cannot help but add layers to the experience of engaging with a Shakespeare text. In a similar fashion, Shôyô wrote in the beginning of his translation of *The Tempest* some of the analytical terms that he had read in English that described the various characters such as 'brutish understanding' and 'youth'. Shôyô wrote out these English terms phonetically in Japanese and added *kanji* characters with similar definitions to allow the meaning to be understood. This type of glossing was, of course, firmly

[62] Von Schwerin-High, *Shakespeare, Reception and Translation: Germany and Japan*, p. 155.
[63] Ariga, 'The Playful Gloss: Rubi in Japanese Literature', 309–35 (p. 335).

embedded in Japanese writing, but in this context 'can be seen as a sort of translation that points to its own translational nature'.[64]

Translators working in any target language are able to select words that fit the purpose they decide to fulfil in their translation; and, indeed, all translators have the liberty to advise readers or performers that they should say another word, instead of the one written in the translated text, by including a key, a set of footnotes or indicating that they should at least consider another version of the word or phrase. However, we would find this strange in an English text. Yet the history and function of *kanji* and *furigana* meant that native Japanese were more familiar than most with the idea of having linguistic phrases with guidance on pronunciation; coupled with this, Japanese readers were also familiar with their language possessing *kanji* characters that can be read in multiple ways, resulting in what we in the West would consider to be different spoken words for the same written character. We should also be clear that this is not the same as adding notes; Shôyô wrote plenty of explicatory notes alongside his translations, especially in his early work. Other translations also provide notes, as evidenced by Matsuoka's footnote on her 'To be or not to be' translation. Rather, *furigana* is an additional method particular to Japanese writing that allows for the creation of meaning through the guided blending of conceptual thoughts expressed in different linguistic details on the page. It is then a short step to accept the idea that there can be a variety of purpose within one text, as in Shôyô translation, relating to readers and performers. By using *kanji* and *furigana* in the way that he did, Shôyô increased his ability to balance elements such as the aural texture of the play with the semantic meaning as it is written down on the page. The way in which the written Japanese language and *kanji* function more generally allowed this format to be familiar to the readers and actors working with the text as a performance script. *Furigana* is employed by the translators who come after Shôyô, including the other three that we have looked at briefly here; but as has been seen, the drive over the years to make Shakespeare more accessible necessarily meant using less *kanji* or certainly using less complicated or archaic *kanji*, and

[64] Von Schwerin-High, *Shakespeare, Reception and Translation: Germany and Japan*, p. 35.

so the need and desire for *furigana*, used in either way, has also been reduced. Despite the apparent failing of Shôyô to succeed in his endeavour, this approach was already embedded in Japanese literature and so offered a further layer of semantic exploration — and even interpretation — to a Shakespeare text in a way that simply is not there for those in the West working with only the original text. This type of *furigana* allows for greater guidance on the layering of the meaning of words when the different suggestions are conceptualised together by the reader or actor using the gloss; it helps with both the comprehension of possible meaning and with enlarging the possibilities of interpretation for actors, and so can add to the range and complexity of the characters being presented on stage. It has been argued that the Shakespearean texts provided Shôyô with an occasion to draw attention to indigenous cultural and linguistical practices and possibilities.[65] This is true: but let us add to this, just as accurately, that here the indigenous cultural and linguistical practices and possibilities are drawing attention to Shakespeare texts in intriguing and valuable ways.

Importantly, this is no judgement on the accuracy of Shôyô's translation, whatever we may believe that term to mean in this context; nor is it to say that the choices Shôyô made regarding his *kanji* and *furigana* necessarily worked well or achieved the result at which he was aiming. By most accounts, his attempts in this style were quite confused and resulted in performances on stage that struggled to sound coherent or convincing. One of the strongest criticisms of the resulting archaic and rather musical style of language came from the Japanese novelist and critic Sôseki Natsume. Sôseki saw Shôyô's 1911 production of *Hamlet* at the Imperial Theatre and wrote what can only be described as a scathing review of the show itself, despite his polite praise for Shôyô's efforts. Sôseki was taught Shakespeare by W. J. Craig in the U.K. and Lafcadio Hearn in Japan, and he famously railed against the notion of Shakespeare's universal genius, in both his fiction and non-fiction writing. Sôseki writes in a newspaper review of the performance,

[65] Ibid., p. 155.

> If one were to ask the several thousand people who saw the production whether they had enjoyed it so much that they had lost all thought of themselves and become completely absorbed in the action, then there probably would not be even one who could say that they had.[66]

This is rather a sweeping statement, where Sôseki feels able to speak for an entire audience. This is made even more surprising by the admission that Sôseki arrived late and had to leave the theatre before the end of the play so did not even watch the entire performance, and so is hardly a convincing criticism. More relevant to our discussion, however, is the following:

> If the gap between *Hamlet* and a Japanese audience is to be properly closed, we should not need England or three hundred years of history or the poetic language or all those troublesome adjectives. Hamlet by itself is enough.[67]

This indicates a key element of Sôseki's stance: namely, the idea that *Hamlet* somehow can be separated from the context, time and location where the play takes place. This position is not that surprising when we remember the history of Shakespeare in Japan before 1911. For the past 50 years or so, Shakespeare had been produced mostly in adaptations in Japan, be they *kabuki*, *noh* or even in Japanese literature. Sôseki is suggesting that whatever *Hamlet* the play truly means will still exist within an adaptation; if the names, location, and time period were all created as different to fit the experience of the specific Meiji Japanese audience, the play being produced would still be *Hamlet*, but it would be *Hamlet* for a particular audience.

This fits with Sôseki's wider belief that Shakespeare is culturally and temporally specific. Sôseki's argument highlights the turning in the later Meiji period when Japan became more confident in its own new-found identity. One could well argue that in this case, allowing its audience to reject the relevancy of its text, *Hamlet* is truly holding a mirror up to the nature of its now contemporary audience,

[66] Sôseki Natsume cited in Gallimore, 'Shôyô, Sôseki, and Shakespeare: Translations of Three Key Texts', 41–61 (p. 48).
[67] Ibid., p. 49.

and so proving Shakespeare as still universally relevant; but the idea that *Hamlet* is 300 years old and full of poetic language and troublesome adjectives and the fact that Shôyô's 'faithful' translation maintains these elements is a cause of agitation for Sôseki. However, in his strident attempt to argue that Shôyô's production is too literary and unactable, he misses an important and fascinating part of Shôyô's achievement.

Within his decision to use *kanji*, there is a further point worth discussing; and to appreciate fully what Shôyô achieved, we must first attend to some more details of the Japanese language. Masako K. Hiraga expounds on this, telling us that Japanese has three written scripts: *hiragana*, *katakana* and the *kanji* characters already discussed. (This is true of the present day; however, there is no evidence of any written script in Japanese before the introduction of Chinese texts c.400 A.D.) Whilst *hiragana* and *katakana* are syllabaries, the *kanji* are Chinese logographic characters that were introduced to Japan over 1500 years ago and are usually categorized in modern linguistic studies into four groups: pictographs (simplified pictures of the physical thing the word represents), ideographs (a picture that represents a more abstract concept or idea), compound-ideographs (a combination of the two categories above) and phonetic-ideographic or phono-semantic characters (made of two parts, usually, that details the category of meaning and an approximation of the originally Chinese pronunciation). *Kanji* characters are usually used for words of Chinese origin and the roots of nouns and adjectives of Japanese origin. These have an implicit meaning, yet also possess multiple readings depending on their combination.[68] The majority of *kanji* are constructed from a set number of component parts called radicals. To give some simple famous examples of pictograms: the Japanese character for 'mountain' is 山 which is a simplified picture of a mountain; 'tree' is 木, which is also recognizable at the thing that the word represents. Similarly, with ideograms: even someone without a deep knowledge of the Japanese language would likely appreciate

[68] Masako K. Hiraga, 'Kanji: The Visual Metaphor', *Style*, 40 (2006), 133–147 (p. 139) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/10.5325/style.40.1-2.133> [accessed 1 Oct 2021]

why the character 上 means ‘above or up’ and 下 means ‘below or down’. The compound-ideographs are similar but more complex in their formation: for instance, ‘East’ is a simplified picture of the ‘sun’ (日) rising behind a ‘tree’ (木) which results in 東.

Ernest Fenollosa (1853–1908), followed by Ezra Pound (1885–1972), argued that ideographic languages were inherently poetic. Chinese poetry, they claim, can incorporate nouns and verbs into a single compound-image making the visual representation a richer experience than when one reads the more arbitrary phonetic script of the English language. The debate about how this works exactly continues to this day.[69] Nevertheless, the use of language in such a visual way within a translation asks even more questions about whether plays are written to be read as well as performed. Shôyô was criticized by Sôseki who claimed that someone would have to read the play before attending the performance of his 1911 *Hamlet.* In fact, Shôyô did not see this as a bad thing, presumably as it helped raise the status of drama as literature in Japan, which he was keen to do. Shôyô’s balance of *kanji* and *furigana* tell us that he was aware that plays could and should be read. Within the theatre tradition in Japan up to this point, play texts had not the respect they would come to receive in the future; and therefore, Shôyô’s attention to such detail is even more striking. Fenollosa’s conclusion is that the Chinese language ‘has, through its very pictorial visibility, been able to retain its original creative poetry with far more vigor and vividness than any phonetic tongue’.[70] Following this, Japanese *kanji* characters can also retain the same force of creative poetry, especially in comparison with the arbitrary nature of the phonetic script of English.

Therefore, Shôyô made his translation poetic in a way not fully appreciated by his audience at the time, and certainly not appreciated by English speakers unable to understand *kanji* characters. Shôyô had

[69] Willard Bohn, *Modern Visual Poetry* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2001), p. 35.
[70] Ernest Fenollosa and Ezra Pound, *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry: A Critical Edition*, ed. by Ezra Pound and others (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), p. 55.

a far greater range of 'pictorial visibility' with which to script his 'creative poetry' for, unlike the c. 2,000 *kanji* characters in regular use today, in the Meiji Period there were c. 10,000 in use. Gallimore hints at this latent poetic capacity, but admits that it is not the scope of his current article when he writes,

> Tsubouchi's primary view of Shakespeare as a translator, therefore, would have come from a perspective not discussed in this article, namely the visual correspondences between kanji and aesthetic beauty of individual characters.[71]

While important, poetry is not just about beauty. Far more relevant is the ability to explore human existence in a way that truly connects with a reader. Good poetry usually offers some sort of clarity or insight into human experience; it does this through the ways in which the words on the page communicate with a reader, stimulating a response, usually provoking thoughts and emotions in a way in which we rarely encounter in daily life. Although clearly different in some important ways, *kanji* characters can be said to be a type of visual poetry. Willard Bohn writes that 'visual poetry strives to motive (or remotivate) the signifier, to restore its fundamental identity as a material object'.[72] This description fits nicely with *kanji*, a script where many of the signifiers are (or contain) simplified pictures of the material objects they represent or simplified pictures of the material objects that act as metaphors to construct the meaning. This is not to ignore the aural quality of *kanji*, but if a reader receives a greater sense of the signifier's identity as a material object, either consciously or unconsciously, then the connection between the text and the real-life experience of the reader is strengthened.

Accepting this idea avoids the need to differentiate poetry from prose by formal characteristics such as layout or specific metre, although these may well be employed by a poet to achieve the above objective. *Kanji* is better suited to this end, for its ability to blend ideas through compound ideograms is

[71] Gallimore, 'Shôyô at Sea: Shakespeare Translation as a Site for Maritime Exchange in Meiji and Taishô Japan', 428–47 (p. 441).
[72] Willard Bohn, *Modern Visual Poetry*, p. 16.

superior to the other scripts. As there is no such thing as a truly stationary or isolated thing in the world, Fenollosa suggested that this type of pictographic script was a more accurate description of life due to its ability to reflect the movements of reality in a more immediate and possibly a more accurate way. This type of language 'speaks with the vividness of Painting, and with the mobility of sounds'.[73] Fenollosa presents us with a beautiful summary of this argument as compared with reading English when he tells us, 'When reading Chinese we do not seem to be juggling mental counters, but watching *things* work out their own fate.'[74] Is there a better description of the response that a dramatic text should provoke in a reader? This is clearly relevant to anyone reading a text, yet, in addition, these layers of textual experience can also subconsciously inform how an actor or director approaches and performs a role.

The use of *furigana* that Shôyô employs was not that uncommon at the time when he was writing as education beyond primary school level was not yet compulsory. However, it is by using the combination of *furigana* and a greater amount of *kanji* characters that Shôyô's text stands out. From this, it is fair to ask a simple but contentious question: is it possible for a translation of Shakespeare to be more poetic, on the page at least, simply due to the nature and specific use of the target language? For instance, Shôyô writes the word 'dagger' with the *kanji* 短剣, literally 'short sword': what is the poetic impact on a reader when we can see the simplified picture of a blade at the end of these two characters? Shôyô uses the characters 火宅 when speaking of 'suffering'. The literal translation here is as follows: the first character 火 means 'fire' and the second 宅 means 'home' or 'house'. Together they create 'the house of fire' which, along with being a Buddhist term for suffering, is a potent metaphor for suffering that evokes distinctly the idea of pain and anguish imagined on both an emotional and even a physical level. Within this, the *kanji* characters are highly evocative in a visual way by themselves. In 火 we see the flames dancing, almost personified with limbs, adding the idea of action and movement and possibly even

[73] Fenollosa and Pound, *The Chinese Written Character as a Medium for Poetry: A Critical Edition*, p. 81.
[74] Ibid., p. 45.

intention, so obviously present in real fire, to what is clearly a static symbol; in 宅 we see clearly the roof on top demarcating and protecting everything below. Of course, not every *kanji* character that exists or that Shôyô used is as clear as these, or even as texturally intricate; and Shôyô was not the only translator to use *kanji*, although it could be said he was the one who tried deliberately to use the most *kanji*. If we compare the use of *furigana* for example in the above two speeches we see that Odashima uses *furigana* in only one instance to guide the pronunciation of the characters 怒濤（どとう）which translates as 'surging waves'. Nevertheless, when *kanji* is employed in the way Shôyô wrote, we find poetry on the page before we have even begun to search for the semantic meaning in the way we must for a script that is purely phonetic. The answer to whether this type of writing can in fact render a translation of Shakespeare more poetic than the original is perhaps an unanswerable question; or, at the very least, a highly debatable one with no easy answers. But even the thought that it could be possible has significant consequences for our understanding of how the English language works, and therefore how Shakespeare's language impacts native-English speakers in the West. If Shakespeare's script relies on sound and meaning only to create its poetic effect in a reader of listener, then we lose an element of dramatic effect and part of the connection to those experiencing the text, through the lack of visual impact of the language on the page. Highlighting the cognitive linguistic effect of *kanji*, Masako K. Hiraga tells us that 'kanji offer endless creativity and imagination in visual and verbal arts, particularly calligraphy and poetry'.[75] Other studies have shown some difference in brain activity between reading *kanji* and reading the other phonetic scripts thereby pushing further the argument that the scripts function in different ways with different effects:

> the lexical information of *kanji* stimuli may follow the ventral route to gain their semantic or phonological access, while kana stimuli (i.e., hiragana transcriptions of kanji words) may require character-to-sound conversion to gain their semantic access through the dorsal route.[76]

[75] Hiraga, 'Kanji: The Visual Metaphor', 133–147 (p. 139).
[76] Thuy and others, 'Implicit and Explicit Processing of Kanji and Kana Words and Non-Words Studied with Fmri', 878–89 (p. 888).

Therefore, even if the majority of native Japanese process most *kanji* subconsciously, it is likely that some of the effects of the visual imagery of the characters remain, even when actors perform the text. This point is reiterated by a comment from Matsuoka regarding her use of *kanji* in her translations. She has stated, 'I like to help the actor visualise the image, even if this is not accessible to the audience. (Although I often think it is.)'.[77] If one agrees that one part of the quality of Shakespeare's plays is his exceptional poetry, then this point is hugely important. It may well be true that Shôyô's plays are harder to act in a naturalistic way than the more modern translations such as Odashima's or Matsuoka's, but one may argue that Shôyô added something as important to the world of Shakespeare studies. Shôyô struggled all his life to find a style of Japanese language that fit his idea of both remaining as true as possible to the original yet bringing Shakespeare's work into the contemporary Japanese theatre and society. If the task is impossible, as so many have claimed, then we must salute Shôyô's endeavour and persistence and, more than this, his linguistical achievement: his translation of *Hamlet*, at least, adheres to another principle of translation set down by Nida and Taber: 'Rather than bemoan the lack of some feature in a language, one must respect the features of the receptor language and exploit the potentialities of the language to the greatest extent.'[78] If *kanji* can indeed maintain its creative poetry with more vigour and vividness than Shakespeare's original Early Modern English script, then it follows that Japanese Shakespeare translated with the deliberate and skillful use of numerous *kanji* may well augment one aspect of the power of the plays: it can bring about not only new meaning in a script but, additionally, the possibility of a new *experience* of poetic meaning and drama through the way in which the language holds and transmits meaning in a way that is not possible for native English speakers reading Shakespeare in the original texts.

[77] Kazuko Matsuoka, 'Discussion on Shakespeare and Translation', interview with Richard Keith, 15 July 2021, Tokyo.
[78] Nida and Taber, *The Theory and Practice of Translation*, p. 4.

Metaphor in intralingual translation

As these observations and the title of Hiraga's paper, remind us, *kanji* characters often function as visual metaphors, even if this is not always interpreted consciously as such by a reader or the author. The concept of a language having metaphor embedded in the written script is intriguing and sparks a range of fascinating questions as to what happens when such a script is learnt, spoken and received. The evidence suggests that, in one way at least, by using more *kanji* characters, Shôyô maintains a 'poetic vigor' in his script that was subsequently reduced by the more recent Japanese translations; furthermore, it is something that not even Shakespeare could achieve in his plays, despite his clear brilliance at using the English language in original ways and with great effect. This is not a slight on the genius of Shakespeare, who understood much about the etymology of his language and regularly used Anglo-Saxon or Latinate registers to good effect; but it is a result, simply, of how the different languages function and of Shôyô's choice to embrace this specific function of *kanji*. The more arbitrary nature of the English language in its written form cannot contain the same use of metaphor implicitly; unlike the Japanese *higashi* (東) our word 'East', for instance, has no relation to the sun rising or any sort of landscape, or indeed anything else that could be said to constitute the idea of 'East'. Unlike the Japanese word *yama* (山), our word 'mountain' does not in any way resemble a mountain, nor anything resembling the notion of a mountain. We know metaphor can be constructed in linguistic utterances in English with wonderful results. But more than this, metaphor may, in fact, play a different but equally important role in our reading and experiencing of Shakespeare as native English speakers, and consequently this may have a huge effect on how we process Shakespeare when we read and hear the plays.

To explore this idea further we should start with the fascinating debate between academics John McWhorter and David Crystal, with a final word from actor Ben Crystal, David's son.[79] (Susan Bassnett

[79] John McWhorter, David Crystal, and Ben Crystal, 'Translating Shakespeare into English: A Debate', *Voice and Speech Review*, 7.1 (2011), 38–51 <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2011.10739518>

raised the point about Shakespeare's challenging language and the difficulty of keeping his work alive back in 2001, but the McWhorter and Crystal debate is a better starting point because of the details contained within their arguments.)[80] The core of their arguments are as follows: McWhorter contends that Shakespeare's language is dense and dated, and therefore most audiences struggle to understand large quantities of it. During a performance, this lack of comprehension becomes a barrier to enjoying the play. Consequently, we should allow writers of quality who are well-versed in Shakespeare to 'translate' the texts into modern English. McWhorter clearly still reveres Shakespeare's original texts and claims that we should keep these alive as much as we can. However, the modern translations, he contends, would ensure that Shakespeare remains accessible and relevant to modern-day audiences. In his rebuttal, Crystal makes the case that Shakespeare's language cannot be that difficult because it is not really that different. Crystal estimates that native English speakers already know 80–90 per cent of Shakespeare's words and that the proportion of words left are a challenge that yields substantial rewards compared with the effort required to learn them. The very concept, Crystal contends, that we need to translate Shakespeare's texts into modern English for comprehension, and greater enjoyment, is wrong.

Everyone would agree that Shakespeare contains language that is unfamiliar. Even Nicholas Hytner, former Artistic Director of the National Theatre in London, has admitted he struggles at times with the language and even goes so far as to make alterations in the texts used in his productions, for the purposes of comprehension.[81] The McWhorter vs Crystal debate turns, then, upon a question of degree. Is Shakespeare mostly familiar with some strange bits, or mostly strange with some familiar bits? Beyond this, there is the question of the disruptive nature of this unfamiliarity: that is, even if Shakespeare's language is indeed mostly familiar, are the unfamiliar parts substantial enough to be a significant barrier

[80] Susan Bassnett, 'Shakespeare's in Danger: Act Now to Avoid a Great Tragedy', *The Independent Education Supplement*, 15 November 2001, pp. 6–7.
[81] John Sutherland, 'All the World's a Stage for Shakespeare, but We No Longer Understand Him', *The Guardian*, 11 October 2013 <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/oct/11/shakespeare-understand-national-theatre-hytner-confusing> [accessed 19 August 2019]; Abigail Rokison-Woodall, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Nicholas Hytner* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), pp. 153–54.

to understanding? The answer to these questions only begins to tell us if a modern translation would be valuable, especially as one could argue that the strangeness and corresponding difficulty of Shakespeare's language has become part of our cultural expectation of Shakespeare and even contains a certain type of pleasure. The answer also depends a great deal on who is asked about these proportions and how one defines what is 'familiar' and what is 'strange'. Others have tackled the subject of translating Shakespeare into modern English and its component parts in a variety of ways.[82] In a subsequent volume of the same journal in which the McWhorter vs Crystal debate was published, there appeared an article by Scott Kaiser, who is a member of the Artistic Staff at the Oregon Shakespeare Festival.[83] Kaiser tells us of a project at the Festival where playwright and translator Kenneth Cavander was commissioned to write a modern translation of *Timon of Athens,* which was then workshopped in 2012. Kaiser's article presents certain parts of Cavander's translation and so highlights the different areas of the play that were updated and how this was done. Kaiser deliberately withholds his personal opinion of the merits of such a translation, but it is noteworthy that he reports testimony from a small group of listeners to this modern translation, who evidently had a revelation regarding the power and relevance of *Timon of Athens,* having experienced it in the new format. Yet, the issue is not resolved even by this for, as Kaiser writes,

> Without a doubt, there will be much more debate in the future about whether 'translating Shakespeare' into modern, understandable English is necessary or worthwhile. Is it an outrage or a blessing? An abomination or an enhancement? I have presented the evidence — you be the judge.[84]

The idea of translating Shakespeare into modern English is gaining momentum in the world today, with translations being created and shared to help readers to understand Shakespeare; for example, the *No Fear*

[82] Brian Parker, '*Richard III* and the Modernizing of Shakespeare', *Modern Drama*, 15 (1972), 321–29 <https://doi.org/10.1353/mdr.1972.0064>; Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, *Modernizing Shakespeare's Spelling: With Three Studies in the Text of Henry V* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).
[83] Scott Kaiser, 'Translating Timon: The Oregon Shakespeare Festival's Shakespeare Translation/Adaptation Project', *Voice and Speech Review*, 8.1 (2014) 40–56 <https://doi.org/10.1080/23268263.2013.863049>
[84] Ibid., 56.

Shakespeare website offers modern-day translations next to the original texts online.[85] Others have explored the idea of modern translations for performance. For instance, Hugh MacDonald has written modern versions of *As You Like It*, *Coriolanus*, and *The Tempest* in one edition. In the preface of this book, MacDonald is clear about the task he has undertaken when he calls writing these plays in modern English an act of translation.[86] There is no need here to judge the work of Cavander, the *No Fear Shakespeare* editors, or MacDonald. Rather, what is worth asking is this: is it possible that native English speakers who read or watch Shakespeare in the twenty-first century are actually performing a type of translation, albeit unconsciously? Secondly, if this is the case, how might this translation occur? Finally, what could a fuller appreciation of this possible act of translation add to the more general discussion of translating Shakespeare into other languages?

Regarding whether native English speakers may translate Shakespeare today, I agree with McWhorter's premise that Shakespeare's original texts contain enough unfamiliarity to be a type of barrier to comprehension for many people, and so also a barrier to maximising enjoyment of the play. Even if we accept Crystal's point that much of the language is familiar, McWhorter raises a key argument when he writes, 'Who is to say that the decisive barrier that I describe would require more than a ten percent discrepancy in vocabulary?'[87] How some of these words are joined syntactically, spelt in the text, or even their former usage and, importantly, the exact meaning in the plays can often be very different to what may be the current use of the words in English today, which creates a significant psychological distance. Moreover, who is the best authority to decide that a word or syntactic structure within a Shakespeare play is problematic to understand? In reality, academics, theatre practitioners and literary editors are the least well equipped to make these decisions due to the extensive knowledge of Shakespeare

[85] Sparknotes Editors, *No Fear Shakespeare*, Sparknotes.com, (2005) <https://www.sparknotes.com/shakespeare/> [accessed 5 April 2022]
[86] Hugh MacDonald, *Shakespeare in Modern English: Three Plays Translated by Hugh MacDonald* (Leicester: Troubador Press, 2016), p. vii.
[87] McWhorter, Crystal, and Crystal, 'Translating Shakespeare into English: A Debate', 38–51 (p. 45).

that they have by default. The distance between Shakespeare's language and the words and linguistic structures that most native English speakers use every day ensures that many outside scholarly or theatrical coteries are likely to conceive of Shakespeare as a foreign language. As Hugh MacDonald sums up,

> The experience of seeing Shakespeare is for most English speakers (and I naturally exclude Shakespeare scholars since they are fluent in his language — or should be) is not unlike seeing a play acted in a foreign language with which we are very familiar though not completely fluent. Much is thus missed.[88]

We find this conceptualisation of Shakespeare as a foreign language suggested elsewhere.

> If Shakespeare's language is often hard to understand even for native speakers, if scholars have written dictionaries of Shakespearean English intended for native speakers of English, and if those native speakers are also being told that they should perhaps learn Shakespearean English in the way of a classical or a foreign language, could we not take the next step and regard 'Shakespearean' as a 'different' language that requires 'translation'?[89]

To be clear, believing that Shakespeare's plays are a foreign language does not contradict the earlier argument that there are plenty of people in the U.K. who believe that Shakespeare productions performed in this country, and in the original language, are more authentic than Shakespeare in foreign performance. Similarly, it does not contradict the argument that some in the U.K. believe that we in the West remain closer to Shakespeare's contemporary world than other modern-day foreign cultures are to Shakespeare's contemporary world. There are, of course, different degrees within the perception of foreign. As MacDonald's writes accurately, Shakespearean English is a 'foreign language with which we are very

[88] MacDonald, *Shakespeare in Modern English: Three plays translated by Hugh MacDonald*, p. vii.
[89] Dirk Delabastita, '"He shall signify from time to time": *Romeo and Juliet* in modern English', *Perspectives*, 25.2 (2017), 189–213, (p. 198) <10.1080/0907676X.2016.1234491>

familiar though not completely fluent' (although we are moving further and further away from fluency as more time passes).[90] Put another way, a native English speaker can easily see that a language such as French is closer to English than Arabic is to English; Shakespeare performed in the original Early Modern English, therefore, can be conceptualised as foreign by a modern-day English speaking audience, and, at the same time, be considered closer to modern-day English than Shakespeare performed in, for instance, Chinese or Russian.

This conceptualisation may be the reason why many young actors often put on a 'Shakespeare voice' when they first start performing Shakespeare on stage. As so many of the sentences they are speaking do not fit naturally into their normal speech patterns, they create a vocal pattern or type of accent that they unconsciously believe better accommodates this strangeness, as they may well do when learning French or Spanish. Certain neurological studies hint at the unfamiliarity I am suggesting. For example, examining the brain's response to Shakespeare's use of Functional Shift (FS) in sentence structure (that is, when a word takes on a new syntactical function, such as using a noun as a verb) scholars have made several findings, including,

> judging from overt measures of sentence processing, participants found word class conversions rather difficult — but not impossible — to integrate. In other words, on the surface, the Shakespearian functional shift appeared to have a detrimental effect on sentence comprehension since this condition generated the largest number of error [sic] and the longest reaction times.[91]

Accordingly, they found that there was 'a relative functional independence of syntax and semantics' in the processing of the Shakespearean language examined.[92] This reiterates that it can be the way in which Shakespeare uses words rather than merely the words themselves that can be unfamiliar to modern

[90] MacDonald, *Shakespeare in Modern English: Three plays translated by Hugh MacDonald*, p. vii.
[91] Guillaume Thierry and others, 'Event-Related Potential Characterisation of the Shakespearean Functional Shift in Narrative Sentence Structure', *NeuroImage*, 40 (2008), 923–928 (p. 927).
[92] Ibid., p. 929.

readers and audiences. Shakespeare's poetry often uses grammatical constructions that can make understanding the meaning of a phrase a challenge. Dirk Delabastita outlines this, eloquently detailing the difference between language and discourse in Shakespeare. He defines discourse as 'language in action in specific texts and contexts' including density of style, use of complex metaphors, wordplay and rhetoric, and reference to intertextual and mythological elements.[93] This difficulty is always exacerbated when we watch a play for, unlike reading a text, we cannot go back over the words the actor has just spoken (or if we try to do so in our minds, we risk missing what is said next or what occurs next on stage). Some scholars have already argued that a type of translation of this foreign language occurs for us today. Jonathan Bate, for example, highlights that all art is really the translation of life into special languages with codes of their own.[94] George Steiner begins his argument in *After Babel* with an exploration of a speech from Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*.[95] Steiner performs a close reading of the text interpreting the difficult words and phrases, breaking them down to be more easily comprehensible. This approach is valuable and is a fitting example of the alternative name that Jakobson gives intralingual translation, that of 'rewording'.[96] Shakespeare's language, then, contains enough unfamiliarity in its vocabulary and the syntax to be thought of as foreign by the majority of modern readers and audiences in the U.K.

The conceptualisation of Shakespeare's plays as being in a foreign language is essential in understanding another important point. Alongside the question of the language, many of the worlds that Shakespeare is writing about are very unfamiliar to most theatregoers in the twenty-first century. From the small details such as the type of clothes worn (such as Malvolio being 'ever cross-gartered' or a Hamlet's father appearing with a 'doublet unbraced') to the larger notions of elderly rulers dividing up their Kingdom between daughters, eleventh-century Scottish battles, the affairs of Egyptian royalty, or the

[93] Dirk Delabastita, '"He shall signify from time to time": *Romeo and Juliet* in modern English', 189–213 (p. 194).
[94] Jonathan Bate, 'Elizabethan Translations: The Art of the Hermaphrodite', in *Translating Life: Studies in Transpositional Aesthetics*, ed. by Shirley Chew and Alistair Stead (Liverpool: Liverpool University press, 1999), pp. 33–51 (p. 49).
[95] Steiner, *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation*, pp. 1–7.
[96] Jakobson, 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', pp. 232–39 (p. 233).

politics of ancient Rome, these are things of which audiences today almost never have real-life experience. (Of course, these are things with which Shakespeare's original audience was also unfamiliar. However, whilst we can be sure that there were elements of Shakespeare's language that were unfamiliar to his contemporary audience, it is likely that his audience would have been more skilled at accessing the meaning in his discourse, thereby ensuring that his language was not conceived of as foreign in the same way as it is for modern-day audiences.) The ineluctably modern prism through which we all must view Shakespeare today has been argued by Brian Parker, who tells us that our textual interpretation,

> is bound to be modern, strained through the sensibilities of actors, directors, designers, and audience which, willy nilly, have been set — 'programmed,' if you like — by the conditions of modern experience. We cannot, even if we would, recapture the state of mind of an Elizabethan. No amount of antiquarian accuracy of costume, staging, rhetorical gesture, Warwickshire pronunciation, or exegetical footnotes can create an Elizabethan performance. And this for the simple reason that the audience — that essential, but too often neglected, element in theatrical experience — is inescapably modern.[97]

Parker reminds us of an important detail. A performance is a two-way piece of communication that involves the actors and the audience. Whilst it is not necessary for an audience to understand every single word to get the gist of a story on stage, it is surely the case that if an audience cannot receive effectively what the actors offer them due to their modernity, there is no performance but only more rehearsal. To quote David Crystal elsewhere, reading a text (or we could say any textual interpretation) is a 'meeting of minds'.[98] Readers and audiences in today's world must somehow bring Shakespeare's mind to theirs in order to facilitate such a meeting. It is by doing this that they can comprehend more directly and

[97] Parker, '*Richard III* and the Modernizing of Shakespeare', 321–29 (pp. 321–22).
[98] David Crystal, 'The Language of Shakespeare', in *Shakespeare: An Oxford Guide*, ed. by Stanley Wells and Lena Cowen Orlin (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 67–78 (p. 67).

specifically what is going on in the play, and they can then appreciate the significance of these often unfamiliar things, which is essential for the drama to work.

The evidence for how we perform this type of translation may be found in cognitive linguistics and specifically in the work of George Lakoff and his colleagues (on metaphor and Conceptual Blending), and Charles Fillmore (on frame semantics). The notion that we frame ideas cognitively using metaphor was first posited by Lakoff and Johnson who originated Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) in their 1980 book *Metaphors We Live By*, with the idea evolving subsequently in other books and articles by these and other linguists.[99] These scholars moved the theories of metaphor from purely linguistic substitution that can render poetry more beautiful, and argued instead that they are aspects of the mind that bring about concepts which 'arise from, and are understood through, the body, brain, and experience in the world'.[100] They help us to understand something unfamiliar through our understanding of something else that has a more experiential basis: we can comprehend something that is abstract to us due to how 'our bodies interact with, that is experience, the world.'[101] We actually think in metaphors; and these metaphors are constructed by the lived experience of our everyday lives. Some of the most obvious metaphors that demonstrate this well have been noted: Lakoff and Johnson originally pointed to ARGUMENT IS WAR and TIME IS MONEY; Zoltan Kövecses further unpacked metaphors such as LIFE IS A JOURNEY, ANGER IS FIRE, and THEORIES ARE BUILDINGS.[102]

[99] Lakoff, 'The Contemporary Theory of Metaphor', pp. 202–51; Lakoff, *Women, Fire and Dangerous Things: What Categories Reveal About the Mind*; Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*; Lakoff and Johnson, 'The Metaphorical Structure of the Human Conceptual System', 195–208.
[100] George Lakoff and Mark Johnson, *Philosophy in the Flesh: The Embodied Mind and its Challenge to Western Thought* (New York: Basic Books, 1999), p. 497.
[101] Jörg Zinken, 'Ideological Imagination: Intertextual and Correlational Metaphors in Political Discourse', *Discourse & Society*, 14.4 (2003), 507–523 (p. 507) <https://www.jstor.org/stable/42888585> [accessed 1 Oct 2021]
[102] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, pp. 4–9; Zoltán Kövecses, *Extended Conceptual Metaphor Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), p. 5.

Let us take the example of LOVE IS A JOURNEY. Kövecses has showed the mapping from the potential source domain to a target domain: these include the 'travellers' being 'the lovers', 'the vehicle' being 'the love relationship itself', and 'the distance covered' being 'the progress made' among others. From this we appreciate how the concepts are conceived in the human mind and we can therefore intuit and understand more completely the meaning of the linguistics utterances that arise from such an association.[103] The vast majority of people are likely to have taken a journey at some stage in their life; in reality, we can expect practically everyone to have taken a good number of journeys during their existence. As taking a journey is a physical experience, all people can appreciate the experiential nature of travelling from A to B including elements such as the goals, the challenges encountered, the sensation of physically moving forward; from this, we can appreciate the more abstract nature of an idea — such as love — through specific comparisons of the various parts or entailments of that physical experience. The mapping here gives us the common metaphorical expressions that we use when we speak of relationships such as 'We aren't going anywhere' or 'we're at a crossroads'.[104]

From this type of mapping, applied in different ways, we can make deductions about a target domain as if it is our experience of the source domain: we can frame effectively more abstract or distant concepts by comparing them to things with which we are more familiar. In everyday life this includes things such as understanding the intricate details of being in love with someone: in Shakespeare, conceptual metaphor can help us appreciate the imagery in his poetry, but also the more abstract elements of his narratives (such as falling in love with a woman dressed as a man, seeing another human for the first time on a practically deserted island after a tempestuous storm, confusing one twin for another, or seeing our father's ghost on the battlements of his castle) in a way that is fundamentally more familiar to our daily existence. It is this process that may well allow us to understand more completely the brave new worlds that Shakespeare presents.

[103] Zoltán Kövecses, *Metaphor: A Practical Introduction*, 2nd edn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 9.
[104] Ibid., p. 8.

There are plenty of metaphors that do not have the same physical basis as taking a journey. In addition, with a little thought, we can also appreciate that not everything in a source domain may be mapped effectively onto the target domain. Lakoff and Johnson highlight this also, suggesting that,

> Cultural assumptions, values, and attitudes are not a conceptual overlay which we may or may not place upon experience as we choose. It would be more correct to say that all experience is cultural through and through, and that we experience our 'world' in such a way that our culture is already present in the very experience itself. [105]

Even accepting this point about culture, we can understand better many aspects of a distant or abstract target domain by applying the same cognitive process of mapping a source domain, albeit unconsciously. Much of our unfamiliarity with Shakespeare, created by experiencing his foreign worlds and reinforced by hearing his foreign language, may be understood by us through metaphors that link these back to the embodied and cultural experience we have of our individual world. There has been an increasing number of cognitive studies within Shakespeare scholarship in recent years. Amy Cook's has written on how CMT and Conceptual Blending (a related view of how we may construct meaning through metaphors) can help an audience understand Shakespeare's imagery.[106] She has written persuasively on how Conceptual Blending Theory works through the metaphors in the opening line of *Richard III*.[107] Mufeed Al-Abdullah has demonstrated how Shakespeare's use of metaphors related to time in his sonnets help a reader to appreciate the highly abstract notion in a more accessible way if approached through Cognitive Metaphor Theory.[108] Michael Booth's book *Shakespeare and Conceptual Blending: Cognition, Creativity,*

[105] Lakoff and Johnson, *Metaphors We Live By*, p. 57.
[106] Amy Cook, *Shakespearean Neuroplay: Reinvigorating the Study of Dramatic Texts and Performance through Cognitive Science* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010).
[107] Amy Cook, 'Cognitive Interplay: How Blending Theory and Cognitive Science Reread Shakespeare', in *Stylistics and Shakespeare's Language: Transdisciplinary Approaches*, ed. by Mireille Ravassat and Jonathan Culpeper (London: Bloomsbury, 2011), pp. 246–68.
[108] Mufeed Al-Abdullah, 'Conceptual Metaphors of Time in the Sonnets of Shakespeare: A Cognitive Linguistic Approach', *English Language and Literature Studies*, 10.2 (2020) 1–16 <https://doi.org/10.5539/ells.v10n2p1>

Criticism demonstrates how cognitive theories can add not only to the close reading of poetry but also to a greater understanding of Shakespeare's blending of plots and his use of humour.[109] In *Shakespeare, Rhetoric and Cognition,* Raphael Lyne comments that,

> inspired by cognitive linguistics, conceptual metaphor, and conceptual blending should indeed open up new detailed readings of passages and poems. Alternatively, it might provide more thorough corroboration for intuitive observations made by earlier critics about the thoughtfulness of Shakespearean speech.[110]

Lyne is right to point out that new and detailed readings are to be expected, and the results that such readings yield will be highly insightful. Yet, more than looking at only the specifics of the poetry certain characters use, I am arguing that almost the entirety of Shakespeare's work, especially the worlds and narratives he presents to an audience, needs to be interpreted in this way.

It should be clear that a modern-day reader or audience in the U.K. does not have the same need to translate when they read or watch modern British or American drama, because they do not conceptualise it as foreign. Firstly, our modern-day world of experience is far closer to that of a teacher's affair with an older man in a North London flat (such as David Hare's *Skylight*), or a real estate sales agency in Chicago (such as David Mamet's *Glengarry Glen Ross*) or even the outside of a caravan on the morning of St George's Day (such as Jez Butterworth's *Jerusalem*), to name a few examples. Although these are likely not to be our own worlds exactly, they are undoubtedly far closer to ours than the worlds that Shakespeare brings to life. Secondly, the overarching sense of distance between a modern-day audience and Shakespeare's work grows substantially when the audience struggles to understand many of the specific words the characters use; plus, so much of Shakespeare is written in difficult verse, or in an

[109] Michael Booth, *Shakespeare and Conceptual Blending: Cognition, Creativity, Criticism* (Cham: Springer Nature, 2017).
[110] Raphael Lyne, *Shakespeare, Rhetoric and Cognition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 43.

unfamiliar rhetorical style clearly different to the everyday speech in common use today. It is the perception of both distant worlds and unintelligible language combined that cements the sensation for many that what they are watching or reading when they engage with Shakespeare is something truly foreign. Whilst an audience may not understand everything in a modern piece of drama, it is this combination in Shakespeare's work that ensures that many people today must perform a type of translation, using metaphor. After all, as Lyne tells us about metaphor, 'It is most active in relation to the things that prove most challenging.'[111]

It may be that the reluctance by some to identify this growing understanding of how many people engage with Shakespeare is due to political reasons. Many lovers of Shakespeare in the academic world adhere to the view of David Crystal, believing that any desire to change Shakespeare's language would be almost sacrilegious. Yet, as we can see, there is plenty of evidence suggesting that Shakespeare is already being conceptualised as foreign by many native English speakers. This consequently ensures that there is a distance that must be closed: it hints strongly at the need to make changes to keep Shakespeare's work alive and relevant for future generations and those outside academic and artistic circles. It is possibly the idea that Shakespeare cannot be relevant to everybody without these changes that many in the academic and theatre world fear. The consequences for foreign Shakespeare should also now be evident: if both modern-day English speakers and speakers of foreign languages have to translate Shakespeare in some way, this suggests that foreign Shakespeare in performance may have a similar type of authenticity to many of our modern-day productions in the original language in the U.K.

We should return for a moment to Conceptual Blending Theory (as suggested as a relevant tool for Shakespeare studies such as Michael Booth's book) to highlight why it is highly useful, but not completely able to fulfil the task I am suggesting. First it should be noted that Lakoff and Fauconnier, two

[111] Lyne, *Shakespeare, Rhetoric, Cognition*, p. 35.

of the key individuals researching this area, are clear that these approaches are complementary. They state that,

> the different strands of research on conceptual mappings within cognitive linguistics have continuously reinforced each other, producing worthwhile generalizations and deeper understanding along the way. There would be no conceptual blending framework without conceptual metaphor theory.[112]

Amy Cook suggests that CMT has its limits due to the need to map one single domain directly onto another single domain: she contends that Conceptual Blending Theory (CBT) may be the more effective way of analysing the exceedingly abstract ideas within a play, such as that of 'nothing' in *Hamlet*.[113] Other critics have also suggested the limits to CMT.[114] CBT was proposed by Giles Fauconnier and Mark Turner in their book *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* as a system of thought that can combine information and structures from different conceptual spaces.[115] This works well to helps us make sense of the paradoxical in the drama, such as Cook's example, which interrogates how we can conceptualise 'nothing' as something that exists. This is a conceptual challenge that, she rightly notes, is accentuated by the degree of 'nothing' that appears written down in the text of *Hamlet*. A great deal of Shakespeare's skill with language lies in this area: he uses words in a way that forces us to engage with concepts in ways that are juxtaposed and even contrary, thereby creating the need to blend concepts to understand the layered meaning of the words in the context in which they are being used. This allows us to appreciate more than one meaning simultaneously for a word or line in certain contexts, or to recognise how a line is appropriate in one context yet not in another, usually resulting in humour. However, whilst there are elements of Shakespeare's poetry and stories that work

[112] Lakoff and Fauconnier, 'On Metaphor and Blending', 393–99 (p. 397).
[113] Cook, 'Staging Nothing: "Hamlet" and Cognitive Science', 83–99.
[114] Zoltán Kövecses, 'Conceptual Metaphor Theory Some Criticisms and Alternative Proposals', *Annual Review of Cognitive Linguistics*, 6.1 (2008), 168–84.
[115] Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, *The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending and the Mind's Hidden Complexities* (New York: Basic Books, 2002).

this way to great effect, the use of metaphor to understand much of what is being presented to a reader or audience appears still to rely on the mapping of source domain onto the target domain. For example, Booth uses Bottom with the ass's head as an example of Conceptual Blending: that is, 'something in a state of unresolved duality, showing two natures at once'.[116] Yet we must still use CMT to map our experiences of rather simple animals such as donkeys (and our experiential understanding that donkeys normally only mate with other donkeys or horses) onto the highly abstract idea of a romantic relationship between an animal and a fairy. It is this that helps us understand why Titania's words and behaviour are unusual, and therefore funny or disturbing depending on the interpretation.

Unpacking this further, what precisely is it that is being mapped within the metaphors when we make these comparisons? The answer to this may lie in another concept from cognitive linguistics, that of frame semantics. Charles Fillmore argued for the original concept of framing — namely, that every word is conceptualised by reference to a frame rather than a single meaning, a frame being 'a cognitive structure device used in the service of understanding'.[117] When we hear a word like 'driver', for example, our various experiences of this concept ensure that the word carries a huge amount of information that contextualise (or frame) our understanding in terms of an environmental reality rather than a single semantic meaning. We understand the word 'driver' in relation to other words such as 'vehicle', 'journey' and 'passenger'. Clearly, even if we speak English as a first language, if we do not know these words, we would not be able to comprehend how they fit into the world and so would not be able to understand them. However, assuming we have that knowledge, the consequent framing we perform is the reason why the sentence 'The driver got into the vehicle, started the engine, and drove the passenger to the station' is instantly easy for us to accept; whereas the sentence, 'The passenger got into the vehicle, started the engine and drove the driver to the station' does not fit so easily in our minds. Any number of other

[116] Booth, *Shakespeare and Conceptual Blending: Cognition, Creativity, Criticism*, p. 3.
[117] Miriam R. L. Petruck, 'Introduction', in *Advances in Frame Semantics*, ed. by Mirjam Fried and Kiki Nikiforidou (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2013), pp. 1–12 (p. 1).

examples demonstrate this: the frames we have for 'the chef went into the kitchen and served the spaghetti in a bowl' ensure that the picture is clear; 'the mechanic went into the swimming pool and served the bowl in the spaghetti' is more of a struggle. All of these examples are semantically acceptable and may be, in a particular way, an accurate description of what happened in that instance; but when we read these second examples, we are alerted to a distorted picture being drawn. From our existing frames we recognise that something is slightly unusual in the image. Frames, therefore, apply within the mapping of the metaphor: for example, both the source and the target domain of LOVE IS A JOURNEY rely on frames for comprehension. It is highly likely that every one of us can access frames for JOURNEY and for LOVE, as we will have various experiences of both; that said, each of us will conjure up slightly different frames. Some parts will overlap, and some parts will remain completely individual to us personally. To reiterate Brain Parker's point, though, what is evident is that our frames are by their nature inescapably modern, as they belong to those of us living today.

On framing, Fillmore writes,

> In characterising a language system we must add to the description of grammar and lexicon a description of the cognitive and interactional 'frames' in terms of which the language-user interprets his environment, formulates his own messages, understands the messages of others, and accumulates or creates an internal model of his world.[118]

This description fits well what we are being asked to do as a modern audience when we watch or read Shakespeare: for much of it, we must interpret, attempt to understand messages, and we create our own internal model of the world being described, all through the language and actions of the characters. This is necessary for us to comprehend what is happening, to appreciate what the consequences may be, and to appreciate why what is happening matters within the story overall. In short, it is necessary for the drama to have any real impact on us.

[118] Fillmore, 'Frame Semantics and the Nature of Language', 20–32 (p. 23).

That modern native English speakers may translate much of Shakespeare through a type of intralingual translation is an interesting idea, but why is it important? Firstly, perhaps understanding this goes some way to relieving what can be an emotional response to the suggestion that Shakespeare should be translated into modern English. For some in the academic or theatrical world, the response to this can be a type of horror, as if to do so is some sort of crime. Knowing that modern native English speakers may be translating Shakespeare out of necessity could go some way to allaying the horror of this act. Afterall, we accept already the use of metaphor visually in many productions; audiences regularly expect and enjoy this as it can offer a specific insight into a play. To give one example, the visual concept of Rupert Goold's 2007 production of *Macbeth* was, according to one very favourable review, 'inspired by both the Stalinist terror and Orwell's *1984*'.[119] If a production retains Shakespeare's original words but the action does not take place in the original setting, is this not a type of metaphor? How do the title of Thane, the place names of Fife, Inverness, and England, and the mention of real Scottish royalty that existed hundreds of years ago fit into this clearly modern, 'Stalinist' world that the audience sees on stage? This is not merely a comprehensible framework due to the clear incongruity: if we do not recognise it (albeit unconsciously) as a metaphor (that is, a comparison), then the incongruity would be a barrier to comprehension rather than an aid. In Goold's *Macbeth* he is comparing the more unfamiliar world of eleventh-century Scotland with the more recent world of Stalin's rule and one of the most widely known visions of dystopia in Western culture; he does so to help us understand his take on the drama unfolding on stage. Returning to McWhorter's important caveat, understanding that native English speakers are already translating much of Shakespeare in a certain way does not mean that we abandon the original texts, but only that there should be modern-day alternatives.

[119] Charles Spencer, 'The Best *Macbeth* I Have Seen', *The Telegraph*, 27 September 2007 <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/culture/3668183/The-best-Macbeth-I-have-seen.html> [accessed 20 Oct 2019]

Appreciating this type of translation may also offer greater liberty to interlingual translators working in other languages. As outlined above, there are many obvious struggles for those performing interlingual translation into Japanese. Some translators may feel less shackled by the Early Modern originals if they understand that audiences in English speaking countries today may also conceptualise Shakespeare as a foreign language. Translators of Shakespeare who are native speakers of other languages may not fully understand the extent of Shakespeare's difficulty to many native English speakers. Furthermore, understanding the details behind this type of translation may go some way to explaining why Shakespeare means so many different things to so many different people. A deeper understanding of how personal it is (that is, how it ultimately relies on our own embodied and cultural experience and works at an unconscious level) helps us understand why Shakespeare, whose own words are filled with metaphor, appears infinitely interpretable.

From the above argument, it also stands to reason that interlingual translations may be viewed as fully equal to many productions staged today in the original language. Rather than being seen as only an interpretation of the events that take place within the play that must alter the original to bend its focus to the target language and culture, we may come to see interlingual translations as a different, but equally valid, interpretation of the original text because of the unavoidable need for so many modern audiences in the West to translate also. This supports the argument at the core of this thesis, albeit tangentially: whilst not necessarily offering an access to the power of the play that we do not have in the West, it does go some way toward destabilising the concept of Western Shakespeare authority, and so strengthens the idea that many foreign Shakespeare productions should be viewed as equally 'Shakespearean' to many productions that are staged today in the original language.

In this chapter, we have examined some of the choices translators made in Hamlet's famous soliloquy and explored how translating into Japanese is highly enlightening in certain ways. Despite the immense difficulties, it allows a translator to guide a reader or actor towards the character of the Prince in

key ways that shed a great deal of light on what we assume we know about Hamlet. Yet, more than this, the choices that a translator makes especially with *furigana* and with *kanji* characters, offer a linguistic functionality that may allow for clearer definition between the text for the page and the stage, and may even be said to enhance the poetic power of Shakespeare's original words in certain ways, thereby offering an even more direct access to the power of the play. The value of the metaphor within the written characters is implicit in the conceptualisation of the ideas within the text; and from this, it is a short extension of thought to appreciate that native English speakers may well use metaphor in a similar way to conceptualise Shakespeare's worlds when we read or hear the plays, translating in a fashion that could be described as intralingual. This strengthens further the argument that foreign Shakespeare in production, despite clearly being different, can be seen as equally Shakespearean to many modern-day productions performed in Shakespeare's original language in the West.

CHAPTER FIVE

Visual aspects of foreign Shakespeare

We have seen how scholars of ideographic languages such as Chinese and the *kanji* characters argue for the written form being metaphorical in its construction and function; and we have seen how this can add layers to a translated text. I have, in addition, argued how metaphor may play a part in the type of intralingual translation that native-English speakers perform when reading or listening to Shakespeare, as well as suggesting that a great number of productions of Shakespeare staged in the West function as metaphors to bring the drama closer to the audience's own experience of the world. Rupert Goold's *Macbeth* is one example cited, but there are innumerable instances of this from which to choose. These productions function metaphorically, primarily in a visual way, with set and costume doing the majority of the work in the target domain, occasionally with expression of physicality on stage such as dances or manners of moving that represent a time period or specific culture. It is this last point that is worth pursuing further now, for applying it to more modern Japanese Shakespeare productions can yield valuable dividends.

Despite the argument that a language such as Japanese may be able to add something to Shakespeare's text, it of course does not follow that everything in the original is maintained when his plays are translated. Without doubt, enormous amounts of detail are lost, be they semantic, cultural, or theatrical. Coupled with this, we have seen how since arriving as a 'modern' drama after the Meiji Restoration, Shakespeare's plays were not quite the revered texts that we often now believe them to be: they were adapted into other settings, other genres, even other forms of theatre. Parts were cut, such as the soliloquies. Therefore, although the language in a translated play is important, it is fair to say that the language does not — perhaps cannot — take the central role that it does regularly in the West nowadays. The words on the page are not enough in the eyes and ears of many.

One person who held this belief was perhaps the most famous modern day Shakespeare director in Japan, Yukio Ninagawa. Ninagawa originally trained as a painter, and then began his life in the theatre as an actor. When he started to direct, he desired to reintroduce aspects of Japanese theatre forms that had fallen out of use in the *shingeki* period of Japanese drama, such as *kabuki* and *bunraku*. For various reasons, he committed to using striking visual images, although he suggested this was primarily to help Japanese audiences understand better the scenes he was dramatizing on stage.[1] He made a name for himself in Japan and worldwide due to his impressive use of features other than the text of the play leading to what has been called his 'signature aural and visual landmark: exquisite beauty'.[2] He often blended Shakespeare's stories with certain cultural elements of Japan such as setting *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in a Zen rock garden in the Japanese city of Kyoto (1996), or his *Kabuki Twelfth Night* (1998) that drew on the *kabuki* theatre form, or perhaps most famously, the *NINAGAWA Macbeth* (1985) that set the action of the play in the Azuchi-Momoyama Era of Japan (1568–1603) framed visually within a large *butsudan* (a Buddhist altar). This has led to some debate as to the authenticity of the Japanese forms of theatre he incorporated and to the accusation of the director indulging in 'japonisme'; especially that, when conceiving his productions, his eye on foreign audiences has led him to indulge in excessive Japanese visual imagery to the extent that its authenticity is compromised (see *The Pitfalls of Intercultural Discourse: The Case of Yukio Ninagawa* by Yeeyon Im for an overview of the 'japonisme' debate).[3] Whatever conclusion one reaches in this particular argument, it is certain that Ninagawa's hugely impressive productions have done much to bring Shakespeare to audiences in Japan, and to bring Japanese Shakespeare to audiences in the rest of the world in striking and memorable ways.

His use of visual imagery to help Japanese audiences understand the scenes provokes certain questions. Ninagawa has said in interviews that one reason he feels such imagery is necessary is due to

[1] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, pp. 78–79.
[2] Huang, 'Ninagawa', pp. 79–112 (p. 99).
[3] Yeeyon Im, 'The Pitfalls of Intercultural Discourse: The Case of Yukio Ninagawa', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, 22.4 (2004) 7–30 <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26349161> [accessed 19 June 2021]

the inability of Japanese actors to speak the lines in the way he feels they should be spoken. He has claimed they cannot 'project the self for long' and so are unable to meet fully the demands of a text like Shakespeare's.[4] Coupled with this struggle that the actors undergo, Ninagawa felt that Japanese audiences would also have trouble understanding Shakespeare's text.[5] Whilst agreeing completely with the notion that effective visual imagery can aid the comprehension of a story and bring certain details to light, it may be a struggle to understand exactly what Ninagawa meant by this projection of the self when it comes to speaking lines, and therefore what exactly he feels he is adding to this by incorporating visuals. After all, the most impactful visual images are usually ones that tell an audience something on a macro level about the play: they are the larger metaphors that influence an audience's thoughts about the world of the drama or the characters being examined. The *butsudan* altar, for instance, interrogates the idea of legacy, fate and lineage which are all themes of *Macbeth*; but they are large themes and their framing effect here is static. Ninagawa's visual framing of his 1987 *The Tempest* as a rehearsal for a *noh* play on the island of Sado incorporated an old, slightly crumbling *noh* stage in a village by the sea on the Island of Sado: these visuals brought metaphorical entailments to the minds of his audience regarding the nature of performance, Japanese theatre forms and the nature of reality, and banishment; but again they are impactful primarily due to their overarching influence on how one conceives what happens within such a frame. One would most likely expect, in a performance of quality, the projection of the self to be a more subtle and fluid aspect of a play, one that changes as a character's journey progresses. Therefore, impactful visuals can help an audience understand the world of a play and the themes being explored, and part of who the characters are and what they are dealing with. But along with the possible disservice to the actors, such a sweeping statement does a disservice to the nuances of Shakespeare's characters as they are written, even before an actor attempts to voice the lines. It should be acknowledged that Ninagawa is likely referring to the Japanese sense of self that he perceives as being contested and unstable, if not lacking altogether, due to the influences of other cultures. Following the Meiji Restoration that brought in

[4] Ninagawa cited in Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, p. 78.
[5] Ibid., p. 78.

influences from Europe, Japan was occupied from 1945–1952 by the U.S.A, which subsequently left a substantial cultural footprint on the Japanese nation. Being born in 1935, Ninagawa would have experienced this first-hand.

This idea that Ninagawa felt the actors could not always do justice to the text is supported by a style of acting regularly seen on Ninagawa's stage, a style that many in the West would probably perceive as melodramatic. There is often little that is naturalistic in the performances, especially at times of heighted emotion, which are frequent in Shakespeare, and particularly, one could argue, in Ninagawa's early productions. Away from Ninagawa's productions that openly borrow from the more melodramatic worlds of *kabuki* and *noh* (such as his *kabuki Twelfth Night* in 2009 or his production of *The Tempest* in 1987 which drew on both *kabuki* and *noh*) this destabilising of naturalism can still be found in his other productions. Whilst it may be impossible to judge quantitively, perhaps this effect is even more acute in the productions that make direct reference to Japan and Japanese culture outside of the theatre traditions. The debate about naturalism when performing Shakespeare is not exclusive to Ninagawa or Japan; in the West, acting styles have altered over the past centuries, and it could be argued that we still have not succeeded in finding the appropriate balance of acting style that does justice to both the heightened, poetic nature of Shakespeare's plays and the need to embody a degree of naturalism that makes the characters and their actions believable for a modern audience. Former director at the RSC John Barton (1928–2018) sums up this challenge, telling us, 'There has to be a balance between being seemingly natural on one hand and coming to terms with the heightened language on the other.'[6] If an actor does not strike this balance well (or, more accurately, if they do not strike this balance to the liking of a specific audience) then we call it bad acting. If the actor pays too much attention to the heightened language and verse, then the audience sees an actor on stage simply reciting poetry; if the actor strives for naturalism at the expense of the heightened language, then the audience sees a mismatch between what a character is

[6] John Barton, *Playing Shakespeare* (London: Methuen Drama, 1984), p. 19.

saying and how they are saying it, also resulting in the perception of bad acting. Former Artistic Director of the RSC, Trevor Nunn (b. 1940), writes about the evolution of acting Shakespeare that has occurred over the past sixty years or so in the U.K:

> The age of rhetorical delivery gave way to the discovery, particularly aided by the influence of small theatre intimate productions, that Shakespeare was at times an astonishingly naturalistic dramatist. In consequence, the 'voice beautiful' and what became disparagingly known as 'mouth music' gave way to the search for and presentation of meaning above all, and in consequence to the ceaseless search for the underlying thought.[7]

This 'ceaseless search' continues, with certain practitioners these days aligning Shakespeare with acting schools such as Meisner technique, a type of actor training that many have long thought incompatible with heightened text. Meisner technique requires an actor to understand the 'emphasis on personal truth and response in finding the non-intellectual life of the text', which was considered by many in the West as not particularly useful when performing verse drama.[8] With regards to Ninagawa, it is striking that, for the large part, he used the translations by Odashima and Matsuoka, both of whom aim to write in more natural Japanese, with a degree of simplicity and a reduced lyricism that leads often to the claim that they are more 'actable' than many earlier translations such as Shôyô's. This hints at the fact that Ninagawa also believes the text should be as naturalistic as possible in these Shakespearean productions. A director is not fully responsible for every detail of each actor's performance and Ninagawa's style of directing has been remarked upon as often leaving actors to get on with it without him getting in the way. Nevertheless, Ninagawa was surely aware of the overall theatrical canvas which he was creating for his audience to see and hear, and the fact that his actors often performed in this heightened way is a telling data point when we recall his words about their inability to use the text as effectively as he wished they could.

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[7] Trevor Nunn, 'Foreword', in *Shakespeare on Stage: Thirteen Leading Actors on Thirteen Key Roles*, ed. by Julian Curry (London: Nick Hern Books, 2010), p. 11. Ebook.
[8] Aileen Gonsalves and Tracy Irish, *Shakespeare and Meisner: A Practical Guide for Actors, Directors, Students and Teachers* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2021), p. 4. Ebook.

Ninagawa's apparent distrust of the ability of Japanese actors and the language of the play to do the necessary job for an audience may have something to do with a larger concept. It may be that the origin of all language most likely evolved from the need to manipulate other human beings more effectively:

> Language in summary brings precision and fixity, two very important features if we are to succeed in manipulating the world. And, specifically, though we may not recognise this, it is good for manipulating other human beings. We can't easily hide the truth in *non*-verbal communication, but we can in words.[9]

This element of distrust in language should not be overemphasised; but, at the same time, it should be recognised as relatively deep rooted, having existed in Japanese culture for many years (as previously discussed regarding Hamlet's soliloquies). Whilst Western studies of linguistics and literature certainly interrogate the idea that words can conceal as much as they reveal, this philosophical idea was far more resonant throughout the history of Japanese social culture: questioning the belief that language in and of itself was an effective tool for communication, especially for communicating truth, was not uncommon. This runs contrary to the prevailing views in the history of Western thought. As Takeo Doi writes,

> the Western philosophical tradition is suffused with an emphasis on the important of words. In Japan such a tradition does not exist. I do not mean to suggest that traditional Japanese thought makes light of words, but it seems to be more conscious of matters that words do not reach.[10]

Zen Buddhism makes this point, maintaining that, 'A word is a finger that points at the moon.' Pupils of Zen must strive to understand the moon itself, rather than the tool offering the direction.[11] Undoubtedly,

[9] McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*, p. 114.
[10] Doi, *The Anatomy of Self: The Individual Versus Society*, p. 33.
[11] Soiku Shigematsu trans, *Zen Forest: Sayings of the Masters* (New York and Tokyo: Weatherhill, 1981), p. 3.

other scholars have shown that language plays an important part in Zen Buddhism; and the circular paradox of using language to highlight of how little importance language is in such a philosophy is not lost on scholars of Zen Buddhism.[12] Indeed, after detailing this idea of the finger and the moon, Shigematsu acknowledges that there is a contradiction here and that words may be of use in helping people appreciate what to avoid. In an interesting point that we may be tempted to relate to Shakespeare's poetic work, he tells us, 'Zen masters find that the best way to express the unexplainable is to put their satori experiences in symbolic verse.'[13] Nevertheless, the position of language as a tool with limits is clear. I have argued above for how various worlds of Buddhism, Shintoism and Confucianism permeate Japanese society in subtle ways and that their influence is often present in the population, even unconsciously. It is very likely, then, that Ninagawa, whom nobody is suggesting was Zen Buddhist in the traditional sense, had a strong understanding of the importance of visual communication more generally as a method of conveying truth and for not merely an aesthetic pleasure, but for more profound storytelling and to generate meaning. Certain remarks gleaned about Ninagawa's style of working are, in this context, rather more enlightening then perhaps first perceived. For instance, take those of Peter Barnes detailing his time spent with Ninagawa and observing his directing style when working with actors: 'The learning process is Zen influenced, and long-winded instructions or explanations are almost totally absent. The teacher makes odd comments from time to time, but does not expect any questions from the pupil.'[14] Whilst we may not know for certain whether Ninagawa was consciously aware of the long history and origin of such a line of thought, the possibilities and the value of visual communication was embedded in his approach to theatre in a different way to many Western theatre directors. Add to this the knowledge Ninagawa clearly had that he was working from a text that had undergone the practically impossible task of being translated from its Early Modern language into a Japanese language that was

[12] Wang Youru, 'The Limits of the Critique of "the Zen Critique of Language": Some Comments on Philosophical Meditations on Zen Buddhism', *Dao: A Journal of Comparative Philosophy*, 4 (2004), 43–55. <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF02871080>
[13] Shigematsu, *Zen Forest: Sayings of the Masters*, p. 4.
[14] Peter Barnes, 'Working with Yukio Ninagawa', *New Theatre Quarterly*, 8.32 (1992), 389–391 (p. 390) <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0266464X00007181>

ineffably different, then we can begin to form a clearer picture of how Ninagawa likely approached his Shakespeare productions, and the relative importance of words.

Such an approach feels at odds with the central role that language often takes in our evaluation and appreciation of Shakespeare in the West. I have already mentioned comments from Frank Kermode ('Shakespeare's revolutionary use of language is where the true power of his plays lies.') and Russ McDonald ('his control of language — more than, plot, characterization, theme — gives his work its distinctive qualities and underwrites his demonstrated theatrical sovereignty'.)[15] In *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Language* we are told, 'Shakespeare's mythic gift for lexical invention underlies his enduring reputation as godfather of English literature and language.'[16] From a more practical point of view, Cicely Berry informs us that working on Shakespeare is 'the surest way of learning about text' because it is 'so rich and extraordinary'.[17] These scholars — and many others — make a persuasive case for the formidable quality of Shakespeare's words in comparison to other dramatists. However, they fail to convince that the latent (or added) visual impact that is contained within the narratives of Shakespeare's plays cannot be equally powerful, and perhaps yield even more for a receptive audience, if executed effectively. This is understandable to some degree, for these scholars are usually examining the texts of Shakespeare's plays rather than the productions; but it appears clear that the question of how much the visual elements contribute to the perceived quality of a Shakespeare production ranks on a far lower scale for many academics in the West. This is not to discredit the growing body of scholars of Performance Studies, many of whom are interested in the visuals of a production. However, this remains a relatively new area of examination, without the established reputation of traditional Shakespeare studies. Strikingly, there are numerous examples of Shakespeare scholars dismissing the importance of

[15] Kermode, *Shakespeare's Language*, (front cover); McDonald, *Shakespeare and the Arts of Language*, p. 1.
[16] Alysia Kolentsis, 'Shakespeare's Creativity with Words', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare's Language*, ed. by Lynne Magnusson and David Schalkwyk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), pp. 20–34 (p. 20).
[17] Berry, *The Actor and the Text*, p. 9.

Shakespeare in performance. As Kennedy writes, 'Some of the most important Shakespeare scholars of the past have cared little for the theatre or have actively disliked it.'[18] This irreverence is largely because Shakespeare's texts hold such a revered position in the eyes of so many in the West. Robert Wiemann and Douglas Bruster's book *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance: Stage and Page in the Elizabethan Theatre* aims 'to address a renewed or, as many would say, growing rift between page and stage in Shakespeare studies'.[19] W. B. Worthen writes that Shakespeare studies are 'constructed through centuries of textual scholarship and interpretation and so perhaps constitutionally dismissive of the work of Shakespeare onstage'.[20] The true depth of this position is evident in David Scott Kastan's argument that,

> Shakespeare does, of course, 'live' in the theatre; there he becomes our contemporary, responsive to our needs and interests. But, as I have argued elsewhere, that seems to be exactly what makes the commitment to stage-centered approaches to Shakespeare suspect. Shakespeare in performance yields too easily to our desires.[21]

Kastan writes later that, 'Text and the performance are, then, not partial and congruent aspects of some unity that we think of as the play, but are two discrete modes of production.'[22] (Although I disagree with this position, this stance does destabilise further of the authority of modern-day Western Shakespeare performance, and it strengthens the argument for the equality of foreign Shakespeare in performance.) In the U.K, Shakespeare is taught as literature as well as in different areas of theatre studies. As such, the firmly cemented history of textual importance in Shakespeare studies ensures that Shakespeare in performance has struggled to be considered its equal in Western culture.

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[18] Dennis Kennedy, *Looking at Shakespeare: A Visual History of Twentieth-Century Performance*, pp. 6–7.
[19] Robert Weimann and Douglas Bruster, *Shakespeare and the Power of Performance: Stage and Page in the Elizabethan Theatre* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), p. 13.
[20] W. B. Worthen, *Shakespeare Performance Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), p. 2.
[21] David Scott Kastan, *Shakespeare and the Book* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), p. 6–7.
[22] Ibid., p. 9.

Even those who we may consider to have been recently at the apotheosis of staging Shakespeare in the U.K. often come from a distinctly literary tradition, lending weight to the argument that the words usually take centre stage in their approach to mounting a Shakespeare production. At the Royal Shakespeare Company, we have seen a succession of Artistic Directors with English degrees: Peter Hall read English at Cambridge University, Trevor Nunn read English at Cambridge University, Terry Hands read English at Birmingham University, Adrian Noble read English at Bristol University, Michael Boyd read English at Edinburgh University, and Greg Doran read English and Drama at Bristol University. Elsewhere, many well established Shakespeare directors at theatres such as the National Theatre, Shakespeare's Globe, and the Almeida, have come from a university background where English literature played, we imagine, an important part in their Shakespeare education. The likes of Richard Eyre, Nicholas Hytner, Dominic Dromgoole, and Rupert Goold to name but a few, are all graduates of the English Tripos at Cambridge University. Some may suspect additional political questions intertwined within this degree of similarity; and, certainly, the ability of these directors to create visually impressive productions is unquestionable. Yet it is a relatively safe assumption that the educational institutions that cultivated the talents of these directors — who subsequently had the responsibility of crafting the artistic vision of how quality Shakespeare should be produced in the U.K. — likely prioritised Shakespeare's words as the key to his drama. One may be tempted to believe that these directors rebelled against their education and became stage directors because the language was not enough. However, this notion is dispelled by the words of some of these directors themselves. For example, whilst he was Artistic Director of the National Theatre, Richard Eyre writes of Peter Hall's *Anthony and Cleopatra*,

> It has complete authority and most of the actors — particularly Judi and Michael Bryant — have an innate sense of how to treat the language. There's a temptation with Shakespeare to provide a visual conceit that tidies up the landscape, or to impose unity through a rigorously enforced discipline of verse-speaking, as Peter does. For me verse-speaking should be like jazz: never on

> the beat, but before, after, or across it. All the same I'd rather have Peter's emphasis on the life of the play being in the language, than an arhythmic, naturalistic shuffle.[23]

In *How to Do Shakespeare*, Adrian Noble writes that throughout his book we have seen,

> how a human being expresses himself through language, and how the form and structure of that language convey meaning. Everything that needs to be communicated by a character exists in the language.[24]

Nicholas Hytner's comments on the job of the actor when it comes to performing Shakespeare echo this idea. He says, '99 per cent of the time, the actor's job is to master the text and to speak it as clearly as possible.'[25] It is important to state once again that these directors clearly had visions for their productions; they understood that the text was not enough by itself, they were interested in how to stage Shakespeare, and they cared about the impact on an audience of visual effects. But it is also clear that, for many directors in the U.K., the life of a Shakespeare play, and what, therefore, might be called the foreground of a Shakespeare production, is very often the language of the drama.

We can point to Aristotle's *Poetics* as the original source of this point of view in much European and North American theatre practice, especially regarding classical texts such as Shakespeare.[26] Within the list of the six elements of Tragedy, Aristotle lists Spectacle as the least important (after Plot, Character, Thought, Diction and Song), suggesting that it is the least artistic and the least connected with the poet.[27] Whatever one believes to be the extent of *Poetics* on Western theatre history, we can be certain that his famous notes on drama have had an even smaller impact on Asian theatre in the past three

[23] Richard Eyre, *National Service: Diary of a Decade at the National Theatre*, ed. by Arzu Tahsin (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2004), p. xviii, Ebook.
[24] Adrian Noble, *How to Do Shakespeare* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2010), p. 243.
[25] Nicholas Hytner, quoted in *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Nicholas Hytner*, ed. by Abigail Rokison-Woodall, p. 28.
[26] Dennis Kennedy, *Looking at Shakespeare: A Visual History of Twentieth Century Performance*, p. 5.
[27] Aristotle, *Poetics*, trans. by S. H. Butcher (New York: Dover Publications, 1997), p. 13.

thousand years, and so Spectacle does not hold so lowly an estimation. Returning to Ninagawa's work, recent studies in cognitive neuroscience are yielding interesting results that contribute substantially to this discussion. First, it is important to appreciate a little of what the research is revealing about the hemispheres of the brain and their priorities before applying these findings to Ninagawa and Japanese Shakespeare productions such as his productions of *Hamlet*. It is widely accepted now that both hemispheres are engaged in almost every process that occurs in the brain, although to different degrees and with different priorities. What has become clearer, however, is the extent to which the left hemisphere deals with details of language such as syntax and vocabulary, whereas the right hemisphere attends to comprehending aspects such as meaning in its entirety and humour. As one comprehensive review of the numerous studies in this area asserts, 'The right hemisphere's particular strength is in understanding meaning as a whole and in context.'[28] Related to this, research is suggesting that the right hemisphere specialises in non-verbal communication, especially metaphor (and metaphor here should be understood as the conceptual thought process previously detailed that underlies everything and is our only way of learning, rather than only the analysis of linguistic utterances within Shakespeare's plays themselves).

Studies have also shown that East Asian populations, including the Japanese, are more likely to emphasise right hemisphere functions. Whilst admitting that their study should spark more research in the area, the results of Paul Rozin, Morris Moscovitch and Sumio Imada seem to confirm the 'East–Right Hemisphere, West–Left Hemisphere' hypothesis that was originally presented by Robert E. Ornstein back in the early 1970s.[29] Nobody is suggesting that the Japanese use only the right hemisphere and people in the West use only the left; that would be preposterous as everything is a question of balance. Even within a population there will undoubtedly be differences. Yet, the science does suggest that the majority of

[28] McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*, p. 70.
[29] Robert E. Ornstein, *The Psychology of Consciousness* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1972); Paul Rozin, Morris Moscovitch, and Sumio Imada, 'Right: Left:: East: West. Evidence that Individuals from East Asian and South Asian Cultures Emphasize Right Hemisphere Functions in Comparison to Euro-American Cultures', *Neuropsychologia*, 90 (2016), 3–11 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.neuropsychologia.2016.06.027>

Japanese very likely use strategies of each hemisphere in a more balanced fashion than those of us in the West, where we attend to the priorities of the left hemisphere to a far larger extent.

> There is by now enough consistent evidence, from a variety of sources, and of a variety of types, for us to accept something which seems intuitively likely: that there are differences between the way in which Westerners and East Asians see the world, and that these have something to do with the balance of the hemispheres. More specifically, in the case of every single difference listed above, it takes the same form, a greater reliance in the West on the left hemisphere, and there is not even a single difference suggesting a greater reliance on the right.[30]

The corollary of this finding is the likely greater sensitivity to the channel of visual communication and aural communication such as music, especially when coupled with the perception that language may be insufficient in its ability to perform the task of conveying with accuracy the depth and complexity of the drama that Shakespeare presents. As has been noted regarding visual communication in this regard, this is not because of a lack of accuracy in speech but rather, 'It is precisely its accuracy and definiteness that make speech unsuited for expressing what is too complex, changeful and ambiguous.'[31] Against this emerging picture we may be tempted to position the studies that have suggested that the processing of *kanji* characters takes place primarily in the right hemisphere. Once again, we should remind ourselves not to separate the use of the hemispheres too forcefully as undoubtedly both are used and likely to be dependent on the specific task and individual. Nevertheless, it is interesting that, knowing the visual nature of *kanji* that we have already explored, the results of Takeshi Hatta's investigation, for instance, support the already established hypothesis that, at the very least, 'phonetic symbols (Kana) are recognised

[30] McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*, p. 458
[31] Rotenberg V.S and Arshavsky V.V., 'The Two Hemispheres and the Problem of Psychotherapy', *Dynamische Psychiatry / Dynamic Psychiatry*, 20 (1987), 369–77 (paragraph 4)
<http://www.vsrotenberg.rjews.com/two_hemispheres.html> [accessed 27 Sept 2021]

in the left hemisphere and non-phonetic logographic symbols (Kanji) are recognized in the right hemisphere'.[32]

The adjectives 'Complex, changeful and ambiguous' that we read above are incontestably hallmarks of Shakespeare's plays and championed regularly as evidence of his quality as a writer; these descriptions are perhaps another of the key reasons why Shakespeare's work is endlessly interpretable and speaks to so many people in different ways. Yet, when Shakespeare is staged, decisions must be taken by a director and actors; certain options must be closed off to ensure the complexity is rendered manageable, the changeful nature of the drama rendered purposeful, and the ambiguity reduced. If these effects are not balanced, then an audience is likely to be overwhelmed, confused and possibly even bored. In short, even if a story is understood at some level, if what that story *means* is not clear (or even, to push it further, if an audience is left uncertain as to whether the story has any relevant meaning at all), they are less likely to feel a production is of quality.

What concern is this regarding the work of Ninagawa? For starters, such a revelation asks us to consider whether we in the West have paid so much attention to the details of the language of Shakespeare to the extent that we as audiences have sacrificed our understanding of what the visuals of a production can truly add to Shakespeare's texts: that is, what can visual elements add regarding not only narrative information that reveals the events of the story, but also in the creation of meaning? Further to this, it demonstrates how paying greater attention to the nonverbal aspects of his productions, an artist like Ninagawa created spectacles that were so striking to so many people. To be clear, there are, without question, plenty of visually conscious directors in the West creating theatre productions with hugely impactful visual effects. Similarly, there are plenty of theatre directors in Japan for whom the visual aspects of a production do not merit the same attention as they did for Ninagawa. Tadashi Suzuki may be,

[32] Takeshi Hatta, 'Recognition of Japanese Kanji in the Left and Right Visual Fields', *Neuropsychologia*, 15, 4/5 (1977), 685–688 (p. 687) < https://doi.org/10.1016/0028-3932(77)90073-2>

after Ninagawa, the second most famous Japanese director known outside Japan: he is less famous for his visual imagery, although his emphasis on the use of the body and his desire to rearrange texts hints at an implicit understanding of the same issue regarding nonverbal communication. It is not the case that Ninagawa always created effective visuals on stage that were balanced and cohesive: as certain reviews attest, it could sometimes feel that he was overloading a stage and audience with his visual imagery and incongruent audio elements leaving many with the impression of visuals and a soundtrack that were conflicted or were just too numerous or complex for real impact.[33] Rather what I am arguing is that Ninagawa's Shakespeare productions often hit a sweet spot that combined his skill as a visual artist, with an intuitive, cultural understanding and capacity (in both the director himself and his native audiences) of what nonverbal communication can add to 'meaning as a whole' when language is perceived as insufficient and unsuitable to the task at hand. Within this school of thought, one reason why Shakespeare, in its original Early Modern English, is regarded so highly by so many may be that his poetry comes closest to expressing the complexity and ambiguity of life. Shakespeare's use of metaphor in his poetry even argues, in a certain way, for it being a visual effect due to the extent to which a reader or audience are able to paint pictures in their mind from listening to Shakespeare's words. However, as has been argued already, elements of this poetry inevitably must be lost to a large extent when translated into Japanese and then spoken out loud, adding yet one more reason for Ninagawa to come up with and incorporate his impactful visuals and aural textures. When Ninagawa's productions were transported outside Japan, especially to Britain, another key aspect was also brought to bear on his work so often being judged as successful: this was his often extensive use of Japanese cultural and iconographic visual imagery coming from his desire to reform Japanese Shakespeare as a genre in and of itself. He has been reported as saying his work is an attempt to 'break down the artificial barriers between different forms of theatre by combining ritual, naturalism, Kabuki, Noh, Hollywood musicals, and film westerns'.[34] Such an

[33] Brokering, 'Ninagawa Yukio's Intercultural "*Hamlet*": Parsing Japanese Iconography', 370–396 (p. 393).
[34] Barnes, 'Working with Yukio Ninagawa', 389–91 (p. 389).

amalgam may have resulted in risks that did not completely hold together at times; but for the most part his work was perceived to be spectacular in the positive sense.

One interesting discrepancy must be commented upon before moving on. Although his overall acclaim is undoubted, his productions have at times received mixed responses from Western critics, with the degree of positivity often correlating to whether his production was performed in English or in Japanese. These responses present what has been remarked upon as being a simple dichotomy: when a show was performed in English (such as his 2004 *Hamlet* and his 1999 RSC production of *King Lear*) the response from Western critics was not nearly as favourable as when he directed productions in the Japanese language, such as the *NINAGAWA Macbeth* and or the Kabuki *Twelfth Night* or even his 2015 *Hamlet*. Kishi and Bradshaw posit a reason for this:

> What happened seems to be very simple. When the production was in Japanese which the critics could not understand, they loved it. When the production was in English which they understood perfectly well, they hated it [….] So why did they respond so positively to the Japanese-language productions? The obvious answer would be: they loved them because they were able to concentrate on non-verbal aspects of the productions without being bothered with what the actors were saying.[35]

Kishi and Bradshaw are mostly right in what they claim here but fail to provide a full explanation; Huang is also correct in his expansion of this point contending that, 'What the theorists and journalists failed to grasp is the fact that most theatre works have a presentational and a representational dimension.'[36] It should be noted that it is a slightly sweeping statement to claim that the critics 'hated' his productions en masse when in English; whilst it is certainly true that many critics were unimpressed, one does not have to dig very deep before finding, for instance, a partial defence of his 1999 *King Lear* from Michael

[35] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, p. 84.
[36] Huang, 'Ninagawa', pp. 79–112 (p. 89).

Billington who offers some positive notes: 'But, to those who accuse the production of shallowness, I would say that Ninagawa points up the mutual antipathy of Lear's daughters with absolute clarity. Visually the production is also stunning.'[37] Similarly, Sheridan Morley in *The Spectator* wrote, 'I have never seen a Lear which ends better' and continues, 'The result is infinitely more moving than many bigger and some even better *Lears*.'[38] It is more apposite to say that rather than hate his English productions, critics perhaps felt they were nowhere near as powerful as those in Japanese; but this may well be a testament to how high the bar had been set with his Japanese productions rather than how low the bar had sunk when he produced shows in English. Nevertheless, we must accept that as a trend this division is more or less accurate.

As detailed above regarding Shakespeare's language and translations, it is especially true of this genre that such theatre productions necessarily have a presentational and representational dimension; but there is more to this point than only appreciating these two complimentary dimensions of a work on stage. True, being able to concentrate on the non-verbal elements without considering the language (or any examination of the vocal delivery of that language in spoken form, the 'being bothered' by the language as Kishi and Bradshaw put it) allows the specifics of the non-verbal elements to be focused on to a far larger extent. But more than this, with the details of the language no longer needing to be considered, the impressive aesthetic effects gave a distinct clarity to something so challenging with Shakespeare incredibly complex worlds and characters: that is, the visual and aural tapestry created by Ninagawa became a significant contributor not only to the details of the story being told but also to the audience's ability to perceive meaning in a production. For critics to be granted such an unencumbered access to the creation of meaning was probably a very rare experience. It is also likely that this ability to appreciate the

[37]Michael Billington, 'King Nigel's Shakespearean Tragedy', *The Guardian*, 30 Oct 1999, <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/1999/oct/30/artsfeatures> [accessed 27 Sept 2021]
[38] Sheridan Morley, 'Japanese Production at the RSC Barbican: "King Lear" From Afar', *New York Times* from *International Herald Tribune*, 3 November 1999, <https://www.nytimes.com/1999/11/03/style/IHT-japanese-production-at-the-rsc-barbican-king-lear-from-afar.html> [accessed 6 Sept 2021]

meaning of his productions on a deeper level was surprising as consciously the worlds being presented in the productions were foreign. On the surface, many may have felt that setting Shakespeare's plays in the feudal Japan of *NINAGAWA Macbeth* or the northern Japanese island of Sado in *The Tempest,* for instance, should have inhibited their ability to understand the meaning of the drama. This is not to suggest that these critics had never seen Shakespeare performed in another language, as this was surely not the case. Nevertheless, they had probably never seen Shakespeare performed with these three component parts in such fine alignment: that is, Shakespeare in a language so different to English that it is completely incomprehensible, thereby rebalancing the use of the hemispheres to a large extent; along with a production staged by a director with an exceptional talent for the visual and aural elements; along with cultural and iconographical imagery so foreign that it felt alien on a surface level and provoked the conscious expectation of meaning being inhibited, that was then subverted. There may even have been a hint of self-congratulatory surprise within this last point. All of this explains to a far greater degree why such levels of praise were heaped upon Ninagawa and his productions when he directed in Japanese. Conor Hanratty tells us, 'In Ninagawa's theatre, the audience was presented with multiple layers of meaning, and invited to enjoy the "pleasure" of creating their own meaning from his varying systems of signification'[39] Here Hanratty omits a key factor that should be acknowledged: the real power of Ninagawa's work in this regard lies in the macro-cultural capacity in Japan and then the micro-cultural circumstance in the U.K. for meaning to be created more effectively than is usually possible through systems of signification.

It has been argued that intercultural theatre can often be a site of misunderstanding. Ric Knowles talks of the times when 'a shadow falls between the conception and the act'.[40] He goes on to say that this divide 'happens time after time when audience members, reviewers and scholars fail to read the codes in

[39] Hanratty, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Yukio Ninagawa*, p. 25.
[40] Ric Knowles, *How Theatre Means* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), p. 11.

performances emerging from cultures and identity positions other than their own'.[41] One may be tempted to read some of the British reviews of the *NINAGAWA Macbeth* as evidence of this, for they contain clear misunderstandings. Many reviewers, for example, did not understand the significance of the *butsudan* or elderly women who watched the play from the side of the stage. In a review of the show at the National Theatre in London in 1987, Paul Taylor wrote, 'Two filthy, hunchbacked hags open and close proceedings, pushing back the lattice screens through which a good deal of the play is mistily revealed.'[42] Two important points come out of examining comments such as these.

Firstly, we must question the difference between narrative and meaning when it comes to understanding. James R. Hamilton argues for a 'feature-salience model' of understanding in the theatre, writing,

> On the feature-salience analysis, far from being accidental or coercive, the fact that most spectators agree about the characteristics they encounter is the key datum we seek to explain. And it explains that datum by noting how a feature becomes projectible for a pattern, for a spectator, in such a way that any spectator may plausibly conclude that any other spectator will also think the same feature reveals the same pattern. [43]

Hamilton argues that the 'feature-salience model' draws some inspiration from reader-response theory but goes further.

> This is not to dispute the motivation for reader-response theory. It is well motivated, in particular, in its rejection of authorial intentions. But we can go even further. For the feature-salience explanation is committed to the view that what the *performers* intend is also not what settles the

[41] Ibid., p. 12.
[42] Paul Taylor, 'Review of *Ninagawa Macbeth*', *London Theatre Record*, 7.19 (1987), 1173–1248 (p. 1201).
[43] James R. Hamilton, *The Art of Theater* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2007), p. 101.

> issue of what is presented. So it is also not an intentionalist account of the mechanism of theatrical understanding.

Hamilton is right to argue that authorial intentional and the intention of the performers do not complete the mechanism of understanding: however, I am not convinced that the spectator is consciously attempting to match their own understanding of the features that create patterns to those of their fellow audience members. Matthew DeCoursey also queries this type of conscious reasoning, suggesting that 'the experience of theatre does not seem so involved'.[44] However, Hamilton's conclusion that 'spectators mostly do get the same stories from narrative theatrical performances' is accurate and revealing.[45] Yet, getting 'the same stories' is not the same as getting the same meaning from those stories. That is, even if an audience watching a performance all agree that the same events are happening on stage, or they agree on the emotions being expressed by the characters, or they agree on the importance of key parts of a drama, it does not necessarily follow that they will agree on what these things mean to them as individual members of the audience.

This is due to the receptive frame of cultural-artistic influence that I have outlined already when discussing translation. The subjective frame and the performative frame are evident in Hamilton's description here, as the intention of the author and the performers respectively; we must apply the receptive frame to add the existing experiences of the audience as a key part of the creation of meaning in its complete form. In doing so, we can see the receptive frame of cultural-artistic influence is influencing Paul Taylor's review. The very first scene of Shakespeare's play *Macbeth* introduces us to the witches; elsewhere the witches are referred to as 'midnight hags' and 'filthy hags'.[46] By the time Taylor is writing

[44] Matthew DeCoursey, 'Making Meaning in the Theatre: Double *Noesis*', in *How to Make Believe: The Fictional Truths of the Representational Arts*, ed. by J. Alexander Bareis and Lene Nordrum (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter GmbH), pp. 269–282 (p. 270).
[45] James R. Hamilton, *The Art of Theater*, p. 101.
[46] William Shakespeare, 'Macbeth', in *Complete Works*, ed. by Peter Alexander (Glasgow: HarperCollins, 1994), IV. 1. 47; IV. 1. 115.

his review, he is consciously aware that the elderly ladies at the beginning of Ninagawa's production are not the witches; however, the numerous cultural-artistic experiences of *Macbeth* that Taylor has encountered already are subconsciously influencing his viewing of the play. This is what leads him to describe the ladies that are 'opening proceedings' as 'filthy' and 'hags'.

There is an intercultural misunderstanding when Taylor's frame of cultural-artistic influence leads to talk of lattice screens rather than a *butsudan*, the existence of which he was likely unaware. There is little doubt that what Hamilton refers to as the specific intention of the performers (and here we may include the director) regarding the creation of meaning has been lost, and so Taylor's understanding of the play loses the overarching visual framework of ancestor worship and family legacy that is obvious to a Japanese audience. Nevertheless, we should be aware of what is added in its place when one conceptualises a lattice screen instead of a *butsudan*. Lattice screens are often used to add privacy to a space, giving a stronger sensation that what is being revealed onstage when they are pushed back is normally hidden from the audience's view. Adding weight to this, the doors of a *butsudan* are designed to be opened: a lattice screen is not normally designed for this purpose, so the opening and then the closing of them become more significant and powerful moments. In this way, if the *butsudan* doors are incorrectly conceptualised as lattice screens, then the urgent need for this particular *Macbeth* to be revealed in full view of the audience feels heightened. As a lattice screen is used often to divide up a single space (such as a garden), this emphasises the fact that the audience and the action on the stage exist in one area together, even when the screen is closed, joining the audience to the play in a more direct manner. In many ways, this is a more evocative framing of a piece of intercultural theatre: metaphorically, a Western audience both can and cannot see the *Macbeth* that they know on the stage; in a similar way, one both can and cannot see literally through a lattice screen due to the criss-cross pattern. When the visual barrier of this (incorrectly conceptualised) lattice screen is opened, the feeling that the audience members are part of the same world of the play (compared with peering into a *butsudan*) helps to increase the accessibility that the Japanese production offers the spectators sitting in the Barbican.

One can misunderstand narrative. For example, if an audience member somehow believed that Malcom, rather than Macbeth, killed Duncan, this would be an important misunderstanding that would lead to confusion later in the play (unless a particular adaptation deliberately created the effect). The misunderstanding of meaning in its complete form, however, cannot be judged so easily, for creating meaning in the theatre requires input from the subjective frame (the author or translator), the performative frame (the performers, director, and producer), and the receptive frame (the audience). This receptive frame functions subconsciously to a large degree, meaning that an audience is not always aware of why they create meaning from a particular action on stage. Knowles is right to highlight that this type of misunderstanding happens in intercultural theatre where an audience fails to read the necessary codes (often through no fault of their own), but such misunderstandings are not limited to this genre of theatre. Knowles' shadow that falls 'between the conception and the act' also happens,

> on every occasion in which theatre artists read reviews, critical accounts, or scholarly analyses of work to which they have contributed and fail to recognize themselves, their intentions or the show in which they took part[47]

Therefore, while we should be aware of what an audience can lose when they misunderstand meaning in its complete form, this is not the concern of intercultural theatre specifically. It is impossible for any theatre practitioner to have full control of meaning; although this necessarily entails a degree of loss at times, it is also part of the wonder of theatre, and can even add to the experience, in certain circumstances.

Ninagawa's *Hamlets*

Let us now return to Ninagawa and specifically his use of visual and aural effects when staging Shakespeare. Ninagawa's use of music, lighting and set design was often metaphorical. This makes

[47] Knowles, *How Theatre Means,* (p. 12).

perfect sense within the argument that I am making: namely, that metaphor is a system of thought that allows us to understand things that are external to our physical experience, hence why such effects were so striking to both Japanese and British audiences. The link between the use of the right hemisphere regarding metaphor and comprehending meaning in its entirety has also been outlined above: with this in mind, let us now examine Ninagawa's use of visual metaphors, in the contexts of his productions of *Hamlet* that came to the U.K. to appreciate why the specific images were not just striking and effective at conveying narrative, but also how they functioned to create this meaning within the productions.

Ninagawa directed *Hamlet* eight times (1978, 1988, 1995, 2001, 2003, 2004, 2012, 2015); he did so seven times in Japanese, and once in English in 2004. His Japanese productions of 1995 came to the U.K. (in 1998) and the production played for 8 performances from 28 August to 03 September at the Barbican; his 2015 production also played at the Barbican from 21 to 24 May 2015. *Hamlet* fascinated Ninagawa throughout his career and he was taken to exploring it in brave ways. As mentioned, his 1988 production melded two different translations of the text as he incorporated parts of Odashima's translation and of Shôyô's translation for different characters in the play. The director has also explored variety in cast size, with his 1978 production being the largest, having a cast of over 70 people. Ninagawa returned to a variety of stage images in his productions of *Hamlet*, such as the *hinadan* platform that hosts the *hina* dolls or the concept of metatheatre, including a play going on within the play.[48] (By the time the drama gets to Hamlet staging The Mousetrap in the productions that use this frame such as the 1998 and 2015 performances, there appears to be a play within a play, within a play.) What is most significant regarding the visual aesthetics in his productions, however, is his use of levels which works to demonstrate metaphorically the world of intercultural theatre, especially for a Western audience.

[48] Hanratty, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Yukio Ninagawa*, p. 92.

Looking in greater detail at the two productions of *Hamlet* that played in the U.K. (in Japanese) shed more light on this. Take, firstly, his 1995 production that came to the Barbican in 1998. Ninagawa set this *Hamlet* in the backstage environment of a theatre, with a set design that incorporated dressing rooms, mirrors and lights, all allowing the real Barbican audience to witness the cast and crew pretending to warm up and put together the final elements of the performance such as make up or setting the stage. This metatheatrical frame has been commented on often as allowing the Japanese cast to escape some of the pressure of authenticity, something Ninagawa himself has suggested was part of the design of such a motif as well as being an interesting visual reflection of the performing and hiding that takes place within the story of *Hamlet* itself.[49] However, there is more to this than merely the attempt to destabilise authenticity.

Ninagawa has claimed that his use of metatheatrical framing works well for his Japanese actors to 'eliminate the artificiality of Japanese actors performing non-Japanese roles'.[50] This is an effective theatrical device and offers plenty to the actors on the stage. However, in addition to this, it is the audience who truly benefit from this piece of direction, and they do so in various ways. By having the cast seen 'backstage' as it were, warming up, doing their make-up and making their supposed final preparations for the start of the show, Ninagawa grounds the production in the specific reality being experienced at that exact time by the audience. The audience are the ones who, in the real world, are preparing for the beginning of the play as they find their seats, look through their programmes, and make their final preparations to be sat for the next few hours watching the performance. Contrary to what may be explicitly happening and what Ninagawa expressly claims is his aim, by doing this he is in fact attempting to reinforce the authenticity of the performance before it has truly begun. The claim may be that the world of theatre is by its nature artificial, and an audience should not therefore judge a Japanese production of Shakespeare as any more artificial than a Western one; if the characters in Elsinore are

[49] Brokering, 'Ninagawa Yukio's Intercultural "*Hamlet*": Parsing Japanese Iconography', 370–396 (pp. 374–75).
[50] Ibid., p. 373.

fictitious then it matters little who inhabits them for the next three hours. But by reminding the audience of what goes on behind the scenes just prior to the start time of the show serves to point them towards the notion that Ninagawa and his actors are presenting a real, live, theatrical experience that has been prepared and is being presented for them at that very moment. It reminds the audience that they are not just watching a Japanese Shakespeare production, but also a professional company of actors about to give a Shakespeare performance that happens to be in Japanese. By grounding the forthcoming performance in the bodies of the actors before the audience meet the characters, Ninagawa roots his Japanese Shakespeare in the authority of real people doing a job in 1998 rather than in the fictious persons within the play of *Hamlet*, which will certainly carry with it the further layer of distance created by the fact that the characters on stage are quite evidently Japanese. The masterful director, although probably unconscious of it, is using the technique of persuading the audience by priming them, as much as he is using a framing technique: by presenting the audience with this tableau he primes them to judge the production that will take place from the official 'start' of the performance that is imminent.

In addition, the use of stairs has been commented upon as a useful stage device that separated individual dressing rooms from a more general room for the actors and stage crew to congregate and prepare. Yet the steps do more in that they act as a metaphor for the production as well as for the drama within the play.

Fig 1: Ninagawa's 1998 *Hamlet* at the Barbican[51]

Ninagawa is subtly, and again most likely unconsciously, providing a visual metaphor of connection between two plains or different levels which is exactly the experience of the audience. This conceit is important as a site of intercultural theatre: the different levels are representative of the intertextuality of the drama Ninagawa is presenting. Literally, the steps hold the potential for the movement of the characters in the story between the different stage levels; metaphorically, the steps hold the potential for movement of the audience between Shakespeare's text in English and a Japanese production. The steps themselves function as a physical point of access that allows the actors to traverse between the two levels that are interconnected at certain points and exist together on the same stage; yet the levels are clearly separate and can be seen distinctly as separate by the audience. The stairs on the stage thereby invite the audience to ascend and descend metaphorically with the actors within the show, taking the audience between the different levels of theatrical experience.

The same argument can be made with even greater force regarding the Japanese *hina* dolls that were incorporated in four of his different *Hamlets*. Much has been written on this evocative metaphor

[51] Hiroyuki Sanada and Mariko Kaga in front of the stairs. (Photo: Jon M. Brokering) Printed in Brokering, 'Ninagawa Yukio's Intercultural "*Hamlet*": Parsing Japanese Iconography', 370–396 (p. 376).

with Jon M. Brokering, for instance, telling us of the cultural significance of these dolls in Japan, (including the poignant history of originally sending them downriver after the *hina* doll festival (*hinamatsuri*) in March, which colours Ophelia's impending fate) and, thus, the impact they have on the audience's understanding of the issues in the Danish Court overall.[52] Although, these days, the ceramic dolls are packed away for the following year, when the festival originated in the Heian Period (794–1185), the dolls were made of straw or paper; the ancient custom of sending these dolls downriver at the end of the *hinamatsuri* was in the hope that bad luck for daughters would be washed downriver with them, leaving girls able to live a happy life and marry well. Others have highlighted how the *hina* dolls in Ninagawa's 1995 production drew attention to Ophelia's relationship expressly with her father due to the absence of her mother, the mother figure being traditionally associated with the arrangement and the subsequent taking down of the dolls.[53] Ninagawa used these dolls as a metaphor for the Danish Court in their smaller doll form, allowing actors to handle the dolls, placing them, at certain times, on the *hinadan* so that he could draw attention to aspects of his production such as the power hierarchy, the displacement of an individual such as Hamlet, and even a degree of fatalism for, in Japanese culture, the dolls must always be put away at the end of the *hina* doll festival and therefore their time is necessarily limited. In order to further solidify these concepts as pertaining to the characters on stage, Ninagawa also incorporated a larger *hinadan* platform on which the actors could sit at times (during the play within a play scene, for instance) so as to embody the metaphor physically. Huang tells us,

> In the play-within-a-play scene, performers sat on a tiered platform resembling a *hina* dolls cabinet. They formed a human tableau and drew attention to the artificiality of the performance. The audience's attention was redirected away from the representational aspect of theatrical realism to the presentational aspect of Ninagawa's metatheatrical narrative.[54]

[52] Brokering, 'Ninagawa Yukio's Intercultural "*Hamlet*": Parsing Japanese Iconography', 370–396 (pp. 378–383).
[53] Hanratty, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Yukio Ninagawa*, p. 98.
[54] Huang, 'Ninagawa', pp. 79–112 (p. 111).

It is not entirely clear exactly which artificiality is being referred to here. Does Huang mean the characters watching the play-with-the-play that Hamlet has amended for his own detective purposes? Or does he mean the entire Ninagawa production being staged? But his last sentence is most enlightening: by drawing this distinction between presentational and representational Huang confuses a key issue. Certainly, Japanese theatre tradition has not emphasised theatrical realism in the way in which we have in the West; further to this, such a drive for realism must jar often with attempts to perform Shakespeare's original text for reasons we have already discussed. He is correct in suggesting that by weaving various Japanese theatrical traditions, and especially theatrical framing devices, into the fabric of his Shakespeare productions Ninagawa can, in some ways, remains more faithful to Shakespeare's original texts, which cannot be conducive to completely naturalistic performances due to the style of drama that Shakespeare wrote. However, Ninagawa's metatheatrical narrative is a visual metaphor (that is, he compares the source domain of the *hinadan* with the target domain of the Danish Court). A metaphor is a comparison, a carrying over of meaning; it is therefore more representational than the presentational that is thought to bring to the stage the reality of humanity that is in the narrative of the play (although it could be easily argued that any kind of acting is a metaphorical form). When incorporating such a deliberate metaphor, the effect relies completely on the balance between the source domain and the target domain in the minds of the audience: as such, the effect of such a metaphor is as representational as any sort of human performance aimed at representing something understood to be real.

Beyond this, the use of the *hinadan* has a more important function as a metaphor. More than the idea of a hierarchy or tableau of status, the *hinadan* also functions as a set of stairs in a fashion not dissimilar to the literal steps we have discussed in his 1998 *Hamlet*. Perhaps this function is most obvious in the poster for Ninagawa's 1988 production as below: this stark, red, tiered display unit does not feature the dolls, and so resembles a set of stairs even more obviously.

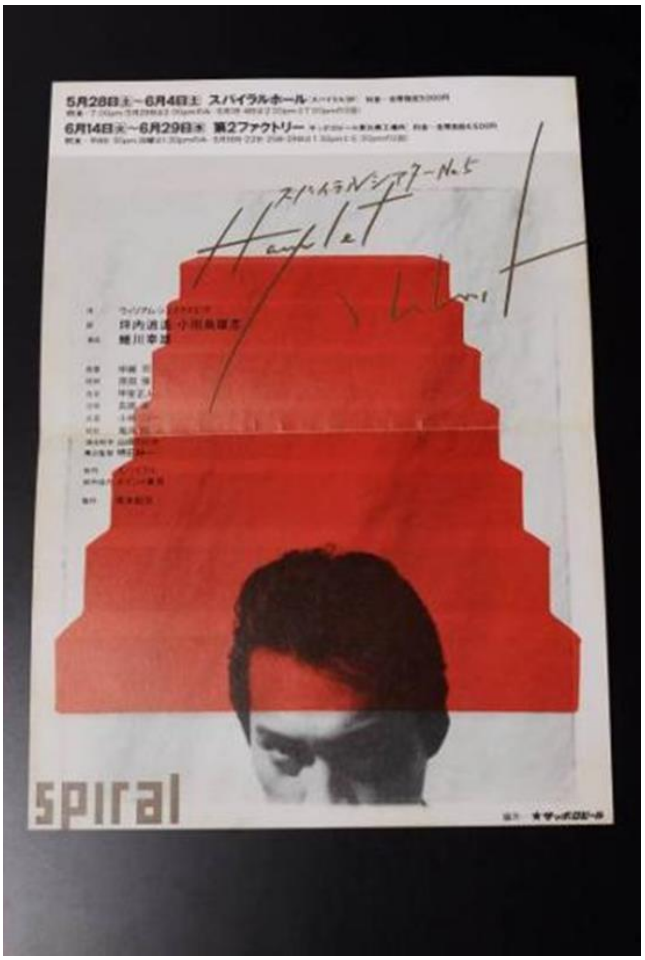

Fig 2: The poster for Ninagawa's 1988 *Hamlet*[55]

It is important too that the face of this particular Hamlet can be seen in the poster at the bottom but also in front of the *hinadan*, his face being portrayed as translucent allowing the red of the *hinadan* behind it to be seen through its features. It thus comes across as a face displaced, particularly as we see no neck or body of the young prince. Once again, the stairs work to serve the themes of the play, but also as an implicit invitation to the audience to ascend between the levels of the intercultural discourse, between the ground of Shakespeare's original narrative to the raised level of this Japanese interpretation, as well as understanding that a production of *Hamlet* in Japanese can be thought of as displaced in a way not dissimilar to the image presented on the poster. This becomes even more apparent when the *hinadan* is

[55] The poster for *Hamlet*, 1988, Tokyo, dir. by Yukio Ninagawa. Image courtesy of Mami Ninagawa.

'blown up' to human size on Ninagawa's stage and has actors climbing up and down the different steps to take their seats on their designated level.

Throughout his career, Ninagawa has used different metaphorical frames not only to convey information and meaning about the drama, but also to implicitly suggest the accessibility of his intercultural productions: for example, we may think of the two elderly ladies who open the enormous *butsudan* altar at the beginning of the *NINAGAWA Macbeth*, thereby inviting the audience to watch the play; or of the cage in which much of the action of his 2003 *Hamlet* took place, that was lifted after the interval, thereby removing a physical and visual barrier between the audience and the drama on the stage, as the play raced to its conclusion. This type of setting works on the audience's subconscious by serving to underline the crossing of the performance threshold and so, in one way, emphasising a type of accessibility to those experiencing the production; by symbolically removing the barriers that would physically prevent an audience from seeing effectively the action on stage, he is also attempting to remove for an audience their psychological and emotional barriers to the production being staged, thereby helping to traverse any cultural divide between the audience and the show. His use of stairs is probably the most effective in this regard for it encourages an audience psychologically to move between the levels of the intercultural discourse so evidently taking place on stage, all shrouded within an effective visual metaphor for the action being performed within the story of *Hamlet*. In his 1998 production at the Barbican, the audience was invited to watch the characters move between the levels on the actual stage of the Barbican, and, at the same time, between the levels of the pretend backstage environment within which the play was taking place; in this way, the sense of a theatrical event occurring was greatly reinforced. The meta-theatre draws greater attention to the connection between the original text of *Hamlet* (a fictional story that must be presented) and Ninagawa's Japanese production (the real presentation of that fictional story taking place at that moment). The original text and Ninagawa's production are clearly joined in a certain way, for it is Shakespeare's story of *Hamlet* being performed to the audience; but they are also separate, as the words being spoken are not Shakespeare's original text. Visually, this is similar to

the two physical levels on the stage that are separated, and yet joined by the stairs, that the actors can use. It is not that the stairs themselves are intercultural, but, rather, that the stairs offer a visual representation of the connection and separation of the cultural elements necessarily brought together on the stage in this intercultural theatrical event. In the discourse of intercultural theatre, the term 'different levels' is used in a metaphorical sense to discuss the different psychological, emotional and cultural areas of intercultural interaction taking place. For instance, we read it in comments such as, 'this form of theatre-making places great importance on cultural negotiations at all levels, from the highly personal and individualistic to the "superstructural" and institutional'.[56] The added brilliance of Ninagawa's use of this visual metaphor is, then, his appreciation that this is one of the highly evocative and valuable linguistic metaphors that we employ to discuss the very theatre he is making. The stairs, whether explicit in form or implicit as in the use of the *hinadan* platform, work metaphorically within the story of *Hamlet*: for example, 'Ninagawa's first three *Hamlets* all ended with the image of the surviving Danish Courtiers clambering up the steps towards Fortinbras, grovelling towards their new ruler.'[57] But more than this, they also serve the story of the audience's experience of intercultural Shakespeare productions as a joining structure that allows for movement between two distinct parts of what is happening within the theatrical event on stage. It is a somewhat ironical observation, but the stairs themselves function on different levels.

The sound of Ninagawa's *Hamlet*

Although not restricted to his productions of *Hamlet*, Ninagawa's use of music should be explored here briefly for it has interesting implications for the argument overall. His use of music has received astute commentary from different scholars. Alexa Alice Joubin claims that 'Ninagawa notably appropriates Japanese and Western sounds and music motifs in his productions to disassociate particular sounds from one single cultural origin'.[58] Yeeyon Im informs us that in *Pericles*, 'the Western classical music is mixed

[56] Lo and Gilbert, 'Toward a Topography of Cross-Cultural Theatre Praxis', 31–53 (p. 39).
[57] Hanratty, *Shakespeare in the Theatre: Yukio Ninagawa*, p. 100.
[58] Joubin, *Shakespeare and East Asia*, p. 33.

with traditional Japanese music of Shamisen and Biwa'.[59] Alexander C. Y. Huang adroitly tells us regarding *NINAGAWA Macbeth*,

> The gongs initially gave an impression of coherence between visual and aural motifs around the Buddhist altar. Christian music soon joined the scene. The three minute 'Sanctus' of Gabriel Fauré's (1845–1924) *Requiem* accompanied the appearance of the two elderly women in ragged clothes praying at the Buddhist altar. An eclectic mix of music from different eras and cultures echoed Ninagawa's hybrid visual strategies. The opening scene featured temple bells and Fauré, and later on a lone flute accentuated the horror of Macbeth's command to the assassins to go after Banquo.[60]

As can be seen from these comments, what is most striking about Ninagawa's use of music is his ongoing desire to combine music from different cultures. It seems that he wished to marry seamlessly Japanese and Western music within one production as a statement to encourage an audience, either Japanese or Western or both, to appreciate that the overall effect of Ninagawa's work is a cohesive dialogue between these different cultures. By incorporating music from both, he is suggesting a degree of unity on his stage within that specific production, thereby promoting, it could be argued, a greater sense a familiarity for each culture with the other. Put another way, if a Japanese audience is watching the *NINAGWA Macbeth* they are watching Japanese actors speaking Japanese in a Japanese setting; yet at the heart of the production is the original Shakespeare play, *Macbeth,* which must be recognized as Western. Blending Western and Japanese music further cements the accepted balance of intercultural exchange, as placing the music effects side-by-side, so to speak, encourages them to work together in performing their function. The same can be said of a Western audience watching a Ninagawa production in London, for example. They see Japanese actors speaking Japanese text; yet the combination of intercultural sounds

[59] Im, 'The Pitfalls of Intercultural Discourse: The Case of Yukio Ninagawa', 7–30 (p. 19).
[60] Huang, 'Ninagawa', pp. 79–112 (p. 102).

cements the notion that the production is a hybrid and confirms further the acceptance of the other as part of the tapestry of the work.

It should be acknowledged that Ninagawa's use of music in this way appears to run against some of the prevailing thoughts regarding intercultural music. To fully understand this, we must first return to the idea of the creation of meaning. Cognitive research has shown some interesting results regarding the meaning that listeners can find in music. The studies have their origins in an earlier seminal experiment that is key. In 1949 Jerome Bruner and Leo Postman conducted an experiment that interrogated perceptual expectancies and incongruency: using playing cards, some of which were created as different to a standard set (for instance, some cards were printed with their colours reversed such as a black four of hearts or a red six of clubs), they asked participants to recognize and name each card. They found that when the unexpected card occurred the responses of the participants were resistant to the incongruity being experienced. They even found that a number of participants found this really quite innocuous experiment quite distressing due to the subversion of their expectations.[61] Following this, after reviewing the existing literature on meaning, especially that of existentialism, Travis Proulx, Steven J. Heine and Kathleen D. Vohs argued for what they call the Meaning Maintenance Model (MMM).[62] This theory suggests that,

> humans possess an innate capacity to identify and construct mental representations of expected relationships between people, places, objects, and ideas. As self—conscious entities, humans also possess a unique capacity to reflect on these representations and can consequently detect structural breakdowns and inconsistencies.[63]

[61] Jerome S. Bruner, and Leo Postman. 'On the Perception of Incongruity: A Paradigm', *Journal of Personality*, 18.2 (1949), 206–223 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6494.1949.tb01241.x>
[62] Steven Heine, Travis Proulx, and Kathleen Vohs, 'The Meaning Maintenance Model: On the Coherence of Social Motivations', *Personality and Social Psychology Review: An Official Journal of the Society for Personality and Social Psychology, Inc*, 10 (2006), 88–110.
[63] Ibid., p. 90.

The majority of this work relates to the attempt to understand meaning at an existential level, to appreciate a greater purpose that relates the world of external phenomena to the self as an individual; yet, at its core, is the exploration of the ability of human beings to construct meaning from a series of perceived patterns gleaned from the relationship between different aspects of the world. It is in this way that one is able to understand the meaning of a play, for example, constructing from what are ostensibly disparate elements such as language, a variety of human interactions between characters, a huge amount of implied elements, often including those that have not been seen or are only intimated, and many other pieces of data such as music, lighting and set design. Drama is a particularly good example of this type of meaning construction because as an artistic endeavor it is (usually) designed to express at least one particular meaning, if not more. There is even an entire genre of drama that challenges the very idea of such congruent patterns that humans are able to appreciate: the Theatre of the Absurd interrogates this concept asking questions about how meaning is created when expectations in those relationship are disrupted, especially with regards to patterns of communication.

Following on from this, some scholars have looked specifically at music and meaning creation. For instance, a fascinating paper by Paul James Maher, Wijnand Adriaan Pieter van Tilburg and Annemieke Johanna Maria van Den used a variety of experiments to show how encountering unexpected elements in music can lead to derogation of outgroups and stronger distinction between ingroups and outgroups. In their conclusions about music in an intercultural setting they argue that,

> Traditional music from one culture or society can often sound unconventional to outsiders (Lynch, Eilers, Oller, & Urbano, 1990), and some forms of cultural exposure may counter-intuitively contribute to greater tensions between groups. Celebrations of culture and tradition are

> often accompanied by music, and as a result, attempts to celebrate and share diversity may have the reverse effect and lead to greater outgroup discrimination.[64]

It is here where we should return to Ninagawa's productions and their noted use of music from different cultures. It may be that the use of music from another culture that is unexpected in the context of the rest of a production (for instance, Western classical music being heard against a backdrop of Japanese visuals, Japanese actors, Japanese spoken language) may encourage a Japanese audience to respond in a similar way to the participants of Bruner and Postman's experiment, thereby resulting in an implicit resistance to what we may assume to be Ninagawa's aim. Possibly the outgroup could be identified here as the Western culture, thereby enforcing more of a divide than a sense of unity. However, once more, Ninagawa's implicit cultural understanding of meaning and the development of the priorities of the right hemisphere in Japan play a significant role. Music has been remarked upon as 'consisting entirely of relations, betweenness' as, of course, it is the relationship between musical notes, their duration, their pitch, their timbre and timing that create the music itself and therefore the effects that music can provoke in the mind.[65] This idea of relations or betweenness can easily be extended to cover the relationship between different tracks from different cultures: as such by using music from different cultures in one production, Ninagawa allows his audience to focus more directly on the idea of the relations between cultures of which he desires them to be aware. In this way, his structuring of different tracks works as a metaphor, comparing the more disparate effects to that of a single unified song, where different notes from different instruments still work together to form a cohesive whole. As has been argued, 'Music is likely to be the ancestor of language and it arose largely in the right hemisphere, where one would expect a means of communication with others, promoting social cohesion, arose'.[66] Again, we can presume that the nature of the use of the hemispheres in the Japanese population allowed for this sense of cohesion to

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[64] Paul James Maher, Wijnand Adriaan Pieter Van Tilburg, and Annemieke Johanna Maria Van Den Tol, 'Meaning in Music: Deviations from Expectations in Music Prompt Outgroup Derogation', *European Journal of Social Psychology*, 43.6 (2013), 449–54 (p. 453) <https://doi.org/10.1002/ejsp.1969>
[65] McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*, p. 72.
[66] Ibid., p. 105.

be formed when listening to Ninagawa's productions, in spite of the risk of derogation due to the intercultural nature of the music being heard. From this we can agree, at least to some extent, with the idea that such an intercultural blend of sounds acts as a metaphor for the entire production. Even for his productions that were seen by Western audiences in London and elsewhere, who perhaps do not have the same priorities in their hemisphere use, it seems that through adding to the impact of metaphorical visual elements — such the stairs already discussed — his use of music from the two cultures served as a conceptual system of thought, comparing the entire production to the soundtrack one hears. In this way, even if an element of derogation did occur, the other sensory information being received by the audience highlighting the effective mingling of the cultures and the openness of the production to the Western audience would likely outweigh this effect.

All of this points to one key idea of which Ninagawa was keenly aware: meaning is created from more than words. Perhaps he was less certain of why and how precisely this worked, but his audiences were encouraged to create meaning from their significant use of the right hemisphere as well as the left hemisphere in order to gain the most emotionally powerful and clear understanding of his interpretation of the play. This rebalancing away from the central position where Shakespeare's text is so often situated can teach us a lot. Ninagawa famously did not make many changes to the translated text during his rehearsal process.[67] But that may well be because he knew that the words, although certainly important, were not necessarily the instrument through which the meaning of the production would be truly situated and fully received by the audience (perhaps also because, certainly in his later productions, he often had Kazuko Matsuoka in the rehearsal room with him). In this way, the power of a play such as *Hamlet* can be augmented through a skillful artist's understanding of how visual communication and especially metaphor can work in intercultural theatre, and subsequently employing these in ways that create a clearer and more vivid meaning for an audience.

[67] Kishi and Bradshaw, *Shakespeare in Japan*, p. 80.

Ninagawa's intercultural theatre and intercultural communication

Ninagawa is not the only director to employ visual metaphors: I have even argued that any setting away from those expressly articulated in Shakespeare's text can be seen as metaphorical. Nevertheless, in a production such as Ninagawa's 1998 *Hamlet* the combination of the metaphorical framing devices (that interrogate and contribute to how meaning is created), visual metaphors on the stage and his choice of music used in the metaphorical way already discussed (both of which can interrogate how meaning is created and create meaning in themselves) all work to make his production closer to something we might find in the field of linguistics than in many areas of traditional theatre or performance studies. After all, as Benjamin Lee Whorf told us, 'linguistics is essentially the quest for meaning'.[68] Extrapolating from this, it becomes simpler to understand a key term that influences greatly our understanding of the entire argument: this type of Japanese Shakespeare can be said to be an act of intercultural communication and should be treated as such, applying similar frameworks for exploration and analysis, rather than being treated only as intercultural theatre, a separate entity in need of its own definition. We should remind ourselves here what we have discussed regarding two central approaches to culture:

> If we treat culture as something people do, then its status changes from an entity to a process. The entity understanding of culture is essentialist: it treats culture as something people have or to which they belong. The process view of culture is constructionist: it treats culture as something people do, which they perform, and, crucially, compete over.[69]

An intercultural conversation is what is being performed here, the thing people are doing on stage. There is the conversation that takes place between the culture of Japan and the culture of Shakespeare's original text, and that conversation is subsequently seen by the audience, be they Japanese

[68] Whorf, Language, *Thought and Reality: Selected Writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*, p. 26.
[69] Ingrid Piller, *Intercultural Communication: A Critical Introduction*, 2nd edn (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), p. 9. Ebook.

or Western. But beyond this, it is a highly Anglo-centric view to think that the only participants in the conversation taking place on the stage are the two cultures of Shakespeare's Western original text and Japan, for the hundreds of preceding Japanese cultural elements and Shakespeare elements are also part of the conversation. This idea of an intercultural conversation fits to some degree with the ideas of Pavis, Carlson and Fischer-Lichte that 'drew on translation theory and semiotics – which focuses on the composition of signs and how they combine to produce systems of signification' yet it goes beyond the concept of a 'one or two way passage between a "source" and "target" culture'.[70] Key to this is the understanding that a conversation flows in often unpredictable directions, and can have many participants; by conceptualizing the theatrical experience as a conversation that obeys a more natural pattern of communication through interaction — rather than only a performance that is a more static experience by nature of it being rehearsed, and predetermined to a large extent — we open ourselves up to the possibilities of a true intercultural experience. The socio-religious culture of Japan is a rich and informative tapestry that cannot help but be a factor in understanding Shakespeare from a Japanese point of view, by the Japanese themselves as well as Westerners. Following this, the frames of cultural-artistic influence that contribute to a translator's interpretation of the play are powerful forces; these frames extend also to directors such as Ninagawa and to the actors delivering the performance. Add to this the necessary linguistic choices that are present in the text being performed, and the use of conceptual metaphors that both interrogate the site of meaning and create meaning in themselves, and you have a distinct cultural event that works in conversation with what has come before in Japanese culture (both on and off the stage), and in Western theatre history, and also with those lucky enough to experience it as a member of the audience at that time.

Ninagawa is doing culture himself, and specifically Japanese culture in the moments of creation, by staging these intercultural productions. Since the introduction of Shakespeare's work after the Meiji

[70] Rae, *A Concise Introduction to Intercultural Theatre*, p. 8.

Restoration the plays have been adapted and translated: we now look back at Shôyô's translations of Shakespeare and can see them both as intercultural in their attempt to blend Western drama with Japanese theatre forms, but also as a distinct part of Japanese theatre culture, separate from the intercultural label. Ninagawa's work can be seen in the same way. Scholars such as Rodney H. Jones argue that, 'Culture is (alas) a noun.'[71] But in truth, Ninagawa's productions of *Hamlet*, for example, demonstrate very well Brian Street's argument that culture is a verb, at least when it comes to intercultural theatre. Coming from an anthropologist background, Street was adamant that, 'Culture is an active process of meaning making and contest over definition, including its own.'[72] This relates to the balance of 'things' and 'process'. For example, one can argue that the *hinadan* is an object of Japanese culture: it comes from a real festival held only in Japan that originated in the seventeenth century. It is presented by Ninagawa as thing within his Japanese production of *Hamlet*, which is also a thing. But his production of *Hamlet* must become part of the compositional noun of 'Japanese culture', as has Ninagawa himself become an element of Japanese culture and by staging such a production these things are entered in the intercultural conversation.

Many intercultural theatre models are interested in drawing attention to a variety of other aspects already mentioned, be they power relations, racial issues, political history, cultural awareness and exchange of authentic information or lack thereof. They are consequently surrounded by the highly important and relevant ethical questions regarding authenticity, ideology and political and economic influences, and these are undoubtedly important issues to be explored. But Ninagawa's work does not treat culture as a collection of things, despite certain appearances to the contrary. Or perhaps we should say that whilst Ninagawa employs 'things' necessarily in his productions, such as a text, cultural items on set, specific costumes, his emphasis is more on the interaction of these things in a process rather than the

[71] Rodney H. Jones, 'The Paradox of Culture in a Globalized World', *Language and Intercultural Communication*, 13 (2013), 237–44 (p. 237).
[72] Brian V. Street, 'Culture is a Verb: Anthropological Aspects of Language and Culture Process', in *Language and Culture*, ed. by David Graddol, Linda Thompson, and Mike Byram (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1993), pp. 23–43 (p. 25).

static examination of individual pieces and their representations. This idea, then, looks to amend slightly the aforementioned definition by Ric Knowles who sees intercultural theatre and performance as a 'site for the continuing renegotiation of cultural values and the reconstitution of individual and community identities and subject positions'.[73] We have read other intercultural theatre scholars speaking of negotiations with Lo and Gilbert writing, 'this form of theatre-making places great importance on cultural negotiations'[74] The amendment I suggest is simply to move away from the idea of 'negotiation' or even 'renegotiation' which hints at an act of communication between two parties that, importantly, aims to reach some sort of agreement. In order to be completed and successful, an agreement must be found in a negotiation, even if it is not to the liking of both parties equally. Yet a conversation does not have agreement as its goal; it does not look to be concluded in the same way, and so can be more interested in the very process of the communication itself. Of course, studying conversations has been employed to explore culture and human communication in books such as *Cultures in Conversation* which looks at the 'interactional practices of people in places'.[75] This fits our study of theatre to some extent, but we must add further elements: we should be encouraged to examine intercultural theatre and productions like Ninagawa's as part of the 'unending conversation' which Kenneth Burke suggested was the answer to the question 'Where does drama get its materials?' That is, as a discussion already in progress and that has been going on for so long that nobody has a complete command of the facts; there are different points of view and, perhaps most importantly in Burke's metaphor and for our purposes, where you enter, engage for some time, and subsequently leave.[76] This is our experience of Ninagawa's work.

Whether in place of or in addition to the linguistic text of a Shakespeare play, Ninagawa has incorporated elements of communication that create meaning in a potentially more effective way than is

[73] Knowles, *Theatre & Interculturalism*, pp. 4–5.
[74] Lo and Gilbert, 'Toward a Topography of Cross-Cultural Theatre Praxis', 31–53 (p. 39).
[75] Donal Carbaugh, *Cultures in Conversation* (New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, 2005), p. xii.
[76] Kenneth Burke, *The Philosophy of the Literary Form: Studies in Symbolic Action*, 3rd edn (Berkely: University of California Press, 1974), p. 110.

possible with language only. Daniel Gallimore makes the point that, '*Ninagawa Macbeth* should be considered not a showcase for Japanese culture, but rather a significant step in the director's journey to interpret Shakespeare afresh for Japanese audiences in a theatrical language they could understand.'[77] But I disagree to some extent, preferring the idea that by using the techniques described that are heavily influenced by Japanese culture to create meaning, he is engaging in an act of intercultural communication that articulates something about Japanese culture through the conversations within itself.

By choosing how to create meaning in his Japanese Shakespeare production through not only a verbal language but also the language of the visual and aural, Ninagawa is entering his metaphorical voice into the larger conversation regarding the creation of meaning of *Hamlet*, as well as into the conversation of the wider contested issues of meaning within the spheres of Japanese Shakespeare and the even wider sphere of meaning within Japanese culture. When we watch such a production we too are entering into the conversation, albeit briefly and without being fully briefed as to the different positions that the conversation contains. That is, we may not fully understand every aspect of Ninagawa's Japanese iconography, design or imagery, (or even language), including being able to assess whatever is meant by authenticity. The comparison to the world of linguistics is marked more distinctly when we recall that Shakespeare's original texts must have had a similar sense regarding the vocabulary being used on stage. Shakespeare has become famous for inventing numerous new words, with many of these being adaptations of words that already existed in the English language. Therefore, the idea of presenting a variant of something on stage to fit a specific dramatic purpose is not only unoriginal, but in fact quite Shakespearean. Even outside the ideas of linguistics, Shakespeare's drama in its original language has regularly been conceived of as a space for innovation: W. B. Worthen is right to claim, 'Shakespearean drama not only occupies the sphere of the "classic," but also has frequently provided the site for

[77] Gallimore and Ryuta, 'Seven Stages of Shakespeare Reception', pp. 484–96 (p. 493).

innovation in the style, substance, and practice of modern performance.'[78] Shakespeare's drama is perfect for this type of exploration.

This feels reminiscent of the earlier argument regarding *kanji* characters being more poetic due to their capacity to blend individual elements that exists as single words in English. For instance, there are plenty of *kanji* characters that are made from pictures of things happening — processes, if you will — which is clearly an impossibility in the English language. For verbs this makes sense, of course. For instance, the character for 'to hear' is the simplified version of an ear up against a gate: 聞; or the character meaning 'to rest' is a simplified picture of a person leaning against a tree: 休. But we have also seen how it works with nouns. 'East' is the simplified picture of the process of the sun rising behind a tree 東; and some characters can be used as both nouns and verbs depending on context. The character 食, for example, can mean both 'food' and 'to eat' depending on the context and what other characters surround it. Again, I am not suggesting that every *kanji* character works this way, or even that every Japanese speaker is consciously aware of all the intricate linguistic details within the characters, as this is certainly not the case. I am merely reiterating that the connection between language and culture is strong, and results in a script that functions in way that is very different to English. Following this, if a language such as Japanese can function in a way that can prioritise interaction and process, then an instinctive, albeit unconscious, acceptance that culture functions in a similar way may exist in many native Japanese speakers, such as Ninagawa. This more distinct framework of linguistics and communication for examining work such as Ninagawa's becomes even more apparent when we remind ourselves that already embedded in the Japanese language are the different *on-yomi* and *kun-yomi* pronunciations due to the fact that the Japanese written script had to blend imported written Chinese characters with the already existing Japanese enunciations. This can be seen as a very effective form of translation in itself, despite the fact that it does not result in the creation of a new text in the traditional way. It thus fits perfectly with the

[78] Worthen, 'Introduction: Dramatic Performativity and the Force of Performance', p. 2.

metaphor of an ongoing conversation with regards to Ninagawa's work for it encapsulates the very thing Ninagawa is doing on stage. Indra Levy understands this effect very well and refers to a range of strategies writing:

> To expand the meaning of translation in this way opens up the possibility for transference into a *tertiary* language, one that is neither entirely 'foreign' or 'domestic' but that clearly mediates between the two and may have a transformative effect on the target culture.[79]

Ninagawa's intercultural communication presented on stage can be seen as this type of translation: he develops the strategy for making meaning available by extending the techniques to include his use of visual metaphor and aural effects, incorporating aspects from his source culture which when put in these contexts may no longer be native in the traditional sense. What results is a type of tertiary language that mediates between the two cultures effectively in a type of conversation.

The wider point about intercultural theatre here should now be apparent. If indeed contemporary Shakespeare productions in the West are in fact less authoritative than many believe, as I hope I have shown, then this destabilises the notion of the cultural exchange traditionally suggested as so important in intercultural theatre. It allows us to respond to creative practitioners such as Daryl Chin who wrote back in 1989 that 'When Japanese culture has been considered, the emphasis is on issues of style' and later in the same article that 'Interculturalism hinges on the questions of autonomy and empowerment.'[80] We can reply that if we are to judge interculturalism in performance in this way then appreciating the arguments I am making may help us view the field as more level than many have assumed in the past, and foreign Shakespeare should be empowered by this. To be clear, the questions regarding the power relations between the cultures that are in conversation with each other in any intercultural performance are

[79] Levy, 'Introduction: Modern Japan and the Trialectics of Translation', pp. 1–12 (p. 3).
[80] Daryl Chin, 'Interculturalism, Postmodernism, Pluralism', *Performing Arts Journal*, 11.12 (1989), 163–175 (p. 166; p. 174) <https://doi.org/10.2307/3245434>

important; but the rebalancing I am suggesting can allow for a more equal status between the cultures, and possibly — to return to the heart of our discussion — the capacity for a non-Western culture to ascend to a higher status within the relationship by virtue of their ability to heighten the power of a particular play.

With such a distance now in existence between Shakespeare's original work and our contemporary performances we must accept that questions of authenticity become far harder to answer, and perhaps even redundant to ask. That is not to say that Shakespeare in production should become free-for-all without any governing principles; it does not mean that quality cannot be judged and our appreciation of the original texts should be diminished. Rather, the important questions in intercultural theatre should be reframed slightly through the lens of critical cultural studies and linguistics to include other explorations. This is again where Levy's redefinition of translation is so helpful as it tells us clearly that the novelty and value is found in the mediation between the cultures that subsequently originates something, rather than focussing of the transference of something and the judgements surrounding that. Following this, perhaps we should focus less on attempting to ask what a production can accurately teach us about another culture specifically, and therefore pay less attention to the idea of authenticity in any cultural exchange; rather, an awareness of such a mediation and origination should perhaps allow us to focus on asking questions such as 'what can these productions teach us about *our perception* of Shakespeare and *our perception* of other cultures?'

Conclusions and further research

When done well, Japanese Shakespeare is a site for intercultural theatre at its most potent allowing for an interrogation and a conversation regarding culture, language, psychology as well as literature, theatre and the specific Shakespeare play itself; but especially, it is a conversation that both creates meaning and asks questions about the creation and transmission of meaning. This paper began by announcing its support for the position explicitly stated by Dennis Kennedy: namely, that some foreign productions can have a direct access to the power of the plays that is not accessible to Western audiences experiencing Shakespeare in

his original language. It expounded on this idea in three key areas with the following findings. Firstly, it argued that the socio-religious fabric of Japan made for, and continues to make for, a highly resonant background for many aspects of Shakespeare's plays that cannot be as powerfully presented in the West. Following this, it suggested that the functioning of the Japanese language, especially the use of *kanji* characters and *furigana,* can add layers to Shakespeare poetry and possibilities for interpretation that are not available to those of us restricted to working in an arbitrary phonetic script such as Early Modern English. Finally, it explored the effective visual and audio effects in Ninagawa's work, particularly his *Hamlet*, and the importance of these in appreciating meaning as a whole, especially suggesting a slight reframing of such work as intercultural communication, particularly a conversation. Research in cognitive linguistics supports many of the ideas that, again, such elements may be more resonant and more accessible to Japanese audiences, due to the likely balance of the priorities of the hemispheres in Japan comparatively with Western cultures. It is fitting for a writer like Shakespeare that it is metaphor that links these aspects together. Yet developing it beyond the poetic 'vehicle-tenor' relationships first articulated by I. A. Richard in 1936, it is the more recent ideas surrounding how we think in metaphor and especially Conceptual Metaphor Theory that show us how we relate to the issues raised in such an exploration of intercultural theatre. [81]

From this we can learn something about Japanese Shakespeare in production and we can further our understanding as to why a culture such as Japan has maintained and developed its relationship with Shakespeare to such a wide-ranging extent. Without denying the brilliance of Shakespeare's work, this thesis should add support to the idea that it is not only Shakespeare's universality that keeps his plays alive as a global phenomenon, but it is also the specifics of the cultures in which his plays are brought to life that make foreign Shakespeare such a varied, provoking and continuously exciting phenomenon to explore. The additional value is that a deeper understanding of these aspects of intercultural Shakespeare

[81] I. A. Richards, *The Philosophy of Rhetoric* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1965).

force us in the West to examine our own relationship with Shakespeare and the assumptions that this relationship may be based on. The key conclusions in that regard are as follows.

Firstly, appreciating in more detail how a culture such as Japan, quite rightly perceived as distinctly different to the U.K. in many ways, can not only accommodate Shakespeare's work but can even be a more relevant background for his plays, helps to loosen our cultural grip on Shakespeare. Jon M. Brokering sums this up perfectly: 'Moreover, with many aspects of feudal society still so prevalent in Japanese society and language, the Japan of today in many ways bears greater resemblance to Elizabethan England than any Western nation does.'[82] My own thesis shows what this resemblance looks like. Using various plays, but especially *Hamlet*, it demonstrates how specific elements of Shintoism, Confucianism and Buddhism have created in a Japanese audience particular beliefs and values that often fit better in the Early Modern world, thereby allowing for the heightening of key parts of Shakespeare's plays when they are presented in Japan. The thesis also shows how the translations of Shakespeare into certain languages may be more poetic than Shakespeare's original texts in at least one way, if the target language can function like visual poetry, as *kanji* characters do. I have also highlighted how some productions of Shakespeare in Japanese can offer us a new way of conceptualising intercultural theatre, and from this I suggest a new definition of intercultural theatre: namely, as a particular type of conversation. This moves away from a definition which contains the implied need for some sort of agreement within the perceived cultural exchange: this implied need for agreement is too difficult to define clearly in today's globalised world, and so becomes restrictive in unnecessary ways. My proposed definition amends this.

Shakespeare in Japan (and, very likely, in many other cultures) can, without question, shed light on aspects of Shakespeare's plays that are often lost to us in the West; extrapolating from this, we should recognise the various needs of many modern Western audiences regarding understanding Shakespeare's

[82] Brokering, 'Ninagawa Yukio's Intercultural "Hamlet": Parsing Japanese Iconography', 370–96, (p. 392).

work, and at the very least, we should be prepared to have more robust conversations about the accommodation required to ensure Shakespeare stays relevant to future generations in the West. Ideas such as translating his work into modern English, or encouraging more intercultural Shakespeare to come to, or even to be created, within the U.K. should be discussed now without the accusation of reduced authenticity. That is not to suggest that we should do away with the more traditional productions of Shakespeare that are staged all over the world in the original Early Modern English; neither should we stop studying and exploring the various editions of his wonderful original plays. Rather we should use these findings to further the process of removing the negative attitudes that can, at times, accompany non-traditional productions of Shakespeare's work. I highlighted at the beginning of this thesis how certain reviews implicitly held that the quality of a production — and its related claim to be Shakespearean — is tied, to some degree, to the notion of its authenticity: as the evidence I have presented suggests, this point of view is mistaken.

Regarding the theories and exercise of translating Shakespeare, I agree with the now commonly accepted argument that we should move on from the more traditional questions around linguistic equivalences or cultural similarities and that we must accept that a huge amount is lost when Shakespeare is translated. Yet, the next stage in this evolution of thinking is that we should also be brave enough to ask what can be gained above and beyond the original? For instance, can Shakespeare's poetry actually be rendered more poetic by how another language functions? The ideas behind how *furigana* works and how *kanji* characters can keep the layers of poetry more vivid and impactful are persuasive in this regard, but it is likely that research into the specifics of other languages would yield interesting results also. The claim here is not that all translators remain consciously aware of every detail contained in each *kanji* character regarding how their meaning has been created; the simplification of the original pictures has come too far for that to be the case, and there are too many *kanji* characters for this to be feasible. Rather, the overall result of using a language such as Japanese, which has the potential of using different pronunciations as well as pictographs and ideographs as simplified pictures, is that the poetry can be augmented naturally

and unconsciously in a way unavailable to English, no matter how talented the English poet. This is true of Japanese: but we must be open to the idea that how other languages function — especially those more distant to the Romance languages — may create opportunities that can add layers to dramatic poetry that may be unique to each language, and may be more powerful in some ways that Shakespeare's original text.

What is perhaps most striking for us in the West is the idea of metaphor, both within the *kanji* characters themselves, and the Cognitive Metaphor Theory by which we as native English speakers today likely translate Shakespeare. Metaphor has for so long been a central aspect of Shakespeare's writing and of Shakespeare studies: yet if we reposition it slightly as a tool of conceptual thought it reveals interesting results. If the distance between Shakespeare's worlds and native English speakers in the twenty-first century is as great as it seems to be in truth, then translate we must, in a way similar to intralingual (although even this definition of intralingual rather than interlingual could be debated); and of course, if native English speakers translate Shakespeare with a similar need to those working with Shakespeare in other languages, we must, by default, lose even more of our cultural grip on his work.

Finally, the visual metaphors, so apparent in *kanji*, help with the creation of meaning in a specific way. Linked to this, I have argued how a culture such that of Japan has, through its history, allowed for a more balanced incorporation of each hemisphere of the brain when processing information, especially regarding communication and the creation of meaning. This contrasts with most Western cultures which can be seen now to prioritise the features of the left hemisphere. The consequence is a sensitivity embedded in the culture to how language may not be sufficient to understanding truth, and an appreciation that 'meaning is more than words'.[83] This is part of what has allowed an artist such as Ninagawa to create the stunning visual and aural textures for which his work has become famous.

[83] McGilchrist, *The Master and His Emissary: The Divided Brain and the Making of the Western World*, p. 72.

Especially throughout this, his expert use of visual metaphor achieved the difficult task of 'carrying over' meaning to an audience: in Japan it invited the transfer of Shakespeare to a Japanese audience; and in the West, it invited the transfer of his Japanese Shakespeare productions to an audience that could not understand them linguistically. All of this suggests that a modified framework for examining intercultural theatre could be valuable: I have proposed a new way of thinking of work such as Ninagawa's: namely, as an act of intercultural communication, specifically a conversation, inspired by Kenneth Burke's metaphor. This allows us to better understand the aims and objectives, and therefore how we may judge the quality of a production, rather than arguing over the value of it as an act of purely intercultural exchange or negotiation as it has been defined so often in the past.

There are limitations to this study and many areas that would benefit from further research: being deliberately interdisciplinary in its approach, there are many different directions that instantly invite more exploration. There is a great deal more to be found in a deeper exploration of Japanese socio-religious culture and Shakespeare; similarly, there is little doubt that the world of metaphor and cognitive linguistics would produce further fascinating findings. Especially, further investigation into the cognitive neuroscience behind theatrical experience would be beneficial, for this will continue to enlighten us as to how people truly respond to what they see and hear on stage, and it would be especially useful to help us understand intercultural theatre to a greater extent. Related to this are the neurological studies evolving in cultural research: understanding further how the brain receives and processes information will be beneficial to any exploration of the transmission of ideas such as culture, language and theatre. The author's Japanese language ability has been acknowledged as insufficient to engage in Japanese texts fully, including many that would likely contribute to this argument; without a detailed knowledge of Japanese there will always be avenues worth pursuing that are closed off and therefore bringing a deeper knowledge of Japanese into these areas of possible future research would be highly beneficial. Nevertheless, there is value in the outsider's point of view on the inside, for the key arguments I am

making relate to those of us who are not fluent in the Japanese language and should be able to be understood by us in this way.

The now notorious review from Charles Osborne in 1987 claimed that 'there is something faintly ridiculous about a Japanese company attempting to grapple with Shakespeare'.[84] Since then, the idea that it is ridiculous has been shown by many scholars to be short sighted, and I hope the new evidence submitted here furthers debunks this myth. Much would have been lost in the last twenty-four years if such a myopic ethos had infected theatre practitioners in Japan and their partner producers in the West. As can be seen, it may be as accurate to argue that there is something faintly ridiculous about Western companies in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century attempting to grapple with Shakespeare, for our distance from his work is now greater in a number of important ways, about which we may be unaware, or we may simply choose to overlook. Yet, grapple we do; and without doubt our grappling has brought about wonderful, innovative and edifying productions in the West. Nevertheless, our continued exposure to Japanese Shakespeare in its various guises will only help us in our continued grappling, as it shows us things about Japan, of course, but also about ourselves and our relationships with Shakespeare that may well remain hidden from our view without such a culturally specific vantage point. Twelve years after Osborne's review, Ninagawa's RSC 1999 production of *King Lear* was performed in the U.K. With a Japanese director, Japanese designer, a Japanese stage crew, a Japanese fool, and an initial run in Tokyo, this production was a blend of Japanese and Western. The production was poorly received overall; yet the positive words of Sheridan Morley's review are worth revisiting for their astute clarity and the wider point they raise about Japanese Shakespeare.

[84] Charles Osborne, 'Review of the *Ninagawa Macbeth*', *Daily Telegraph*, 19 September 1987, *London Theatre Record*, 19.7 (1987), 1173–1248 (p. 1203).

> What this *King Lear* usefully reminds us is that we don't hold the patent on Shakespeare, and that Japanese conventions and traditions, both social and theatrical, can give us insights into the play we would never otherwise have learnt.[85]

There is nothing ridiculous about that in the slightest.

[85] Morley, 'Japanese Production at the RSC Barbican: "King Lear" from Afar'.

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