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ANSTON BOSMAN

Shakespeare and globalization

The worldwide diffusion of William Shakespeare's works occurs today, as it has occurred for centuries, in the context of social processes of mobility and mediation. Since the 1960s these processes have been studied under the rubric 'globalization', but the term names a condition as ancient as the experience of empire and diaspora, of nations and the states they create. Such antiquity should not lead us, however, to equate classical Rome with Elizabethan England or modern Russia or Japan. On the contrary, if we can accept an influential definition of globalization as both 'the compression of the world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a whole', then we should try to historicize that compression and that consciousness.[1] We might begin with Shakespeare himself, since he lived in the age when all the world's populated continents were first permanently linked by trade. Economic historians have recently proposed that globalization began in the year 1571, when the Spanish established Manila as an entrepôt finally connecting Asia and the Americas, and William Shakespeare of Stratford-upon-Avon turned 7.[2] During his lifetime, cultural exchanges multiplied not only among European nations, but between Europe and the Atlantic and, more slowly, Pacific worlds. Many of these growing interdependencies left their mark on Shakespeare's writing and theatre, from advances in stage design to an explosion of literary sources in print.

In Shakespeare's day, moreover, English was taking its first steps towards its current status as a world language. Beginning with travellers and traders in the sixteenth century, English penetrated the Americas, Asia and the Antipodes in the seventeenth and eighteenth, enabled colonial developments in Africa and the South Pacific in the nineteenth, and was adopted in the twentieth as an official language by many newly independent states. Between the death of Elizabeth I and the closing years of the reign of Elizabeth II, the number of mother-tongue English speakers in the world increased at least fiftyfold, from around 7 million to over 350 million.[3] As English spread, Shakespeare's works travelled beyond Britain into the colonies and across

the empire, settling in the United States and throughout the post-colonial world: thus the copyright page of the latest Oxford Shakespeare locates the press in Oxford and New York but lists its publishing centres as follows: 'Auckland, Cape Town, Dar es Salaam, Hong Kong, Karachi, Kuala Lumpur', etc. To these nodes in the publishing economy we should add the global centres of theatre (London) or film (Los Angeles) from which Shakespeare radiates in English – or better, in 'Englishes', since a Hollywood adaptation or a West End production in Scots extends the rich variation within the English language itself.

Yet the scattering of Shakespeare is not coextensive with the advance of English. Dissemination of his work in foreign languages began in his lifetime, when so-called English players travelled the Continent, assembling multi-national troupes, mounting polyglot productions and seeding translations in European vernaculars.[4] Early Dutch and German versions were gradually overshadowed by French, in which the first foreign Shakespeare collection appeared (1745–6), and which dispersed Shakespeare as far as Russia and Turkey, via Spanish and Portuguese to South America, and via Italian into the cosmopolitan sphere of opera and ballet.[5] But French neoclassical Shakespeare was countered in its turn by the German Romantics, who produced their own canonical translation (1762–6, revised as the first foreign complete works in 1775–7), as well as a lively performance tradition. So forceful was this appropriation of Shakespeare for nationalistic purposes that German writers, scholars and theatre managers claimed the Bard as a compatriot, inspiring later political uses of Shakespeare in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. By the twentieth century the plays – and, at some delay, the poems – had found new homes in Icelandic and Greek, in Quebecois and Korean, in Arabic and Zulu. The complete works now appear in over thirty languages and individual texts in over eighty. And in our multi-lingual world it is not unusual to stage or film Shakespeare in a mix of tongues, expanding his own use of French or Welsh into a production like Tim Supple's 2006 *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, which blended English with a mixture of Hindi, Bengali, Tamil, Sinhalese, Malayalam, Marathi and Sanskrit.

The Shakespeare we confront today has been globalized beyond the confines of any single language or territory. As migrants and media exchange his works back and forth across national borders, a simple opposition between 'domestic' and 'foreign' Shakespeare grows ever less convincing, and to set down his fortunes country by country is to tour the empty pavilions of an abandoned world's fair. For this reason, it seems prudent to explore the subject of this chapter by ways other than the recitation of national theatre histories. Let us instead follow the worldwide dissemination of Shakespeare by distinguishing among three global networks: a theatrical network made up

chiefly of performers and directors; a textual network comprising writers, editors and translators; and a digital network deploying a range of media and devices.[6] Needless to say, in practice these environments considerably and increasingly overlap, and it is therefore with some irony that I have named each section after what might initially seem the single numinous source of each network's power: the actor, the author and the aether.

Actors

The globalization of Shakespeare began with performance. Years before literary translations of the plays appeared, foreign versions took shape on stage and in real time as an actor, or, rarely, a spectator, mediated between English and a local tongue. Troupes crossing Europe before the Thirty Years War (1618–48) used a bilingual clown to summarize and satirize the unfolding action for an audience that knew no English. And in the first Shakespeare recorded outside Europe, an English merchant ship off the coast of what is now Sierra Leone became in 1607 a stage for *Hamlet*, an African guest providing a running translation in Portuguese (and possibly Temne).[7] Over time, as players abroad acquired new languages and drafted local cohorts, these spoken improvisations – comparable to today's sports commentary or simultaneous interpreting – developed into complete foreign-language stagings, scripts and printed books. But printing did not simply replace the authority of performers with that of writers. A 1620 German collection of the itinerant repertory, for example, cites no author but advertises the plays as having been 'acted and presented by the English in Germany'.[8] For some time, translations remained largely instrumental documents judged in terms of their accessibility to actors. And as late as 1899 a new French version of *Hamlet* made its mark not by the names of its translators, Marcel Schwob and Eugène Morand, but through the star power of the person who commissioned and starred in it – Sarah Bernhardt.[9]

To be sure, the time between the Baroque and the Belle Époque saw major shifts in theatre and drama, with consequences for international Shakespeare. First the early modern actor's sole governance over staging was redistributed across a performance network including producers, directors, designers and dramaturgs. In 1620, after all, a troupe of Anglo-European comedians comprised ten to fifteen actors plus musicians, headed by a leader who often played the crucial clown role; yet this leader was not responsible for ensuring the artistic unity of a production, and so performances tended to be free and quite uneven adaptations of their source. With the rise of the actor-manager in the eighteenth century and the director and producer in the nineteenth, aesthetic control became a controversial issue, actor-directors

driving avant-garde innovation or putative returns to authenticity. When Bernhardt presented *Hamlet* in 1899, she unusually combined the roles of producer, principal actor and director. She also insisted that the alexandrine couplets and plot changes of earlier French versions be swept away by a landmark scholarly translation in prose. The new text's claim to fidelity – it aimed to capture in the language of the sixteenth century a French equivalent of Elizabethan English – makes a fascinating contrast with Bernhardt's experimental portrayal of Hamlet, against sentimental *travesti* norms, as a virile and volatile young man.[10]

The actor's role in transferring a play across cultures remains central today. In Taipei in 2001, for instance, the Taiwanese master Wu Hsing-Kuo premiered his solo work *Li Er zaici* (*Lear is here*), which fused materials from Western and Chinese theatrical traditions. Wu introduced Shakespeare's story by presenting Lear's Fool as refracted through the clown type of *jingju* theatre (also known as Beijing opera). Sporting the hallmark white-patched nose and crouching steps of the Chinese clown, Wu's Fool drew the audience into complicity using conventions of rhyme and mime:

Ah ha! [An exclamation used by the clown type.]
Just now I had a dream,
Dreaming of my master sleeping in a dark hole.
Giving up his position as a king and volunteering to be an inferior,

> How can I not feel distressed for him!…I really miss him when I don't see him; but I simply want to kick him whenever I do see him. You old fool, idiot! How can you be so out of your mind before you're really old?! [*To the audience.*] Do you know why? I'll tell you…[11]

This cross-cultural performance echoes the interventions of the earliest travelling clowns. While Wu is not concerned to present a word-for-word equivalent for a specific passage in *King Lear*, this moment is clearly an effort to translate some of the play's other theatrical 'languages', including intonation, movement, gesture and make-up, from one culture to another. (The show also incorporated versions of *jingju* costume, properties, singing, music and dance.) In this process of translation, neither Shakespeare nor the traditional Chinese genre went unchanged, and the transformations continued as Wu modified his play throughout its subsequent European tour. *Li Er zaici* reminds us that theatre is a syncretic and provisional art whose multiple dimensions are reconfigured before each new audience: like the Fool himself, a transcultural actor must improvise with verbal and physical agility, stretching the limits of convention and thereby revitalizing the theatre itself.

Though his play explored personal themes, Wu admitted that it harboured a cultural agenda. Describing *King Lear* as 'a bombshell … capable

of exposing human hypocrisy', he expressed the hope that *Li Er zaici* would in turn be 'capable of destroying the tombstone that has been prepared for traditional Chinese theatre'.[12] A hallmark of Shakespeare's intercultural entanglements is this tension between the apparently universal values of a story and the local motivations of its staging. The tension runs especially high in places where staging has itself been proscribed. Consider the difficult recent case of Afghanistan, where theatre was silent through decades of warfare, culminating in the repressive rule of the Taliban in the 1990s. Since the fall of the Taliban, however, Afghanistan has seen a theatrical revival at the national and regional levels, including projects jointly undertaken by Western and Middle Eastern practitioners. Perhaps the most remarkable such project was the truly global collaboration that led to a production of *Love's Labour's Lost* in a bomb-scarred Mughal garden in Kabul over five nights in September 2005.

For the Kabul *Love's Labour's Lost* eleven Afghan actors gathered under the direction of a Canadian actress and a US aid worker to perform a text adapted into Dari by two Afghan writers from a Farsi translation prepared by an Iranian scholar.[13] The play was chosen because the directors liked Shakespeare, because the actors preferred a comedy to a tragedy and because it could be adapted for an equal number of male and female roles. In the aftermath of Taliban rule, having women on stage at all was contentious, and those who joined the cast – forgoing veils or protective burqas – had to face some public disapproval. In this context the play's initial oath, by which the King and his three lords forswear female company and mandate punishments for women who approach the court and men who speak with them, acquired fresh urgency, as did the comically swift dissolution of their contract under the witty and level-headed interventions of the Princess and her ladies. Moreover, the Kabul production added to Shakespeare's plot new features targeted at specific Taliban prohibitions: towards the play's end, after mocking the lords' inconstancy, the Princess Shardakht-e-Herat called for conciliatory music, whereupon courtiers took up instruments and serenaded the ladies with an Afghan folk song – and the women promptly joined in, thereby putting the fundamentalist ban on public singing by women, which had until recently been in force, firmly in the past.

Nonetheless, the production's religious and political context imposed limits and changes. There was no touching between the sexes during the performance, but when the actors held hands at the curtain call some of the (mostly Afghan and male) audience demurred. And many of the comic types in *Love's Labour's Lost*, descended from the zanies of the *commedia dell'arte*, disappeared from the cast list in Kabul on account of their obscene jokes teeming with sexual and scatological innuendo. Most remarkably, the

revels of the lords disguised as Muscovites bore too strong an association with the brutal Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and had to be rewritten. The fake Russians were turned into fake Indians, who entertained the ladies with song-and-dance routines from Bollywood films, which are hugely popular among Afghans. More is at stake here than a transfer of humour from Shakespeare's place and time into a new cultural context, complex though that operation is; rather, the Kabul team sought to translate Shakespeare's European stereotypes of foreign places, remapping them for an audience caught in a web of relations stretching throughout Asia and beyond, mediated by English drama and Hindi cinema alike.

I earlier proposed examining transnational performances of Shakespeare in terms of a tension between universal values and particular motivations. The Kabul *Love's Labour's Lost* might appear to endorse such a split, inasmuch as the American co-adaptor praised Shakespeare for writing 'truths of human experience' and was then excoriated online by an Afghan blog poster as an agent of 'imported theatre'.[14] Upon inspection, however, its adaptation process models neither global hegemony nor local resistance, but a complex give-and-take between sameness and difference. Sociologists have named this trade-off 'glocalization', and the term may serve to describe how the global flow of Shakespeare is filtered through local environments.[15] Performance, in particular, registers the inequities of world power but cannot be reduced to them. Under the British Raj, for instance, educational policy deployed Shakespeare as part of its so-called civilizing mission, and yet Indian adaptations on stage also helped to nurture an emerging nationalism; after independence had been won, moreover, actor-directors like Utpal Dutt pressed further by immersing the dramas in Bengali language and folk theatre, and touring the countryside with intercultural experiments such as his *Jatra Macbeth*.[16] At the same time, Shakespeare found a home in the Indian film industry, and twenty-first-century Bollywood continues to adapt the plays, which will doubtless soon appear on the television screens of Afghanistan. Such is the circuitry of 'glocal' culture.

It will be clear from the above examples that no single politics attaches to performances of foreign Shakespeare. But even when a production has political intent, its mission may or may not be fulfilled. Take the example of the Brazilian *Coriolanus* staged in 1974, a decade into military dictatorship. At a time when the arts were severely censored, this high-profile *Coriolano* was still protected by the standard case made for Shakespeare's classic status and his portrayal of universal values. In reality, however, it had been conceived by the actor Paulo Autran (who played the lead, produced the play and collaborated on the Portuguese translation) as an indictment of its hero as 'a right-wing extremist' and 'consummate villain'.[17] The production was

inspired by Brecht's *Coriolan*, which adapted Shakespeare in order to rebut Nazi ideals of military heroism (German schoolbooks in the 1930s compared Coriolanus to Hitler) and on which the German playwright was working at his death. Like Brecht, Autran dramatized Coriolano's fall from grace by adding a scene in which his family requests funerary rites for his corpse but is bluntly denied. In spite of this, the Brazilian public saw Coriolano not as a villain, but as a tragic hero. Among the reasons for this aesthetic failure, Autran admitted, was his own identification with the protagonist – and, one might add, the context of a state-run theatre dominated by a traditional charismatic actor-manager.[18] In this instance, the performance itself revealed an internal contradiction: between a local intent to criticize and the universally shared desire of actors to be admired.

Authors

'Every engagement with a Shakespearian text', writes Antony Tatlow, 'is necessarily intercultural. The past really is another culture, its remoteness disguised by language that can occasionally appear as familiar as we seem to ourselves, whom we understand so imperfectly.'[19] This argument applies even more strongly when a Shakespearian work is translated into foreign languages. To translate a text is to disguise it anew, rendering it at once more familiar and more remote. In the case of Shakespeare, most translations evoke familiarity by updating the text's Elizabethan English to a modern version of the target language, so that non-Anglophone readers confront the plays and poems as contemporary works. On the other hand, this procedure occludes or effaces many of Shakespeare's bravura linguistic effects, forcing translators to invent awkward correspondences or relegate problems to footnotes. In general, however, translations successfully disguise not only the historical and cultural remoteness of their source, but the work of the translators themselves. And that work, though routinely described as a process of conversion, is better understood as a kind of conversation – one in which the translator responds to Shakespeare as well as to the symposium of interpreters who have echoed, contested and manipulated his voice across multiple languages, epochs and cultures.

Let us take a look at two recent bilingual editions of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The name of William Shakespeare appears on each cover, but so does the name of a translator: the German version, *Ein Sommernachtstraum*, was translated by Frank Günther, and the French, *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été*, by Jean-Michel Déprats.[20] Opening each book reveals more hands at work. In the course of their annotations both translators acknowledge their debts to their predecessors, Déprats tracing a path from the nineteenth-century

translations of François-Victor Hugo to such recent versions as that of Pierre Messiaen, and Günther citing the now canonical work, from the 1760s to the 1820s, of Christoph Martin Wieland, August Wilhelm Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck. And we have still to consider whose English text lies on the verso pages: for its English half, the Günther edition draws on the Arden edition of Harold F. Brooks, whereas the French volume prints a text established by Gisèle Venet using sources up to the Oxford edition by Peter Holland. Each volume includes resources compiled by yet more scholars and critics. Clearly, the globalization of Shakespeare in print is a richly collaborative task.

If, as we have seen, Shakespeare's worldwide influence in the theatre depends on a complex international performance network, then his literary expansion outside Britain and the United States relies on a corresponding textual network consisting of writers, printers, publishers, editors and translators. And just as we recognized the actor as only one element in performance, so our concept of the author must share credit with a host of literary collaborators. The bilingual editions at issue here make this shared authority especially apparent. When reading a Shakespeare edition in English, we generally repress the extent to which editors 'modernize and punctuate, name characters, determine who is present on stage, print speeches in prose or verse, choose specific words at the expense of others, even decide when a character is or is no longer king – and in the process determine what constitutes Shakespeare's works'.[21] But an *en face* foreign-language version alerts us to precisely such changes, reminding us that translation is a kind of editing, and equally that editing is a kind of translation.[22] As a practical norm, moreover, translators work not from the quarto or Folio texts, but from English-language editions or intermediate versions in their own or a third language: not all Shakespeare translators have known English, and 'in certain situations, including eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, indirect translation of Shakespeare was the rule rather than the exception'.[23] The textual network, in other words, is not everywhere connected, but instead characterized by interference, circuitous indirection, and occasional loss.

Let us return to our bilingual editions for an example. Consider the famous line from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* spoken by Peter Quince on first seeing his much-changed comrade: 'Bless thee, Bottom, bless thee. Thou art translated' (3.1.105). Here is the line as it appears in the German and French versions:

> SQUENZ:Gott steh dir bei, Zettel, Gott steh dir bei! Du bist verwünschen! (73)QUINCE: Dieu te bénisse, Bottom, Dieu te bénisse! Tu es transfiguré. (138)

One difference between the versions lies in the names of the characters: Günther translates them into German, whereas Déprats opts to retain

the English originals. An obvious problem is how to translate the name 'Bottom', which evokes the character's profession by denoting a weaver's implement – the spool on which yarn was wound – but also has bawdy connotations, even if different in the Renaissance from those picked up by modern ears.[24] No translation could capture this *double-entendre*. Günther's word *Zettel* designates the warp in a woven fabric, but lacks bodily resonance; it has been the standard translation since Wieland. Unlike German, French lacks a canonical Shakespeare text and has given Bottom various names, including *Navette* (a weaver's shuttle) or *Lefond* (the bottom in the sense of a base or depth). Despite this, Déprats reverts to the English, declaring it more elegant and familiar than a French invention. Yet this choice cancels out Bottom's later puns on his own name, such as his dream which 'hath no bottom' (4.1.209): whereas Günther can joke that 'Zettels Traum' is 'verzettelt' (wasted or warped), Déprats is saddled with the cipher that 'Le Rêve de Bottom' is 'un rêve insondable'. Both choices yield losses and gains. They exemplify opposing strategies of translation: the German option domesticates the source in the target culture while the French marks the source as foreign. Most choices in translation fall between these extremes, and the diffusion of Shakespeare's texts depends on innumerable compromises made by editors and translators between the poles of alienation and acculturation.

There is more to be said about the lines cited above: one might remark that both French and German exclamations specify the name of God where the English ('Bless thee') elides it, and that Shakespeare's term for Bottom's transformation – he is 'translated' – is notably modified by the terms 'verwünschen' (bewitched) and 'transfiguré' (transfigured, with inevitable echoes of Jesus on the Mount). Of course, 'translated' in Quince's use does not specify either a spell or a sacrament; its chief meaning, implied by its etymology as well as Helena's earlier use of the word to imagine trading places with Hermia (1.1.191), is metamorphosis by spatial displacement. That even the sense of 'translation' can be lost in translation is more than a joke in this play, which returns obsessively to the difficult interlocking of disparate worlds, such as an Athenian palace and a Warwickshire wood imperfectly compressed by a cosmopolitan who can 'put a girdle round about the earth / In forty minutes' (2.1.175–6). If Puck embodies global reach in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, then the play's most local figure, unnamed and known only by a place, is the 'Indian boy' (3.2.376). No account of the world of the play or of the play in the world would be complete without considering India, which lies both in the text's mythical past and in its mercantile future.

The literary tradition from which Shakespeare drew associated Oberon with India by way of France. As *Le Songe d'une nuit d'été* makes sure to

record, the fairy king of India first appears in a medieval *chanson de geste* translated into English in the 1530s (which inspired Spenser, Greene and later Jonson). But in Shakespeare's globalizing age, India was becoming less a fable and more a financial opportunity. To evoke 'the spicèd Indian air' (2.1.124) in the 1590s was to cite travel narratives and anticipate contracts for trade; by the decade's end the East India Company would be founded. And as Anglo-Indian relations shifted from the commercial to the colonial, Shakespeare took a central place in the theatres of the Raj, beginning in Bombay and Calcutta and spreading into the regions, in English and indigenous languages alike.[25] From around 1870, an efflorescence of literary adaptations and literal translations saw the printing of Shakespeare's dramas in Indo-Aryan languages (such as Hindi or Urdu) and Dravidian languages (including Tamil, Kannada and Telugu). In these versions, Oberon's Indian origins are cunningly reclaimed from Europe by South Asia, and transposed from an exotic romance to vernacular drama. In M.L. Srikantesha Gowda's Kannada translation, *Pranilarjuniyam* (1896), Oberon appears as Manmatha, churner of hearts, an avatar of a classical Indian love-god.[26] And in R. Krishnamachari's Sanskrit adaptation, *Vasantikaswapnam* (1892), he is named Pradosh or 'Night' as personified in classical texts like the *Mahabharata*.[27]

These translations pursued a familiar domesticating strategy by transporting Shakespeare's text into a complex new linguistic, cultural and political environment. But, unlike their French or German counterparts, Indian translators of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* also needed to confront the play's explicit references to their country. What, for instance, should a Sanskrit author make of Titania's reproof that Oberon has returned 'from the farthest step of India' (2.1.69)? The actors in the Afghan *Love's Labour's Lost*, discussed above, ingeniously solved a similar dilemma by replacing the play's comic Muscovites with Indians. But rather than relocate Oberon/Manmatha/Pradosh at some equivalent limit of travel, an alternative operation has been to mute the exotic setting entirely. Thus Krishnamachari rewrites 'the farthest step of India' simply as *maddesham* (my land), the 'spicèd Indian air' as *upavanapranta* ('the edge of a small forest') and the 'Indian boy', who Puck says was stolen from a king, as a mere *rajabala* ('a prince'). To close the gap in this way between Shakespeare's notion of India and the reality of the nineteenth-century subcontinent is a bold move in a text written at the height of colonialism, but the change deprives the drama of a crucial third location besides the city and the wood – a place that shimmers between fact and fiction and should therefore prove for its readers not idly imaginary but actively imaginative. On the one hand, erasing India as fantasy and grounding it in the play's geography makes Shakespeare's text

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newly global. On the other, such an appropriation also risks making the text newly provincial. After all, how India signifies in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is a question to be posed rather than resolved or disguised, and what Theseus calls a poet's 'shaping fantasies' (5.1.5) ought to challenge the act of translation even, or perhaps especially, when the translator's own culture is implicated.

Aethers

Shakespeare's global dissemination is easy to track insofar as theatrical and textual processes generate recognizable material products, and most late twentieth-century stage and printing practices would not have struck even a time-travelling Elizabethan as the forms of things unknown: a company of managers and artisans still gathers around the body of one or more actors to produce a play; a network of editors and translators still labours over the text of one or more authors to generate a book. What would surprise an Elizabethan, however, is how modern technology has lately enabled a shift from physical objects to electronic carriers for the inscription and decoding of sound and images. The globalization of culture is now unthinkable without the media of mass communication, and radio, cinema and television have contributed hugely to the diffusion of Shakespeare across national boundaries. Yet scholarship on Shakespeare's transnationalization through popular media is not far along, and even studies of film often remain segmented by national categories, despite film's multi-national workforce and global audience.[28] One reason for this delay is that these media are derivative: though not immediately accessible to our senses, any analogue capture of a Shakespeare play carries a physical palimpsest of the bodies and books at its source.

By contrast, the emergence of digital media has begun to transform both the page and the stage, significantly blurring the historical distinction between them. When you read a play or poem on the Web in an electronic edition or a digital facsimile, or when you rent a DVD of that play from an online service via mail or streaming video, or when you download an audio file of that poem to a portable device, or when you preview a book or theatre performance online before buying that text or ticket without leaving your computer: in these and many other instances you are dealing with Shakespeare not as realized materially by an actor or author, but as distributed virtually across a spacious and volatile medium – a kind of aether. This metaphor has grown popular as early descriptions of the new information system as a fast and complex superhighway have given way to evocations of the system's increasing disembodiment and unpredictability through the image of a cloud.[29] By definition, this next

generation of the Internet will operate transnationally: since 'vast virtualized computer systems and electronic services know no borders', the cloud has been termed 'the ultimate form of globalization'.[30]

To those who know Shakespeare's work, the rhetoric of cloud computing will recall *The Tempest*, which we may consider an anticipation of the joys and illusions of cyberspace. The play's unplaceable island pulses with aethereal phenomena. Caliban praises its ambient sounds and shimmering images, humming instruments and visions of 'clouds [that] methought would open, and show riches / Ready to drop upon me' (3.2.136–7); but this nebulous idyll fails to materialize, and even Prospero's multi-media 'pageant' turns out to be a 'baseless fabric' which, like 'the cloud-capped towers' and 'the great globe itself', melts 'into thin air' (4.1.150–5). This analogy between a swift-moving cloudy mass or 'rack' (151) and the mode of performance itself is one that each production of *The Tempest* is bound to reinvent. In 2005, for instance, a Montreal company called 4D art staged *La Tempête* as a 'mixmedia creation' whose cast was divided between islanders, who were played by normal actors, and shipwrecked Italians, who appeared onstage as ingenious holograms.[31] These 'virtual characters' appeared sometimes as life-sized images, sometimes as towering close-ups, their taped voices perfectly synchronized with the live action. The staging presented the wayfarers as mere projections of Prospero's imagination, with one exception: when the virtual Ferdinand touched the hand of Miranda, he miraculously assumed corporeal form. Swirling light and sound effects (including chanting in indecipherable languages) permeated the auditorium, and above the French dialogue an edited version of Shakespeare's script appeared as supertitles.

Lost in an electronic cloud of text, video, music and theatre, the audience at *La Tempête* experienced the post-digital condition that performance theorists have termed 'intermediality.'[32] This buzzword suggests the capacity of newer media to unfix and recombine older forms, which in Shakespearian terms means unsettling the familiar dualism by which the drama has been fissured into writing and playing. In what follows, I sketch out two developments of this intermedial type which are likely to support the transnationalization of Shakespeare in the twenty-first century. The first, the electronic supertitle, already has a record of turning foreign-language performances into multi-lingual texts; the second, the digital translation, is barely underway but has the potential to convert bilingual print editions into macaronic archives – texts from which each user fashions a unique interpretative performance.

Modelled on the cinema subtitle used since sound films reached international audiences, the theatrical supertitle has recently developed from a translation tool to a means of aesthetic innovation. In a study of mixed-language theatre, Marvin Carlson has charted the supertitle's promotion

'from a feature of the experimental stage and occasionally of the opera to a major feature of international performance', where supertitles can now provide 'not simply a device for duplicating the spoken text, but a separate communicative channel in the theatrical experience'.[33] The trick has been to turn the obvious defects of captioning – visual distraction and enforced selectivity, not to speak of the partiality of any translation – into unexpected virtues. Compare 4D art's *La Tempête*, whose scrolling tickertape of Shakespearian lines served merely as a digital libretto for English-speaking audiences, with *King Lear* as produced by the Belgian troupe Needcompany in 2000, where the supertitles added both a language and a new theatrical code. While Needcompany's actors performed in Flemish, French and bits of English, the supertitles appeared in the language of the audience (German for Carlson in Berlin, but English when performed in New York). Nor did the titles always run parallel to the action: on the contrary, the play opened with Kent and Gloucester scoffing at their projected lines, and in the chaotic battle an actor shouted out speech prefixes while text flashed by unspoken overhead. During the final scene the subtitles degenerated into fragments, then went dark, as though the script itself had strained and shattered beneath the tragedy's weight.

Beyond the European avant-garde, the new supertitles are enhancing the work of cultural translation surveyed early in this chapter. One example is the writing and performance of the Anglo-Kuwaiti director Sulayman Al-Bassam, who has been staging Shakespearian adaptations in Arabic and English since 2001. Al-Bassam uses an unusual layering technique: he first adapts Shakespeare's text into modern English with an Arabic twist; this version is translated into Arabic for performance; supertitles convert the Arabic into the primary language of the audience; and the Arabic script is finally turned back into English for the purposes of publication.[34] In the following supertitles for *Richard III – An Arab Tragedy* (Stratford, 2006), Clarence rejects his assassins' hypocritical order that he pray:

– Dare you counsel me to pray to God yet would war with God by murdering me?
… He who kills without due reason, it is as though he kills the whole of humanity
(Q.);
– Pray!
– *And do not shed blood that is sacred by Allah's law* (Q.);
– Pray!
– Al Rawindi in the sources says: *beware of shedding innocent blood* –
– Pray![35]

Much can be said about Al-Bassam's shift of *Richard III* from a Christian to a Muslim world, but here we can only observe that the supertitles clearly mark Quranic allusion and italicize quotations from Islamic scripture and

scholarship. To grasp the crucial change of register, then, a foreign-language audience needs this text – but what sort of text is it? The video screens display neither what is being spoken nor what will ultimately be printed, but something provisional and virtual. In a flash, each supertitle opens a channel between languages, media and cultures, and through its translation and annotation the theatrical experience is recharged.

If the supertitle provides, as it were, the lightning between a production's cloud of versions and meanings and the ground of individual points of reception, what could be its equivalent in textual terms? A plausible answer is: the hyperlink. We cannot yet predict how digital media will renovate the translation of Shakespeare's writings, but that process will surely draw on English-language projects currently underway to transfer the plays and poems from printed books into hypertext. The most advanced of these are the Internet Shakespeare Editions and the Shakespeare Electronic Archive, founded in the 1990s in Canada and the United States respectively.[36] Whilst their names signal different goals – editions versus an archive – the projects create similar environments that benefit from editorial selection and structure as well as archival completeness and searchability. Both provide a wealth of resources in text, image, video and sound formats, and both ensure that users can easily navigate these media via a network of hyperlinks. This network has the capacity to link a single Shakespearian word not merely to a textual gloss but to an essay or concordance or photograph or audio file or film clip. Digital animation may even allow onscreen text to dance between multiple variants, so that options for dialogue or stage directions flicker alternately before the eye.[37]

A Shakespeare text this full, open and dynamic offers an ideal template for future work in translation. The raw material for that work is already accessible in digital libraries such as Project Gutenberg, which currently provides Shakespeare online in English and eight European languages. Where sites affiliated with Project Gutenberg spring up across the world, there Shakespeare translation appears as well: the first of these, Sweden's Project Runeberg, explains why even a site devoted to Scandinavian literature had to include an author of his stature – and adds that since *Hamlet* derives from a Danish myth, the influence has been reciprocal.[38] What is more, the gap between foreign e-texts and the English-language archives is closing fast: the Shakespeare Electronic Archive features clips from Svend Garde's German-made *Hamlet* (1920) and is building a new collection on Shakespeare performance in Asia, while the Internet Shakespeare Editions site has mounted a growing collection of essays under the rubric 'Shakespeare Around the Globe'.[39] It is no longer difficult to imagine a digital archive of Shakespeare translations and adaptations that would collect and configure the range of

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texts, performances and commentaries sampled in this chapter. Whatever the form of that cloudy future, it will require the collaborative energies of Shakespearians worldwide, the same energies of which 400 years of globalization yield fine and ample evidence.

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3 David Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 92.
4 See my essay 'Renaissance Intertheater and the Staging of Nobody', *ELH*, 71:3 (2004), 559–85.
5 See Dirk Delabastita, 'Anthologies, Translations, and European Identities', in Dirk Delabastita, Jozef De Vos and Paul Franssen (eds.), *Shakespeare and European Politics*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008), pp. 343–68.
6 I adapt this tripartite scheme from W. B. Worthen, 'Shakespeare 3.0, or Text versus Performance, the Remix', in Diana E. Henderson (ed.), *Alternative Shakespeares 3* (London: Routledge, 2008), pp. 54–77.

7 See Gary Taylor, '*Hamlet* in Africa 1607', in Ivo Kamps and Jyotsna G. Singh (eds.), *Travel Knowledge* (New York: Palgrave, 2001), pp. 223–48.

8 See my essay 'History Between Theatres', in Peter Holland and Stephen Orgel (eds.), *From Performance to Print in Shakespeare's England* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006) pp. 191–207.

9 See Romy Heylen, *Translation, Poetics, and the Stage: Six French 'Hamlets'* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 61–91.

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11 Ruru Li, "Who is it that can tell me who I am? / Lear's shadow": A Taiwanese Actor's Personal Response to *King Lear*', *Shakespeare Quarterly* 20:20, 205. Translations from the unpublished Chinese script, provided by Wu, are by Ruru Li.

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31 An archive of production materials, from which my citations are drawn, is accessible at www.4dart.com/

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38 See http://runeberg.org/authors/shakewil.html

39 On the US project, see Peter S. Donaldson, 'The Shakespeare Electronic Archive: Collections and Multimedia Tools for Teaching and Research, 1992–2008', *Shakespeare*, 4:3 (September 2008), 250–60. The Canadian project's essay series and guidelines are available at http://isebeta.uvic.ca/Foyer/around-globe.html