

Afterword

“Why is Shakespeare so unflaggingly popular? Why do we continually nourish ourselves on the Elizabethans?” These are the questions had by Charles Marowitz in 1963. He answered, “Because there we can experience (albeit second-hand) a theatre bursting with variety, shifting freely into contrasting styles, astonishing us with richness of content and fluidity of form” (*The Encore Reader: A Chronicle of the New Drama*, ed. C. Marowitz, T. Milne and O. Hale. London: Methuen, 1965, 241). Marowitz staged his adaptations and collages of *Hamlet*, *Macbeth*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, etc., from which young dramatists gained a new stimulus.

In the second half of the twentieth century, dramatists and directors attempted to rediscover and reconsider Shakespeare. For instance, Akira Kurosawa’s *Throne of Blood*, a film adaptation of *Macbeth*, showed us the blending of Western thought with elements from Japan’s feudal society. In addition, Aimé Césaire’s *Une Tempête*, Eugène Ionesco’s *Macbett*, Welcome Msomi’s *uMabatha*, Heiner Müller’s *Hamletmaschine*, etc. not only captivated us but also gave us opportunities to rethink the political meaning of Shakespeare’s plays.

Thus Shakespeare is a global writer. He has already transcended national boundaries and has been a cultural icon even to non-English-speaking people. His works have been studied, performed, translated, adapted and appropriated in various countries.

In our *Multicultural Shakespeare*, Vol. 2 the contributors discuss the problems of language and culture, while others write about Shakespearean acceptance, performance, studies, criticisms, texts and teaching. I express my gratitude to all of the article contributors. In addition, I wish readers to consider why Shakespeare is extremely influential in the development of intellectual culture of each country. Shakespeare is cross-cultural and universal. He will exist here and there as long as people love him.

Yoshiko Kawachi