

The chapter on Li Yuru presents her as very successful when allowed to innovate within the tradition, but stumped when forced to play new kinds of heroines without using many of the old conventions of Beijing opera. The rise in status of actors in the PRC is contrasted with the loss of many freedoms and the danger of becoming the object of political criticism. With Ma Yongan, we have an actor who was trained to perform painted-face roles, but ends up starring in one of the "revolutionary contemporary model plays" of the Cultural Revolution (1966–76), in which painted-face actors were no longer allowed to paint their faces. With Yan Qinggu, we come to the Reform Period (1976–), when government subsidies for Beijing opera were drastically cut, forcing companies to try to attract new audiences and create commercially successful productions. The chapter on Kuo Hsiao-chuang presents both the very different (conservative) situation that Beijing opera originally found itself in on Taiwan after the Nationalists retreated there and Kuo's attempts to reach younger audiences by incorporating nontraditional elements of modern stagecraft into her productions. The final chapter, on Wu Hsing-kuo, focuses on a performer who, unlike the others discussed in Li's book, seems to have no interest in keeping the tradition of Beijing opera alive, preferring instead to make use of its elements in his own avant-garde intercultural projects. This chapter leads directly into the epilogue, which asks whether Beijing opera has reached a period of new beginnings or the beginning of the end.

The book contains two very useful appendices (a chronology of Beijing opera in China and Taiwan and an outline of the major role-types in Beijing opera). Sixteen pages of plates, many in color, as well as many transcribed musical examples, help the reader follow the analysis. The book is innovative among works in English on Beijing opera in that the romanization of Chinese characters reflects how they are pronounced in Beijing opera, rather than their standard pronunciations.

Li Ruru's book should be of interest to both specialists and more general readers, and she has written it in such a way as to accommodate both. It addresses fundamental questions concerning the development and fate of Beijing opera (and, by extension, traditional Chinese theatre in general) during the last century and our present one and draws on a rich variety of sources and voices. It is unique among books in its field.

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CHINESE SHAKESPEARES: TWO CENTURIES OF CULTURAL EXCHANGE. By Alexander C. Y. Huang. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009; pp. 368.

Since David Garrick's Shakespeare Jubilee in 1769, the Shakespeare industry has been steadily growing, both in English-speaking countries and worldwide. The proliferation of global and intercultural theatre in recent decades—exemplified in productions by artists like Peter Brook, Ariane Mnouchkine, and Ninagawa Yukio and by filmmakers like Kurosawa Akira—has enlarged scholarly attention to Shakespearean performance in other cultures. Alexander C. Y. Huang contributes to this scholarship in his book *Chinese Shakespeares*, in which he examines interactions among Shakespearean text and performance and Chinese culture throughout the past two centuries, both in mainland China and in the more liminal zones of Hong Kong and Taiwan.

In *Chinese Shakespeares*, Huang begins with the premise that both "Shakespeare and China are narrative systems read and written within the framework of performance and cultural translation" (24), and thus symbiotically enhance and transform each other's uniqueness. By treating them as overlapping narrative systems, Huang avoids uncritical generalizations about both Shakespeare and Chinese culture; instead, he provides case studies of intersections between China and Shakespeare in order to "examine the transnational imaginary of China in Shakespearean performance and Shakespeare's place in Chinese cultural history from the first Opium War in 1839 to our time" (5). Central to Huang's method is his focus on the locality of particular performances. Defining locality as the space "where authenticity and intentionality is derived and . . . where differences emerge" (17–18), Huang opposes it to the universalizing gestures of much intercultural global performance.

Huang begins his book by noting that, while Shakespeare has exerted quite an influence on Chinese theatre, both *xiqu* (Chinese opera) and *huaju* (spoken drama), and while *xiqu* (especially *jingju*, Beijing opera) has reciprocally influenced Western productions, the history of Shakespeare in China is brief, compared to other parts of the world. (The first recorded reference to Shakespeare in Chinese appears in 1839, by Lin Zexu, the Chinese scholar and official who tried to stop the opium trade.) Chinese Shakespeare, Huang points out, "does not fit easily into the postcolonial theoretical models commonly used to interpret Asian rewrites of the European literature" (26).

In his first chapter, "Owning Chinese Shakespeares," Huang examines the terms "China" and "Shakespeare," observing that, throughout the history of Shakespeare in China, a moral rhetoric of faithfulness (whether to Shakespeare's texts or to traditional Chinese aesthetics) persists. The second chapter, "Shakespeare in Absentia: The Genealogy of an Obsession," explores the prehistory of Shakespeare in China, demonstrating how, well before his works were translated or performed there, Shakespeare represented "the West." To figures like Lin Zexu, Shakespeare was a way to "know thy enemy," while for Chinese elites who read or saw Shakespeare's plays in England he inspired cultural yearnings for the West. Chapter 3, "Rescripting Moral Criticism," explores early Shakespearean "translations" and adaptations, including Lin Shu's Chinese version of Charles and Mary Lamb's *Tales from Shakespeare* and Lao She's parodic short story "New Hamlet." Huang argues that these texts can serve as examples of the ways Chinese writers in the early twentieth century conveyed their locality, using Shakespeare to "map their temporal and local coordinates" (69).

Huang's fourth and fifth chapters are grouped together as "Locality at Work" and examine how Shakespeare has allowed Chinese artists to perform their changing culture. In "Silent Film and Early Theater," the author examines the silent films *The Woman Lawyer* (1927, based on *The Merchant of Venice*) and *The Amorous Bandit* (1931, from *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*), showing how they reflect changing concepts of womanhood in early twentieth-century China. In this chapter, he also discusses huaju performances, including a *Romeo and Juliet* in Shanghai in 1937 and *Hero of a Tumultuous Time* (1945, from *Macbeth*), discussing how these productions exoticized Englishness and localized their stories to conditions in China. The following chapter (chapter 5) is devoted to three site-specific productions: a 1942 staging of *Hamlet* in a Confucian temple, the University of Chicago-educated professor Wu Ningkun's reading of *Hamlet* in a labor camp, and a Soviet-Chinese production of *Much Ado About Nothing*, staged in 1957 and revived, in nearly identical forms, in 1961 and 1975. Here, Huang's meticulous analyses reveal how theatre can generate subversive meanings, even in totally repressive cultures.

The final chapters explore postmodern Shakespearean productions from the 1980s up to the present. In chapter 6, Huang examines intersections between Shakespearean performance and *xiqu*, especially Ma Yong'an's 1983 *Othello*. Huang notes that such productions were part of a shift in the 1980s from "political positioning [that had been necessary during the time of Mao Zedong] to artistic innovation" (188). However, he argues, art-

ists continued to frame this search for originality as a quest for authenticity. In the final chapter, "Disowning Shakespeare and China," Huang examines the globalization of Shakespearean cultural capital in the new millennium through local, personal Shakespearean adaptations. Here, Huang examines two works from Taiwan: Stan Lai's *Lear and the Thirty-seven-fold Practice of a Bodhisattva* and Wu Hsing-kuo's metatheatrical and autobiographical *Lear Is Here*, which explores intersections between *jingju* and Shakespeare. In the epilogue—through an examination of the 2006 film *The Banquet* and Lin Zhaohua's production of *Richard III*—Huang meditates on the continuing complexities of the relationships between Shakespeare and China, and between local and global performance.

Huang, who chaired a seminar on "Localizing Shakespeare in Asia" at the 2009 meeting of the British Shakespeare Association and has guest edited a special issue of *Asian Theatre Journal* on Shakespeare, is renowned for his scholarship on Shakespeare in Asia. Not surprisingly, *Chinese Shakespeares* has been recognized for its achievement, winning the 2010 Modern Language Association's Scaglione Prize for Comparative Literature. Praise for Huang's book is entirely deserved. His scholarship is meticulous, wide-ranging, and very well presented. The book's nearly thirty pages of bibliography contain a wealth of sources in both English and Chinese. It includes twenty-six black-and-white images, which are illustrative of his points and visually appealing; the book also contains a ten-page chronology of historical events, selected worldwide productions of Shakespeare, and of Shakespeare in China. Although the book feels at times a bit overwritten and presumes a knowledge of historical events that some readers may not have, these are minor quibbles. *Chinese Shakespeares* is an exceptional work of theatre scholarship that will be of great value to scholars of Shakespeare, Chinese theatre, and those interested in a new model of intercultural analysis that treats both text and culture as narrative systems and interprets individual performances through the locality of culture.

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ILLUSIVE UTOPIA: THEATER, FILM, AND EVERYDAY PERFORMANCE IN NORTH KOREA. By Suk-Young Kim. Theater: Theory/Text/Performance. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2010; pp. 400.

Suk-Young Kim's *Illusive Utopia: Theater, Film, and Everyday Performance in North Korea* is a groundbreaking book that provides a rare view of every-

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