

PART XIX

TRANSLATION

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The standing of Shakespeare as a world author is intertwined with issues of language, multilingualism, and translation. For native speakers of English the world over, the transmission of Shakespeare has at least a semblance of linguistic directness and offers the prospect of a reasonable level of understanding. For the others, everything depends on their multilingual skills. If their proficiency in English as a foreign tongue permits it, Shakespeare can still be meaningful to them in his own language; if not, access to Shakespeare will require translation. This illustrates how multilingualism and translation really pull in opposite directions. If you know enough English as a foreign tongue, translation is redundant; if translations abound, you will be disinclined to invest in improving your English. In this way, the internationalization of Shakespeare has taken place in a field of forces that is defined by three points between which a negative dialectic obtains: the spread of English as a hegemonic world language, multilingualism, and translation.

Every observation that is made about Shakespeare's language in the relevant chapters in *Shakespeare's World, 1500–1660*, the first volume of this reference resource, could in principle be revisited from the angle of internationalization: what happens when the texts move (back) along the multiple axes of space, time, language, and/or culture? This chapter offers a general survey and flags a few areas of special interest, some of which are further investigated in other chapters.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- From Globe to globe: England, its colonies, and beyond
- Continental Europe, its colonies, and beyond
- Flexible models of language and translation
- Problems of translation

185. CANONIZATION AND OBSOLESCENCE:

CLASSIC TRANSLATIONS VERSUS RETRANSLATIONS

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In 1769 – the very year in which Garrick staged his “Shakespeare Jubilee” – Jean-François Ducis completed the first version of his translation-cum-adaptation of *Hamlet*, marking the beginning of what has become known as “Shakespeare without his language.” Ducis's blatant rewrites stimulated translations that claimed to return to the authentic texts and, especially in the case of France's cultural and political rival Germany, to reproduce the very *form* in which these were originally written. This chapter focuses on Ducis's French adaptations and the German translations by August Wilhelm Schlegel and Ludwig Tieck as the most decisive interventions in the spread of foreign Shakespeare. Although radically at odds in their respect for, and attitude toward, the source texts, they stand as the two main lines of force by which Shakespeare was introduced into Europe and beyond.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- The Ducis adaptations
- A surprising afterlife
- Germany and the “real” thing
- Canonization

186. SIGNING SHAKESPEARE (ASL)

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An arsenal of physical linguistic tools is available to a translator of Shakespeare into American Sign Language (ASL), the language used among the deaf community in the United States and parts of English-speaking Canada. More than any written or spoken language, ASL forces a reconsideration of conventional notions of language, verse, and even literature itself. An ASL translation reincarnates Shakespeare's language, placing the body at the center of the interpretive act, and combines both textual and performance criticism in dynamic interplay, allowing audiences to really "see" Shakespeare's language for the first time. This dynamic relationship of the body as text, not in an abstract theoretical sense but in actual grammatical and syntactical structure, is the source of the ASL translator's greatest asset. This chapter looks closely at two productions in ASL: two scenes from *The Tempest* and the entirety of *Twelfth Night*. The author spent two years collaborating on the latter production.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Body as performed text
- Embodying bawdiness
- Visual rhyme and verse

187. SHAKESPEARE INTO CREOLE

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The translation of Shakespeare into minority languages is always a deliberate and political choice. Looking at Shakespeare in creoles, in particular, provides an interesting lens through which to understand the position of speakers of minority languages in relationships of language and power. Pidgins and creoles, born out of the necessity for communication across linguistically diverse communities, usually brought together in contexts of slavery, still remain subject to their interpellation as poor and inadequate representations of the main lexifying language. There are approximately seventy Pidgin and creole languages across the world. Most are derived from European languages, from Afrikaans to Zamboangueno. Rather than an overview of all creole Shakespeares, this chapter focuses on the polyvalent faces of Shakespeare, as text and as cultural icon, in two creole contexts, those of Sierra Leone and Mauritius.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Postcolonial translation
- Sociolinguistic contexts
- Shakespeare: The Language Project
- Writing *with* Shakespeare
- Exotic Shakespeare: *Toufann*
- Cosmopolitan Shakespeare: *Prezidan Otelu*
- Eco-warrior Shakespeare: *Tabisman Lir* (*Ou "fode perdi pou gagne"*)
- Complex negotiations

188. TRANSLATING SHAKESPEARE FOR THE SCREEN

Nicolas Sanchez, Bellecour Ecoles d'Art, France

When adapted for the screen, Shakespeare's works undergo an elaborate kind of translation: dialogues and actors' performances are enhanced with new channels of expression, such as camera movements, editing, or music score. When such English-language adaptations are to be released worldwide, they have to go through additional transformations to make them accessible to non-English speakers. According to the distributor's decision, films will be subtitled and/or dubbed. Dubbing and subtitling could thus be said to be translations of translations, as they involve an interpretation of a text that was previously filtered and altered by the director and performers. This chapter considers the impact of subtitling and dubbing in five languages, with most examples taken from Kenneth Branagh's *Henry V*, *Much Ado about Nothing*, and *Hamlet*, and with primary attention to French.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Subtitling Shakespeare
- Dubbing Shakespeare
- Beyond the debate

189. TRANSLATING SHAKESPEARE FOR PERFORMANCE

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Plays are received both as self-contained literary texts and as theatrical play scripts. As a consequence, the nature of requirements imposed on their translation is essentially heterogeneous, meaning literary and theatrical. Whether willingly or not, the translator finds himself in the position of a director: separating, testing, and joining together the semiotic and linguistic threads of the original play. The variety of strategies adopted by Shakespeare translators over the centuries, and in different countries, shows them positioned as intermediaries, not only narrowly between texts or somewhat vaguely between cultures but more specifically between the stages. The first of these stages is the Elizabethan, whereas the other is the one that is to host their translations.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Translating for performance
- Sample strategies
- Jean-Michel Déprats
- Stanisław Barańczak
- Alessandro Serpieri
- Contemporary trends and threats

190. IDIOMS, PROVERBS, QUOTATIONS: SHAKESPEARE'S INFLUENCE ON LANGUAGE EVOLUTION

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Writing during a period of fluidity, creativity, and rapid change in the development of the English language, particularly in terms of vocabulary expansion, Shakespeare introduced – or is credited with introducing – as many as 1,500 words and phrases into the language, many of which remain in common use today. Numerous attempts to record and gloss Shakespeare's lexical inventory have abounded since the late sixteenth century, in the form of glossaries, dictionaries, and collections of quotations. The Shakespearean roots of many quotations, however, are becoming increasingly lost or diluted as a result of additional or alternative routes to the phrase being invoked. Many readers today use Shakespearean phrases with no sense of their origin.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Quotation books as indices of Shakespeare's influence
- Phrases along a continuum
- Shakespearean quotations in twentieth- and twenty-first-century popular culture
- Bits and scraps: Shakespeare quotation and phrasal allusion
- Case study: "we band of brothers"

191. SHAKESPEARE'S ENTRY INTO THE ARABIC WORLD

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It has been a commonplace in translation and intercultural studies that the early attempts in any cultural tradition to introduce new foreign cultural products are usually motivated by a perceived need to fill gaps in the host culture. Although it is true that Shakespeare's work was used, together with the work of other Western writers, to meet specific needs in the Arab culture from the late nineteenth century onward, scant scholarly attention has been paid to the cultural processes involved in this mediation. This chapter attempts to map general trends of dissemination, highlighting representative cases.

Particular attention is focused on Egypt, which, for historical and sociocultural reasons, fostered most representations of Shakespeare's work in Arabic.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Early adaptations: Shakespeare and Egyptian popular culture
- Decommmercializing Shakespeare in Arabic
- From popular culture to academia
- Politicizing Shakespeare

192. *THE MERCHANT OF VENICE* IN THE JEWISH DIASPORA: GERMAN, HEBREW, YIDDISH

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The convoluted relationships among German, Hebrew, and Yiddish, from both linguistic and historical perspectives, has long been demonstrated in productions of *The Merchant of Venice*. Since the eighteenth century, German productions of the play have been used as social commentaries on the relations between Jews and non-Jews in a way that was not perceived in the English theater until relatively recently. The Jewish theater has largely subscribed to the same tradition, almost always presenting the play as a poignant and engaged discussion about the relationship between Jews and non-Jews. This chapter considers the dramatic and theatrical history of *The Merchant of Venice* in German, in relation to Jewish representation and participation; the history of the play in Yiddish, particularly in the United States; and the history of the play in Hebrew, both in and out of Israel.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- *The Merchant of Venice* in German
- *The Merchant of Venice* (*Shylock*) in Yiddish
- *The Merchant of Venice* in Hebrew

193. SHAKESPEARE TRANSLATIONS IN ASIA

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Although the political and cultural dominance of the British Empire was undoubtedly the prime propagator of Shakespeare in Asia, more localized negotiations among Asian nations (or even among the various language groups within a single nation, as in the case of India) also disseminated the works and influence of the English playwright. China had traditionally been the hegemonic power in the region, and its culture had been transmitted, by way of the Korean Peninsula, to Japan for more than a millennium. The opening of Japan to the rest of the world in 1854, however, resulted in a linguistic shift. Since the late nineteenth century, the Japanese language has acted as an intermediary for relay translation of Western literature into Chinese and Korean. Shakespeare translations followed that trajectory.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Untranslated Shakespeare
- The place of the Shakespearean translator
- Institutional translations
- The language of translation
- Intra-Asian dynamics: China, Japan, and Korea
- "Acceptable" translation and domestication
- Prosody and declamation
- "Faithful" translation and textual scholarship

194. THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF SPANISH TRANSLATIONS

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The binary model of colonizing/colonized languages cannot help us account for the cultural relations between English and Spanish as source and target languages, respectively. Yet we still can use this model – if we complicate it – to better

understand the cultural implications of translating Shakespeare from English into Spanish. In some instances, the translations have functioned as two competing colonizing languages: Shakespeare has often entered the Spanish arena as the British competitor to canonical Spanish Golden Age authors. At other times, Shakespeare has been placed inside a triangular relation among England, Spain, and Spanish America. Spanish translations of Shakespeare's English verse have offered an alternative hegemonic European tradition on which Spanish Americans can draw to build a literary identity independent from Spain.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- The earliest versions: Leandro Fernández de Moratín's *Hamlet* (1798)
- Joseph Blanco White's "Poetic Translations" (1823)
- Delineating the field
- Translations of the dramatic works
- Translations of the poetic works
- Shakespeare as a cultural icon, the Spanish version

195. SHAKESPEARE WITHOUT SWEAT: UPDATING AND SIMPLIFYING SHAKESPEARE'S ENGLISH

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Shakespeare's English is four centuries old. Is it still sufficiently understandable and palatable today, even for native speakers of the language? Or is it time to start "translating" Shakespeare into modern English? These questions may sound like provocations to the Shakespearean establishment. Yet, at least four series of updated texts on the market point to a growing demand for a modernized and simplified Shakespeare. This growing niche in the publishing market is relatively recent and so far has not attracted the well-known Shakespearean scholars and the mainstream publishers or imprints. This confirms a perception that the idea of "Shakespearean with Ease" may at best meet certain educational needs, have at worst an unpleasant whiff of commercial opportunism about it, and can generally claim little scholarly or aesthetic credibility. This chapter investigates and compares the four series of updated Shakespeare.

TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHAPTER INCLUDE

- Four centuries of linguistic change
- Two modernizing strategies
- Edition, translation, adaptation, paraphrase, version?
- Different versions
- Beyond the debate