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***Foreign Accents: Brazilian Readings of Shakespeare,*
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Shakespeare can be interpreted *ad infinitum*. Confrontation of his works with the logic of resource depletion, which assumes that a cultural environment is based on renewable and non-renewable resources of cultural energy, leads to a statement that the reserves of cultural inspiration Shakespeare provides, can only be obtained from non-renewable resources. Shakespeare's works are open to the never-ending re-readings in the chain of national appropriations/interpretations of his plays. *Foreign Accents: Brazilian Readings of Shakespeare*, a collection of thirteen essays edited by Aimara da Cunha Resende and prefaced with her introduction (11–41), participates in cultural exploration of Shakespearean renewable resources.

Some of the collected essays aim at searching for national identity through analyses of appropriations, adaptations and translations of Shakespeare's plays and sonnets. It is worthy to note that the introduction (additionally to examinations of Shakespearean works presented in each of the essay) discusses some selected Brazilian theatre and film productions of Shakespeare in the nineteenth and twentieth century.

¹ See O. Mandel'shtam: 227–233.

After three centuries of colonial dependence from Europe, the nineteenth century brought independence to Brazil in 1822.¹ Since then the real societal awakening of cultural consciousness was about to happen. The great *meta-morphosis* – from the culture in Brazil to the culture of Brazil, from Caliban speaking Prospero’s language to Caliban using Eurocentric cultural standards for his own purposes – is the transmutation that Brazil had to go through in search of its own identity, transforming its previous form into a “brave new” one.²

In the first essay of the volume – “Theater for the Oppressed: Augusto Boal’s *A Tempestade*” (42–54) – Marlene Soares dos Santos examines a Brazilian appropriation of *The Tempest*.³ Santos presents Boal’s transgressive rewriting of *The Tempest* in the light of postcolonial re-reading of European colonialism and Northern American neocolonialism, and its oppressive mechanisms towards Brazilian and other Latin American nations.⁴ This parody of the master text attacked the Brazilian dictatorial regime of the 1960s and 1970s, as Boal’s innovative approach and his highly participatory form of theatre held great subversive potential.⁵ In the early 1970s Boal experimented with theatrical form, which bore fruit as the Theatre of the Oppressed. It evolved to become influential to the extent that at present it is a vibrant international movement offering many opportunities to participants.

The following essay – “Shakespeare’s Sonnets: A Case of Nontranslation” (55–61) – is devoted to two important sonnets: 130 and 132, omitted by Eugênio da Silva Ramos in his translation of thirty-three sonnets (1953). Examining the publication of the Brazilian translator, Solange Ribeiro de Oliveira suggests it is the European way of translating and interpreting Shakespearean sonnets (“universal imperative”)⁶ that is responsible for this omission. The Dark Lady, whom the lyrical speaker addresses in the sonnets 130 and 132, is portrayed by Shakespeare in a way that contradicts the traditional associations between black and evil and this may suggest that Shakespeare was innovative by breaking

¹ The first encounter between the Brazilians and the conquistadores, particularly the Portuguese, occurred at the very beginning of the fifteenth century.

² Here, *metamorphosis* is written with a hyphen, to specify that *meta* means “change” and *morphe* – “shape”. With reference to the figure of Caliban, who became the emblem of the quest for freedom, especially when postcolonial studies are taken into consideration, this *meta-morphosis* signifies that Caliban is being revised. This “special” attitude towards Caliban is also evident within Brazilian re-readings of Shakespeare in some essays of the volume.

³ *A Tempestade* was first published in 1979.

⁴ Latin American nations were defined by Roberto Fernández Retamar, a Cuban poet, in his essay “Caliban” as Caliban; this collation echoed in Boal’s *A Tempestade*.

⁵ Santos reminds that according to Boal theatre can serve as a “rehearsal for revolution”, not being revolutionary itself.

⁶ The “universal imperative” – here it is understood as a type of an outer command, imposed by the colonizer on the colonized people, which aimed at copying and duplicating European patterns and styles by the natives.

with conventional representations. Curiously enough, even though sonnets 130 and 132 shed a different light on the “dark complexion”, a translation by Silva Ramos does not tend to redefine black identity, rather it reproduces a certain image imported from abroad, an image that established undeniable “facts” about otherness.

In “*Hamletrash: A Brazilian Hamlet Made of Scraps*” (62–75) Anna Stegh Camati presents *Hamlet* as the play deriving its meaning from the local identity, particularly from Brazilian socio-political and cultural context. (Re)shaping this drama through interpretation (minor changes made to the source text), or more transformational relation to original text (when appropriations are taken into consideration), is nothing new to *Hamlet’s* incarnations since it was first performed between 1600–01. César de Almeida’s *Hamletrash* (1996), made in convention of the appropriation, becomes a parody of the classical text through deconstruction. It consists in cutting Shakespeare’s text, defragmenting and then reconstructing it – creating a new playtext on the basis of the original text collated with another source (for example Heiner Müller’s *The Hamlet/Machine*, 1977). Making use of satire, this Brazilian version of *Hamlet*, tends to criticize Brazilian social and cultural reality, especially its popular television – Globo TV (called “trash” by Almeida), exposing its profit-oriented side.

How to comment on everyday life of Brazilian reality in the nineteenth century? Silvia Mussi da Silva Claro responds to this question in her essay “Quotations from *Hamlet* in the Chronicles of Machado de Assis” (76–99) where she refers to *crônicas* (of Machado de Assis), i.e. short essays depicting contemporary life, usually published in the print media.⁷ Machado de Assis’ excellent power of observation and his critical sense captured the atmosphere of Rio de Janeiro with its socio-political web of intrigues and human susceptibility to the power of words.⁸ He also exploited and popularized various quotations from *Hamlet*. Most frequently he appropriated the citation: “There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, Than are dreamt of in your philosophy”, in order to refer to daily events of Rio de Janeiro. Distancing themselves from reality through language, both Hamlet and Machado de Assis find a remedy for the predicament of human life and instability in the world, and at the same time, try to suppress their own fears and anxieties.

Maria Clara Versiani Galery devotes her study to the stagings of *Titus Andronicus* and space effectiveness in the Elizabethan theatre, that is, the artistic side of “stage management”. In the essay entitled “Staging Practices in the Elizabethan Theater: *Titus Andronicus* at the Rose” (100–113), Galery concentrates

⁷ Machado de Assis (1839–1908) is regarded as one of Brazil’s greatest novelist, who often satirized and ironized with the purpose of social criticism.

⁸ For example Hamlet’s “words, words, words” are transformed – by the chronicler in one of his texts – into “rumors, rumors, rumors”, since his intention was to stress a dangerous inner potential hidden in words.

on the recent excavations of the foundations of The Rose Theatre (built in 1587) which might have been constructed in a way which reflects the stage directions given in the First Quarto of *Titus Andronicus* (1594). Shakespeare experimented with scenic resources and introduced spatial innovations within the theatre. He developed three levels of the stage: the platform, the gallery and the trap-door, to emphasise the distance between social positions and between extreme feelings of different characters. The discovery of the Rose foundations provided new information on Elizabethan performances in the playhouse.

Macbeth, a play of opposing forces, warring elements, dichotomic division between male and female behaviour, brings into question the intricate notion of masculinity. In his essay, “*Homo/Vir: The State of Man and Nature in ‘Macbeth’*” (114–125), Thomas LaBorie Burns analyses controversies around the concept of masculinity, and provides a gender reading of the play. Whereas female behaviour is understood as gentle (the antithesis to the inhumanity of Lady Macbeth), the concept of masculinity is of the twofold nature: *homo*, which refers to a man of good deeds and *vir*, reflecting “the dark side” of man’s personality.⁹ Much attention is also devoted to the play’s imagery of unnatural events and phenomena concomitant with evil human actions. Shakespearean language – abundant in descriptions of extraordinary reactions of nature – is complete with metaphorical references to (hu)man exposure to infection with a disease. It is the analogy to the intoxication of man’s mind contaminated with foul deeds, as *vir* taking over *homo*.

Reading gender is a problematic and challenging task which Maria Lúcia Milléo Martins undertook in her essay “*The Taming of The Shrew: Shakespeare’s Theater of Repetition*” (126–137). She concludes her linguistic analysis suggesting that the way gender is presented and portrayed in the Shakespeare’s play might reflect the Elizabethan ambiguous attitude towards gender. Bearing in mind the uncertainty this conclusion might provoke, she proposes to treat the author with ambivalence: as the chauvinist supporting the patriarchal system or as the “feminist-oriented” critic. Milléo Martins draws on Gilles Deleuze’s concept of “the theatre of repetition” which is based on the premise that “repetition” occurs on two levels: on the playwright’s level – when Shakespeare repeats the problematic paradigm of his times concerning male dominance over women, and on the other level – when the play is repeated in the process of theatrical and cinematic performances. Thus Milléo Martins compares three different interpretations of *The Shrew*, that is John Fletcher’s play *The Woman’s Prize*

⁹ In Latin *homo* means “human being” and *vir* – “adult male human being”; in post-classical Latin these two words merged to the extension of *homo* to both senses (according to *Online Etymology Dictionary*). The idea of femininity provokes an in-depth study of the subject, implicating a comprehensive selection of approaches to the subject within the field of gender studies. A case in point is an analysis of Lady Macbeth whose femininity does not correspond to traditional understanding of the term, therefore a separate study is required.

or *the Tamer Tamed* (1613), and two film productions: Franco Zeffirelli's (1966) and Charles Marowitz's (1974). And so the cycle of repetition continues.

The subsequent essay "Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Salman Rushdie's *Yorick*, and the Dilemmas of Tradition" (138–153) by Adelaine La Guardia Nogueira, focuses on the literary production of Bombay-born postcolonial British writer – Salman Rushdie – who, according to the author of this essay, belongs to the hybrid culture of "in-between". This condition of (non)belonging is considered in respect to the short story *Yorick*,¹⁰ in which Rushdie daringly rewrites Shakespeare's *Hamlet*. Foremost, *Yorick* recaptures the spirit of the literary tradition in a way that aims at destroying the literary ancestor(s), among them Shakespeare, occupying a stable position in the Eastern and Western canon. Rushdie's transgressive writing utilizes a Bakhtinian "carnivalistic sense of the world" and tends to undermine "the pantheon", and deprive the literary father(s) of their paternity, suggesting that literary texts are in constant dialogue, rather than constructed in linear and hierarchical order of mastery. The postcolonial tone is also manifested by zeroing in on overcoming the literary boundaries, and creating a cross-cultural, mixed category of texts.

A postcolonial point of view is presented by José Roberto O'Shea in his essay juxtaposing Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (first published in 1623) with Aimé Césaire's adaptation of the master text – *Une Tempête* (first published in 1969). O'Shea devotes part of his essay " 'Uhuru!': Césaire's and Shakespeare's Uncontainable Calibans" (154–173) to traditional readings of *The Tempest*, evoking the idea of the Aristotelian concept of the naturalness of slavery as a stage before civility, in which Caliban is interpreted as inferior and therefore submissive to Prospero's civilized world.¹¹ The tendency to break with this exemplar of traditional interpretations comes with revisionist criticism and re-readings of the source text, epitomized by Césaire's *Une Tempête*. Caliban (who embodies *expressis verbis* blackness) and Prospero are examined from a different perspective to the extent that the author refuses to place Caliban in the distressing position of the hated half-man, half-fish. Since, in Césaire's version of *The Tempest*, interdependence becomes a paramount bond between the oppressor and the oppressed, such interrelative influences eventually lead to the subversive end: Prospero as the oppressor becomes addicted to Caliban's presence and not the other way round. Eventually Caliban defeats Prospero with his own weapon.

Texts acquire meanings not only through relations to other literary sources, which means that works of literature are intertextual, but a piece of writing also becomes denotative (and connotative) through references to the socio-political

¹⁰ *Yorick* was published in 1994 in a collection of short stories entitled *East, West*, divided into three sections: "East", "West" and "East, West", including the stories which are settled in respective geographical areas.

¹¹ Caliban begins the play giving a shout: "Uhuru!", a Swahilian word signifying "freedom" or "independence". With an enthusiastic starting point of *Une Tempête*, the author suggestively foreshadows the subversive tone of the play.

situation at the time of its writing. William Valentine Redmond, in his essay “Intertextuality in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* and Césaire’s *Une Tempête*”¹² (174–182), draws on these two “stormy” texts which refer to variant textual sources. In spite of the fact that *Une Tempête* was published over three hundred years after *The Tempest*, the “communication” between *The Tempest* and *Une Tempête* (and between other texts in the chain of interactions and interplays) is unavoidable. Invoking the etymology of the term, intertextual texts “intermingle while weaving”, and in this respect *Une Tempête* modifies and communicates with its “father” – Shakespeare’s *The Tempest*.

A conception of metatheatre derives from autoreflexive forms of theatrical art and the specific usage of selected devices. These include the composition of the play by means of dramatic play – a special use of theatrical resources, or “play-within-play” – applied in order to engross the audience into the process of active production of meanings, interaction with the scenic reality. The metatheatrical convention, classified as a dramatic category, is discussed in Bernardina da Silveira Pinheiro’s essay – “Stoppard’s and Shakespeare’s Views on Metatheater” (183–197). Her comparative study of Shakespeare’s *Hamlet* and Tom Stoppard’s film – *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1990),¹³ leads to the conclusion that while *Hamlet* could serve as an example of intuitive metatheatre, Stoppard’s version confirms the intentional involvement of metatheatrical techniques in his production.

Jean-Luc Godard’s cinematic version of Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (1987) is examined in the essay – “Godard: A Contemporary *King Lear*” (198–206) written by Thaís Flores Nogueira Diniz. According to the author, the French filmmaker developed his interpretation as a protest against the concept of order in the world of art. Through techniques such as disconnections from master text, disharmony in the sequential narratives, fusion of elements from different sources, non-logical connections between images and characters, and all kinds of disrapture in orderliness, Godard attempted to not only mock Shakespeare’s tragedy, but primarily to manifest his view of contemporary chaos, meaninglessness and decentralized reality, where nothing is definite and understandable. Such is Godard’s *King Lear*, according to him: “meaning *nothing*”.

In the last essay “Multiple Texts and Performance in the Final Scene of *Henry V*” (207–223), Margarida Gandara Rauen carries out an intertextual analysis discussing theatrical possibilities for female parts in two versions of *Henry V*: the 1600 Quarto and the 1623 Folio. The author gives careful consideration to the roles of Princess Kate and Queen Isabel, since Q and F present these dramatis personae in a different light, provided act 5, scene 2 is

¹² This version of *The Tempest* is intended for a black theatre, being also much shorter than the Shakespearean text.

¹³ It is a screen version of Stoppard’s play *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead* (1966), intended to inverse the plot of Shakespearean *Hamlet* in such a way as to place its two minor characters – Rosencrantz and Guildenstern – at the forefront of the events.

thoroughly examined. Gandara Rauen tries to reveal through stage directions how female presence on the stage varies between Q and F and how it affects the audience. Bearing in mind that there are dissimilarities between the plays (e.g. power relations, gender representation and exploitation of irony), the director's choice of either Q or F would suggest a different approach to the play's interpretation. This awareness is crucial to gender studies where representation and power is of pivotal importance.

The collection of the essays can be divided into two sections. One of the sections consists of texts which give more synthetic critical readings of Shakespeare, while the other discusses more localised interpretations/appropriations/translations of his works, and thus, seems to give the reader a better understanding of Brazilian comprehension of Shakespeare.

The Brazilians experienced a pre-independent phase of identity development – culture in Brazil. After being at a crossroads, they eventually found the right path, an independent phase of identity development – culture of Brazil, an amalgamation of the tropical and the European. Shakespeare was present on the Brazilians' way to national consciousness, for his output turned out to be “handy” and illuminating at the same time. Seeking for firm rooting in Brazilian land and a desire to devour the foreign tradition, resulted in “wringing Brazilian Shakespeare out of his works”. Brazilians undertook an attempt to “design” Shakespeare in their own style, that is, in a “cannibalistic style”.¹⁴

Adapted to the Brazilian context, his works have undergone both slight and serious modifications, and the result is Shakespeare of the Other: transfigured, parodied, subverted. The Brazilians have started to learn how to use the language of the colonial era and the language of Shakespeare for their own purposes. The quest for *brasildade*, for Brazilian spirit, a batch of qualities which inherently indicate the nation, materialized in the form of the culture of Brazil which appropriated Shakespeare.

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¹⁴ What happened to Brazilian nation while shaping its culture on the conscious level was not a total negation and rejection of a non-native element, remaining after the era of colonization, but a dialectic movement that Oswald de Andrade (1890–1954), a Brazilian famous writer, termed “anthropophagy” in his *Manifesto Antropófago* (1928). This cannibalistic practice (cultural cannibalism) consisted in devouring the foreign, digesting “tasty bites” and vomiting unwanted “leftovers”.