CARRY THIS ISLAND HOME IN HIS POCKET": BUYING AND SELLING SHAKESPEARE

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Introduction

This chapter is concerned with the export of Shakespeare from the UK, but, more particularly, with the re-exporting of Shakespeare from other countries and its re-importing into the UK It will address the underlying questions of why Shakespeare should be traded at all, and what kind of cultural assumptions are made in the process of this trade.

Shakespeare and culture: national or international?

There is no doubt that Shakespeare has a particular status in terms of the representation of culture in general and of English culture in particular. One of the most surprising features of Frank Darabont's 1994 film The Shawshank Redemption is that, as the US prison becomes more "civilised", and Mozart is played over the tannoy, there is no performance of Shakespeare.

Elsewhere, almost everywhere, being acculturated means acquiring Shakespeare. If a teacher in a film is going to change the hearts and minds of his pupils (and teachers of this kind in films are almost always male) it will be to Shakespeare that he appeals. In Peter Weir's 1989 film Dead Poets Society (no apostrophe), in Penny Marshall's Renaissance Man (1994), in Mel Gibson's The Man Without a Face (1993), if a play is to be performed, it will be a Shakespeare play.

One of the small pleasures of contemporary life is the ability to be able to switch from a video performance of Patrick Stewart as Ulysses in Troilus and Cressida, telling us that "The enterprise is sick" (I. iii) to his role as commander of the Enterprise on Star Trek. One of the pre-Picard Star Trek films, Nicholas Meyer's The Undiscovered Country (1991) not only borrows its title from Shakespeare; it also makes Shakespeare the site of a cultural contest between the humans and the Klingons. For example, in the dinner-party scene, the apparently crude table manners of the Klingons are heightened by the discussion on the Klingon's appropriation of Shakespeare.

The relationship between Shakespeare and English culture, or between Shakespeare and Englishness, is not, however, a straightforward one. In the mid-1990s, the Typhoo Tea company ran a television advertisement which consisted of images of England (cricket, bicycles, white people, families, green fields, trawlers at sea). These images were accompanied by a sound track of Kevin Whately reading a "version" of John of Gaunt's speech from Richard II, over the music of Hubert Parry's "Jerusalem" (1916). It was a "version" of the Shakespeare speech, in that the final two words were changed from "this England" to "this Britain".

Some students of mine produced a startling alternative version of this advertisement with shots of urban squalor, police with riot shields breaking up a demonstration, and people with non-white face in order to demonstrate just how biased a view of "Britain" was being presented in the original. The final words of that speech in the original advertisement had to be altered for two reason: to avoid giving offence to the non-English parts of Britain, and, more importantly, because the Typhoo slogan, featured at the end, is "Typhoo Puts the T Back in Britain". There is no "T" in England. Kevin Whately's accent is Northern, and therefore ideal for presenting a notion of inclusive Britishness, and the closing shot of the advertisement was of the athlete Sally Gunnell wrapped in the Union Flag. Athletics is one of the few sports in which Britain competes as a United Kingdom rather than as separate nations.

Some of the problems of the island/country confusion are noted by Willy Maley in his chapter "This sceptred isle" in John J Joughin ed. Shakespeare and National Culture, (Manchester, MUP, 1977), pp. 83-108, although the advertisement to which I refer above is

not mentioned. I am not in total agreement with Maley. He is acute in observing the problem of slippage between the terms British and English in relation to Shakespeare:

Alan Sinfield's attack on Shakespeare and education [Alan Sinfield, "Give an account of Shakespeare and Education" in J Dollimore and A Sinfield eds, Political Shakespeare, (Manchester, MUP, 1985), pp.134-157] slips easily between "English" and "British". Ironically entitled "Give an account of Shakespeare and education, showing why you think they are effective and what you appreciate about them. Support your comments with precise references", this essay answers the question it poses very successfully. Shakespeare is effective in the Englishing of the British state ... Shakespeare, for half of his literary career, lived in a polity that consisted of England Wales and - contested - Ireland. The royal house was of Welsh provenance, and the Irish wars were the most pressing contemporary political conflict. [86]

But he then goes on to develop his argument with respect not to what Shakespeare writes, but what others write about him:

It is worth remembering that Jonson's famous poem addressed to Shakespeare and prefixed to the first Folio edition of 1623, having first proclaimed Shakespeare's exalted position among authors domestic and foreign, goes on specifically to situate the Bard in a British context - the words "English" and "England" do not appear in the poem. While the line which is most often quoted declares that Shakespeare was "not of an age but for all time!" the preceding couplet contradicts that claim to transcendence and universality: "Triumph, my Britain; thou has one to show,/ To whom all scenes of Europe homage owe" ... The "rise of English" in the nineteenth century would reclaim Shakespeare as narrowly English. [87]

In contrast to this view, one might observe that Shakespeare was no great respecter of the provinces: he includes parodies of the Scots, Welsh and Irish in his Histories, as well as comic Northerners - Kevin Whately beware. Nevertheless, the overall point remains: the sceptred island and the single nation are not co-terminous. One need only glance at a concordance of Shakespeare to see how little he used "Britain" or "British" in comparison to his use of "England" and "English". It would seem that, for him, Britain was largely applied to the earliest period of history, what we might know of as the time of the Ancient Britons.

Selling Shakespeare in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries

Shakespeare may now be being claimed in fiction on film by the Klingons, but his work has been part of cultural commerce for a very long time indeed. The export of Shakespeare was taking place even during Shakespeare's own lifetime through performances of his plays on continental Europe. There were touring companies performing Shakespeare in Belgium, in Germany and in Poland, and their work is now well-documented. Willem Schrickx has published two substantial articles in Shakespeare Survey on the performances of these companies in Belgium and Germany ("English Actors at the Courts of Wolfenbuttel, Brussels and Graz during the lifetime of Shakespeare", Shakespeare Survey, 33, (1980), 153-68, and " 'Pickleherring' and English Actors in Germany", Shakespeare Survey, 36, (1983), 135-48). Oswald le Winter, in "Poland" in O J Campbell and E G Quinn eds, A Shakespeare Encyclopaedia, (London, Methuen, 1966), 646-50 furnishes further information on early performances in Poland. There is, of course, a real problem here in simply how one defines certain cities as Polish or German.

John Green's company arrived at the seaport of Elblag in Sept 1607, two years after the first Polish performances by that company in Gdansk, and performed five plays by Shakespeare and one by Marlowe; all of these performances were in English. The first Shakespeare in Warsaw, again in English, was at the Royal castle of Sigismund III on November 16, 1611. It was, according to legend, The Taming of the Shrew. Since then there have been Polish translations of Shakespeare, Polish work influenced by Shakespeare, and notable Polish critics of Shakespeare, including, of course, Jan Kott,

one of the greatest of all late twentieth-century Shakespeare critics.

The earliest Polish translations of Shakespeare are, in themselves, of interest, since they are based not upon the original English, but on either German or French translations. Thomas Healy in his chapter "Past and present Shakespeares", in Shakespeare and National Culture (pp.206-32), cites Brigitte Schultze, writing in European Shakespeares, Lieven D'Hulst & Dirk Delebastita eds Philadelphia, Benjamins, 1992).
:

with Polish translations ... she ... points out that it was rare for ... these translations to refer to the original English texts. In the Polish case, rival schools of Shakespearian translation developed between those favouring a French classical model and those devoted to a German Romantic one. Because few in these Slavic cultures had opportunities to learn English, there was seldom a question of reading Shakespeare in the original and the German translation of Schlegel and Tieck became the shaping version of Shakespeare for Eastern Europe.
[222]

A Shakespeare Encyclopaedia furnishes a further gloss on the mediation between Polish translations of Shakespeare and the original English versions:

It did not help that Shakespeare was performed in French or German adaptations at this time [during the Romantic period] ... Hamlet, the first translation of Shakespeare into Polish by the "father of the Polish theatre", Woljciech Boguslawski (1757-1829) ... had been translated from a German version by Friedrich Ludwig Schroder (1744-1816) and bore only the remotest resemblance to the English original. [647]

Boguslawski's preface to his 1797 translation of Hamlet, cited by A Shakespeare Encyclopaedia, is very instructive:

The tragic drama Hamlet which we offer here to the reader is entirely faithful to the plot of Shakespeare's origina1. However, structure, acts and scenes, as well as the ending, have been changed. A long play that takes five hours to perform, a play that in disregarding the conventions of drama, destroys the audience's interest: a play that, by presenting on stage low characters and ugly scenes, cheapens tragic grandeur a play, lastly, whose ending disregards all moral purpose, punishing the guilty as well as the innocent with death; such a play could not be staged in an enlightened era without necessary improvements. Still, it could hardly be neglected because of other undeniable beauties which only Shakespeare's genius could create and make immortal. [647]

The process of translation of Shakespeare becomes, almost inevitably a process of re-inscription and "improvement". Just as, in England, Tate "improved" King Lear, so, in Poland, Boguslawski "improves" Hamlet. In his case, however, without any knowledge of the English versions of the play attributed to Shakespeare.(

Shakespeare in unexpected places

The export of Shakespeare has continued, and has flourished. There have been regular articles on Shakespeare abroad in the Shakespeare Survey (for example, the article by Chang Chen-Hsien, "Shakespeare in China", in Shakespeare Survey, 6, (1953), 112-6, since developed into a book-length study): the first eighteen volumes had a section called "International Notes". A prime part of the work of the British Council has been the export of Shakespeare. In addition, witness such private ventures as the Shakespeare Wallah project in India (represented by James Ivory in his 1965 film of that name), and Woza Shakespeare in South Africa. The whole area of this kind of export is wonderfully parodied, with particular reference to export to the USA, in Angela Carter's Wise Children.(

What is, perhaps, most surprising is the ease of reception and re-inscription of

Shakespeare by three cultures least likely to want to be associated with English culture-Nazi Germany, Japan and the USA.

In a footnote hidden away in her book Strange Attractors, (New York, Prentice Hall, 1995), Harriet Hawkins makes the tantalising observation that "The elopement of Jessica and Lorenzo posed problems for Nazi productions of The Merchant of Venice". [168]. She goes on to explain how this problem was solved, and to allude to two Shakespeare plays, Othello and Antony and Cleopatra, which were not performed in the Third Reich. But the reader may remain amazed at the Nazi's love of Shakespeare.

In his article "Shakespeare and the Nazis", History Today, 47, 5, (1997), 16-21, Gerwin Strobl gives a fascinating and full account of the way in which the plays of Shakespeare were used by the Nazis in an attempt to become the party of high culture. What is remarkable is that this took place not just I the early 1930s but during the Second World War itself. The approved translations were, of course, those from the eighteenth century, which underpinned the Polish versions of Shakespeare mentioned above. Ironically, during the winter of 1939, Berlin productions of Shakespeare outnumbered London productions by ten to one.

There have been many Japanese productions of Shakespeare, some of which, like those of Yukio Ninagawa, have been re-imported on to the London stage. Japan also boasts a replica Globe theatre, with a hologram of Shakespeare, speaking, of course, in Japanese.(

A former student of mine, Kim Sturgess, charted the way in which the USA moved very quickly from the sort of rejection all that was British in the immediate aftermath of the War of Independence represented by Hezekiah Niles's writings in the Weekly Register:

In the general prosperity, we behold the downfall of that faction which would have made a common interest with the British ... a faction which is miserable that Great Britain did not reduce us to "unconditional submission" ... We have a strong monarchical party among us, whose principle is imported from England, that must be carefully watched. [cited in Annals of America, 4, (Chicago, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 1976), p. 399.

There is a great leap from such sentiments as these [now available through an Encyclopaedia Britannica Publication!] to the speeches made at the opening of the Folger Library.

The USA was very pleased to establish the best collection of early Shakespeare texts in the Folger, outstripping the Bodleian collection in Oxford, which had made a particular policy decision at its inception, one which proved to be unfortunate.

As Sir Thomas Bodley was establishing his collection in 1612, he wrote in these terms to Thomas James, first Keeper of the Bodleian Library:

I can see no good reason to alter my Opinion, for excluding such books as almanacs, plays. and an infinite number that are daily printed of very unworthy matters and handling ... Haply some plays may be worthy the keeping but hardly one in fifty. For it is not alike in English plays and others of other nations: because they are most esteemed for learning the languages, and many of them compiled by men of great fame for wisdom and learning, which is seldom or never seen among us.(

Could it be that Sir Thomas was a direct descent of the A & R man at Decca who recorded the Beatles on New Year's Day 1962, and turned them down!

At the dedication of the Folger Shakespeare Library in 1932, as Michael Bristol, (Shakespeare's America, America's Shakespeare, (London, Routledge, 1990), pp 74-5), Alan Sinfield ("Heritage and the market" in J Dollimore and A Sinfield eds, Political Shakespeare, (Manchester, MUP, 1994), pp. 255-280, 256) and Stephen Brown ("The uses of Shakespeare in America" in David Bevingtom and Jay I Halio eds, Shakespeare, Pattern of Excelling Nature, (London, Associated University Press, 1978), pp. 230-8, 230-32) all

point out, Joseph Quincy Adams commented on the immigrants, the new Americans, who were "foreign in their background and alien in their outlook" and thus posed a threat. America, he told his audience, "seemed destined to become a babel of tongues and cultures". In those circumstances, it was to Shakespeare that America must look, a writer through whose work might be preserved their "long-established English civilisation".

Sinfield goes further, citing these words from a1985 speech by William J Bennett: "Our society ... is the result of ideas descended directly from great epochs of Western civilization ... These ideas ... are the glue that now binds together our pluralistic nation." [256]

That glue, that civilisation, includes, according to Bennett, England, France, Renaissance Athens and Periclean Athens: it does not include Spain. Making Shakespeare American allows other, non-white cultures to be excluded and suppressed. Shakespeare, by 1932, had become more than English, more than British, he had become a weapon in a war of cultural attrition.

There are many connections between Shakespeare and the USA: the very Statue of Liberty itself, which carries Emma Lazarus's poem "The New Colossus", bears through that poem a Shakespeare allusion:

Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me

There is particularly fascinating material on early American performances of Shakespeare and on the incorporation of extracts from Shakespeare into vaudeville shows in Nancy and Jean Webb's book, Will Shakespeare and His America, (New York, Viking, 1964).and in an article by Jennifer Lee Carrell ("How the Bard Won the West", Smithsonian, 29, 5 (1998) 98-107). This early US reception of Shakespeare is well represented in George P. Cosmatos's 1993 film, Tombstone.

In a more contemporary example, an extract from Philip Roth's novel American Pastoral (London, Cape 1997) reminds us of the continuing hold which Shakespeare exercises on the popular imagination of the USA. At a family dinner-party, the central character reminisces:

"Al Haberran was a great reader. No schooling but he loved to read His favorite author was Sir Walter Scott. And Sir Walter Scott, in one of his classic books, gets an argument going between the glovemaker and the shoemaker about who is the better craftsman, and the glovemaker wins the argument. You know what he says? 'All you do,' he tells the shoemaker, 'is make a mitten for the foot. You don't have to articulate around each toe.' But Sir Walter Scott was the son of a glover, so it makes sense he would win the argument. You didn't know Sir Walter Scott was the son of a glover! You know who else, aside from Sir Walter and my two sons? William Shakespeare. Father was a glover who couldn't read and write his own name You know what Romeo says to Juliet when she's up on the balcony? Everybody knows 'Romeo, Romeo, where are you, Romeo' - that she says. But what does Romeo say? I started in a tannery when I was thirteen, but I can answer for you because of my friend Al Haberman, who since has passed away, unfortunately. Seventy-three years old, he came out of his house, slipped on the ice, and broke his neck. Terrible. He told me this. Romeo says. 'See the way she leans her cheek on her hand? I only wish I was the glove on that hand so that I could touch that cheek.' Shakespeare. Most famous author in history." pp. 349-50

Shakespeare is, for everyone, the great teacher. Even for this Jewish small-time American businessman there is significance in Shakespeare, especially if it can be demonstrated that you share something with the Bard. Even a misremembered or misunderstood Shakespeare still has power. Juliet, as we know too well, does not ask "where are you?", and, to spare the reader the effort of looking up what Romeo says, his actual words are:

See how she leans her cheek upon her hand!
O that I were a glove upon that hand,

That I might touch that cheek. [I iii]

The dignity of this occupation of glove making is somehow enhanced by the biographical connection with Shakespeare and by the reference to a glove in one of his most well-known plays.

What can be sold?

What is it about Shakespeare that can be exported and imported? Little can be done with the words themselves, I would suggest, for they are tied to a culture and to a particular language. Claims for a universal Shakespeare happily ignore the historicity of the language and the single example of his use of "quick" in Hamlet V i "Now pile your dust upon the quick and the dead" may serve to indicate just how different Shakespeare's usage is from out own. The words of plays may be particularly easily disregarded, as only one aspect among many of the spectacle that is drama: that seems to be what underlies the mistake which Bodley made.

What, then, can be bought and sold?

Every work of literature has a setting. For Shakespearian drama, some of these settings are imaginary (Illyria, for example) but many are real, and where there are real places, there is real money to be made. For example, Romeo and Juliet is set in Verona, and there is every reason for the city to profit from this. A recent newspaper article commented on the restoration work done on the Casa di Guilietta:

The work includes a complete scrub of the archway leading to the courtyard ... and the renovation of the balcony itself, which ... has a habit of crumbling into dust.

And yet, as the article admits:

the whole thing is a glorious fake ... the house was picked for the job of attracting the world's tourists back in the 1920s, when ... the city fathers were on the hunt for some extra cash ... the balcony ... was built from scratch as a pure historical folly.(

To be fair to Verona, its latest tourist literature is careful not to claim authenticity: it judiciously uses terms like "legend has it" and "recreating". The house claims no more and no less than many a property in Stratford.

A further example from the Mediterranean is far more culturally complex. The island of Cyprus has now been divided for almost a quarter of a century. In the southern, Greek part of the island, it is possible to buy good, inexpensive wine: a white wine called Bellapais and a red wine called Othello. One notes that Othello is not a black wine, but is, nevertheless, placed in binary opposition to white. Its name comes from the fact that Shakespeare's play is, for the most part, set on Cyprus, and that there is a place in Famagusta called Othello's Tower. Indeed, a picture of this tower appears on the label of the wine bottle.

However, Famagusta and Othello's Tower, like the abbey of Bellapais, are not in the Greek section of the island, but in the Turkish-controlled North. The wine is made by the KEO company, based in the south, in Limassol, and they have been making these two popular wines for a very long time, long before the Turkish invasion of 1974. Much of the land in the Greek part of Cyprus is still covered in vineyards, but the Turks are much less interested in wine and have not maintained the vines on the land which they occupy. The Greeks continue to lay claim to the whole island, and the production of a wine called Othello, picturing a link with Shakespeare which they no longer control, is part of the propaganda of that claim. Another part is the performances of Shakespeare plays in the theatre at Curium, just outside Limassol. Thus, Shakespeare becomes central to contestations of culture in Germany, in the USA and in Cyprus. Perhaps, for the Greek Cypriots, there has always been mileage in a play which features an unsuccessful Turkish

invasion.

The very buildings in which performances of Shakespeare's plays take place may themselves become material objects to be marketed. There are replica Globes all over the world: some, like those in the USA and Japan , having no connection with Shakespeare; others, like that planned in Gdansk, in Poland, having a least a tenuous link. Shakespeare has become a kind of universal force for cultural cohesion, a Global Glue. It would be easy to lose sight of the fact that the replica Globe in London, now called "Shakespeare's Globe", as if only his works were ever performed there, was an American-led project, initiated by the late Sam Wanamaker . There may be a bridge here, formed by the Globe, between the vaudeville Shakespeare of the nineteenth century and the work, and style of performance of The Reduced Shakespeare Company, which we shall come to a little later.

One of the best-selling books of recent years was Jostein Gaarder's novel/philosophical treatise, Sophie's World (translated Paulette Moller, (New York, Farrar, Straus and Giroux), 1994). It was written by a Norwegian, but, at its centre, lies Hamlet, Shakespeare's Scandinavian play.

" ... in Macbeth, he says:
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
And then is heard no more; it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.''

"How very pessimistic."
"He was preoccupied with the brevity of life. You must have heard Shakespeare's most famous line?''
"To be or not to be - that is the question."
"Yes, spoken by Hamlet. One day we are walking around on the earth - and the next day we are dead and gone."
"Thanks, I got the message." p. 228

Designer Shakespeare

This kind of quotation, and the wish to underpin and validate almost all opinions by reference to Shakespeare, results in such popular publications as the Shakespeare Insults series, and books with such titles as Shakespeare on Golf, Shakespeare on Leadership, Lessons on Living from Shakespeare. (Wayne F Hill and Cynthia J Ottchen, Shakespeare's Insults, (London, Ebury Press, 1995): Lessons on Living from Shakespeare, ed. M Macrone, (New York, Cader, 1996); Shakespeare on Leadership, ed. F Talbot, (Nashville, Nelson, 1994); Shakespeare on Golf, eds J Tullius & J Ortiz, (New York, Hyperion, 1997). This is not as new a phenomenon as one might think: Hallmark, the US card company, published in 1971 a volume called We are such stuff as dreams are made on: Shakespeare on Youth, selected by Roland I Swanson Jr. With the exception of the Insults series, all of these are US publications.

There are now two ways in which to wear clothes: with the label outside if it is prestigious, or with the label hidden if the product is cheap. What kind of label is Shakespeare? Back in Cyprus, again, one can buy a T-shirt, with the slogan "Two Beer or Not Two Beer" above a picture of two foaming glasses and the attribution, in parenthesis, Shakesbeer. This is in marked contrast to some of the other Shakespeare T-shirts one can buy. The range of these products suggests that Shakespeare can be a designer label, but can also be a signifier of mass-produced tat. The Two Beer shirt is produced in Cyprus, presumably to be sold to British visitors and re-imported to the UK. In contrast, the more up-market chain, Past Times, promote shirts with witty Shakespearean quotations; Hill & Ottchen sell their Shakespeare's Insults on shirts, and the Philosophy Football Company included Shakespeare in their range of shirts even before Sophie's World.

Shakespeare as a label can be found on cheap mug in Stratford, on a tea pot labelled "not to be used as a teapot", on a beautiful teddy-bear (William Shakesbear) from the USA or on an expensive collection of Royal Doulton china.

Selling the show

Performances of Shakespeare were, as we have seen, initially exported from England. But they are now regularly imported, either on the stage, as in the Japanese production of Hamlet referred to above, or on screen in the many Hollywood versions of Shakespeare.

So popular has Shakespeare become in Hollywood (which may or may not be regarded as American) that the 1997 Oscar ceremony included a tribute to Shakespeare as a "screenwriter": the tribute was presented by Kenneth Branagh.

The Reduced Shakespeare Company has exported Shakespeare back to Britain, alongside of versions of The Bible and of The History of America: all three shows with a running time of ninety minutes. This is an entirely American, entirely Californian project, which commodifies Shakespeare, not only through performance, but also through merchandise, including a book which parodies the style and format of academic editions of Shakespeare, with huge amounts of footnotes for each tiny chunk of Shakespeare.

Their performance includes audience participation, and elements of vaudeville and physical comedy which are strongly suggestive of the early performances of Shakespeare in small towns in the West. The interaction with the audience also has similarities with the acting style adopted by the company at Shakespeare's Globe. In one respect, the Reduced Shakespeare Company is more "authentic" than the Globe, in that all its actors are male.

Much of the humour in the Reduced Shakespeare's work comes from their own writing, but some the funniest lines, the lines which win the biggest laughs, are Shakespeare's. For example, their version of Hamlet retains Shakespeare's joke at the expense of the English:

First Clown: it was the very day that young Hamlet was born - he that is mad , and sent into England.

Hamlet: Ay, marry, why was he sent into England?

First Clown: Why, because 'a was mad: 'a shall recover his wits there; or if 'a do not, 'tis no great matter there.

Hamlet: Why?

First Clown: 'Twill not be seen in him there: there the men are as mad as he. [V i]

Moreover, the agenda of their performance is the one we find everywhere: Hamlet is given most space (half the show), and large chunks of the corpus merit only a passing reference. Even King Lear gets short shrift, perhaps because even the Reduced Shakespeare Company cannot make that play funny.

The note on their book on that well-known speech from the balcony scene of Romeo and Juliet might provide a suitable place on which to end this chapter. It describes Juliet's question as "perhaps the most widely misconstrued line in all of Shakespeare". We are told that "Wherefore" means "Why", but then informed that "Juliet is asking him why he wastes all his time on his paintings ("Wherefore art thou Romeo?"). (Jess Borgeson,, The Reduced Shakespeare Company's The Complete Works of William Shakespeare (abridged), (New York, Applause Books, 1994), p. 16.).

You will be not be surprised to learn that, among the merchandise of the Reduced Shakespeare Company, is their own T-shirt.

1 See Hazelton Spencer, Shakespeare Improved : the Restoration versions in quarto and on the stage. (New York, Ungar, 1963).

2 A Carter, Wise Children, (London, Chatto, 1991). A. Sher, Woza Shakespeare, (London, Methuen, 1996).

3 See The Independent on Sunday, August 30 1998, 'Culture', 2 for a review of Ninagawa's Hamlet at the Barbican. See The Express, April 18 1997 for the Japanese Shakespeare Country Park.

4 Letters of Sir Thomas Bodley to Thomas James, ed. G. W Wheeler (1926), letter of 15 January 1612, 221-2, cited in Elizabethan-Jacobean Drama,: ed G Blakemore Evans, (London A & C Black, 1988), p. 17.

5 The Independent on Sunday Magazine July 14 1996, 41.