

at times they presented information that this reader, at least, found substantive enough to warrant inclusion in the main text. This is a book that will serve equally well in the library and the classroom, and which will necessarily factor in analyses of early modern popular culture for some time to come. While it may be the case that women's place in jesting culture has been overlooked up to this point, this book will assuredly persuade many other scholars to follow the evidentiary trail that Brown has blazed here.

REGINA BUCCOLA

Diana Brydon and Irena R. Makaryk (eds). *Shakespeare in Canada: 'A World Elsewhere'?* Toronto, Buffalo, and London: University of Toronto Press, 2002. Pp xii, 490.

This excellent collection makes a valuable contribution to theatre history in Canada. In the introduction, Irena Makaryk chronicles the history of Shakespeare productions in Canada from the early days, beginning with productions by eighteenth-century garrison troupes and gentry-elite amateurs, and continuing through the Theatre Royal, established in 1870 'by the First Ontario Rifles in Winnipeg at the rear of a store' (10), the Queen's Arctic Theatre, the first permanent theatre in Montreal, in an upper-storey warehouse (11–12), and finally the Stratford Festival. Karen Bamford, in a piece rich with archival research, traces the history of the Shakespeare Society of Toronto, 1928–69, affiliated with the political elite and committed to England and empire, which mounted a number of full productions. (The Society 'expired in 1969, shortly after Trudeau's Liberal government committed Canada to a bilingual and multi-ethnic future' [83].) Marta Straznicky discusses Shakespeare on CBC radio, 1947–55, a series which brought Shakespeare to the many Canadians with no access to live theatre, and broadcast the entire cycle of English history plays in 1953–4. Several essays discuss the seminal influence of the Massey Commission (1949–51) in sparking the quest for a national theatre. Though the 'Massey Report's vehemence concerning the classics' hindered efforts to foster Canadian playwriting (Margaret Groome 117), there is no doubt that Vincent Massey was a staunch supporter of Canadian theatre and a believer in theatre's social power (see Makaryk 22).

A number of essays criticize the Stratford Festival, for its 'automatic equation of quality with lushness and spectacle', and its habit of treating Shakespeare 'as an antique . . . [with] little relevance to present problems' (Groome 115, 118). Makaryk documents objections to Stratford's domination by foreign directors and actors, its embodiment of 'Canada's colonial dependence', and its consumerism (25). C.E. McGee notes that despite appeals to Canadian nationalism during the festival's formative phases, director Tyrone Guthrie soon abandoned his early attempts at distinctively Canadian productions.

But what emerges from nearly every essay in the collection is Canada's wonderful diversity of productions, from conventional Shakespeare to wild adaptation. We hear of an Inuit-themed *King Lear*; a British Columbia *Tempest* in which 'Ariel was played as Nanabush (an aboriginal trickster figure)' (31); an aboriginal *Tempest* acted in the Queen Charlotte Islands; a Quebec *Midsummer Night's Dream* set 'in a massive mud-bath (the audience in the first three rows was provided with plastic ponchos)' (Makaryk 34); *MacBed*, a pidgin-English adaptation of *Macbeth*; a clown *Twelfth Night*; and *Hamlet, Prince du Québec*. Michael McKinnie discusses a 1995 *King Lear* whose cross-gender casting became entangled with the affirmative action debate in Ontario. Daniel Fischlin, Mark Fortier, Lois Sherlow, and Ric Knowles discuss adaptations, beginning with *Shakespeare's Skull and Falstaff's Nose* (1889) and proceeding through *Cruel Tears* (a country-music *Othello* with Humphrey and the Dumptrucks); Djanet Sears' *Harlem Duet* (which also rewrites *Othello*); *Being at Home with Claude* (which incorporates *Pericles*); and Normand Charette's *Les Reines*, derived from *Richard III*. Not to mention *Goodnight Desdemona (Good Morning Juliet)*; *Mad Boy Chronicle (Hamlet)*; and *Cloning Miranda*.

As for performance theory, the collection is especially astute when addressing the collision between theatre practice and academic theory. Peter Ayers challenges the 'assumption ... in many academic discussions of the plays, that the relevance of Shakespeare generally, and Shakespearean production more specifically, must be defined exclusively in terms of transgression, that is, of interrogation of the text and its ideological assumptions. Only thus can a Shakespeare production be said to be doing useful cultural work' (207). Anthony Dawson (in one of the strongest essays in the collection) explores an impasse: while recent academic Shakespeare criticism deplors reducing plays to 'character', for the actors and directors whom Dawson interviewed it is 'an unquestioned truth that what the actor does is create character' (237). While academic criticism scoffs at the notion of Shakespearean timelessness and his unique insight into some transcendent 'human nature', actors and directors

remain firmly committed to these notions. Dawson even-handedly assesses strengths and shortcomings of *both* these conflicting views.

There is much pleasure in this book. Alexander Leggatt wonderfully compares legendary Canadian indecisiveness (evident perhaps in the question mark in this collection's title) with the characteristic Shakespearean 'refusal to take sides' that Keats called 'negative capability'. In addition to enjoying the droll doings of Canadian anti-Stratfordians as chronicled by Paul Yachnin and Brent E. Whitted in the essay 'Canadian Bacon', I was delighted to learn that on 2 July 1951, a mulberry tree, 'purportedly a scion of the true Shakespearean root', was ceremoniously planted in the Trinity College quadrangle at the University of Toronto (Makaryk 21). And I rejoiced to be informed that 'in 1990, a Canadian living in Oxford set the speech record for reciting Hamlet's "To be or not to be" soliloquy' (24 seconds) (38). Both as a thought-provoking cultural critique and as a treasury of delectable information, this book is outstanding.

LINDA WOODBRIDGE

Leon Craig. *Of Philosophers and Kings: Political Philosophy in Shakespeare's Macbeth and King Lear*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001. Pp 480.

This is not another book by a professional Shakespearean. Leon Craig is a long-time professor of political philosophy and the author of a well-known book on Plato's *Republic*. This effort is the culmination of 'some two decades of studying and teaching Shakespeare ... in seminars with graduate students.' The result, Craig frankly admits, is an 'old-fashioned book' that espouses 'old-fashioned views about literature' (11). I'm not sure this is the best description of a big, ambitious, provocative, and sometimes unwieldy book that uses Shakespeare as the launching pad for investigations into all sorts of things, from the nature of Time to healthy sexuality. It has the feel of a graduate seminar on Shakespeare led by a generous, broadly educated, and unusually insightful, if sometimes quirky, professor.

Craig begins his study of *Macbeth* and *Lear* (he treats several other plays more briefly) in a decidedly up-to-date fashion – with an account of his critical 'method'. Concern with epistemological questions currently dominates the