

Shakespeare and Costume. Patricia Lennox and Bella Mirabella, eds.

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Fashion not only signifies age, gender, social rank, and occupation; it also represents personality. A stage character is created through costume devices with these connotative factors. Mining playtexts, archives, and clothing materials, contributors in *Shakespeare and Costume* explore what actors wore throughout past centuries, how they used clothing in their performances, and what meaning costumes conveyed. They focus on productions on the early modern English stage (part 1), performances in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (part 2), and approaches of contemporary costume designers (part 3).

A man's appearance defines "what sort of man he wants to seem" (111), according to Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, and it also functions didactically, indicating what sort of a person he should be. This theme is taken up in part 1. Hayward, who bases her earlier work on dress at the court of Elizabeth I and James I, links the royal costumes in reality with those on stage. She argues that quality garments with markers of color, textual materials, and frequently crowns, which set the sovereign apart from others, were demanded in theatrical production. She uses actors' wills as sources to make inferences regarding their costuming and clothing, and presents that of Simon Jewell. In what seems an omission, Augustan Philips's and Thomas Pope's wills, which provide more relevant information, are unmentioned. Lin's attention to a servant's livery with the color green and "more guarded" design leads to a persuasive interpretation of Lancelot's identity formation in *The Merchant of Venice*. Richardson sees a white starched coif and kerchief as external signifiers of a righteous woman in early modern England, and discusses Falstaff's disguise with "a hat, a muffler and kerchief" and his presence in the buck-basket as an aspect of social conventions for the middling sort. Korda, starting from a slip-on leather shoe excavated at the site of the Rose Theatre, analyzes the actor's footwork on the professional stage, although it is impossible to know, she admits, whether the shoe was on the foot of an actor. She reveals that new fashions were innovated in foot attire, such as colorful silk stockings, cork-soled shoes, heeled shoes, and decorative shoe-roses made of ribbons, in the latter half of the sixteenth century; she persuasively argues that the latest fashionable accouterments were utilized by the actors for the express purpose of allowing them to demonstrate their remarkable foot skills in onstage dancing and, more importantly, as visual signs of character. Mirabella turns to a portrait of a Moorish ambassador from Morocco to Queen Elizabeth to discuss Othello's clothing. She rightly

observes that the essentials of English male attire at the time were a padded doublet and tight-fitting hose, which represented an image of masculinity, constrained power, and stability. Mirabella suggests that Othello appeared on stage in the conventional doublet and hose in order to construct his persona in the Venetian society, pointing out convincingly that the expected but foreign attire was threatening to the Moor who was arguably being translated out of his identity.

The three essays in part 2 center on modern productions. Jackson examines how the cross-dressed Rosalind was played by an actress in the last two centuries, reviewing the social conventions against appearance of their legs, although unfortunately there are no drawings or photographs of their performances. Lennox, tracing the changes in the way the Nurse was dressed and performed in *Romeo and Juliet*, reveals explicitly that her costume was associated with an image of a genteel upper servant with most of her earthy lines cut in the nineteenth century; the twentieth-century full-text productions changed the Nurse into a lively comic character with a big white headdress as an icon. Dorney's thought-provoking essay describes the costumes in productions in a Far Eastern prisoner-of-war camp and in a postwar nightclub in London, which consisted of bare necessities or a minimum of what represents a character or the theme of a play.

"A bare necessity" (203) is not irrelevant to Greenwood's remark in part 3 on "the bottom-top school of decoration," creating an appearance of luxury in costume while using inexpensive materials (210). It is drawn from her extensive experience in designing costumes, and the criteria for a satisfactory production has not changed since the early modern period. According to Morgan, the designer's job is "to make clear a character's social status" (220) and "to clarify character using such design tools as color, mass, texture, and rhythm" (222). Designers do this mainly through costumes, which are significant sources of information for audiences about a character's inner and outer self. The essays in this volume give these costumes a voice and students and stage practitioners an ear to understand a lost language through which materially based visual codes once spoke.

YUKO KOBAYASHI, *Tokyo University of Science*