Introduction

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In this issue of *Critical Survey*, the journal continues to publish cutting-edge research on Shakespeare and Renaissance literature, together with innovative work in modern literature and theatre studies.

Two articles add to the growing volume of critical work on Arab Shakespeare which substantially owes its formation to *Critical Survey* via our groundbreaking special issues, 19:3 (2007), edited by Margaret Litvin, and 28:3 (2016), edited by Katherine Hennessey and Margaret Litvin. In his article 'Challenging Hegemonic Patriarchy: A Feminist Reading of Arab Shakespeare Appropriations', Safi Mahfouz offers a feminist reading of some Arab Shakespeare appropriations, showing how some female characters in these plays have been, unlike their Shakespearean counterparts, empowered to challenge the hegemonic patriarchal structures of their societies while others remain oppressed and submissive. The featured plays include Aḥmad Shawqī's *Maṣra' Kileopatṛā* (*The Fall of Cleopatra*), Egypt, 1946; Nabyl Lahlou's *Ophelia Is Not Dead*, Morocco, 1968; Mamdūḥ Al-'Udwān's *Hamlet Wakes Up Late*, Syria, 1976; Yūsuf Al-Sāyyegh's *Desdemona*, Iraq, 1989; Jawād Al-Assādī's *Forget Hamlet*, Iraq, 1994; and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Palestine, 2011. Meanwhile, Mahmoud Al-Shetawi, a founding critic in Arab Shakespeare studies, attempts to document and examine the corpus of matters relating to the Arabic/Islamic world and culture in Shakespeare's drama and poetry in line with postcolonial discourse and theory. While the works of Shakespeare incorporate a relatively large body of Arabic materials and Islamic subjects which Shakespeare gleaned from different sources such as travel literature, narratives of pilgrims, history annals and common tales of the Crusaders, unlike many fellow playwrights of his age (for example Marlowe), none of Shakespeare's plays or poems deals solely with an Arabic theme or Oriental topic. Therefore, a scrutiny of Arabic/Islamic references and allusions in the works of Shakespeare from a postcolonial critical perspective reveals that Shakespeare had only a vague idea about Arabs and the Orient at large, and therefore represents the Orient as the *other*, exotic and bizarre, posing as an impending menace to Europe.

With reference to aspects of the career of the great twentieth-century actor-manager Donald Wolfit, and the use of the concept of provincialism in English criticism, Christopher Marlow argues that idealist and universalist values are repeatedly valorised in order to devalue materialist and what might be called

'provincial' interpretations of Shakespeare's plays. Marlow considers the conditions of production of early modern drama in the sixteenth century, and Wolfit's Second World War performances of Shakespeare, the reception of which is offered as evidence for the persistence of a critical prejudice against what is understood as provincial marginality.

Tareq Zuhair applies a Freudian methodology to examples from Shakespeare and from modern American and Palestinian literature. His article explores how neurotic displacement in Shakespeare's *Hamlet* is tacitly approached, and how this reaction has become a recurrent case in Willa Cather's *A Lost Lady* (1923) and Laila Al Halaby's *Once in a Promised Land* (2007). Zuhair analyses the incentives of neurosis in each work, how these reasons lead to the onset of displacement, and how relatively similar implications about displacement are shared between very different literary works.

Vassiliki Markidou attempts for the first time to shed light on the politics of simulation and dissimulation in sixteenth-century poet Isabella Whitney's poem 'Wyll and Testament', arguing that the poem both reflects its creator's awareness of the celebrated English historical and topographical narratives, and deviates from them by crucially omitting a seminal part of London's history, namely its Troynovant tradition. In so doing, Whitney presents a tale not of the (mythic) founding of the English capital with its patriarchal and nation-building connotations, but of its (satiric) bequeathal by benevolent femininity, as such offering its reader a different angle from which to explore and interpret early modern London. She thus creates a text that competes with the established chronicles and epic poems of London and presents a startling, slanted view of the English capital. Whitney's literary will and testament, which with its fictional, exaggerated and highly amusing 'bequests' transcends a legal one, forms a satirical reproduction of the 'real' and functions as her means of criticising the contemporary patriarchal, legal/cultural constrictions imposed on the female sex, even if only within the simulated framework of her poem.

In a new departure for the journal, Pramod K. Nayar analyses Joe Sacco's journalistic comic book *Safe Area Goražde* about the Bosnian War, published in 2000. The book describes the author's experiences during four months spent in Bosnia in 1995–96, and is based on conversations with Bosniaks trapped within the enclave of Goražde. Nayar argues that Sacco constantly draws our attention to the resilience of the Goražde people who recover from their horrific experiences of the 1994–95 massacres as a way of pointing to the continuing trauma of the same people. Nayar argues that Sacco depicts both individual and social resilience, and suggests that resilience is not a good thing after all, because it opens up already embedded vulnerability to greater exposure and an uncertain, but not secure, future.