

Auden, W(ystan) H(ugh) (1907–1973). English poet and critic. Auden's most important poetic engagement with Shakespeare is *The Sea and the Mirror: A Commentary on Shakespeare's "The Tempest"* (1944), a long poem comprising a series of dramatic monologues in which the **characters** of Shakespeare's play speak in differing **verse** forms and dictions; "Caliban to the Audience" is the most substantial address, in which **Caliban** acts as mouthpiece for the poet's philosophical and aesthetic explorations in an elaborate **Henry James**-like prose poem. The poem is constructed around dualities that Auden discerned in *The Tempest*, and meditates on such large questions as the relationship between author and audience, **body** and spirit, freedom and control, and art and life.

Auden is also a powerful Shakespearean critic, in ways even more evident since the reconstruction and publication of his *Lectures on Shakespeare* in 2000. These lectures, given in New York in 1946–1947, cover almost all of Shakespeare's plays, and are notable for the way Auden brings his particular understanding of Christian philosophy to bear on discussions of morality, and combines this with his detailed knowledge of **Sigmund Freud** in considerations of character psychology (*see also psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic criticism*). His own experience as poet and dramatist often lies behind his ability to speak authoritatively about the construction of **verse**, scene, and character; his own personality comes across too in his skepticism toward young romantic love, and in particular in the special attention he pays to outsider figures (*see also aliens and foreigners*). The Shakespeare essays of Auden's *The Dyer's Hand* (1962) include similar material more fully worked: he considers *Othello* from the perspective of **Iago**, *The Merchant of Venice* from **Shylock's**, and *Henry IV* from **Falstaff's**; but he is increasingly attentive to relationships, including that of **King Lear** and the **Fool** in the context of other Master-Servant relationships in "Balaam and his Ass." Auden also wrote the introduction to the **Signet**

edition of Shakespeare's *Sonnets* (1963), and collaborated on the libretto for an **opera** of *Love's Labour's Lost* (1973).

Further Reading: Auden, W. H. *Lectures on Shakespeare*. Ed. Arthur Kirsch. Princeton University Press, 2000.

(Peter Maber)

Barnes, Charlotte Mary Sanford (1818–1863). American author and actress. As a girl Charlotte Barnes (later Conner) played **Juliet** to the **Romeo** of her mother (Mary Barnes). Her play *The Forest Princess, or, Two Centuries Ago* (1844) adapts *The Tempest* to fit the story of Pocahontas and Captain John Smith, showing Pocahontas as an early proponent of **racial** and **gender** equality in a **colonial** world.

(Peter Maber)

Beckett, Samuel (1906–1989). Irish author. As with many of his lifelong interests, Beckett's fascination with Shakespeare can be traced back to his time at Trinity College, Dublin, in **Ireland**, where he took a course on the plays. Beckett's early works are riddled with Shakespearean **allusions**, often in the context of **death**, above all to *Hamlet*, an influence which he shares with **James Joyce**. After Beckett's move to **France**, and the paring down of his style, Shakespeare became delicately integrated into his mature works, including the French originals, but more prominently in their English counterparts. As well as in specific allusions, Beckett shows a debt to Shakespeare in the worlds he conjures, in particular the desolate climate of *King Lear*. **Lear** lurks behind Arsene's departure into the wilderness in *Watt*, and Beckett's later work often shares with Shakespeare's play a

preoccupation with **fools**, old men, references to **clothing**, and the state of nullity. The metatheatricality of Beckett's plays corresponds with Shakespeare's plays within plays: Hamm in *Endgame*, for example, is analogous to the **Player King** of *Hamlet*, as well as to **Prospero** orchestrating his revels in *The Tempest*. Again, allusion is an important part of their textures: thus Krapp will echo **Othello**, Winnie will botch lines from **Ophelia**; Clov recalls **Caliban**, and "Ohio Impromptu" refashions *The Winter's Tale*.

Further Reading: Ackerley, C. J., and S. E. Gontarski, eds. *The Grove Companion to Samuel Beckett*. Grove Press, 2004.

(Peter Maber)

Berryman, John (1914–1972). American poet, playwright, scholar, and biographer.

Initially inspired by **Mark Van Doren** at Columbia University, and **George Rylands** in Cambridge, Berryman went on to devote the greater part of his career as a scholar to Shakespearean research. He worked on a (never finished) **critical** edition of *King Lear* in the 1940s, corresponding extensively with **W. W. Greg**; then labored throughout the 1950s and 1960s on a critical **biography** of Shakespeare. This protean project delved into the elusive question of Shakespeare's identity, and became increasingly **psychoanalytic** in its approach. Though this too remained perhaps inevitably incomplete, notable essays were published in his lifetime, including the compelling portrait "Shakespeare at Thirty" and "Notes on *Macbeth*," a meticulous close reading of the play's **imagery**. Ever attracted to tricky questions of identity, Berryman also worked extensively on pursuing the possible relationship between Shakespeare and William Haughton. A collection containing much of his unfinished research, together with lectures, correspondence, and essays, was published in 1999 as *Berryman's Shakespeare*, revealing the full extent of his investigations. Though often

idiosyncratic, and at times derivative, Berryman's approach can also appear distinctly liberated in his undeterred belief that the life can be inferred from the text (*see also Shakespeare, William*).

Perhaps the most important aspect of Berryman's engagements with Shakespeare is the impact they had on his creative work. Berryman was inspired by his Shakespeare study to attempt plays, and his first project, "The Architect" (1936–1937), was modeled on *Hamlet*. His poetry also frequently drew on Shakespeare: *Berryman's Sonnets*, though **Petrarchan** in form, often echo and indeed challenge Shakespeare's *Sonnets*; and *The Dream Songs*, Berryman's greatest work, alludes frequently to the plays (for example song 85 refers to *Richard III*).

Further Reading: Haffenden, John, ed. *Berryman's Shakespeare: Essays, Letters, and Other Writings by John Berryman*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1999.

(Peter Maber)

Bond, Edward (1934–). British dramatist Edward Bond's engagements with Shakespeare foreground the political and social aspects of his plays and of his time, identifying eternally recurring power structures, prejudices, and abuses, and demonstrating their relevance to the contemporary world.

Bond drew heavily on Shakespeare for two of his plays, *Lear* (1971) and *Bingo* (1973). *Lear*, his most famous work, engages with *King Lear* in its story, its characterization, and in translating some of its **imagery** into a contemporary idiom. It shares with Shakespeare's play a climate of devastating violence, but **adapts** it to focus far more on the common people. Bond's **Lear**, as a fallen autocrat defeated by the forces of his own daughters—the **Goneril** and **Regan**-esque Fontanelle and Bodice—develops his social

conscience through his meetings with the peasant class whose suffering under his oppression he had failed to recognize. The cyclical nature of the play presents a perhaps even bleaker vision of the workings of power. **Cordelia** here is a resistance fighter, who has experienced terrible suffering, but who ultimately refuses to change the system when her people seize power. Lear is blinded during one of his times in prison, gains insight, but ineffectually. He is shot at the play's close while attempting to demolish the wall that has been the emblem of his regime and the subsequent ones.

Bingo, by contrast, paints an imaginary portrait of **Shakespeare's life**, centering on his putative **materialism**, in particular the **Welcombe enclosure** episode (*see also Shakespeare as a literary character*). Bond's Shakespeare sides with the landowners, and turns a blind eye to the suffering of the peasant class, only to commit **suicide**, guilt-ridden, in horror at the offspring he has created. The play embodies Bond's belief that **artists** have responsibilities to promote social justice not only in their works but also in their lives.

Further Reading: Cartelli, Thomas. "Shakespeare in Pain: Edward Bond's *Lear* and the Ghosts of History." *Shakespeare Survey* 55 (2002): 159–69.

(Peter Maber)

Borges, Jorge Luis (1899–1986). Argentinean writer and critic. Shakespeare for Borges is a symbol of irreducible complexity and ambiguity, and a means of exploring the mysteries of identity. The prose-poem "Everything and Nothing" (1960) imagines Shakespeare as a man haunted by an emptiness, for whom the theater and his works alone are real, and who becomes someone only through his characters. "La memoria de Shakespeare" ("Shakespeare's Memory", 1983) is the narrative of a German Shakespeare scholar, who is magically given Shakespeare's memory, enabling

him to inhabit the world of Shakespeare the man. *See also* Latin America (Spanish-speaking) and Mexico.

(Peter Maber)

Brecht, Bertolt (1898–1956). German playwright, poet, and director. Brecht's interest in Shakespeare spans his entire career, both as writer and director. It was Brecht's contention that naturalistic acting had warped the classical theater, neutering it for a comfortable bourgeois audience averse to critical analysis. At the heart of Elizabethan drama, he believed, lay irresolvable conflict, and his epic theater of wide scope and frequent disruption, he argued, was the contemporary medium that could rediscover the true nature of Shakespeare's plays. In his quest to force plays into speaking for the current age he spoke of *Aneignung*—appropriation—of the original material, adding, cutting, parodying, and rearranging scenes; both in his original plays and in his productions he foregrounded contemporary political and social concerns and introduced extratextual elements such as projections, placards, masks, music, and stage mechanisms to engineer an audience alienation that he hoped would produce critical scrutiny.

In the late 1920s Brecht adapted *Hamlet* and *Macbeth* for radio and began work on a version of *Measure for Measure* that evolved into *Die Rundköpfe und die Spitzköpfe* (*Round Heads and Pointed Heads*, 1936), an allegory of the Jews and the Aryans. In his Nazi satire *Der aufhaltsame Aufstieg des Arturo Ui* (*The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui*, 1941, 1958), the Hitler figure Ui is in part a parody of Shakespeare's Richard III; Brecht employs a Shakespearean actor to coach him, using Mark Antony's funeral oration as a practice speech.

In 1949 Brecht, together with Helene Weigel, established the Berliner Ensemble, a theater company based in East Berlin. Brecht was continually evolving thoughts for Shakespearean productions: he made substantial acting and staging notes for *Richard II*, *Macbeth*, and *Julius Caesar*,

and his *Kleines Organon für das Theater* (*Short Organum for the Theatre*, 1949) contains an entire projected scheme of direction for *Hamlet*. At his death he was planning a production of *King Lear*, and his version of *Coriolanus* was produced posthumously, by the Berliner Ensemble, in 1964, with the plebeians as Marxist proletarians and the patricians representing the bourgeoisie. The Berliner Ensemble toured in London in 1956, and their example influenced many British directors, including Peter Brook and Peter Hall, who founded the Royal Shakespeare Company along related lines. *See also* Germany; performance, 20th- and 21st-century.

Further Reading: Heinemann, Margot. "How Brecht Read Shakespeare." In *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield. Cornell University Press, 1985, 202–30.

Craig, Amanda (1959–). British journalist and novelist. Her fifth novel, *Love in Idleness* (2003), is a reworking of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, set among wealthy professionals on holiday in Tuscany.

(Peter Maber)

Eliot, T(homas) S(tearns) (1888–1965). Born American, naturalized British poet, playwright, and critic. Eliot's early criticism champions the work of **Renaissance** dramatists and poets as writing untainted by what he saw as a post-mid-17th-century separation of thought from feeling; he sought both to liberate these writers from such later approaches and to unlock their liberating possibilities. For Eliot, writing in the second decade of the 20th century, Shakespeare was increasingly misrepresented by both **criticism** and stage **performances** that imposed upon and tamed his art, depriving it of its power. Eliot sought to

reactivate Shakespeare's power to move people. His strategy involved a close scrutiny of Shakespeare's **language** and verse, attentive to the functions of **sound** and **metaphor** in order to reveal the poetic vision of the whole (*see also metrics and versification*). Eliot's discussions of Shakespeare were often bound up with the question of identifying what makes great art. In "Kipling Redivivus" (1919), and most famously in "Tradition and the Individual Talent" (1917), he held up Shakespeare as the model of the impersonal artist whose work is immortal because it is, in the final instance, personally detached.

In "Hamlet and His Problems" (1919) Eliot controversially identified the problem of *Hamlet* as a mismatch between emotion and its expression in external facts, with **Hamlet** lacking the "objective correlative" to give access to his feelings. In "Shakespeare and the Stoicism of Seneca" (1927), Eliot also caused consternation with his reading of **Othello's** final speech as an attempt at "cheering himself up." This essay has been more important for its wider argument that Shakespeare is not philosophical in the way **Seneca** was: that Shakespeare makes use of stoic thought for theatrical purposes, but his plays ultimately derive more from the observation of real life and, while tending toward intellectual formulation, express emotions more precisely.

For Eliot, however, there remained the problem of Shakespeare's coherence when viewed as an artist who drew on many **sources** but subscribed wholly to none. Eliot attempted to resolve this, beginning in his introduction to **G. Wilson Knight's** *The Wheel of Fire* (1930), by making the case for unifying poetic patterns that lie forever beyond absolute interpretation. He extended this line of thinking in his two lectures on "Shakespeare as Poet and Dramatist" (1937), to describe Shakespeare's development in terms of an increasing emphasis upon the "musical" and "ultra-dramatic" qualities that for Eliot amounted to the

total vision of a play, transcending plot and **character**; he saw the apotheosis of this kind of vision in Shakespeare's later plays.

Eliot's poetry frequently quotes from and alludes to Shakespeare, most notably to *Hamlet* in "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917); to *The Tempest* in *The Waste Land* (1922), in ways correlating with the poem's patterns of life, death, and rebirth; to *Pericles* in "Marina" (1930); and to *Coriolanus* in the unfinished *Coriolan* (1931–1932). In terms of his playwriting, Eliot drew on Shakespeare in his attempts to revive verse drama, while equally at times desiring to escape his influence, as is demonstrated in his changing thoughts on the matter of **blank verse**.

Further Reading: Warren, Charles. *T.S. Eliot on Shakespeare*. UMI Research Press, 1987.

(Peter Maber)

Ervine, St. John Greer (1883–1971). Irish author. His play *The Lady of Belmont* (1924) is a sequel to *The Merchant of Venice*, set 10 years later. It shows the deterioration of the three marriages (including a **Jessica** who has grown tired of **Lorenzo**), unsettling the apparent resolutions of Shakespeare's original. It also attempts to circumvent the problems of prejudice in making **Shylock** the most humane **character**.

(Peter Maber)

H(ilda) D(oolittle) (1886–1961). H.D.'s lifelong interest in Shakespeare was crystallized in *By Avon River* (1949), her ambivalent tribute, in which she acknowledges Shakespeare's influence and meaning for her as a poet. The work considers the role of the female writer within the dominant male literary tradition, with Shakespeare as its emblem. H.D.'s **feminism** takes a **deconstructive** and imaginative approach that ultimately transforms

Shakespeare from male threat into friend. *By Avon River* comprises two halves. The first, “Good Friend,” is a long poem centered upon the poet’s visit to **Stratford-upon-Avon** on **Shakespeare’s birthday** in 1945, taking its title from his gravestone’s **epitaph**, which curses any who will move his bones. H.D. does just that. Viewing Shakespeare as a “thief,” this poem too takes imitation and **adaptation** as its creative strategies. Its symbolic figurehead is the invisible and voiceless **Claribel** from *The Tempest*, for whom the poet imagines a life in the form of a personal and religious quest for identity: Claribel is finally transformed from a passive **marriage** token, and from the bonds of her creator, into an independent, spiritual being.

By contrast, the second half, “The Guest,” situates Shakespeare in his own time in a **modernist** essay on Elizabethan poetry; but again the aim is a positive feminist revision, and facts yield to the imagination. In imagined scenes from **Shakespeare’s life**, it is **Mary Arden** and **Judith Shakespeare** who take center stage, and whose power anticipates a female literary tradition. Shakespeare’s difference is explored by presenting him as an androgynous man and a “heretic” writer who transcends dogma in dangerous times. Thus, H.D. fashions a proto-modernist Shakespeare who can be her mentor, not her oppressor. *See also women and adaptations in the 20th and 21st centuries.*

Further Reading: Friedman, Susan Stanford. “Remembering Shakespeare Differently:

H.D.’s *By Avon River*.” In *Women’s Re-Visions of Shakespeare*, ed. Marianne Novy. University of Illinois Press, 1990, 143–64.

(Peter Maber)

Hughes, Ted (1930–1998), English poet, children’s writer, and essayist, born Edward James Hughes. Hughes’s poetry has engaged memorably with Shakespeare on a number of

occasions, notably in “Crow’s Song about Prospero and Sycorax” (1971), in which the fate of the **witch** (**Sycorax**) is seen as inextricably bound up with **Prospero**’s fate, and in “Setebos” (1998), which returns to *The Tempest* to reflect on Hughes’s relationship with Sylvia Plath. As a scholar Hughes worked on Shakespeare on and off for many years: *Shakespeare and the Goddess of Complete Being* (1992) was the summation of his investigations. In this study he argues that Shakespeare’s mature plays are bound together in their plots and **imagery** by a “tragic equation,” whereby the hero falls in love with an ideal, only to doubt it, resulting in destruction, and sometimes redemption; Hughes traces this idea back to *Venus and Adonis* and *The Rape of Lucrece*. Though praised for its **textual criticism**, the work was criticized for its assumptions about **religion** in the **Renaissance**. *See also criticism, history of.*

(Peter Maber)

Lessing, Doris May (1919–2013). Persian-born British writer, best known as a novelist, whose upbringing in southern **Africa** strongly influenced her work. Lessing was a strong opponent of apartheid, and many of her works deal with forms of prejudice, above all those arising through **colonialism**. *The Tempest* fittingly holds particular significance for her. Her *Children of Violence* series **alludes** to this Shakespeare play on several occasions, most notably in its concluding part, *The Four-Gated City* (1969), in which the past and redemption are major concerns. The protagonist, Martha Quest, dies on an island that she has conceived as a transcendent **utopia** similar to **Gonzalo**’s “commonwealth” (in *The Tempest* 2.1.148). In 2007, Lessing was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

(Peter Maber)

Malouf, David (1934–). Australian novelist, short story writer, and cultural commentator, Malouf has frequently cited Shakespeare as an inspiration. His collection of

stories, *Dream Stuff* (2000) takes its title from *The Tempest* (“we are such stuff / As dreams are made on,” 4.1.156–57), and the title story owes something to **Prospero** in its portrayal of an aging writer who returns to his hometown to confront his past and his sense of self.

Malouf addressed the eighth **World Shakespeare Congress** held in Brisbane, **Australia**, in 2006 on “Shakespeare the Writer.”

(Peter Maber)

Nabokov, Vladimir (1899–1977). Russian American novelist, short story writer, and scholar, who cited Shakespeare among his greatest influences and admired above all the complexity of his **language**. Nabokov at various stages called into question Shakespeare’s identity, beginning with the Russian poem “Shakespeare” (1924), which describes a faceless Shakespeare who exists apart from the known biographical details (*see also biographies of Shakespeare; Shakespeare, William*). In a 1941 review of Frayne Williams’s *Mr. Shakespeare of the Globe*, Nabokov was scathing about the indulgences of biographical speculation, and his antitotalitarian *Bend Sinister* (1947) again pokes fun at the **authorship question**, painting a picture of a willfully protean and disruptive Shakespeare. The novel’s principal concern is with the complexities and potential abuses of interpretation and **translation**. In an extended episode on *Hamlet*, the police state demands a production of the play based on a political interpretation suiting its own ends; however, a money-driven **film** version is shown to be no less distorted.

Nabokov’s *Pale Fire* (1962), a novel in the form of a long poem of the same title, together with a critic’s foreword and commentary, takes its title from **Timon’s** speech on thievery in *Timon of Athens* (4.3.437–38: “the moon’s an arrant thief, / And her pale fire she snatches from the sun”), underscoring its own frequent literary thefts and its metafictional qualities. Both its poetry and its prose are steeped in Shakespeare, and the college at which

the fictional authors are based even has a grove containing every kind of tree mentioned in Shakespeare. The multifaceted possibilities for interpreting the convoluted narrative and its characters serve to emphasize the instability of identity that Nabokov found in Shakespeare.

See also Russia and the Former USSR (Shakespeare in).

Further Reading: Graves, Herbert. "Nabokov and Shakespeare: The English Works." In *The Garland Companion to Vladimir Nabokov*, ed. Vladimir E. Alexandrov. Garland, 1995; Schuman, Samuel. "Nabokov and Shakespeare: The Russian Works." In *The Garland Companion to Vladimir Nabokov*, ed. Vladimir E. Alexandrov. Garland, 1995.

Peter Maber

O'Neill, Eugene (1888–1953). American dramatist. His father, the classical actor James O'Neill, was the inspiration for the Shakespearean James Tyrone of his play *Long Day's Journey into Night* (1941, 1956); as a boy, O'Neill learned the entire part of **Macbeth** as a wager with his father. Shakespeare came to be the major unacknowledged influence on his plays. Though O'Neill would align himself more readily with **August Strindberg** and Friedrich Nietzsche, the catalog of Shakespearean **allusions** in his work is vast and varied. *Long Day's Journey into Night* marks the climax of these references, encompassing *Othello*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest* among other allusions; a **portrait** of Shakespeare watches over the Tyrone's living room.

Further Reading: Berlin, Normand. *O'Neill's Shakespeare*. University of Michigan Press, 1993.

(Peter Maber)

Rylands, George “Dadie” (1902–1999). Shakespearean scholar, actor, and director

George “Dadie” Rylands was a Fellow of King’s College, Cambridge. He became the key figure in the university’s **Marlowe** Society, directing productions that continued the society’s project of bringing **Elizabethan** and **Jacobean** drama back into the **repertory**, and of rejecting **Victorian** conventions in favor of ensemble acting, the carefully measured delivery of **verse**, pared-down sets, clarity of direction, and above all close scrutiny of the text. He directed **John Gielgud**’s seminal *Hamlet* at the Theatre Royal in Haymarket in 1944, and his 1939 anthology, *The Ages of Man*, was the basis for Gielgud’s solo performances. Between 1957 and 1964 he recorded the landmark complete works of Shakespeare for the **British Council**, mixing undergraduate and professional actors. Through his protégés **Peter Hall** and **John Barton**, who went on to found the **Royal Shakespeare Company**, and later **Trevor Nunn**, Rylands influenced the mainstream course of English Shakespearean performance.

(Peter Maber)

Schwartz, Delmore (1913–1966). An American poet, short story writer, playwright, and

essayist, Schwartz once listed Shakespeare as his greatest influence. Early on he imitated the Sonnets, and in his first volume, *In Dreams Begin Responsibilities* (1938), Schwartz experiments with mock-Elizabethan syntax and diction, as well as referencing the plays, especially *Hamlet* and *Coriolanus*. “Coriolanus and His Mother” is a long dramatic poem occupying a third of the volume. It conjures up an imaginary version of Shakespeare’s play, watched by the ghosts of Aristotle, Beethoven, Marx, and Freud, who provide commentary on the action and bring ideas of determinism to the fore. The poet initially watches too and identifies with Caius Marcius, who here displays an extreme narcissism; the poet then takes to the stage in the guise of the fool, to provide entertainment between the acts. Schwartz returned to Shakespeare in his least successful volume, *Vaudeville for a Princess* (1950), which contains prose travesties of *Hamlet* and *Othello*.

sonnet, the 20th century Shakespearean. By the end of the 19th century, the sonnet had evolved into a highly flexible form that could encompass a large range of subjects beyond its traditional association with love **poetry**. In the first few years of the 20th century, there was still a trend for traditional sonnets, but with the advent of modernism such compositions began to be viewed as outmoded and insignificant. However, instead of being made redundant by modernist free verse, the sonnet form became fractured, dissonant, and subversive, and 20th-century poets began, and continued, to appropriate the form to rebel against it from within.

Wilfred Owen's "Anthem for Doomed Youth" (1917), which melds the Italian form with the English **rhyme** scheme, inaugurated the century's exploration of the sonnet's dark and ironic possibilities by situating it in the midst of death and warfare. While many major British poets have more or less steered clear of the English form—**W. H. Auden**'s two sonnet sequences, for example, are both **Petrarchan**—their American counterparts have more readily rediscovered it. For example, e. e. cummings wrote a number of sonnets, including "when what hugs stopping earth than silent is" (1940), perfectly Shakespearean despite some half-rhymes and minor metrical disturbances, and dealing too with love, time, and natural **imagery**, demonstrating that even the most experimental of poets found that the form could speak for them.

Berryman's Sonnets (1967), **John Berryman**'s sequence of 115 Petrarchan sonnets from the 1940s, charting an extramarital affair, is set up as a rival to Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, and frequently alludes to the latter. His contemporary Robert Lowell also engaged prolifically with the form; "Night Sweat" (1964), for example, comprises two sonnets that subtly adapt

the Shakespearean pattern, finally breaking free, reflecting the poem's anguished consideration of art's difficult relations to life. Seamus Heaney, an accomplished sonneteer, has similarly used the form to reflect on complex relations between freedom and control, both prosodic and political: in his "Act of Union" (1975) the Shakespearean sonnet rhyme scheme reflects the impositions of **Britain** upon **Ireland**. More recently, the New Formalism that emerged in mid-1980s has seen a return to purer versions of the form.

(Peter Maber)

Soyinka, Wole (1934–). Nigerian author and political activist whose interest in Shakespeare can be traced back to his time studying Shakespeare in **Britain** with **G. Wilson Knight**. Best known as a playwright, Soyinka has frequently drawn upon his understanding of Shakespeare both in perfecting his dramatic craft and as an explicit point of reference. A *Dance of the Forests* (1963), his first major play, alludes to *Macbeth* in its title and in its **apparitions** and prophecies, while *Kongi's Harvest* (1967) has been compared in depth to the **Henriad** cycle of Shakespeare's **history plays**. During his imprisonment during the Nigerian Civil War, Soyinka wrote the **sonnet** "Hamlet" (1972), critiquing while at the same time identifying with **Hamlet's** inaction. Such belief in the living power of the past is also the theme of Soyinka's important essay, "Shakespeare and the Living Dramatist" (1983), in which he speaks of the liberation and even revolution that Shakespeare can make possible. The essay focuses principally on Shakespearean **translations** and **adaptations** by Arab authors (*see also Arab Shakespeares*), and Soyinka cites *Antony and Cleopatra* as the play that best lends itself to Arab and African interpretations. *See also Africa*.

Further Reading: Gibbs, James. "The Living Dramatist and Shakespeare: A Study of

Shakespeare's Influence on Wole Soyinka." *Shakespeare Survey* 39 (1987): 169–78;

Soyinka, Wole. *Collected Plays*. Oxford University Press, 1973–1974; Soyinka, Wole. “Shakespeare and the Living Dramatist.” In *Art, Dialogue, and Outrage: Essays on Literature and Culture*, ed. Soyinka Wole. Pantheon, 1988, 147–62.

(Peter Maber)

Stoker, Bram (1847–1912). Irish novelist, short-story writer, and critic. Also **Sir Henry Irving**’s theater manager at the **Lyceum Theatre** in **London**, Stoker published *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* in 1906. The Bram Stoker Collection, which contains Stoker’s complete chronicles of his work with Irving between 1878 and 1895, is housed in the Shakespeare Centre Library at the **Shakespeare Birthplace Trust** in **Stratford-upon-Avon**. Recently, critics have begun exploring the influence of Shakespeare on Stoker’s *Dracula* (1897).

Further Reading: Belford, Barbara. *Bram Stoker: A Biography of the Author of Dracula*. Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1996.

(Peter Maber)

Turgenev, Ivan (1818–1883). Russian author. Turgenev inaugurated Russian “Hamletism” with his short story “Gamlet Shchigrovskogo uezda” (“Hamlet of Shchigrovsky District”, 1849, collected in *Zapiski okhotnika (A Sportsman’s Sketches)* [1852]), in which the narrator meets an introspective outsider, who is highly educated but discontented with life, and feels himself to be shallow and insignificant. This Russian Hamlet, together with the protagonist of his related story, *Dnevnik lishnego cheloveka (The Diary of a Superfluous Man*, 1850), has come to stand for the disillusionment felt by intellectuals of Turgenev’s generation. Turgenev developed his ideas about the type in his essay “Gamlet i Don-Kikhot”

(“Hamlet and Don Quixote”, 1860), in which he identifies two fundamental contrasting natures: the Quixotes, who are uncritical, steadfast, and altruistic, and the Hamlets, who are discriminating, indecisive, and egocentric. Turgenev also transposed *King Lear* to Russia in the short story “Stepnoy Korol Lir” (“A Lear of the Steppes”, 1870). *See also* Cervantes Saavedra, Miguel de.

(Peter Maber)

Van Doren, Mark (1894–1972). American author and scholar. Mark Van Doren’s principal work of Shakespearean **scholarship** is *Shakespeare* (1939), an accessible study that considers each of the plays in turn without scholarly appendages, footnotes, or sources. Van Doren was a professor at Columbia University in New York, and this work is in many respects the product of the Shakespeare course he taught there in the 1930s. His approach ranges from close readings to broad surveys, and he incorporates insights and anecdotes gleaned from his experiences of teaching. This clear, fresh study has enjoyed renewed popularity since coming back into print in 2005.

(Peter Maber)

Wallace, David Foster (1962–2008). American novelist, short story writer, and essayist. Wallace’s encyclopedic novel *Infinite Jest* (1996) takes its title from Hamlet’s speech on Yorick (5.1.185). The novel’s many thematic links with *Hamlet* include suicide, madness, usurpation, arbitrariness, doubt, and redemption; there are also motivic links, including a repeated attention to skulls. One of its main characters, Hal Incandenza, has seen his uncle take his father’s position after the latter’s death; his father later communicates from the afterlife, and there are suggestions of his

mother's infidelity. Hal reads *Hamlet* in order to assist with a conceptual film project, and debates the play's representation of madness.

(Peter Maber)

Wesker, Arnold (1932–). British playwright Arnold Wesker's principal engagement with Shakespeare is his 1976 *Shylock* (originally *The Merchant*, but renamed in 1980), an antithetical *Merchant of Venice*. Wesker's version emerged out of his conviction that the play is anti-Semitic beyond redemption. His answer was to return to Shakespeare's **sources** and to study histories of **Jews** in the **Renaissance** in search of alternative accounts and new possibilities of characterization. Wesker reverses the traits of Shakespeare's **characters** traits wherever possible: his **Shylock** is sociable, cultured, and sincere in contrast to the philistine **Venetians**; his **Portia** sees through **Bassanio** as a scheming fortune hunter. Wesker's 1997 book *The Birth of Shylock and the Death of Zero Mostel* charts via his journals the ill-fated 1977 **Broadway** production. Wesker has since been critical of subversive Shakespeare productions: he argued that **Trevor Nunn**'s 1999 production of *The Merchant of Venice* amounted to a revisionism that is, for him, not the answer to addressing the problems of its prejudices. In 2006 Wesker wrote **abridgements** of *Much Ado about Nothing* and *Henry V* for the National Youth Theatre of Great Britain.

Further Reading: Rozett, Martha Tuck. "Shakespeare Transformed: *The Merchant of Venice*." In *Talking Back to Shakespeare*. University of Delaware Press, 1994.

(Peter Maber)

Wyman, Lillie Buffum Chace (1847–1929). American author and social reformer. Wyman's *Gertrude of Denmark: An Interpretive Romance* (1924) imagines the story of Hamlet's mother from

her perspective, covering her early years through to the events of Shakespeare's play. The novel is a defense of Gertrude, elaborating upon the events of *Hamlet* to reveal what might lie behind her public facade.

Further Reading: Rozett, Martha Tuck. "Gertrude's Ghost Tells Her Story: Lillie Wyman's *Gertrude of Denmark*." In *Cross-cultural Performances: Differences in Women's Re-visions of Shakespeare*, ed. Marianne Novy. University of Illinois Press, 1990, 70–85.

(Peter Maber)

Yeats, William Butler (1865–1939). Irish poet, playwright, and critic. Yeats inherited a love of Shakespeare from his father, the painter Jack Butler Yeats, and Shakespeare rapidly became central to his cultural consciousness. In terms of his own writing, Yeats was ambivalent about the use he had for Shakespeare. In some ways he could align his project of reviving poetic, nonrealistic drama with Shakespeare's transformation of the stage; but for his nationalistic purpose he found Shakespeare less helpful, not for his Englishness so much as for his heterogeneity. Yeats's Cuchulain cycle of plays, however, are in a sense analogous to Shakespeare's **Henriad** plays in their creation of a national identity for an Irish audience.

Yeats's essay "At Stratford-on-Avon" (1901) testifies to his engagement with Shakespeare **criticism**: he reacted strongly against the **Victorian** argument for the realism and morality in Shakespeare, above all in the criticism of **Edward Dowden** (1843–1913). Instead, Yeats insists on the impersonality of Shakespeare's plays, placing the emphasis on the **verse** and on visionary qualities that reach beyond the world, and points to the productions of **Gordon Craig** (1872–1966) as a hopeful example of transcending realism. Yeats notably subverts the Victorian allegories of *Richard II* as the story of a weak king

deposed by a hero, rereading the play in terms of **Richard II**'s otherworldly poeticism set against the pragmatic cynicism of **Bolingbroke**, with overtones of **English** rule in **Ireland**.

Yeats later attempted to situate Shakespeare historically and psychoanalytically (*see also psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic criticism*); in *A Vision* he sees Shakespeare setting literature free from the tyranny of the **church** by allowing human personality to come to the fore in his works, and he attempts a detailed analysis of Shakespeare's own personality.

Yeats's poetry frequently alludes to Shakespeare, above all to *Hamlet*; the catalog of discerned echoes throughout his creative writing career amounts to more than 60 entries.

Further Reading: Desai, Rupin W. *Yeats's Shakespeare*. Northwestern University Press, 1971.

(Peter Maber)