



25 May 2011 (Wed)

Macbeth, National Taiwan University

This was no doubt the most inventive production in the Festival. The whole presentation was a showcase for some fine performing skills on the part of all of the actors. The singing; the use of percussion and other musical instruments; the innovative sets and lighting and sound effects, all contributed to the powerful theatrical effect of this performance. The acting of Macbeth [David Ting Ta-Wei], Lady Macbeth [Anita Wang Ying-Jeng] and Chorus [Umy Chang Yi-Hsuan] was like wise of a high quality. While I have the greatest admiration for the creativity of the director [Bi-qi Beatrice Lei] I feel that there is one central problem with this presentation. It is not really a presentation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* but rather a new play entitled *Macbeth: A Political Allegory*. There are a whole series of plays by the dramatist Charles Marowitz which use the collage technique that was employed in this presentation. This approach uses the words of Shakespeare's plays but cuts them up and relocates them and often assigns lines to different characters from those who originally spoke them in Shakespeare's play. The point is that in these new plays the 'action' [ie what the play is about, its meaning] is different from the 'action' of Shakespeare's dramas. I kept wishing that the very fine talents of the actors and of the director could have been directed towards presenting an innovative production of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. In many ways this presentation fragments the original so much that there is little chance for the performers to show any character development. Even the excellent "Tomorrow, and Tomorrow" song that was sung in its entirety at the presentation dinner and which consequently had overall coherence, was fragmented in the performance and became difficult to follow. Despite my reservations I believe that it was quite appropriate to reward this imaginative presentation. This performance was awarded the prize of 1st Runner-up.

Prof. Geoffrey Borny