

RECONSTRUCTING SHAKESPEAREAN SOUNDSCAPES:  
TABLEAUX VIVANTS, INCIDENTAL MUSIC, AND EXPRESSIONS OF NATIONAL  
IDENTITY ON THE LONDON STAGE, 1855-1911

by

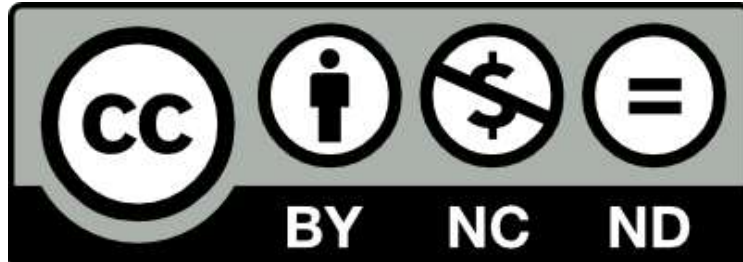
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DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

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## Abstract

This thesis explores incidental music written to accompany *tableaux vivants* in London Shakespeare productions from 1855-1911. Through an analysis of the interaction between these pictorial interpolations and their accompanying soundscapes, I argue that incidental music and stage picture combined to comment on English national identity through the cultural authority of the national poet. As the structure of this thesis demonstrates, I argue that these accompanied tableaux helped to form and perpetuate three interrelated myths related to English national identity: the myth of Merrie England (Part One), the myth of benevolent imperialism (Part Two), and the myth of national religion (Part Three).

To discuss these strands of national identity, I analyze their presence in two separate productions on Victorian or Edwardian stages. The first chapter of each part addresses a scene from *King Henry VIII*, which due to its episodic structure, elaborate stage directions, and engagement with a well-known period of English history, made it a perfect vehicle for spectacular *tableaux vivants* through which protestations about England and Englishness could be expressed. As such, Chapters 1, 3, and 5 explore three tableaux inherent in the text that were subsequently expanded on the nineteenth century stage: the masque at York Place (1.4); the coronation of Anne Bullen (4.1); and Katherine's vision at Kimbolton (4.2). The analogous chapter of each Part (Chapters 2, 4, and 6) discuss another Shakespearean production that engaged with similar themes and expressions of national identity as the respective *Henry VIII* tableaux. These include Herbert Beerbohm Tree's stagings of the masque at Herne's Oak in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1902), two interpolated tableaux in his *King John* (1899), and a series of interpolated tableaux in his staging of *The Merchant of Venice* (1908).



A majority of the music referenced throughout this thesis has not been heard since it was played in its original production. To bring this music back into scholarly discourse, I have digitally reconstructed these selections using a music-writing software that has produced sound files and modernized sheet music for these selections, available in the digital appendix to this thesis.<sup>1</sup> This does not include a handful of previously recorded selections, including Edward German's music for *Henry VIII* and Arthur Sullivan's music for *Merry Wives*, for which I have provided links to these professional recordings. Readers are encouraged to listen to these musical selections as they read. Above all, this thesis aims to showcase how considering musical accompaniments written for the Victorian and Edwardian stage can change our understandings of these productions and the role of incidental music in the theatre.

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<sup>1</sup> See <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PyPGZ4whl5dXqp6r8TUadg8nMUGroUuv> for digitized playback sound files of music; see [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fuFVYaUeM8Cx5\\_bWnr17Yr3EG73V4fHS](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fuFVYaUeM8Cx5_bWnr17Yr3EG73V4fHS) for PDFs of transcribed music.

*In loving memory of my grandparents:*

*James Thomas Chambers  
(1932-2017)*

*and*

*Mabel Ann Scott Chambers  
(1934-2018)*

*“I sing because I’m happy,  
I sing because I’m free,  
For his eye is on the sparrow,  
And I know he watches me.”*

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## General Introduction

At the 2016 World Shakespeare Congress, I attended a panel run by the Royal Shakespeare Company's Head of Music Bruce O'Neill that sought to answer a simple question: "What did music offer Shakespeare that he couldn't achieve with words alone?"<sup>1</sup> In O'Neill's twenty-minute, interactive demonstration, two actors performed a short, pantomimic scene containing a singular movement: running towards each other and meeting face-to-face at the center of the room. Underneath this, musicians played a selection of accompaniments from the RSC's repertoire, changing the music each time the scene was played out. Those in the audience were asked to write down how changing the music for each run altered the meaning of the action. Responses varied based entirely on the tonality of the accompaniment, ranging from the meeting of two lovers accompanied by soft, romantic strains; a confrontation between two enemies accompanied by an intense, frenzied soundscape in a minor tonality; and the reuniting of old friends accompanied by jovial, lighthearted music. The aim of the panel was to show audiences "the impact of music on both the drama and the audience" and to demonstrate how integral music is in shaping atmosphere and making meaning in the theatre.<sup>2</sup> By looking at the effect of different accompaniments on a single scene, O'Neill's experiment allowed panel attendees to consider the aural potentialities of accompanying music within dramatic performance, particularly in scenes with no dialogue. Music emerged as the single theatrical tool used to create atmosphere, make meaning, and evoke emotional response.

The learning that I took from this experiment as a first-year PhD student interested in incidental music used in nineteenth-century Shakespeare performance became central to the focus

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<sup>1</sup> Bruce O'Neill et. al., 'Music in Shakespeare', *World Shakespeare Congress* (2 August 2016).

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

and outcome of this project. To riff on the question posed by O’Neill, the central question I aim to answer here is: What did music offer Victorian and Edwardian productions of Shakespeare that could not be achieved by words or scenery alone? To follow this line of questioning further, in an age of overtly pictorial theatre, how did music work in tandem with spectacular *mises-en-scene* to create atmosphere and make meaning? How might reviving and reconsidering this music alongside what we already know about the pictorial stage change our understanding of Shakespeare performance during this period? Finally, if we consider this music in context with Victorian and Edwardian society and culture, what did this music – via its inclusion in Shakespeare productions – express or assume about England or Englishness? What did this music represent for Victorians and Edwardians and how was it mobilized within productions to make precise (and often topical) social, political, and religious comment?

To answer such questions, Adrian Poole suggests that “we have to slow the story up and delve back in time with informed imagination. Then we can begin to apprehend what it meant to be grasped by the sensory assault of the gorgeous scenery, the insistent music, [and] the charisma of the actors.”<sup>3</sup> Many studies on Victorian and Edwardian theatre tend to focus on the “gorgeous scenery” of productions, calling attention to the spectacular nature of the theatre, the mechanics and technologies required to create these spectacles, and the relationship between nineteenth-century visual culture and theatrical *mises-en-scene*.<sup>4</sup> Other studies on nineteenth-century drama

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<sup>3</sup> Adrian Poole, *Shakespeare and the Victorians* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2004), p. 24.

<sup>4</sup> There is a wide range of material that could be cited in reference to the pictorial nature of the nineteenth-century stage. Publications consulted for this thesis include: Stuart Sillars, *Shakespeare Seen: image, performance and society* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2019); *Shakespeare and the Visual Imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015), *Shakespeare, Time, and the Victorians* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012); and *The Illustrated Shakespeare, 1709-1875* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008). Michael Booth, *Theatre in the Victorian Age* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1991); and *Victorian Spectacular Theatre, 1850-1910* (Boston, Mass.; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981).

focus on “the charisma of the actors”, exploring how acting styles evolved over the course of the century, the rise of the actor-manager system, the role of actresses as working women, and biographical studies on some of the most well-known figures of the London stage.<sup>5</sup> The “insistent music” of the Victorian and Edwardian stage, by comparison, has received significantly less attention than scenery and actors, despite the fact that exploring such music can often illuminate an aspect of the pictorial stage or a specific feature of an actor’s performance or gestural technique that might otherwise go unnoticed.

In this sense, Stephen Cockett observes that “our retrospective view of nineteenth century theatrical performance has been diminished by the loss of the original orchestral ‘sound track’”, and with this in mind, my thesis seeks to fill the gaps in our collective knowledge of incidental music used in Shakespearean productions in late-nineteenth and early-twentieth century London.<sup>6</sup> Far from arguing against the pictorial nature of the nineteenth-century stage, I show how music enhanced and made meaning of both the scenic features and the gestural acting styles dominant in this century, often driving narrative, creating atmosphere, and heightening the emotions of both

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<sup>5</sup> There are also a wide range of biographical studies on actors and actor-managers from this century. Those relevant to this thesis include: Jeffrey Richards, *Sir Henry Irving: a Victorian actor and his world* (London: Hambledon and London, 2005); Henry Irving, *Theatre, culture and society: essays, addresses and lectures*, ed. by Jeffrey Richards (Keele: Ryburn, 1994); Richard Foulkes (ed.), *Henry Irving: a re-evaluation of the pre-eminent Victorian actor-manager* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008); Nina Auerbach, *Ellen Terry: player in her time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997); and Katherine Cockin (ed.), *The Collected Letters of Ellen Terry*, Vols. 1-6 (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2011). Gill Perry, with Joseph Roach and Shearer West, *The First actresses: Nell Gwynn to Sarah Siddons* (London: National Portrait Gallery, 2011); Linda Kelly, *The Kemble Era: John Philip Kemble, Sarah Siddons and the London stage* (London: Bodley Head, 1980); Robyn Asleson (ed.), *A Passion for Performance: Sarah Siddons and her portraitists* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Museum, 1999); and Russ McDonald, *Look to the lady: Sarah Siddons, Ellen Terry, and Judi Dench on the Shakespearean stage* (Athens, GA; London: University of Georgia Press, 2005); Gail Marshall, *Actresses on the Victorian Stage: Feminine Performance and the Galatea Myth* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998); Tracy Davis, *Actresses as Working Women: Their Social Identity in Victorian Culture* (London: Routledge, 1991); Peter Holland (ed.), *Great Shakespeareans: Garrick, Kemble, Siddons, Kean*, Vol. 2 (London: Continuum, 2011); and Richard Schoch (ed.), *Great Shakespeareans: Macready, Booth, Terry, Irving*, Vol. 6 (London: Continuum, 2011).

<sup>6</sup> Stephen Cockett, ‘Music and the Representation of History in Charles Kean’s Revival of Shakespeare’s *Henry V*’, *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, Vol. 34, no. 1 (June 2007), pp. 1-14 (p. 1).

performers and spectators. As Michael Pisani points out, it is useful to think of incidental music just like any other mechanical feature of the stage: “the ‘mechanics’ of production, including music, loom as important as dialogue, acting style, and scenic design.”<sup>7</sup> As such, to “delve back in time” to the world of nineteenth century theatre, as Poole suggests, without recognition of the “insistent music” featured in these productions ultimately offers the theatre historian a reductive glimpse at these dramatic performances. The case studies in this thesis aim to show how considering incidental music alongside what we already know about Shakespeare performance in this century brings new information to light and provides the theatre historian with a fuller understanding of how stage picture, actor, and incidental music were designed to work in tandem.

Paradoxically, music for stage plays was simultaneously invisible and indispensable, unremarkable, and yet, fundamental to the effectiveness of the production. Incidental music was rarely discussed in any significant detail in performance reviews, which in turn, has given the impression that it was a trivial feature of these productions; however, if all music were to be suddenly removed from any given performance, the dramatic shape and atmosphere of the performance would have been reduced significantly. As Cockett states, it would be equivalent to “watch[ing] a familiar film sequence without its music; the alteration of effect and meaning would be immediately noticeable.”<sup>8</sup> Music’s integral role in heightening the emotions of the audience, while remaining perceptually invisible, is typified in Charles Reade’s reflection on Edwin Ellis’ music for Dion Boucicault’s melodrama *Arrah-na-Poge* (1864):

I suppose two million people have seen Shaun the Post escape from his prison by mounting the ivied tower, and have panted at the view. Of those two million how

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<sup>7</sup> Michael Pisani, ‘Music for the theatre: style and function in incidental music’, in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian and Edwardian Theatre*, ed. by Kerry Powell (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2004), pp. 70-92 (p. 70).

<sup>8</sup> Stephen Cockett, ‘Music and the Representation of History in Charles Kean’s Revival of Shakespeare’s *Henry V*’, *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, Vol. 34, no. 1 (June 2007), pp. 1-14 (p. 1).



many are aware that they saw with the ear as well as the eye, and that much of their emotion was caused by a mighty melody [...] being played all the time on the great principle of climax, swelling higher and higher, as the hero of the scene mounted and surmounted? Not six in two million spectators, I believe.<sup>9</sup>

Reade shows how the “mighty” melodies that ring out from the orchestra are fundamental to the emotional experience of the spectator and the believability of the stage picture. There is an analogous relationship between *mise-en-scene* and incidental music, wherein spectators “see” or experience theatre “with the ear as well as the eye”, even if the ear’s contribution to this experience works subconsciously. As Pisani points out, “The irony was that good dramatic music – like good film music – was most effective when it was unobtrusive; hence few spectators seem able to recall it.”<sup>10</sup> And yet, this “unobtrusive” music seems to be integral to the effectiveness of the stage pictures for which the Victorian period is most notorious. Working on a subliminal level, music heightens the senses, stimulates the emotions, and imbues the theatrical space with an appropriate ambiance.

In this sense, it is useful to imagine incidental music as a single, iridescent thread woven into the large and intricate tapestry of nineteenth-century Shakespeare performance. At first glance, it usually goes unheeded, its translucence giving way to the bolder colors and dominant subject of the tapestry. Yet, its illustrious shimmer performs a crucial, if hidden, role in the effectiveness of the tapestry’s beauty, highlighting the contours of the image and providing luminous accents that give the illustration dimension and life. If this iridescent thread is removed, the tapestry begins to unravel, and the image dulls; it no longer has the radiance that the

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<sup>9</sup> Charles Reade, ‘A Dramatic Musician: To the Editor of the “Era”’, in *Readiana* (New York: John W. Lovell Co., 1884), p. 20.

<sup>10</sup> Michael Pisani, *Music for the Melodramatic Theatre in Nineteenth-Century London and New York* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2014), p. xi.

shimmering thread provides, and the final product seems incomplete. So it is with incidental music. Its elusiveness in our studies of the nineteenth-century stage does not indicate triviality; its transparency does not mean that it is less important than the bolder “threads” or features of the Victorian theatre. On the contrary, it is precisely its translucent nature that makes it so effective, that gives incidental music the ability to shape the atmospheric contours of a *mise-en-scene* while not outshining it. The question that remains is, in context with the case studies in this thesis, what was this iridescent thread of incidental music designed to highlight? What comment did this music, when combined with stage picture, aim to make?

O’Neill’s experiment showed that a stage picture’s meaning can be shifted by a simple change in accompanying music, which in turn, suggests that incidental has the potential to express any number of emotions and has a powerful, if underestimated, role in eliciting collective feeling from spectators. Exactly what type of emotional response or reaction the music was intended to elicit varied from production to production, largely depending on the overarching narrative of the drama itself and its visual make-up. To narrow the scope of this thesis, I have chosen to address scenes that fit the following two criteria: scenes in which there is little dialogue, and therefore, relied on music to shape narrative; and scenes that resonated with contemporary issues in nineteenth-century society, politics, and religion and that expressed an aspect of English national identity prevalent in Victorian and Edwardian culture. I argue that incidental music used in Shakespeare performance during this period engaged with and perpetuated insular notions of Englishness that looked backwards to an invented, aggrandized past for inspiration and validation. Elaborate stage pictures accompanied by equally elaborate incidental music conscripted the national poet into the service of three, interrelated national myths that sit at the heart of English national identity: the myth of Merrie England, the myth of

benevolent imperialism, and the myth of the national religion. This resulted in romanticized snapshots of national history – usually rooted in the medieval or Tudor period – that both glorified national myth and paralleled it with Victorian and Edwardian society.

### **Incidental Music: Approaches and Terminology**

There is good reason why incidental music for the nineteenth-century stage is not as prominent as other topics in historical theatre studies, and it largely stems from issues with accessibility. The first obstacle for any researcher interested in incidental music used in nineteenth century drama is locating a physical score, which may no longer exist or could be difficult to find or access. As Michael Pisani notes, most of the theatre music that survives from this period “resides quietly in theatre archives, often uncatalogued.”<sup>11</sup> For example, the music for Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s productions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1902) and *King John* (1899), featured in Chapters Two and Four respectively, are not listed in the Boston Public Library’s card catalogue but are, nonetheless, housed in their collections.<sup>12</sup> The second obstacle is being able to read this score, which is wholly dependent on an individual researcher’s musical knowledge. For musicologists such as Pisani, this ability is a given, but for theatre historians, this knowledge understandably varies from researcher to researcher, and may not be present at all, depending on an individual’s musical background and abilities. Additionally, interpreting these scores also relies on the context that other surviving documents from these productions provide, which, in some cases, are housed in entirely different locations. For example, the promptbooks,

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<sup>11</sup> Pisani, *Music for the Melodramatic Theatre*, p. xxvi.

<sup>12</sup> I am grateful to the librarians and staff at the Boston Public Library (Boston, MA) for entertaining my requests to look for this music in the recesses of their underground storage, despite its absence from the catalogue.

production papers, lighting plots for Tree's productions that inform the musical scores at the Boston Public Library are held in Bristol University's Theatre Archive, and this geographical separation means that these materials have not been consulted alongside one another until now.

As such, a central aim of this project has been to make the incidental music discussed here accessible to my readers, regardless of their musical knowledge or abilities. Although I began my research on music that had been previously published and recorded (Edward German's music for *Henry VIII* and Arthur Sullivan's music for *The Merry Wives of Windsor*), a research grant funded by the New England Regional Consortium Fellowship soon led me to numerous bodies of music that had not been heard, published, or discussed in any significant detail since their original performance, including John Lipcott Hatton's music for Charles Kean's *Henry VIII* production (1855), Raymond Rôze's music for Herbert Beerbohm Tree's *King John* (1899), and Adolf Schmid's music for Tree's *The Merchant of Venice* (1908).<sup>13</sup> For these previously unrecorded selections, I have transcribed the music from manuscript using the music-writing software Sibelius, which, in turn, has produced an updated copy of the score and digitized sound files, giving my readers the opportunity to hear this music and to follow along in the score.<sup>14</sup> In comparison to the professional recordings of German's *Henry VIII* and Sullivan's *Merry Wives* music (links to which are provided in the Appendix), these digitized recordings are rudimentary and contain none of the nuance that a live orchestra would undoubtedly provide. However,

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<sup>13</sup> John L. Hatton, 'Incidental music for plays given at the Princess Theatre, 1855-1858', manuscript, (1855), Folger Shakespeare Library, W.b.569-573, also available on microfilm at the Shakespeare Institute Library, reel S859; Raymond Rôze, 'King John', manuscript, (1899), Herbert Beerbohm Tree Theatre Music Collection, Boston Public Library, uncatalogued; Adolf Schmid, 'The Merchant of Venice', manuscript, (1908), Herbert Beerbohm Tree Theatre Music Collection, Boston Public Library, Brown ML96.S325M4.

<sup>14</sup> For all transcriptions, I have used the software Sibelius. Links to previously recorded files are listed in the Appendix. Sound files and modernized sheet music of all newly-transcribed music is accessible to examiners in a shared Google Drive: <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PyPGZ4whl5dXqp6r8TUadg8nMUGroUuv> (sound files); [https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fuFVYaUeM8Cx5\\_bWnr17Yr3EG73V4fHS](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fuFVYaUeM8Cx5_bWnr17Yr3EG73V4fHS) (PDFs of transcriptions).

despite their limitations, these sound files preserve this music well enough to make what has been unheard for over a century resound once again, and, most importantly, allow researchers of varied musical abilities the chance to consider this music alongside other surviving ephemera from these productions.

The most complete studies of theatre music from this period are those by Pisani, whose *Music for the Melodramatic Theatre in Nineteenth-Century London and New York* and *Imagining Native America in Music* inspired my interest in this topic and demonstrate the importance of studying theatre music for both musicologists and theatre historians.<sup>15</sup> The main difference in my approach to that of Pisani's stems from our differences in educational background and training. While Pisani approaches theatre music as a musicologist – employing intricate, technical analyses of tonal structures, chord progressions, and other complex musical features – I approach incidental music as a theatre historian, exploring incidental music as it fits within the entire production in the same way that one might consider costume, lighting, or scenery. Therefore, I should make clear that this thesis does not intend to analyze theatre music as a musicologist might, nor do I possess the advanced musical training required to do so.<sup>16</sup> My central interest is to re-examine Victorian and Edwardian theatrical performance with the incidental music in mind, and to discover what this music, long hidden away in the recesses of our archives, offers to our understanding of Shakespeare productions on the London stage. In particular, in the same way that Pisani's work on expressions of Native America in incidental music explores how music

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<sup>15</sup> Michael Pisani, *Imagining Native America in Music* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2004).

<sup>16</sup> I am grateful to my secondary supervisor, Dr. Paul Rodmell, for his help in deciphering difficult parts of the music discussed throughout this thesis. I am also grateful to all of my former music teachers, choir and band directors, church leaders, and vocal coaches, whose varied formal and informal musical instruction over the course of my childhood and young adulthood gave me enough musical knowledge to be able to read and transcribe all of the music featured in this thesis.

shaped cultural and national identities, so too does this study turn its gaze to music's ability to help an audience imagine a national culture and its people, recognizing music's "extraordinary role in organizing and shaping our societies and our social values."<sup>17</sup>

Apart from Pisani's pioneering work in the field of theatre music to which this study is deeply indebted, there are several other studies that foreground the subject of this thesis. Marian Wilson Kimber's work on Felix Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (concert overture, 1826; incidental music, 1842) as well as Benedict Taylor's work on Arthur Sullivan's *The Tempest* (1861) discuss two of the most popular bodies of Shakespearean incidental music from this period and their use in various nineteenth-century performances and public concerts.<sup>18</sup> Their sustained popularity throughout the century is often contributed to their engagement with Shakespeare. Taylor, for example, argues, quite romantically, that Sullivan "blossoms ... into the new hope of English music" in *The Tempest* and "calls on the cultural authority of his country's greatest poet to accomplish this feat."<sup>19</sup> In such a comment, we can observe the complex entanglement that occurred between native-born composers such as Sullivan and Shakespeare. Such a labyrinthine relationship between so-called "national composers" and the "national poet" will be further explored in Part One in my discussion of Edward German's dances for *Henry VIII* and Sullivan's music for *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

Other bodies of incidental music written for the Shakespearean stage have also garnered recent attention. For example, Sullivan's *Macbeth* music for Henry Irving's 1888 production has

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<sup>17</sup> Pisani, *Imagining Native America*, p. 2.

<sup>18</sup> See Marian Wilson Kimber, 'Victorian Fairies and Felix Mendelssohn's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in England', *Nineteenth-Century Music Review*, Vol. 4, no. 1 (2007), pp. 53-79; and Marian Wilson Kimber, 'Reading Shakespeare, Seeing Mendelssohn: Concert Readings of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ca. 1850-1920', *The Musical Quarterly*, Vol. 89, no. 2 (2006), pp. 199-236.

<sup>19</sup> Benedict Taylor, *Arthur Sullivan: A Musical Reappraisal* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2018), p. 70.

been discussed by both Julie Sanders and Kenneth DeLong, and both compare Sullivan's music (particularly for supernatural scenes) to Giuseppe Verdi's opera (1847, revised 1865).<sup>20</sup> Other studies of Shakespearean incidental music from this period include Cockett's work on Hamilton Clarke's music for Henry Irving's *The Merchant of Venice* (1879), which has provided a useful point of comparison for my analysis of Tree's music for his 1908 production of the same play, discussed in Chapter Six. Additionally, Cockett's and Val Brodie's respective evaluations of Bernard Isaacson's music for Charles Kean's *Henry V* (1859) demonstrate the importance of considering incidental music when evaluating the spectacular, Shakespearean stage.<sup>21</sup> Brodie acknowledges incidental music's role in shaping audience response, stating that "orchestral sound pervaded performance, counterbalancing pictorially-realistic scenery and providing the soundscape to feed the imagination and lead the emotional response."<sup>22</sup> Out of all of the scholars cited here, Cockett's and Brodie's respective work most fully anticipate my own. Cockett provides digital reconstructions of music, using similar software to digitize previously unheard musical selections, and Brodie considers music's use as an "interpretive tool" that could make precise socio-political comment, particularly in stagings of Shakespeare's history plays.<sup>23</sup>

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<sup>20</sup> Julie Sanders, 'Shakespeare and Music', in *Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Gail Marshall (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2012), pp. 187-204; Kenneth DeLong, 'Arthur Sullivan's Incidental Music to Henry Irving's Production of *Macbeth* (1888)', in *Henry Irving: A Re-Evaluation of the Pre-Eminent Victorian Actor-Manager*, ed. by Richard Foulkes (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 149-83; and, for my early work on Sullivan's *Macbeth*, see K.E. Harker, 'Musicking *Macbeth*: the evolution of *Macbeth* music in performance' (unpublished MA dissertation, University of Birmingham, 2015).

<sup>21</sup> Stephen Cockett, 'Serenade in a Gondola: Music and Interpolated Action in Irving's Production of *The Merchant of Venice*', in *Henry Irving: A Re-Evaluation of the Pre-Eminent Victorian Actor-manager*, ed. by Richard Foulkes, (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 135-48; Stephen Cockett, 'Music and the Representation of History in Charles Kean's Revival of Shakespeare's *Henry V*', *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, Vol. 34, no. 1 (June 2007), pp. 1-14; Val Brodie, 'The Music for *Henry V* in Victorian Productions by Kean and Calvert' in *Shakespeare, Music and Performance*, ed. by Bill Barclay and David Lindley (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2017), pp. 167-181; Val Brodie, 'The Overlooked Evidence: The Use of Music in Production of *Henry V* 1859-1916' (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of Birmingham, 2013).

<sup>22</sup> Brodie, 'The Music for *Henry V*', p. 167.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

Sitting on the periphery of this study are additional discussions of non-Shakespearean incidental music from this period, such as David Mayer's and Cockett's respective studies of Etienne Singla's music for Irving's production of *The Bells* (1871), DeLong's and Denis Slater's work on Charles Villars Stanford's music for Irving's production of *Becket* (1893), Katherine Preston's essay on Edgar Stillman Kelley's music for William Young's toga drama *Ben-Hur* (1899), and Sarah Hibberd's numerous publications on music written for Victorian melodrama, French grand opera, and the relationship between music and the sublime in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.<sup>24</sup> These offer significant insight into the style and function of music on the Victorian stage, drawing attention to the evolution of theatre music as the century progressed, and demonstrating that elaborate incidental music occurred in a variety of dramatic performances during this period, not just Shakespeare productions. Also sitting on the periphery of my work are studies of incidental music in Shakespeare performance during the late-sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries. Randy L. Neighbarger's survey of music for Shakespearean performance in London from 1660-1830 provides an indexed account of music used in the theatre on the Restoration and eighteenth-century stage, leading up to the Victorian era.<sup>25</sup> David Lindley's *Shakespeare and Music* establishes the musical culture of Shakespeare's age and

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<sup>24</sup> David Mayer (ed.), *Henry Irving and The Bells: Irving's Personal Script of the Play* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1980); Stephen Cockett, 'Acting with Music: Henry Irving's Use of the Musical Score in his Production of The Bells', in *Europe, Empire, and Spectacle in Nineteenth-Century British Music*, 2nd edition, ed. by Rachel Cowgill and Julian Rushton (London: Routledge, 2016), pp. 235-48; Kenneth DeLong and Denis Salter, 'C.V. Stanford's Incidental Music to Henry Irving's Production of Tennyson's Becket', *Theatre History Studies*, Vol. 3 (January 1983), pp. 69-86; and Katherine Preston, 'The Music of Toga Drama', in *Playing Out the Empire: Ben-Hur and Other Toga Plays and Films, A Critical Anthology*, ed. by David Mayer (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), pp. 23-29; Sarah Hibberd, *French grand opera and the historical imagination* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2009); Sarah Hibberd (ed.), *Music and the sonorous sublime in European culture, 1680-1880* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2020); and, *Melodramatic voices: understanding music drama* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2011).

<sup>25</sup> Randy L. Neighbarger, *An Outward Show: Music for Shakespeare on the London Stage, 1660-1830* (Westport; London: Greenwood Press, 1992).



investigates the presence of music in his plays and in Early Modern performances.<sup>26</sup> Similarly, Amanda Eubanks Winkler has also recently contributed to our understanding of theatre music and musical culture on Early Modern and Restoration stages.<sup>27</sup> While these studies of theatre music pre-date that which is discussed here, they establish both the importance of considering music in discussions of performance practice and evidence the mutual, symbiotic relationship between text, performance, and music.

The terminology used across these publications to describe theatre music varies, and thus, it is worth establishing how I have chosen to employ musical terms in this thesis. As Pisani observes, “affective or situational music *during* the play” was typically labelled “appropriate”, “characteristic”, “melodramatic”, or “incidental” during the nineteenth century.<sup>28</sup> “Appropriate” indicated that “music was more or less consistent with the emotional contours of a scene or speech and with the way that audiences expected to react”; “characteristic” implied music of a quasi-descriptive nature that could be used to express a “collective national or ethnic identity” or could be “a literal embodiment of the actor’s physical demeanor or ethos”; “melodramatic” referred to “music required to accompany any necessary action in the play” or that “engaged with the spoken text in ways that required special skills from both orchestra leaders and actors”; and “incidental ... refer[red] to music *added* to an existing play, such as songs and dances that supplemented or retarded the dramatic progress.”<sup>29</sup> There is a noticeable overlap in the type of music to which each of these terms allude, and as Pisani observes, “the interchangeability of

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<sup>26</sup> David Lindley, *Shakespeare and Music* (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006).

<sup>27</sup> Amanda Eubanks Winkler (ed.), *Music for “Macbeth”* (Middleton, Wis.: A-R Editions, 2004); and *Music, dance, and drama in early modern English schools* (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge UP, 2020) See also Linda Phyllis Austern, Candace Bailey, and Amanda Eubanks Winkler (eds.), *Beyond boundaries: rethinking music circulation in early modern England* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2017).

<sup>28</sup> Pisani, *Music for the Melodramatic Theatre*, p. xv (his emphasis).

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xv-xvi.

these terms hints at the flexible nature of nineteenth-century theatre music and its capacity for multifunctionality.”<sup>30</sup> In modern usage, “incidental music” has emerged as a generic label for music written for the theatre, and in this thesis, my use of the term “incidental music” is deployed in this generalized sense. However, most of the music I discuss could also be considered “characteristic” because it expresses a collective, national identity. For example, Edward German’s *Three Dances* (Chapter One) are “characteristic” morris dances and his *Coronation March and Hymn* (Chapter Three) is a “characteristic”, ceremonial march.

Pisani has also identified three categories of theatre music common in nineteenth-century theatre: (1) “Overtures and entr’actes, or music that fills up the intervals between plays and acts”; (2) “Music with a precise visual or aural reference within the play, such as bringing up the curtain, assisting a scenic or lighting effect, or accompanying a song or dance performed on stage”; and (3) “the great invisible mechanical apparatus of melodramatic music”, which occupies a more “subordinate position than theatrical music in the second category ... [and] should not distract the audience so much as heighten the progress of the drama.”<sup>31</sup> My work focuses on music that falls mostly within the second category, for the music explored throughout was designed to interact with a particular tableau, but there are a few instances where this music crosses over into the third category, particularly in the final chapter. While most of the *tableaux vivants* discussed in this thesis are self-contained scenes – the banquet at York Place (Chapter One), the masque at Herne’s Oak (Chapter Two), the coronation of Anne Bullen (Chapter Three), “The Fight Near Angiers” and “The Granting of the Magna Charta” (Chapter Four), and Queen Katherine’s Vision (Chapter Five) – the music in Chapter Six for Beerbohm Tree’s 1908

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. xvi-xvii.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, p. xx.

production of *The Merchant of Venice* sits on the boarder of categories two and three, showcasing the actor-manager's ingenuity as a sound designer particularly towards the end of his career. Other snippets of music like "Falstaff's Theme" of Chapter Two, also fall into this latter category. For this study, differentiating between different types of theatre music is not as important as determining how music – of whatever style – interacted with the pictorial stage.

### ***Tableaux vivants: Approaches and Terminology***

This thesis focuses on music that accompanied interpolated, pantomimic, and highly symbolic scenes that were largely devoid of dialogue. These scenes were commonly referred to as "*tableaux vivants*", or living pictures, a term which had an ever-evolving definition throughout the nineteenth century. In its most traditional meaning, *tableau vivant* describes a "mute, immobile arrangement of performers to reproduce a scene from art, literature or the imagination,"<sup>32</sup> but as Stuart Sillars points out, "the word 'tableau' in the nineteenth century was used in a number of ways to include a variety of scenic depictions, and did not always refer to the static representation of a moment on stage."<sup>33</sup> By the end of the century, "*tableau vivant*" could refer to a wide range of stage representations, both static and dynamic. Depending on the venue in which the tableau was staged, the play in which the tableau was interpolated, and its position within the dramatic narrative, these stage pictures could represent any number of subjects, ranging from the overtly sexualized *poses plastiques* to more conservative representations of high

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<sup>32</sup> 'Living picture [*tableau vivant*]', *The Cambridge Guide to the Theatre*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, ed. by Martin Banham (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1995), p. 647.

<sup>33</sup> Stuart Sillars, *Shakespeare, Time, and the Victorians: a pictorial exploration*, p. 254.

art and culture.<sup>34</sup> My use of “*tableaux vivants*” throughout this thesis embodies the term’s usage by Shakespearean actor-managers in the latter half of the century (specifically Charles Kean, Henry Irving, and Herbert Beerbohm Tree), who used it to refer to scenes of a pictorial nature that contained intricately choreographed, pantomimic *movement* and that relied on music for atmospheric effect, narrative shaping, and cultivating a collective, emotional response.<sup>35</sup> Given the term’s malleable meaning and variety of definitions during this period, it is necessary to both further clarify my use of the term in this way and account for its widespread prevalence in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century theatrical culture.

Theatrical tableaux, I argue, run parallel to closely related forms of artistic expression popularized during this period, including the “attitudes” of Emma Hamilton, isolated “acting points” of the dramatic stage, parlor theatricals, and historical paintings. While each of these forms should be understood as having a separate development and genealogy to the large-scale tableaux of the Victorian and Edwardian stage, they sit on the periphery of the accompanied pictorial scenes discussed in this thesis. Discussions on early tableaux and the rise of parlor theatricals often engage with Emma Hamilton’s (née Hart) performative “attitudes”, memorialized in Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s *Italienische Reise* (published 1816-17).<sup>36</sup> Goethe describes one of her performances in Naples in 1787:

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<sup>34</sup> On the moral debate that surrounded *tableaux vivants* with risqué subject matter, see Brenda Assael, ‘Art or Indecency? *Tableaux Vivants* on the London Stage the Failure of Late Victorian Moral Reform’, *Journal of British Studies*, Vol. 45 (October 2006), pp. 744-758; and Joseph Donohue, ‘W.P. Dando’s Improved *Tableaux Vivants* at the Palace Theatre of Varieties, London’, *Theatre Notebook*, Vol. 63, no. 3 (2009), pp. 151-179.

<sup>35</sup> Charles Kean often also used “historical episode” in addition to “tableau vivant” and “living picture.” Irving’s and Tree’s promptbooks reveal their regular use of the term “tableaux vivants”, which was also regularly used in reviews of these scenes in various British periodicals.

<sup>36</sup> For a photographic analysis of one such entertainment at Rutland Gate, see: Hannah Jordan, ‘Hidden Life: Reanimating Victorian *Tableaux Vivants* in the Rutland Gate Album’, *RACAR: revue d’art Canadienne/ Canadian Art Review*, Vol. 44, no. 2 (2019), pp. 92-109.

Dressed in [a Greek costume], she lets down her hair and, with a few shawls, gives so much variety to her poses, gestures, expressions, etc., that the spectator can hardly believe his eyes. He sees what thousands of artists would have liked to express realized before him in movements and surprising transformations – standing, kneeling, sitting, reclining, serious, sad, playful, ecstatic, contrite, alluring, threatening, anxious, one pose follows another without a break. [...] This much is certain: as a performance it's like nothing you ever saw before in your life.<sup>37</sup>

This description confirms that, even in their originary form, tableaux relied on mimetic movement to create a believable illusion. Far from being frozen poses, Hamilton's performances sought to imitate classical subjects and human affectations in rapid succession, which created an optical illusion of a "living" painting or statue. As Kirsten Van Holmström states, these "moving, or rather shifting pictures ... introduc[ed] a new genre on the borderline between pictorial art and theatre," wherein pictorial art was animated by the performer, with the central aim being picturesque verisimilitude.<sup>38</sup>

Hamilton's "attitudes" also sit in conversation with the "acting points" of David Garrick and Sarah Siddons.<sup>39</sup> As Joseph Roach observes, their "similarly structured sequence[s] of passions, accented by moments in which the actors held a climactic tableau indefinitely, became the signature of eighteenth-century acting style."<sup>40</sup> Martin Meisel helpfully differentiates between tableaux *a la* Hamilton and the frozen postures of Garrick and Siddons. While both forms presented "a readable, picturesque ... arrangement of living figures," the dramatic tableaux of the eighteenth-century stage "arrested motion", while the *tableaux vivants* of Hamilton "brought

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<sup>37</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Italian Journey*, trans. by W.H. Auden and Elizabeth Mayer (London: Penguin Group, 1970), p. 208.

<sup>38</sup> Kirsten Gram Holmström, *Monodrama, Attitudes, Tableaux Vivants: studies on some trends of theatrical fashion, 1770-1815* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1967), p. 139.

<sup>39</sup> Stuart Sillars, *Shakespeare and the Victorians* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2013), p. 60.

<sup>40</sup> Joseph Roach, *The Player's Passion: studies in the science of acting* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), p. 69.

stillness to life.”<sup>41</sup> Over the course of the nineteenth century, the dramatic tableau would continue to evolve, with both William Macready and Samuel Phelps moving away from the isolated “acting points” of their predecessors.<sup>42</sup> Borrowing from performance practices often seen in pantomime and extravaganza, theatrical tableaux in mid-to-late century London progressed from frozen attitudes to fluid sequences that relied on a combination of gestural expression, mimetic acting, and accompanying music to make meaning. Sometimes also called “historical episodes” or “dumb shows”, these scenes shifted the focus away from a single performer to the entire stage picture, made up of the same elements one might find in historical paintings of the period. In this sense, the “living” in “living picture” did not so much refer to the liveness of the performer’s body, but to the manner in which the picture was given life through motion and music. Such animation, as Daniel Wiegand, Vito Adriaensens, and Steven Jacobs have pointed out, anticipates the techniques and artistic processes that would come to define silent film at the turn of the century.<sup>43</sup>

Parlor theatricals and amateur tableaux performances became increasingly prevalent as the century progressed and were not reserved for aristocratic social circles. Descriptions of tableaux performances are present in various nineteenth-century novels, particularly Goethe’s *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809), Louisa May Alcott’s *Behind the Mask* (1866), and Edith

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<sup>41</sup> Martin Meisel, *Realizations: Narrative, Pictorial, and Theatrical Arts in Nineteenth-Century England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), p. 47.

<sup>42</sup> Sillars, *Shakespeare and the Victorians*, p. 60.

<sup>43</sup> Vito Adriaensens and Steven Jacobs, ‘The Sculptor’s Dream: Living Statues in Early Cinema’, in *Screening Statues: Sculpture in Film*, ed. by Steven Jacobs, Susan Felleman, Vito Adriaensens, and Lisa Colpaert (Edinburgh: Edinburgh UP, 2017), pp. 29-45; Daniel Wiegand, “‘Performed live and talking. No kinematograph’: Amateur Performances of *Tableaux Vivants* and Local Film Exhibition in Germany around 1900’ in *Performing New Media, 1890-1915*, ed. by Keveh Askari, et. al. (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2014) pp. 273-281; and Daniel Wiegand, ‘Tableaux Vivants, Early Cinema, and Beauty-as-Attraction’, trans. By Suse Trenka, *Acta Universitatis Sapientiae, Film and Media Studies*, Vol. 15 (2018) pp. 9-32.

Wharton's *The House of Mirth* (1905), which helped to popularize the pastime in both Britain and the United States.<sup>44</sup> Manuals and guidebooks explicating the manner in which amateur tableaux should be staged in one's home were being published by the mid-nineteenth century, often marketed towards the bourgeoisie.<sup>45</sup> One such volume – J. H. Head's *Home Pastimes, or, Tableaux Vivants* (1860) – provides a contemporary perspective on the purpose of these entertainments, centering on the Victorian premise of self-improvement:

The delineation of the natural and poetical, its realization upon canvas, or upon paper, or in the living picture, tends to improve the mind, assimilates the real with the ideal, conforms taste to the noblest standard, overflows the heart with pure and holy thoughts, and adorns the exterior form with graces surpassing those of the Muses.<sup>46</sup>

Imitation required both learning and the embodiment of an ideal – artistic, poetic, natural, or otherwise. To embody such “perfect” beauty was to be carried to a liminal space between the self and the idea, picture, or emotion being represented. In this sense, tableaux could simultaneously educate, entertain, and enlighten, evidenced by the range of subjects depicted in these performances. Head's tableaux, for example, loosely fall into eight categories: Art and sculpture; historical events and royal pageantry; battle re-enactments and shows of militaristic strength; sacred or biblical subjects; scenes from classical literature, poetry, opera, or drama; re-enactments

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<sup>44</sup> On *tableaux vivant* in Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* see Tanvi Solanki, 'A Book of Living Paintings: Tableaux Vivants in Goethe's *Die Wahlverwandtschaften* (1809)', *Goethe Yearbook*, Vol. 23 (2016), pp. 245-270. On Wharton and Alcott's novels featuring *tableaux vivants* as well as its popularity in the United States, see, Jennie A. Kassanoff, 'Extinction, Taxidermy, Tableaux Vivants: Staging Race and Class in *The House of Mirth*', *PMLA*, Vol. 115, no. 1 (January 2000), pp. 60-74; and Mary Chapman, "'Living Pictures": Women and *Tableaux Vivants* in Nineteenth-Century American Fiction and Culture', *Wide Angle*, Vol. 18, no. 3 (July 1996), pp. 22-52.

<sup>45</sup> Examples of this type of publication include: Charles Harrison, *Theatricals and tableaux vivants for amateurs* (London: Upcott Gill, 1882); Arnold George and Frank Cahill, *The Sociable, or, One thousand and one home amusements* (New York: Dick and Fitzgerald, 1858); J.H. Head, *Home Pastimes, or, Tableaux Vivants* (Boston: J.E. Tilton and Company, 1860); and William Fearing Gill, *Parlor tableaux and amateur theatricals* (Boston: J.E. Tilton, 1868). For a Shakespearean themed manual, see T. Maskell Hardy, *An evening with Shakespeare: an entertainment of reading, tableaux, and songs set to the old tunes* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1908).

<sup>46</sup> Head, p. 8.

of popular folk customs and folklore; personifications of nature; and so-called “scenes from imagination”, which showcased non-descript events from ordinary life that did not fit within the other categories. Scenes from Shakespeare were relatively prevalent in these guidebooks. For instance, William F. Gill’s *Parlor tableaux and amateur theatricals* (1868) includes instructions for staging a tableau of King Lear “exposed to the furies of a raging storm in a desolate heath” and “The Believer’s Vision”, an adaptation of Katherine’s Vision in 4.2 of *Henry VIII*, discussed further in Chapter Five.<sup>47</sup>

Dramatic tableaux also evolved alongside other pictorial entertainments of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including waxworks, panoramas, dioramas, penny gaffs, and magic lantern shows. The productions discussed in this thesis show and indebtedness to techniques and mechanics of these spectacles. Richard Altick’s work thoroughly investigates these public spectacles throughout nineteenth-century London and their value as spectacular entertainments and tools of educational instruction, serving as “an alternative medium to print” and “a supplement to books, particularly ... the most popular kinds of informational literature.”<sup>48</sup> Much like the private amusements performed in Victorian drawing rooms, these shows of “illusory reality” portrayed a similar range of subject matter, and their perceived value as educational entertainments was central to their sustained popularity.<sup>49</sup> Like the tableaux in Shakespearean productions, these optical entertainments also relied on props, costumes, lighting, and music to create a sense verisimilitude with the original subject. Thus, the synthesis of visual and aural stimuli inherent in these shows anticipates the continued development of dramatic tableaux

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43, 180.

<sup>48</sup> Richard Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge, Mass.; London: Harvard University Press, 1978), p. 1.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 50.



throughout the century from static to dynamic features of the stage. An early example is the Eidophusikon (1781), which as Altick states, “was the way-station between the theatre of Garrick and that of [Samuel] Phelps and the younger [Charles] Kean.”<sup>50</sup> Designed by Garrick’s scenery designer, Jacques-Philippe de Louthembourg, the Eidophusikon created illusory reality through the fusion of a moving picture (often a landscape scene) and accompanying sound effects and music (Figure 0.1).<sup>51</sup> The tableaux discussed in this thesis show an indebtedness to this integration of music and movement as a way of bringing spectacle to life and creating a believable illusion.



Figure 0.1: The Eidophusikon (1781) – the synthesis between music and image in this entertainment is discernible by the harpsicord (or piano) that sits directly in front of the framed image.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 126.

<sup>51</sup> Robert Poulter and the New Model Theatre have built two reconstructions of the Eidophusikon, giving fascinating insight into the mechanics of the apparatus. The scenes displayed in the reconstructions were: sunrise to sunset over the Royal Naval College, Greenwich; a Mediterranean scene with lighthouse, moonlight, storm and shipwreck; and “Satan and the Creation of the Palace of Pandemon in Hell” from Milton’s *Paradise Lost*. See Robert Poulter, *New Model Theatre* (2007) <<http://www.newmodeltheatre.co.uk/eidophusikon.html>> [02 February 2020].

Given the prevalence of tableaux and other optical entertainments in Victorian culture, audiences were primed to interpret these scenes and to understand their role within the illusion. Part of the entertainment value of *tableaux vivants* and other related entertainments was being able to imagine oneself as a part of the scene. As Caroline Radcliffe observes, “pictures and tableaux externalize feeling, and the suspension of time focuses the spectator, allowing her to internalize the emotional moment.”<sup>52</sup> If the illusion was effective enough, the audience could slip into a temporary, pseudo-reality wherein they became emotionally invested with the scene as it played out. This process was dependent on any given spectator’s imaginative faculty and the effectiveness of the illusion itself, typically a combination of picture, movement, and sound. In cases where the subject matter of the stage picture was historical – such as Charles Kean’s interpolated panorama used in his 1855 production of *Henry VIII* – this meant imagining oneself as a part of a notable historical moment, usually romanticized to some degree.

Although Kean’s panorama is not a tableau, as it contains no live persons performing gestural, mimetic acting, I consider it here to demonstrate three interrelated concepts that provide a foundation for my forthcoming chapters. First, this panorama demonstrates the process by which spectators were invited to imagine themselves as a part of historical moment, which in this case, was joining the maritime procession on the way to Princess Elizabeth’s christening. Second, this example evidences the manner in which stage pictures and soundscapes were designed to synthesize with one another and demonstrates the type of new information incidental music offers to a historian of nineteenth-century theatre. Lastly, Kean’s panorama provides contextual point of

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<sup>52</sup> Caroline Radcliffe, ‘Remediation and Immediacy in the Theatre of Sensation’, *Nineteenth Century Theatre and Film*, Vol. 36, no. 2 (2009), pp. 38-52, (p. 50).

reference for three accompanied tableaux from *Henry VIII* discussed in my forthcoming chapters: the banquet scene (1.4), the coronation of Anne Bullen (4.1), and Katherine's vision (4.2), featured in Chapters One, Three, and Five, respectively.

Kean's "Grand Moving Panorama Representing London in the Reign of Henry the Eighth" was based on Anton van der Wyngaerde's panoramic illustration of London (1543), which was popularized in the nineteenth century through Nathaniel Whittock's engraving (1849).<sup>53</sup> Erkki Huhtamo categorizes it as a "scenic transformation panorama" meaning that it helped to bridge locations in the play, "transporting the audience along the Thames from Bridewell Palace to Greenwich, to witness the christening of the infant Princess Elizabeth."<sup>54</sup> Previous discussions of this panorama are limited to what can be gleaned from details in Kean's playbill, which provides a list of the landmarks and objects portrayed: the Palace at Bridewell, the Fleet Ditch, Blackfriars, St. Paul's, London Bridge, The Tower, Limehouse, the Celebrated Man of War, "The Great Harry", and Greenwich Palace and Park.<sup>55</sup> This description alone gives the impression that the panorama gave audiences a birds-eye view of the city, much like Wyngaerde's original image, distancing the spectator and allowing for a topographical and geographical perspective. However, when William Grieves' surviving miniature illustrations of the panorama are combined with Hatton's accompanying music, it reveals that Kean's design placed the spectator right in the middle of the Thames, as if floating down the river on one of the

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<sup>53</sup> An interactive reproduction of Wyngaerde's panorama of London can be found at: John R. Inglis, *Panorama of the Thames Project* (2015) <<http://www.panoramaofthethames.com/pott/wyngaerde-pan/wyngaerde-1543>> [15 June 2019].

<sup>54</sup> Erkki Huhtamo, Roger F. Malina, and Sean Cubitt, *Illusions in Motion: Media Archaeology of the Moving Panorama and Related Spectacles* (Cambridge, Massachusetts; London: MIT Press, 2013), p. 122. Huhtamo notes that similar panoramic interpolations were performed in two previous Shakespearean productions: Samuel Phelps' *Timon of Athens* (1851) at Sadler's Wells and William Macready's *Henry V* (1839) at Covent Garden.

<sup>55</sup> Richard Schoch, *Shakespeare's Victorian Stage: Performing History in the Theatre of Charles Kean* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), p. 42.

many barges of state.<sup>56</sup> This created a sense of immediacy and encouraged an imaginative leap from being a mere observer of the scene to a participant, grafting a sense of belonging to this historicized London.

Hatton's accompanying incidental music was central to the creation and believability of this illusion. It is written in the style of a *barcarolle* and in the compound triple meter of 9/8, intended to imitate the rocking of a boat on the water and giving the audience a sense of gliding down the Thames.<sup>57</sup> The music was designed to coordinate seamlessly with the image rolling across the stage, indicated by Hatton's notes in the autograph score. For example, as the imaginary vessel glides beneath London Bridge, Hatton writes in a crescendo, giving the illusion that the music is echoing off the stone archway above their heads (bars 21-2). Through such combination of sight and sound, Kean's panorama did not so much invite topographical study as it invited imaginary participation. For example, after seeing the play, Theodore Fontane stated, "I felt then as though I had been set down by magic in the middle of an age brought back to life, and the images that surrounded me came to life and touched me with an irresistible poetic force."<sup>58</sup>

As such, patrons in Kean's theatre were not positioned as mere spectators of the historical event,

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<sup>56</sup> I have attempted to coordinate the surviving images of Kean's panorama with a digitized reconstruction of the music, available to examiners separately via the Google Drive. Throughout the thesis, footnotes will indicate when readers should listen to relevant music, either in digitized transcriptions, such as this, or professional recordings, listed in the Appendix. In this case, I have combined music and image into a .mov file. The image does not "roll" across the stage, as it would have in original performance, but I have attempted to sync up music and image and incorporated "transitions" at appropriate points, depending on notes in the music. There could be a few stills that are missing, given that the penultimate and ultimate frames are not connected, but this utilizes all surviving illustrations and music. I am grateful to my colleagues at Warwick University's Visuality and the Theatre in the Long Nineteenth Century conference (Jun 2019), who assisted me in my initial thoughts and analyses of this interpolated sequence.

<sup>57</sup> Barcarolle (Fr.; It. *Barcarola*) is a "title given to pieces that imitate or suggest the songs (barcarole) sung by Venetian gondoliers as they propel their boats through the water." The form was widely known throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Maurice J.E. Brown and Kenneth L. Hamilton, "Barcarolle", *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001), [28 Aug. 2019].

<sup>58</sup> Theodore Fontane, *Shakespeare in the London Theatre, 1855-58*, trans. by Russell Jackson (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1999), p. 42.

but as a part of it, forging a sense of belonging to a romanticized past that underpins every tableaux discussed in this thesis.

Each strand of national identity discussed in this thesis – Merrie England (Part One), Imperial England (Part Two), and Protestant England (Part Three) – are showcased in Kean’s panorama. The pastoral scenery, particularly in the final frame of Greenwich Park, provided a picture of an arcadian “Merrie England”; the barges of state (particularly “The Great Harry” in the penultimate frame) and the monarchical pageantry inherent in the scene provided a picture of an imperial England under a powerful monarch; and the celebrated Gothic architecture, embodied by the old St. Paul’s in the first two frames, provided a picture of the nation’s pre-Reformation church and the Gothic style, both of which experienced a resurgence during the Victorian period. Through such visual signifiers, the panorama created a sense of belonging to a historicized version of the nation expressed through reductive, yet recognizable symbols. Within the context of the play, the scene preempts the dawn of a new age under Elizabeth I, which for Victorians, was tethered to notions of the “Shakespearean”. As Michael Dobson and Nicola Watson observe, “Both Elizabeth and Shakespeare retrospectively participated in the invention of a British way of life.”<sup>59</sup> Kean’s interpolation provided audiences with the opportunity to conceptualize themselves as a part of this flourishing nation, and to conceive the Victorian age as a continuation of this past greatness. The effectiveness of Grieves’ illustrations, accompanied by the rollicking tones of Hatton’s *barcarolle*, meant that only a small leap of the imagination was required to feel a part of this historical event, and on a broader scale, this nation and this history.

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<sup>59</sup> Michael Dobson and Nicola J. Watson, *England’s Elizabeth: An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy* (Oxford, Oxford UP, 2002), p. 117.

## Imagining the nation through Shakespeare

The role that the imagination played in spectacles such as Kean's panorama, wherein spectators visualize themselves as belonging to a particular group or community, also applies more broadly to the formation of nations and national communities. Benedict Anderson's watershed study on the foundations of nationalism defines a "nation" as "an imagined political community" that is dependent on notions of fraternity and belonging and often "conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship".<sup>60</sup> To belong to a nation, therefore, requires seeing oneself within a community that is bound together by certain commonalities, giving an individual a sense of belonging to a larger group and as fitting in with an overarching national self-image. One of the many factors that contributes to the formation of such imagined communities is how the past is conceptualized and remembered, and the relationship between this imagined past and the present. In this sense, national communities (and particularly nationalist communities) often find unity through nostalgia. As Susan Bennett states, "collective nostalgia can promote a feeling of community which works to downplay or disregard divisive personalities (class, race, gender and so on); when nostalgia is produced and experienced collectively, then, it can promote a false and likely dangerous sense of 'we'."<sup>61</sup> Such nostalgia underpins a collective longing to return to a past that, in actuality, has only ever existed in imagination, but that has been made palpable through reductive remembrances and revisionist histories.

Throughout the nineteenth century, Shakespeare was an emblem of this collective nostalgia, and his works were frequently used as sites to express the glories of a vaguely defined

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<sup>60</sup> Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London; New York: Versa, 2016), pp. 6-7.

<sup>61</sup> Susan Bennett, *Performing Nostalgia: shifting Shakespeare and the contemporary past* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 5.

national past, a perceived golden age that understood itself through collective, national myths. As Graham Holderness points out, “myth is not a non-existent fantasy or ideological conjuring-trick: it is a real and powerful form of human consciousness, holding some significant place within a culture.”<sup>62</sup> The processes by which Shakespeare was mythologized and enshrined as England’s national poet has been well documented by Michael Dobson, Jonathan Bate, and Gary Taylor, whose respective studies trace the adaptation and canonization of Shakespeare’s works, his emergence as a national “genius”, and his use as an hegemonic instrument to express dominant, national ideologies.<sup>63</sup> Thus, by the time of the performances discussed in this thesis, Shakespeare’s “artistic supremacy had ceased to be debated; it was simply assumed,” and such assumptions were expressed and further solidified in performances of Shakespeare’s plays in some of London’s most popular theatres.<sup>64</sup> As Sillars observes, “at every moment, the Victorian period had Shakespearian activity of some kind at its core, and studying Victorian Shakespeare cannot be separated from studying Victorian society and its views on history, culture, morality, and ethics.”<sup>65</sup>

This thesis explores moments in these productions in which Shakespeare, tableaux, and incidental music were mobilized conjointly to express pervasive national myths and cultivate collective nostalgia. As independent mediums, *tableaux vivants*, music, and dramatic performance all harbor the potential to create a sense of belonging. As Niamh Campbell observes

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<sup>62</sup> Graham Holderness, ‘Bardolatry: or, The cultural materialist’s guide to Stratford-upon-Avon’, in *The Shakespeare Myth*, ed. by Graham Holderness (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988), pp. 10-11.

<sup>63</sup> Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992); Jonathan Bate, *The Genius of Shakespeare* (Basingstoke; Oxford: Picador, 1997); Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: Hogarth Press, 1989).

<sup>64</sup> Taylor, p. 168.

<sup>65</sup> Sillars, *Shakespeare and the Victorians*, p. 18.

in her work on *tableaux vivants* of the Irish Revival, “a tableau is conducive to the creation of a sense of community because it relies on the spontaneous affirmation of consensus, recognition, and belonging in any given context.”<sup>66</sup> Similarly, Pisani notes that “music, like social and even political discourse, establishes, reinforces, and redefines the cultural margins of ... ‘imagined communities’, serving to establish boundaries between various peoples and nations.”<sup>67</sup> This was particularly true in the nineteenth century, which was, as Jeffrey Richards states, “the century of musical nationalism”, a time in which nations “developed a musical style that was seen to reflect the[ir] national identity.”<sup>68</sup> As such, specific tonalities, musical forms, rhythms, and melodies could both express and form the values and ideologies of the imagined collective. Moreover, “until the gramophone and the wireless created the possibility of the solitary listener, music was designed to be experienced communally,” so these nationalistic musical expressions were inherently collective experiences, contributing to their role in forging imagined communities with perceptually “national” soundtracks.<sup>69</sup>

With this in mind, the expressive potentialities of tableaux, music, and Shakespeare – when combined in nineteenth century performance – were used to purport, and even propagandize, a version of Englishness rooted in assumption, aggrandizement, and convenient amnesia, that is, a willingness to ignore and elide lackluster historical moments in favor of those that affirm the nostalgic remembrances of the collective group. Shakespeare and his plays, particularly those set in England, became lenses through which the nineteenth century could

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<sup>66</sup> Niamh Campbell, ‘Living Pictures of the Irish Revival: Two Tableaux Vivant [sic]’, *New Hibernia Review*, Vol. 23, No. 2 (Summer 2019), pp. 134-153.

<sup>67</sup> Pisani, *Imagining Native America*, p. 6.

<sup>68</sup> Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music* (Manchester, Manchester UP, 2001), p. 10.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6



imagine their pasts nostalgically and gave definition to the question of what it meant to be English. This national nostalgia, imbued with a false sense of authenticity via the national poet, applied to notions of Englishness rather than Britishness, for as many cultural historians have traced, Britain was frequently and problematically defined through perceptions of England throughout the nineteenth century, and in many ways, continues to be defined in this sense.<sup>70</sup> As Angelia Poon argues, Englishness is not so much a fixed, political ideology as it is “a way of being and seeming that seeps and permeates the political, social and cultural domains”, expressing itself “in a grammar of sensate, emotive and moral terms that exceeds the strictly political and juridical meanings traditionally associated with statehood.”<sup>71</sup> Lauren Berlant terms this the “National Symbolic”, or “the order of discursive practices whose reign within a national space produced, and also refers to, the ‘law’ in which the accident of birth within a geographic/political boundary transforms individuals into subjects of a collectively-held history.”<sup>72</sup> The theatres discussed in this thesis can be thought of as microcosms of this “national space,” wherein notions of Englishness were both cultivated and expressed. Berlant argues that the “traditional icons, metaphors, heroes, rituals, and narratives” of the National Symbolic “provide an alphabet for a collective consciousness or national subjectivity,” and this lexicon of

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<sup>70</sup> For studies that further delineate the differences between Englishness and Britishness, see: Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2005); Catherine Hall, *White, Male and Middle Class: Explorations in Feminism and History* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995); Catherine Hall, ‘What did a British world mean to the British?: Reflections on the Nineteenth Century’ in *Rediscovering the British World*, ed. by Phillip Alfred Buckner and R. Douglas Francis (Calgary, CA: University of Calgary Press, 2005), pp. 21-37; Krishan Kumar, *The Idea of Englishness: English Culture, National Identity and Social Thought* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); Angelia Poon, *Enacting Englishness in the Victorian Period: Colonialism and the Politics of Performance* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016); and Krishan Kumar, Jeffrey C. Alexander, and Steven Seidman, *The Making of English National Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2003).

<sup>71</sup> Poon, p. 5.

<sup>72</sup> Lauren Berlant, *The Anatomy of National Fantasy: Hawthorne, Utopia, and Everyday Life* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1991), p. 20.

national identity, its iconography, and its narratives were, I argue, repeatedly used in performances of Shakespeare during this period.<sup>73</sup>

By design, accompanied tableaux sought to heighten the emotions and senses of the spectator, and when these tableaux expressed one of the many strands of the “imagined community” of Englishness, then this emotional response did not just apply to the isolated scene or dramatic narrative, but to the nation represented within it. To imagine England through Shakespeare was to self-identify with what Shakespeare was thought to epitomize, to imagine oneself as belonging to the same imagined community as the *English* (never British) national poet. The actor-managers discussed in this thesis – Charles Kean, Henry Irving, and Herbert Beerbohm Tree – curated this version of Englishness by manipulating the imaginations and emotions of their audiences through theatrical illusions that ultimately presented mythical versions of the nation. Tree understood imagination to be “the strongest power in fostering the aspirations, in shaping the destinies of nations,”<sup>74</sup> and Shakespeare’s works in particular gave to “the artist as to the spectator [the] most opportunities of weaving round the work of the poet the embroidery of his own imagination.”<sup>75</sup> This thesis is an examination of such embroidery, an analysis of the processes by which tableaux, incidental music, and Shakespeare converged on the nineteenth-century stage to comment on the nation.

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<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> Tree, *Thoughts and After-Thoughts* (London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1913), p. 93.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

## Thesis structure and chapter summaries

This thesis is broken down into three parts with two chapters in each part. As I have stated, each part addresses one aspect of national identity prevalent in nineteenth-century society and culture that, I argue, was expressed in accompanied tableaux in Shakespearean productions: Pastoralism, or the myth of “Merrie England”; Imperialism, or the myth of the benevolent Empire; and Protestantism, or the myth of the National Religion. Each of these aspects of identity will be defined and discussed further in the introduction to each respective part of this thesis, followed by two chapters that provide case studies evidencing the presence of such nationalistic expressions in accompanied tableaux on the nineteenth-century Shakespearean stage. Rather than strictly defined, separate entities, these national identities should be understood as constantly overlapping and distilling meaning from one another, which will be evidenced further in my forthcoming chapters.

Readers will notice that the first chapter of each part addresses a tableau in Shakespeare’s and John Fletcher’s play *King Henry VIII*, and the reasons for this are twofold. First, *Henry VIII*’s episodic structure provided natural spaces for accompanied *tableaux vivants* to occur. As such, some of the most elaborate stage pictures and incidental music of this period originated in performances of *Henry VIII*, but these productions, and particularly their music, have received little attention until now. Secondly, as Poole states, “Victorians took a keen interest in Shakespeare’s English kings and what their plays had to say about English history” and it was because of this that “*Henry VIII* figured prominently in the nineteenth-century repertoire” along with Shakespeare’s other history plays.<sup>76</sup> Because of the proximity of Henry VIII’s reign to

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<sup>76</sup> Poole, p. 195.

Shakespeare's own age, the play was often seen as capturing the essence of one of the most notable moments of English history that preempted the comeuppance of the national poet and represented a glorified Tudor age that many Victorians likened to their own.

Chapters One and Two discuss the myth of Merrie England as it was portrayed in Kean's and Irving's stagings of the masque at York Place (1.4 *Henry VIII*) and in Herbert Beerbohm Tree's 1902 production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The settings of these plays and the characters involved in their plots offer two different views of Merrie England: one from the perspective of the monarchy and the other from the perspective of a loosely-defined "middle class". Despite this difference, both productions' portrayals of Merrie England relied on symbols derived from folk customs and folklore, which was accompanied by nineteenth-century arrangements of traditional "English" music and late-nineteenth century meditations on this style, which came to form the genre of English light music.<sup>77</sup> I argue that Kean's and Irving's tableaux of the banquet offered a revisionist history of Anne and Henry's meeting that paralleled them with popular figures from English folklore: Maid Marian and Robin Hood. Similarly, Tree's *Merry Wives* portrayed the Merrie England of an imagined, medieval Windsor and its colloquial history in the final tableaux at Herne's Oak, which also engaged with English folklore through the figure of Herne the Hunter.

Chapters Three and Four address British imperialism as it was expressed in Kean's and Tree's stagings of Anne Bullen's coronation (4.1 *Henry VIII*) and in two, interpolated tableaux in Tree's 1899 *King John*: "The Fight Near Angiers" and "The Granting of the Magna Charta". These chapters address different, yet interrelated strands of the imperial self-image: the monarchy

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<sup>77</sup> Geoffrey Self, *Light music in Britain since 1870: a survey* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001); Eric Saylor, *English Pastoral Music: From Arcadia to Utopia, 1900-1955* (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2017).

as a powerfully symbolic head of state under which the Empire is ostensibly united, and acts of imperialism and colonization through warfare and diplomacy. In Chapter Three, I show how Kean's and Tree's productions engaged with the long-held tradition of using Anne Bullen's dramatized coronation to commemorate the current monarch. The pageantry of the coronation represented a tradition that, in actuality, was largely invented, and placed the monarch as a symbolic figurehead of the empire, even as the actual constitutional power of the monarchy waned. In Chapter Four, I argue that Tree's interpolated tableaux expressed acute, imperialistic messages directly related to the socio-political contexts of the Second Boer War (1899-1902) and presented colonization as a benevolent, rather than self-serving, act. This was communicated through elongated, pantomimic sequences accompanied by elaborate and pre-cinematic incidental music that purported a view of England as dominant in warfare and aggrandized the Magna Carta as a defining moment in national history which indicated Britain's "benevolent" relationship with its constituents.

Chapters Five and Six analyze expressions of religious identities through discussions of Kean's staging of Katherine's vision (4.2 *Henry VIII*) and a series of interpolated tableaux featured in Tree's 1908 production of *The Merchant of Venice*. In Chapter Five, I argue that Kean presented Katherine's vision as an Anglo-Catholic experience, relying on imagery that tied it directly to the tenets of the Oxford Movement and the rise of ritualism in the Church of England from the 1840s until the 1860s. Through a mixture of ostensibly "Catholic" imagery with accompanying "English" music, Kean provided audiences with a view of England's ancient, pre-Reformation religion, symbolized by Gothic architecture which experienced a resurgence throughout the Victorian period. Chapter Six addresses the relationship between Christians and Jews in *fin-de-siècle* England, arguing that Tree's series of interpolated tableaux in his 1908

production of *Merchant* called into question the values and ideologies of British Protestants. Through a complex sound design and use of traditional Jewish music, Tree paralleled the mistreatment of Shylock by the hands of Venetian Christians with the mistreatment of immigrant Jews at the hands of English Christians in London's East End. In this sense, the final case study of Tree's *Merchant* is slightly different than those that come before it. While the productions discussed in Chapters One through Five solidified and perpetuated the aggrandized notions of Englishness presented in their respective tableaux, Tree's production of the *Merchant* challenged and questioned the audiences' understanding of Christianity and their assumptions about Jews and Judaism. Here, music did not so much confirm or celebrate the audience's understanding of themselves as a Christian nation, but pulled back the veil of prejudice and xenophobia that underpinned the Christian ethos of the period as well as anti-immigrant legislation such as the Anti-Aliens Act of 1905.

There are, no doubt, various other productions during this period that, with unlimited time and word count, could also be addressed within these themes. My choice of the productions featured in this thesis relied primarily on the availability and completeness of musical scores and promptbooks and each production's engagement with English national identity. I also chose productions in which the incidental music has received scant recognition in previous scholarship, embodying my aim to bring previously unheard music back into scholarly discourse. On the whole, this project has two central aims that I hope will be elucidated in my forthcoming chapters. First, I show how integral the study of incidental music is to performance studies and our understanding of theatre history, and suggest that considering incidental music alongside what we already know about nineteenth-century theatre can often change or enhance our conclusions and provide a fuller understanding of Victorian and Edwardian theatre. Secondly, I

show how music and *tableaux vivants* were mobilized within Shakespearean productions to express dominant, national ideologies, emotionalizing the nation's history and sense of self through the combination of sound and sight.

## Part One: Shakespeare and the Myth of Merrie England

### Introduction

The notion of a “Merrie England” is invented. As Roy Judge stated in his presidential address to the Folklore Society in 1991, “it is a world that has never actually existed, a visionary, mythical landscape, where it is difficult to take normal historical bearings.”<sup>1</sup> Underpinned by the nostalgia of bucolic English landscapes, thatched cottages, maypoles, morris dancing, folk music, and reveling peasantry, the arcadian myth of an idyllic, bygone age offered a temporary escape from the increasingly industrial and capitalist nineteenth-century society, much like William Morris expressed in *The Earthly Paradise* (1868-70):

Forget the six counties hung with smoke,  
Forget the snorting steam and piston stroke,  
Forget the spreading of the hideous town;  
Think rather of the pack-horse on the down,  
And dream of London, small, and white, and clean,  
The clear Thames bordered by its gardens green.<sup>2</sup>

Throughout the long nineteenth century, landscapes, objects, and rituals thought to represent the age of Merrie England were viewed as artifacts of a colloquial history, serving as an avenue into understanding, recreating, and reliving a romanticized version of England’s past. Texts like Alfred Austin’s *Haunts of Ancient Peace* (1901) expressed a collective yearning to return to an imagined world of “... home-made jams, lavender bags, recitations of Gray’s *Elegy*, and morning and evening prayers” that had been replaced by “ungraceful hurry and worry, perpetual postman’s knocks, [and] an intermittent shower of telegrams.”<sup>3</sup> However fictional, the myth of

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<sup>1</sup> Roy Judge, ‘May Day and Merrie England’, *Folklore*, Vol. 102. No. 2 (1991), 131-148 (p. 131).

<sup>2</sup> William Morris, *The Earthly Paradise: a poem* (London: F.S. Ellis, 1868), in *Internet Archive* [10 November 2019], p. 1.

<sup>3</sup> Alfred Austin, *Haunts of Ancient Peace* (London: Macmillan, 1902), in *Internet Archive* [10 November 2019], p. 21.



Merrie England proffered a rustic vision of England's past that offered a sense of stability and tranquility and served as a pastoral retreat from urban life.

The idea of a Merrie England was not unique to the nineteenth century. As Ronald Hutton's work has shown, the myth of a previous, utopic society was already well established by the middle of the seventeenth century.<sup>4</sup> However, the notion of a Merrie England gained significant traction during the latter half of the nineteenth century, and Shakespeare, already enshrined as the national poet, became increasingly solidified as the figurehead of this nondescript utopia. His envisaged participation in the myth is layered. Shakespeare was seen as both a product of Merrie England through his upbringing in the rural English village of Stratford-upon-Avon and a progenitor of Merrie England through his perceived ability to capture the essence of such a time in his plays, particularly those set in England. This collective thinking about the relationship between national poet and national landscape came to shape the way in which Shakespeare's works were staged in nineteenth-century London. I argue that the myth of Merrie England was crystalized in the Victorian and Edwardian imaginations via such performances on the nineteenth-century Shakespearean stage, particularly *tableaux vivants*, accompanied by "English" music that shaped the emotional appeal and national sentiment in these tableaux. This chapter explores two such instances – the masque at York Place (1.4) in *Henry VIII* as performed at the Princess's (1855) and the Lyceum (1892) and the masque at Herne's Oak (5.1) in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* as performed at His Majesty's Theatre (1902).

I will show that the visual components of the *mises-en-scene* and the accompanying incidental music for these productions embodied and propagated the arcadian notion of Merrie

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<sup>4</sup> Ronald Hutton, *The Rise and Fall of Merry England: The Ritual Year, 1400-1700* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001).

England. Choices in costuming and set design were firmly rooted in historically “realistic” portrayals of either the late-medieval or Tudor periods. Incidental music was either sourced from traditional tunes, rediscovered during the late-Victorian and early-Edwardian folksong revival, or was specially composed for production by popular English composers Edward German (for *Henry VIII*) and Arthur Sullivan (for *Merry Wives*). As I will explore, there are influences from various strands of late-nineteenth century art and culture at work here, akin to each other through their respective participation in defining what it meant to be English via the pastoral myth. I argue that the English Musical Renaissance, the Folk Song Revival, and the widespread movements of medievalism and romanticism influenced the way in which Shakespeare was performed and accompanied on London stages, and a closer look at such influences helps in determining what Merrie England represented to Victorians and Edwardians.

Although the term “Merrie England” eschews precise historical dating, it was a real place in the Victorian and Edwardian imagination, consistently represented by symbols of a colloquial, rural history. The maypole, morris dancing, unadulterated landscapes, and figures like Robin Hood, Maid Marian, and King Arthur created a palpable image of Merrie England. It is helpful to think of the lemma of “Merrie England” as an umbrella term that encompassed a vague, historical “golden age” that could simultaneously refer to the Middle Ages, the medieval, the Tudor, the Elizabethan, the Renaissance, the Early Modern, the Jacobean, or the Shakespearean, depending on one’s choice of terminology. Herein, we can observe what Tatiana String and Marcus Bull term essentialism, or “the reduction of a given historical period to a set of clichéd images and associations.”<sup>5</sup> The blurring of distinct historical boundaries and the conflation of the medieval

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<sup>5</sup> Tatiana String and Marcus Bull, eds., *Tudorism: historical imagination and the appropriation of the sixteenth century* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011), p. 10.

and Tudor periods is symptomatic of the cultural mentality of Merrie England, and it was precisely this type of essentialism that grouped the sixteenth century, or Shakespeare's age, in with English culture and history that predated and postdated his life and works. The sixteenth century's relationship with the medieval period can be seen as a "continuation ... as a caesura, as a kind of extended epilogue, as a dilution, as the beginning of the end or the end of the beginning."<sup>6</sup> In nineteenth century thought and culture, "the sixteenth century vis-à-vis medieval culture" thus "contributed toward constructions of the medieval, or Gothic, or premodern, or pre-industrial, or dark-age, or feudal, or primitive, or traditional."<sup>7</sup> The slippage between these distinct historical periods allowed a space within collective cultural thought where national and colloquial history could be remembered with a great deal of romanticism. As symbols of the medieval and Tudor periods became increasingly enmeshed in the popular imagination, the reductive yet strikingly pervasive notion of Merrie England began to take shape. Shakespeare emerged as a central figurehead of this age, and perceptions of his works and biography aided in the perpetuation of the myth.

Nineteenth-century biographers strived to connect Shakespeare's life and works with this perceived golden age by envisioning Shakespeare's medieval ancestry, his participation in popular folk customs of the rural village, and his inspiration by the English pastoral landscape.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> For nineteenth century biographies of Shakespeare in addition to Charles Knight's, see: Sidney Lee, *A Life of William Shakespeare* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1898); Thomas De Quincey, *Shakespeare: A Biography* (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1864); William Henty, *Shakespeare, with some notes on his early biography and an identification of the characters of William Fenton and Ann Page with William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway* (London: Ballantyne Press, 1882); Karl Elze, *William Shakespeare: a literary biography*, trans. L. Dora Schmitz (London: G. Bell, 1888); and Hamilton Wright Mabie, *William Shakespeare: poet, dramatist, and man* (London, New York: Macmillan, 1901).

For example, Charles Knight's 1865 biography places Shakespeare at the center of the Merrie England myth by imagining Shakespeare's ancestors fighting in the Battle of Bosworth:

Was there in that victorious army of the Earl of Richmond [...] an Englishman bearing the name of Chacksper, or Shakespeyre, or Schakespere, or Schakespeire, or Schakspere, or Shakespeare, or Shakspere, a martial name, however spelt? [...] Certainly there was a Shakspere, the paternal ancestor of William Shakspere, who, if he stood not nigh the little mountain when the Earl of Richmond promised condign recompense to his valiant soldiers, was amongst those especial friends and fautors whom Henry VII enriched with possessions and goods.<sup>9</sup>

Though Knight admits there is no evidence that anyone in Shakespeare's genealogy ever fought for England, the practice of imagining his ancestors on Bosworth field, a locale that Shakespeare wrote about in *Richard III*, embodies the degree to which Victorian biographers desired to locate, if not, invent Shakespeare's medieval lineage via fabricated evidence from his plays. Proving such a pedigree directly linked Shakespeare with romantic notions of chivalry, bravery, and valor, all indicative of the medievalism that makes up part of the Merrie England myth.

Similarly, Knight imagines a young Shakespeare participating in folk customs in the bucolic village of Stratford-upon-Avon, arguing that these customs influenced his subsequent works:

Let us follow the boy William Shakspere ... through the annual course of the principal rustic holidays ... We may discover in these familiar scenes not only those peculiar forms of dramatic spirit in real manners which might in some degree have given a direction to his genius, but, what is perhaps of greater importance, that poetical aspect of common life which was to supply materials of thought and of imagery to him who was to become in the most eminent degree the poet of humanity in all its imaginative relations.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Charles Knight, *William Shakespeare: a biography*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: George Routledge, 1865), in *Internet Archive* [12 November 2019], p. 4.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 63-4.

Shakespeare's association with features of the English landscape is understood to be effortless, an inborn trait that suggests an ability to see and express the truth of all that is perceived to define English nature – that is, the natural landscape and the nature, or characteristics, of the English people. What these segments of Knight's biography reveal is a collective cultural assumption that Shakespeare and Merrie England were inherently linked, and that England could claim some responsibility for cultivating his "genius".

Thus, Shakespeare's imagined medieval lineage, his influence by the pastoral landscapes of Warwickshire, and his imagined roles within rustic holiday celebrations all imbued his works with a sense of historical validity. They were solidified in the Victorian imagination as realistic accounts of the age of Merrie England, seen as part-historical, part-colloquial chronicles of England's "golden age". This assumption directly influenced the way in which his plays were staged throughout the nineteenth century, and these stagings only worked to perpetuate such assumptions further. This was particularly true in performances of the English history plays and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Their respective settings in England all drew on various historical periods that had been conflated under the title of Merrie England, particularly in interpolated or extended tableaux in which music and image combined to present a seemingly realistic but heavily romantic portrayal of this arcadian age.

Yet, the reach of the Merrie England myth went far beyond perceptions of Shakespeare's upbringing and performances of his plays. Reverberations of the myth can be observed in almost every conceivable part of nineteenth-century art and culture. The notion of a Merrie England was central to the Gothic revival, romantic literature such as the novels of Walter Scott, the back-to-the-land movement, romantic art and poetry, the folk-song revival, nationalistic politics such as

the Young England party<sup>11</sup>, the theology of pantheism, the revival of folk customs, many popular pantomimes portraying figures from folklore, and the tenets of the English Musical Renaissance and Folk Song Revival. This list, which is by no means exhaustive, illustrates the degree to which a perceived golden age of a mythological Merrie England sat at the pulse of Victorian and Edwardian life and society. Through this, we can observe another route that nineteenth-century English society took into understanding this past and identity: topicality, or “the aligning of constructions of the past to present-day concerns and debates.”<sup>12</sup> Topical appropriation of the societal values that underpinned the Merrie England myth increasingly became a way to forge an equally idealized future for England. The thinking was circular. In order to build a future English utopia, one needed to return to the values of the past utopia. As Edward Carpenter put it in *Civilisation: its cause and cure*, a seminal text in the back-to-the-land movement, “a return to nature and community of human life ... is the way back to the lost Eden, or rather forward to the new Eden.”<sup>13</sup>

This was particularly applicable in an increasingly urban London, where populations had grown exponentially throughout the century. As Jan Marsh states, “between 1801 and 1911 the proportion of the population living in urban areas rose from twenty per cent to eighty per cent,” and despite an overall increase in total population, “the rural population fell between 1861 and

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<sup>11</sup> The Young England party was described in 1878 as “a small section of clever young men, who had tried the experiment of importing sentiment into politics and applying the ideas of medievalism to the questions of the day.” See W.H. Davenport Adams, *English Party Leaders and English Parties from Walpole to Peel*, Vol. 2 (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1878), p. 468. For contemporary commentary, see Charles Richmond and Paul Smith (eds.), *The Self-Fashioning of Disraeli 1818-1851* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1999), who define Young England as “a movement in the early 1840s which despised utilitarianism, middle-class liberalism, and centralized government. It sought to return England to the feudal and monarchal antecedents of its national youth” (p. 55).

<sup>12</sup> String and Bull, p. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Edward Carpenter, *Civilisation: its cause and cure* (London: G. Allen & Unwin, 1921), in *Internet Archive* [2 November 2019], p. 35.

1901.”<sup>14</sup> With health and safety regulations lacking and human exploitation, harsh factory conditions, and child labor becoming a norm for working class Londoners, city life became increasingly vilified. London “was seen as infernal” described with “potent imagery associated with hell”, while the countryside was increasingly seen as “the source of all that was divine” and a seat of “health and happiness.”<sup>15</sup> Gustave Doré’s illustrations of London (1872) express the poverty, crowded conditions, and harsh working environments that working class Londoners were subject to (Figures 1.1 and 1.2). In contrast to this were illustrations of Merrie England, such as William Powell Frith’s *An English Merry-making in the Olden Times* (1847) (Figure 1.3), which demonstrates what Merrie England represented in the nineteenth-century imagination: idyllic scenes of reveling peasantry beneath the shade of oak trees and flanked by Tudor cottages. What the contrast between these paintings suggests is that the working class, who had migrated in droves to the city throughout the nineteenth century, would have been better off in the countryside, even under the class restrictions of a feudalistic society. Even though the feudal structure came with its own forms of oppression on the working class, the work in the countryside was at least out in nature, surrounded by England’s lush landscape, fresh air, and immediate food sources via abundant agriculture. City life, on the other hand, doomed the working class to a life in a factory, filthy air quality, overcrowded living environments, and limited access to fresh food and minimal agricultural space to grow their own.

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<sup>14</sup> Jan Marsh, *Back to the Land: The Pastoral Impulse in Victorian England from 1880 to 1914* (London: Quartet Books, 1982), pp. 3-4.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 4, 36-7.



Figures 1.1 and 1.2: Gustave Doré's illustrations of London, from William Blanchard Jerrold's *London: A Pilgrimage* (1872).





Figure 1.3: William Powell Firth's *An English Merry-making in the Olden Times* (1847).

However, the Merrie England myth did not only appeal to the working class. As Martin Weiner observes, “as the century wore on, shapers of middle- and upper-class opinion, in disenchantment with continual change, turned more and more to the past, and to the elements of the past surviving in the present, as a source of alternative values.”<sup>16</sup> As nationalistic sentiment increased as the century went on, there was a gradual reevaluation and redefinition of “what constituted ‘Englishness’” within the “cultural conservatism of the re-formed elite.”<sup>17</sup> This ultimately created a “new national self-image” that “dressed itself in the trappings of an older tradition,”<sup>18</sup> and more specifically, the trappings of the Merrie England myth. As Richard Wollheim observed in 1961, the values embedded in the myth can be understood as the “English

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<sup>16</sup> Martin J. Wiener. *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit, 1850-1980*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2001), p. 43.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 41.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

dream,” comparable to the notion of the “American dream.”<sup>19</sup> While the “American dream” espouses the ideals of “affluent and assertive individualism,” the “English dream” espouses a “collective, unalienated folk society, where honest men work together and create together, the ideal of Ruskin and William Morris and Leavis.”<sup>20</sup> These views, which would eventually come to define the agenda of the “New Left” in the 1960s, find their roots in the nineteenth century, and particularly in the middle and upper classes. As the “social location of rural fantasies” shifted from working to middle classes, the countryside not only offered an escape from the harsh conditions faced by laborers, but also provided an alternative to a capitalistic economy and social order, holding the promise of a utopic, socialist society.<sup>21</sup>

In this way, the Merrie England myth’s appeal was stratified across various classes throughout the Victorian and Edwardian periods. The plays I have chosen to discuss in the next two chapters embody this stratification, for the characters in *Henry VIII* and *Merry Wives* represent distinctly different social milieus. The pervasiveness of the Merrie England myth amongst a range of social classes meant that imagery associated with Merrie England could be applied to characters such as Henry VIII and Anne Bullen as well as Falstaff, Mistress Quickly, and Anne Page. The masque in 1.4 of *Henry VIII* was a theatrical space in which monarchical pretensions associated with the Merrie England ideal were expressed with all the splendor and ceremony actor-managers Charles Kean and Henry Irving could muster. On the other hand, Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* engaged with a different side of the myth, the part that represented lives of the working and middle classes. Its final scene

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<sup>19</sup> Richard Wollheim, ‘The English Dream’, *The Spectator*, Vol. 206 (1 March 1961), pp. 334-5 (p. 335).

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 335.

<sup>21</sup> Wiener, p. 47.

at Herne's Oak takes place in the pastoral setting of Windsor Park and contains the popular folklore figure Herne the Hunter; thus, it is more pastoral and colloquial than the banquet at York Place, engaging less with splendor and ceremony and more with folklore, ancient ritual, and the humor of the English village. In my exploration of these tableaux in Chapters One and Two, I will argue that the notion of a Merrie England became a way of defining a collective understanding of English national identity rooted in pastoralism and romanticism. It was presented as a shared heritage belonging to every English person, no matter his or her class, and it was this factor above all else that attributed to the degree to which this nostalgic vision of England pervaded the way people of the nineteenth century thought about their collective past and national identity.

As nationalism gained momentum in the latter half of the century, people increasingly sought to define "Englishness" through an insular exploration of England's folk history and customs, ignoring any influence from the Continent. During this period, there was a marked increase in interest in all things folk: folklore, folk customs, folk dancing, folk art, and folk music. Efforts were made to unearth, preserve, reenact, rediscover, and revive these traditions and artforms. Folk customs like May Day, as Roy Judge traces, saw a resurgence beginning in the 1840s. By the 1880s, some of these revivals had become extremely popular, such as the May Day festival at Knutsford, which was patronized by the Prince and Princess of Wales and officially deemed the Royal May Day Festival in 1887.<sup>22</sup> Judge observes that "these recreations of the past were being accepted as eyewitness likenesses, as real images of Merrie England."<sup>23</sup> Much like the historical realism that defined Shakespearean stagings of this era, seen as true reenactments of a

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<sup>22</sup> Judge, 'May Day and Merrie England', p. 134.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

bygone age, the revived folk traditions were read as historically viable. The belief was that participating in the traditions of the past not only brought them out of obscurity but offered an opportunity to shape a new nation founded on the morals of a bygone and ostensibly superior era. This outlook was particularly prevalent in discussions of national music, which was perceived as one of England's largest failures in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This brought about the interrelated movements of the English Musical Renaissance (EMR) and Folk Song Revival (FSR), both of which would come to directly influence the music that accompanied the tableaux in this chapter. As such, the final section of this introduction explores the ways in which English music was tied up in the Merrie England myth, and how the push to establish a native-born composer of merit was symptomatic of a larger surge in English nationalism at the end of the century.

As Jeffrey Richards observes, “there began to be insistent calls for the promotion of English national music” in the latter half of the century.<sup>24</sup> The music of a nation was thought to be inextricably linked with national landscape, ancestry, and character during this period. As *The Musical Times* stated (1887), “... nationality in music does not lie in either borrowing or adaptation, but in some inborn qualities, to be ascribed either to the influences of Nature or of manners, or of peculiar instruments, originated by rude people.”<sup>25</sup> This idea that creativity is an inborn trait influenced by nature echoes what I have already explored in relationship to how Shakespeare's literary genius was seen as cultivated by English landscape, folk customs, and medieval ancestry. The same logic applied to composers of different nations. “The chief cause of national distinctiveness may be found in temperament and physical surroundings,” stated *The*

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<sup>24</sup> Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music*, p. 10.

<sup>25</sup> ‘Nationalism in music’, *The Musical Times*, 1 January 1887, Vol. 28. No. 527, pp. 9-12 (p. 11).

*Musical Times*, and “the roots of national music ... lie deep down in the nature of the people to whom it belongs.”<sup>26</sup> It was seen as each nation’s responsibility to “cultivate the art for itself, seize upon whatever is most distinctive and valuable in its own conception and expression, and endeavour to complete the edifice upon that best and surest foundation.”<sup>27</sup>

In terms of literary achievement, England had achieved this through figures like Shakespeare, but music was seen as an area in need of dire attention and improvement. For most of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, music from the Continent – chiefly France, Italy, and Germany – was given superior status in English musical culture, dubbing England as “*Das Land ohne Musik*,” or the land without music.<sup>28</sup> In 1907, Cecil Sharp, one of the prominent leaders of the Folk Song and Morris Dance Revivals lamented the condition of English music: “Is this deplorable state of things to continue indefinitely? Is there no remedy? Is England, the land of Shakespeare, to go down to posterity as the only nation in all Europe incapable of original musical expression?”<sup>29</sup> The thinking was that if the nature and temperament of England could produce the poetry of Shakespeare, then surely it could also produce an English Berlioz, Verdi, or Wagner. It is unsurprising that the point at which English music was perceived to be at its height pointed back to Merrie England. As Sharp reminisced, “in earlier days, we were known as ‘Merrie England’, and renowned throughout Europe as a nation of dancers and ballad-singers; and, during the infancy of art-music we contributed our full share to its nourishment. But with the death of Purcell English music fell upon evil days.”<sup>30</sup> This led to an assumption that true English

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>28</sup> Cited in Andrew Blake, *The Land without Music: music, culture and society in twentieth-century Britain* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1997), p. xi.

<sup>29</sup> Cecil J. Sharp, *English Folk-Song Some Conclusions* (London: Simpkin & Co., 1907), p. 129.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 128.

music, that is music by a native-born Englishman or Englishwoman, had hopelessly declined because the English in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries patronized music of other nations, “music which is not their own .. and often thoroughly at variance with their character.”<sup>31</sup> The emergence of the EMR and FSR are reactions against this tendency, revealing a calculated effort to revive English music, cultivate native-born composers, rediscover “lost” folksongs, and ultimately find reflections of national self-hood within such music.

Sir Hubert Parry, one of the central figures in both the EMR and the FSR, confirmed this view, highlighting the most prominent English national composers of the Elizabethan and Jacobean periods and drawing and connection between the “national temperament” of their work and the nineteenth-century personification of Britain, John Bull:

... [W]hether it is the severe dignity of Tallis<sup>32</sup> [*sic*] or the kindly subtlety of Byrd,<sup>33</sup> the nobility and warmth of Orlando Gibbons,<sup>34</sup> the geniality and humour of Morley,<sup>35</sup> the tender sweetness of Dowland,<sup>36</sup> the fantastic ingenuity of John Bull,<sup>37</sup> it always rings true, and it is the direct outcome of national temperament. [...] All the Elizabethan and early Jacobean music, whether choral or instrumental, has a national and consistent flavour – It has the same ring as the primitive English folk-music; and its salient characteristics are simplicity and unaffected tunefulness.”<sup>38</sup>

By locating the Renaissance period as the time in which the nation’s music most accurately reflected English character – described as full of “severe dignity,” “subtlety,” “nobility and warmth,” “geniality and humour,” and “tender sweetness” – and then combining this assumption

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<sup>31</sup> Hubert Parry, *Style in musical art* (London: Macmillan, 1911), p. 156.

<sup>32</sup> Refers to Thomas Tallis, an English composer (1505-1585).

<sup>33</sup> Refers to William Byrd, English composer (1543-1623).

<sup>34</sup> English composer, virginalist, and organist (1583-1625).

<sup>35</sup> Refers to Thomas Morley, English composer (1557-1602).

<sup>36</sup> Refers to John Dowland, English composer (1563-1626).

<sup>37</sup> Refers to the national personification of the United Kingdom, often portrayed in caricature as a part of political cartoons and other graphics. The image was first created in the early-eighteenth century by Dr. John Arbuthnot, but gained significant popularity in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

<sup>38</sup> Parry, p. 156-7.

with the “fantastic ingenuity” of John Bull, Parry makes a connection between the music of Merrie England and late-nineteenth century nationalism worth further exploration. What the music of Shakespeare’s age offered was a compositional model for modern composers that was derived from a distinctly English source instead of a wider European influence. For if, as Perry thought, the music of a nation “bespeaks them more truly than any other manifestation of the mind of man,”<sup>39</sup> then the perceived lack of national music by the end of the nineteenth century was not only an indictment of the state of national music, but of the state of the nation.

Proponents of the EMR, as the title of their movement suggested, argued that England needed a musical rebirth. Echoing the aforementioned quote by Carpenter, they suggested that the way forward to a new age of musical prominence was to go backwards to the age of Merrie England, where England was seen as “... being the most accomplished in the skill of music of any people.”<sup>40</sup>

It was the renowned music critic Joseph Bennett, who first used the word “renaissance” to describe England’s musical comeuppance towards the end of the nineteenth century. Bennett, reviewing a composition of Parry’s, wrote in *The Daily Telegraph* (1877) that “Mr. Parry’s symphony in G ... is capital proof that English music has arrived at a *renaissance* period.”<sup>41</sup> As Merion Hughes and Robert Stradling observe, Bennett’s use of the word “renaissance,” which was given its first modern usage by Swiss historian Carl Burkhardt in 1860, “tapp[ed] into some potent tropes of [nineteenth-century] culture and society.”<sup>42</sup> The term mobilized a “direct comparison between the ... 1880s and a recongised ‘Golden Age,’” an age which “conjured up

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<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 155.

<sup>40</sup> Originally stated by Erasmus in 1509, quoted in Sharp, p. 128.

<sup>41</sup> Cited in Hughes and Stradling, p. 42.

<sup>42</sup> Hughes and Stradling, p. 43.

... the literary and political achievements of the Elizabethans” and “descried in its ambit the origins of all that it held most dear – nationhood, religion, maritime-commercial traditions, civilisation, and empire.”<sup>43</sup> The EMR had two aims: the first was to establish an English school of music wherein professional musicians could be trained, ultimately resulting in the establishment of the Royal College of Music (1882). The second, and most relevant to this chapter, was to rediscover the “natural musical idiom of [the] nation”<sup>44</sup> by unearthing music written during the Early Modern period by English national composers. As Hughes and Stradling observe, “Tudor polyphony and folksong” were both increasingly seen as “vital, and potentially renewing, areas of the English musical past”<sup>45</sup>, and I argue that folksong in particular came to influence how pastoral Shakespearean tableaux were accompanied in nineteenth-century theatres.

Rediscovering English folksong and reestablishing a specifically English style of music fit in with the wider patterns of romantic and pastoral thought. Folksong was thought to be pure, primarily due to its association with the countryside. As Marsh observes, the Folk Song Society (FSS) was placed “firmly within an anti-urban, anti-industrial perspective.”<sup>46</sup> Parry’s address to the FSS in 1898 blamed the “terribly overgrown” environment of London, filled with “tawdriness of sham jewellery and shoddy clothes”, “pawnshops and flaming gin palaces”, and “miserable piles of Covent Garden refuse, which pass for vegetables”<sup>47</sup> for cultivating modern song, which he deemed “the enemy of folk music.”<sup>48</sup> The countryside and its folk tunes were the remedy, for this music, as Cecil Sharp stated, was “transparently pure and thankful, simple and direct in its

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<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 43-4.

<sup>44</sup> Sharp, p. 130.

<sup>45</sup> Hughes and Stradling, p. 76.

<sup>46</sup> Marsh, p. 76.

<sup>47</sup> Hubert Parry, ‘Inaugural Address’, *Journal of the Folk-Song Society*, Vol. 1. No. 1 (1899), pp. 1-3.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.



utterance,” and free from “the taint of manufacture, the canker of artificiality.”<sup>49</sup> Pastoralism is embedded in the rhetoric with which Sharp describes English folksongs, calling them “simple ditties which have sprung like wild flowers from the very hearts of our countrymen, and which are as redolent of the English race as its language.”<sup>50</sup> Thus, the same anti-urbanism embodied in the widespread Romantic movement and that underpinned the works of Ruskin, Morris, and Carpenter was used to vilify modern song and suggest that folksong, and particularly its status as a pastoral phenomenon, would lead the country back to the musical superiority associated with Merrie England.

There is much more that could be said about both the pervasiveness of the EMR and the FSR throughout the *fin-de-siècle* musical culture, but of chief relevance here is how these movements influenced the ways in which Shakespeare was staged and accompanied during this period. The two composers addressed in this chapter are Arthur Sullivan and Edward German, both popular composers of theatre music, among many other genres of music, during the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Though from slightly different generations, both Sullivan’s and German’s careers share common links. They both rose to fame through writing Shakespearean incidental music. German’s incidental music settings for *Richard III* (1889) and *Henry VIII* (1892) – the latter of which is discussed in Chapter One – made him a household name in English music.<sup>51</sup> Likewise, Sullivan’s music for *The Tempest* (1861) is often cited as his first major composition, which premiered at the Crystal Palace in 1862 with widespread success. He would also come to write music for *The Merchant of Venice* (1871), *Henry VIII* (1877), *Macbeth*

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<sup>49</sup> Sharp, p. 136.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> See Brian Rees, ‘Setting the Bard’, *A Musical Peacemaker: The Life and Work of Sir Edward German*, (Bourne End: Kensal Press, 1986), pp. 48-73.

(1888), and *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1874), the last of which is addressed in Chapter Two.<sup>52</sup> Probably the most well-known of the two, Sullivan was considered by some to be the answer to the EMR's call for a British-born native composer, but his willingness to participate in writing theatre music (seen as "less respectable" than "serious" music) and his association with Gilbert kept him from being the EMR's archetypal representative of an English national composer.<sup>53</sup> Likewise, German's start as a composer of theatre music sequestered him from being a central figure within the EMR.

There is one final similarity between the composers of relevance here, as both Sullivan and German wrote works that fully embody the Merrie England myth. These were Sullivan's "Grand National Ballet in Eight Tableaux" entitled *Victoria and Merrie England*, which premiered in 1897 and commemorated Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, and German's operetta *Merrie England*, which premiered in April 1902. Both pieces are indicative of the ways in which the symbols of Merrie England – figures of folklore, maypoles, rural villages, pastoral landscapes, and English folksong – appeared on the nineteenth century stage, and expose something of a complete picture of the Merrie England myth as it existed in the Victorian imagination. Sullivan's ballet was more of "a series of historical episodes"<sup>54</sup> quite similar to the Shakespearean tableaux I discuss in this thesis. Together these episodes offered a pictorial history of England beginning with "the Genius of Britain, amid Druidical surroundings, predict[ing] the greatness of Britannia", then presenting several scenes of Elizabethan England including a May

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<sup>52</sup> See Arthur Jacobs, *Arthur Sullivan: A Victorian Musician*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1992), pp. 456-6.

<sup>53</sup> See Andrew Blake, p. 38 and Hughes and Stadling, pp. 18 and 49.

<sup>54</sup> "'Victoria and Merrie England' – Sir Arthur Sullivan's New Ballet", *Illustrated Sporting and Dramatic News*, in *British Library Newspaper Archive*, 12 June 1897, p. 10; and "Alhambra Theatre: 'Victoria and Merrie England'", p. 5.

Day celebration with Robin Hood and Maid Marian, and ending with a reenactment of Queen Victoria's coronation, attended by representatives from the colonies and accompanied by the National Anthem (Figure 1.4).<sup>55</sup> Tableaux and the accompanying music combined to present a picture described as "not only a beautiful and gorgeous spectacle" but also "a lesson in history and historical costume, accompanied by some of the best music ever written for ballet purposes."<sup>56</sup> The chronology of the tableaux, particularly the jump between the Elizabethan age to the Victorian age, is instructive, for it draws a topical connection between the ages of Elizabeth and Victoria that was typical in Victorian society.<sup>57</sup>

German's opera was also full of symbols of Merrie England: the figures of Robin Hood, Maid Marion, Friar Tuck, and Little John are all mentioned in the libretto, and the March and Chorus of scene eight rings with nationalistic fervor, proclaiming "Elizabeth for England, and England for thee!"<sup>58</sup> According to one review, German's music transported audiences back to "England in the days of Elizabeth, when villagers danced country dances and sang patriotic songs."<sup>59</sup> While his operetta contained more of a complete narrative than Sullivan's balletic series of tableaux, German relied on the same reductive symbols of a largely invented bygone age and its monarch to represent the nation. Through such an intermingling of monarch and myth, a broad and reductive form of national identity was expressed, with Englishness repeatedly being defined through prescriptive visual and aural symbols. The *mises-en-scene* and soundscapes present in German's operetta and Sullivan's ballet are also present in the scenic designs and incidental

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<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> "'Victoria and Merrie England'" *The Era*, in *British Library Newspaper Archive*, 29 May 1897, p.8.

<sup>57</sup> See Dobson and Watson, *England's Elizabeth*, particularly chapter 4.

<sup>58</sup> For full score see, Edward German and Basil Hood, *Merrie England* (London: Chappell and Co, 1903), in *IMSLP* <[https://imslp.org/wiki/Merrie\\_England\\_\(German%2C\\_Edward\)](https://imslp.org/wiki/Merrie_England_(German%2C_Edward))> pp. 1-196.

<sup>59</sup> "'Merrie England' at the Savoy," *The Scotsman*, in *British Library Newspaper Archive*, 3 April 1902, p. 5.

music for *Henry VIII* and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, discussed in the forthcoming chapters. I argue that both German's and Sullivan's incidental music for *Henry VIII* and *Merry Wives* were influenced by both the call for English national music and traditional English folksongs, and I show how their respective bodies of incidental music written for the Shakespearean stage engaged with visual signifiers of England's folk customs and mythologized history. This combination of visual spectacle and soundscape purported a version of the nation rooted in the symbolic lexicon of Merrie England that presented a romanticized view of England and her national poet.



Figure 1.4: Illustrations from Sullivan's *Queen Victoria and Merrie England*, showing the first, second, third, and eighth tableaux.

## Chapter One: Merrie England and the Masque at York Place

In the village of Betley, Staffordshire is an antique glass pane called the Betley window. It was first discovered by George Tollet in the eighteenth century when he acquired Betley Manor.<sup>1</sup> The window contains twelve panels, each depicting a hand-painted figure related to May Day and morris dancing, including a fool, a minstrel, a maypole, a hobby horse, a May Queen, a friar, and six other dancers (Figure 1.5). Images of the Betley window were widely circulated throughout the Victorian period, and it was looked to frequently as an authoritative depiction of English folk customs and as an authentic relic from the Henrician age. Etchings and other adaptations of this image turned up repeatedly during the research for this chapter, and my encounters with this image (or derivatives from it) caused me to question its significance as a cultural symbol and historical artifact and to trace how the window came to be associated with both Shakespeare and Henry VIII in the Victorian imagination. The Betley window serves as a useful starting place for this discussion as it combines three areas of interest related to Charles Kean's and Henry Irving's stagings of the banquet at York Place (1.4) in *Henry VIII*: the historicization of the reign of Henry VIII within the Merrie England myth during the Victorian period; the prevalence of the morris dance and its accompanying music as symbols of this "golden age"; and the degree to which such symbols represented an imagined historical record that was often tethered to Victorian notions of the "Shakespearean".

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<sup>1</sup> See E. J. Nicol, 'Some Notes on the History of the Betley Window', *Journal of English Folk Dance and Song Society*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (Dec. 1953), pp. 59-67.



Figures 1.5 and 1.6: (Left) The original Betley Window. (Right) The fold-out reproduction as printed in the Johnson and Steevens' Shakespeare (1787).

Although the V&A Museum dates the creation of the Betley window sometime between 1550-1621, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the window was often considered to be from the reign of Henry VIII.<sup>2</sup> This was not because of any factual evidence, but a direct result of Tollet's dissertation on the glass pane, in which he stated that "probably the glass was painted in [Henry VIII's] youthful days, when he delighted in May-games."<sup>3</sup> Tollet's commentary was

<sup>2</sup> Unknown Artist. (1550-1621?) *Betley Window* [Painted enamel on glass]. Victoria and Albert Museum, London. <<https://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O8054/window-unknown/?print=1>> [4 June 2016].

<sup>3</sup> George Tollet, 'Mr. Tollet's Opinion concerning the Morris Dancers upon his Window', in *Annotations by Sam[uel] Johnson and Geo[rge] Steevens, and the various commentators, upon King Henry IV, Part I, written by Will[iam] Shakespeare*, ed. by Samuel Johnson and George Steevens (London: Bell, 1787), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online* [2 February 2016] pp. 146-64 (p. 164).

printed in the annotations for *Henry IV, part 1* in the Johnson and Steevens' Shakespeare editions (1787) along with a fold-out reproduction of the image (Figure 1.6). His description was intended to explicate the reference to Maid Marian in one of Falstaff's lines in the play (3.3.90-3). Yet, Tollet's commentary seems to be less concerned with the line or the play in question, and instead, is chiefly concerned with the historical significance of the window and the figures represented in it. In fact, Tollet's commentary includes no references to *Henry IV, Part 1*, but contains three mentions of *Henry VIII*: a reference to the line "as 'tis to make 'em sleep on May-day morning" (5.3.13-4); a reference to the description of the "long motley coat, guarded in yellow" worn by the fool (Prologue 16); and the stage direction for the coronation scene, describing Anne Bullen as being "in her hair" (4.1.36.17), which Tollet relates back to the May Queen depicted on the window.<sup>4</sup> Thus, *Henry VIII* is referenced in the same manner as the chronicle histories Tollet also cites, including Stowe's *Survey of London*, Holinshed's *Chronicles*, and Olaus Magnus' *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*.<sup>5</sup> Tollet provides no differentiation between historical records and literary references to the historical, and thus, he arrives at a host of unfounded conclusions, both about the antiquity of the window itself and – most importantly here – about the authenticity of the figures represented. His conflation of the history of Henry VIII's reign and Shakespeare's and Fletcher's play of *Henry VIII* creates a historical reading of the drama that anticipates how it would be staged by Kean and Irving, typifying an approach to Shakespeare as a historical chronicler of Merrie England rather than a dramatic playwright. For Tollet, the window

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*, pp. 146, 151, and 163. All quotations from *King Henry VIII* are taken from the Arden 3 edition, ed. by Gordon McMullan (London: Arden, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> John Stowe, *The survey of London* (London: Nicholas Bourn, 1633), in *Early English Books Online* [06 January 2017]; Raphael Holinshed, *Holinshed's Chronicles: England, Scotland, and Ireland in six volumes* (London: J. Johnson et. al., 1807), in *Project Gutenberg* [06 January 2017]; Olaus Magnus, *Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*, Vols. 1-3, trans. by Peter Fisher and Humphrey Higgens; ed. by Peter Foote (London: Hakluyt Society, 1996).

instantiated an imagined history of Merrie England, and via the publication of his commentary in the Johnson and Steevens' Shakespeare edition, this idea was passed on to Victorian readers.

While Tollet's conclusions about the origin of the window and the degree to which it represented historical fact are assumptive, incorrect, and unevidenced, their presence in the Johnson and Steevens' Shakespeare editions provided them with a degree of reliability. His conclusions were subsequently passed down throughout the nineteenth century through various fact-based texts, such as Francis Douce's *Illustrations of Shakespeare and of Ancient Manners* (1807), Charles Knight's *Old England: A Pictorial Museum* (1845), Robert Chambers' *Book of Days* (1869), and Alfred Burton's *Rush-Bearing* (1891).<sup>6</sup> These texts all fall in the category of historical publications, either as illustrative accounts portraying "ancient manners" indicative of "Old England" or as almanac-style yearbooks intended to describe ancient customs such as May Day. Their interpretation of the characters in the window as factual depictions of morris dances during the reign of Henry VIII are based entirely on the words of Tollet. By tracing this, I have shown through the lineage of a single image how romanticized notions of history can evolve to become perceived historical facts through repetition and reproduction. What emerges from my discussion of the Betley window that is relevant to this chapter is the way in which historical authenticity was formed in the Victorian imagination, and the type of evidence that reinforced Merrie England as a believable and even historically "accurate" definition of national self-hood. The window reflected back to Victorians their own romanticized notions of English history,

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<sup>6</sup> Francis Douce, *Illustrations of Shakespeare and of Ancient Manners* (London: Longman, Hurst, & Rees, 1807), pp. 584-607; Charles Knight, *Old England: A Pictorial Museum of Regal, Ecclesiastical, Municipal, Baronial, and Popular Antiquities* (London: James Sangster and Co., 1845), frontispiece; Robert Chambers, *Book of Days* (London; Edinburgh: W. & R. Chambers, 1869), p. 575; Alfred Burton, *Rush-Bearing* (Manchester: Brook & Chrystal, 1891), p. 103.



holding the potential for the creation of a collective confirmation bias that the Merrie England represented in this window – and, indeed, the Merrie England represented in Kean’s and Irving’s tableaux of the banquet scene in *Henry VIII* – were reliable, fact-based depictions of English history.

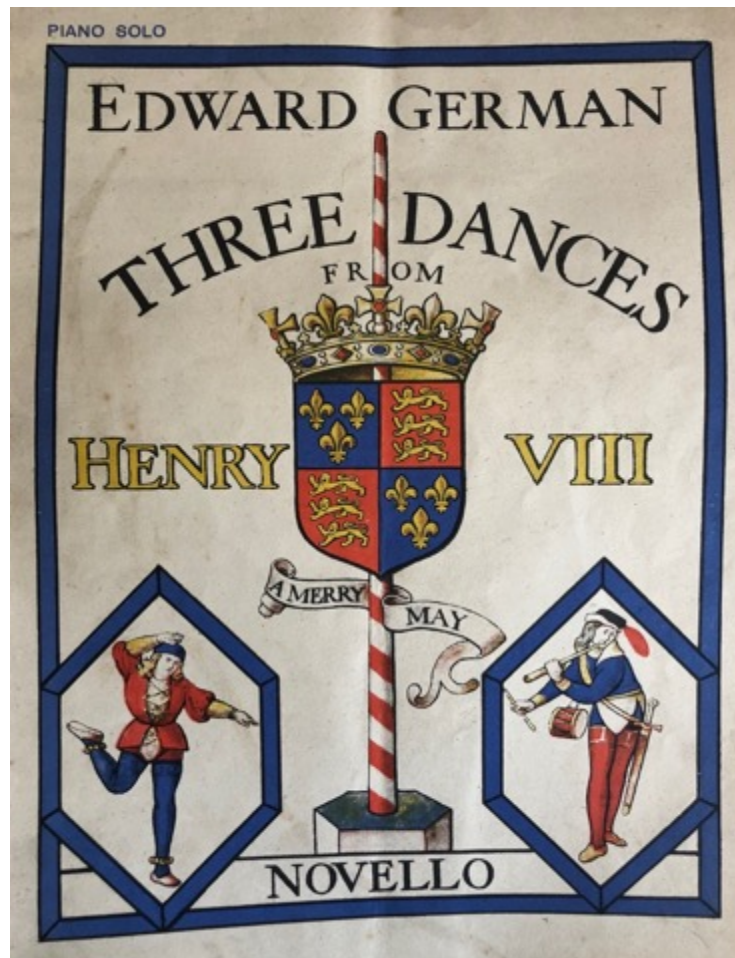


Figure 1.7: Color cover for Edward German’s *Three Dances from Henry VIII*.

Fittingly, a derivative of the Betley window served as the cover for Novello’s 1892 piano arrangement of German’s *Three Dances*, originally written to accompany the banquet scene of Irving’s production (Figure 1.7). As I show in this chapter, German’s compositions were mock-Tudor, emulating traditional Tudor music arranged by John Lipcott Hatton for Kean’s production thirty-seven years earlier. German’s dances, much like Novello’s reworking of the Betley

window, refashioned Tudor music to suit the taste of the Victorian bourgeoisie, resulting in an imitative, seemingly historical soundscape that also appealed to contemporary ears. Through the combination of incidental music and lavish stage picture, the masque at York Place in both Kean's and Irving's productions became spaces in which the myth of Merrie England was propagated. Though Hatton's and German's respective musical designs for this scene differed, I will show that both soundscapes created a romanticized atmosphere that, in the minds of reviewers, transported audiences back to England's "golden age". A review of Kean's production stated that the "accessories of sound and sight" worked to "heighten the illusion [and] confirmed [to] the spectator ... that that on which he looks is indeed a living figment of the 16th century."<sup>7</sup> Likewise, a review of Irving's production stated that "under the spell of Mr Irving's stage-management, the slightest mental effort transports one back to the England of 300 years ago."<sup>8</sup>

In addition to the incidental music, both productions also employed visual tropes related to the folk custom of May Day to further create a believable picture of a pastoral Merrie England in this scene. I argue that Kean and Irving portrayed the character of Anne Bullen as a Maid Marian or Queen of the May figure by embedding references to Merrie England in the music, costumes, and dances for the scene, echoing Tollet's parallel between Bullen at her coronation and the May Queen depicted on the Betley Window. Of chief interest here is interplay between the visual and aural elements of their stagings, exploring how sound and sight combined to make the Merrie England of the Victorian imagination come to life. Thus, in this chapter, I will assess the degree to which folklore and romantic notions of English history were enmeshed in

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<sup>7</sup> "The Princess's Theatre", *Morning Post*, 18 May 1855. *British Library Newspaper Archive* [22 January 2020].

<sup>8</sup> *The Dublin Daily Express*, 07 January 1892. *British Library Newspaper Archive*, p. 7.

performances of *Henry VIII*, and consider how Kean's and Irving's respective tableaux of the banquet scene both participated in and further perpetuated this invented notion of English history.

I begin by considering the version of *Henry VIII* that was presented on London's Victorian stages, analyzing promptbooks from both productions and discussing how textual omissions and alterations changed the meaning of the play to fit in with the Merrie England myth. This is a point to which I will return in all of my discussions of *Henry VIII* throughout this thesis, but in this chapter, the discussion will be limited to the treatment of the scenes leading up to and pertaining to 1.4. This section also allows me to compare the theatrical approaches of both actor-managers and uncover how Irving's *mise-en-scene* was influenced by the practices of Kean. Following this textual analysis, I will discuss the prevalence of English folk customs – particularly those pertaining to May Day festivities and morris dancing – on the nineteenth-century stage. I show how, through costuming and incidental music, both Kean and Irving portrayed Anne Bullen as an archetypal May Queen figure in this tableau, and this characterization allowed both actor-managers to eschew any negative historical associations with Henry VIII and Anne Bullen and to present a revisionist history of the Tudor period that purported the Merrie England myth.

As is the case in all of the chapters of this thesis, music serves as the key to understanding the full meaning of tableaux, and the sound design of both productions emerged as a tool for promoting an English nationalism largely dependent on an invented image of the nation. While Kean's and Irving's characterizations of Anne and use of morris dancing in this scene are relatively similar, their soundscapes differ slightly. Kean's production utilized arrangements of traditional Tudor music that had previously been preserved in John Playford's and William Byrd's collections ("Staines Morris" and "Sellinger's Round"), while Irving's production

consisted of new music written in the mock-Tudor style (“Morris Dance” and “Shepherd’s Dance”).<sup>9</sup> Thus, the final section of this chapter explores the use of authentic Tudor music versus late-Victorian mock-Tudor music in this scene, arguing that in both instances, the musical selections participated in the national music movements of the FSR and EMR. Seen as archetypal representations of England’s past and present “national music”, these dances accompanied the meeting of Henry VIII and Anne Bullen, and helped to frame their meeting as a celebratory, pastoral affair that ultimately brought about the Reformation – described by Kean as “that wonderful and controlling change in the destinies of England” and as “intimately associated with our strongest national feelings” – and brought about the birth of Merrie England’s most celebrated monarch: Queen Elizabeth I.<sup>10</sup> Both actor-managers used incidental music to graft believable, yet mythical representations of the meeting of Anne and Henry that were symbolically linked to popular English folk customs, resulting in a propagandized and romanticized portrayal of English history.

### **Textual alterations and the “truth” of royal display**

*Henry VIII*, or, *All is True*, is about truth, and this theme has inspired various discussions and critical assessments of the play spanning from the Victorian period until now.<sup>11</sup> In the

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<sup>9</sup> German also wrote a third dance for the scene entitled “Torch Dance” but the corresponding dance in Kean’s and Hatton’s production does not survive in the extant musical score. Therefore, I have chosen to only discuss German’s first and second dance here to maintain continuity with Kean’s earlier production.

<sup>10</sup> Printed in Kean’s flyleaf commentary, reproduced in William Shakespeare, *King Henry VIII*, adapted by Charles Kean, 1855 (London: Cornmarket Press, 1970), p. v.

<sup>11</sup> See Gordon McMullan, ‘Introduction’, *King Henry VIII, Or All is True*, Third Series (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2000); Alexander Leggatt, *Shakespeare’s Political Drama*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Routledge, 1992); Lee Bliss, ‘The Wheel of Fortune and the Maiden Phoenix of Shakespeare’s *King Henry the Eighth*’, *ELH*, Vol. 42, No. 1 (Spring, 1975), pp. 1-25; Anston Bosman, ‘Seeing tears: Truth and sense in *All is True*’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 50, No. 4 (Winter 1999), pp. 459-76; Jean-Christophe Mayer, ‘Revisiting the Reformation – Shakespeare and

nineteenth century, concerns of truth, authenticity, and historical representation were projected onto stagings of the play through historical realism and antiquarianism. Kean's and Irving's productions were primarily concerned with truth as it applied to the historical fidelity of the *mise-en-scene*, intended to create life-like historical episodes from the reign of Henry VIII. *Henry VIII* was a natural fit for such a theatrical philosophy because the episodes of the play, which were often based on chronicle histories of the period, provided a natural space for "truthful" historical recreation. The play entire, as Gordon McMullan notes, is "at once celebratory and cynical about display," both "dependent upon the authenticity of the representations of history that it provides" and simultaneously "questions both the possibility of precise reproduction and the validity of state ritual as an authentic representation of political will."<sup>12</sup> But the play as presented in the theatres of Kean and Irving was only celebratory, only concerned with "authentic" historical representation of the monarchy and not the cynicism that comes with questioning the truth of monarchical pageants and shows of political power.

Instead, the historical "truth" that both actor-managers aimed to present in their productions was one based on an invented history, the aforementioned myth of Merrie England, and the tableau in which this myth could be most effectively portrayed to audiences within *Henry VIII* was the masque at York Place. The text leading up to this scene was cut and re-arranged to make room for the elongated spectacle of the banquet. Kean's and Irving's choices to exchange the dialogue leading up to this scene for a pantomimic tableau ultimately resulted in the presentation of a skewed narrative that subverted themes of truth that McMullan and others have

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Fletcher's *King Henry VIII*, *Reformation and Renaissance Review*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (21 March 2003), pp. 188-203; and Michael Davies, 'Converting Henry: truth, history, and historical faith in *Henry VIII*', in *Shakespeare and Early Modern Religion* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2015), pp. 258-79.

<sup>12</sup> Gordon McMullan, 'Introduction', *King Henry VIII, Or All is True*, pp. 6-7.

addressed in their critical commentary. Thus, to accurately explore the thematic meanings that came out of these Victorian performances requires a reevaluation of the text used in these productions, which takes the actor-managers' changes into consideration. I argue that in the nineteenth century the play was no longer about questioning the truth of the royal ceremony, but rather simply presenting these ceremonies as truth.

The cuts both actor-managers made to the opening scene serve as a useful example of this. As Lee Bliss observes, "even before the appearance of the king, the first scene sets up a world in which establishing the 'truth' in any given situation is exceedingly complicated" and in which "prior certainty repeatedly dissolves in the face of later revelations."<sup>13</sup> The first scene of the play is intended to introduce the audience to a "pattern of contradiction" where "only in retrospect can we see how false, how truly unstable" the "truth" of royal display is in this play.<sup>14</sup> For instance, when Norfolk relates the events of the Field of the Cloth of Gold to Buckingham, he first describes it as "a view of earthly glory," but as Bliss observes, "eighty lines later ... we are told that the whole grandiose display was a hollow sham; the gilded pomp and pageantry in which Norfolk expressed his vision of earthly harmony merely draped a temporary political maneuver."<sup>15</sup> The scene is meant to encourage audiences and readers to lift the veil of royal ceremony, to look beyond or behind the pomp and circumstance, and to question what these shows conceal, distract from, or gloss over. In theory, having now been privy to a "whole complex scene of withheld information, shifting perspectives, and uncertain 'truths'" the

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<sup>13</sup> Bliss, p. 3.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*

audience is “now less ready to accept either the grand appearance of the moment or any single person’s assertion” as the play continues.<sup>16</sup>

However, this scene played differently on the Victorian stage, undermining the central theme regarding the instability of the truth of royal display. Kean’s and Irving’s heavy cuts to the dialogue describing the Field of the Cloth of Gold resulted in an extreme simplification of Norfolk’s report, with Kean cutting seventy-five percent of the lines in this scene and Irving cutting seventy-seven percent.<sup>17</sup> These alterations to the dialogue meant that Norfolk’s initial observation of the Field of the Cloth of Gold as a “view of earthly glory” – one of the lines retained in both Kean’s and Irving’s altered versions – is taken at face value, interpreted as nothing but a glorious and virtuous display of royal authority without an ulterior, political motive. The bulk of the other lines retained refers to the “private difference” between Buckingham and Wolsey, which sets up the future spectacle of Buckingham’s execution. And while lines communicating Wolsey’s hand in the spectacle are retained, key imagery describing the Cardinal as the “spider-like” orchestrator of this display is not retained in either production (1.1.62). Thus, in the Victorian theatre, this scene lost its purpose as “a description of spectacle at its worst.”<sup>18</sup> If the dramatic purpose of this scene is, as Bliss suggests, intended to lay the groundwork for audiences to question any forthcoming state pageantry in the play, then in the productions of Kean and Irving, the opposite becomes true. Instead, their audiences were primed for acceptance rather than interrogation, and the royal pageants that made up the ensuing scenes became spaces in which the cultivated audience response was naïve wonderment rather than hesitant cynicism.

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid*, p.4

<sup>17</sup> I have calculated this by comparing the complete text to promptbooks of both productions. Out of 226 lines, Kean retained 56 and Irving retained 53.

<sup>18</sup> Alexander Leggatt, *Shakespeare’s Political Drama*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed (London: Routledge, 1992), p. 225.

Just as the alterations both actor-managers made to the opening scene skew a central thematic pillar of the play, the cuts made to the unnamed Gentlemen's lines in 2.1, which provide commentary on the events of the banquet, also assist in skewing the meaning of 1.4. In the complete 2.1, the Gentlemen discuss the fate of Buckingham and, most relevant here, the rumor of a separation between the King and Katherine, but their conversation, including the section below, was completely cut from Kean's and Irving's performances:

Gentleman 2: Did you not of late days hear  
A buzzing of a separation  
Between the King and Katherine?

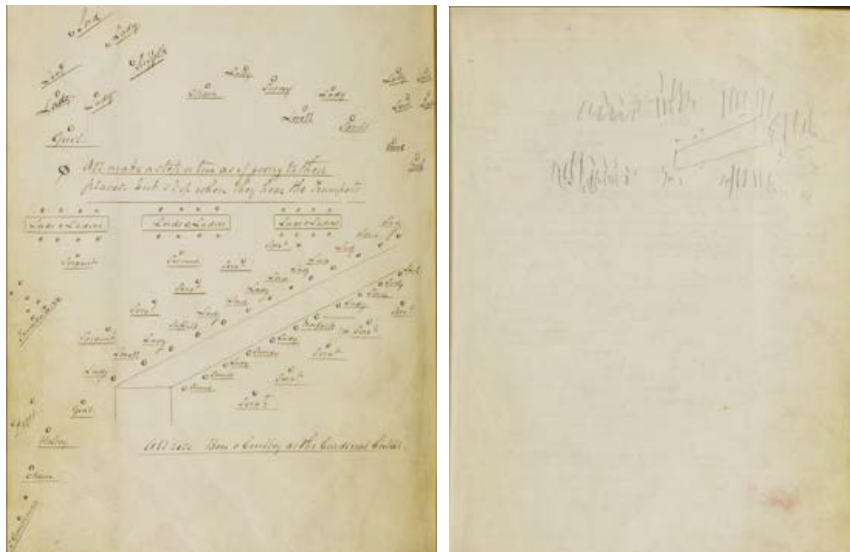
Gentleman 1: Yes, but it held not,  
For when the king once heard it, out of anger  
He sent command to the lord mayor straight  
To stop the rumour, and allay those tongues  
That durst disperse it.

Gentleman 2: But that slander, sir,  
Is found a truth now; for it grows again  
Fresher than e'er it was, and held for certain  
The king will venture at it (2.1.146-55).

These lines are intended to draw attention to the reality behind the myth, to reveal that the "slander" born out of the events of the banquet "is found a truth now." The Gentlemen's discussion points to the realistic aftermath of infidelity – a separation – and reveals the king's reaction to these rumors. In the complete text, this conversation causes the splendor of the banquet to lose some of its luster, but the absence of these lines in Kean's and Irving's productions only further reinforces the validity of royal display in 1.4. The ceremonious tableau is not subjected to this interrogation and commentary, ultimately resulting in a surface understanding of the spectacle. The Victorian audience is given no indication of the king's reaction to this rumor or his efforts to "allay those tongues that durst disperse it." There is no



recognition of wrongdoing, no concern expressed for Katherine’s fate, and no postulations about what may happen next between Henry and Anne. Like the opening scene with the Field of the Cloth of Gold, the banquet functions as a show, a spectacular party, an episode that is emblematic of an idealized monarchy that fits in with the myth of Merrie England. This is the Tudor period as the Victorians want to remember it, free from scandal which might create disillusionment of these royal spectacles. While the complete text presents a “world in which everything seems equally true or equally questionable,” Kean’s and Irving’s versions of this play decide the truth being presented by consistently omitting the voice of the non-elite, those that “offer a significant response to the pattern of rises and falls, trials and judgments, which demand the court’s attention.”<sup>19</sup> I argue that this results in an unchecked picture of an idyllic Merrie England and its monarchy, that is to be blindly praised and celebrated by mute observers as opposed to being critically processed by observant and vocal citizens.



Figures 1.8 and 1.9: (Left) Prompter T.W. Edmonds’ annotations in Kean’s promptbook showing the blocking for 1.4. (Right) Irving’s attempted copy of Edmonds’ design in the same promptbook. Shattuck has previously identified this as Irving’s hand. The name “Ellen” can be made out in the far-right margin, a reference to where Ellen Terry as Queen Katherine would stand.

<sup>19</sup> Bliss, pp. 5-6.



Figure 1.10: Frank Lloyds' rendering of Kean's staging of the banquet scene.



Figure 1.11: Copy of Hawes Craven's rendering of Irving's staging of the banquet scene, as printed in the souvenir book.

When we consider the scenic design of 1.4 in both Kean's and Irving's productions, it is evident that they reflect the same distorted, idealized "truth" as the truncated text: the interminable splendor of the Tudor age and its monarch. Both Kean's and Irving's set designs were underpinned by meticulous research and showcased sumptuous spectacle, with Irving's emulating many of Kean's pictorial features. The promptbook used by Irving had, in fact, previously belonged to Kean and contained all of the annotations from Kean's prompter, T.W. Edmonds (Figure 1.8).<sup>20</sup> Pencil markings in Irving's hand show his attempt at replicating Kean's design for the banquet scene (Figure 1.9), and though his penmanship makes it difficult to see similarities between these sketches, artistic renderings of each version of the scene show clear commonalities (Figures 1.10 and 1.11).

Both actor-managers also adhered to the scene's description in George Cavendish's historical account of *The life and death of Thomas Wolsey*, and the perceived historical "accuracy" of the scene was a chief point of celebration in reviews from both productions. As a review of Kean's production claimed:

the performance is instructive as it is amusing, and the people acquire knowledge and pleasure by the same delightful operation. The audience leave the theatre not only merrier but wiser than they entered it, for they find that they have been actual spectators of scenes – and these, too, historic scenes – which heretofore they have only read of, and which it required a severe effort of imagination to summon into ideal existence.<sup>21</sup>

However romanticized the image might have been, spectators generally received the tableau of Wolsey's banquet as historically accurate and even educational. Ideas relating back to England's

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<sup>20</sup> See entry 37 in Charles H. Shattuck, *The Shakespeare promptbooks: a descriptive catalogue* (Urbana, Illinois; London: University of Illinois Press, 1965). For a digitized copy, see Charles Kean, *Henry VIII* promptbook, 1855, in Adam Matthew, Marlborough, Shakespeare in Performance: Prompt Books from the Folger Shakespeare Library, [Accessed February 25, 2018].

<sup>21</sup> *Morning Post*, 18 May 1855, pp. 5-6.

Tudor past that were normally cultivated in the imagination were now curated by Kean, ultimately offering a resplendent view of the nation's most notorious Tudor monarch under the guise of historical verisimilitude.

Similarly, a review of Irving's production observed that "so complete is the picture in itself and so accurate its details, if not to the actual truth, at all the events to the conception which the historians and painters have enabled us to form of it."<sup>22</sup> Showing an awareness of the historian's and the painter's influence on collective understandings of the historical, this review, while celebrating Irving's production, also suggests that his stage picture presents a similar revisionist history as genre paintings of the period. Echoing the imagery found in illustrations such as "Henry VIII Maying at Shooter's Hill" printed in Charles Knight's *London* (1841), Irving's 1.4 tapped into a nostalgia directly associated with morris dancing, May Day, the May queen, and other representations of folk traditions and mapped this onto his historicization of the Tudor period (Figure 1.12).<sup>23</sup> These features recalled a fictional Merrie England and became a part of a symbolic lexicon through which the nineteenth-century could express and process assumptions related to English history and culture. In other words, the reign of Henry VIII became tethered to romanticized understandings of an Arcadian England and processed as a part of a collective, national myth. As the next section explores, Kean's and Irving's allusions to the May Day celebrations and legendary folklore, as well as their use of morris dances and Tudor (and mock-Tudor) music in this tableau, situated this scene as a glimpse of a supposedly blissful golden age of monarchical decadence and idealized courtship.

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<sup>22</sup> *The Dublin Daily Express*, 07 January 1892, p. 7. *British Library Newspapers* [02 January 2020].

<sup>23</sup> Charles Knight, *London*, Vol. 1 (London: Charles Knight & Co., 1841), p. 169.

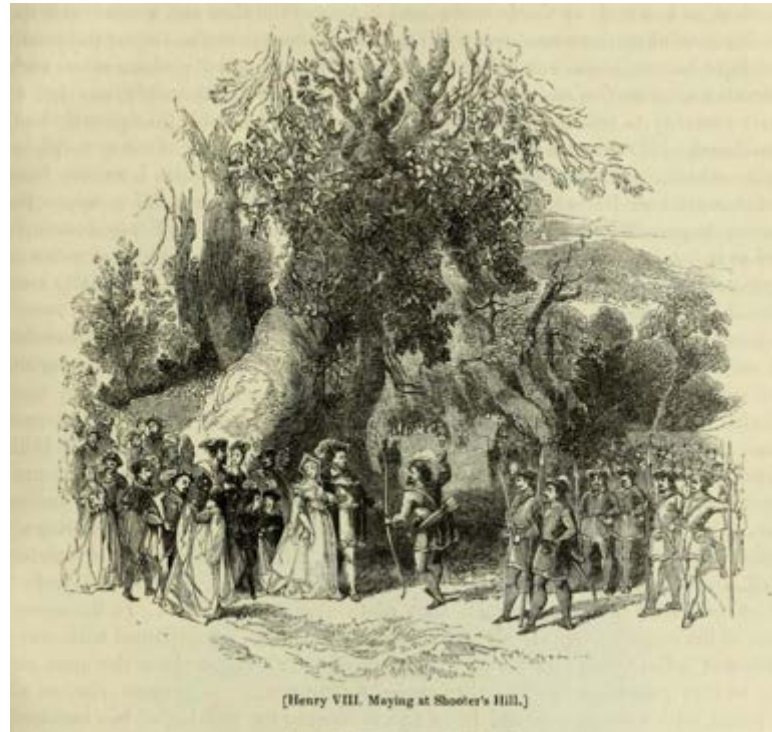


Figure 1.12: Anonymous etching of Henry VIII at Shooter's Hill on May Day.

### **Anne Bullen the May Queen: Morris Dancing, Folksong, and May Day**

The morris dance and English folk music were reintroduced into nineteenth-century society as both a source of entertainment and education. By the end of the century, reenactments of morris dances, May Day rituals, and the use of folk tunes in the traditions became increasingly common, largely due to the efforts of Mary Neal and Cecil Sharp. The re-popularization of the morris in *fin-de-siècle* England worked in tandem with the aims of the EMR and the FSR, espousing its value as a way of both preserving these rituals and teaching the public about their English heritage. The attraction was not just to folk music, folk dance, or folk rituals as pastimes, but to the lost society that they symbolized. Reenactments of these entertainments provided participants and audiences a way to participate in and revive the mythical Merrie England. In 1906, Sharp published *The Morris Book*, a five-volume collection of surviving morris dance

forms collected from around the country with detailed descriptions of each style of dance along with the appropriate steps.<sup>24</sup> Sharp's aims were similar to those of the FSR; he viewed his research as an act of restoring "a rightful inheritance, a means and method of self-expression in movement, native and sincere, such as is offered by no other form of dancing known to us."<sup>25</sup> The perception of the morris dance as representing something distinctly English, despite its widespread European origins, contributed to its positioning as a symbol of national character.

However, long before the advent of morris dance reenactments *a la* Neal and Sharp, spectacles recalling England's folk traditions were readily available in various theatrical entertainments throughout the period.<sup>26</sup> These scenes often recalled traditions such as May Day and celebrated folk dancing and music thought to represent England's bygone golden age. Many of these stage spectacles contained allusions to the folk legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood, which as Stephanie Barczewski states, "played a role in both displaying and shaping British national identity in the nineteenth century," a time in which "many nation-states turned to mythical material as they sought to celebrate and clarify their national identity."<sup>27</sup> Such narratives were central to some of the most popular Romantic literature of the period, including Thomas Love Peacock's *Maid Marian* (1822) and Sir Walter Scott's *Ivanhoe* (1819), both of which inspired adaptations for the operatic stage. Henry Rowley Bishop's *Maid Marian, or The*

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<sup>24</sup> See Cecil Sharp and Herbert C. Macilwaine, *The Morris Book* (London: Novello & Co., 1907). Sharp's book was dedicated to Mary Neal's Espérance Working Girls' Club in North London, one of the earliest established groups for working-class women dedicated to learning the tradition morris. See also Mary Neal, *The Espérance Morris Book* (London: J. Curwen, 1910-12).

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, p. 1.

<sup>26</sup> See Roy Judge's articles, "'The Old English Morris Dance': Theatrical Morris 1801-1880", *Folk Music Journal*, Vol. 7, No. 3 (1997), pp. 311-50; 'Cecil Sharp and the Morris, 1906-1909', *Folk Music Journal*, Vol. 8, No. 2, (2002), pp. 195-228; 'Merrie England and the Morris 1881-1910', *Folklore*, Vol. 104, No. 1, (1993), pp. 124-43; and 'Mary Neal and the Espérance Morris', *Folk Music Journal*, Vol. 5, No. 5, (January 1989), pp. 545-91.

<sup>27</sup> Stephanie Barczewski, *Myth and national identity in nineteenth-century Britain: the legends of King Arthur and Robin Hood* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), pp. 1, 46.

*Huntress of Arlingford* was staged by J.R. Planché at Covent Garden in 1822, and, according to Judge, was played throughout the century in various theatres.<sup>28</sup> The opera centers on the adventures of the main character, Matilda Fitzwalter, who after wooing and marrying Robin Hood, changes her name to Maid Marian. Scott’s *Ivanhoe* was operatized by Sir Arthur Sullivan in 1891, staged by Richard D’Oyly Carte for the opening of The Royal English Opera House. Despite the opera’s eventual reputation as a failure, initial reviews praised the Englishness of the piece, both in its participation with English folk traditions and its promotion of English music and native-born composers.<sup>29</sup> The *Illustrated London News* stated that the opera told “a story which is the inalienable birthright of every Englishman; and the story is told to music which is, above and before everything, English.”<sup>30</sup>



Figures 1.13 and 1.14: (Left) Anna Maria Tree as Maid Marian in Planché’s and Bishop’s historical opera *Maid Marian*, based on the novel by Peacock (1822); (Right) Illustration of Rowena on the cover of the programme for Arthur Sullivan’s and Julian Sturgis’ *Ivanhoe*.

<sup>28</sup> See Roy Judge, “‘The Old English Morris Dance’: Theatrical Morris 1801-1880’, pp. 311-50.

<sup>29</sup> See Paul Rodmell, *Opera in the British Isles, 1875-1918* (Farnham; Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013) pp. 66-7.

<sup>30</sup> *Illustrated London News*, 7 Feb 1891, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

In *Maid Marian* and *Ivanhoe*, Marian and Rowena emerge as archetypal feminine beauties, embodying the idealized figure of a “fair maid” or “May Queen” (Figures 1.13 and 1.14). Such a character was common in English folklore, usually characterized “as a noble but vulnerable woman” who “enhanc[ed] and validat[ed] the status of her male consort.”<sup>31</sup> She was also routinely typified by her beauty (often specifically her hair), chastity, and genteel nature.<sup>32</sup> The May Queens in May Day customs were similarly characterized and objectified. As Chambers’ *Book of Days* indicates, the May Queen was chosen out of a group of women and crowned, after which she was “placed in a sort of bower or arbour, near the May-pole, there to sit in pretty state, an object of admiration to the whole village.”<sup>33</sup> Shakespeare’s and Fletcher’s Anne Bullen is represented similarly in the banquet scene. Like the May Queen, Anne is sexually objectified, first by Sandys and later by a masked Henry, who eventually chooses her for a dance, mirroring the process of choosing a May Queen. Anne is also subjected to what cultural theorists term “the discourse of the gaze,” wherein the one gazing – in this case Henry – is often placed in a position of power, and the one being gazed at – in this case Anne – is objectified and controlled.<sup>34</sup> Anne’s characterization in the text alone situated her as the “fair maid” archetype, described by Henry as “the fairest hand I ever touched. O Beauty, | Till now I never knew thee” (1.4.75-6), and this characterization was further magnified in Kean’s and Irving’s productions

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<sup>31</sup> Stephen Knight, ‘Maid Marian’, in *The Robin Hood Project: A Robbins Library Digital Project*, University of Rochester. <<https://d.lib.rochester.edu/robin-hood/theme/maid-marian>> [31 March 2016].

<sup>32</sup> Barczewski shows that Maid Marian was sometimes mobilized as a figure of female independence who rejected traditional gender roles and “who refused to be governed by notions of ‘appropriate’ feminine conduct” (p. 191). This sits in contrast to portrayals of Anne Bullen, but evidences that these stringent gender roles were slowly resisted in pantomimes and other dramatic entertainments, particularly by the end of the century.

<sup>33</sup> Robert Chambers, *The book of days: a miscellany of popular antiquities in connection with the calendar, including anecdote, biography & history, curiosities of literature, and oddities of human life and character* (London; Edinburgh: W&R Chambers), p. 572.

<sup>34</sup> See Dani Cavallaro, ‘The Gaze,’ in *Critical and Cultural Theory* (London: Athlone Press, 2001), pp. 131-40 (p. 131).



through their choices in costuming and incidental music. By including both visual and musical references to Marian, the May Queen, and morris dancing, Kean and Irving not only competed with popular entertainments occurring around the same time of their productions, but also further blurred the lines between the myth of Merrie England and the “history” their productions of *Henry VIII* purportedly presented.<sup>35</sup> These visual and aural symbols situated Shakespeare’s tableau alongside other popular English traditions and folk customs, ultimately skewing the historical “truths” of their productions and creating a living picture of an invented Merrie England that was presented to audiences as historically accurate.

This was primarily achieved in Kean’s production through incidental music. Hatton chose to accompany the dances in Kean’s tableau with his arrangements of “Staines Morris” and “Sellinger’s Round”.<sup>36</sup> The provenance of these tunes recalled Tudor folk traditions that, to most people in the nineteenth century, were symbolic of Merrie England. Hatton probably procured these songs from William Chappell’s *A Collection of English National Airs* (1838) and its revised edition, *Popular Music in the Olden Time* (1855).<sup>37</sup> In addition to containing detailed evidence regarding the tunes’ historical significance – no doubt an attractive feature of for an antiquarian such as Kean – these works also anticipate the English Folksong Revival that would become more widespread by the end of the century. For as Chappell himself stated, the object of these publications was “to give practical refutation to the popular fallacy that England has no National

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<sup>35</sup> Irving’s production in particular, which premièred on 6 January 1892, coincided with continued performances of Christmas pantomimes, in which figures from folklore and fairy tales would have had a dominant presence.

<sup>36</sup> Listen to Hatton’s arrangement of “Sellinger’s Round” and “Staines Morris” on Google Drive.

<sup>37</sup> This is based on conjecture, but given the resources available to Kean at this time concerning traditional English music, Chappell’s collection was likely the most readily-available collection of such music.

Music,”<sup>38</sup> by suppling readers with a multi-volume collection of English tunes from the medieval, Tudor, and Jacobean periods. Chappell’s commentary repeatedly draws attention to Henry VIII’s status as a monarch who both enjoyed and composed music, as well as denoting all the instances in which a song in the collection was mentioned by Shakespeare or another Early Modern playwright. Most relevant here, however, is the length at which Chappell links morris dancing and May Day celebrations to particular tunes, and by examining the music Hatton chose to arrange for Kean’s tableau, we can see that the songs were chosen not only for their appropriateness as Tudor music generally, but for their respective associations with May Day, morris dancing, and the folklore related to Robin Hood.

The song to which King Henry and the masquers made their entrance and exit in Kean’s staging of the banquet was the Staines Morris, referred to by Hatton as “Old Morrice Dance”.<sup>39</sup> The tune was first printed in Playford’s *Dancing Master* (1651) and William Ballet’s *Lute Book* (1595),<sup>40</sup> and is described by Robin Williamson as “a more courtly morris dance,” indicating its appropriateness for this scene.<sup>41</sup> In his 1855 revision of his work, Chappell paired the tune with the lyrics of “The Maypole Song” from Robert Cox’s Restoration drama *Actoeon and Diana* (1655). Chappell admits that this pairing is “on conjecture,” based on the fact that the lyrics “seem so exactly fitted to the air.”<sup>42</sup> Cox’s lyrics describe the wooing of young maidens by young

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<sup>38</sup> William Chappell, *A Collection of English National Airs: consisting of ancient song, ballad, & dance tunes: interspersed with remarks and anecdote, and preceded by an essay on English minstrelsy* (London: Chappell, 1838), p. iii.

<sup>39</sup> John L. Hatton, ‘Incidental music for plays given at the Princess Theatre, 1855-1858’, manuscript, (1855), Folger Shakespeare Library, W.b.569-573, also available on microfilm at the Shakespeare Institute Library, reel S859.

<sup>40</sup> John Playford, *The English Dancing Master: Or, Plaine and Easie Rules for the Dancing of Country Dances, with the Tune to each Dance* (London: Thomas Harper, 1651), in *Early English Books Online*, p 87.

<sup>41</sup> Robin Williamson, *English, Welsh, Scottish & Irish Fiddle Tunes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (London: Oak Publications, 2014), p. 17.

<sup>42</sup> William Chappell, *Popular Music of the Olden Time: a collection of ancient songs, ballads, and dance tunes, illustrative of the national music of England: with short introduction to the different reigns, and notices of the airs from writers of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries: also a short account of minstrels*, Vol. 1 (London: Cramer, Beale & Chappell, 1855), p. 126.

men during the dance around the maypole, echoing the events at the banquet itself, wherein Anne Bullen's dance with Henry represents the beginning of their courtship. While these lyrics were not sung in Kean's production, their presence in this volume, which was considered one of the most scholarly collections of "Old English" music, evidences a tangential connection between the Staines Morris and celebrations pertaining to May Day. As Roger Savage indicates, Chappell's association of the "Staines Morris" with May Day was expanded even further in H.E. Wooldridge's 1893 revision of Chappell's collection, in which Wooldridge specifically mentions Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Friar Tuck, Little John, and other characters of the morris along with his description of the song.<sup>43</sup> Though it is impossible to determine how recognizable the link between this tune and the folklore of Robin Hood and Maid Marian would have been for Kean's audiences, tracing Kean's and Hatton's research back to Chappell shows how this song accrued meanings directly related to English folklore as the nineteenth century progressed.

The song which accompanied the dance between Henry and Anne was an arrangement of "Sellinger's Round", sometimes referred to as "The Beginning of the World" or "St. Leger's Round". Chappell indicates that this tune was thought to be from the time of Henry VIII, claiming that it derived its name "from Sir Anthony St. Leger, whom Henry the Eighth appointed Lord Deputy of Ireland, in 1540, and who was one of the most active in the downfall of Cardinal Wolsey."<sup>44</sup> This claim solidified a connection between "Sellinger's Round" and the historical events dramatized in *Henry VIII*. To add further validity to its historical significance, Chappell also cites references to "Sellinger's Round" that appear in other Early Modern texts, including

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<sup>43</sup> Roger Savage, *Masques, Mayings, and Music dramas: Vaughan Williams and the Early Twentieth Century Stage* (Rochester: Boydell, 2014), p. 286.

<sup>44</sup> Chappell, *English National Airs*, p. 76.

Middleton's *Father Hubbard's Tale* (1604) and Haywood's *Fair Maid of the West, part ii* (1610?).<sup>45</sup> By doing so, Chappell reinforces the song's perceived prevalence during the Early Modern period. In addition to this historical lineage, Chappell also links the song to morris dancing and May Day by noting multiple examples of seventeenth-century broadside ballads that were sung to the tune of Sellinger's Round, including "The merry wooing of Robin and Joan, the West-country Lovers" (1695?), "The Fair Maid of Islington, or the London Vintner overreached" (1688-1709?), and "Robin's Courtship" (n.d.).<sup>46</sup> The titles of these ballads all link the melody of "Sellinger's Round" to folklore related to Robin Hood and May Day. From a musical standpoint, Chappell describes the inner harmonies of the tune as imitative of "the prancing of the hobby-horse ... a usual attendant on May-day and May Games," drawing a direct connection between the rhythm and tonality of the piece and one of the central figures in the morris.<sup>47</sup> Thus, "Sellinger's Round" fits the antiquarian brief in three interrelated ways: the name of the song itself alluded to an historical figure integral to the downfall of Wolsey dramatized in *Henry VIII*; the song had also been mentioned in multiple Early Modern texts and broadside ballads, contributing to its authenticity as Tudor and suggesting a prolific presence in the period; and, the musical form itself was reminiscent of the prancing steps of the morris. The prominence of this tune as a representation of the English "golden age" has continued even into the modern era, as

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<sup>45</sup> Dates are taken from Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson, *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue*, Vol. 6 (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015).

<sup>46</sup> Chappell, *English National Airs*, p. 192. Dates for these broadside ballads are taken from Patricia Fumerton, Carl Stahmer, and Kristen McCants, *University of California at Santa Barbara's English Broadside Ballad Archive* (2020) < <https://ebba.english.ucsb.edu/> > [20 February 2020].

<sup>47</sup> Chappell, *Popular Music*, p. 71.

*Sellinger's Round, Variations on an Elizabethan Theme* was collaboratively arranged by six British composers for Elizabeth II's 1953 coronation.<sup>48</sup>

As I have already mentioned, Irving commissioned German to write an entirely new body of music for his production. This evidences the difference in Irving's approach to his Shakespeare productions, which as Schoch observes, "was more of a case of aestheticism than historicism" as his "overriding concern was to achieve a full pictorial display through the manipulation of theatrical space, even at the expense of historical correctness."<sup>49</sup> While Hatton's musical selections for Kean's production required considerable historical knowledge to be recognized as authentically Tudor, German reimagined the characteristic Tudor sound and blended it with the style of popular late-Victorian music. Kean's production encouraged audiences to observe Merrie England as a specific – albeit invented – moment in history; in contrast, and as the closing section of this chapter shows, Irving's production encouraged audiences to imagine themselves as a part of Merrie England.

### **Irving's late-Victorian Merrie England and mock-Tudor incidental music**

Because German's music replaced traditional Tudor music that, through its historical provenance, linked Anne Bullen and Henry VIII to May Day, then this association had to be made elsewhere in Irving's production. I argue that this was done through costuming. As shown in sketches by Ethel Webling – a friend of Henry Irving and Ellen Terry who reportedly illustrated scenes from the production while watching the performance from backstage – Anne's

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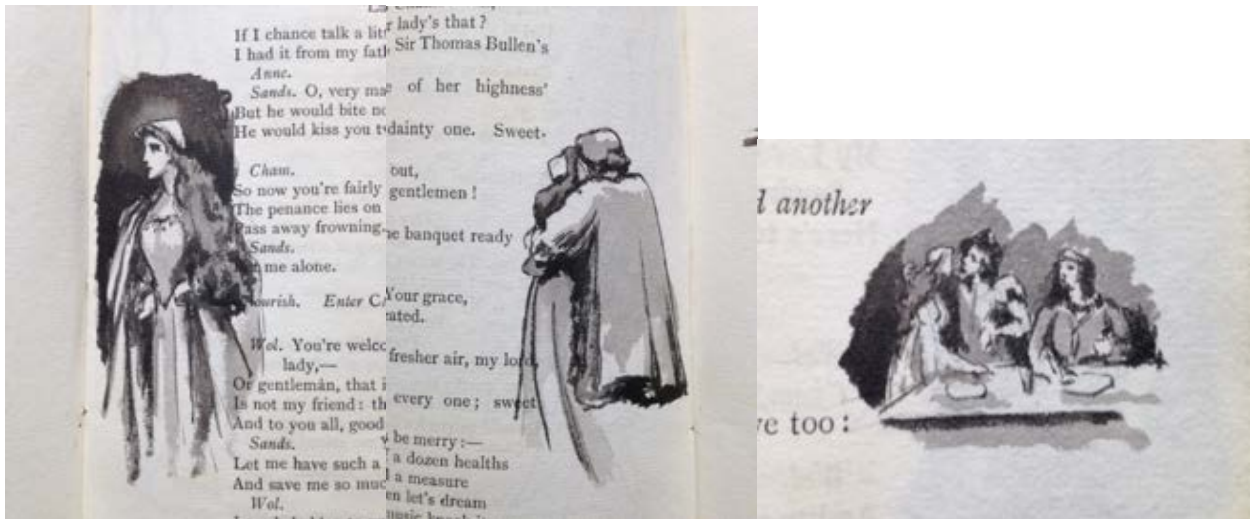
<sup>48</sup> The piece was composed by Arthur Oldham, Michael Tippett, Lennox Berkeley, Benjamin Britten, Humphrey Searle, and William Walton. See Alison Latham (ed.), 'Sellinger's Round, Variations on an Elizabethan Theme', *The Oxford Companion to Music* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011).

<sup>49</sup> Schoch, *Shakespeare's Victorian Stage*, p. 4.

aesthetic features are strikingly similar to the aforementioned Marian and Rowena in Bishop's and Sullivan's respective operas, as well as the general archetype of May Queen (Figures 1.15-1.17). Like the May Queen of the Betley window, Anne is "in her hair," revealing a pastoral influence on her costuming. This is not the Anne of the Stanhope portrait, but the archetypal "fair maid" of Merrie England, incorporating the same physical features that had long been ascribed to Maid Marians and May Queens on the nineteenth-century stage. While the details of Anne's dress are not visible in Webling's illustration, Violet Vanbrugh, who played Anne, described it in an interview as being made of "white satin, upon which is brocaded a large flowered design in lime-green velvet, and with a contrasting effect, like the gleaming bark and green foliage of the silver birch," revealing that pastoral imagery was embedded in the costume itself.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, Anne is sexually objectified in these illustrations, with two of the three showing her being kissed by Sandys and Henry. This associates her character with figures from popular folklore and legendary narratives also subjected to the male gaze like Rowena and Maid Marian. Thus, Anne and Henry are positioned as a pastoral, legendary couple, embodying a recognizable literary scene from celebrated English folklore. The problematic history of Henry's union with Anne – and his eventual beheading of her – is glossed over and resituated, as the tableau, instead, purports an innocent, blithe meeting of two lovers, dancing the morris as if in a fairy tale.

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<sup>50</sup> "Miss Violet Vanbrugh at Home", *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette*, 09 January 1892, p. 6.



Figures 1.15-1.17: Ethel Webling's illustrations of Irving's *Henry VIII*.

With the pastoral imagery and references to folklore embedded in the costumes for Anne rather than in the specific songs chosen for the scene, German could now deviate from the Tudor arrangements of Hatton and create something new. His goal, as evidenced in his correspondence with Irving, was to write new music that emulated and embellished upon Tudor tonalities and structures. German wrote: "If ... you will have confidence in me, I will give you music that will have the necessary touches of old English colour and be in keeping with the play [...] only it will be without the baldness, bareness and lack of colour that music had in those days [...] As long as it has the character of the time it seems to me the end is met."<sup>51</sup> Here, German effectively defines his mock-Tudor style, which like Victorian actor-managers' approaches to staging Shakespeare, sought to embellish and expand upon the original. German sought to capture the essence of the past without completely replicating it, and thus, reimagined Merrie England through a distinctly

<sup>51</sup> Quoted in Brian Rees, *A Musical Peacemaker: The Life and Work of Sir Edward German* (Abbotsbrook: Kensal Press, 1986), p. 69.

Victorian lens. While celebrating an invented past society, the tableau also encouraged the formation of an idyllic present society in the image of bygone Merrie England.<sup>52</sup>

Stephen Banfield has explored the mock-Tudor style in German's operetta *Merrie England*, mentioned in the introduction to Part One. Writing music in this manner meant "superimposing a gently enticing measure of modality, that is of old musical scale systems, upon the standard tonality of bourgeois music," which ultimately achieved a sound that was simultaneously "popular and alluring, which means modern and distinctive; archaic (Tudor); and English."<sup>53</sup> The same approach applies to German's "Morris Dance" and "Shepherd's Dance". German's dances were close enough to the tonality and structure of the "Staines Morris" and "Sellinger's Round" to be believable "Tudor" music, but also aligned with popular taste through modern orchestration and instrumentation. Thus, German ultimately achieved what he set out in his letter to Irving, composing morris dances that functioned well enough as "Tudor" music for the banquet tableau, while also providing audiences with a new, attractive music that became widely celebrated.

German's dances were so convincingly Tudor that they were mistaken as authentic by some reviews. The *Pall Mall Gazette* observed that "the ladies that are present [at the banquet] move to quaint sixteenth-century music."<sup>54</sup> Other reviews, as in *The Musical Times*, noted the balance of archaic and popular forms in the dances, which "suggested the old modes without

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<sup>52</sup> Listen to professional recordings of German's "Morris Dance" and Shepherd's Dance", links to which are provided in the Appendix.

<sup>53</sup> Stephen Banfield, 'Tudorism in English Music, 1837-1953', in *Tudorism: historical imagination and the appropriation of the sixteenth century*, eds. Tatiana String and Marcus Bull (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2011), pp. 57-77 (pp. 64, 71).

<sup>54</sup> "'King Henry VIII' at the Lyceum", *Pall Mall Gazette*, 06 January 1892, *British Library Newspaper Archive*. [21 February 2020].



departing from modern needs in the matter of tonality.”<sup>55</sup> Above all, the music was thought to be representative of England and its emerging national music, embodying “a bright and straightforwardly English character.”<sup>56</sup> German’s dances had a prolific afterlife throughout the twentieth century. In the span of one year, Novello sold 30,000 copies of German’s piano arrangement, and the dances became such a prevalent part of English music that within a year, they were seemingly known to everyone, as evidenced in a 1893 review which stated, “Of the familiar dance music it is needless to speak.”<sup>57</sup> The “Shepherd’s Dance” became a favorite of Sir Edward Elgar, who would most fully answer the EMR’s call for a native-born English composer worthy of international fame. In a letter to German, Elgar stated, “... you would have found me here alone [...] smoking a pipe and listening to your 6/8 Henry VIII [Shepherd’s Dance] with all the exquisite pleasure I have always derived from it.”<sup>58</sup> Like Elgar, German would also earn a knighthood in 1928 for his contributions to English music, including his incidental music for other productions on the London stage, including Irving’s *Romeo and Juliet* (1895), George Alexander’s productions of *As You Like It* (1896) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (1898), and Anthony Hope’s and Edward Rose’s *English Nell, or Nell Gwyn* (1900). Thus, this style of composition became increasingly common on the late-Victorian stage, a musical expression of the Merrie England myth which served as a soundtrack for a lost, fictional Eden. It was a simultaneous representation of past and present, a reflection of a cultural heritage that, for many Victorians, was central to their national identity and sense of self.

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<sup>55</sup> *The Musical Times and Singing Class Circular*, Vol. 33, No. 595, 1 September 1892.

<sup>56</sup> *Theatre*, March 1892, *Henry VIII Scrapbook Collection*, Harvard University Theatre Collection.

<sup>57</sup> *The Observer*, 17 December 1893, p. 6.

<sup>58</sup> Quoted in Geoffrey Self, *Light music in Britain since 1870: a survey* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001), p. 53.

### **Anne Bullen – fair maid of Merrie England**

Having now considered how Kean’s and Irving’s aesthetic and musical choices framed the banquet at York Place within the Merrie England myth, I conclude this chapter by considering how portraying Anne Bullen as a May Queen or Maid Marian in this scene shifts the dramatic narrative of the play. As I have argued, Anne is presented in both Kean’s and Irving’s productions as a quasi-mythical figure rather than a solely historical figure, becoming timeless and transcendent as the May Queen. Through visual and aural symbols, she resembled figures from folklore that had been “utilized in literary efforts to identify and promote certain elements considered essential to British national identity” throughout the nineteenth century.<sup>59</sup> Anne’s repositioning as a morris dancing fair maid also changes the characterization of Henry. When placed beside the May Queen Anne Bullen, Henry VIII can be read as a heroic, Robin Hood figure. As a “lord of misrule,” Henry’s adulterous behavior in this scene is reinterpreted as a necessary act of rebellion against Rome, which, in turn, preserved the English nation-state and brought about the “maiden phoenix” Elizabeth I (5.4.40). Kean’s and Irving’s cuts to the text – which eliminated the voice of dissent in the play – and their aesthetic and musical choices in the banquet scene – which paralleled both Anne and Henry with English folklore – ultimately resulted in a historiographic retelling of the “ungodly behaviour that brings about godly change.”<sup>60</sup> The consequences of Henry’s infidelity are overlooked in favor of a nostalgic remembering of the splendor of Merrie England.

In this sense, the tableau as performed in Kean’s and Irving’s productions read much like historical romances of the nineteenth century, particularly novels – and periodic operatic

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<sup>59</sup> Barczewski, p. 3.

<sup>60</sup> McMullan, p. 143.

adaptations of these novels – that fictionalized the lives of the Tudors. For as Schoch observes, “Henry’s reign was remembered in the nineteenth century as an era of luxurious repose which followed the bleak devastation of the Wars of the Roses”.<sup>61</sup> Likewise, Dobson and Watson state that Elizabeth was sometimes venerated in the Victorian period “as the Good Queen Bess who had ruled over the never-never land of Merrie England” and who “was thought to have sponsored the development of almost any sort of modernity associated with the greatness of Victorian Britain.”<sup>62</sup> Thus, the banquet tableau did more than just showcase the “luxurious repose” of the Tudors; it celebrated the coupling of Henry and Anne as a momentous occasion that completely changed the course of English history. Like Robin Hood was thought of as a rogue savior who committed necessary evils for the greater good of the nation, so too was Henry imagined in a similar heroic role, praised for having “freed his country from the galling ‘yoke of bondage’” of Papal authority through the necessary evil of infidelity.<sup>63</sup> Most importantly, this directly resulted in the birth of Elizabeth, the “royal infant” whose birth promises “a thousand thousand blessings” upon England “which time shall bring to ripeness” (5.4.17, 19-20). In the Victorian imagination, these blessings had ripened in their lifetimes, resituating Cranmer’s prophecy – originally written to appeal to James I – as a prediction of the greatness of the Victorian age.

The morris dances, costumes, references to May Day, elaborate sets, and incidental music that I have discussed in this chapter helped Kean and Irving to achieve spectacular displays in their productions, but more importantly, they assisted actor-managers in presenting revisionist histories that had direct implications on how the Victorians defined their nation, its past, and their

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<sup>61</sup> Richard Schoch, *Shakespeare’s Victorian Stage*, pp. 86-7.

<sup>62</sup> Michael Dobson and Nicola J. Watson, *England’s Elizabeth* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2002), pp. 150-1.

<sup>63</sup> Charles Hastings Collette, *Henry VIII: an historical sketch, as affecting the reformation in England* (London: W.H. Allen, 1864), p. x.

place within it. Kean's didacticism was intended to encourage audience learning of this invented history. Audiences were, as Schoch states, "equipped to recognize and read historical iconography"<sup>64</sup> in the Victorian theatre, and when this was interwoven with the Merrie England myth, Kean set his audiences up to take away historical "truths" that had only ever existed in the imagination. On the other hand, Irving's aestheticism encouraged audiences to see and hear themselves as a part of a largely invented and embellished history, as descendants of this resplendent age. Similar to how Knight imagined Shakespeare's medieval lineage in his biography of the national poet, this tableau provided audiences an opportunity to do the same, to understand late-Victorian society and its monarch as scions of Merrie England.

In the next chapter, I discuss a similar tableau presented in Tree's 1902 production of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. The play's status as Shakespeare's only comedy set in England offered the actor-manager an opportunity to historicize a sector of English life that sat outside narratives related to the monarchy and well-known English histories. I argue that Tree approached the play as a colloquial, alternative history of the medieval period, and his tableaux presented snapshots of Merrie England from the perspective of the "middling sort" rather than the monarchy.<sup>65</sup> Seeing *Henry VIII* in the nineteenth century was an opportunity to see a theatrical recreation of royal life and ceremony, but seeing *Merry Wives* gave audiences a chance to see something more akin to their imagined, romanticized personal histories. *Merry Wives* is not, of course, a history play, but in the minds of Victorians who lived in the age of unfettered theatrical "historical" realism and who were susceptible to overly-romantic thoughts about their ancestral roots in the medieval and

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<sup>64</sup> Schoch, *Shakespeare's Victorian Stage*, p. 2.

<sup>65</sup> I borrow this term from Mary Ellen Lamb who uses it in place of "middle class". See *The Popular Culture of Shakespeare, Spenser and Jonson* (London: Routledge, 2006).

Tudor periods, the play was treated as something quasi-historical. The following chapter will explore how *tableaux vivants* and incidental music were used in Tree's production to create "historical" episodes of a fictionalized Merrie England that embodied romantic views of England's medieval and Tudor past.

## Chapter Two: Herbert Beerbohm Tree's *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1902)

Leah Marcus states that “the one place to go for a Shakespearean ‘Merry England’ is *The Merry Wives of Windsor*,” and this was particularly true on London’s nineteenth-century stages.<sup>1</sup> The idea that *Merry Wives* presented a glimpse of a bygone, provincial English society was the central attraction of the play for Victorian and Edwardian readers and audiences. As P.A. Daniel’s and F.A. Marshall’s introduction to the Henry Irving Shakespeare editions stated (1895), “It will always be one of the most interesting of Shakespeare’s plays; if for no other reason, because it is the only comedy in the scene of which is laid entirely in England, and the characters of which are, avowedly, taken almost entirely from the English middle class.”<sup>2</sup> This points to the primary difference between the Merrie England presented in the aforementioned stagings of *Henry VIII* and the Merrie England presented in Tree’s productions of *Merry Wives*. The events dramatized in the banquet scene are derived from English history and center on the life of the monarchy, which ultimately resulted in one of the most defining moments of English national, religious, and political history (the Reformation) and eventually brought about Merrie England’s most celebrated monarch (Elizabeth I). In contrast, *Merry Wives* is, as Catherine Richardson states, “involved in local rather than national events, domestic rather than political.”<sup>3</sup> There are no banquets or lavish halls in this play, nor is it sourced from historical records. Instead the spectacle showcases the lives of a distinctly different social class. As mentioned in the previous chapter, the voice of the middle and lower classes in *Henry VIII* were almost entirely erased by textual alterations in nineteenth century productions, so the visibility of the non-elite in

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<sup>1</sup> Leah Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe, Milton* (London: Routledge, 1996), p. 82.

<sup>2</sup> Henry Irving and Frank A. Marshall, eds., *The Works of William Shakespeare* (London: Blackie, 1895), p. 98.

<sup>3</sup> Catherine Richardson, ‘Introduction’, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, ed. by G.R. Hibbard (London: Penguin Books, 2005), pp. xxi-lxxviii, (p. xxiv).

productions of *Merry Wives* was unique, particularly in comparison to stagings of Shakespeare's English history plays.

In this sense, I argue that the tableaux in Chapters One and Two can be read as inversions of one another. While in performances of *Henry VIII*, audiences witnessed Tudor monarchs perform morris dances reminiscent of folk customs typically associated with the "middling sort", in Tree's productions of *Merry Wives*, audiences witnessed this "middling" social milieu participate in "a stylized, courtly form of entertainment" often associated with the monarchy.<sup>4</sup> Thus, the monarchy sits at the center of *Henry VIII* while the perspectives of the non-elite hover on the periphery. Conversely, in Tree's productions of *Merry Wives*, the misadventures of ordinary citizens sit at the center of the narrative while the presence of the monarchy is relegated to the periphery. This was particularly true in the final scene of the play, the masque at Herne's Oak featuring the popular folk legend of Herne the Hunter, a sprite associated with Windsor Forest and memorialized in the final act of Shakespeare's *Merry Wives*. This scene provided a natural space for a pantomimic tableau of dancing "urchins, oafs and fairies, green and white" (4.4.48) in Windsor Park, under the shadow of Windsor Castle. Through this juxtaposition of royal and urban spaces, the play, as Richardson observes, "points to the contrasts between the royal and the everyday, the high and the low."<sup>5</sup> As I show in this chapter, Tree capitalized on this contrast, historicizing the lives of the characters in the play – particularly his Falstaff – and presenting them as emblems of a vernacular, English history. I argue that like the previously discussed tableau of York Place in Kean's and Irving's stagings of *Henry VIII*, the tableaux in Tree's *Merry Wives* portrayed aspects of a conceived national selfhood that were rooted in

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<sup>4</sup> Richardson, p. lvi.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. lvii.

pastoralism and the Merrie England myth. I show that this was expressed through English light music written by late-Victorian, native-born composers, whose music had become emblematic of English national music. The primary difference was the perspective from which this Merrie England was expressed, and the part of English society that was represented.

The music for Tree's productions was taken primarily from Sullivan's incidental music, originally written for John Hollingshead's 1874 production at The Gaiety starring Samuel Phelps as Falstaff. I have chosen to explore Sullivan's music within the context of Tree's production rather than Hollingshead's due to my interest in how Tree utilized an already popular body of music within a larger concept of music and sound design. Sullivan only wrote music for the final act of the play, notoriously stating that he "could see no opportunity for music" elsewhere.<sup>6</sup> As such, Tree looked to other sources to fill out the rest of the music for his production, using newly-composed passages by Raymond Rôze and Norman Bath and another composition by Sullivan extraneous to *Merry Wives*. By featuring Sullivan's already popular *Merry Wives* music within a corpus of other light music written by English composers of the same era, Tree further expanded the influence of the EMR on this production of the play. This accompaniment signaled a national ownership of the English folklore embedded in the final scene and of Windsor itself. Tree's productions reinforced the English musical idiom that was popularized by English light music, tethering the image of Merrie England – which had long been defined by troupes recognizable to nineteenth-century audiences – to a specifically English sound that worked to transport audiences to a non-specific time and place defined within the Merrie England myth. Such light music

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<sup>6</sup> Written in a letter to Joseph Bennett, music critic of *The Daily Telegraph*. Quoted in Paul Howarth, *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive*, (13 September 2011) <<https://www.gsarchive.net/sullivan/windsor/index.html>> [15 February 2017].



evoked feelings of nostalgia, or to borrow J.B. Priestley's description, "act[ed] as a series of vials, often charmingly shaped and coloured, for the distillations of memory. The first few bars of it remove the stopper; we find ourselves reliving, not remembering, but magically recapturing, some exact moments of our past."<sup>7</sup>

The primary focus of this chapter is Tree's 1902 revival, but I have also integrated a few press reviews from his earlier 1889 production at the Haymarket into my discussion in order to evidence the general view of the play in performance from the spectator's perspective. My focus on the 1902 production is motivated by the bulk of material that survives from this production in comparison to Tree's 1889 staging, which pre-dated the actor-manager's tendency to preserve promptbooks, production papers, and musical scores from his productions.<sup>8</sup> The extant musical score is uncatalogued and undated, but from my analysis, it seems to correlate more with the 1902 staging than the 1889 staging. It is possible that the conductor's score originated in the 1889 production and was augmented for the 1902 production, given that the layout of the score is in a pastiche fashion and shows evidence of constant omissions and revisions. It is unclear if these changes are from performance to performance or from production to production. The conductor's score is also somewhat incomplete, with many passages written out in piano reduction rather than in full orchestral scoring. Thus, reconstructions of music not previously recorded have been transcribed as piano accompaniment.

I will discuss this incidental music later in this chapter, but to more fully understand the atmosphere this soundscape created, I must first establish what the incidental music accompanied

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<sup>7</sup> Quoted in Geoffrey Self, *Light Music in Britain since 1870: A Survey*, p. vii.

<sup>8</sup> I am grateful to the staff at the Bristol Theatre Collection for this information. As Tree's career and celebrity status gained momentum, he increasingly collected and retained various ephemera related to his productions, as evidenced by their collections.

by exploring the visual components of the *mise-en-scene*. For the Victorians and Edwardians, attraction to Tree's stagings of *Merry Wives* stemmed from the pastoral sentimentality evoked by the moonlit Windsor Castle rendered on the stage. Windsor Park and Herne's Oak were sites of historical importance, pastoral bliss, and mythological intrigue in the nineteenth century, and Tree's productions of *Merry Wives* amplified these socio-cultural views to create tableaux that tapped into this collective nostalgia. I begin this chapter by examining what *Merry Wives* and Windsor represented in the Victorian imagination, exploring how the play was understood as "a picture of the contemporary middle-class" and how Windsor was imagined as a pastoral Arcadia with deep connections to England's national poet.<sup>9</sup> The mythology of Herne's Oak – like the mythology of Robin Hood, Maid Marian, Ivanhoe, and Rowena discussed in the previous chapter – was also a central part of the attraction to Windsor, as well as its association with the monarchy. The second section explores the interplay between the *mise-en-scene* and the accompanying incidental music, looking at how Sullivan's light music helped to solidify this aggrandized view of Windsor and created a nostalgic atmosphere through which Victorian audiences could imagine themselves and their colloquial histories. Finally, I conclude this chapter by considering Tree's choice to stage *Merry Wives* to commemorate the coronation of Edward VII, circling back to the liminal space between the monarch and the "middling sort" that this play occupies.

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<sup>9</sup> Georg Brandes, *William Shakespeare: A Critical Study* (London: William Heinemann, 1909), p. 212.

## Windsor, Folklore, and Nostalgia: Nineteenth century views of *Merry Wives*

For nineteenth century audiences and readers, *Merry Wives* was a play that evoked feelings of belonging. As Adrian Kiernander states, it is “a text that encourages aspects of memory and nostalgia, possibly with a potentially conservative effect ... which valorises the past at the expense of the present, glosses over any negative aspects of the remembered state, inhibits social change and distorts political images of social justice into the future.”<sup>10</sup> Numerous reviews of Tree’s 1889 and 1902 productions show that such nostalgic sentimentality for an imagined past was evoked by his stagings and evidence that audiences saw reflections of their imagined, personal histories in his productions. An 1889 review in the *Illustrated London News* observed, “How it breathes the spirit of Old England; how it traces back for us the sturdy vigour and manliness of our ancestors!”<sup>11</sup> In 1902, the *Sports Argus* similarly stated that “in every sense [the performance] was a happy family gathering, making Windsor and its neighborhood the scene of remarkable and unwonted revels.”<sup>12</sup> *The Playgoer* even went so far as to parallel the characters in the play with the audience, stating:

Merry wives occupy the Haymarket stage now, and, as a consequence of their delightful goings on, a crowded company of merry wives and husbands, bachelors and maids occupy nightly the Haymarket seats, and go away delighted [...] How true it is that Shakespeare wrote for all time, has rarely received better exemplification than is now afforded by the audiences at the Haymarket. What comedy of now-a-days will make our grandchildren laugh three centuries hence?<sup>13</sup>

The parallels between the “merry wives” in the audience and those on stage denotes a topical reading of the play that ultimately contributed to a perception of Shakespeare’s representation of

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<sup>10</sup> Adrian Kiernander, ‘Young Falstaff and the performance of nostalgia’, in *The Merry Wives of Windsor: New Critical Essays*, ed. by Evelyn Gajowski and Phyllis Rackin (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 199.

<sup>11</sup> ‘The Playhouses’, *Illustrated London News*, 19 January 1889, p. 88. *Illustrated London News Historical Archive, 1842-2003* [25 October 2019].

<sup>12</sup> *Sports Argus*, 14 June 1902, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

<sup>13</sup> *The Playgoer*, March 1889, *Bristol Theatre Collection*, HBT/TB/4.

the habits and humor of an imagined, medieval Windsor as timeless. On the whole, these reviews evidence the slippage that existed between the imagined medievalism of the play's setting and early-twentieth century society.

There were some reviews that derided the coarseness of the play, claiming that "Shakespeare in the farcical-comedy mood was never altogether at his best."<sup>14</sup> One particularly negative review, printed in the conservative periodical *Vanity Fair*, stated that Tree's production "betrayed the hollowness of Mr. William Shakespeare's work."<sup>15</sup> But for many, the morally questionable and sexually suggestive portions of the play contributed to its authenticity; the course humor offered not only slightly scandalous entertainment but a guileless and seemingly accurate representation of country humor in Shakespeare's age. Interestingly, *The Playgoer* understood this "blunt coarseness about the lines that somewhat shocks, now and again, the hypocritical squeamishness of the nineteenth century," to be a direct result of the incorrect assumption that "there was no Lord Chamberlain to trouble Mr. Shakespeare."<sup>16</sup> While this statement is entirely false, as Shakespeare did, in fact, have a Lord Chamberlain to contend with, it exposes a view of *Merry Wives* in the nineteenth century as something uncensored and unadulterated by theatrical restrictions. The play was read as a tangible and pure representation of the common folk of Shakespeare's age, with Shakespeare's imagined personal perspective implied in these readings. *Merry Wives* offered a tabooed authenticity, what *The Playgoer* couched as "a healthy, *honest* coarseness ... the coarseness of the breezy country, not of the hot city street, and it falls on us as harmless as the country mud compared with London slime."<sup>17</sup> The

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<sup>14</sup> *The Fan*, 6 March 1889, *Bristol Theatre Collection*.

<sup>15</sup> *Vanity Fair*, 16 February 1889, *Bristol Theatre Collection*.

<sup>16</sup> *The Playgoer*, March 1889.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

imagery in this review circles back to my discussion of the back-to-the-land movement in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries in the introduction to Part One. As Marsh states, the collective thinking was that “health and happiness were only to be found in the country, in rural life and agricultural occupations,” while the city was seen as “physically and morally corrupting”.<sup>18</sup> Thus, Tree’s Windsor was, in some sense, an escapist fantasy, providing audiences with a picture of life in a quintessential, rural English village, a locale that already held significant importance in Victorian and Edwardian culture.

The nineteenth century held considerable nostalgia for Windsor, due to its associations with the monarchy, Shakespeare, and the folk legend of Herne the Hunter. In William Hepworth Dixon’s account of the history of Windsor Castle (1879-80) he describes Windsor with a dose of sentimentality:

By the edges of dripping wells, which bear the names of queen and saint, stand aged oaks, hoary with time and rich in legend: patriarchs of the forest, wedded to the readers of all nations by immortal verse. A gentle eminence, the Castle hill springs from the bosom of a typical English scene. [...] Sanctity and poetry are everywhere about us; in the royal chapel, by the river side, among the forest oaks, and even in the tavern yards. Chaucer and Shakespeare have a part in Windsor hardly less pronounced than that of Edward and Victoria, that of St. Leonard and St. George.”<sup>19</sup>

Dixon demonstrates that even for the historian, Shakespeare had an irremovable influence in Windsor via the “immortal verse” of *Merry Wives*. Windsor was both a seat of monarchical history and national poetry, or as Alexander Pope expressed in 1713, “Thy forest, Windsor, and thy green retreats, | At once the Monarch’s and the Muse’s seats.”<sup>20</sup> Shakespeare was thought to

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<sup>18</sup> Jan Marsh, *Back to the Land*, p. 4.

<sup>19</sup> William Hepworth Dixon, *Royal Windsor*, Vol. 1, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1879), p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> Alexander Pope, ‘Windsor Forest’ in *The Poems of Alexander Pope*, Vol. 1, ed. by John Butt (London: Methuen & Co., 1961), p. 148.

have an inherent connection with this landscape, for as Kiernander observes “there is potential for nostalgia to emerge from our awareness of the adult Shakespeare working in London and remembering his own country town not unlike the play’s version of Windsor.”<sup>21</sup> This was particularly true in the nineteenth century. As C.H. Herford’s introduction to the Eversley Shakespeare Editions (1899) stated, “[Shakespeare] has painted Windsor and its burghers with the sympathetic touch of one who well remembered another antique country-town, with another side sylvan river lapping its meads and parks.”<sup>22</sup> While the castle itself served as a visual reminder of the royal family’s history and influence in the region, the grounds and village surrounding the castle symbolized provincial histories and heritages, as well as historicized imaginings of the national poet’s boyhood years. The village of Windsor, though always in the shadow of the royal castle, was a microcosm of ordinary life, and for Victorians, a representation of the daily lives of their English ancestors.

Nineteenth-century paintings of Windsor also exposed romanticized and idyllic notions of Windsor. Invariably, paintings featured bucolic landscapes and pastoral personages in the foreground with the castle towering in the distance. J.M.W. Turner’s *Ploughing Up Turnips, near Slough* (exh. 1809), originally entitled *Windsor*, is a perfect example of this (Figure 1.18). The castle hangs in a fog on the horizon, but the main subject of the painting is the agricultural laborers in the foreground.<sup>23</sup> Two similar paintings of the same period – Thomas Creswick’s (1811-69) *A View of Windsor Castle* and Alfred William Hunt’s *Windsor Castle* (1889) – reveal a similar juxtaposition between castle and village (Figures 1.19-1.20), as do various illustrations in

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<sup>21</sup> Kiernander, p. 200.

<sup>22</sup> C.H. Herford, ed., *The Works of Shakespeare*, Vol. 2, (London: Macmillan and Co., 1899), p. 241.

<sup>23</sup> Windsor must have transfixed Turner for a number of years, for this painting is only one of over a hundred illustrations of Windsor in the Tate Britain’s collections.

Victorian editions of Shakespeare's work, as evidenced in the work of Michael John Goodman.<sup>24</sup> What is repeatedly represented in these images of Windsor are its provincial qualities, ultimately creating a notion of Windsor, and particularly an imagined medieval Windsor, as the Eden to which nineteenth-century society wished to return. In Tree's stagings of the play, he sought to bring this provincial, colloquial Windsor to life through accompanied tableaux, and did so with great effect, utilizing the same visual features. As Peter Evans states, "in both productions Tree's sets were built to promote an atmosphere of faery, with moonlit shimmering boughs, banks of foxgloves, a 'thick growth of braken and fern, amid which the glow-worms glint,' and moss-grown trees. In the distance could be seen a customary outline of Windsor Castle."<sup>25</sup>



Figure 1.18: Joseph Mallord William (J.M.W.) Turner, *Ploughing Up Turnips, near Slough*

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<sup>24</sup> See Michael John Goodman, *Victorian Illustrated Shakespeare Archive* (2020) < <https://shakespeareillustration.org> > [20 February 2019].

<sup>25</sup> Peter Evans, "'To the Oak, To the Oak!'" The Finale of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Theatre Notebook*, Vol. 40, (1986), pp. 106-14 (p. 107).



Figure 1.19 (Left): William Hunt's *Windsor Castle*    Figure 1.20 (Right): Thomas Creswick's *A View of Windsor*

The allure of Windsor in the nineteenth century can also be contributed to the folklore embedded in the town's legacy through the legend of Herne the Hunter. The folklore that surrounded Windsor was derived from a Victorian re-invention of medieval mythology. Retellings of the legend of Herne the Hunter were popular during this period, as in William Ainsworth's novel *Windsor Castle* (1842). In the previous chapter, I demonstrated how references to folklore were integrated into performances of *Henry VIII*, resulting in Anne Bullen and Henry VIII being represented on the stage as Maid Marian and Robin Hood. Similarly, the attraction of the final tableau in *Merry Wives* was derived from its association with ancient English folklore. This time, the legend was present in Shakespeare's text rather than imagined by actor-managers, imbuing the story with sense of historical validity and attachment to the national poet.

The legend of Herne stemmed from a wider tradition of the wild huntsman present in medieval folklore across Europe.<sup>26</sup> As Michael John Petry observes, "no feature of the pre-Christian nature religions of Europe has survived in such a variety of forms" and that "stories

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<sup>26</sup> Michael John Petry, *Herne the Hunter: A Berkshire Legend* (Reading: William Smith Ltd, 1972).



relating to and deriving from it are to be found in every part of the continent.”<sup>27</sup> The earliest English reference to Herne is Shakespeare’s *Merry Wives* (1597), and thus, in the nineteenth century and even in Petry’s study from the 1970s, Shakespeare’s play was read as an authoritative source on English folklore related to the wild hunt. Petry suggests to his readers that his “investigation of the legend” begins with “extracting from this play what information we can with regard to the exact location and precise identity of this tree.”<sup>28</sup> In this statement, Petry displays the same logical fallacy that was present in nineteenth century thinking about Herne’s Oak and Herne the Hunter: Shakespeare’s play is read and interpreted as an historical record that might locate the “real” oak and shed light on the folklore that surrounded it. While Shakespeare’s description of the oak might reveal some local knowledge, it is hardly a text meant to be read for topographical accuracy, nor is it a fully reliable or complete record of the folklore related to Herne. Yet, in the nineteenth century, the play was often looked to as a quasi-historical colloquial record, and thus Shakespeare’s engagement with Herne positioned the poet as somewhat of a folklorist, as one who’s retelling the legend of Herne and description of the oak are taken as truths.

This is further exemplified by the debate that arose in the nineteenth century about which oak in Windsor Park was the “real” one from Shakespeare’s play. The details of the debate are irrelevant here, but in short, there were two opposing beliefs about which oak in Windsor park was authentic. Some believed that Herne’s oak had been cut down by the Hanoverians in 1796, while others believed the tree to be a different oak in Windsor Park. This tree survived in a decaying state until 1863, when it was blown down in a windstorm, and its fate was widely

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<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 4.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5.

reported in the press. An article in the *Illustrated Times* exhibits the degree to which the tree held special importance in the public's imagination, stating that "the desire to possess portions of this relic, made famous in Shakspeare's 'Merry Wives of Windsor,' was so great that a guard had to be placed over it night and day, in order to prevent it being carried off in fragments as memorials."<sup>29</sup> William Perry, woodcarver to Queen Victoria, was commissioned by the monarch to carve a bust of Shakespeare from "two or three fragments" of this oak in a similar manner to one Perry had "previously made for a gentleman, a great admirer of the Poet, out of a piece of oak from Shakspeare's Barn at New Place."<sup>30</sup> After learning that the 1863 tree might not have been the "real" Herne's Oak, Perry wrote his *Treatise on the Identity of Herne's Oak* (1867) as a way of authenticating the carving he had made for the queen. In this treatise, he, too, cites Shakespeare as the foremost authority on the subject, searching the text of *Merry Wives* for clues to the location of Herne's Oak to support his argument.

Through such logic, however flawed, we can observe another example of how *Merry Wives* was interpreted by Victorians as a quasi-historical, colloquial account of Windsor in the age of Merrie England. The animation with which people argued the location of the oak demonstrates the hold the legend of Herne had in the Victorian imagination. Accurately determining the authenticity of Herne's Oak tapped into a desire to locate details of Shakespeare's past in material objects, and by doing so, imaginatively connect with the national

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<sup>29</sup> 'Herne's Oak', *The Illustrated Times*, 26 September 1863, p. 195. *British Library Newspaper Archive*. [15 October 2019].

<sup>30</sup> William Perry, *Treatise on the Identity of Herne's Oak, Shewing the Maiden Tree to Have Been the Real One* (London: L. Booth, 1867), in *Internet Archive* [10 October 2019], p. x.

poet through a feature in one of his plays.<sup>31</sup> To look on Herne's Oak, or to possess a piece of wood from it, was to memorialize both Shakespeare and the folklore of Herne, to feel both the awe associated with a relic from one of Shakespeare's plays and the delightful fear associated with the medieval legend of the wild hunt. As I explore in the next section, Tree capitalized on these features, bringing the landscape of Windsor and the mythology attached to Herne's Oak to life for his audiences, particularly in the final tableau. His scenic design, arrangement of the text, and insistence on the play's setting as strictly medieval resulted in historicized staged pictures. There are, unfortunately, no surviving sketches or photographs of the set designs for Tree's *Merry Wives* productions, but by piecing together descriptions from the promptbook, reviews, and evidence from extant costume sketches and photographs, we can arrive at an understanding of what Tree's stage might have looked like and how this stage picture worked with incidental music to create a tableau of Merrie England.

### **Medieval Windsor**

Tree's 1902 revival commemorated the coronation of Edward VII, and as a result, featured a star-studded cast that the actor-manager "had to move Heaven and Earth to secure."<sup>32</sup> Deemed "the most noteworthy theatrical event of the Coronation year", the production featured Ellen Terry as Mistress Page and Madge Kendal as Mistress Ford, as well as Maud Tree as Anne

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<sup>31</sup> For more on the Victorian tendency to collect material objects related to Shakespeare see Julia Thomas, *Shakespeare's Shrine: The Bard's Birthplace and the Invention of Stratford-upon-Avon* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012), especially chapter 5; Graham Holderness, 'Bardolotry: or, The cultural materialist's guide to Stratford-upon-Avon', in *The Shakespeare Myth*, ed. by Graham Holderness (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1988) pp. 2-15; and Stephen H. Grant, *Collecting Shakespeare: The Story of Henry and Emily Folger* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), especially chapters 5-7.

<sup>32</sup> Maud Tree, 'Herbert and I', in Max Beerbohm, *Herbert Beerbohm Tree: some memories of him and his art* (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1920?), pp. 1-171, (p. 125).

Page and her husband in his habitual role as Falstaff.<sup>33</sup> Embedded within these costume designs is one of the most unique aspects of both of Tree's productions of *Merry Wives*: his choice to set the play in the medieval period rather than the Elizabethan, as was often customary (Figures 1.21-1.24). The headdress for Mistress Ford in particular borrows directly from medieval styles, imitating the butterfly hennin or double-horned hennin. While the other costumes do not mimic a specific medieval design, they typify a classic Victorian interpretation of the "historical" and would have been recognized as antiquated or representing a vague "Old English" style.<sup>34</sup>

Tree's choice to stage the play in the medieval period was not unanimously supported. Terry expressed her disagreement in a letter to her son, Edward Gordan Craig, who had taken the liberty of drawing a preliminary design for his mother's dress in the Elizabethan style. In Terry's response to him, she laments that she cannot wear it:

Your Mrs. Page [dress] is just to my mind – splendid. And I only don't wear it because I can't – The whole spirit of the thing breaths [*sic*] Shakspeare and his own time, and that's as the play \*should\* be dressed. \*But\* there is a historical figure in it ... [the] figure of Falstaff and in that way-back period the Play is going to be dressed, and [I] must do the best I can in the dress provided for me – Edy makes it – thank goodness – but both she & I only wish it were from your sketch.<sup>35</sup>

The differences in opinion between Tree and Terry illustrate how differently individuals imagined Merrie England, and how essentialist thought that made it possible for both the medieval and Tudor periods to be considered as viable settings for a historicized staging of the play. Terry ultimately admitted that though the costuming was not as Shakespearean as she might have hoped, wearing a dress that reflected the medieval period helped her "enormously to be a

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<sup>33</sup> *The Queen*, 14 June 1902, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

<sup>34</sup> I am grateful to my colleague and friend Dr. Ella Hawkins for her help with analyzing these costumes.

<sup>35</sup> Katharine Cockin, ed., *Collected Letters of Ellen Terry*, Vol. 4, (London: Pickering & Chatto, 2013), p. 254.

*real merry wife.*”<sup>36</sup> Again, the reality of her character is communicated, much like Tree’s take on Falstaff. In her role of Mistress Page, Terry sought to create a character that had a believable history, working to achieve the overarching aim of Tree’s production: to make Merrie England palpable, to animate the nostalgic visions of the past, and to invite audiences to step inside their contrived reality.



Figure 1.21 Left: Illustration from 1902 production by Charles A. Buchel featuring Ellen Terry as Mistress Page, Herbert Beerbohm Tree as Falstaff, and Madge Kendal as Mistress Ford.  
Figure 1.22 Right: Studio photograph of Ellen Terry as Mistress Page.

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<sup>36</sup> Edith Craig and Christopher St. John, eds., *Ellen Terry’s Memoirs* (London: V. Gollancz, 1933), p. 253, my emphasis.



Figure 1.23: Design for Anne Page's headdress played by Maud Tree.



Figure 1.24: Designs for Mistress Ford's dress, with back detail, played by Madge Kendal.

Tree's justification for his medieval setting was the fact that Shakespeare's Falstaff was based on the historical figure of Sir John Oldcastle, who lived during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries.<sup>37</sup> As Kiernander suggests, the presence of Falstaff (as well as Mistress Quickly, Bardolph, Pistol, and Nym) in other Shakespearean plays makes their respective characterizations in *Merry Wives* seem "more 'three dimensional' and realistic ... [and] implies that the characters have an independent existence, a real life, between and outside the plays in which they appear."<sup>38</sup> This was particularly true for Tree's approach to Falstaff, whose characterization was informed by *Henry IV parts 1 and 2* and *Henry V*. According to one review, Tree's Falstaff "... was always a gentleman. He might consort with scum, he might drink the night through in low taverns with lower company, but always he was Sir John."<sup>39</sup> In this interpretation, Tree anticipated twentieth-century critics, namely Harold Bloom, who argues for Falstaff's perceived universality as "a representative human, the quintessential man."<sup>40</sup> In doing so, he allowed the character to broadly apply to late-Victorian assumptions about the quintessential lives of medieval residents of Windsor, and Tree's manipulation of the text placed his characteristically "human" Falstaff at the center of the play's narrative. As one review noted, "In liberally and wisely 'editing' the play, he has not hesitated to bring Falstaff well to the front, and picture him rather as the good-natured fat

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<sup>37</sup> For a discussion of Oldcastle in context with *Merry Wives*, see Peter Lake, 'Contemporary readings: Oldcastle/Falstaff, Cobham/Essex' in *How Shakespeare Put Politics on the Stage* (New Haven, London: Yale UP, 2016); and Harriet Phillips, 'Late Falstaff, the Merry World, and *The Merry Wives of Windsor*', in *Shakespeare*, Vol. 10, no. 2 (2014), pp. 111-137.

<sup>38</sup> Kiernander, p. 197.

<sup>39</sup> W. Macqueen Pope, *Haymarket: Theatre of Perfection* (London: Allen, 1948), pp. 330-1.

<sup>40</sup> Rebecca Ann Bach, 'Falstaff becomes the (hu)man at the expense of *The Merry Wives of Windsor*' in *The Merry Wives of Windsor: New Critical Essays*, ed. by Evelyn Gajowski and Phyllis Rackin (London: Routledge, 2015), p. 171. Bach astutely argues against these assumptions, citing bestial descriptions of Falstaff as evidence of his nonhuman characterization. Most notoriously, Harold Bloom has argued for Falstaff's universality as a quintessential human in both *Shakespeare: The Invention of the Human* (New York: Riverhead, 1998) and *Falstaff: give me life* (New York, London: Scribner, 2017), rebuked in *Harold Bloom's Shakespeare*, ed. by Christy Desmet and Robert Sawyer, (New York, Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002).

man well-lined with sack than as the lewd besotted old vagabond imagined by Shakespeare.”<sup>41</sup> By emphasizing Falstaff’s good nature over his lewdness, Tree created space for his character to serve as an archetypal representation of a man in medieval Windsor, much like Terry’s claim that her medieval attire helped her to become a “real” merry wife. As David Crane states, “In production, the play needs the sense that it happens in a real place, and that extraordinary human characters and reactions to events are within the compass of the real.”<sup>42</sup> Tree’s historical approach to the play and his humanization of Falstaff did just that, encouraging audiences to understand the play as an episode from a long-gone medieval Windsor featuring the lives of everyday folk.

Additionally, Tree chose to open his 1902 production with an interpolated tableau giving audiences a glimpse of “everyday life” in Windsor. As Crane observes, “Tree recognized that *The Merry Wives of Windsor* is created ... amid the topographical circumstances of a real town as the mature histories are amid the historical circumstances of the reigns of three English kings,”<sup>43</sup> and this opening tableau showcased colloquial Windsor and brought nostalgic remembrances associated with the locale to the surface. The tableau presents a pastoral Windsor and was accompanied by original music composed by music director Norman Bath, setting the tone for the entire production.<sup>44</sup> The promptbook describes the opening tableau as follows:

Discovered: Blacksmith outside the shop up R. Tanner down R. 3 musicians playing outside Page’s house, L. Maid at window of Inn, cleaning platters, another at window over door. Nym and Pistol at table R., playing dice. Maid crosses from R.1.E. up C., meets 2 others who have entered at the same time, coming from L.U.E. They stop and converse R.C. – They see Fenton and Anne Page coming

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<sup>41</sup> *The Queen*, 14 June 1902, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

<sup>42</sup> David Crane, ‘Introduction’ in *New Cambridge Shakespeare*, ed. by David Crane (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010), pp. 10-47, (p. 35).

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>44</sup> Listen to music cues, entitled “No. 1 Curtain Music” and “No. 2 Falstaff”.



down the street, just point to them and then pass on their way. As these two enter, about 5 school children also enter R.1.E. and cross to L.U.E. 1 musician passes round to Nym and Pistol for money – They draw their swords at him, he is frightened and beckons the other musicians who join him and all go off together, R.1.E. Nym and Pistol laugh noisily. Anne Page picks a flower which she hands to Fenton and then goes into the house – Fenton turns and goes off up street. The music changes to Falstaff march – then noise from Inn and Bardolph is ejected by the Host – He falls across the table. There is a little riot from his companions, then Falstaff enters on horse-back, children following, also Robin, who holds the stirrup for Falstaff to dismount – He then leads the horse off R. Falstaff waves hands to maids at windows, then to Anne who has appeared at window over door. Falstaff goes into the Inn, calling out “Mine Host!” etc, then Shallow’s voice is heard off.<sup>45</sup>

What this opening interpolation communicated was exactly what Turner’s, Creswick’s, and Hunt’s paintings expressed in their foregrounds. The subject of *Merry Wives* is not Windsor Castle, but the people of the village of Windsor: the blacksmith, the tanner, the maids, the busking musician, school children, and the riotous group drinking at the local inn. Anne and Fenton’s pantomimed exchange presents the audience with an example of idealistic flirtation in the countryside, foreshadowing their eventual pairing at the end of the play. Falstaff’s entrance on a horse is superfluous, as the horse is not used again throughout the rest of the performance, but perhaps gestures towards Tree’s gentlemanly characterization of the old knight while allowing the actor-manager to display his equestrian skills. Even before the opening lines of the play, the production was poised to evoke pastoral nostalgia and wistfulness for a bygone age.

While such visual features contribute to the realism of the tableau, the jollity of the musical accompaniment only enhances the tableau’s illusion of a Merrie English Windsor further. Music cue 1, which opens the tableau, has a merry, light rhythm in 6/8 with a simple, melodic tune, which was repeated as necessary until the entrance of Falstaff. Falstaff’s music is quite

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<sup>45</sup> Herbert Beerbohm Tree, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* promptbook, 1902, His Majesty’s Theatre. Bristol Theatre Collection, HBT 143. All descriptions of stage action are taken from this promptbook unless otherwise indicated.

similar, containing the same lilted, syncopated rhythm. The melody trips along with the aid of grace notes that periodically come before the down beat, communicating a silliness that reflects Falstaff's humorous personality. The tonality of this music foregrounds the nature of Sullivan's soundscape for the final tableau at Herne's Oak: lighthearted and spirited melodies backed by dance-like rhythms. In the next section, I take a closer look at Sullivan's music for the final tableau, coordinating the music with the balletic action on stage that ultimately made up an elongated spectacle of five pantomimic segments. This climatic stage picture contained a trifecta of symbols representing Merrie England: a pastoral setting at Windsor, references to folklore through Herne the Hunter, and a characteristically "English" musical accompaniment supplied by a celebrated, native composer. As one review noted: "With the help of Sir Arthur Sullivan's delicious music ... the last act was changed from its usual character of a wearisome tag into a charming little one-scene pantomime. The one scene was ... a perfect gem ... the most elaborate of many beautiful tableaux."<sup>46</sup>

### **Sullivan's Incidental Music and the tableau at Herne's Oak**

Sullivan's music for the final act was grounded in the same realism which informed Tree's approach to Falstaff and the play's setting in medieval Windsor. As he stated in a letter written before Hollingshead's 1874 production, "the fairies are not *real* fairies (if such exist) but only flesh and blood imitations ... I have endeavoured to indicate this, and have not written music of the same character as I wrote for *The [sic] Midsummer Night's Dream*, or that

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<sup>46</sup> *Country Gentleman*, 5 January 1889, *Bristol Theatre Collection*.

Mendelssohn wrote for the third act of *The Tempest*.”<sup>47</sup> This differentiation evidences that Sullivan’s music was not designed to transport audiences into a dreamworld filled with fairies, but rather was intended to transport them to a Merrie England, a time and place, as I have stated, which was defined aurally by English light music. Sullivan writes music that reflects the people of medieval Windsor rather than their temporary, sprightly forms, creating less of a mythical atmosphere and, instead, reinforcing the play’s setting in an imagined, but palpable past. In this sense, Sullivan’s music has more in common with German’s *Henry VIII* music than it does with music for plays with more supernatural overtones, such as *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* or *The Tempest*, as the music’s primary function is to romanticize the historical, rather than to fanaticize the metaphysical world. For *Merry Wives*, Sullivan borrowed music from his balletic afterpiece *L’Île Enchantée*, originally performed at Covent Garden in 1864 and which also inspired his music for *Victoria and Merrie England*, evidencing the music’s propensity in capturing the soundscape of Merrie England.<sup>48</sup>

In addition to Sullivan’s *Merry Wives* music, Tree also used the composer’s “Graceful Dance” for the entr’acte preceding his final scene. This was originally written for Charles Calvert’s Manchester production of *Henry VIII* (1871), but was rebranded in the programme as “Merry Wives of Windsor.”<sup>49</sup> This further supports my argument that Tree’s approach to *Merry Wives* leaned towards the historical rather than the supernatural, as music written for *Henry VIII* could be readily incorporated into *Merry Wives*. As the final notes of Sullivan’s “Graceful

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<sup>47</sup> Arthur Jacobs, pp. 78-9. This quote is transcribed correctly, but certainly Sullivan himself confused the two plays here, as he never wrote music for *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* nor did Mendelssohn write music for *The Tempest*. He likely meant Mendelssohn’s infamous music for *Dream* and his own music for *The Tempest*.

<sup>48</sup> Paul Howarth, *Gilbert and Sullivan Archive*, (13 September 2011)  
<<https://www.gsarchive.net/sullivan/windsor/index.html>> [15 February 2017].

<sup>49</sup> Programme pasted inside of Promptbook 143.

Dance” were played, the curtain rose to reveal a tableau of Anne Page sitting at the roots of Herne’s Oak, weaving a garland.<sup>50</sup> Children circle around her as a nightingale is heard singing in the distance. The music segued into Sullivan’s “Love Laid His Sleepless Head,” a ballad with lyrics by Algernon Charles Swinburne.<sup>51</sup> In Hollingshead’s original production, it was love song for Anne to sing to Slender, but in Tree’s production it was placed completely out of context rendering some confusion about the song’s meaning within the surrounding scene.<sup>52</sup> Tree delegated the song to Sir Hugh Evans, likely due to the fact that the part was played by well-known tenor Courtice Pounds, and in this arrangement, Peter Evans observes that “the song bec[ame] even more of a meaningless break in the flow of the play.”<sup>53</sup> Evans suggests that Tree retained the song due to the “publicity value a song by Swinburne would provide,” but I argue that this opening segment of the tableau – and this song – served another purpose.<sup>54</sup>

The portrait of Anne sitting at the roots of Herne’s Oak is a glimpse of Windsor Park before the haunting of the legendary Herne. This is a tableau of Windsor as it usually is, as a Victorian visitor to Herne’s Oak might find it: bucolic, pastoral, and romantic. The tableau recalls similar imagery used to depict Anne Bullen in the aforementioned banquet scenes, and the song recalls the same simple, pastoral love represented by the exchange of a flower between Anne and Fenton in the opening tableau of “everyday” Windsor. The trick elopements of Caius and Slender also take place during this scene, though completely in pantomime, for Tree’s substantial cuts to previous scenes had removed most of the dialogue pertaining to the subplot.<sup>55</sup> As such, this

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<sup>50</sup> Listen to Sullivan’s “Graceful Dance”. Link provided in Appendix.

<sup>51</sup> Listen to “Love Laid His Sleepless Head”. Link provided in Appendix.

<sup>52</sup> Evans, p. 107.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 109.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 110.

opening tableau, which occurs before the entrance of Falstaff as Herne, revolves around the wooing of Anne by various suitors, setting up her eventual union with Fenton at the end of the play. Here, Windsor Park is presented – albeit temporarily – as the wood in which two lovers meet, much like the wood in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

The significance of this is even more pronounced when we consider that some Victorians read *Merry Wives* as a semi-autobiographical work. For example, William Henty (1882) claimed that “... William Fenton and sweet Anne Page were designed to be the representative of William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway” and that the locality of the play was “evidently Stratford, though disguised as Windsor.”<sup>56</sup> Thus, for some Victorians and Edwardians, Anne Page was representative of Shakespeare’s wife, and this scene as Tree staged it, with Anne representing the fair maid stereotype, provided audiences with an opportunity to further imagine such a biographical connection, to catch a glimpse of Shakespeare’s mythologized love story. Swinburne’s poetry and Sullivan’s music created a temporary gap wherein this imagined Merrie England and its idealized love – and indeed the national poet’s own – could be expressed. In addition to the romantic imagery of this scene, it also worked structurally to create a contrast between Windsor as it usually is – bucolic and pastoral, able to evoke love under the shade of an oak – and Windsor under the spell of Herne – full of mystery, supernatural sprites, and shrouded in moonlight.

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<sup>56</sup> William Henty, *Shakespeare, with some notes on his early biography and an identification of the characters of William Fenton and Ann Page with William Shakespeare and Anne Hathaway*, p. 21. Other nineteenth century biographical texts made similar assumptions, including Robert Cartwright’s *The Footsteps of Shakspere: or, A ramble with the early dramatists* (London: J.R. Smith, 1862), and Stephen Watson Fullom’s *History of William Shakespeare, player and poet* (London: Saunders, Otley, 1864).

At the final line of “Love Laid His Sleepless Head”, the transition between this pastoral, love-evoking Windsor and the supernatural one occurs, segueing into the Dance of the Fairies.<sup>57</sup> This music brings on the fairies, as “they join in one long line [and] circle all round [the] stage till all gathered round Anne and Evans – filling out the music and then sink [to the] ground at conclusion.”<sup>58</sup> Here begins Shakespeare’s short, metatheatrical scene of 5.4, featuring Sir Hugh Evans directing the children pretending to be fairies. At the end of Evans’ speech, the children run off stage, and Falstaff enters unaccompanied, shaking a chain and with antlers on his head. In an aural touch that further emphasizes the contrast between the opening tableau of Anne Page and this one, the nightingale stops singing, almost as if frightened by the appearance of Herne. The mood shifts from a blissfully pastoral tableau of Anne Page and children around the oak to a slightly more mysterious mood associated with Falstaff as Herne.

As Falstaff enters, the clock strikes midnight, and after his invocation of the “hot-blooded gods,” (5.5.2) Mistress Page and Mistress Ford enter, signaling the next phase of the tableau.<sup>59</sup> Falstaff’s lines, “Am I am woodman, ha? Speak I like Herne the Hunter? ... As I am a true spirit, welcome,” (5.5.29) serve as the cue for Anne Page’s song and chorus, but the professional recording of this song does not include the accompanied dialogue between Mistress Page and Mistress Ford (cue 27) that precedes the chorus of “As I am a true spirit, welcome”. I have digitally reconstructed music cue 27 and find that Sullivan’s music emphasizes the sound effects made off stage, such as screams and shaking chains, enhancing the shift in mood.<sup>60</sup> The

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<sup>57</sup> Listen to professional recording of Sullivan’s “Prelude and Dance of Fairies”, link provided in Appendix. Note that Prelude was not played in Tree’s production, so “Dance of Fairies” begins at 2:30.

<sup>58</sup> Promptbook 143, *Bristol Theatre Collection*.

<sup>59</sup> All line references taken from William Shakespeare, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, ed. by Georgio Melchiori (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2000).

<sup>60</sup> Listen to transcribed “No. 27 As I am a true spirit, welcome” available in Google Drive.

promptbook shows how the dialogue and music worked in tandem to build a mysterious atmosphere that contrasted against the blithe pastoralism of the Anne Page tableau:

[*OFF – very loud rattles and screams*]

Mistress Page: Alas, what noise? [*Music*]

Mistress Ford: Heaven forgive our sings! [*Noise repeated, music*]

Falstaff: What should this be?

Mistress Page and Mistress Ford: Away, away! [*The two women run about in fright, pull Falstaff to his knees, use him roughly and run off.*]

Falstaff [*on knees*]: I think the devil will not have me damned, lest oil that's in me should set hell on fire. He would never else cross me thus (5.5.30-6).

After this, the dance and chorus of “fairies, black, grey, green, and white” begins in Sullivan’s “As I am a true spirit, welcome”.<sup>61</sup> Evans, dressed as a satyr, twenty-four children dressed as fairies, and Anne Page as the Fairy Queen enter variously from all entrances with lighted lanterns, and the children begin to run all around Falstaff. The motivation behind Tree’s choice to have Anne Page, rather than Mistress Quickly, play the part of the Fairy Queen is likely due to the influences of various nineteenth century editors who typically assigned the part to Anne Page. Also, from a logistical standpoint, the use of Sullivan’s music required the Fairy Queen to sing, and Maud Tree as Anne Page fit that brief. As she recalled in her memoirs, “to be allowed to sing and skip at will, as Anne Page, was unalloyed delight.”<sup>62</sup> In Tree’s staging, the children danced about the stage as the Fairy Queen sang, singing the choral responses while being supported by extras doubling backstage. The dialogue spoken by the Fairy Queen is largely relegated to what is preserved in Sullivan’s musical setting, with large portions being omitted to better fit his musical structure. The repetition of the line “Worthy the owner, and the owner it” emphasizes the royal presence in this scene, reinforcing the allegorical representations of the

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<sup>61</sup> Listen to professional recording of Sullivan’s “As I am a true spirit, welcome”, link available in Appendix.

<sup>62</sup> Maud Tree, p. 40.

monarchy through the figure of the Fairy Queen (5.5.60). When considered against the topical contexts of Edward VII's coronation, this refrain gestured even more demonstratively to the shadow of royal influence in this play.

The next dance sequence and phase of the tableau occurs shortly after the end of this song and chorus. At Sir Hugh's couplet "And twenty glowworms shall our lanterns be, | To guide our measure about the tree," (5.5.78-9) another choreographed dance ensues.<sup>63</sup> The promptbook reveals little about the nature of the dance, but the structure of Sullivan's music echoes the structure and tonality of many of German's *Henry VIII* dances. This dance symbolizes the circular shape of the Garter, danced around Herne's Oak. The sprightly, fast-moving rhythms and instrumentation featuring heavy brass and cymbals emphasize the downbeat, creating a hurried, playful effect. Tempo and dynamics push the piece along, giving a raucous feel. This segues into the final song and dance of the tableau, the Dance with chorus singing "Fie on sinful fantasy!," which brings about the long-awaited punishment of Falstaff, though in Tree's staging, the fat knight seems to have suffered little torment.<sup>64</sup> Instead, Tree's skill as a comedian in the role of Falstaff flourished here, as evidenced in the pantomimic blocking contained in the promptbook:

The children's song is sung through spiritedly – they all clustering round to pinch him. He runs through them – away from them – up C at back children following all the while. As he reaches entrances R&L various of the peasants and principals enter – with masks on – drawing him back in fright – they beat him with bladders tied to sticks – when song through once they begin it again still more spiritedly – at the end. Falstaff climbs up the tree down L. They hang onto his jerkin dragging him down and he falls C. They all crowding around laughing and beating him with bladders – this brings on everyone – principles, extra ladies & gentlemen – the scene being completely filled.

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<sup>63</sup> Listen to professional recording of Sullivan's "Dance Allegro vivace", link available in Appendix.

<sup>64</sup> Listen to professional recording of Sullivan's "Dance with Chorus – Allegro vivace", link available in Appendix.



Falstaff's treatment seems to be less of a punishment and more of a show of slap-stick comedy. Tree's use of extras to fill up the stage created a scene of lively chaos that must have gone on for at least five minutes, given the length of the music. This was the crowning moment of the production, a gut-busting pantomimic romp around the stage, accompanied by the lighthearted music of Sullivan that is reminiscent of so many of the large-scale choral passages in the comic operas he wrote alongside W.S. Gilbert. A review in the *Illustrated London News* best sums up this closing tableau as "a healthy picture ... of the middle-class life of Shakspeare's 'Merrie England' – its domineering husbands, its hearty women, its scheming lovers, its open-air festivities, its comic fools, its unctuous scoundrels."<sup>65</sup>

At the end of this pantomimic segment, the loose ends of the play are quickly resolved with a truncated resolution between Slender, Dr. Caius, Fenton, and the Pages. Tree offers one final interpolation, which occurs after the final lines of the play are spoken. It is accompanied by a reprise of Falstaff's theme (musical cue 2), and as the melody trips along once again, all the merry wives and their husbands take center stage. Falstaff approaches Mistress Ford for a dance, but she denies him. He then goes to Mistress Page, and she also says no. This bit of pantomime suggests that Falstaff has learned no lesson; he has merely been caught up in some rather bizarre merriment in a moonlit Windsor forest, and remains the same lecherous knight. The wives and their husbands dance in a ring around Falstaff, eventually dancing off-stage left. Falstaff is left dancing playfully with a child, and it is perhaps within this final picture that Tree's understanding of the character is most clearly communicated. As Kiernander suggests, "One of the most potent triggers for foregrounding the passage of time and the condition of progressive decay is the figure

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<sup>65</sup> "The Playhouses", *Illustrated London News*, 14 June 1902, *The Illustrated London News Historical Archive, 1842-2003*, [Accessed 25 October 2019]. (Emphasis mine.)

of Falstaff,” and the juxtaposition of a young child and the old knight in this closing stage picture perhaps signals this passage of time, as the imagery evokes nostalgia for the younger self, a younger age, the “childhood” of Merrie England.<sup>66</sup> Falstaff’s merriment, and even his mischief, is perceived as child-like. Indeed, his coarse humor falls on the audience like harmless country mud, and the tableaux that make up the final act can be read as something akin to child’s play – chaotic, merry, nonsensical, and full of music, noise, shouts, and laughter – taking the audience back to the Merrie England of the nineteenth-century imagination.

### **Merrie England, the “benevolent” colonizer, and the coronation of Edward VII**

To close this chapter, I briefly consider Tree’s aim in staging *Merry Wives* for the coronation of Edward VII, or as Crane puts it, commemorating the time “when the lecherous fat king finally came to the throne after the death of Queen Victoria.”<sup>67</sup> As documented in Jane Ridley’s biographies, Edward VII was known as a philanderer, womanizer, gambler, and for his corpulent stature, brought on by eating and drinking in Falstaffian proportions. Ridley compares the monarch to Prince Hal in her biographies, but as a review in the *Wall Street Journal* suggested, there are also parallels with Falstaff: “... as a paunchy, google-eyed roué of 60, [Edward] became one of the best constitutional monarchs in British history. It is as though Falstaff rather than Prince Hal became king and turned out to be rather good at the job.”<sup>68</sup> While the physical similarities between Falstaff and Bertie are evident, a central question emerges here: how does *Merry Wives* and its various portrayals of “Merrie England” respond to or memorialize

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<sup>66</sup> Kiernander, p. 202.

<sup>67</sup> Crane, p. 35.

<sup>68</sup> Ferdinand Mount, ‘Book Review: “The Heir Apparent” by Jane Ridley’, *Wall Street Journal (Online)*, 13 Dec. 2013.

the coronation of a new king, and most specifically Edward VII? To answer this requires circling back to the idea of the play as occupying a liminal space between royal and urban, elite and non-elite.

One attractive aspect of the play in the late-Victorian period was its supposed connection to Elizabeth I, who, as the story goes, commanded Shakespeare to write a play showing Falstaff in love. Although this anecdote had been debunked long before Tree's production, actor-managers, reviewers, and critics continued to cite this as one of the central attractions of the play. Brandes stated as late as 1909 that Shakespeare "almost certainly did not write the piece of his own motive, but at the suggestion of one whose wish was a command."<sup>69</sup> He continued:

As it amused the London populace to see kings and princes upon the stage, so it entertained the Queen [Elizabeth I] and her court to have a glimpse into the daily life of the middle classes, so remote from their own, ... to see a picture of the prosperity and contentment which flourished at Windsor right under the windows of the Queen's summer residence, and to witness the downright virtue and merry humour of the red-cheeked, buxom townswomen."<sup>70</sup>

Thus, the representation of the "middle class" in the play was not just for the benefit of the bourgeoisie, but also for aristocracy, an opportunity for the monarch to see a snapshot of the prosaic life of Merrie England. Similar assumptions were made regarding the play's significance for Edward VII. As the *London Evening Standard* reported, "A special appropriateness attaches to the choice of the work that introduces characteristic pictures of the King's immediate domain, and deals, indeed, with another Monarch besides the occupant of the Throne, for Falstaff is the King of humorists."<sup>71</sup> Thus, it was imagined, at least, that Tree's *Merry Wives* provided not only the general public with a glimpse of everyday life in medieval Windsor, but also displayed that

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<sup>69</sup> Brandes, p. 208.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>71</sup> *London Evening Standard*, 11 June 1902, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

picture for the benefit of the new monarch. The merry making of Mistress Quickly and Mistress Page, the idealized courtship of Fenton and Anne, and the coarse humor of Falstaff purported visions of past and present Windsor, both equally romanticized, over which this new monarch ruled.

As a part of coronation festivities, Tree's production was also attended by numerous dignitaries from the United States and various British colonies, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Natal, and Newfoundland.<sup>72</sup> The day before, the distinguished group was given the opportunity to admire Windsor's sweeping landscapes and royal castle by invitation to attend a garden party at Windsor Castle.<sup>73</sup> Through this, it is evident that the staging of *Merry Wives* did not just showcase Windsor as a pastoral abode for the sake of the monarch, but also for his colonized subjects. Their attendance at the garden party at Windsor as well as the play the following night suggested that, by extension, they too could take ownership of this Merrie England typified by Windsor both through its past and present-day depictions. Subsequently, this framed colonization as a benevolent gesture, an opportunity to be inculcated into the perceptually ancient society that Windsor so readily represented. Like the myth of Merrie England, which lived on far more in the imagination than it did in reality, the myth of the benevolent colonizer, particularly in the wake of the brutality of the Second Boer War, was also an imagined state. As J.E.C. Bodley suggested, Edward was assuming a crown which had become "an emblem of Empire wider than Darius or the early Caesars had ever dreamed of," and was inclusive of these colonized territories.<sup>74</sup> Showcasing Britain's most attractive features and glossing over its

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<sup>72</sup> *Manchester Evening News*, 16 June 1902, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> J.E.C. Bodley, *The Coronation of Edward VII: a chapter of European and imperial history* (London: Methuen & Co., 1903), p. 4.

complex and troubled history with the broad strokes of the Merrie England myth typified by Shakespeare's *Merry Wives* was not just mere entertainment for these visiting dignitaries, but propaganda that sold a version of the Empire rooted in pastoralism and accompanied by the strains of characteristically "English" light music by a native-born composer. Most importantly, Shakespeare and his plays were present at the heart of these myths, fueling their perceived validity in the public eye.

As the next chapter addresses, the imperial ethos in the nineteenth century was, in many ways, underpinned by the myth of Merrie England. It assumed that newly acquired colonies could become a part of the perceptually ancient traditions of the mother country and that replica "Merrie Englands" could be established in these colonized territories. Thus, the myth of benevolent imperialism, and indeed the imperial ethos itself, depended on the same essentialist logic, romantic thinking, and glossed over "histories" of England that have been discussed in Part One. Like John Hatton's arrangements of authentic Tudor dances, Edward German's mock-Tudor interpretations, and Sullivan's music for the masque at Herne's Oak, the music that accompanied tableaux of imperial grandeur was central to shaping meaning and how it comments on the nation, its monarch, and *fin-de-siècle* British imperialism.

## Part 2: Shakespeare and the Myth of the Benevolent Empire

### **Introduction: Shakespeare, imperialism, and the theatre**

Expressions of the British Empire were present in nearly every facet of popular culture in the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods. As John MacKenzie's work observes, the "drama of empire" was expressed through various "vehicles of propaganda", including commercial products – such as photographs, cigarette cards, biscuit tins, children's toys, and jingoist sheet music – and theatrical productions – such as music hall performances, early cinema, melodrama, and various non-theatrical visual entertainments.<sup>1</sup> The widespread nature of imperial propaganda throughout this period is demonstrated in each of these genres, but most relevant here is the way in which the theatre was used to propagandize the empire. As Marty Gould argues, "[...] the Victorians relied on imperial theatrics to teach them their roles in the drama of empire", and thus, the theatre became a space where the idea of empire was inculcated through repetition, historical revision, and glittering pageantry.<sup>2</sup> As J.S. Bratton reiterates, "theatrical and quasi-theatrical presentations [...] played a large part in the creation and propagation of the 'traditions' of the nation, supplanting local, fragmented and potentially subversive histories."<sup>3</sup> In the forthcoming chapters, I explore the degree to which expressions of imperialism were embedded in historicized *tableaux vivants* on the Shakespearean stage throughout the long nineteenth century, exploring their use as tools of imperial propaganda, and in particular, looking at how music shaped and made meaning of such imperialistic expressions. As such, Part Two builds on the work of other nineteenth

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<sup>1</sup> John MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire: The manipulation of the British public opinion 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1984), pp. 16-38.

<sup>2</sup> Marty Gould, *Nineteenth-Century Theatre and the Imperial Encounter* (New York: Routledge, 2011), p. 31.

<sup>3</sup> Jacqueline S. Bratton, *Acts of supremacy: the British Empire and the stage, 1790-1930* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1991), p. 5.

century theatre historians who have discussed the widespread presence of imperialism in Victorian theatres, highlighting instances where national poet and national music were mobilized conjointly to both express and further define the British Empire.

To add to MacKenzie's work, I argue that the tableaux and musical accompaniments discussed in Chapters 3 and 4 were also vehicles of propaganda, and by being included in Shakespearean productions, positioned the national poet as a posthumous spokesman for the imperialist agenda. This follows the view of Shakespeare that Edward Salmon expressed in 1924, stating "he was the stuff of which an Empire, broad-based on freedom, is made, and his plays may legitimately be regarded, in the words of Macbeth, as 'Happy prologues to the swelling act | Of [the] imperial theme.'"<sup>4</sup> Chapter Three discusses another tableau in *Henry VIII*, the coronation of Anne Bullen (4.1), beginning with a brief evaluation of select eighteenth-century performances of the tableau before exploring performances of this scene in the theatres of Charles Kean (1855) and Herbert Beerbohm Tree (1910-11), accompanied by the music of Hatton and German, respectively. Chapter Four explores Tree's 1899 production of *King John*, focusing on his staging of and Raymond Rôze's accompaniment for two interpolated tableaux in the production: "The Fight Near Angiers" and "The Granting of the Magna Charta."<sup>5</sup>

To provide the necessary context for understanding these tableaux, I must first define imperialism and discuss what I mean by the imperialist ethos. I must also consider these Shakespearean productions within a larger scope of imperialist theatrical expression that was present in popular drama, visual entertainments, and music of the period. Lastly, I must explore

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<sup>4</sup> Edward Salmon and Maj. A.A. Longden, *The Literature and Art of the Empire* (London: British Books Ltd., 1924), pp. 44-5.

<sup>5</sup> The spellings "Angiers" and "Charta" were used by Tree in his production papers, so I have retained it here for continuity, despite the fact that both deviate from modern spellings of "Angers" and "Carta".

the late-Victorian and Edwardian view of Shakespeare as a paragon of English patriotism and explore the way in which the national poet's works – particularly *Henry VIII* and *King John* – were mobilized to support imperialist and nationalist agendas during this period. In doing this, I will also justify why I have chosen the specific productions and tableaux featured in this chapter, exploring how *Henry VIII* and *King John* were particularly fitting plays through which one could imagine and advocate for the expansion of the British Empire. The reigns of King John and Henry VIII were thought to have contained the stirrings of the present-day empire, planting the seeds of colonial conquest, monarchical grandeur, and imperial power that ultimately blossomed in the late-nineteenth century.

### **Defining Imperialism**

My definition of imperialism does not deviate from the scholarship that precedes my own. Edward Said defines imperialism as “the practice, the theory, and the attitude of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory”, which sits in close proximity to colonialism, defined as “the implanting of settlements on a distant territory.”<sup>6</sup> MacKenzie identifies an “ideological cluster” that surrounded imperial thinking during this century that “formed out of the intellectual, national, and world-wide conditions of the later Victorian era, and which came to infuse and be propagated by every organ of British life in the period.”<sup>7</sup> The ideologies included in this cluster are “renewed militarism, a devotion to royalty, an identification and worship of national heroes, together with a cult of personality, and racial ideas associated with Social

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<sup>6</sup> Edward Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994), p. 8.

<sup>7</sup> MacKenzie, p. 2.



Darwinism.”<sup>8</sup> To this list, Richards also adds Protestantism and suggests that chivalry coincides with militarism.<sup>9</sup> MacKenzie suggests that “together these [ideologies] constituted a new type of patriotism, which derived a special significance from Britain’s unique imperial mission.”<sup>10</sup> I argue that two strands of this ideological cluster were illuminated in accompanied tableaux on the Shakespearean stage: “devotion to royalty” and “renewed militarism”. Both Kean’s and Tree’s stagings of the coronation of Anne Bullen directly engaged with a rising sense of monarchism that was intertwined in the imperial ethos. Stagings of Anne’s coronation suggested that royal pageantry was ancient and immemorial, despite the fact that such pageantry was largely a nineteenth-century invention, as evidenced in the work of Eric Hobsbawm and David Cannadine, which will be discussed in further detail in Chapter Three.<sup>11</sup> Similarly, Tree’s interpolated tableaux in *King John* engaged with the militarism of the First and Second Boer Wars, particularly “The Fight”, which acted out the defeat of the French at Angers in pantomime accompanied by an intense, combative soundscape.

The societal structures and ideologies that underpin the imperialism of this period can be traced historically and discussed factually, but of equal importance is the imagined imperial ideal, or in other words, the way in which the British public understood, processed, and visualized Britain’s rise as an imperial nation. Just as the myth of Merrie England was a largely invented notion, the imperial identity of Britons was also based on invented, backwards-looking notions of national selfhood that were routinely linked to inflated perceptions of medieval and Tudor

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Richards, p. 16.

<sup>10</sup> MacKenize, p. 2.

<sup>11</sup> Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1983), particularly David Cannadine’s ‘The Context, Performance and Meaning of Ritual: The British Monarchy and the “Invention of Tradition”, c. 1820-1977’, pp. 101-164.

England.<sup>12</sup> While Merrie England was conjured up in imaginings of unadulterated landscapes, folk dancing, and Maypoles, the myth of empire was imagined in a similar time and place, an age where England's crowning achievements were colonizing North America and the defeat of the Spanish Armada. In this way, the myth of Merrie England and perceptions of Britain as an imperialist stronghold were closely related and tied to the same aggrandized notions of the nation's past. The image of a utopian, arcadian England was increasingly projected onto foreign dominions and possessions as the empire expanded, for "one promise held out by Imperial expansion was that of escape from the pressure of unwelcome social change at home, and the recreation of 'traditional' English life overseas."<sup>13</sup> Thus, the very same philosophies that underpinned domestic ideologies, such as those that lay beneath the back-to-the-land movement, also underpinned collective ideologies related to colonization and imperialism. While the social changes produced by industrialism depended on the colonies to provide captive markets and cheap raw materials, ideologically both the empire and the homeland were imagined as chivalric. The assumption was that a new Eden could not only be returned to at home by reembracing the pastoral life over the industrial, but that it also could be cultivated in foreign territories through colonization, assimilation, and expansion of the imperialist state.

As such, colonial takeovers and the forced assimilation of foreign peoples were routinely framed as acts of benevolence. Richards discusses this as being entangled with the nation's Protestant identity, stating that:

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<sup>12</sup> This chapter, and the sources cited within it, will vacillate between usages of "English/England" and "British/Britain" when speaking of nineteenth century imperial identities. This is not a haphazard conflation of the terms, but rather indicates that in the nineteenth century "British" often meant "English", even if not stated outright. Typically, "English" seems to be used when discussing domestic issues and identities, while "British" seems to be applied to colonial territories, which are considered a part of the "British" Empire but also are seen as extensions of "English" domestic culture.

<sup>13</sup> Wiener, p. 56.

the missionary impulse, the desire to bring the ‘heathen’ to the light of God, and the leadership principle, the idea that the British being the greatest race in the world had a duty to provide government and justice for ‘inferior races’, intertwined to create a continuing theme in imperial writing: the idea that the British ran their Empire not for their own benefit but for the benefit for those they ruled.<sup>14</sup>

This myth of benevolent imperialism via Protestantism was increasingly palpable through the way that the imperialist ethos was propagandized. Although I engage more with Protestantism in Part Three, its role as a part of the imperialist ethos is widespread, particularly in its relationship to nineteenth-century perceptions of Britain’s religious history. The reigns of Henry VIII and King John showcased two monarchs who had resisted papal rule in Britain, and from the Victorian and Edwardian perspective, their resistance was understood as the beginning of the modern-day empire. For by gaining autonomy from Rome, Britain had strengthened its own independence and charted the course for amassing foreign dominions. The logic was that by eventually gaining autonomy from Rome via the Reformation, Britain could now assume a more independent status, ultimately empowering the nation to colonize, to project this independence onto foreign lands. Such thinking underpinned the perceptions of the reigns of Henry VIII and King John in the nineteenth century and was particularly prevalent in stagings of Shakespeare’s dramatizations of their respective reigns.

Artistic expressions of this period – and particularly on the London stage – provide the fullest view of how the British thought of themselves as an imperial nation and how this imagined identity was propagated for thousands of patrons at the Princess’s Theatre, Her/His Majesty’s Theatre, and more broadly, on many *fin-de-siècle* popular stages. While the imperialist ethos was a dominant way of thinking during this period, I should acknowledge that there were

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<sup>14</sup> Richards, p. 14.

dissenters, though their perspectives were rarely articulated in large commercial theatres of the West End, and they are, therefore, only rarely visible in the following chapters. Historians routinely discuss this period as overtly supportive of empire, although dissident voices were audible in each epoch of the British Empire's formation, growth, and eventual demise. I account for these voices here to acknowledge that while this chapter discusses performances that were supportive of the imperialist mission, there were certainly also productions that voiced anti-establishment sentiments. Importantly, the two actor-managers discussed in this chapter both seem to have held the monarchy and the empire in high regard, and the tableaux in their productions evidence such views. Thus, this chapter discusses the dominant and pervasive imperialist ethos of the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods, while acknowledging that there is perhaps far more to say about expressions of anti-imperialism on stages in both the homeland and its colonies.

### **Tableaux vivants, visual entertainments, and music as “vehicles of propaganda”**

The aforementioned studies of British imperialism on the nineteenth-century popular stage provide valuable context for my evaluation of the same imperialistic expressions in Shakespearean performance. Gould claims that these popular spectacles “mediat[ed] Britons' encounter with the rest of the world [by] encouraging public commitment to their nation's costly and ambitious project of global expansion.”<sup>15</sup> Thus, the stage became a mirror to the imperialist project and reflected back to audiences carefully curated and often distorted visualizations of the British Empire. As evidenced by the work of Michael Booth, Jim Davis, Katherine Newey,

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<sup>15</sup> Gould, p. 15.

Jeffrey Richards, and Jennifer Schacker, this was particularly visible in popular spectacular pantomime of the period.<sup>16</sup> Through the lens of Arthur Collins' 1899 production of *Jack and the Beanstalk* at Drury Lane, Schacker shows how "the fairy-tale panto actually served as a remarkably rich medium for reflection on Britain's military and imperial positioning at the fin de siècle".<sup>17</sup> Like the *King John* tableaux discussed in Chapter Four (which premiered only a few months earlier), *Jack and the Beanstalk* directly resonated with the events of the Second Boer War. The giant named "Blunderboer" was depicted as a caricature of the South African president Paul Kruger, and after his defeat in the final scene, a "procession of child players dressed as 'the entire British Army' ... emerge[d] from the pockets of the fallen giant."<sup>18</sup> Schacker demonstrates that Blunderboer "not only represent[ed] the Boers (or Kruger, specifically) but also embodie[d] the larger project of imperialism toward which common Britons were asked to labor and for which they were losing their lives."<sup>19</sup> In this example, we can observe the delicate balance between "frivolity and topicality" inherent in the pantomime tradition, which as Newey states, "satisfied audiences' desires to see parody and satire of notable events and personages of the past year."<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Booth, *Victorian Spectacular Theatre, 1850-1910* (Boston; London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), particularly Chapter 3; Jim Davis (ed.), *Victorian Pantomime: a collection of critical essays* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2010); Jim Davis, 'Imperial Transgressions: the Ideology of Drury Lane Pantomime in the Late Nineteenth Century' in *New Theatre Quarterly*, Vol. 12, no. 2 (1996), pp. 147-55; Katherine Newey, 'The Melodramatic and the Pantomimic' in *Politics, performance and popular culture: Theatre and society in nineteenth-century Britain*, ed. by Peter Yeandle, Katherine Newey, and Jeffrey Richards (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2016), pp. 59-74; Jeffrey Richards, 'Drury Lane Imperialism' in *Politics, performance and popular culture: Theatre and society in nineteenth-century Britain*, ed. by Peter Yeandle, Katherine Newey, and Jeffrey Richards (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2016), pp. 174-98; and Jennifer Schacker, 'Slaying Blunderboer: Cross-Dressed Heroes, National Identities, and Wartime Pantomime', in *Marvels & Tales*, Vol. 27, No. 1 (2013), pp. 52-64.

<sup>17</sup> Schacker, p. 53.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Newey, 'The Melodramatic and the Pantomimic', pp. 65-69.

Through such forms of spectacular theatre, audiences were primed to understand imperial and royalist messages in the drama they patronized, often reading these scenes as relating topically to current events. As Jane Pritchard and Peter Yeandle argue, imperialist spectacles “reduced the geographical distance” between the audience and the foreign realms of the empire, “both by the immediacy of the reporting and also by the speed with which the theatre retold and interpreted the news as a cultural event.”<sup>21</sup> This positioned the theatre as an aggregate part of a wider culture of illustrated journalism “and the speed with which images could become widely circulated – including war photography and early film as well as the illustrated press – meant that the theatre became a site in competition for the commercialisation of reportage.”<sup>22</sup> Certainly, theatre historians must look at the “reportage” that happened on London’s stages with a degree of skepticism, for as MacKenzie suggests, these seemingly factual reports of British activity in far-flung colonies were routinely laced with nationalist propaganda. I maintain the argument that Gould puts forth that “it was in the theatre and related venues of popular spectacle that Britons came to see themselves as masters of an imperial domain,” and to this argument I would add that it was not only newly-scripted spectacles and popular pantomimes that engaged with imperialist expressions of national identity, but also the Shakespearean spectacles staged by actor-managers such as Kean and Tree.<sup>23</sup>

Theatres and music halls utilized a variety of techniques, technology, and theatrical troupes to communicate imperialist and patriotic themes, including those most relevant to this

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<sup>21</sup> Jane Pritchard and Peter Yeandle, “‘Executed with remarkable care and artistic feeling’: popular imperialism and the music hall ballet”, in *Politics, performance and popular culture: Theatre and society in nineteenth-century Britain*, ed. by Peter Yeandle, Katherine Newey, and Jeffrey Richards (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2016), pp. 152-173, (p. 170).

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 166.

<sup>23</sup> Gould, p. 15.

study: *tableaux vivants* and incidental music. As Pritchard and Yeandle observe in relation to ballet, “it was precisely the ballet’s appeal to multiple senses that made it a unique medium to promote imperial patriotism.”<sup>24</sup> Similarly, the final transformation scene spectacular pantomimes during this period also relied on engaging multiple senses at once as well as gesturing towards topical circumstances in late-Victorian culture.<sup>25</sup> Spectacular finales in late-nineteenth century pantomimes and music hall ballets serve as a useful points of comparison for Shakespearean *tableaux vivants*, for these spectacles also depended on “carefully choreographed mass movement of casts of hundreds” and appropriate accompanying incidental music.<sup>26</sup> Such scenes “have an absence of spoken word,” and in this absence, music and movement take over as the primary methods of expression and narrative building: the nineteenth century theatre, one might argue, contained within itself the seeds of the Nuremberg rallies.<sup>27</sup> Like ballet finales, spectacular pantomime, and grand military spectacles, the tableaux staged within the Shakespearean productions discussed in this chapter “depicted the nations of the empire in a microcosm that represented – to a suitable soundtrack – the global stage, the empire as a global family to be supported and enthusiastically celebrated.”<sup>28</sup>

Grafting audience enthusiasm and support for the exploits of the British Empire within theatrical spectacles required equal measures of didacticism and emotionalism. The visual aspects of spectacle worked to educate audiences through recognizable images and symbols, while the

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<sup>24</sup> Pritchard and Yeandle, p. 155-6.

<sup>25</sup> For a biographical discussion of the techniques used by scenic artists of this period (specifically Bruce Smith who was responsible for much of the spectacle in Drury Lane pantomimes), see: Dennis Castle, “*Sensation*” *Smith of Drury Lane* (London: Charles Skitton, 1984), particularly chapter 9 for a brief discussion on spectacular theatre and the Boer War.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 156.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

musical aspects of the production were responsible for curating a specific, collective emotional response. As Pritchard and Yeandle state, “toward the end of the nineteenth century, music was increasingly understood as a communal cultural practice; when collectively heard, it was understood to effect a collective emotional response.”<sup>29</sup> When paired with elaborate scenes of spectacle that represented the height of the imperial nation – victorious wars overseas, far-flung adventures in colonized territories, and royal pageants – music had the ability to romanticize the didactic image. In other words, while the visual features of these scenes can be read as at least quasi-factual when they stand alone, when we consider the accompaniment for these scenes, they become even more propagandized, for the music ultimately shapes an emotional rather than rational response to the scene.

This music was often militaristic in style, consisting of marches and anthems that bolstered the sentiments of empire and came to define another aspect of English national music by the end of the century. This music sits in close proximity to the national music of folksong discussed in Chapter One, but rather than expressing the English pastoral idyll, it expressed England’s growing sense of itself as a nation of military and imperial power. It was thought to reflect another part of English personality and culture, described by *The Musical Times* as being “of a manly and straightforward character, emphasized by well-marked rhythm and regularity of phrase.”<sup>30</sup> The identity expressed here is not of escapism into an idyllic Arcadia, but a rigidness and masculine identity that embodied the character traits suitable for an imperially dominant nation and its monarch. The rise in demand for brass and military bands in the latter half of the nineteenth century evidences the growth of this side of the English musical idiom, and these

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 169.

<sup>30</sup> *The Musical Times*, 1 January 1887, p. 11.



bands were often deployed to accompany processional ceremonies of state as there arose “a real need to regenerate the country’s collective consciousness of nationhood through displays of national pride.”<sup>31</sup> The bands’ repertoires were made up of stately marches and anthems written by English composers, and their performances of these works became “a means of aggrandising the imperial image of the British monarchy at a time when its real political power was in decline.”<sup>32</sup> As Trevor Herbert states, we can frame military ceremonies within the “invented traditions” defined by Hobsbawm, for while military and brass bands and the spectacles in which they were involved were viewed as stemming from deep-rooted British traditions, they were Victorian innovations, designed to project the symbolic significance of an increasingly powerless monarch.<sup>33</sup>

Victorian and Edwardian Britons were used to seeing scenes from pursuits overseas in photographs and illustrated newspapers, but the theatre provided accompaniment to these pictures, imbuing them with feeling and emotion that helped to shape a collective imperial ethos. Though music could certainly serve as a tool to denigrate rather than celebrate the empire, as MacKenzie points out in relation to music halls, “risqué and anti-Establishment songs were abandoned in favour of royalist, militarist, and nationalist outbursts,” particularly by the end of the century.<sup>34</sup> When the inherent spectacle of imperialism met with the spectacular stage and its music, the results painted a picture of a mighty nation, heightening the royalism and militarism that lay beneath such a demonstrative expression of identity. Thus, the British Empire and the

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<sup>31</sup> Trevor Herbert, ‘Ritual, Performance Style and Musical Patriotism’, in *Music & the British Military in the London Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Helen Barlow and Trevor Herbert (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2013), pp. 215-239 (p. 226).

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225-6.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>34</sup> MacKenzie, p. 41.

spectacular theatre maintained a mutual, symbiotic relationship. The stage benefitted from the ready-made spectacle of imperial warfare and monarchical pageants, and the empire benefitted from the stage's propagandizing of the imperial ethos that underpinned these events. When we consider the spectacle of the Shakespearean stage, and take into account Shakespeare's increased status as not only the national genius but a great patriot, productions of *Henry VIII* and *King John* in this period emerge as containing acute commentary on Britain's ascendancy to imperial power. The closing section of this introduction further explores Shakespeare's perceived role as an advocate for nineteenth-century imperialism, considering how contemporary views of the national poet contributed to assumptions related to the poet, his works, and the historical eras dramatized in *Henry VIII* and *King John*.

### **Shakespeare the imperialist**

One of the strands in MacKenzie's cluster of imperialist ideology that I have yet to address is the "identification and worship of national heroes".<sup>35</sup> For MacKenzie, these "national heroes" included those who spear-headed imperialist aims, such as leaders of colonial exploits, military generals, and statesmen. However, I suggest that MacKenzie's idea of "hero-worship" as a contributor to the formation of a collective imperial consciousness extends far wider than military heroes and statesmen. For in a similar manner, Shakespeare as national poet was made into a posthumous spokesman for the *fin-de-siècle* imperialist agenda, painted in the public's imagination as the ultimate patriot, an archetype to which all Britons should aspire. Parallels between Shakespeare's age and the late-Victorian and Edwardian era were used to imagine

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<sup>35</sup> MacKenzie, p. 2.

Shakespeare's support for the nineteenth century's imperialist agenda, such as Salmon's and Longden's 1924 claim which stated: "No effort of imagination is required to believe that with very little change of circumstance, with more favourable experience in the first efforts to colonise Virginia and the West Indies and Newfoundland, Shakespeare would have transferred the sentiments of nation to Empire."<sup>36</sup> In a similar vein, J.A.R. Marriott (1918) claimed that "Shakespeare was ... intensely national, pre-eminently an Elizabethan Englishman, and above and before all else a great-hearted English patriot."<sup>37</sup> Like Shakespeare's perceived connection with a mythical Merrie England, his association with the imperialist ethos of the nineteenth century was equally invented, sometimes used as a tool of propaganda to justify colonization and military force overseas. Shakespeare's plays – particularly the chronicle histories – were cited as evidence of his support for the imperialist agenda. Salmon writes that "none could witness a play of Shakspeare or hear declaimed such lines as those which close King John ... without the quickening of the pulse and a belief in the destiny of 'this royal throne of Kings, this sceptered isle, the envy of less happier lands.'"<sup>38</sup> In speaking about *Henry VIII*, he stated that Cranmer's speech predicting England's future under Elizabeth and monarchs to follow was "proof of Shakespeare's confidence in England's destiny."<sup>39</sup> The pageantry of the monarchy embedded in plays like *Henry VIII* was also read as support for colonial expansion, largely dependent on comparisons between the reigns of Elizabeth I and Victoria.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Salmon and Longden, p. 42.

<sup>37</sup> John Arthur Ransome (J.A.R.) Marriott, *English History in Shakespeare* (London: Chapman & Hall, ltd, 1918), p. 2.

<sup>38</sup> Salmon and Longden, p. 42.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> See Dobson and Watson, *England's Elizabeth: An Afterlife in Fame and Fantasy*, esp. chapter 4, pp. 147-178.

By being imagined as a patriot and as an endorser of imperial activity and monarchical grandeur, a wide majority of the British public subsequently read and understood imperial activity in the context of English histories *a la* Shakespeare. The medieval and Tudor period maintained an imagined status as unified and intensely national, and this sentiment was projected onto Shakespeare's imagined personality, biography, and subsequent works. As Marriot writes, "To [Shakespeare], as to other Elizabethans, England was something more than a home and a country: it was an inspiration. At no period in our history has the realization of national unity been keener, the consciousness of national identity more intense."<sup>41</sup> Thus, perceptions of England as possessing an unprecedented and cohesive sense of national self-hood during the Tudor period sat at the heart of the imperialist myth, and though any historian of the Tudor period could cite countless examples of national division during that period, the nineteenth-century perspective remained blinkered to the possibility that the age of Shakespeare was nothing but unified, possessing the stirrings of a national spirit congruent with the nineteenth century's imperial ethos. The Victorians and Edwardians saw themselves as a generation who could fully realize the imperialist aims of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in their own imperial conquests. Likewise, the nineteenth century was also the period in which the pageantry of the monarchy was re-invented and re-invigorated, subscribing to an embellished view of England's medieval and Tudor monarchies and seeking to outshine it. The seeds of monarchy and of empire had been planted in England's golden age, expressed by Shakespeare, but cultivated, expanded, and improved upon by Victorians and Edwardians. Shakespeare's plays, to borrow Salmon's words, were seen to "buttress the spirit which built up the Empire,"<sup>42</sup> and thus, in performances of

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<sup>41</sup> Marriot, p. 3.

<sup>42</sup> Salmon and Longden, p. 2.

Shakespeare's plays, one could use them to enhance, justify, and celebrate the imperial agenda of the British Empire.

In this way, Shakespeare's works became vehicles for encouraging royalist sympathies and for making political comments about the nation's various imperialist missions. This was not only present in performances of the plays on the London stage, but also prevalent in colonized nations abroad. In British colonies like India and South Africa, Shakespeare became a tool for promoting imperial aims and assimilating the colonized to English language and culture. Jyotsna Singh has discussed this in relation to the presence of Shakespeare in India, stating that "... the reproduction of the English play – both as a dramatic and literary text – in theatres and educational institutions in eighteenth and nineteenth-century Calcutta was crucial in producing a discourse of cultural colonialism – a discourse in which Shakespeare was undoubtedly a privileged signifier."<sup>43</sup> The performance of Shakespeare in Calcutta's theatres – as well as other British dramatists such as Sheridan, Congreve, and Massinger – in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries "kept alive the myth of English cultural refinement and superiority – a myth that was crucial to the rulers' political interests in India."<sup>44</sup> Likewise, the English language via Shakespearean texts was integrated into the education of Indians, replacing learning and reading in Sanskrit and Arabic languages, among others.<sup>45</sup> Thomas Babington Macaulay's address to parliament's Committee of Public Instruction (1835) – often referred to as "Macaulay's Minute" – set forth the intentions of British colonizers to form "a class of persons Indian in blood and

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<sup>43</sup> Jyotsna Singh, 'Different Shakespeares: The Bard in Colonial/Postcolonial India', *Theatre Journal*, Vol. 41, no. 4 (1 December 1989), pp. 445-458, (p. 447).

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 446.

<sup>45</sup> See Nandi Bhatia, 'Imperialistic Representations and Spectatorial reception in Shakespeare Wallah', *Modern Drama*, Vol. 45, no. 1 (2002), pp. 61-75.

colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect” who could serve as “interpreters” between the colonizers and millions that they governed.<sup>46</sup> As Singh notes, “by inculcating in their native subjects a love of English literature, the rulers were clearly trying to idealize the project of empire, while occluding its harsh, exploitative effects.”<sup>47</sup> Thus, “the consent of the governed [was] secured through intellectual and moral manipulation rather than through military force,” resulting in the privileging of the colonizers’ culture over the colonized via the Shakespearean canon.<sup>48</sup>

Thus, Part Two of this thesis argues that in the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods, the Shakespearean theatre was a place in which patrons increasingly encountered expressions of national, imperial identity that were framed within and bolstered by the narratives in the chronicle histories. I will show that the tableaux featured in this chapter were utilized on the London stage as analogues to topical, imperial events of the nineteenth century. The monarchical pageant of Anne’s coronation in *Henry VIII* and “The Fight” and “Magna Charta” tableaux in *King John* showcased the glories of bygone national pageants, victorious English conquests, and shows of diplomacy that, by the nineteenth century, had been lauded as crowning achievements for the British nation. From a modern perspective, the plays of *King John* and *Henry VIII* are perhaps not the best choice for promoting a unified national identity. Alice Throne points out that England is experiencing something of an identity crisis in each play,<sup>49</sup> but nineteenth-century readers and audiences understood these plays as representing what Marriot calls “national unity and social

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<sup>46</sup> Henry Sharp, ed., *Selections from Educational Records, Part 1, 1781-1839* (Calcutta: Superintendent Government Printing, 1920), in *Internet Archive* [1 April 2018], pp. 102-117.

<sup>47</sup> Singh, p. 450.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 449.

<sup>49</sup> Alison Thorne, “‘O, lawful let it be/ That I have room ... to curse awhile’: Voicing the Nation’s Conscience in Female Complaint in *Richard III*, *King John*, and *Henry VIII*”, in *This England, That Shakespeare: New Angles on Englishness and the Bard*, ed. by Willy Maley and Margaret Tudeau-Clayton (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), p. 107.

solidarity”.<sup>50</sup> *Tableaux vivants* in nineteenth-century productions provided a space in which such views could be expressed and where Victorians and Edwardians could view their history and forge their identity through the lens of Empire.

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<sup>50</sup> Marriott, p. 293.

## Chapter Three: Invented Traditions and the Coronation of Anne Bullen

### Coronations as “invented traditions”

Coronations are one Britain’s many “invented traditions,” defined by Hobsbawm as “a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition.”<sup>1</sup> They are invented traditions not because the rituals that make up coronation ceremonies are invented, but because what the ceremony symbolizes is invented and depends on ever-changing socio-political contexts.<sup>2</sup> As Cannadine elaborates, “Under certain circumstances, a coronation might be seen by participants and contemporaries as a symbolic reaffirmation of national greatness. But in a different context, the same ceremony might assume the characteristics of collective longing for past glories.”<sup>3</sup> As such, the meaning of any given coronation depends on a variety of factors related to the status of the monarchy at the time it occurs, including: the political power of the monarch; the self-image of the nation over which the monarch ruled; the attitude of those responsible for liturgy, music, and organization of the event; and the nature of the ceremony as actually performed.<sup>4</sup> In my forthcoming consideration of stagings of Anne Bullen’s coronation throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and their relationship to coronations proper, I suggest that the theatre played an important role in the invention of coronation traditions. By linking the ceremony to an aggrandized past via Shakespeare, actor-managers showcased the supposed splendor of bygone coronations and encouraged the Victorians and Edwardians to emulate these perfect stagings in the public sphere.

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<sup>1</sup> Hobsbawm, p. 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cannadine, pp. 106-7.

<sup>3</sup> Cannadine, p. 105.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 106-7. Cannadine identifies ten contexts in total, but these four are most relevant to this chapter.



In this sense, British coronations and other monarchical pageants performed in the nineteenth century were invented traditions because they “attempt[ed] to establish continuity with a suitable historic past.”<sup>5</sup> This “suitable historic past” was the Tudor period, whose monarchy and rituals were imagined as the apex of British ceremony. In particular, Shakespeare’s dramatization of Anne’s coronation served as a sentimental example of such royal resplendence, imbued with a sense of historical validity because it had been memorialized by “the poet-historian of England.”<sup>6</sup> The assumption was, as Selina Bunbury expressed in 1844, that “London perhaps never witnessed a greater display of pomp and magnificence than was shewn at the coronation of Anne Boleyn,” and performances of Anne’s coronation on the London stage throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries solidified such views.<sup>7</sup> They presented the Tudor period as a time of unfettered monarchical display and imperial grandeur, which subsequently influenced how the nineteenth century imagined English history, its traditions, and their place within this culture and these customs.

The theatre became a space in which spectators ostensibly could see resplendent royal ceremonies of the past come to life, and by comparison, their own royal pageantry seemed deficient. Similar to the idea that Victorians, in comparison to the Tudors, were inept at producing “national music” of a high caliber, so too was the English propensity for staging royal ceremonies considered to be a lost art, particularly in the first three-quarters of the century. As Cannadine notes, most state ceremonies from the 1820s-1870s, “did not articulate a coherent ceremonial language, as had been the case in Tudor and Stuart times, and as was to happen again

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<sup>5</sup> Hobsbawm, p. 1.

<sup>6</sup> Cumberland Clark, *A Study of Shakespeare’s Henry VIII* (London: The Golden Vista Press), p. 1.

<sup>7</sup> Selina Bunbury, *The star of the court, or, The maid of honour and queen of England, Anne Boleyn* (London: Grant and Griffith, 1844), p. 102.

towards the end of the nineteenth century.”<sup>8</sup> Additionally, ceremonies during this period “were not so much shared, corporate events as remote, inaccessible group rites, performed for the benefit of the few rather than the edification of the many.”<sup>9</sup> Queen Victoria’s coronation, for example, was a largely domestic affair, attended only by “ministers and statesmen of ministerial rank”, and with little imperial sentiment or symbolism.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, her ceremony was “chaotically staged, with the Queen being handed the orb at the wrong moment, the ring being put on the wrong finger, the service being prematurely halted and then re-started, and the elderly Lord Rolle falling down the steps of the throne while making his act of homage.”<sup>11</sup> This led to the assumption that the English “do not understand shows and celebrations, or the proper mode of conducting them,” as the *Illustrated London News* commented after the Duke of Wellington’s funeral in 1852, reportedly another ceremonial fiasco.<sup>12</sup> In comparison to staged replicas of Anne’s coronation such as Kean’s historically “accurate” 1855 staging, the English propensity for public spectacle making was in decline, which had a marked impact on the nation’s imperial self-image.

This perception began to shift by the end of the century (1877-1918), a period in which “there was a fundamental change in the public image of the British monarchy, as its ritual, hitherto inept, private and of limited appeal, became splendid, public and popular.”<sup>13</sup> By the time of Edward VII’s coronation in 1902, royal ceremonies had become global rather than domestic affairs that were laced with imperial sentiment. As J.E.C. Bodley described, “The distinctive

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<sup>8</sup> Cannadine, p. 116.

<sup>9</sup> Cannadine, p. 111.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>11</sup> Richards, *Imperialism and Music*, p. 102.

<sup>12</sup> “The Duke’s Funeral”, *The Illustrated London News*, 25 September 1852, p. 1. *British Library Newspaper Archive*, [14 March 2020]

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 120.

feature of the ceremony was the attendance on the King of his faithful subjects from lands beyond the seas ... [it] was essentially a domestic celebration of the British race united by the influence of the Imperial Crown, which was for the first time assumed as the specific symbol of world-wide empire.”<sup>14</sup> Rather than lament that their royal ceremonies were lackluster in comparison to the Tudors, late-Victorians and Edwardians attempted to recapture and outdo Tudor ceremonies, much like English composers at the end of the century sought to establish a new “national” music that looked back to the Tudor period for inspiration and validation. As such, Shakespeare’s dramatization of Anne’s coronation emerged as a historical reference point for how coronations proper and other imperial pageants should be performed, thereby forging an intricate relationship between staged drama, public spectacle, and national poet. As this chapter will show, state pageantry at the turn of the century began to borrow from stagings of Anne’s coronation, particularly musical accompaniments. This forged an imagined link between the (albeit overtly historicized and romanticized) Tudors and the late-Victorians and Edwardians, which hinged on their emerging identity as an imperial nation and the monarchy as a symbol of empire.

Anne’s coronation was understood as prefiguring the nation’s imperial identity. As Alice Hunt observes, her coronation “was the first state ceremony following England’s assertion of its independence from papal jurisdiction, as expressed in the Act in Restraint of Appeals with its much-quoted preamble, ‘this realm of England is an Empire’ and the naming of Henry as its ‘supreme head and king.’”<sup>15</sup> References to the imperial status of the nation and its monarch occurred throughout Anne’s historical ceremony. In particular, Henry VIII’s changes to the

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<sup>14</sup> Bodley, p. 239.

<sup>15</sup> Hunt, pp. 42-3.

coronation oath included a reference to his “Imperiall Jurisdiction”, which placed him as the supreme ruler of an “imperial” nation.<sup>16</sup> From a nineteenth-century perspective, it was Henry VIII who “formally invest[ed] the crown of England with the epithet ‘imperial’ ... an assertion of the idea that England was destined to be not a self-contained country, but the metropolis of an Empire.”<sup>17</sup> Thus, the imperial “destiny” of England had been put forth during the Tudor period, and the nineteenth century was tasked with fulfilling it. This suggested that the seedlings of empire as Victorians and Edwardians knew it had begun during Henry VIII’s reign, and to be more precise, at Anne’s coronation. The 1533 ceremony affirmed Henry VIII’s monarchical and imperial power, and similarly, reenactments of Anne’s coronation would continue to legitimize the increasingly symbolic, imperial power of contemporary monarchs in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Such dramatizations employed an inflated view of the Tudor monarchy and became emblematic representations of the nation’s imperial legacy in the popular imagination.

Interestingly, Henry VIII’s reassertion of his royal supremacy and imperial jurisdiction aggrandized the monarchs which came before him in the same way that the nineteenth century aggrandized the Tudors. Hunt states that for Henry VIII, “England as an ‘Empire’ reached back to historical claims that the first kings of England enjoyed the same sovereignty and jurisdictional control in their kingdoms as the first Christian Roman emperors,” and his revisions to the coronation oath for Anne’s ceremony “appeal[ed] to a lost English past and the restoration of the correct monarchical authority.”<sup>18</sup> By the nineteenth century, the same “appeal to a lost English past” that Henry VIII held in regard to the first Christian monarchs would eventually be projected

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 47-50.

<sup>17</sup> Bodley, pp. 324-5.

<sup>18</sup> Hunt, p. 50.

onto Henry VIII's reign by the Victorians and Edwardians. Such is the cyclical and repetitive nature of romanticizing the past, for though the nineteenth century looked back onto the Tudors as exemplifying the imperial ethos that they sought to cultivate further, the Tudors looked back to the times before them as exemplifying royal supremacy and imperial power. In the present moment, the power of the monarch was never enough, but an invented view of the past provided an avenue for imagining a return to the perceived "glory days" of imperial power and royal supremacy.

As royal ceremonies increasingly sought to connect themselves with this inflated view of the Tudors (particularly by the end of the century), they became increasingly elaborate and musical accompaniment emerged as a fundamental element in their effectiveness. Musical accompaniments used in coronations worked to stimulate the senses of the spectators and participants, bringing about a collective, emotional, and often political response to the event. Thus, music maintained an important role in shaping the drama of coronations, particularly because such music was understood to represent the imperial character of nation. In Richards' study of the 1902, 1911, 1937, and 1953 coronations, he states that the coronation service "provided an occasion for Britain's leading composers to signal their allegiance to the crown by contributing freshly composed works to the order of service," and in this way, "the coronation became as much a celebration of British music as of British monarchy, each reinforcing and validating the other."<sup>19</sup> The English Musical Renaissance contributed greatly to the ceremonial changes made to state pageantry of the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods, particularly Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, Edward VII's coronation, and George V's coronation. While

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<sup>19</sup> Richards, p. 101.

previous royal occasions might have been interpreted as “embarrassing indictments of the dearth of music in England,” these *fin-de-siecle* events became “festivals of native talent,” showcasing compositions from England’s leading musicians.<sup>20</sup> Composers such as Hubert Parry, Arthur Sullivan, Charles Villiers Stanford, Edward Elgar, and Walter Parrett all had featured compositions in these events. Works by bygone native composers such as Henry Purcell, Thomas Tallis, and Orlando Gibbons were also featured, again drawing a link between renowned British composers and those emerging as a part of the EMR.<sup>21</sup> Most important to this chapter were the contributions from German, whose coronation march for Anne Bullen – originally written for Irving’s 1892 production of *Henry VIII* and subsequently reworked for Tree’s 1910 production – was featured in three royal ceremonies in 1911 including George V’s coronation, marking a significant crossover between theatrical and public spectacles.

It is precisely this crossover between the stage and public ceremonies that I would like to explore further in this chapter, considering the relationship between dramatic reenactments of Anne’s coronation and the monarchical pageantry of the Victorian and Edwardian period. In the first section, I show how stagings of Anne’s ceremony in the eighteenth and early-nineteenth centuries were used to legitimize the symbolic power of current monarchs, specifically George II (1727), George III (1761), and George IV (1821). Although no music survives from Colley Cibber’s, John Rich’s, David Garrick’s, and Robert Ellison’s respective productions, these actor-managers established an important precedent for extracting Anne’s coronation from *Henry VIII* and using it to commemorate and celebrate the current monarch. In turn, this created a paradigm in which current coronations were read through the lens of an aggrandized Tudor period, creating

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<sup>20</sup> Cannadine, pp. 130-1.

<sup>21</sup> For a complete account of the music, see Richards, pp. 107-10.

slippage between the dramatic stage and the public spectacle. Through the repetition of Anne's coronation tableau in London theatres during coronation years, the scene became an archetypal example of royal pageantry and created a sense of belonging to an imagined, resplendent history. This was particularly reinforced by Kean's historically "realistic" staging of Anne's coronation, the subject of the second section of this chapter. I discuss how Kean's scenic design and Hatton's accompanying incidental music worked to distance spectators and position them as witnesses to a resplendent monarchical history authorized by the national poet. I argue that Kean's tableau was interpreted as an accurate, historical portrayal of Anne's ceremony, which served as template for how royal pageants should be staged and accompanied that would be emulated by the turn of the century. Anne's coronation became increasingly romanticized in the minds of the public through Kean's production, forming a collective, imagined national identity that centered on a monarchical figurehead that symbolized national sovereignty and imperial rule.

In Tree's 1910 production – the subject of the final section of this chapter – the precedents established in eighteenth and early-nineteenth century productions would become inverted; rather than public ceremony influencing the dramatic stage, the dramatic stage would come to influence public ceremony, specifically through musical accompaniment. In contrast to Kean, Tree's production sought to invite spectators to imagine themselves as participants in this ceremony, and this link was formed through his use of German's *Coronation March and Hymn*. Although his *mise-en-scene* was strictly historical, the accompanying music was contemporary, blurring the lines between the historicized Tudors and Edwardians. The subsequent use of German's music within three imperial ceremonies in 1911 – coronation of George V, the Festival of Empire, and the imperial pageant at the Delhi durbar – directly tied to protestations about the Tudors, their ceremonies, and the nation's imperial lineage. What German intended to be

historicized theatre music to accompany a bygone, inflated view of the past subsequently became the soundscape of the modern-day empire.

### **Anne Bullen's coronation in tableaux: a brief exploration of pre-1855 performances**

Colley Cibber's production of *Henry VIII*, staged at Drury Lane on October 26, 1727, was designed specifically to celebrate the coronation of George II. The coronation scene was the focal point of the production, so well-received by audiences due to "the Excellency of the Performance, and the extraordinary Grandeur of the Decorations" that it began to be thought of as a separate entertainment and subsequently extracted and performed apart from its original dramatic narrative.<sup>22</sup> Nearly a month after Cibber's opening performance of *Henry VIII*, Drury Lane staged John Banks' *Virtue Betray'd: or, Anna Bullen*, "with the ceremonial of her coronation in the same manner as it was perform'd in the play of Henry the Eighth."<sup>23</sup> The following week, *Jane Shore* was performed with a tableau of Anne's coronation and another newly-added royal pageant featuring the military ceremony in Westminster Hall.<sup>24</sup> Over the course of the next few months, Leo Hughes documents that Anne's coronation would be performed as a part of nearly seventy-five other plays at Drury Lane.<sup>25</sup> The competing theatre, Lincoln's Inn Fields, and its manager, John Rich, also followed this trend by adding "a burlesque of the Ceremonial Coronation of Anna Bullen" to the end of productions of *The Country House* and *The Rape of Proserpine*.<sup>26</sup> This scene developed into the, apparently disastrous, burlesque

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<sup>22</sup> Leo Hughes, *The Drama's Patrons: a study of the eighteenth-century London audience* (Austin; London: University of Texas Press, 1971), p. 114.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 114-5.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 115.



pantomime *Harlequin Anna Bullen*, intended to be a mockery of Cibber's ceremonial re-enactment of the scene. Through such efforts, these actor-managers established a theatrical trend for extracting Anne's coronation from both its historical and theatrical contexts, making space for topical refractions. That the scene could be performed on its own or appended to almost any play, regardless of subject matter, establishes an important precedent that is present in subsequent performances of the scene to celebrate the current monarch.

In 1761, George III was crowned, and, once again, Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields responded to the event by staging versions of Anne's coronation. Rich, now thirty-four years removed from his failure with *Harlequin Anna Bullen*, seems to have bested Drury Lane this time, by taking "uncommon pains with th[e] Coronation" which "fully satisfied [the audience's] warmest imaginations."<sup>27</sup> Rich's reputation and experience as "a very artful contriver" of pantomime influenced his artistic conception for the coronation scene. The "profusion of fine clothes, of velvet, silk, sattins, lace, feathers, jewels, pearls, &c." as well as "the scenery, music, and other ornaments, [which] were all correspondent to the grandeur of the ceremony" contributed to Rich's enormous success. His coronation tableau "was shewn to crowded houses for nearly two months together."<sup>28</sup> David Garrick, who had taken over as manager of Drury Lane, also chose to stage the coronation scene to honor George III's coronation, but his staging was a fiasco, as recounted by Thomas Davies:

The exhibition was the meanest, and most unworthy of a theatre, I ever saw. The stage indeed was opened into Drury-lane; and a new and unexpected sight surprised the audience, of a real bonfire, and the populace huzzaing, and drinking porter to the health of queen Anne Bullen. The stage in the mean time, amidst the parading of dukes, duchesses, archbishops, peeresses, heralds, &c. was covered with a thick fog from the smoke of the fire, which served to hide the tawdry

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<sup>27</sup> Thomas Davies, *Memoirs of the Life of David Garrick*, Vol. 1. (London: Thomas Davies, 1780), p. 322-3.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* p. 321-2.

dresses of the processionalists. During this idle piece of mockery, the actors being exposed to the suffocations of smoke, and the raw air from the open street, were seized with colds, rheumatisms, and swelled faces.<sup>29</sup>

Garrick's mistake was making a bonfire on the stage without sufficient ventilation for the actors or audience, which ultimately caused "disgrace and empty benches."<sup>30</sup> Despite the production's failure, Garrick's decision to extend the stage into the street establishes an interesting dynamic between the stage and the London street, forging a connection wherein the street itself became an aggregate part of the theatre. Though this was likely an unsuccessful attempt to ventilate his theatre, this extension established a dynamic wherein the line between historical theatre and the celebrations in a public space was blurred, with a scene extracted from history literally being extended into and jumbled with contemporary politics. The patrons Davies describes as "huzzaing and drinking porter to the health of queen Anne Bullen" function as supernumeraries who, in toasting the health of a queen who lives only in her theatrical representation, also celebrate the life of a newly-established monarch. Anne is positioned as a figure preserved in historical memory and her legacy is revived in her continued association with the current monarchy. Her ties to both Shakespeare and the imagined splendor of the Tudors works to legitimize George III. Although Garrick would not perform *Henry VIII* for the next ten years, his production anticipated the continued association that Anne's coronation would have with the monarchical pageantry in the ensuing century.

By the time of George IV's coronation in 1821, Robert William Elliston had taken over as the lessee and manager of Drury Lane. He chose not to stage Anne's coronation to commemorate George IV, opting instead to stage a reenactment of George IV's ceremony. Originally, Elliston

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<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 321.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*

and his company had wanted to be involved in the actual coronation, under the designation of “his Majesty’s servants.”<sup>31</sup> However, this was not permitted, causing Elliston to plan a recreation of the coronation to be staged at Drury Lane. He was given access to all the preparations for the ceremony at Westminster and was invited to attend the event, but Elliston appears to have temporarily lost interest in recreating the coronation, and ultimately chose not to attend or continue with his preparations. That all changed, however, when he received a letter from Edmund Kean, announcing his return to England from his recent tour in America and offering his acting services at Drury Lane.<sup>32</sup> According to Elliston’s biographer, George Raymond, “playbills of enormous size were, in a few hours [of receiving the letter from Kean], posted over London” advertising Kean’s return, his re-appearance in the role of Richard III at Drury Lane, and Elliston’s “Magnificent representation of the Coronation,” to be shown after *Richard III*.<sup>33</sup> The show was back on, and perhaps as a result of being caught-up in the spirit of pageants, processions, and coronation festivities that infiltrated London at the time, Elliston chose not only to stage his reenactment of George IV’s ceremony, but also chose to celebrate Kean’s return to the theatre in the style of a coronation procession through the streets of London:

... A special courier announced the progress of Kean towards the door of Drury Lane, and within a quarter of an hour, the cavalcade was in sight. Six outriders, in a medley of costume of all nations of the earth ... constituted the vanguard; then came Elliston himself in solitary grandeur, in his own carriage, drawn by four greys. The hero of the triumph next – Kean himself, likewise in his own carriage, supported by Russell and Hughes in cocked hats, drawn by four blacks. John Cooper, in the simple majesty of his undecorated form, followed, drawn also by four skewbald or piebald. A troop of horsemen formed the flank, composed of bruisers, jockeys, tavern-keepers, dog-fighters, and other friends of the drama; and

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<sup>31</sup> George Raymond, *The Life and Enterprises of Robert William Elliston*, (London: Routledge & Co., 1857), p. 301.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 303-4.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 304.

the whole was brought up by the heterogeneous rabble which the progressive affair had, from pillar to post, enlisted in its service.<sup>34</sup>

In this procession, Kean is positioned as the “monarch” of the theatre, processing through the streets of London as a monarch would on his coronation day. The actor was thronged by “bruisers, jockeys, tavern-keepers, and dog-fighters,” which supplanted the alderman, bishops, lords, chancellors, and other state officials that take part in coronations proper. This was not merely a celebration of Kean’s return or an advertisement for Drury Lane, but it was also a calculated, public ploy to bolster the reputation of actors and other employees of theatre via the authority of a mock coronation, and in doing so, present the “monarchy” of the theatre to the public.

Elliston’s staged imitation of George IV’s coronation opened the night following Kean’s procession. Raymond recounts that “as a piece of theatrical effect, [it] was perhaps the most complete ever represented on the English stage. Faithful in its delineation, gorgeous in its appointments, replete in its auxiliaries, and profuse in its expenditure, the ‘Coronation’ at once attracted the attention and admiration of the whole town.”<sup>35</sup> Nearly two hundred people were employed for the recreation, and Elliston himself played the part of George IV. As Raymond reports, delusions of grandeur gripped the actor-manager as he played this part:

That there were moments in which he verily believed himself, not the shadow, but the substance of monarchy, there can be no doubt ... And when, amid the acclamation of hot-pressed Drury, threading his way through the ‘upturned wondering eyes’ of all London in the pit, he exclaimed, ‘Bless you, my people!’ he believed himself no less than ‘The Lord’s anointed.’<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 305.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 305-6.

Elliston's behavior, while admittedly bizarre, provides an important glimpse into the mindset of the period, revealing a further slippage between theatrical reenactment and reality that occurred, once again, in association with the coronation of a new monarch. Elliston's actions, both in providing Kean with his own processional and in believing himself to be George IV in his reenactment of the coronation proper, created a paradigm under which actors supplant the monarch as the centralized and celebrated figure, and the theatre becomes a microcosm of the state. Although Elliston's coronation reenactment in no way engaged *Henry VIII* or Anne Bullen, it demonstrated a desire to imitate events and celebrations associated with the monarchy and further encouraged slippage between historicized, staged spectacles and contemporary public ceremonies.

These select eighteenth-century performances established an imagined link between the Victorians and the Tudors that hinged on the spectacular, invented tradition of the coronation. Both actors and audiences were given opportunities to immerse themselves in a social ritual from which, under normal circumstances, they would have been excluded. In this, the drama of Anne's coronation as documented by Shakespeare was written into the nation's traditions and rituals, and as productions evolved over the course of the century to become more spectacular and historically "accurate", Shakespeare's role within Britain's traditions became increasingly solidified. Through a discussion of Kean's staging in 1855 in the next section, I suggest that his production in particular crystallized Anne's coronation as the height of Tudor resplendence and as a reference point for contemporary English pageantry, still considered hopelessly inept by the mid-century. Music thought to represent the nation's rising imperial status occupied a liminal space between historicized staging and contemporary society. Although what patrons saw on the

stage was perceptually “ancient”, what they heard was the soundscape of modern life, making the process of imagining themselves within the tableau an easier mental exercise.

### **Charles Kean’s Coronation of Anne Bullen (1855):**

Unlike the eighteenth and early-nineteenth productions of *Henry VIII* discussed above, Kean’s production held no immediate or topical connection to the current monarch. Victoria had been queen for nearly twenty years by the time of Kean’s staging, and thus, his coronation tableau did not memorialize Victoria’s own ascendency to the throne. Rather, Kean sought to honor both English history and the national poet in his production, as evidenced in his fly-leaf commentary:

In the revival of Henry the Eighth, [...] it will be perceived that I have ventured to differ from the stage arrangements of my predecessors. Although in their time fine scenic effects were produced, and much pageantry was displayed, the management did not attempt, nor did the public require, that scrupulous adherence to historical truth in costume, architecture, and the multiplied details of action, which modern taste demands, and is so capable of appreciating, when employed *in the service of the monarch of dramatic poetry*.<sup>37</sup>

The historical authenticity of his production was, thus, the driving concept of his staging.

Importantly, this authenticity was authorized by and in service of Shakespeare, presenting the grandeur of Anne’s coronation as an historical “truth” that was tethered to assumptions regarding the grandeur of “Shakespeare’s Age”. Elsewhere in his commentary, Kean imagines that because Shakespeare lived “... so near the time when his principal personages occupied the stirring scene in animated reality,” he “might have formed the personal acquaintance of more than one grey-elder, who remembered [...] the marriage, coronation, and execution of Anne Boleyn” as well as

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<sup>37</sup> Charles Kean, “Preface”, in *King Henry VIII, adapted by Charles Kean, 1855*, by William Shakespeare (London: Cornmarket Press, 1970), pp. v-x (p. ix).

the other historical references and characters in the play.<sup>38</sup> Thus, via Shakespeare's authority and the assumption that his version of events were verisimilar to the Tudor period, Kean's coronation tableau was taken as a factual representation of history, a didactic scene showing the audience how Anne's coronation looked in 1533.

In this sense, Kean's tableau affirmed the Tudor period as resplendent and overtly ceremonious, marking the period as the height of England's imperial power and showcasing the nation's prowess at national display. As mentioned, the idea of England as a nation capable of glorious ceremony had waned significantly by the time Kean staged *Henry VIII*. Lord Robert Cecil, in response to Queen Victoria's state opening of Parliament in 1861, commented, "We can afford to be more splendid than most nations; but some malignant spell broods over all our most solemn ceremonials, and inserts into them some feature which makes them all ridiculous ... Something always breaks down."<sup>39</sup> Yet, Kean's tableau showed that once England had been capable of the most glorious displays of monarchical power, using the re-created spectacles in his *Henry VIII* production as factual evidence of this. This urged a return to these glory days through an imitation of their ostensibly illustrious ceremonies, an idea that would gain significant traction by the Edwardian period.

I argue that Kean's production played a role in the invention of the coronation tradition, with Hatton's incidental music serving as an intermediary between his historical setting and the contemporary public. It is well known that Kean's historical productions of Shakespeare – however inaccurate and aggrandized in their portrayals of English history – were presented to the public as factual, much like other non-theatrical entertainments that were often geared towards

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid*, p. vi.

<sup>39</sup> *Saturday Review*, 9 February 1861, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

educating patrons. Kean's biographer, John William Cole, attributed the success of Kean's *Henry VIII* to "... the life-painting, the vivid resurrection of persons, places, and events – the severe, undeviating accuracy of historic research."<sup>40</sup> Thus, Kean's production anticipated and perhaps served as a catalyst for the late-nineteenth century's attempt to rekindle England's prowess in monarchical display, which in turn has eventually led to invention of traditions that are now considered to be as ancient as the monarchy itself. Hobsbawm's description of the "use of ancient materials to construct invented traditions of a novel type" could, in retrospect, easily apply to Kean's antiquarian production of *Henry VIII*.<sup>41</sup> The "extraordinary combination of all the highest elements of art" present in the production aided Kean in creating a tableau that was at once educational, artistic, and convincingly ancient, a template of the invented tradition of the English coronation.<sup>42</sup> Referencing Joseph Strutt's *Manners and Customs of the English* (1775) in his playbill, the actor-manager puts forth his view of the Henrician period as wholly resplendent: "... the whole life of Henry the Eighth ... abounded with processions and princely shows of grandeur and magnificence."<sup>43</sup> Such was the version of Henry VIII's reign that Kean sought to present, and within the tableau of Anne's coronation Kean could unfurl heightened sights and sounds of monarchical grandeur and imperial power.

Kean's alterations to the text of the coronation scene further bolstered the image of the monarchy by removing any dissenting or questioning dialogue, usually spoken by the observing, unnamed Gentlemen. Thus, Anne's coronation was not framed by the commentary of the masses

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<sup>40</sup> John William Cole, *The life and theatrical times of Charles Kean, F.S.A.*, Vol. 1, (London: R. Bently, 1859), p. 141.

<sup>41</sup> Hobsbawm, p. 6.

<sup>42</sup> Kean, p. viii.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*



as Kean cut seventy-six percent of the lines in the scene entire. As in his cuts to the banquet scene, Kean removed any lines that might have illuminated dishonorable aspects of the occasion, including the line referring to the “great-bellied women, that had not a half a week to go,” a reference to Anne’s pregnancy at the time of her coronation (4.1.76-7). By editing out anything that drew attention to unpalatable parts of the Tudor monarchy, Kean’s historical tableau stands as a revisionist history that cultivated the imperial ethos and the notion that Britain had once – during her glory days – been ultimately successful in the state pageantry, processions, and grandeur that rapt both Kean and his audience. Herein, Kean is literally inventing the tradition of the coronation through the authority of the national poet. Kean’s production suggested that by returning to the perceived “perfection” of the Tudor age and its ceremonies, Victorians could recapture a lost national identity rooted in the symbolic power of the monarchy. As such, this production mediated the concept of tradition for audiences, solidifying the coronation as a tradition through Victorian innovation and performance.

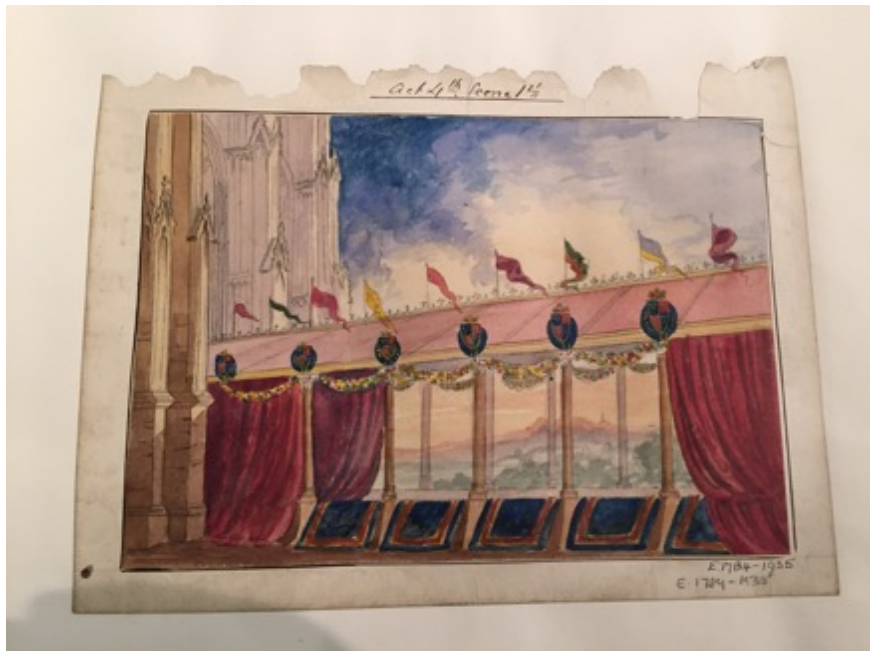


Figure 2.1: Illustration of Charles Kean’s design for Anne Bullen’s coronation procession (4.1).

Kean's *mise-en-scene* distanced audiences and positioned them as witnesses to a historical moment from which they could take learning. The perspective of the scene places the audience as a part of crowd looking upwards as they attempt to catch a glimpse of the monarch and her retinue. Kean did not stage the coronation ceremony itself as Tree would later do, but only the coronation procession showing Anne and the courtiers making their way into Westminster Abbey. An illustration of Kean's design for the scene show a canopy leading into the church, decorated with flags, garlands, and the royal coat of arms (Figure 2.1). Curtains on both sides are pulled back to reveal a columned transept, creating a smaller frame situated within the overarching boarder of the proscenium arch. The eye is drawn to the frames created by the transept and the staggered columns, and if we imagine a procession moving from right to left, Anne and her train would flicker through these frames as they made their way into the chapel.

As was the case in Kean's interpolated panorama (discussed in the General Introduction) Hatton's incidental music mediated this historical picture for audiences and blurred lines between the Tudor age represented in the *mise-en-scene* and the nineteenth century as represented in the scene's soundscape. Hatton's music can be categorized as one of the many standard, rudimentary marches played by military bands throughout the Victorian period, featuring straight-forward melodies and stately rhythms thought to reflect the nation's imperial character.<sup>44</sup> It is written in C major and in 4/4 time, and the brass section (made up of three trumpets and a trombone) play rhythmic fanfares throughout, grounding the piece in military style, while the strings and woodwinds provide light-hearted, sentimental melodies and harmonies. A chorus is also present, but no lyrics are preserved in the autograph score. Kean's promptbook gives no exact indication

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<sup>44</sup> Listen to transcription of Hatton's coronation march, located in Google Drive.

as to when Anne is to pass through the columned transept, but the music combined with the order of the procession written in Kean's promptbook provides enough information to approximate her entrance around bar 58. This is the point at which Hatton's march becomes the most complex, expanding on phrases established in the opening bars and building to a climax. The structure and tonality of Hatton's music engages the current culture's tastes and expectations for pictorial shows and embodies the "English" marches played by military bands from the mid-nineteenth century onwards. German's *Coronation March* as performed in Tree's 1910 production and subsequent royal pageants, built on the increasing popularity of this musical form. Juxtaposed against Kean's historicized staging that was generally interpreted by audiences as a factual representation of history, Hatton's contemporary march suited Victorian tastes while also being considered perceptually ancient, imbuing the "tradition" of coronations as staged by Kean with a contemporary soundscape.

### **Tree's Coronation of Anne Bullen (1910-11) and Edwardian imperial pageantry**

If Kean's production sought to reaffirm and solidify Tudor ceremonies as perfect spectacles and expressions of the nation, then Tree's production sought to outdo the Tudors' perceived prowess in pageantry and imperial display. As this closing section argues, Tree's staging of Anne's coronation broke down barriers between staged pageantry and public spectacle, equating the imperial glories of the Tudor age with the Edwardian expansion of the British Empire. The process by which coronations had become invented traditions by the early-twentieth century is demonstrated in the crossovers between Tree's historicized tableau of Anne's coronation and public pageants of the period. Tree's use of German's *Coronation March and Hymn* to accompany the tableau resulted the march's use in three imperial ceremonies of 1911:

the Festival of Empire, the Coronation of George V, and the Imperial Durbar at Delhi.<sup>45</sup> As such, German's march assisted in forging a connection between the imagined resplendence and imperial protestations of the Tudors and that of the Edwardians, who saw themselves as rivalling the ceremonious traditions of the Tudors and fulfilling their imperial aims.

Music was not the only element of the production that crossed the boundary between the theatre and the public sphere. Tree also enlisted the help of Louis Napoleon Parker, a notable orchestrator of outdoor historical pageants, to assist with the organization of his production, particularly in pageantry scenes such as the coronation tableau. This subsequently placed the theatrical representation of Anne's coronation in conversation with contemporary shows of national history, both of which were rooted in revisionist histories and myth. Considering these overlaps further, the final section of this chapter explores how the incidental music and the mode pageantry of Tree's *Henry VIII* not only aided in grafting a realistic spectacle of Anne's coronation for the theatre's patrons, but also established a connection between the imperial shows and celebrations of Tudors and those of the Edwardians. These parallels between the pageantry of the past and present monarchies, and their relationship with the imperial identity of the nation is the chief interest of this final section, and particularly incidental music's role in creating this slippage between the two periods. What began as accompaniment for a historicized reenactment of Anne's coronation eventually became the soundtrack to Edwardian, imperial progress and its shows of power, both in London and abroad.

Tree planned his production of *Henry VIII* during the summer of 1910 in Marienbad, a spa town in the Czech Republic, evidenced by his publication born out of his research, *Henry*

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<sup>45</sup> Listen to profession recording of German's *Coronation March and Hymn*. Link is provided in the Appendix.

*VIII and his court*.<sup>46</sup> Given that Edward VII died before the start of Tree's summer holiday, the planning of his production was informed by the upcoming coronation year, so his *mise-en-scene* and choice of incidental music was designed specifically to commemorate George V. As Foulkes states, "Tree's production of *King Henry VIII* opened on 1 September, late enough to show respect of the deceased king, but in time to catch the growing excitement about his successor's forthcoming coronation."<sup>47</sup> The production maintained such a long run that even by the time of George V's coronation in June 1911, it was still showing, ultimately profiting a total of £19,282, 6s, 1d over the course of 252 performances, breaking all of Tree's previous box office records.<sup>48</sup> The view of the Tudor age that informed Tree's production is revealed in his commentary, which states, "In the days of Henry VIII, [...] outward show and ceremony were considered of utmost importance."<sup>49</sup> Tree perceived the Tudor age as a period of unrivalled splendor, a time in which shows and ceremony were lavishly decorated and performed. Tree's research also evidences that he was influenced by notable past productions of *Henry VIII* from the beginning of the eighteenth century onwards. One of the productions Tree highlights is Cibber's 1727 staging, observing that "the play had an exceptional run of forty nights, largely owing, it is said, to the popularity it obtained through the coronation of George II., which had taken place a few weeks before."<sup>50</sup> Tree's choice to highlight the link between Anne's coronation and that of George II provides a glimpse into the actor-manager's consideration to do the same for George V, the first monarch since the Hanoverians with the same namesake.

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<sup>46</sup> See Herbert Beerbohm Tree, 'King Henry VIII' in *Thoughts and After-Thoughts* (London: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1913), pp. 227-299.

<sup>47</sup> Foulkes, p. 145.

<sup>48</sup> Foulkes, p. 145, and Booth, p. 128. This is equal to over two million pounds in today's money.

<sup>49</sup> Tree, *Thoughts and After-Thoughts*, p. 279.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 284-5.

Tree's textual changes to the play were even more severe than that of Kean, due in part to his habitual reworking of Shakespeare's plays to fit within a three-act structure. As Booth states, Tree's total cuts to the play eliminated 1323 of 2810 lines, or forty-seven percent, and the coronation scene as preserved in the promptbook was cut by ninety-four percent.<sup>51</sup> This means that the coronation was a tableau in the strictest sense of the word. Tree's arrangement also positioned the coronation as the final scene of the play, with the whole of Act 5 – including Elizabeth's christening – being eliminated. This was not Tree's original intention, but rather the result of a last-minute decision made a few days before the premiere. Tree insisted that the performance could not run longer than two hours, influenced by his reading of a lines 12-3 in the Prologue, stating that audiences "may see away their shilling | Richly in two short hours". Tree interpreted this line to mean that "Shakespeare's own theatre had played *Henry VIII* in 'two short hours'" and when his final rehearsals far surpassed that time limit, Tree cut out Act 5 in an attempt to do justice to what he perceived were Shakespeare's intentions.<sup>52</sup> Despite his efforts, the opening performance lasted three and a half hours, a testament to the intricate and lavish scenes that took a great deal of time to assemble and disassemble in between scenes.<sup>53</sup> Placing Katherine's vision (4.2) ahead of Anne's coronation (4.1), Tree thus situated the coronation scene as the climax of the play's narrative, which conveniently resonated with audiences in 1910-11. Similar to how eighteenth-century actor-managers extracted the coronation from the play and performed it at the end of other plays, Tree's placement of the coronation as the final scene allowed the tableau to be somewhat separated from the rest of the dramatic narrative.

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<sup>51</sup> Booth calculated the cuts to the play entire, p. 134. I calculated the cuts to the coronation scene by comparing the promptbook with the complete scene.

<sup>52</sup> Tree, *Thoughts and After-Thoughts*, p. 282.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 137.



Figure 2.2: Anne Bullen's coronation as staged by Herbert Beerbohm Tree (1910-11).

Tree's coronation also deviated from past productions and Shakespeare's stage directions for the scene by including the full coronation ceremony that occurs inside of Westminster Abbey rather than just the coronation procession leading into the church. (Figure 2.2). Unlike Kean's staging of the procession, which had a distancing effect for audiences, this provided audiences with access to the coronation proper, an invitation usually reserved for only the most elite members of society. Spectators were positioned as guests of honor at the coronation ceremony itself rather than the throng of onlookers lining the streets of London. Tree's choice to build an apron stage that extended beyond the proscenium arch for this production only added to this effect, bringing the ceremony closer to the audience in proximity and providing a sense of immediacy.

As such, Tree's coronation tableau embodies a different part of the text than Kean's. While Kean's focus seems to have rested on the Folio's stage directions for 4.1 (containing the order of the procession), Tree's staging embodies the description of the ceremony itself, accessed in Shakespeare's text only through its description by Gentleman 3:

At length her grace rose, and with modest paces  
Came to the altar, where she kneeled, and, saint-like,  
Cast her fairy eyes to heaven and prayed devoutly;  
Then rose again and bowed her to the people,  
When by the Archbishop of Canterbury  
She had all the royal makings of a queen,  
As holy oil, Edward Confessor's crown,  
The rod, and bird of peace, and all such emblems  
Laid nobly on her; which performed, the choir,  
With all the choicest music of the kingdom,  
Together sung *Te Deum* (4.1.82-92).

Thus, Tree's aims for this scene were to create a tableau of the coronation proper that rivalled the authentic ceremony. Audiences could imagine themselves as attending a coronation, perhaps George V's specifically, particularly since Tree's production was accompanied by recognizable, Edwardian music. The musical score was paramount to the scene's effectiveness because there was no dialogue was spoken. As one review described, it was "... a scene without words, but plenty of noise – music, and the ringing of bells, and the shouts of the crowd. As a pageant, nothing could be more gorgeous."<sup>54</sup> Besides the handful of opening lines preserved by Tree, which "must have been played, as a brief prologue to what followed, on the apron in front of the curtain," music was the primary auditory feature of the scene, and therefore was solely responsible for shaping the meaning and emotional contours of the tableau as it unfolded.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> *London Times*, 2 September 1910, *Harvard Theatre Collection*, uncatalogued Shakespeare scrapbooks.

<sup>55</sup> Booth, p. 152.



German's march itself was described by reviewers as having "the directness of aim and certainty of effect which is essential to a good march. It suggests well-knit muscles and a straight back," recalling the definitions of the martial aspects of the English musical idiom as being characteristically straight-forward and manly.<sup>56</sup> The *London Times* stated that the soundscape "did not reflect the atmosphere of an Italian restaurant or a German beer garden, but brought back with Shakespeare the simple jollity of old English life ... It was Old England to the life, and no mere imitation, but fresh, original music into the bargain."<sup>57</sup> Thus, German's ability to "make new English music just like the old English music" did not just apply to his dances for the banquet scene, but also to his *Coronation March*.<sup>58</sup> German's ability to imitate the style of a standard, English march – such as Hatton's march written for Kean – and to expand on these structures in a way that appealed to the Edwardian taste made his *Coronation March* a popular and lasting piece of music. The music reflected of the "straight-backed" personality of the Edwardians and linked them to the splendor of the Tudors authorized by Shakespeare's drama.

The pageantry of Tree's coronation was also perceptually authentic due to Parker's involvement in the planning of the production. In the five years leading up to Tree's premiere, Parker had gained notoriety as an organizer of historical pageants, beginning with the Sherborne Pageant of 1905, which involved over 900 participants and was attended by over 50,000 spectators.<sup>59</sup> As Dobson states, such pageants were "committed ... to the participation of all classes in the national culture" and "profoundly engaged with Shakespeare as both a symbol and

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<sup>56</sup> *The Times*, 17 June 1911.

<sup>57</sup> Frank Merry, *The Daily Mail*, 24 September 1904. *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>59</sup> Ayako Yoshino, "'Between the Acts' and Louis Napoleon Parker – the Creator of the Modern English Pageant", *Critical Survey*, Vol. 15, no. 2 (2003), pp. 49-60.

an expression of that culture.”<sup>60</sup> After his success at Sherborne, Parker’s services were in high demand for the next twenty years, and he was asked by 73 other towns to conduct similar pageants depicting their local and national histories.<sup>61</sup> As Dobson observes, these pageants were heavily indebted to Shakespeare’s histories, and the vaguely-defined “Age of Shakespeare” provided focus for the nostalgia of the spectacle.<sup>62</sup> Situated within a “loosely-defined ‘old England’ ... full of revels and dances of the olden time”, Parker’s pageants sat in close relationship to stagings of *Henry VIII* in their “historical” representation. Tree loaned lightweight stage armor to Parker for these pageants in exchange for advice on mounting processions in his spectacular productions. Thus, Tree’s production was informed by and, it can be argued, sits in conversation with Parker’s historical pageants, which were laced with pastoral and imperial sentiment and were understood as expressing a collective national identity rooted in the Tudor myth with Shakespeare at its center. Similar to Parker’s entertainments, the effectiveness of the stage picture and its reliability as historically accurate depiction of national history depended on an engagement with audiences’ senses, striking a balance between the didactic image and emotionally stirring music. It was precisely these same sentiments that George V’s actual coronation and public pageants of the coronation year sought to build on.

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<sup>60</sup> Michael Dobson, ‘Shakespeare in the open: outdoor performance’ in *Shakespeare and Amateur Performance: A Cultural History* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2011), pp. 152-196 (p. 167).

<sup>61</sup> In the years leading up to Tree’s production, Parker would stage similar historical pageants in Warwick (1906), Bury St Edmunds (1907), Dover (1908), Colchester (1909), and York (1909).

<sup>62</sup> Dobson, *Amateur Shakespeare*, p. 169, 171-2.

## Theatre music and Edwardian pageants

The first public pageant of 1911 to utilize German's coronation march was the Great Pageant of London and Empire, also orchestrated by Parker and part of a larger Festival of Empire that took place from May-September 1911 and utilized the entire 250-acre site at Crystal Palace (Figure 2.3).<sup>63</sup> The festival was comprised of an exhibition, numerous imperial concerts, and the aforementioned pageant of London and Empire, all of which proselytized an intense national and imperial agenda. The exhibition was a recreation of "the entire British Empire in miniature" featuring "three-quarter-sized replicas of the parliament buildings of the dominions which housed displays of the produce and manufactures of those countries."<sup>64</sup> Colonial possessions were put on full display and connected by a miniature railway, stretching 1.5 miles and linking the imperial scenes, including "a Malay village, a Jamaican sugar plantation, Canadian wheatfields and orchard, an Australian sheep farm, an Indian jungle 'well stocked with wild beasts' and a tea plantation, a Maori village, a great waterfall in the Blue Mountains of Australia and the gold and diamond mines of South Africa."<sup>65</sup> This allowed spectators to effectively visit a replica of each nation within the Empire, and to imagine these places as belonging to them. As one review summarized, "The Britisher at home will get a real idea of what the word 'Empire' actually means ... Everything, in fact, that is typical of our brothers across the sea is there."<sup>66</sup> This not only suggested that that British were a benevolent colonizing force, but also inculcated a sense of ownership for the average citizen over these foreign lands.

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<sup>63</sup> Richards, *Imperialism and Music*, p. 180.

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>66</sup> "The Festival of Empire: All about the world's greatest pageant", *Answers*, 20 May 1911, p. 55. *ProQuest British Periodicals* [21 April 2020].



Figure 2.3: Photographs from the Pageant at the Festival of Empire, *Illustrated London News*.

The spectacle of the Great Pageant of London and Empire was equally engaged with imperial themes, particularly in showcasing Britain’s dominance as a world power. Consisting of four parts and a total of twenty-seven separate scenes, the pageant was advertised as “a living picture of our Empire – from the dawn of history to the present day [...] the Pageant of the Past Glories and Future Aims of the British Empire. A dream of colour; a vision of history; a moving, stirring and inspiring spectacle, such as the world has never seen before.”<sup>67</sup> In a similar vein to Sullivan’s *Victoria and Merrie England* ballet (Part One), the pageant sought to showcase and

<sup>67</sup> Richards, p. 188.

associate the past and present glories of the British Empire. Tableaux of historical episodes ranging from the ancient Druids to the formation of the British Empire formed the narrative of the pageant, and as Richards states, “the music played an important part, underlining, reinforcing and animating processions, marches and staged tableaux, and each scene was assigned to a different composer.”<sup>68</sup> German’s compositions were assigned to the scene showing “Elizabeth I ... reviewing her troops at Tilbury,” accompanied by “God Save Queen Elizabeth” from his operetta *Merrie England* and his *Coronation March and Hymn*.<sup>69</sup> This segment of the pageant dramatized one of the most imperial moments of the Tudor era, the defeat of the Spanish Armada, and was also a stirring display of militarism with the rallying monarch at its center. This pushed the connection between *Henry VIII* and the Edwardian Empire. Anne’s coronation, which was a reaffirmation of Henry’s imperial jurisdiction, was situated as bringing about these future events, specifically her daughter’s rallying of the troops at Tilbury, which further carried out the imperial aims of the nation. Though the actual constitutional power of the monarchy had waned significantly by the Edwardian period, the suggestion that the monarch could rally troops at home and abroad in the name of the empire refracted the limitations of the Edwardian monarchy through the lens of Tudor rule.

A few weeks after the premiere of the Great Pageant of London and Empire, the coronation of George V took place (22 June 1911). The occasion was equally charged with imperial sentiment, and as Richards observes even “more imperial than that of Edward VII.”<sup>70</sup> As was the case in the Festival of Empire, German’s music was one of many selections used in the

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 190.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 191.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 107.

coronation that was written by an English composer, but even amongst his colleagues' compositions, his *Coronation March* stood out. As *The Times* reported, "Of the two English marches [the other by Frederic Cliffe], Mr. German's is by far the more distinguished."<sup>71</sup> German received a medal from the King as a show of gratitude for his march, and later the piece was featured in a 1919 Command Concert in which it was "given a very firm royal tick" in the monarch's programme.<sup>72</sup> Other works by contemporary English composers used as a part of George V's coronation included Dr. Walford Davies' "Solemn Melody", an unnamed prelude by Dr. Frederick Cowen, Alexander Mackenzie's "An English Joy Peal", and Sir Edward Elgar's "Imperial March".<sup>73</sup> Like the accompaniments for various productions of *Henry VIII*, such music appealed on two levels. First, it showcased the native talent of English composers, and satisfied an appetite for distinctly "English" music by living, Edwardian composers. Secondly, the regularity and rhythmic structures of the march effectively linked it to older styles of music that represented an ancient and immemorial past.

As such, the "character" that was embodied in German's march did not just embody the Britons of the present, but especially the Britons and monarchs of the past. The coronation ceremony allowed this music to exist in both spaces of the imagination simultaneously, to stir up the imperialist sentiments of the present while simultaneously reinvigorating romanticized notions of English history. This duality was mapped onto the newly-crowned monarch, whose procession through the streets of London was attended by "60,000 troops, lining the route between Buckingham Palace and the Abbey" and included "representatives of all the colonies:

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<sup>71</sup> *The Stage*, 31 July 1919, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

<sup>72</sup> Rees, p. 174.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

from the Bengal Lancers to the Victoria Mounted Rifles, from the Gurkhas to the 7<sup>th</sup> Quebec Hussars, from the Transvaal Scottish Volunteers to the Malta Infantry and Royal Artillery.”<sup>74</sup> As *The Times* reported, King George V was seen as both “the august representative of an ancient ruling race” and “the visible embodiment of our national and Imperial unity.”<sup>75</sup>

The significance of the coronation, for Britons at home and abroad, was therefore entangled with imagining the past and present greatness of the country and its ancient monarchy.

As *The Times* elaborated:

The history of England is the history of the most fortunate combination of progress and stability that the world has ever known; and the symbol of its stability is the King ... Here is the real significance of the Coronation ceremony and the cause of its hold upon the imaginations of the people. They enjoy it, of course, as a spectacle and a holiday. They like the glitter of uniforms and flags and the excitement of great crowds at all times. But there is more for them in the Coronation than a mere show. However little they may know of all the facts of history, they know that Kings have been crowned for hundreds of years; and in the spectacle of the Coronation they feel that they witness history in the making and are present at a representative act of the British nation. The ceremony in the Abbey is, like the Abbey itself, the past alive among us, because of its insistence upon what seems noblest to men of all generations; and it is a reminder to us all of what the past has done for us and of what we must do for the future if our nation is to keep its place in history.<sup>76</sup>

In this statement, the aforementioned work of Cannadine resurfaces, for we can see that even in reports of the coronation, the ceremony is simultaneously linked to both an imagined ancientness and ideas of Edwardian progress. To witness a coronation – either a dramatic staging of Anne’s ceremony or George V’s contemporary ceremony – is to bring the past to life, to witness both history and the making of British history. Importantly, these values were not only projected onto native Britons but those that lived in colonized domains, and by propagandizing the coronation as

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<sup>74</sup> Richards, pp. 107-8.

<sup>75</sup> *The Times*, 17 June 1911.

<sup>76</sup> *Ibid.*

linked to a “history of the most fortunate combination of progress and stability that the world has ever known,” the monarchy could use George V’s coronation as an opportunity to inculcate invented beliefs about the monarchy and its pageants onto its foreign possessions, thereby justifying British rule in these territories and the aims of the empire.

This was only carried out further in the Imperial Durbar at Delhi which occurred at the end of 1911 and was the third (and last) Imperial Durbar in India. As Robert Aldrick and Cindy McCreery state, the ceremony:

[...] marked one of the most important moments in British rule of India, when King George V and Queen Mary were crowned emperor and empress, and received feudatory royals from throughout the subcontinent, the king of Bhutan and Shan princes from Burma. Never before or after did the Raj see such an imposing manifestation of British paramountcy and royal splendour.<sup>77</sup>

Unlike Victoria’s and Edward VII’s durbars (1877 and 1902), which were merely symbolic and not attended by the monarch, George V and Queen Mary were present at their durbar, solidifying the official nature of the event. In effect, the durbar was much like a second coronation, as the king wore “his coronation robes and the imperial crown of India, which was created for the occasion.”<sup>78</sup> Tim Bryars and Tom Harper describe it as “a piece of imperial theatre, staged to display the military might of the Indian Empire and the allegiance of India’s ruling elite, it was a spectacle without parallel.”<sup>79</sup> Much of the same music was used in this ceremony, with German’s *Coronation March* accompanying the procession of the King Emperor and Queen Empress from the Royal Pavilion to the thrones.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Robert Aldrick and Cindy McCreery, eds., *Royals on Tour: Politics, Pageantry and Colonialism* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 2018), in *Manchester Hive Ebooks*, n.p.

<sup>78</sup> Tim Bryars and Tom Harper, *A History of the Twentieth Century in 100 Maps* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014), p. 42.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>80</sup> Rees, p. 175.



Like the coronation proper, the durbar opened up an opportunity to showcase native-born musical talent, and to present to the people of India the soundscape of Great Britain. German's march was not only connected with the pomp of the coronation ceremony but also with England's literary representative of national "genius": Shakespeare. As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, Shakespeare had long been used to assimilate India with British culture and the English language, and now music that had originally been composed as mere theatre music had become a part of a public, and heavily imperial ceremony. Further, the music's ability to recall the Tudor period via its association with *Henry VIII* forged a tangential link with an ancient British past whose imperial destiny the Edwardians sought to fulfill. The suggestion was that India was not only a part of the present monarchy, but now linked in with the imperial desires and royal splendor of the past.

If we take a moment to look at the widespread use of German's *Coronation March*, we confront how remarkable it is for a piece of theatre music to have achieved such notoriety and to have been used repeatedly in such an official capacity. Generally, music written for the stage was considered lesser than symphonic or "art" music, and it usually had very little afterlife beyond its use in the theatre. If we compare Hatton's music to German's, this difference is easily discernable, for while Hatton's march was of strict, utilitarian use and then effectively discarded after the end of the Kean's production, German's entered the public sphere at an astounding pace, not only played in concerts throughout the nation but also used in official ceremonies. Thus, German's music, which was originally intended only to serve as the soundtrack to a piece of historical fiction on the London stage ultimately became the soundtrack to Edwardian imperialism and monarchical pageantry. That the music recalled romanticized, historical assumptions related to both Shakespeare and the Tudor monarchy only aided in its emotional

appeal. The emotional implications of using German's Coronation March repeatedly in public spectacles worked subconsciously to connect the propagandized history of the Tudors with the making of modern, imperial history at home and abroad. In some sense, the music is an example of the repetition as ritual paradigm identified by Hobsbawm, wherein if something is repeated enough, it becomes perceived as traditional, ritualistic, and perceptually ancient.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> Hobsbawm, p. 4.

#### Chapter Four: Herbert Beerbohm Tree's *King John* (1899)

In the general programme for *King John*, Herbert Beerbohm Tree responded to critics of the spectacular theatre and justified his use of tableaux in his production stating, “In presenting the play it has been my aim to give to the stirring scenes of ‘The Life and Death of King John’ a setting which should place before the public a living picture of the times as designed by Shakespeare.”<sup>1</sup> However, as this chapter will show, the “living picture” of the reign of King John that was presented on the nineteenth-century stage was hardly what Shakespeare had originally designed, for the nineteenth-century’s tendency to historicize the thirteenth century via Shakespeare’s *King John* directly influenced the version of the Middle Ages that was ultimately presented on the stage. As Richard Schoch states, “Throughout the nineteenth century, productions of *King John*, whether legitimate or burlesque, bore witness to an enduring obsession with recovering the Middle Ages as a mythologized originary moment for English national character and political identity.”<sup>2</sup> This was particularly prevalent in the two interpolated tableaux in Tree’s production – “The Fight Near Angiers” and “The Granting of the Magna Charta” – which imagined and presented these as defining moments in Britain’s political and imperial history that aligned with the values of *fin-de-siècle* imperialism. Although Tree’s programme markets his production as giving life to Shakespeare’s conception of King John’s reign, what was actually represented was a history of King John that was refracted through the nineteenth-century perspective on the Middle Ages. As Schoch observes, “Audiences expected to see a version of

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<sup>1</sup> Herbert Beerbohm Tree, Programme for William Shakespeare’s *King John*, Her Majesty’s Theatre, London, 1899. Bristol Theatre Collection, HBT/000142/2.

<sup>2</sup> Richard Schoch, *Not Shakespeare: bardolotry and burlesque in the nineteenth century* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), p. 152.

the medieval past which conformed not to Shakespeare's expectations, but to their own."<sup>3</sup> Like performances of the coronation tableau discussed in the previous chapter, English history was aggrandized in these scenes, resulting in historical tableaux that propagated an invented version of Britain's past, which, in turn, was used to justify the colonial activity of the late-Victorian British Empire, particularly during the Second Boer War. In this, Michael Booth's statement that theatre "[...] never exists in isolation from the social and cultural pattern of its own age" is demonstrated, for the politics of imperialism and warfare not only influenced Tree's *King John*, but late-Victorian spectacular theatre on a broader scale.<sup>4</sup>

Most existing scholarship on Tree's *King John* tableaux discusses them as silent, frozen pictures. A.R. Braunmuller writes them off as "wordless business" and Schoch, in his discussion of the Magna Charta tableau, writes that the tableau "remained silent, as if its already clichéd significance could be fully expressed in dumbshow."<sup>5</sup> In such evaluations of the production, there has been little consideration of the music or movement that occurred within the tableaux, and thus, these scenes have become fixed images in our theatre histories, leading to the assumption that they were nothing more than stagnant, pictorial interludes with little meaning or significance to the production as a whole. However, by considering Raymond Rôze's surviving incidental music for these scenes, I will show that the tableaux were dynamic rather than stagnant features of Tree's *King John*, ultimately far from the silent dumbshow Schoch suggests. Specific movements were choreographed to the accompanying incidental music, and therefore, music, rather than dialogue, took over as the primary auditory element of these scenes, driving the

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 153.

<sup>4</sup> Booth, *Victorian Spectacular Theatre*, p. 1.

<sup>5</sup> Schoch, *Not Shakespeare*, p. 154, and A.R. Braunmuller, 'Introduction' in William Shakespeare's *King John* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989), p. 86.

narrative expressed in the tableaux and ultimately shaping their meaning for audiences. By reviving the incidental music for this production, I not only use it to re-evaluate existing scholarship on Tree's *King John* but do so by examining the only surviving kinetic force that survives from these tableaux, the only aspect of the production that preserves the movement and atmosphere of these scenes. As such, the study of this music creates new avenues into discussing the function of tableaux on the nineteenth-century stage, going beyond what these scenes looked like and considering what they sounded like, ultimately enriching previous discussions of these tableaux in their pictorial form.

Another area of expansion that this chapter offers is the reading of both tableaux together. Previous evaluations of these interpolated sequences tend to only focus on the "Magna Charta" rather than "The Fight", perhaps due to the sustained interest in how the Magna Carta has been historicized and remembered. The tendency to discuss these scenes as separate entities ultimately fails to evaluate their relationship with one another, ultimately limiting the effectiveness of the analysis. In this chapter, I evidence how the tableaux worked in tandem, and I argue that their thematic connection is largely found in the accompanying incidental music. Exploring how these tableaux sit in conversation with one another reveals a great deal about Tree's historicization of the reign of King John and suggests that, like the tableaux discussed in the previous chapters, these scenes communicated specific, inflated notions of national and imperial identity that resonated with contemporary British politics. Following the work of B.A. Kachur and James Ellison, I will show how these tableaux commented on the topical affairs of the Second Boer War (1899-1902) and, through their *mise-en-scene* and soundscape, propagated a romanticized

understanding of Britain's imperial presence in the Boer Wars.<sup>6</sup> Both imperial warfare and the politics of the *fin-de-siècle* were refracted through the prism of the past, resulting in a justification of imperial ethos via the drama of the national poet. Once again, Shakespeare was posthumously conscripted into the service of the empire.

By reconstructing and reconsidering the incidental music written for Tree's *King John*, we, first, glean a deeper understanding of how the interpolated tableaux functioned within the performance, as the music itself provides a sonic blueprint for actors' movements and indicates the tonality Tree set for these scenes. Secondly, this music also shows how these tableaux were musically codified to align with and justify Britain's imperial identity within the socio-political contexts of the late-nineteenth century. I will first lay the groundwork for understanding Tree's overall approach to staging *King John*, focusing on textual, historical, and aural features of the entire production. I will then discuss the two tableaux in their isolated dramatic and historical contexts, exploring how the incidental music commented on British imperialism and national identity. Finally, I will explore the topical significance of these tableaux as they relate to late-Victorian notions of the imagined imperial ideal, using the incidental music for these tableaux as new evidence through which we can re-evaluate the existing scholarship surrounding this important topical and historical link.

### **Textual arrangement, historical contexts, and soundscape**

As was Tree's custom, he altered and rearranged the text of *King John* to fit a three-act structure, ultimately compressing Shakespeare's play into a series of eleven scenes and two

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<sup>6</sup> B.A. Kachur, 'Shakespeare Politicized – Beerbohm Tree's "King John" and the Boer War', *Theatre History Studies*, Vol. 12 (1992), pp. 25-44; and James Ellison, 'Beerbohm Tree's King John (1899): A fin-de-siècle Fragment and its Cultural Context', *Shakespeare*, Vol. 3, no. 3 (01 December 2007), pp. 293-314.

tableaux (Figure 2.4). As John Collick states, “the final product was less of a play than a sequence of set tableaux and events used to mark out historical episodes in the forging of British imperial democracy.”<sup>7</sup> In the souvenir programme, Tree explains his arrangement of the text saying:

If ‘King John’ is critically examined it will be found that the death of Arthur and the consequences ensuing therefrom are the real pivot of the play ... The first act ends with Arthur’s capture, the second with his destruction, and the third with the King’s death as an indirect result of that of his nephew. By means of this division it is hoped that swiftness of action is assured, and that the new sequence of scenes, together with the excisions that have been made, will permit the real story of the play to be told in quick, coherent and logical manner.<sup>8</sup>

Tree’s commentary shows that his primary focus in his treatment of the text was swiftness and coherence, and he achieves this by making the play pivot on the life and death of Arthur. This appealed directly to Victorian tastes, for one of the most illustrated and, later, photographed incidents from the play throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was that of Hubert’s abortive attempt to blind and kill the well-loved, tragic character of Arthur (Figures 2.5 and 2.6). Victorians considered Arthur’s death to be a veiled, autobiographical reference to the death of Shakespeare’s son Hamnet in 1596. As Georg Brandes states, “Arthur’s entreaties to the rugged Hubert to spare his eyes, must have represented in Shakespeare’s thought the prayers of his little Hamnet to be suffered still to see the light of day, or rather Shakespeare’s own appeal to Death to spare the child – prayers and appeals which were all in vain.”<sup>9</sup> The pathos of this scene thus not only appealed to the sensationalism of the Victorian gothic, but also helped audiences to imagine

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<sup>7</sup> John Collick, *Shakespeare, Cinema, and Society* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1989), pp. 35-6.

<sup>8</sup> Herbert Beerbohm Tree, Souvenir programme for William Shakespeare’s *King John*, Her Majesty’s Theatre, 1899, Bristol Theatre Collection, HBT/000142/1.

<sup>9</sup> Georg Brandes, *William Shakespeare: A Critical Study*, p. 140.

the suffering of the national poet, making Arthur the character in the play with the most dramatic interest.

Tree's Arrangement:	Shakespeare's Play:
1.1	1.1
1.2	2.1
1.3	3.1
1.4	3.2
<i>Tableau: The Fight Near Angiers</i>	<i>(Interpolated)</i>
1.5	3.3
2.1	3.4 (rearranged)
2.2	4.1
2.3	4.2
2.4	4.3
<i>Tableau: The Granting of the Magna Charta</i>	<i>(Interpolated)</i>
3.1	5.1, 5.2, 5.4
3.2	5.3
3.3	5.6, 5.7
	*eliminated entirely: 5.5

Figure 2.4: Diagram showing Tree's arrangement of *King John* with corresponding scenes from Shakespeare's text.



Figure 2.5 (left): Color print of James Northcote's *Hubert and Arthur*, painted in 1789 and printed in *A Collection of Prints, from picture painted for the purpose of illustrating the dramatic works of Shakspeare* (1803).

Figure 2.6 (right): Studio photograph of Franklin McLeay as Hubert and Charles Septon as Arthur in Herbert Beerbohm Tree's 1899 *King John*.



Tree positioned the tableaux as dramatic linchpins in this arrangement, spaced out to occur at the end of the first and second acts and to coincide with certain plot points related to Arthur's life and death. Tree's placement of "The Fight" is fairly straightforward, as the scene is loosely based on events in Shakespeare's Act 3. Historically, the tableau depicts the Battle of Mirabeau (1202), effectively bringing the conflict between the French and English onto the stage and giving the audience the chance to witness the defeat of Austria and the siege of Angers in pantomime.<sup>10</sup> This is usually an implied event that occurs off stage, the aftermath of which is indicated by the Bastard's entrance with Austria's severed head in 3.2. But in Tree's arrangement, the battle itself was brought to life, creating a sense of historical verisimilitude and conveniently avoiding the need for a severed head for the scene, a prop which, as Martin Wiggins states in his introduction to *Edward II*, was considered grotesque and offensive by nineteenth-century audiences.<sup>11</sup> The battle at Angers had also been included in illustrated editions of the text, such as Charles Knight's *Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspeare* (1839-42?). Tree's visual design for the tableau (Figure 2.7) shows an indebtedness to John Orrin Smith's engravings in Knight's edition (Figures 2.8 and 2.9).

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<sup>10</sup> A.R. Braunmuller, p. 76.

<sup>11</sup> Martin Wiggins, 'Introduction' in *Edward II* (London: Methuen Drama, 1997), pp. 2-127.



Figure 2.7: Photograph of “The Fight Near Angiers” tableau in Tree’s 1899 *King John*.

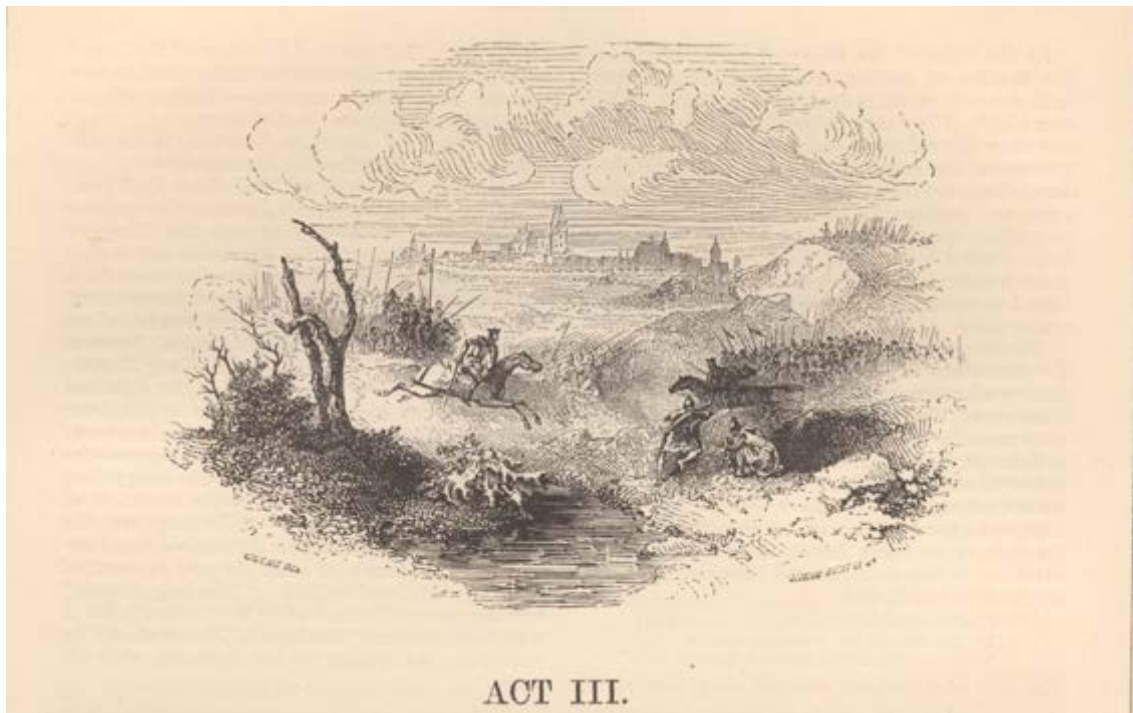


Figure 2.8: “The Battle, near Angiers” in *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, ed. Charles Knight



Figure 2.9: “The Field After the Battle” in *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*, ed. Charles Knight.

The most striking aspect of Tree’s design is the number of raised swords and lances. In addition to the props held by supernumeraries, layers of painted scenery in the background gives the illusion of soldiers in the distance, creating a three-dimensional perspective and giving the impression of a full-scale battle. The eye is drawn toward the center of the image where the two armies meet and where two horses – one black and one white – face each other, signifying the opposing sides of the battle. The photograph is likely a staged image rather than a snapshot taken from a live performance (something which would not become technically possible for decades to come),<sup>12</sup> and Tree chose to have the precise moment the Bastard kills Austria captured in the foreground. Tree’s stage is also framed by a canopy of trees, which gives a nod to the pastoral features in Smith’s engravings. In fact, various features in Smith’s illustrations anticipate Tree’s

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<sup>12</sup> See Sally Barnden, *Still Shakespeare and the photography of performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2020).

stage design. Figure 2.8 also includes two horses and the raised weapons of the two armies standing in opposition to one another, drawing the eye to the center of the image. While Figure 2.8, like the photograph of Tree's design, depicts the climax of battle, the moment that the two armies clash, Figure 2.9 shows the aftermath of battle, complete with the beheaded figure of Austria in the foreground. But, as I have stated, Tree concluded his tableau by having the Bastard take the lion's hide of King Richard I back from the lifeless Austria and wear it as he exited the scene, rather than showing the aftermath of his beheading. If we think of the lion's hide as a symbol of the English throne and royal lineage, the reclamation of the hide by the Bastard can not only be understood as a gesture of his own desire to legitimate himself as the son of Richard I, but also as a way of legitimizing the rightful sovereignty of the English. Already considered "the primary voice of English nationalism" in the play, the Bastard's recouping of his father's lion's hide from the French provided further visual confirmation of English power and authority, appealing to the *fin-de-siècle* view of patriotic national identity.<sup>13</sup>

In comparison to "The Fight" tableau, determining where to position the "Magna Charta" tableau was more challenging, as there is no logical space in the text to include it because it is not dramatized or even mentioned by Shakespeare. As such, Tree attempted to incorporate the tableau within his overarching arrangement which hinged on the capture, destruction, and death of Arthur. With Arthur's death being positioned as the reason for the barons' revolt, the "Magna Charta" tableau emerges as a temporary moment of redemption for the monarch before his impending downfall in Act V. This created an amplified view of the reign of King John, which from a nineteenth-century perspective had to include a reference to the Magna Carta because it

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<sup>13</sup> James P. Saeger, "Illegitimate Subjects: Performing Bastardy in 'King John'", *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, Vol. 100, no. 1 (Jan. 2001), pp. 1-21 (p. 16).

was considered as “the foundation of popular liberty.”<sup>14</sup> This also meant reframing the lackluster details of King John’s reign in favor of an overriding narrative of national unity. As Henry Norman Hudson expressed in his 1887 commentary on the play, “... the rights and interests of England are inseparably bound up with the reverence of [King John’s] person and the maintenance of his title. The crimes of the individual must not be allowed to peril the independence and life of the nation.”<sup>15</sup> In other words, the manner in which King John’s reign was remembered had a direct relationship with the how English national identity was formed and upheld. The monarch’s “crimes” belonged to him alone, while his successes – namely granting the Magna Charta and defying the Pope – belonged to the nation.

Tree’s personal view of the reign of King John aligned with this aggrandized historicization, as revealed in his programme notes:

[...] What a chapter in our national history those seventeen years present! During their passing England lost her Continental possessions; her king having defied the Pope, died his vassal; the people, through the nobles, exacted from an absolute sovereign that Great Charter of their liberties, the advantages of which, in the guise of freedom, justice and equality, we to-day enjoy ... The men and women who then made history were large, adventurous spirits, winning or losing all as the whirlwind of their passions and ambitions swept them along. The masses of the people were waiting for the moment when, their ancient language restored and their ancient laws secured to them, they should be moulded into an united English nation.<sup>16</sup>

Here, Tree directly engages with the invented history of the Middle Ages and suggests that swelling sentiments of nationalism and imperialism present in nineteenth-century society originated during this golden age. With a romanticism similar to that in his productions of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (Chapter Two), the actor-manager imagines those that lived during the

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<sup>14</sup> Brandes, p. 149.

<sup>15</sup> Henry Norman Hudson, *Shakespeare’s history of King John* (Boston: Ginn, Heath, Co., 1884), p. 21.

<sup>16</sup> Souvenir programme, HBT/000142/1.

Middle Ages as those “who then made history”, a freer, more adventurous, more passionate, and more ambitious society than the present day. Particularly, their part in securing “that Great Charter of their liberties” from King John is imagined not only as a notable historical event but as a foundational part of the present-day empire of direct benefit to Victorians. Framed within the politics and imperialism of the Victorian period, the idea was that the liberties secured by the Magna Carta did not just apply to British citizens at home, but also to those living in colonized territories. However skewed, the logic was that Britain had secured these freedoms in the Middle Ages via the Magna Carta, and now through imperial expansion, the nation was extending these freedoms to the peoples other nations. Through such assumptions, the mythology of a benevolent empire emerges once again, which, as I have discussed previously, sat at the nexus of the late-Victorian imperial ethos. Thus, the justification and glorification of the imperial agenda rested on the laurels of the past. Acts of colonization were suitably reframed as extending inalienable rights to the citizens of foreign domains, conveniently eliding the brutality and hostility of *fin-de-siècle* imperial warfare. The Magna Carta was understood not only as a notable historical event but as an active part of Victorian society and its rapidly expanding empire, and this mythologized history became a vehicle for topical engagement with and justification for British imperial activity.

The critical tradition of *King John* in the nineteenth century also contributed to Tree’s decision to include the Magna Charta tableau in his production. Although the Magna Carta would not have held much significance for Shakespeare or his audiences (the document would not accrue its modern-day, mythological significance as the bedrock of democracy until the late-seventeenth century), critical evaluations of the play in the nineteenth century routinely

questioned and lamented Shakespeare's omission of the Magna Carta from *King John*.<sup>17</sup> In 1838, Thomas Campbell commented, "It is remarkable that the Poet of England ... should have dramatised the reign of King John without the most distant allusion to the Magna Carta."<sup>18</sup> In the same year, Thomas Courtenay called attention to the Magna Carta's function as a way of remembering King John and hinted at its potential on the stage:

[...] but one event had happened, of which, although it is that by which we now chiefly remember King John, Shakespeare takes no notice whatever. This event is no other than the signature of the MAGNA CHARTA. How shall we account for Shakespeare's omission of an incident so essential in 'the life and reign of King John,' and so good for stage effect?<sup>19</sup>

A few years later, Charles Knight took this a step further, calling for "... an ingenious adapter, into whom the true spirit of 'Historical Plays considered historically' should be infused, might give us a new King John, founded upon Shakespeare's, with Magna Charta at full length."<sup>20</sup> By the end of the century, Tree emerged as the adaptor Knight had called for, and thus, his decisions as actor-manager must be considered in context with how the play was viewed from a critical standpoint. For the presence of the Magna Charta tableau in Tree's arrangement is not just symptomatic of the actor-manager's tendency for pictorial display or his willingness to indulge deviations from Shakespeare's text; it reveals Tree's engagement with the collective, historicized

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<sup>17</sup> See Jill Lepore, "The Rule of History: Magna Carta, the Bill of Rights, and the hold of time", *The New Yorker (Online)*, 13 April 2015. <<https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/04/20/the-rule-of-history>> [2 September 2019].

<sup>18</sup> Thomas Campbell, 'General Remarks on *King John*', in *Shakespeare: The Critical Tradition*, King John, ed. by Joseph Candido (London: Athlone, 1996), pp. 86-7, (p. 86).

<sup>19</sup> Thomas Peregrine Courtenay, '*King John* and history', in *Shakespeare: The Critical Tradition*, King John, ed. by Joseph Candido (London: Athlone, 1996), pp. 88-96, (p. 95).

<sup>20</sup> Charles Knight, 'The Pictorial Edition of *King John*', in *Shakespeare: The Critical Tradition*, King John, ed. by Joseph Candido (London: Athlone, 1996), pp. 97-105, (p. 102).

view of the reign of King John, which was seen as “the dawn of genuine English nationality, such as it has continued substantially to the present day.”<sup>21</sup>

Through this, we can see how the Magna Carta was inculcated into the nineteenth-century’s perception of its national selfhood. It was this magnified, hyperbolic history that audiences and critics longed to see dramatized, for the imagined significance of the Magna Carta was so prevalent that it was unimaginable that Shakespeare had chosen to leave it out of the text. The widespread desire to interpolate this scene within the play – even if by imagination – is evidenced the inclusion of John Hamilton Mortimer’s 1783 painting *The ratifying of the Magna Charta by King John* within John and Josiah Boydell’s *Collection of Prints Illustrating Shakespeare’s Works* (1803) (Figure 2.10). Thus, Tree’s inclusion of the “Magna Charta” tableau in his production directly responded to Victorian understandings of the life and history of the Middle Ages (Figure 2.11). At Her Majesty’s, these scenes went beyond the printed form through choreographed movement to accompanying music. Audiences who had read *King John* in illustrated editions or studied the history of the period saw these pictures come to life as a part of Tree’s production. Tree believed that the law which governed theatre was, “all that aids illusion is good, [and] all that destroys illusion is bad,” and I argue that sound in particular was integral to Tree’s methodology.<sup>22</sup> This not only included music, which I discuss in more detail in the following section, but also non-musical sound, which aided Tree in achieving a deeper sense of realism and illusion in his productions.

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<sup>21</sup> Hudson, p. 20.

<sup>22</sup> Tree, *Thoughts and After-thoughts*, p. 57.





Figure 2.10: “King John ratifying the Magna Charta a Runnemede”, painted by John Hamilton Mortimer (1783) and printed in *A Collection of Prints, from pictures painted for the purpose of illustrating the dramatic works of Shakspeare* (1803).



Figure 2.11: Photograph of “The Granting of the Magna Carta” tableau, *King John*, 1899.

The surviving promptbooks and production papers show various instances in which Tree scripted vocal responses, shouts, and interjections at predetermined points, particularly in scenes featuring large crowds. For example, Figures 2.12-2.14 show that the actor-manager split the supernumeraries into three groups for his 1.2. The scripting of extra-textual dialogue creates a cacophonous response to King Philip's and King John's conversation, which ultimately results in the conflict between France and England. Through this technique, the stage is filled with a gradual cross-current of sound that rests beneath the dialogue, eventually building to a declaration of war. Tree builds a semi-chaotic atmosphere through the manipulation of spoken utterances and, once again, emphasizes the presence of common citizens in the build-up to the conflict between France and England by actively engaging the supernumeraries in the scene. This changes the nature of the scene, as war becomes modern war, waged by peoples who have chosen it rather than a pan-European, feudalistic chess match between rival monarchs. While the sheer noisiness of the scene creates an important atmospheric prelude to the musical accompaniment for "The Fight", the emphasis on the citizens of the nation also foreshadows the mythological significance of the "Magna Charta" tableau. As I show in my analyses of the tableaux and their accompaniments in the next two sections, Rôze's incidental music only furthers the aims set forth in Tree's textual arrangement, visual design, and use of non-musical sound, resulting in tableaux of enormous dramatic effect with accompanying music that anticipates the non-diegetic sound of twentieth-century film.

No. 1. (FRENCH)

ANSWERS SONGS

"And this is Geoffrey's" -----(MOVEMENT & MURDER)  
 "And by whose help I mean  
 to chastise it" -----(\*WE WILL\*)  
 "Excuse! It is to beat  
 usurping down" -----(\*AND WE WILL\*)  
 "Arthur's or John's" -----(\*GOOD & THE KING\*)  
 "Stalk in blood to our possession" (\*AND WE WILL\*)  
 "To him will we prove loyal" -----(MOVEMENT)  
 "To contradict his claim" -----(\*GOOD AND OUR RIGHT\*)  
 "Hold the right from both" -----(GENERAL MOVEMENT)  
 "To arms" -----(\*TO ARMS - TO ARMS\*)  
 "Come away, away" -----(\*AWAY, AWAY - COME\* ad.lib)  
 "To this unlocked for  
 unprepared pomp" -----(\*LONG LIVE THE KINGS\*)

No. 2. (FRENCH)

ANSWERS SONGS

"And this is Geoffrey's" -----(MOVEMENT & MURDER)  
 "And by whose help I mean  
 to chastise it" -----(\*TO CHASTISE IT\*)  
 "Excuse! It is to beat  
 usurping down" -----(\*AND WE WILL\*)  
 "Arthur's or John's" -----(\*LONG LIVE KING PHILIP\*)  
 "Stalk in blood to our possession" -----(\*IN BLOOD\*)  
 "To him will we prove loyal" -----(MOVEMENT)  
 "To contradict his claim" -----(\*LET US IN\*)  
 "Hold the right from both" -----(GENERAL MOVEMENT)  
 "To arms" -----(\*TO ARMS - TO ARMS\*)  
 "Come away, away" -----(\*AWAY, AWAY - COME\* ad.lib.)  
 "To this unlocked for  
 unprepared pomp" -----(\*LONG LIVE KING JOHN\* -  
 laughter)

No. 3. (ENGLISH)

ANSWERS SONGS

"Thou dost usurp authority" -----(\*WAR, WAR\*)  
 "Hear the crier" -----(\*MURDER\*)  
 "Arthur's or John's" -----(\*JOHN'S TITLE, LONG LIVE  
 KING JOHN\*)  
 "And let us in your King" -----(\*LONG LIVE THE KING\*)  
 "We are the King of France  
 lord's subjects" -----(\*LONG LIVE KING JOHN\*)  
 "Acknowledge then the King  
 and let us in" -----(\*LET US IN\*)  
 "To verify our title with  
 our lives" -----(\*LONG LIVE THE KING\*)  
 "Hold the right from both" -----(GENERAL MOVEMENT)  
 "In dreadful trial of our  
 kingdom's King" -----(\*GOOD & OUR RIGHT\*)  
 "To arms" -----(\*TO ARMS - TO ARMS\* ad.lib)  
 "Come away, away" -----(\*AWAY, AWAY - COME\* ad.lib)  
 "To this unlocked for  
 unprepared pomp" -----(\*LONG LIVE KING PHILIP\*)

Figures 2.12-2.14: Scripted responses for three groups of supernumeraries, Act 1, scene 2 (Shakespeare's 2.1).

### **“The Fight Near Angiers” Tableau**

Tree’s decision to reenact the Battle of Angiers in tableau emulates the tendency of other nineteenth-century entertainments to depict historical battles, and, as I have stated, the frequency with which the battle was depicted in illustrated editions of the play.<sup>23</sup> The tableau is set up by Tree’s 1.4 (Shakespeare’s 3.2) in which the Bastard enters shouting, “Now, by my life, this day grows wondrous hot; | Some airy devil hovers in the sky | And pours down mischief” (3.2.1-3). As the promptbook indicates, Tree designed a “shower of arrows” to accompany this line, anticipating the battle to come.<sup>24</sup> Tree cut the line following this – “Austria’s head lie there, | While Philip breathes” – for, in Tree’s arrangement, the defeat of Austria has not yet happened. At the conclusion of this short scene, Austria enters with four men at arms who attack the Bastard and Hubert. This initiates the “general entrance” of the supernumeraries, seamlessly transitioning into a full-scale, pantomimed battle. While the specified choreography for this tableau is not detailed in production papers or in the promptbook, Max Beerbohm’s description of the scene serves as a useful visual aid: “... You see the two armies ‘face to face, and bloody point to point.’ In a corner of the dark field, fitfully lit by the flames of a distant village, you see the victorious [B]astard fell his arch foe and snatch from his shoulders the lion skin of King Richard [...]”<sup>25</sup> When paired with the still image of the scene and the reconstructed incidental music, this description provides enough detail to visualize how it was rendered on the stage in its complete form.

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<sup>23</sup> See Altick, particularly Chapter 13, in which he discusses the propensity for depicting historical military triumphs at Sadler’s Wells and Astley’s Amphitheatre (pp. 173-83).

<sup>24</sup> Herbert Beerbohm Tree, *King John* promptbooks, 1899, Her Majesty’s Theatre. Bristol Theatre Collection, HBT/000142/3-5. All descriptions from the production are based on these promptbooks unless otherwise indicated.

<sup>25</sup> Max Beerbohm, *The Saturday Review*, 30 September 1899, quoted in *Shakespeare in the Theatre: An Anthology of Criticism*, ed. by Stanley Wells (Oxford, Oxford UP, 2000), pp. 160-3, (p. 161).

Kachur estimates that the tableau lasted about thirty seconds, but the length of the music written for the scene, even without the *dal segno*, suggests that the tableau lasted for a minimum of 4 minutes, meaning that it was a much more significant interlude than previously thought.<sup>26</sup> The music is frenzied, marked by a heavy use of drums, tremolos, and chromatics used to create a believable, war-like atmosphere.<sup>27</sup> Rôze's attention to dynamics and articulations assists the music in emulating the tension of the scene, with calculated swells of dissonance creating an eerie ambience that finds temporary resolution in climatic fortissimos. The use of a march-like rhythm in the lower horns, side drum, and timpani in bars 79-92 and 110-127 creates a battle-like environment, emulating the repetitive, martial tattoo often heard on fields of battle and in the music of Victorian military bands. Much like the scripted, verbal responses for the French and English supernumeraries discussed above, the music paints the opposing sides of the battle through its melodic structure. Rôze creates a repetitive echo of the melodic phrase in bars 79-85, which is played in the upper woodwinds first and then repeated by the bassoon, horn, and strings. This represents the opposition of the two forces, who stand "face to face and bloody point to point" (2.1.390) as the pantomimed battle unfolds.

Perhaps the most important feature of the accompaniment for "The Fight" is its musical relationship with the accompaniment for the "Magna Charta" tableau. Because these tableaux are separated by an entire act, they have been habitually considered to be unconnected historical episodes, but Rôze's soundscape forged a musical connection between these scenes that places them in conversation with one another. The music for "The Fight" is sonically tied to the "Magna

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<sup>26</sup> Kachur, p. 27; *Dal segno* is Italian for "from the sign", which indicates a repetition from the point at which a *dal segno* sign (or D.S.) is placed. Maurice J.E. Brown and Kenneth L. Hamilton (eds.), 'Dal segno', *Grove Music Online* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2001).

<sup>27</sup> Listen to transcription of "The Fight Near Angiers", available in Google Drive.

Carta” tableau in two ways. First, bars 1-70 of “The Fight” are also played as a part of the Prelude to Act III, which occurred just before the “Magna Charta” tableau in Tree’s arrangement. Secondly, in bars 30-37, Rôze anticipates a melodic theme that is recapitulated in bars 20-25 of the “Magna Charta” tableau. As I will explain in further detail in the next section, this melody occurs just before the moment when the charter is granted, symbolizing a supposedly universal moment of triumph. By anticipating this melodic strain in “The Fight”, the incidental music links warfare with securing inalienable rights for the British people. When considered against the backdrop of the Boer War, this frames the brutality of war as a benefit to the nation, and particularly, for the people. Within the brutal soundscape and tense atmosphere of war, there is a glimmer of hope, a foreshadowing of what is to come.

### **“The Granting of the Magna Charta” Tableau**

Although determining the choreography for “The Fight” is largely guess work, relegated to descriptions in reviews of the performance, Tree’s production papers detail a specific choreography for the “Magna Charta” tableau (Figure 2.15). On their own, these seem to be minor, insignificant details, but when paired with Rôze’s music for this scene, the meaning of the tableau and these pantomimic movements is crystallized. The music is structured in five segments, which directly correlate with the five separate movements indicated in the description of the choreography.<sup>28</sup> From an analysis of the production papers and the incidental music, I have identified five phases within this tableau and determined the specific music that accompanied each phase: Mr Tree enters, goes towards table, man takes up document, gives it to Mr Tree (bars

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<sup>28</sup> Listen to transcription of “The Granting of the Magna Charta”, available on Google Drive.

1-11); [Mr Tree] reads it, looks round at Nobles (bars 12-19); [Mr Tree] puts down the document, looks round again (bars 20-25); [Mr Tree] then puts finger on paper – Music changes to joyous rainbow strain (bars 26-41); Mr Tree gives paper back to man, Loud cheers (bars 42-48). From this alignment of music and movement, we see that, like in a pantomime or dumb show, a specific narrative emerges that is told entirely through the combination of pantomimed movement and accompanying music. As such, Rôze’s score serves as a blueprint for the movement in this scene, and a closer analysis of each of the five sections reveal even more details regarding how Tree performed this scene.

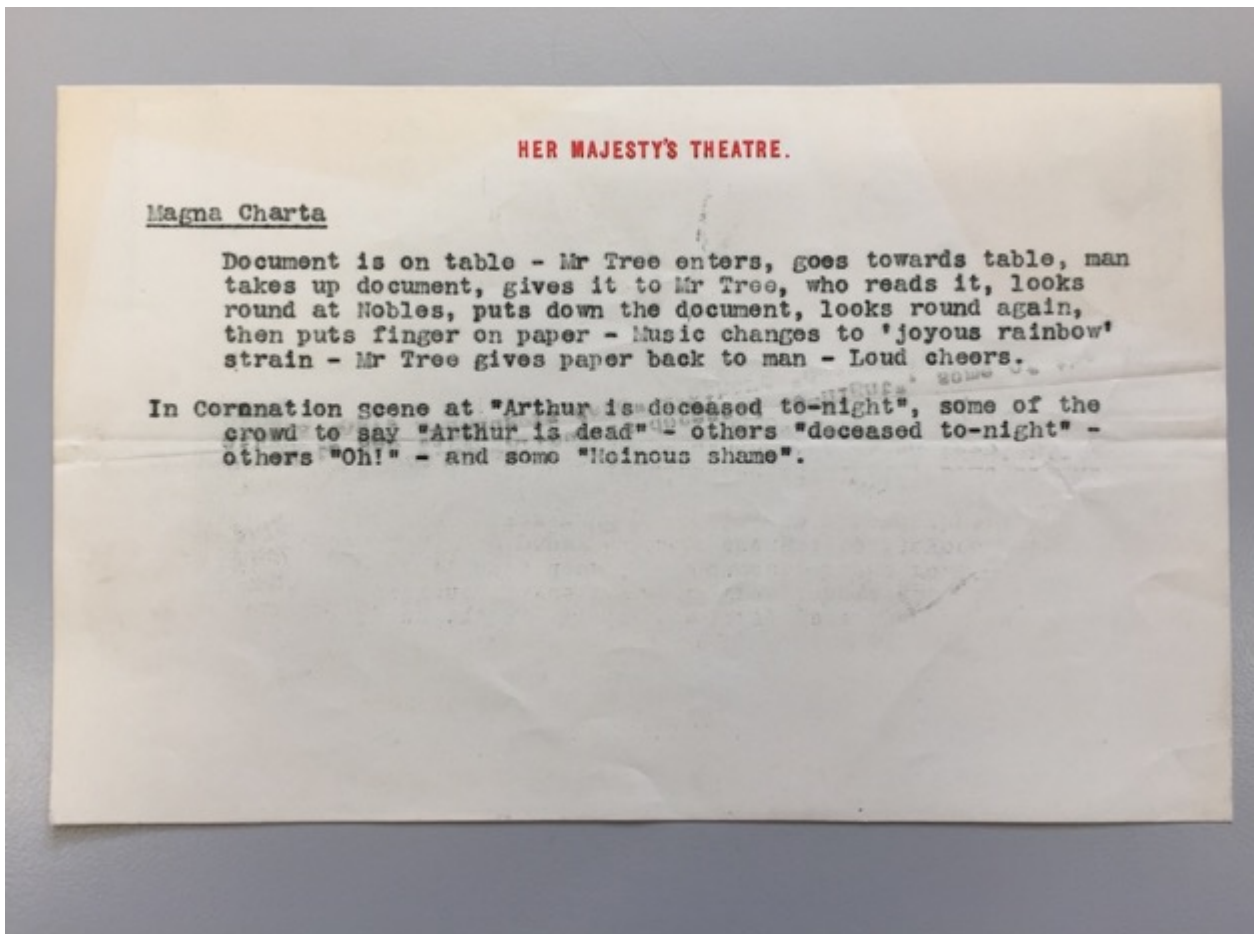


Figure 2.15: Choreography for the “Granting of the Magna Carta” tableau.

The tonality of the first section (bars 1-11) is foreboding and mysterious, picking up on the atmosphere created in the music for “The Fight”. It begins with a tremolo in the upper strings with the melody in the lower strings and woodwinds. This section accompanies the entrance of Tree and his movement toward the table where the Magna Charta sits. The ascending melody played by the bassoon, clarinet, and cello mimics his footsteps across the stage, supplying them with feelings of trepidation. The final two bars of the section (10-11) are offset by two quarter rests and a single note held by the horn, which creates a theatrical “beat” indicating the precise moment that the document is handed to Tree. This immediately segues into the next section (bars 12-19), which has an equally foreboding tonality. The lower horns take over the melody, defined by descending arpeggios. This accompanies Tree’s reading of the charter line-by-line; it is as if each falling arpeggio in the melody mimics the frantic reading of the document, implying an uncertainty as to whether or not the king will grant the charter. The fermata at the end of the section creates a pause in which Tree should move on to the next phase of the choreography: putting the document down and looking around at the nobles again.

In this third section of the music (bars 20-5), there is a slight change in tonality, a brighter melody that, anticipates the impending “joyous rainbow strain” as the tempo slows to *Largo*. As I have mentioned, this melody is a recapitulation of bars 30-7 in “The Fight”, linking this moment in the tableau back to the English victory in the battle of Angers. Here, however, the melody sounds more promising, as it sits in A major rather than in the D minor of the earlier tableau. The harp takes over the arpeggiated movement underneath the melody, creating a flourishing effect. The music tells us here, as Tree looks around at his nobles the second time, that he will indeed grant the Magna Charta. The audience hears positivity, light, freedom, and the rights of the people brimming on the surface, anticipating the celebrations and liberties to come. The



“joyous rainbow” strain (bars 26-41) follows, accompanying the precise moment that the charter is granted, indicated by Tree’s placement of his finger on the document. The melody is played in near unison by seven different groups of instruments, while the arpeggiated movement is played by clarinet and bassoon. Through this instrumentation, the melody soars above the rest of the instruments, proclaiming the virtues of the historic document and infusing the tableau with a sense of celebratory pride. Notably, this is the longest section of music and the climax of the tableau, and the celebratory nature of the music assists in bringing an aggrandized version of this moment to life. The fifth and final section (bars 42-48) brings the tableau to a steady, triumphant end. In a worshipful tone, it creates a peaceful resolution at tempo *Largo* and in 4/4 time, celebrating the granting of the charter and temporarily redeeming its grantor, King John. A final roll on the cymbals proclaims the magnificence of this moment in history. All of the trepidation heard in the preceding music has dissipated, leaving only the sounds of national glory. Combined with the preceding music from “The Fight,” the tableaux suggest, through incidental music only, that war and colonial rule eventually lead to peace, freedom, and happiness for all.

I argue that the narrative presented in this music is underpinned by the late-nineteenth century imperialist ethos, for the tableaux engage with both militaristic and diplomatic shows of the British imperial power. Tree’s historicization of the reign of King John suggests that in these historical moments, the modern, imperial nation was born. As Hudson puts it, “England was then wrestled, as it were, into the beginnings of that just, sturdy, indomitable self-reliance, or *selfhood*, which she has ever since so gloriously maintained. The Poet’s vigorous and healthy national spirit is strongly manifested in the workmanship of *King John*.”<sup>29</sup> Framing the age of King John

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<sup>29</sup> Hudson, pp. 20-1, his emphasis.

as the golden age of the nation, a time in which a “just, sturdy, indomitable” national selfhood was forged, resonated with the British public on a topical level. Beyond aggrandizing the nation’s history, it also justified the imperialism of the present day, presenting the aims of the empire as something tied to the nation’s identity. As the work of Kachur and Ellison points out, this messaging was particularly relevant in relation to British involvement in the Boer War. In the final section of this chapter, I will reevaluate this existing scholarship based on new evidence found in Rôze’s incidental music for this production, pointing out instances where Kachur’s and Ellison’s claims are both vindicated and problematized, and, ultimately, offering my own understanding of the topicality of these tableaux.

### **Topical Imperialism: Tree’s *King John* and the Second Boer War**

As I have stated, the connection between the tableaux in Tree’s *King John* and the Second Boer War have already been established in the work of B.A. Kachur (1992) and James Ellison (2007), but their respective articles largely argue against one another. Kachur claims that Tree’s “Magna Charta” tableau was an acute expression of imperialism, as newly made conscious in the context of the Boer War, while Ellison’s work argues that Tree’s tableau was actually anti-imperialist and worked within performance as an objection to Britain’s involvement in the South African conflict.<sup>30</sup> Both Kachur’s and Ellison’s work is limited in that they discuss the Boer War only in context with the “Magna Charta” tableau and do not address the function of “The Fight” tableau alongside the Magna Carta. Further, neither Kachur nor Ellison address the incidental music of the production, which as I argue, resolves the discrepancies between their respective

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<sup>30</sup> Both scholars also discuss the relationship between the Magna Carta tableau and the Dreyfus affair, which I do not engage with here as it sits outside the scope of this chapter (as it is not directly linked to late-Victorian imperialism).

arguments. Therefore, in this section, I re-evaluate the relationship between Tree's tableaux and the Boer War, seeking to clarify and expand upon previous scholarship and provide a fuller understanding of the role of incidental music in this production and the degree to which the tableaux commented on contemporary political and colonial affairs. I use the new material gleaned from Rôze's incidental music to reach a consensus regarding the topical relevance of these tableaux in context with the Boer War and within the wider Victorian imperial ethos. To do this, I must first give a brief summary of Britain's involvement in the Boer War leading up to the time of Tree's production, after which I will also do a short review of both Kachur's and Ellison's arguments in order to crystallize points of opposition within their work. Finally, I seek to resolve the differences in their scholarship by citing new evidence gleaned from incidental music and Tree's personal writings, which reflect both his general political leanings and his particular opinions of the British imperial agenda.

The Second Boer War officially began on 11 October 1899, after the opening performance of Tree's *King John*, but tensions between the British and the Boers (descendants of Dutch settlers who, in search of freedom from British rule, trekked from the British-controlled Cape Colony to the Transvaal and Orange Free State regions in the 1830s) had been growing since 1881, the date of the First Boer War.<sup>31</sup> In the first war, the Boers reclaimed the Transvaal region from British control, but soon after this, gold was discovered in the region, renewing British interest in colonizing and governing the territory. Driven by the same desire for gold, over

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<sup>31</sup> General details about the First and Second Boer Wars in this paragraph have been paraphrased from the following sources: John Gooch, ed., *The Boer War: Direction, Experience, and Image* (Routledge: Abingdon, 2000); Keith M. Wilson, ed., *The International Impact of the Boer War* (Routledge: Abingdon, 2014); and *The Boer War*, (4 parts), 20:00 23/09/1999, Channel 4 <<https://learningonscreen.ac.uk/ondemand/index.php/prog/TV115704?bcast=3004436>> [Accessed 23 May 2018].

100,000 English and European settlers came to the Transvaal region in the 1880s. These immigrants were denied the right to vote by the president of the Transvaal region, Paul Kruger, despite paying taxes and contributing to the growing economy of Johannesburg. The disenfranchisement of these British citizens living in the Transvaal region became the British government's justification for going to war with the Boers, distracting the British public from the true motives of greed and colonialism with laid beneath this conflict. As Kachur states, "the British government mythologized the war as one for independence and freedom for British citizens in the Transvaal – the Uitlanders, as they were called – who had been tyrannized and deprived of political rights under Kruger's oligarchy."<sup>32</sup> While the true reasons for the Boer War was much larger than obtaining civil liberties for the Uitlanders, it provided Britain "the much needed and convenient moral justification for pushing the Transvaal to the brink of hostilities."<sup>33</sup> Further, it is within this specific aspect of the Boer War that the narrative expressed in Tree's *King John* tableaux – and, indeed, in many other spectacular dramas of the *fin-de-siècle* – finds topical resonance.

Kachur argues that the "Magna Charta" tableau is the moment in the production that most warrants reexamination within the context of the Boer War, as it directly engages issues regarding constitutional liberties through a well-known moment in history. She claims that "by adding the tableau, Tree was tacitly revisioning history through the parallax lens of late-Victorian England."<sup>34</sup> By ascribing to the mythological significance of the Magna Charta, Tree both valorized John and "reinscribed the larger macro-myths about the power and greatness of the

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<sup>32</sup> Kachur, p. 34.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

British empire in charting the course of global, political history.”<sup>35</sup> Drawing parallels between characters in the play and political figures involved in the Boer War, Kachur states that Philip of France represented Paul Kruger, the citizens of Angers were the Transvaal British (Uitlanders), and John was the rightful sovereign, “one duty bound to defend his subjects (regardless of where they reside) from foreign, hostile domination.”<sup>36</sup> Thus, Kachur argues that the “Magna Charta” tableau – much like the finale of *Jack in the Beanstalk* that was performed a few months later at Drury Lane and mentioned in the introduction to Part Two – enforced the imperialist agenda and resonated with the topical politics and culture surrounding the war. In this case, King John was positioned as the mythologized benefactor of rights and freedoms and positioning the British citizens abroad as the fortunate recipients of these liberties. Kachur supports her claims by citing evidence from contemporary periodicals which indicate that the political topicality of this tableau was not lost on the audience. After the opening night of Tree’s production, *The Daily Mail* wrote, “Patriotism is in the air ... and the theatre reflects it,”<sup>37</sup> while *Fun* stated outright that the production “raises speculation as to whether Philip of France was well advised to try and crush the *Uitlanders*.”<sup>38</sup> Further to these reviews, one of the most prominent figures associated with the Boer War, Joseph Chamberlain, was present on the opening night of the performance: he occupied “a guest seat in the royal box and made his presence known by advancing to the box’s edge and bowing low during the opening bar of the national anthem.”<sup>39</sup> *The Freeman’s Journal*

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<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>37</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 29.

<sup>38</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 36.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 30.

reported that Chamberlain demonstratively applauded many of the “jingo passages and declamatory vaunts about war and the might of England” throughout the performance.<sup>40</sup>

Ellison’s criticism of Kachur’s work claims that her reading of the performance against the political backdrop of the Boer War “silence[s] contradictory or questioning voices” which might not be in support of the establishment.<sup>41</sup> Ellison posits that there were subtextual, anti-imperialist messages that underpinned the production, stating that “readings which suggest that Tree was ‘complicit’ with a popular desire to steal the Boers’ gold in an act of imperial expansionism only represent one side of the case.”<sup>42</sup> Certainly, Ellison is right in pointing out that although the imperial ethos was dominant in late-Victorian culture, there were certainly dissenters who were not in support of Britain’s imperial aims, and the Boer Wars were a particular source of disagreement. He is also correct in stating that in theatre historians’ evaluations of collective perspectives, we must give credence to the often underrepresented and dissenting minority, rather than basing our sense of a production’s meanings on a few reviews. However, it is important to point out that Kachur’s work does not rest on the assumption that the general public were all sympathetic to the imperialist agenda, but rather rests on evidence related to Tree’s intent as actor-manager for these scenes. From Kachur’s perspective, Tree’s design for the “Magna Charta” tableau and the subsequent responses from critics and audiences evidence the topical imperialism that lay beneath the scene. Yet, Ellison claims that Tree himself was not in support of Britain’s imperial presence in the Transvaal region, and thus, claims that the “Magna Charta” tableau was underpinned by covert, anti-imperialist expressions that reflected

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<sup>40</sup> Quoted in *Ibid.*, p. 30. Chamberlain was a notable supporter of Shakespeare and funded the Birmingham Shakespeare Library, which opened in 1868.

<sup>41</sup> Ellison, p. 304.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 305-6.

the actor-manager's personal political leanings. Resolving this discrepancy requires a deeper look into Tree's personal perspectives on imperialism before relating these notions back to his *King John* tableaux.

Ellison's evidence for an anti-imperialist reading of Tree's production is shaky, rooted in incorrect assumptions that rest, quite problematically, on the activity of Tree's wife, Maud Tree, at the opening of the run. Around the time Tree was staging *King John*, Maud had planned to recite Rudyard Kipling's poem "The Absent Minded Beggar" at the Palace Theatre (and later at other music halls) as a part of a charity event which raised money for the British soldiers involved in the Boer War.<sup>43</sup> In her account of this activity, she notes that Tree expressed disapproval of her participation in the event, a fact which Ellison cites as proof that Tree was not in support of the Boer War. Yet, further on in the same source cited by Ellison, Maud provides the precise reason for Tree's disapproval, which had nothing to do with her support for the war and everything to do with the fact that she was to recite the poem in a music hall. Maud expresses her trepidation in even telling Tree of her plan to take part in this fundraiser stating, "I hardly dared to [tell Herbert], for in those days a feud, with Herbert as commander-in-chief, was raging between theatres and music halls."<sup>44</sup> Tree had openly expressed disdain for the changes of laws and licensing of music halls, and the subsequent effect this would have on "legitimate" theatres such as Her Majesty's. Tree's disapproval, however, did not prevent Maud from carrying on with the event. Maud reveals that eventually, Tree "gave his consent, though on the condition that I used none of my salary myself, but devoted the whole of it to the war."<sup>45</sup> Thus, contrary to

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<sup>43</sup> See Maud Tree, "Herbert and I", in *Herbert Beerbohm Tree: Some Memories of Him and His Art*, ed. by Max Beerbohm (London: Hutchinson & Co., 1920), pp. 1-170.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 112.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 113. Maud's original plan was to keep half of the salary herself and donate the other half to war efforts.

Ellison's assertion that Tree's disapproval of Maud's recitation of "The Absent Minded Beggar" stemmed from his opposition to the war, a complete consultation of Maud's account of these events shows that the evidence points in the opposite direction of Ellison's claims and outright confirms Tree's support for the Boer War.

Ellison also cites the fact that Tree was a Liberal (which he gleans from Max Beerbohm) as further evidence to support his claim that the *King John* tableaux had underlying anti-imperialist meanings. However, Tree's own writings provide a more accurate look into his thoughts on colonialism and imperialism than those of his half-brother, and they show that while Tree may have considered himself a Liberal, he was in full support of Britain's imperial agenda. In an essay entitled "Our Betters", Tree states:

We [our generation] believe that the most civilizing factor for mankind is the supremacy of the Anglo-Saxon race – the defence of that supremacy is therefore the business of Great Britain. Foreign nations may claim, and claim with reason, that England took her colonies by force. The past history of the world has been to take what one wants and trust to one's luck and one's power to keep it ... Take what you want, but take it gracefully – then apologise for having it, but keep it all the same, and then put a sentry over it. This has answered very well in our colonial policy. But the reason why England has kept her colonies is that she has not only the genius of 'give and take'; she has the yet greater genius of 'take and give' – the genius of a sympathetic understanding of alien races. Her tyranny is tempered by humanity.<sup>46</sup>

Tree's words typify the idea of Britain as a benevolent empire. Here, his liberalism intersects with the view of the empire as sympathetic and humane, creating an idealized definition of imperialism that could both fit within liberal philosophies and justify the imperial agenda.

Tree was not alone in this idealized view of the imperial agenda. His philosophy is mirrored in political cartoons of the era, which also suggested that British imperialism would eventually

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<sup>46</sup> Tree, *Thoughts and After-thoughts*, pp. 25-7.



bring about universal peace and enlightenment. Figure 2.16, entitled “When the War is Over” (1900) promises an “enlightened government” for the Boers and indigenous Africans under British rule. Through the dominant positioning of Britannia in the image and the racially typified depictions of an African and an injured Boer, the image expresses an overt sense of Anglo-Saxon supremacy, clearly prioritizing British life, values, and culture over that of the Africans and the Boers. Wearing an armored helmet and holding a sword, Britannia pulls back the curtain on an futuristic, British-controlled Africa, suggesting that with the right amount of imperial and militaristic power, the British could enlighten the rest of the world through colonization. Signifiers of Victorian progress such as the railroad can be seen in the distance, reminiscent of the railway that connected the British Empire in miniature featured in the aforementioned Festival of Empire. Through the imagery of stage and curtain, the cartoon also gives a nod to the theatricality and performativity of imperialism.



Figure 2.16: Udo Keppler, “When the War is Over”, *Puck*, Vol. 47, no. 1212 (30 May 1900).

A further exploration of Tree's personal reflections on the imperial agenda reveals that he imagined a similar utopia under British colonial rule. For while Tree was definitely an imperial sympathizer, he was also expressly pacifist, and believed that "a general disarmament is the ideal towards which humanity is striving all over the world."<sup>47</sup> A pacifist imperialist seems counterintuitive, particularly in the wake of the brutality of the Boer Wars, but Tree found a balance between these opposing philosophies by considering Art, rather than war, as the most effective method of assimilating and educating other cultures. This idea harkens back to Singh's work mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, which shows how the colonization of India was largely dependent on indoctrinating the nation with the language, literature, and art of Western cultures. This seems to have also been true in South Africa. Furthering his own agenda, Tree states that a universal, utopian society could emerge under humane sovereignty through non-military methods of assimilation:

[...] It may be that in the next half-century mankind will see a revolution which shall bring ... happiness which is derived from the exercise of the most humanizing of all the influence – I mean that which is bestowed by Art. Is it not possible that the gentle tapping at the earth's crust may find an echo in the hearts of the peoples of the earth, who will arise in the might of a new-born religion and will knock at the gates of the world's conscience, singing in unison the hymn of humanity, and crying 'Thou shalt do no murder – even for the divine right of kings'; when frontiers shall be swept away and there shall be one brotherhood of man, one flag, one language, and one religion, the religion of Humanity; when the people shall be generalised by the dreamers, the poets, the philosophers, the seers and singers, the artists of the world? It is men like Christ, Sophocles, Dante, Shakespeare, Cervantes, and Goethe rather than the heroic slaughterers of history who have the abiding influence in the advancement of mankind.<sup>48</sup>

This shows that Tree subscribed to a more sympathetic notion of imperialism, wherein the world's differences could be reconciled, apparently under the signs of Western literature,

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<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 27.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

religion, and philosophy. This comment is self-serving, for it framed the very art that Tree made in his theatre as a force of education and, importantly, assimilation. The idea was that if every person could be exposed to such levels of high culture, they could become unified under the “teachings” of the national poet and other figureheads of Western culture. This not only elevated the perceived role of the theatre as a place where one could become indoctrinated with the aims of the empire, but placed Tree at the center of an imagined imperial expansion that, in his view, would ultimately result in a utopian society unified under the lemma of humanity. This distinction is not just important for clarifying Tree’s political views, but also for deepening our understanding of what the tableaux were supposed to achieve in his production of *King John*. These scenes become vehicles for achieving a snapshot of the utopia Tree envisaged – a post-imperialist, disarmed world unified by the philosophies embedded in Western high culture – that were also refracted through largely invented understandings of English history via Shakespeare.

Based on this evidence from Tree’s personal writing alone, it seems that Kachur’s original reading of the Magna Charta tableau as supporting the imperial agenda is upheld, largely because there is significant evidence that supports that the actor-manager was sympathetic to the aims of the empire. And if we consider the Magna Charta tableau along with “The Fight” and Rôze’s incidental music, Kachur’s reading of Tree’s production is reinforced further. The intensity of the accompaniment for “The Fight” and the opening bars for the “Magna Charta” gives a nod to Tree’s pacifist views, suggesting that war is a necessary evil in the building of the Empire. The music’s resolution in the “joyous rainbow strain” holds the promise of a future utopia under imperial sovereignty, that same benevolent sovereignty of humanity that Tree understands as the ultimate imperial achievement. Importantly, the “joyous rainbow strain” not only concluded the

Magna Charta tableau but also was recapitulated at the end of the play to accompany the Bastard's notoriously nationalistic final speech:

This England never did, nor never shall,  
Lie at the proud foot of a conqueror  
But when it first did help to wound itself.  
Now these her princes are come home again,  
Come the three corners of the world in arms  
And we shall shock them! Naught shall make us rue,  
If England to itself do rest but true (5.7.112-8).

As Max Beerbohm described, these words are those "... in which poetry of patriotism finds the noblest expression."<sup>49</sup> The Bastard represented something deeply national and topical for Victorians, the height of imperial achievement, boasting of the greatness of the English nation. As Brandes wrote in 1909, "he is John Bull himself in the guise of a mediaeval knight, equipped with great strength and racy English humour ... befitting an English Hercules."<sup>50</sup> Of all the characters in the play, it was the Bastard who embodied the mythology of the imperialist ethos, and in Tree's production, he represented something acutely patriotic in a contemporary sense. The accompanying music for this speech only furthered the effect of these final lines. Annotations in the promptbook show that the music crescendoed at the line "This England", continuing to swell until the end of the play, which finally concluded with the monks of Swinstead Abbey chanting "Amen, Amen, Amen." The recapitulation of the "joyous rainbow strain" at this precise moment (coupled with Joseph Chamberlain's demonstrative applause from the box), ratifies and underlines the production's approval of the aims of the British Empire. It not only insists that England will "never ... lie at the proud foot of a conqueror" but that England

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<sup>49</sup> Max Beerbohm, *The Saturday Review*, 30 September 1899, quoted in *Shakespeare in the Theatre: An Anthology of Criticism*, ed. by Stanley Wells, p. 161.

<sup>50</sup> Brandes, p. 144.

has been and presumably always will be the conqueror rather than the conquered. As Tree described the final scene, “the sun rises in all its glory, symbolizing the bright future for England after all her troubles.”<sup>51</sup>

As such, a thorough evaluation of the incidental music, Tree’s political writings, and the production papers reveals that there is no indication that this scene was intended to be read through an anti-imperialist lens. Instead, the tableaux were intended to elicit a calculated, pro-imperialist response to the aims of the British Empire by presenting a revisionist history of King John’s reign. In a topical sense, Britain’s action in the Boer War was justified in Tree’s production of *King John* through the presentation of an invented history that justified and encouraged the idea of a benevolent empire. The Magna Carta was positioned as the first step towards the Pax Britannia, which was itself the first of many steps towards a future, universally enlightened, and humanitarian world. Thus, the connection between the tableaux in this production and the Boer War is backed by evidence from contemporary reviews and Tree’s personal writing. As a review in *The Athenaeum* stated, “[...] there is no question that recent events will lend [the play’s] patriotic language to the utmost possible significance. It is long since a Shakespearean performance has been more picturesque or illuminating.”<sup>52</sup> Thus, Tree’s production was far from a mere reenactment of history, but rather a series of historical episodes that could be easily interpreted through the lens of late-Victorian politics and warfare. The British defeat of the French at Angers and the granting of the Magna Carta represented a mythological nation that the Victorians sought to emulate and even surpass in their modern-day imperialist

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<sup>51</sup> Tree, *Souvenir Programme*, HBT/000142/1.

<sup>52</sup> “King John,” *The Athenaeum*, 23 September 1899, p. 427, quoted in *Shakespearean Criticism*, Vol. 24, ed. by Sandra L. Williamson, (Farmington Hills: Cengage Gale, 1994), pp. 200-1 (p. 201).

aims. Shakespeare's dramatization of *King John* and Tree's rendering of the play at Her Majesty's became a way of processing, understanding, and even justifying the imperialism of the Boer War.

I conclude this chapter with a final piece of evidence for this, found in a part book for cello (Figure 2.17). It is an anonymous sketch of a monk from *King John* with the caption "Who said Boer's?" written below in pencil. The caption not only establishes a definitive connection between the Boer War and Tree's *King John* (at least in the mind of a cellist in the orchestra for Her Majesty's Theatre), but further evidences the use of the chanting monks at the end of the play as patriots who condone the nation's imperial agenda. This marginalia provides a glimpse into the atmosphere of 1899, perhaps even the atmosphere of Tree's theatre, and suggests that these tableaux were deeply political and topical, late-Victorian imaginings of the nation's past and present imperial attitudes.

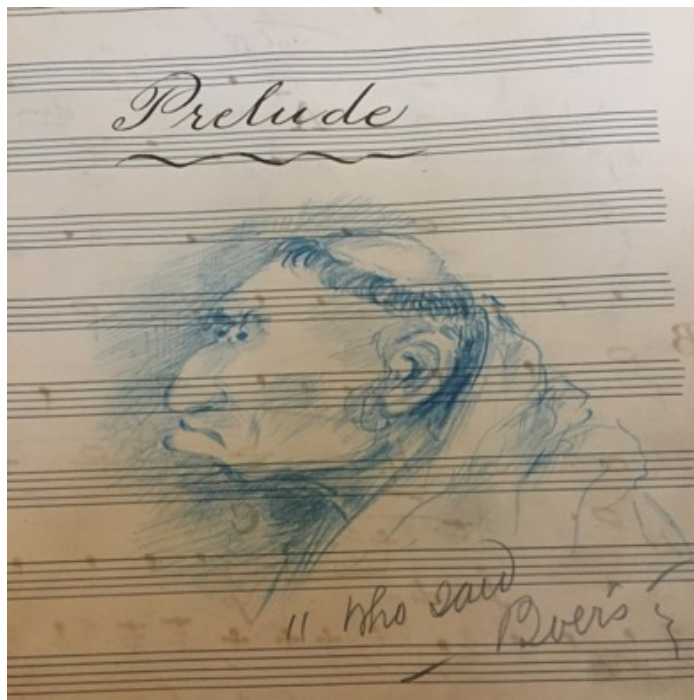


Figure 2.17: Anonymous illustration of a monk found in cellist's part book from *King John*, with a caption reading "Who said Boer's"

## Part Three: Shakespeare and the Myth of National Religion

### Introduction

The final part of this thesis begins with two images of Shakespeare as an infant painted by George Romney for the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery (1799): “The Infant Shakespeare Attended by Nature and the Passions” (Figure 3.1) and its companion piece “The Infant Shakespeare Nursed by Tragedy and Comedy” (Figure 3.2). The first painting is a clear appropriation of the Nativity, presenting Shakespeare as a Christ-like figure whose influence on humanity is predetermined at his birth. The figures that surround him, Nature (painted in the likeness of aforementioned tableaux artist Emma Hamilton) and the Passions (based on Charles Le Brun’s late-seventeenth-century illustrations),<sup>1</sup> contextualize the genesis of Shakespeare within a distinct Romantic framework. The relationship between the infant Shakespeare, Nature, and the Passions moves two ways. On one hand, Nature and the Passions are gifts to Shakespeare, positioned as catalysts of his forthcoming “genius” and anointing him as a demi-god deserving of worship. On the other hand, and as Sillars observes, Nature and the Passions also await poetical redemption and rebirth by Shakespeare, implying that the poet’s forthcoming works will do full justice to them, perfectly expressing the essence of nature, emotion, and the human experience.<sup>2</sup> The painting suggests that, like Christ, Shakespeare was sent down from heaven to redeem and enlighten, a message confirmed by the beam of light shining down upon the infant, drawing the

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<sup>1</sup> See Charles Le Brun, *The Passions of the Human Mind, exhibited in a representation of its various virtues and vices* (London: Charles Piccot, Thomas Boydell, and Charles Sayer, 1760?), in *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, [17 June 2018], pp. 1-21; and Charles Le Brun, *A method to learn to design the passions* (London: n.p., 1734), p. 28, *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*, [25 January 2019].

<sup>2</sup> Stuart Sillars, *Painting Shakespeare*, p. 139.

eye toward the babe and then upward to the source of heavenly light and floating *putti* in the distance.



Figure 3.1: *The Infant Shakespeare*, painted by George Romney, engraving by Benjamin Smith.



Figure 3.2: *Shakspeare Nursed by Tragedy and Comedy*, painted by George Romney, engraving by Benjamin Smith.



Romney's second illustration depicts Shakespeare being nursed by Tragedy and Comedy, for which Sarah Siddons and Hamilton, once again, serve as uncredited models.<sup>3</sup> As with the first painting, the relationship between the infant and the figures surrounding him moves two ways. Indicated by the painting's title, Comedy and Tragedy nurse the infant, positioned as influencers of his formative years. As Comedy wraps her arm around the child, Tragedy offers him a trumpet, placing it to his lips as if providing a mouthpiece for his future art. Grasping the trumpet, Shakespeare responds to their coddling, suggesting a future in which his "music" will come to perfectly embody these personified dramatic genres. The figures are in a pastoral setting, flanked by what Sillars calls "an undoubtedly English group of trees," indicating that "the infant is a phenomenon not only of nature, but of specifically English nature."<sup>4</sup> When read alongside the first painting, this second iteration reminds the viewer that while Shakespeare is a gift to humanity, he is especially a gift to and a product of England. His perceived divinity is not necessarily universal, but instead, a divine right to which England can make sole claim.

These paintings make visible three strands of Romantic thought that reverberate throughout this chapter and that gesture towards ways in which Shakespeare was processed as a cultural and religious commodity for much of the nineteenth century. The first is Shakespeare's imagined status as an omnipotent, god-like figure, capable of understanding and expressing the truth of nature. This line of thinking is echoed in the writings of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, particularly in his assertion that "Shakespeare is the Spinozistic deity – an omnipresent

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<sup>3</sup> For more on Siddons' presence in Romantic paintings based on Shakespeare, see Roger Manvell, *Sarah Siddons: portrait of an actress*; and Robyn Asleson, Shelley Bennett, and Mark Leonard, *A Passion for Performance: Sarah Siddons and her Portraitists*.

<sup>4</sup> Sillars, *Painting Shakespeare*, p. 139.

creativity.”<sup>5</sup> Framing the national poet within the seventeenth-century philosophy of Baruch Spinoza (1632-1677) and the theology of pantheism, Coleridge understands Shakespeare as a manifestation of the divine, god-like in his ability to see and express the truth of nature.<sup>6</sup>

Coleridge’s “On Poesy or Art” (1818) further illuminates his claim as he relates the Spinozistic concepts of *natura naturans* (passive nature) and *natura naturata* (active nature) to the creation of art and poetry, stating:

If the artist copies the mere nature, the *natura naturata*, what idle rivalry! If he proceeds only from a given form, which is supposed to answer to the notion of beauty, what an emptiness, what an unreality there is in his productions ... Believe me, you must master the essence, the *natura naturans*, which presupposes a bond between nature in the higher sense and the soul of man.<sup>7</sup>

Coleridge communicates a view of Shakespeare as an embodiment of the Spinozan concept of *natura naturans*, presupposing an innate bond between “nature in the higher sense” and Shakespeare’s soul. Coleridge’s thought resonates with that behind Romney’s first painting, suggesting that the “omnipotent creativity” of the poet will not merely imitate Nature and the Passions (*natura naturata*) but, to use Coleridge’s words once again, “imitate that which is within the thing ... the *Natur-geist*, or spirit of nature.”<sup>8</sup> As Romney’s second painting reminds us, this *Natur-geist* is a specifically English spirit of nature, a reflection of both national poet and nation.

The second strand of Romantic thought made visible in Romney’s paintings is suggested through his choice to illustrate Nature, the Passions, Tragedy, and Comedy by modelling them on Hamilton, Siddons, and the illustrations of Le Brun. Through their presence in these images,

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<sup>5</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, *Table Talk of Samuel Taylor Coleridge, and The Rime of the ancient mariner, Christabel, &c.* (London: Routledge, 1884), in *Internet Archive* [01 September 2019], p. 80.

<sup>6</sup> For more on Spinoza’s philosophy, see Baruch Spinoza, *Principles of Cartesian Philosophy*, trans. Harry E. Wedeck (New York: Philosophical Library, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, ‘On Poesy and Art’, in *English essays, from Sir Philip Sidney to Macaulay*, Vol. XXVII. The Harvard Classics, (New York: P.F. Collier & Son, 1909-14; Barleby.com, 2001), [20 June 2018].

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

Shakespeare is explicitly linked with contemporary art and culture, and most importantly, artists who were, like Shakespeare, praised for their fidelity to nature. Describing Hamilton in 1809, William Hayley stated, “Her features, like the language of Shakespeare, could exhibit all the feelings of nature, and all the gradations of every passion, with a most fascinating truth, and felicity of expression.”<sup>9</sup> Similarly, William Hazlitt described Siddons’ acting, particularly in tragic scenes, as “something above nature . . . She embodied to our imagination the fables of mythology, of the heroic and deified mortals of elder time. She was not less than a goddess, or than a prophetess inspired by the gods.”<sup>10</sup> These descriptions situate both Hamilton and Siddons as the performative embodiments of the same mythological spirit of nature that Coleridge describes in Shakespeare. In other words, their respective modes of artistic expression are seen to do justice to the preeminent language of nature: Shakespeare’s poetry.

Here, there is a suggestion of spiritual linkage between the art of Hamilton and Siddons with that of Shakespeare, which carries direct implications for the *tableaux vivants* discussed in the following chapters. For if Shakespeare’s poetry is taken as an expression of god-in-nature, then perfectly to express Shakespeare is also to embody the divine. In Hamilton’s case, her tableaux and attitudes were seen to rival Shakespeare’s poetry in expressing “all the feelings of nature, and all the gradations of every passion” with an utmost spirit of truth. Sillars observes this phenomenon in his analysis of Romney’s *Cassandra Raving*, another painting that brings both Shakespeare and Hamilton together, stating that “In presenting Emma Hart [Hamilton 1791] as a Shakespearean figure Romney is propounding a new kind of relationship between Shakespeare

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<sup>9</sup> Thomas Joseph Pettigrew, *Memoirs of the Life of Vice-Admiral, Lord Viscount Nelson, etc.*, Vol. 2 (London: T. and W. Boone, 1849), p. 598.

<sup>10</sup> William Hazlitt, from ‘On Posthumous Fame, -- Whether Shakspeare was influenced by a love of it? (1814)’ in *The Romantics on Shakespeare*, ed. by Jonathan Bate (London: Penguin, 1992), pp. 164-94 (p. 167).

and contemporary culture, which, by implication, relocates the plays on the same level as ... episodes from Greek mythology and classical tragedy.”<sup>11</sup> In his infant Shakespeare paintings, Romney does not just mythologize Shakespeare, but does so within expressly English and Christian frameworks, relocating the earliest moment of Shakespeare’s infancy as a Biblical event. In Siddons’ case, the suggestion is that by perfectly performing Shakespeare’s works, she is brought closer to God in a sort of temporary spiritual ascension, becoming, to use Hazlitt’s words again, “a prophetess inspired by the gods.” Such views were not solely articulated in the Romantic period, but persisted throughout the nineteenth and into the early twentieth centuries, echoed in Tree’s statement that “the actor ... is lifted above himself in giving utterance to the poet’s soaring words ... upborne on their wings into the heights of imagination and emotion.”<sup>12</sup> To perform Shakespeare, according to Tree, was “to live for a time being in the rarer ether half-way between earth and heaven as in an airship of the mind.”<sup>13</sup>

This brings me to the final strand of thought related to Shakespeare and religion relevant to this chapter: the idea that Shakespeare’s works were full of moral teachings, viewed as quasi-Biblical narratives in their instruction of humanity. Both Shakespeare’s perceived status as god-like and the view of his poetry as a perfect expression of god-in-nature helped to endorse a view of his works as morally didactic. Again, Coleridge’s work reflects such a view, particularly his 1813 “Lectures on the Characteristics of Shakespear”, which twice states that Shakespeare kept “at all times to the high road of life,” claiming that the morality found in the national poet is

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<sup>11</sup> Sillars, *Painting Shakespeare*, p. 138.

<sup>12</sup> Herbert Beerbohm Tree, *Nothing Matters, and other stories* (London: Cassell & Co. Ltd., 1917), p. 229.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

unrivalled in the work of any other writer.<sup>14</sup> In 1894, James Bell referred to the King James Bible and Shakespeare's works as "the two noblest possessions of the English-speaking peoples," "the greatest achievements of the Anglo-Saxon race," and "as twin inspirers of all that is best in life and thought, in aspiration and faith."<sup>15</sup> Thus, Victorians could improve their moral standing and religious education through an intimacy with Shakespeare's works, either through readership, spectatorship, or performance, particularly if attention was paid to Biblical allusions in the texts. Some Victorians even went so far as to suggest that these allusions evidenced Shakespeare's personal religious beliefs. While some argued that Shakespeare was Catholic,<sup>16</sup> Paul Franssen points out that "in most early fantasies of Shakespeare's life, the default assumption seems to be that the National Poet must have been a model Anglican."<sup>17</sup> As Richard Foulkes notes, Charles Wordsworth in his 1864 tercentenary sermon "was convinced not only of Shakespeare's religious faith, but his 'conformity as a member of the Church of England.'"<sup>18</sup> Additionally, William Henry Ireland's 1795 Shakespeare forgeries insisted on the national poet's Protestantism through a supposed signed profession of faith, as Jeffrey Kahan, Zoltán Haraszti, and Tom Lockwood have discussed.<sup>19</sup> Thus, Shakespeare's perceived omnipotence was not merely philosophical, for

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<sup>14</sup> Samuel Taylor Coleridge, 'Lectures on the Characteristics of Shakespear', in *The Romantics on Shakespeare*, ed. Jonathan Bate (London: Penguin, 1992), pp. 128-63 (p. 130).

<sup>15</sup> James Bell, *Biblical and Shakespearean Characters Compared* (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, and Kent, 1894), pp. 166-7, 178.

<sup>16</sup> For *fin-de-siècle* arguments for Shakespeare's Catholicism, see Henry Sebastian Bowden, *The Religion of Shakespeare* (London: Burns & Oats, 1899); and William Richard Harris, *The Catholic atmosphere of Shakespeare's dramas* (Toronto: Rainbow, Loretto Abbey, 1917). For modern analysis, see David N. Beauregard, *Catholic Theology in Shakespeare's Plays* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2008).

<sup>17</sup> Paul Franssen, 'The Bard and Ireland: Shakespeare's Protestantism as Politics in Disguise', *Shakespeare Survey*, Vol. 54, (2001), pp. 71-9, (p. 72).

<sup>18</sup> Richard Foulkes, *Church and Stage in Victorian England* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997), p. 103.

<sup>19</sup> See Jeffrey Kahan, 'The Curse of Shakespeare', in *Shakespearean Gothic* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008), who calls the forgery 'Shakespeare's signed adherence to Protestantism,' (p. 62). See also Zoltán Haraszti, 'Ireland's Shakespeare Forgeries', *More Books: The Bulletin of the Boston Public Library*, Vol. 9 (1934); and Tom Lockwood, 'Manuscript, Print and the Authentic Shakespeare: The Ireland Forgeries Again', *Shakespeare Survey*,

the national poet was repeatedly conscripted into service of the national religion. In this intermingling of an organized, state-sponsored religion and the national poet, Shakespeare could be used to convey or promote a specific religious “truth” that also resonated with the Victorian and Edwardian sense of national identity.

In considering these three strands of Romantic thought that bring together national poet and national religion, Part 3 explores how Shakespeare’s perceived authority as a quasi-religious figure was used to respond to some of the acute, religious ideological crises and controversial public events of the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. Just as Shakespeare was used to promote the idea of an idyllic Merrie England (Part One) and an all-powerful British Empire (Part Two), so too were his works used to promote and interrogate the state of Protestantism, and especially Anglicanism, in the nineteenth century. In the same way that Arcadian and imperial myths were tethered to the national self-image, religion also underpinned the nation’s overarching identity. For as Sydney Eisen observes, “Religion was not only a matter of belief but also an integral part of personal and public morality, family life, social position, occupation, and friendship, not to mention education and party politics.”<sup>20</sup> Eisen sees that “convulsions of belief” experienced throughout the nineteenth century “found expression in some of the best (and worst) literature of the day,”<sup>21</sup> and following this suggestion, I argue that such “convulsions of belief” are also observable in performances of Shakespeare, specifically in the *tableaux vivants* featured in Victorian and Edwardian productions. If the gestural acting of Siddons and the attitudes of Hamilton were considered perfect artistic expressions for conveying

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Vol. 59, (2006), pp. 108-23. To read the profession of faith, see W.H. Ireland, *Miscellaneous papers and legal instruments under the hand and seal of William Shakespeare* (London: Mr. Egerton [etc.], 1796).

<sup>20</sup> Sydney Eisen, *Victorian Faith in Crisis* (London: MacMillan, 1990), pp. 2-3.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 3.

the spirit of Nature in Shakespeare, then the tableaux interpolated into Victorian and Edwardian performances of Shakespeare – perhaps influenced by Siddons’ and Hamilton’s earlier artforms – held similar potential. Like paintings and dances, interpolated tableaux and dumb shows are forms by which someone can make claims about what Shakespeare means without Shakespeare’s words getting in the way. Within these religiously-charged scenes specifically, Shakespeare could be used to convey or promote a specific religious “truth”. For if a reader, playgoer, or performer could be brought closer to God, or at least morally enlightened, by Shakespeare, then specific moments in his plays could be used to propagate distinct socio-religious views within nineteenth-century society.

By examining a selection of religiously-themed tableaux featured in Victorian and Edwardian Shakespeare performances and by considering their meanings within the larger context of British Protestantism across the century, I will argue that the topical, religious tensions that existed in London during the nineteenth century directly informed tableaux seen in Shakespeare performances. In Chapter Five, I explore the relationship between the Gothic Revival and the tableau of Katherine’s vision (4.2) as performed in Charles Kean’s 1855 staging of *Henry VIII*, arguing that Kean’s visual design for the scene and Hatton’s accompanying incidental music align with central religious tenets that underpinned the ritualism advocated in mid-century by the Oxford Movement. Alternatively in Chapter Six, I explore religious tensions that existed between Jewish immigrants and Christians in *fin-de-siècle* London, focusing on an array of interpolated tableaux in Tree’s 1908 production of *The Merchant of Venice* that directly responded to the anti-Semitism embedded in the Anti-Aliens Act of 1905. Rather than using Shakespeare as a proponent for British Protestantism (as Kean did in his tableau of Katherine’s vision), I argue that Tree interrogated and criticized the state of Christianity and British

Protestantism in Edwardian London, particularly in relationship to Judaism. In both chapters, incidental music is key to understanding the meaning and affect of these tableaux, guiding the audience on emotional journeys that directly respond to religious events and ideologies of the period. Thus, Part 3 uncovers the role of Shakespeare and accompanied *tableaux vivants* as mediums for expressing British religious identities and explores expressions of Protestantism (specifically High Anglicanism or Anglo-Catholicism), Roman Catholicism, and Judaism as they appear in tableaux on the nineteenth-century Shakespearean stage.



## Chapter Five: Katherine's Vision and the Gothic Revival

When Charles Kean staged Katherine's vision in his 1855 production of *Henry VIII*, he broke a stage tradition followed by John Philip Kemble, George Cooke, and many other actor-managers at the turn of the nineteenth century. Kean's predecessors were not punctilious about following the stage directions printed in the First Folio, omitting the "six Personages, clad in white robes" who dance around Katherine and offer her a crown of garlands (4.2.82.1-82.17). Instead, they accompanied the scene with George Frederick Handel's aria "Angels Ever Bright and Fair", originally written for his 1750 oratorio *Theodora*.<sup>1</sup> Though *Theodora* as a whole was not well-liked, and, consequently, was rarely performed during the period, this aria proved to have an afterlife separate from the oratorio, perhaps because of its longtime inclusion in this scene. Arrangements of the aria were printed by a variety of music publishing companies throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, with over forty arrangements from that period still held at the British Library today.<sup>2</sup> The lyrics were also printed in a variety of acting editions published in the early part of the century, evidencing its widespread use in *Henry VIII* performances.<sup>3</sup>

Cooke's and Kemble's promptbooks (1811 and 1804, respectively) reveal that they chose to stage the scene in an oratory (Figures 3.3-3.6).<sup>4</sup> The designs are fairly plain, containing only a few pieces of furniture. J. Greatbatch's engraving of the scene, based on the painting by F.E.

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<sup>1</sup> Listen to professional recording of Handel's "Angel's Ever Bright and Fair". Link provided in the Appendix.

<sup>2</sup> This was determined by simple catalogue search of the British Library's collections. Date of publications ranges from 1750-1893.

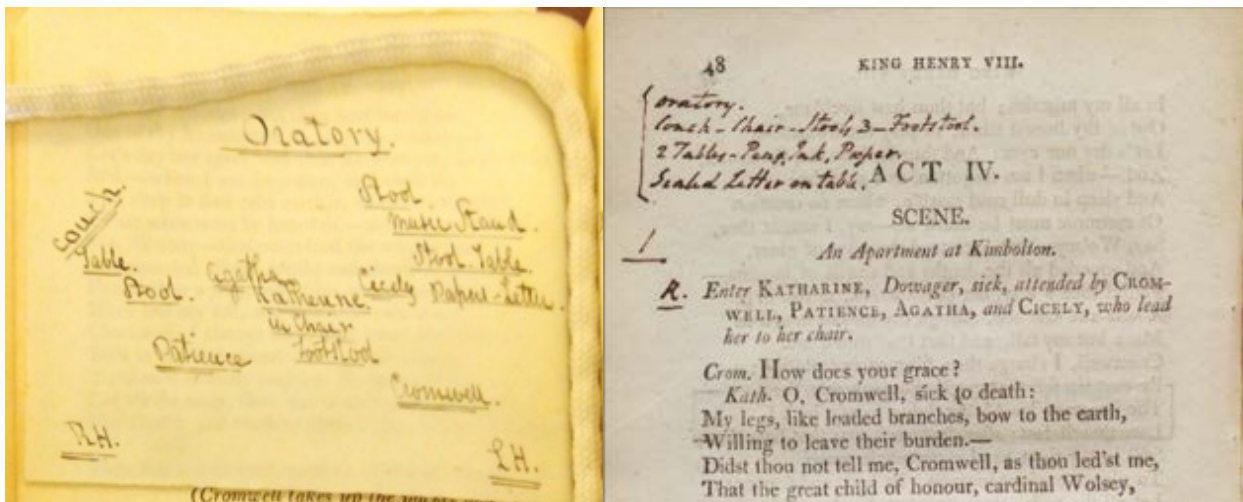
<sup>3</sup> Lyrics are printed in place of 4.2 stage directions in Inchbald Edition (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme, and Brown, 1808); and J.P. Kemble's acting edition (London: Longman, et. al., 1804).

<sup>4</sup> George Cooke, *Henry VIII* promptbook, 1811, Harvard Theatre Collection, TS Promptbook Sh154.212; John Phillip Kemble, *Henry VIII* promptbook, Folger Shakespeare Library, Henry VIII 17 (Shattuck 7), Adam Matthew, Marlborough, Shakespeare in Performance: Prompt Books from the Folger Shakespeare Library. Web. [Accessed 7 July 2018].

Stephanoff, was pasted into Cooke’s promptbook, recalling something like a voice recital, wherein Patience performs the aria on the stage while Katherine silently sleeps (Figure 3.6). In this staging, the vision becomes an entirely internal experience, and the audience does not witness any visualizations of Katherine’s apotheosis. Rather, Katherine’s vision is communicated through Thomas Morell’s libretto:

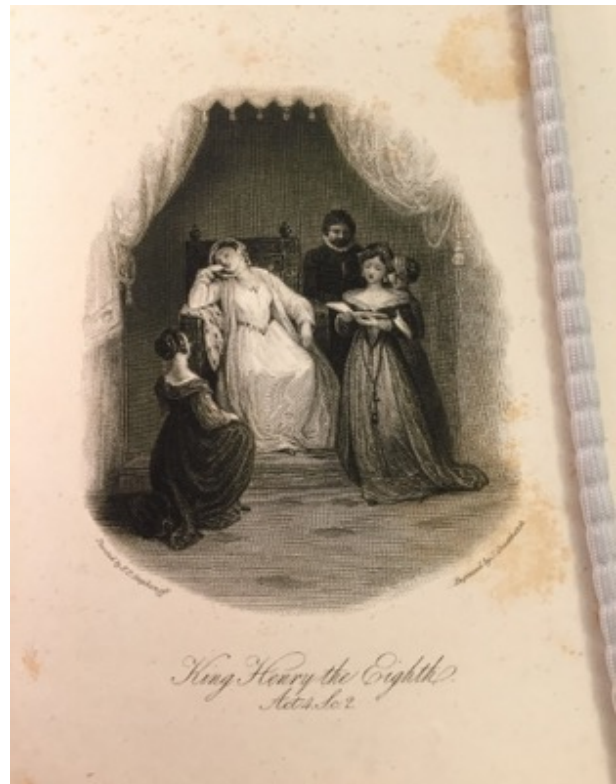
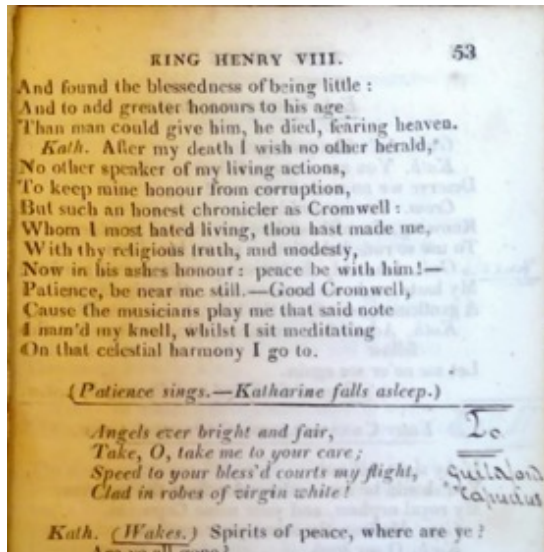
Angels ever bright and fair,  
 Take oh take me to your care;  
 Speed to your bless’d courts my flight,  
 Clad in robes of virgin white!<sup>5</sup>

These words function slightly differently than the Folio stage directions that Kean would eventually reinstate. Though they describe a host of angels ushering the speaker into heaven, the words themselves are a prayer. Within the context of the oratorio, they are a prayer of deliverance sung by Theodora, but here, they are used to describe Katherine’s vision experience. Though Patience sings the words “take oh take *me* to your care”, the first-person pronoun still applies to Katherine, who sits frozen in a posture of quiet suffering behind the singer.



Figures 3.3-3.4: (left) Design for Cooke’s 4.2; (right) Design for Kemble’s 4.2.

<sup>5</sup> George Frederick Handel, *Theodora; an oratorio in score* (London: N.P., 1787), in *Internet Archive*, <<https://archive.org/details/theodoraoratorio00hand/page/16/mode/2up>> [15 February 2018].



Figures 3.5-3.6: (left) Kemble promptbook with “Angels Ever Bright and Fair” printed in place of Folio’s stage directions; (right) Engraving of Act 4, scene 2, pasted into Cooke’s Promptbook.

In contrast to the stripped-back staging of Cooke and Kemble, Kean’s concept for this tableau (Figure 3.7) reintroduced the angels, which had not been performed as a part of the scene for over 100 years.<sup>6</sup> Kean did not just restore them, but skillfully created the illusion of floating angels through the use of stage machinery and forced limelight, expanding upon a feature in his 1854 production of Dion Boucicault’s *Faust and Marguerite*, which closed with a tableau of Marguerite being carried to heaven in the arms of angels.<sup>7</sup> Kean’s angels descended from above, supported by iron harnesses and emerging through a “slant of light which poured in at the Gothic window of Katherine’s room in Kimbolton Castle.”<sup>8</sup> This effect was achieved by painting Gothic

<sup>6</sup> Richard Schoch, *Shakespeare’s Victorian Stage*, p. 164.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Godfrey Turner, ‘Show and its value’, *The Theatre*, May 1884, p. 231.

windows on “a transparency or painted scrim,” which when “lit from behind with a focused limelight,” gave the illusion of a heavenly beam of light emerging through the windows and back-lighting the angels, helpfully concealing the iron supports attached to the actors.<sup>9</sup> As a review in the *Morning Post* recounted, “the solid masonry of the castle wall gradually and noiselessly disappears, and seven angels – beautiful exceedingly – are seen descending on a golden sunbeam.”<sup>10</sup>



Figure 3.7: Frank Lloyds, *The Vision of Queen Katherine*, Princess’s Theatre, London (1855)

<sup>9</sup> Schoch, *Shakespeare’s Victorian Stage*, p. 164.

<sup>10</sup> *Morning Post*, 18 May 1855, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

Kean's musical changes also worked to enhance this illusion for audiences. He replaced "Angels Ever Bright and Fair" with John Hatton's arrangement of a traditional English song, "Light of Love". This popular dance tune – probably written by Leonard Gibson (1570) and mentioned by Shakespeare in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1.2.83) and *Much Ado About Nothing* (3.4.40) – was played at the beginning and ending of the tableau, book-ending a newly-composed, ethereal-sounding middle section.<sup>11</sup> Based on this structure, it seems that "Light of Love" likely accompanied the angels' movements as they floated on and off the stage, corroborated by the *Morning Post's* observation that "there is no dancing, congéeing, curtsying, nor any such nonsense [in Kean's production], but to the sound of delicious music [the angels] are wafted slowly and gracefully through the air."<sup>12</sup> Like Hatton's arrangements of the "Staines Morris" and "Sellinger's Round" for the banquet scene (discussed in Chapter One), "Light of Love" embodied an idealized English musical tradition linked back to the Tudor period.<sup>13</sup> In contrast to this traditional song, the ethereal interlude accompanied Katherine's gesticulations during her vision, providing a seamless and, in some places, discordant soundtrack to her dream and giving emphasis to its status as a genuinely religious event within the narrative of the play.

Kean's use of stage technology, illusory visual effects, and new music for the tableau resulted in awestruck audiences, who sat in "profound silence" at the conclusion of the scene until they "burst ... into a rapture of applause."<sup>14</sup> Reviews of the production evidence the

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<sup>11</sup> Listen to transcription of "Katherine's Vision, Hatton" in Google Drive.

<sup>12</sup> "The Princess's Theatre", *Morning Post*, 18 May 1855, pp. 5-6. *British Library Newspapers*, [5 Mar. 2019].

<sup>13</sup> Hatton likely sourced the tune from the same publication as the other dances, Chappell's *Popular Music in the Olden Time*, and even went so far as to deem it "Shakespeare's favourite tune" in the heading for his autograph score.

<sup>14</sup> Quoted in Georgianna Ziegler, 'Catherine of Aragon Among the Victorians', *High and Mighty Queens' of Early Modern England: Realities and Representations*, Ed. Carole Levin, Debra Barrett-Graves, Jo Eldridge Carney, pp. 203-222 (p. 217). Other reviews corroborate this: see *The Morning Chronicle*, 17 May 1855 and *The Standard*, 17 May 1855.

astonishment with which audiences experienced the tableau. Charles Dodgson's eyewitness testimony, confided in his diary after seeing the production, are only the most eloquent of many comments to a similar effect:

But oh, that exquisite vision of Queen Catherine! I almost held my breath to watch: the illusion is perfect, and I felt as if in a dream all the time it lasted ... the column of sunbeams shone down upon the sleeping queen, and gradually down it floated a troop of angelic forms, transparent, and carrying palm branches ... they waved these over the sleeping queen, with oh! such a sad and solemn grace ... She in an ecstasy raises her arms towards them, and to sweet slow music they vanish as marvelously as they came.<sup>15</sup>

The very presence of the angels on the stage was, for Dodgson and others, an astounding change from the comparatively bare stages of earlier productions. The illusion of these floating angels was so believable that Dodgson himself felt as if he were in a dream, marking an extension of Katherine's experience onto the audience. Dodgson's description of "sweet slow music" refers to the recapitulation of "Light of Love" at the end of the tableau. His use of the word "illusion" to describe the experience was shared with other reviewers, including one from *The Art Journal*, who nonetheless felt that this was not quite the right term: "This is a wonderful piece of stage illusion, and yet it can scarcely be called an 'illusion,' for the beautiful spirits are real flesh and blood. The picture they present is one that Guido [Reni] or [Antonio de] Correggio might have painted, and yet Art could never reach the loveliness of this scene."<sup>16</sup> That the *Art Journal* compares this scene to the Baroque paintings of Reni and Correggio is important, especially when considering that Dodgson himself describes Katherine as "in an ecstasy" when she raises her arms towards the angels. Ecstasy, here, refers to a primarily Catholic religious experience, a common subject depicted by many Renaissance painters, including Reni and Correggio. As

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<sup>15</sup> Ziegler, p. 217.

<sup>16</sup> 'Scenery of the stage', *Art Journal*, Aug 1855, pp. 240. *ProQuest British Periodicals* [23 February 2017].

Georgianna Ziegler states, part of Dodgson's awe at Katherine's vision is predicated on "viewing the ecstasy of a dying *Catholic* queen."<sup>17</sup>

Gordon McMullan observes that "post-Renaissance productions" such as these "have varied between what might be thought of as a 'Protestant' and a 'Catholic' version of the vision, the former sparse and internalized, the latter spectacular and externalized."<sup>18</sup> Kemble's design typifies a "sparse and internalized", "Protestant" vision, and comparatively, Kean's design typifies a "spectacular and externalized", "Catholic" vision, as Ziegler also suggests. Yet, when considered in context with the Oxford Movement and the Gothic Revival, the religious meaning of Kean's tableau disrupts this sectarian binary. It is true, as McMullan states, that "visions of angels are associated with Catholic tradition in a way they are not with Protestantism", but the High Anglicanism born out of the Oxford Movement (1840s – 1860s) is a noteworthy exception to this.<sup>19</sup> Sparked by John Keble's National Apostasy Sermon of 1833, the Oxford Movement began as a call to restore the Anglican Church to a pre-Reformation state, a drive to resume the practices of the late-medieval English Church. This second counter-Reformation led to the "use of material, visual, and liturgical forms" in the High Anglican church "inspired, first, by the medieval past, and second, by contemporary Roman Catholicism."<sup>20</sup> As Dominic Janes states, "gothic styles were meant to provide a model for the re-sacralisation of England, not based upon contemporary Roman Catholic reality but upon an imaginary and idealised English Catholicism."<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Ziegler, p. 217, my emphasis.

<sup>18</sup> McMullan, Introduction to *Henry VIII*, p. 123.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> Dominic Janes, *Victorian Reformation: the fight over idolatry in the Church of England, 1840-1860* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2009), p. 4.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 1.

Thus, if Kean's staging of Katherine's vision is considered alongside the rise of ritualism in the Church of England that came about as a result of the Oxford Movement, this opens up a space in which the vision can be understood as a representation of contemporary Anglo-Catholicism and a celebration of England's medieval, religious past. Although, as McMullan states, Katherine "is, after all, inescapably Roman Catholic", her characterization in comparison to other Catholics in *Henry VIII* is distinctly different: "... she is no Gardiner ... and she is set up from the second scene onwards in direct opposition to Wolsey, who embodies all that is corrupt in both court and Church."<sup>22</sup> This distinction is further supported by the source material for Katherine's vision, which, as E.E. Duncan-Jones states, was based on the deathbed vision of another famous queen – Marguerite of Angouleme, also called Duchess of Alençon and Queen Margaret of Navarre – "a reforming Catholic" whose "piety ... was well known in England during her lifetime."<sup>23</sup> As McMullan observes, "the transfer of her dream to Katherine thus figures Katherine as a reforming Catholic, a far cry from Wolsey or Gardiner."<sup>24</sup> McMullan also suggests two additional sources for the vision: Holinshed's report of Anne Bullen's dream before her beheading, and a scene in Thomas Heywood's *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1605), in which "the young Princess Elizabeth is suffering at the hands of her sister Mary, and she has a dream-vision which shares features with Katherine's vision in *Henry VIII*."<sup>25</sup> These sources further complicate the reading of Katherine's vision as strictly Catholic, suggesting that "the climactic deathbed vision which effectively apotheosizes Katherine acts not to outline her

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<sup>22</sup> McMullan, Introduction to *Henry VIII*, p. 122.

<sup>23</sup> See McMullan, pp. 132-6; and E.E. Duncan-Jones, 'Queen Katherine's Vision and Queen Margaret's Dream', *Notes and Queries*, Vol. 8, no. 4 (1961), pp. 142-3.

<sup>24</sup> McMullan, p. 133.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 134-5.



transcendent separation from Anne and from the Reformation, but to engage her both with her rival and with the cultural transformation she resists.”<sup>26</sup> In other words, because Katherine’s vision is based on the dreams of Anne Bullen, Marguerite of Angouleme, and a young Princess Elizabeth – all reforming Catholics or Protestants – Katherine is subsequently positioned in the text in opposition to the negative aspects of Roman Catholicism, almost an honorary reformer in her own right.

To make this argument requires a closer look at artistic, architectural, and religious aspects of the Gothic Revival, and to consider the ways in which these aspects influenced the formation of a collective, intensely nationalized religious identity at the time of Kean’s production. Dodgson’s and the *Art Journal*’s reviews raise two important points that are directly related to the tableau’s relationship with Gothic Revival: the Romantic influences which informed the artistic design of the scene, and the religious symbolism associated with the ritualism of High Anglicanism embedded in its illusory, visual aesthetic. As such, I explore the influence of these two strands of the Gothic Revival on Kean’s tableau of Katherine’s vision in the final two sections of this chapter. First, I address artistic influences through a discussion of Henry Fuseli’s (1781) and William Blake’s (1790, 1807, 1809, and 1825) paintings of the scene.<sup>27</sup> I show that Blake and Fuseli participated in a shared language of gesture that recalled the religious paintings of Reni and Correggio, imitating gestures and facial expressions that held deep-rooted, acutely Catholic meanings. In turn, I demonstrate that Ellen Kean’s performance of Katherine in this tableau relied on the very same gestural lexicon to convey the religious

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<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 132.

<sup>27</sup> The dates of Blake’s paintings are disputed, but I have chosen to follow the dates specified in Jane Martineau et. al., *Shakespeare in Art* (London: Merrell, 2003).

experience of an ecstasy, ultimately achieving what Kean's biographer John William Cole called "the finest instance we have ever seen of what has been pronounced the perfection of acting, 'art producing nature.'"<sup>28</sup> I argue that if we consider the use of this symbolic, religious lexicon in Kean's tableau in the context of the Oxford Movement, the religious symbolism embedded in Katherine's gesture represented Anglo-Catholicism and glorified the rise in ritualism among some adherents to the Church of England.

This segues into the final section of this chapter, which considers the socio-religious meaning embedded in the neo-Gothic architecture of Kean's scenic design, particularly his choice to use Gothic windows as a central part of the illusion of the vision. As I will elucidate further, this architecture represented something acutely national and was increasingly looked to as representing England's true religious heritage. This scene created, according to *The Atlas*, "an illusion partaking strongly of the miraculous," which centered on the image of "a number of angels ... gliding down a ray of sunshine, which bursts through the window."<sup>29</sup> On the surface, a troop of angels descending on a sunbeam through a Gothic window presents as Catholic in its religious imagery, but when this image is considered alongside the topical circumstances of the Oxford Movement, the meaning shifts and the tableau comes to represent a High Anglican yearning for a Gothic, pre-Reformation England. Moreover, because Kean's tableau was accompanied by English music from the Tudor period, the vision is further solidified as an expressly English experience, despite the foreignness that a Catholic ecstasy might imply. Just as the "undoubtedly English group of trees" in the infant Shakespeare paintings work to highlight England's ownership of Shakespeare's cultural capital, so too does the music that accompanies

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<sup>28</sup> John William Cole, *The life and theatrical times of Charles Kean*, Vol. 2 (London: R. Bently, 1859), p. 149.

<sup>29</sup> *The Atlas*, 26 May 1855, p. 335, *British Library Newspaper Archive*.

Kean's staging of Katherine's vision work to solidify her religious experience as a representation of England, and more specifically, the England imagined by the Anglican High Church of the mid-nineteenth century. Through such a decisive choice of accompaniment for the tableau and, on a larger scale, appropriation of Romantic and Gothic symbolism, Shakespeare was positioned as a proponent of the mid-nineteenth century's counter-Reformation, which, like both pastoralism and imperialism, relied on an invented version of England's past.

### **Katherine's vision in the art of Henry Fuseli and William Blake**

I have argued throughout this thesis that in staged *tableaux vivants* accompanying music takes over the narrative space usually occupied by dialogue, creating meaning through auditory stimuli. As we have seen in the preceding chapters, incidental music often serves as a sonic blueprint of the movements and gestures performed by actors on the stage. As I have shown in Chapter Four in relation to Tree's Magna Carta tableau, narrative is created through both the accompanying music and the correlating pantomimic movements of the actor. Unlike Tree's *King John*, which has surviving production papers that detail Tree's movements during the tableau, we have no such information for Kean's production of *Henry VIII*. However, because Katherine's vision was a relatively popular subject for Romantic painters of the period, we do have Fuseli's and Blake's paintings, which reveal acute attention to Katherine's gestures, facial expressions, and bodily positioning (Figures 3.8-3.12). From these paintings we can glean what meaning these portrayals of Katherine might have carried for Victorians, and in particular, what the gestures and facial expressions utilized by Fuseli and Blake suggested about Katherine's religious experience.

Though these paintings are in no way a production record for any nineteenth-century performance of the play, they engage with a lexicon of gestural meaning born out of the work of

Charles Le Brun and John Bulwar. As the work of Farah Karim-Cooper has shown, this gestural language was not confined to the visual arts, but also central to dramatic performance and *tableaux vivants*.<sup>30</sup> Meanings derived from gesture and bodily positions, whether on canvas or on the stage, are reciprocated across the art forms, and thus, I contend that the dramatic tableau – at least in this instance – derives meaning from the conventions of painting. There are direct links here between the attitudes of Hamilton, the acting styles of Garrick and Siddons, and the paintings of Fuseli and Blake. It is this point of intersection between portraiture, tableaux, and acting that I argue is exemplified in Kean’s staging of Katherine’s vision. By decoding the gestural language used in Fuseli and Blake’s works, we are able to derive meaning from these gestures and pair that with the meaning created by the music in the tableau.



Figure 3.8: Henry Fuseli, *Queen Katherine's Dream* (1781)

<sup>30</sup> Farah Karim-Cooper, *The hand on the Shakespearean stage: gesture, touch and the spectacle of dismemberment* (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2016).



Figures 3.9-3.12, William Blake, *Queen Katherine's Dream* c. 1790 (upper left), 1807 (upper right), 1809 (lower left), and 1825 (lower right).

One common link between the work of Fuseli and Blake is their participation in this language of gesture. Robert Essick has identified a process in the poetry and art of Blake which he calls the “literalization of figuration” in which Blake “grants substantial being to what we would usually take to be only a figure of speech,” confounding “our usual distinctions between literal and figural, the substantial and the conceptual.”<sup>31</sup> Adding to the work of Essick, Martin Myrone has shown that Fuseli probably influenced this feature of Blake’s works, a claim which is corroborated by Janet Warner, who states that Fuseli’s use of dramatic and exaggerated gestures in his paintings “had probably the most profound influence on Blake’s art”.<sup>32</sup> Contemporary critical responses to Fuseli reveal a great deal about how his depiction of the human body was received:

Mr Fuseli gives us the human figure, from the recollection of its form, not from the form itself; he seems to be painting everything from fancy, which renders his work almost incomprehensible, and leaves no criterion to judge of them by, but the imagination. This I conceive to be an attempt of the painter to express what lies more within the reach of the poet.<sup>33</sup>

This critic identifies a distinctive feature of Fuseli’s art that can also be observed in the work of Blake. The observation that Fuseli paints “from fancy” – or, in other words, paints the human form not as it is, but as it might be imagined – suggests that Fuseli attempts to express something “more in reach of the poet” than the artist. Likewise, Blake wrote that “the Poetic Genius is True Man and that the body or outward form of Man is derived from the Poetic Genius,” a statement which exemplifies Blake’s understanding of the relationship between the mind, or imagination,

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<sup>31</sup> Robert N. Essick, *William Blake and the Language of Adam* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1989), pp. 224-5.

<sup>32</sup> Janet Warner, *Blake and the Language of Art* (Gloucester: Alan Sutton, 1984), p. 62; Martin Myrone, *Henry Fuseli* (London: Tate Publishing, 2001), p. 47.

<sup>33</sup> Quoted in Myrone, p. 47.

and the human body.<sup>34</sup> Blake is known for concretely connecting his paintings with poetry in his illuminated books, but even in his paintings that were not paired with texts, Blake still engaged with a defined gestural lexicon, intending “certain figures and stances of the human body to carry a nucleus of meaning, to be the components of a language.”<sup>35</sup> The process by which both Fuseli and Blake are able to express what is more in reach with the poet, the literal and the figural, is through participating in a shared language of gesture and meaning, which both artists use to express specific affectations in their paintings of Katherine’s vision.

Fuseli stated in his *Aphorisms* that “one of the most unexplored regions of art are dreams.”<sup>36</sup> His painting of Katherine’s vision fits into a subset of works that depict a dream experience, most famously *The Nightmare*, which Fuseli painted a year after *Queen Katherine’s Dream*. Andrei Pop has observed the similarities between *The Nightmare* and the attitudes of Emma Hamilton, similarities which also exist in *Queen Katherine’s Dream*. The influence of Hamilton’s attitudes onto Fuseli’s painting of Katherine is prevalent through two neoclassic features: Katherine’s gesture and the form of the *putti* in the dream. Similar to the effect of Hamilton’s attitudes, Fuseli depicts dreaming “as corporeal motion giving rise to a visionary experience.”<sup>37</sup> Katherine’s “corporeal motion,” as Sillars observes, is that of “Fuseli’s habitual classical hero,”<sup>38</sup> her upraised hand embodying the gesture of *Admiratur* from Bulwar, meaning to admire, or regard with wonder (Figure 3.13).<sup>39</sup> Fuseli’s visionary figures also draw on classical

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<sup>34</sup> Quoted in Warner, p. 22.

<sup>35</sup> Warner, p. xviii. Examples of Blake’s illuminated books include *Songs of Innocence*, *The Book of Thel*, and *All Religions are One*.

<sup>36</sup> Henry Fuseli, *Lectures. Aphorisms. A history of art in the schools of Italy* (London: H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1831), p. 145.

<sup>37</sup> Andrei Pop, *Antiquity, theatre, and the painting of Henry Fuseli* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2015), p. 99.

<sup>38</sup> Sillars, *Painting Shakespeare*, p. 118.

<sup>39</sup> John Bulwar, *Chirologia, or, The naturall language of the hand* (London: Tho. Harper, 1644), in *Internet Archive* [2 March 2019], p. 19, 35, and 65.

influences, chiefly “his memories of *Bacchanti* from Roman sarcophagi or from the Greek vases in the collection of Sir William Hamilton in Naples,” revealing the second tie between Fuseli and the neoclassical influence of Emma Hamilton’s attitudes.<sup>40</sup>



Figure 3.13: Selections from Bulwar’s *Chirolgia*, including the gesture for *Admiratur* at letter F.

Through these features, Fuseli’s depiction of the dream lies not within the dream as a religious experience (as is the case in Blake’s iterations of Katherine’s vision) but instead as an experience rooted in classical allegory. Katherine’s vision does not belong to a religious world, but to an imagined, mythological, and antiquarian world. Through Katherine’s gesture and the artistic form of the angels, which Jane Martineau sees as imitative of Thomas Banks’ *Thetis and her Nymphs rise from the seas to console Achilles for the Death of Patroclus*, Fuseli locates Katherine as a sort of mythological heroine, on the same plane as those from Greek tragedy.<sup>41</sup> But in Blake’s paintings, Katherine’s gestures and their meanings (via Le Brun and Bulwar) locate her within distinctly religious contexts. Blake’s attention to gestural meaning is prevalent through the fact that Katherine’s hand and bodily positioning is different in three of the four

<sup>40</sup> Martineau et. al., p. 76.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*



paintings, with the 1807 and 1825 versions being near replications of one another. As such, I have chosen to discuss Blake's four paintings based on thematic similarities rather than chronology. First, I will discuss Blake's 1790 painting, which is recognizably different than the other three in its style. Then, I discuss his 1809 illustration before circling back to discuss his 1807 and 1825 paintings in tandem.

Blake's 1790 painting shows Katherine lying completely flat, eyes closed, with most of her bodily features below her neck indiscernible, as her beige gown blends in with the beige couch on which she lies. Though Katherine does not make a distinct gesture from which we can derive meaning, the style in which Blake paints her body harkens back to low-relief sculptures usually carved on top of tombs of interred noblepersons, a style with which Blake would have been intimately familiar due to his apprenticeship at Westminster Abbey working for Thomas Basire (1772-9).<sup>42</sup> The viewer's attention is drawn instead to the angelic forms above the queen. Katherine communicates only through her lack of movement, her stone-like appearance expressing no engagement with the corporeal motion above her. The viewer's attention shifts to the fairy-like angels who, in their lack of uniformity, seem to create a separate narrative amongst themselves. In this iteration of the scene, the corporeal motion is performed by the *putti* rather than Katherine. One angel with a sunburst of red hair holds his arms in a cruciform gesture; one rides a horse half-hidden by a cloud; two carry baskets of garlands on their heads; another is turned away from the viewer in conversation with another angel; only one seems to directly engage with Katherine, looking down on her while placing garlands above her head. Rather than

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 88.

depicting the vision as it is described in Shakespeare's stage directions, here Blake seems to depict a second vision, one which Katherine herself describes at the end of the scene:

When I am dead, good wench,  
Let me be used with honour. Strew me over  
With maiden flowers, that all the world may know  
I was a chaste wife to by grave. Embalm me,  
Then lay me forth. Although unqueened, yet like  
A queen and daughter to a king inter me (4.2.167-72).

The actions of the angels reflect this description much more than the directions for the staged vision, and as such, this painting depicts Katherine as she wished to be remembered. Her royalty, chastity, and honor are communicated here, and though there are no direct ties to religion or religious ecstasies, as Blake's other three versions will reveal, Katherine's piety remains a common denominator expressed across all four of Blake's paintings.

Blake's 1809 painting of Katherine is in a completely different style, and more aligned with the aesthetics of his 1807 and 1825 versions. All three of these paintings are indebted to the art of the High Renaissance and Baroque periods, moving away from the neoclassicism of Fuseli. Blake's goal here seems to be similar to that of Renaissance art, wherein the distinction between symbol and reality is blurred, and "where abstract ideas such as chastity or penitence may be painted as real and visible."<sup>43</sup> Like "the great baroque ceiling-paintings of Heaven are intended to create an illusion so vivid that the painted heaven can evoke the ecstatic response of the religious vision," Blake's depiction of Katherine, and ultimately Kean's tableau in 1855, operate in a similar manner, drawing the viewer into the illusory experience.<sup>44</sup> The meaning which viewers can derive from these paintings centers, yet again, on Katherine's hand gesture and bodily

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<sup>43</sup> Warner, p. 12.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*

position. In the 1809 version, Katherine is almost fully reclined with her head slightly raised. Her facial expression goes beyond what Le Brun defines as mere admiration and into “rapture” or ecstasy, to which he assigns two distinct, yet interrelated, definitions and expressions: “But if Admiration be caused by an object above the knowledge of the Soul, as the Power and Greatness of GOD, then ... the Head will incline towards the Heart, and both the Eye-brows with the Pupils, will be lifted up” (Figures 3.14-3.15).<sup>45</sup> Katherine’s hands, being raised slightly from her torso, embody what Bulwar identifies as “*Gestus 1: Supplicio*” meaning “I importunate, entreat, request, sue, solicit, beseech, and ask mercy or grace at the hands of others” (Figure 3.16).<sup>46</sup>



Figures 3.14-3.15: Selections from Le Brun’s *A method to learn to design the passions*, showing the difference between Admiration and Rapture, or ecstasy.



Figure 3.16: Selections from Bulwar’s *Chirologia*, including the gesture for *Supplicio* at letter A and *Admiror* at D.

<sup>45</sup> Charles Le Brun, *A method to learn to design the passions*, p. 28.

<sup>46</sup> Bulwar, p. 11, 151.



Figure 3.17: Guido Reni's *The Coronation of the Virgin* (about 1607)



Figures 3.18-3.19: Antonio de Correggio's *The Assumption of the Virgin*, in full (upper) and detail of Mary (lower) (1526)

Blake's 1807 and 1825 paintings experiment with different gestures and expressions than the 1809 version. In the 1807 and 1825 versions, Katherine's arms are outstretched, a symbol that Blake used repeatedly when painting religious subjects.<sup>47</sup> As Warner states, the meaning that is "suggested by outstretched arms is of course the Cross, a symbol of divinity rich with associations of self-sacrifice or death, and regeneration."<sup>48</sup> By pairing this cruciform gesture with the facial expression of ecstasy, Blake emulates the art of the High Renaissance and Baroque periods, specifically Reni's and Correggio's paintings of the Virgin Mary, the very same artists mentioned in the *Art Journal's* review of Kean's production. Reni's 1607 painting, *The Coronation of the Virgin*, and Correggio's 1526 fresco, *The Assumption of the Virgin*, both contain similarities of gesture and theme to Blake's paintings of Katherine (Figures 3.17-3.19). In both paintings, Mary's arms, like Katherine's, are in a cruciform gesture with her hands transitioning from Bulwar's *Suppliko* to *Admiror*, meaning "admiration, amazement, and astonishment ... an appeal unto the Deity ... acknowledging the Hand and Finger of God" (Figure 3.16).<sup>49</sup> Her gaze is also pointed upward toward the angels in Le Brun's expression of ecstasy.

The gestures and facial expressions central to Blake's and Fuseli's paintings were also visible in Ellen Kean's interpretation of Katherine. As *The Standard* observed:

Her conception of the part is entirely original, and found[ed] on an unerring guide – nature. We watched Mrs. Kean closely throughout, in every movement of her person, every glance of her eye, every change of expression in her countenance, every varying intonation of her voice; ... her dying scene was given with such

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<sup>47</sup> See Blake's *When the Morning Stars Sang Together*, *Jerusalem*, *Albion Rose*, and *The Conversion of Saul* for additional examples of Blake's use of cruciform gesture.

<sup>48</sup> Warner, p. 88.

<sup>49</sup> Bulwar, p. 29.

overwhelming truthfulness that every breath was suspended, and many were the white handkerchiefs displayed as the act-drop came down.<sup>50</sup>

In a similar vein, the *Morning Post* stated that “when the part [of Katherine] is entrusted to an actress like Mrs. Charles Kean, who combines judgment with sensibility, and a fine taste with a vigorous perception, the lights and shadows of the portrait commingle harmoniously, and the gradations of passion are accurately discriminated.”<sup>51</sup> Highlighting “the gradations of passion” and the “truthfulness” of “nature” present in Ellen Kean’s performance, these reviews harken back to the same romantic expressions present in Romney’s infant Shakespeare paintings. They evidence that her Katherine was informed by the very same language of gesture and Romantic expression embedded in Romney’s depictions of Nature and the Passions as well as in the gesture and language of expression inherent in Fuseli’s and Blake’s paintings of the scene. Additionally, *The Atlas* drew attention to “the eager, rapt look with which she followed the vanishing figures of the angels,” validating Dodgson’s interpretation of this scene as an ecstasy, and grounding Ellen Kean’s performance in a symbolic lexicon with acute, religious meaning.<sup>52</sup>

Thus, Katherine’s vision as performed by Ellen Kean contained within it influences from various Romantic paintings directly related to Shakespeare and his works. Her acting, as described in reviews, recalls the temporary spiritual ascension evidently experienced by Hamilton and Siddons in their respective art forms, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter. As such, Shakespeare – England’s socio-cultural demi-god – is positioned as a conduit through which a religious ecstasy might occur, particularly in the performance of such a religiously-charged scene

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<sup>50</sup> *The Standard*, 17 May 1855, *British Library Newspaper Archive*, [28 June 2020].

<sup>51</sup> *Morning Post*, 18 June 1855, *British Library Newspaper Archive*, [28 June 2020].

<sup>52</sup> *The Atlas*, 26 May 1855, *British Library Newspaper Archive*, [28 June 2020].

written by the national poet himself.<sup>53</sup> The religious nature of Katherine's vision is only further heightened by its association with Shakespeare, echoing Tree's previously stated notion that when performing Shakespeare, the actor "is lifted above himself" living "for a time being in the rarer ether half-way between earth and heaven."

In this discussion of Fuseli's and Blake's paintings of Katherine's vision and their relationship with the work of Baroque artists such as Reni and Correggio, I have addressed how gesture and facial expression *a la* Bulwar and Le Brun was used in art to convey specific, religious meanings. I have also shown that Ellen Kean's interpretation of the part relied on the very same gestural lexicon inherent in Romantic art. However, I have yet to address the symbolism embedded in the Gothic windows of Kean's set design, which as I have stated, were central to the illusion of the vision. Gothic architecture represented something intensely national for Victorians, particularly as it increasingly became identified with High Anglicanism the nation's pre-Reformation church looked to with "a sentimental and patriotic eye" despite its Catholic origins in various places on the Continent.<sup>54</sup> Gothic became redefined as a national style in the nineteenth century, embodied by the rebuilding of the Palaces of Westminster (1834-76), which were designed by arguably the most important architectural figure of the Gothic Revival, Augustus Northmore Welby (ANW) Pugin. As Kenneth Clark states, "English" was initially adopted by Society of Antiquities to describe what is now widely referred to as Gothic or neo-Gothic architecture.<sup>55</sup> Though "Gothic" would soon be established as the widespread term (likely

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<sup>53</sup> Attribution studies have unequivocally attributed this scene to Fletcher, but in context with the mid-nineteenth century audience, this scene would have certainly been thought of as solely Shakespeare's.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 114.

<sup>55</sup> Kenneth Clark, *The Gothic Revival: An Essay in the History of Taste*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (London: John Murray, 1974), p. 76.



due to Pugin's repeated use of the word in his numerous writings on the subject), the nationalism that the term "English" had once communicated was not lost. Gothic undoubtedly became a national style in the nineteenth century. As such, I argue that the Gothic windows in Kean's vision tableau conveyed something acutely national, reflecting the increase of ritualistic practices in the Church of England during this period. The following section further explores what Gothic architecture symbolized to the British public around the time of Kean's *Henry VIII*, and considers how this architecture is central to the religious symbolism embedded in Kean's tableau.

### **Ritualism, Gothic architecture, and Anglo-Catholicism**

A common link between the artistic and religious subsections of the Gothic Revival was an emphasis on, if not obsession with, symbols, iconography, and their meanings. Just as the gestures used by Blake and Fuseli in their paintings of Katherine's vision carried specific meanings based on a codified language of expression, so too did specific styles of architecture express distinct religious messages. As Janes indicates, ritualists in mid-century Britain believed that through a return to pre-Reformation "visual splendour in art, architecture, and liturgical ritual" the Church of England could be "returned to God" and, as a result, could return people to God.<sup>56</sup> The belief was that if focus was placed on what was worldly, then a life of worldly habits and pursuits would develop; however, if focus was placed on the divine forms in all their visual splendor, then that same individual might develop godly habits and pursuits through the influence of these divine, visual symbols. Therefore, the architectural styles of churches were thought to have a direct influence on the religious experience of the people who attended services within

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<sup>56</sup> Janes, p.6.

them. Symbols – worldly and godly – held a tremendous amount of power and could sway the thoughts and actions of the general public for good or for evil.

There were specific grievances that ritualists had against the reformed Protestant church, particularly in relationship to how the churches were constructed and the behavior of the worshippers. In John Mason Neale's, and Benjamin Webb's concluding commentary in William Durandus' 1843 translation of the first book of *The Rational Divinorum Officiorum* –“arguably the most important medieval treatise on the symbolism of church architecture and rituals of worship”<sup>57</sup> – the authors contrast the architecture, church décor, and faith practices within Protestant and Catholic churches of the nineteenth-century, and, by taking the reader on an imaginative journey into each place of worship, the authors assert the practical and ethical value of restoring ritualist practices.<sup>58</sup> They first take readers to a Protestant church, describing the outer appearance as “choked up and concealed by surrounding shops and houses” signifying that religion has “give[n] way to business and pleasure.”<sup>59</sup> Inside the church, “the pulpit occupies the central position, and towards it every seat is directed,” revealing that preaching is central to Protestant worship practices.<sup>60</sup> “The Altar stands under the organ gallery, as being of no use, except once a month,” indicating the lack of importance of the sacrament amongst Protestant congregations.<sup>61</sup> Neale and Webb also call attention to the social stratification that occurred in these churches, with the affluent members of the congregations “dressed out in the full fashion of

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<sup>57</sup> Columbia University Press, (2020), < <http://cup.columbia.edu/book/the-rationale-divinorum-officiorum-of-william-durand-of-mende/9780231141802>> [13 September 2019].

<sup>58</sup> Rev. John Mason Neale and Rev. Benjamin Webb, “General Conclusion”, in *The Symbolism of Churches and Church Ornaments: A translation of the first book of the Rationale Divinorum Officiorum*, trans. William Durandus (Leeds: T.W. Green; London: J.G.P. & J Rivington; Cambridge: T. Stevenson, 1843), pp. cxxviii - cxxxii.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, cxxviii.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

the day, occupy[ing] their luxurious pue[s] [*sic*], lay[ing] their smelling-bottles and prayer books on its desk, and reclining on its soft cushions.”<sup>62</sup> Meanwhile “the poor and infirm” stand “in the narrow passages” as the pew doors of the affluent are closed against them, “lest [they] should be contaminated, or their cushions spoilt.”<sup>63</sup> Finally, the authors point out the presence of the Royal Arms “for it is a chapel of the Establishment,” concluding that all of these features of the Protestant church converge to symbolize “the spiritual pride, the luxury, the self-sufficiency, the bigotry of the congregations of too many a pue-rented Episcopal Chapel.”<sup>64</sup>

Neale and Webb present the architecture and worship practices of the Catholic Church as the inverse of the Protestant. In contrast to the “choked up” exterior of the Protestant church, “the three spires of [the Catholic] Cathedral” rise high above the “din and turmoil” of the city, “preach[ing] to us of the Most Holy and Undivided Trinity.”<sup>65</sup> The earthly desires of the Protestants, signified by their “luxurious pues” and “soft cushions” are, instead, vanquished by the “spire, pinnacle, and finial, the upward curl of the sculptured foliage, the upward spring of flying buttress, the sharp rise of the window arch, [and] the high thrown pitch of the roof,” teaching anyone who views these architectural features that “we also should ascend [towards God] in heart and mind.”<sup>66</sup> Upon entering, there are “piers, arch behind arch, windows, light behind light, ... the Saints around us, the Heavenly Hierarchy above with dignity of pre-eminence still increasing Eastward, each and all, lead on eye and soul and thought to the Image of the Crucified Saviour as displayed in the great East window.”<sup>67</sup> In contrast to the Protestant

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<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, cxxix.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>64</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, cxxx.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, cxxxii-ii.

church, wherein one's focus lands on the pulpit, in the Catholic church it navigates images of saints, martyrs, prophets, apostles, and virgins before resting on Jesus Christ, hanging, "high above ... on His Triumphal Cross."<sup>68</sup> Neale and Webb state that these figures represented in this religious iconography "are to be our examples."<sup>69</sup> Rather than the "pride, luxury, and self-sufficiency," or, in other words, worldliness of the Protestant church, they argue that the Catholic Church bring worshippers closer to God through their engagement with these emblems of holiness, reverence, and veneration. Doctrine is embedded in architectural style and artistic expression, and the mere experience of seeing these tangible representations of God presumably leads one closer to a life of godliness and a promised "tearless eternity" amongst saints, angels, martyrs, and apostles.<sup>70</sup>

Neale's and Webb's commentary creates marked contrast between Catholic and Protestant faith practices, but, as I have stated previously, the counter-Reformation of the mid-nineteenth century disrupted this binary by borrowing Catholic imagery, aesthetics, and practices and re-incorporating them into the architectural structures and styles of worship in the Church of England. For example, the Church Building Act of 1818, which supplied industrial areas across Britain with houses of worship, built 174 of its 214 Protestant churches in the Gothic style.<sup>71</sup> As Nancy Hazelton observes, this "wholesale building of new Gothic Protestant churches under the Commissioner's auspices purified the style, ... help[ing] to certify its use as Anglo-Christian rather than Roman Catholic" and "encourag[ing] the dissociation between the architectures of the

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<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>71</sup> Nancy J. Doran Hazelton, *Historical Consciousness in Nineteenth-Century Shakespearean Staging* (Ann Arbor: UMI Press, 1987), p. 9.

Middle Ages and its religion.<sup>72</sup> As such, by the time of Kean's 1855 production, the Gothic style would have been interpreted as Anglo-Catholic, and the re-instatement of worship practices like holding Mass, wearing vestments, and using incense were not thought of as Catholic practices, but as representative of England's long-lost medieval church. As such, the celebration and idealization of the medieval period was not just fundamental to the formation of an idyllic, pastoral England (as I have discussed in Part One), but also fundamental to the Oxford Movement, the rise of Gothic architecture in mid-century Britain, and the tenets of Anglo-Catholicism. In the same manner that the morris dances of Kean's 1.4 represented a national "golden age" that was underpinned by a nostalgic understanding of the medieval and Tudor periods, so too did the Gothic arch in Kean's 4.2 represent an equally nostalgic view of the national religion, which like the rustic rituals of May Day, was revived and revered as a representation of an Anglo-centric national heritage. It is perhaps no surprise, therefore, that these scenes received similar accompaniments derived from the Tudor period in Kean's production.

When we turn our attention back to the tableau of Katherine's vision in Kean's production, we can see that, in this context, the tableau can be interpreted as the last remaining episode of a pre-Reformation England. The angels' visibility in this scene, and particularly the illusion of them descending on a beam of light passing through the Gothic window, creates a representation of the sort of religious experience that one might aspire to encounter in a neo-Gothic church, as described by Neale and Webb. When combined with the gestures and facial expressions of Katherine as performed by Ellen Kean, this iteration of the vision emerges as a clear by-product of the Gothic Revival and the religious environment of the mid-nineteenth

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<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*

century, recalling the romanticism of Fuseli, the gestural language of Blake, and the religious and national iconography of the Gothic arch. But what solidified this tableau as an expressly English experience was the accompanying music; the traditional and unmistakably English tonality of “Light of Love” recalled a pre-Reformation Tudor nation, one that appealed to Victorian sensibilities regarding their medieval, religious, and Gothic heritage. Thus, Hatton’s incidental music emerges as the primary feature of this scene that mediates seemingly “Catholic” gestures and iconography with unmistakably English expression. As such, Katherine’s vision – Catholic in its visual expression but English in its musical accompaniment – becomes a vehicle through which the beliefs underpinning the Oxford Movement and, ultimately, changes to the nature of worship in the Church of England, could be expressed.

## Chapter Six – Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s *The Merchant of Venice* (1908)

If we return to the images of the infant Shakespeare mentioned at the start of Part Three, we remember that they portray a Christ-like Shakespeare, a prophetic demi-God with dominion over Nature and the Passions, who will come to write texts from which society can glean moral teachings. As I have stated, these paintings embody a widespread culture of Shakespeare worship that persisted throughout the nineteenth century, wherein Shakespeare’s texts achieved a status similar to the Bible, offering lessons to readers and playgoers alike.<sup>1</sup> As embodied in the analogy Charles Wordsworth gave in his 1864 tercentenary sermon, it was the responsibility of the reader or playgoer to ascertain these moral teachings, to see the reflection of God in Shakespeare: “As in the surface of [a] majestic stream the traveller sees a true reflection of the heavens which are above his head, so in the poetry of Shakespeare the reader may behold no uncertain image of the Word of God.”<sup>2</sup> But as Linda Rozmovits points out, “insisting on the perfection of both the author and his works shifts the burden of responsibility onto the reader, for whom it becomes not just an intellectual but a moral duty to account *favorably* for everything in Shakespeare: the high and the low, the regular and the irregular, the exalted and the vulgar.”<sup>3</sup> This task was decidedly easier for Victorians when thinking about a play like *Henry VIII*, which, as I have shown, became a series of tableaux on the Victorian stage, moving illustrations celebrating pastoral England and its morris dances, imperial England and its monarchical shows of power, and post-Reformation England’s high Anglicanism and religious symbolism.

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<sup>1</sup> Linda Rozmovits, *Shakespeare and the Politics of Culture in Late Victorian England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1998), p. 22.

<sup>2</sup> Charles Wordsworth, *Shakespeare’s knowledge and use of the Bible* (London: Smith, Elder, & co., 1880), in *Hathi Trust Digital Library* [3 March 2019], p. 404.

<sup>3</sup> Rozmovits, p. 22, her emphasis.

*The Merchant of Venice*, a play which became “a late Victorian popular obsession” and “considered to represent the height of Shakespeare’s achievement”, complicates this transcendent view of an all-seeing, omnipotent Shakespeare.<sup>4</sup> As Shylock began to be represented sympathetically on London stages at the end of the century, there was increased pressure to rethink what moral lessons *Merchant* offered its readers and audiences. Was Portia and her oration on mercy still the moral center of the play? Is Shylock’s forced conversion an act of Christian benevolence or of religious oppression? Should our sympathies lie with Antonio and Bassanio or with Shylock? What was Shakespeare’s attitude toward the Jews, and how might that serve as an example for modern-day society? How did the play represent Jews and Christians, and to what degree could these representations be read through the lens of contemporary socio-political tensions between these groups? These are questions with which I grapple in this chapter, looking to how Tree’s production of *Merchant* comments on British religious identities in the nineteenth century through a decisive use of tableaux and incidental music.

Similarly to how I have argued the Gothic Revival and Oxford Movement influenced the tableau of Katherine’s vision in Kean’s mid-century *Henry VIII*, I now turn my attention to a different source of religious tension that occurred at the end of the century: the tensions between Jews and Christians. As I discussed in Chapter Four, Tree’s Magna Carta tableau in *King John* addressed topical issues related to the Boer War through the parallax lens of this historical picture, and, here again, Tree uses tableaux and incidental music to draw attention to topical issues. In the wake of xenophobic legislation such as the Anti-Aliens Act of 1905 and growing anti-immigrant attitudes aimed at Jews in London’s East End at the turn of the century, I argue

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<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 1-3.



that Tree's production of *Merchant* invites a reexamination of religious identities and hierarchies present in nineteenth-century England. Within the soundscapes and tableaux Tree staged, audiences were confronted with questions of what it meant to be Jewish, what it meant to be Christian, and what the shared values, virtues, and codes of morality are in these religions. In other words, Tree's production commented on British religious identity in *fin-de-siècle* London by tapping into the shared religious heritage of Judaism and Christianity, encouraging a reevaluation of the racial, cultural, and religious stereotypes often ascribed to Jews.

Shylock's characterization and representation on the stage was central to this reevaluation. The socio-cultural anxieties surrounding the "Jewish question" at the end of the nineteenth century were projected onto various characterizations of Shylock on the London stage, as literary critics and actor-managers alike sought to uncover Shakespeare's intent for the character and, through this, to use Shakespeare's Shylock as a site in which contemporary views about the place of Jews in English society could be considered. Whether or not Shylock should be presented to audiences as sympathetic or unsympathetic became a site of fervent debate. As has been discussed in recent modern scholarship, Henry Irving's Shylock of 1879 seems to have ignited deliberations about Shakespeare's "intended" Shylock, discussions which continued to circulate by the time of Tree's 1908 staging.<sup>5</sup> While Irving's production is not the subject of this chapter, it is necessary briefly to explore how Irving's sympathetic rendering of Shylock served as a catalyst for the ensuing deliberation about what Shakespeare "intended" for the character.

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<sup>5</sup> See James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (New York: Columbia UP, 1996); Emma Smith, 'Was Shylock Jewish?', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 64, no. 2 (2013), pp. 188-219; Sarah Coodin, *Is Shylock Jewish?: citing scripture and the moral agency of Shakespeare's Jews* (Edinburgh: Edinburg UP, 2017); and Charles Edelman, 'Which is the Jew that Shakespeare Knew?: Shylock on the Elizabethan Stage', *Shakespeare Survey*, Vol. 52 (1999), pp. 99-106.

Irving's Shylock was an isolated, victimized figure. In the words of Irving himself:

For that Shakespeare intended us to regard the Jew of Venice with feelings of exalted pity and commiseration I have no doubt ... there is nothing in his language, at any time, that indicates a snuffling usurer which some persons regard him, and certainly nothing to justify the use the early actors made of the part for the low comedian.<sup>6</sup>

Here, Irving proffers one side of the argument, stating that there is nothing in Shylock's *language* – the language given to him by Shakespeare – that suggests a “snuffling usurer” or “low comedian”. Thus, Irving's Shylock encouraged a view of Shakespeare not unlike his Christ-like depictions, an all-seeing dramatist capable of transcending the prejudice of everyday society. For proponents of this sympathetic Shylock, the logic was that Shakespeare could not have intended a low-comic, anti-Semitic character because he is Shakespeare, the nation's tutelary genius.

Frederick William Hawkins (1879) expressed this sentiment after seeing Irving's production, concluding that Shakespeare was:

... [a] man who exhausted worlds and then imagined new, whose mind was such that at times he seemed to touch some awful secret of the cosmos, whose works are lighted up by wisdom, generosity, and tenderness, such a man could have had no share in an outburst of vulgar envy and fanaticism. He saw the Jews as they were, and so seeing them wrote *The Merchant of Venice* in order to exhibit one of their number at a disadvantage as a direct result of the unreasoning prejudice against them.<sup>7</sup>

Hawkins also reinforces the analogy in Wordsworth's sermon, saying “much of the significance of the play is to be appreciated only by those who read between the lines,” a comment which emphasizes the degree to which finding the moral teachings in Shakespeare fell to the reader and

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<sup>6</sup> Henry Irving, ‘Shylock: an actor's view’ (1879) and Joseph Hatton, ‘An interview with Henry Irving’ (1884) in *The Merchant of Venice: Shakespeare: the Critical Tradition*, Vol. 5, ed. by William Baker and Brian Vickers (London: Bloomsbury, 2005) pp. 126-7; pp. 153-7.

<sup>7</sup> Frederick William Hawkins, ‘A Plea for Toleration’ (1879) in *The Merchant of Venice: Shakespeare: the Critical Tradition*, Vol. 5, ed. by William Baker and Brian Vickers (London: Bloomsbury, 2005) pp.124-5.

implicitly positions Hawkins himself as one of the few capable of finding Shakespeare's true message.<sup>8</sup> In relation to *Merchant*, this statement exonerates Shakespeare from the alleged anti-Semitism of his age and implies that if readers (or playgoers) find any anti-Semitism lurking in the text, they are the ones at fault.

On the other side of this was an entirely different line of thinking, one that has been presented in pivotal scholarship published in the last two decades. As Emma Smith has shown, Irving's Shylock "prompted a paroxysm of scholarly activity invested in reconstructing the play's original context as deeply anti-Semitic,"<sup>9</sup> and provoked some critics and essayists to prove that a sympathetic Shylock *a la* Irving was decidedly "un-Shakespearean."<sup>10</sup> This argument, in turn, insisted that Shakespeare's Shylock had to have been a "grotesquely stereotyped 'Elizabethan' villain," a "rude caricature and boisterous burlesque ... that wore the red hair and beard ... as well as the bottle nose of Barabas."<sup>11</sup> It is at this juncture that the anti-Semitism of the late-Victorian period reveals itself. By insisting that Irving's sympathetic Shylock was "un-Shakespearean," and by embellishing historical fact to support this claim, these essayists were able to create a "largely invented and reactive parable of Elizabethan anti-Semitism" that, by being "Shakespearean," justified past and present anti-Semitism in Britain.<sup>12</sup> As Rozmovits points out, these essays were an expression of fear that perhaps Irving's interpretation of the character was, in fact, Shakespearean. "For, if Irving were right, then the bard of Avon might indeed have written the play as a plea for toleration toward the Jews," which, in turn, would

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<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>9</sup> Emma Smith, p. 219.

<sup>10</sup> See Elmer Edgar Stoll, 'Shylock, a comic villain' in *The Merchant of Venice: Shakespeare: the Critical Tradition*, Vol. 5, ed. by William Baker and Brian Vickers (London: Bloomsbury, 2005) pp. 268-78; and Cecil Roth, 'The Background of Shylock', *The Review of English Studies*, Vol. 9, no. 34 (1933), pp. 148-56.

<sup>11</sup> Smith, p. 209.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 195.

implicate any readers, critics, or audience members who might not be living in line with the moral of toleration that Shakespeare puts forth through the character of Shylock.<sup>13</sup> The solution, therefore, was to insist that Shakespeare's depiction of Shylock was inherently anti-Semitic, a product of his time, and through this, to imply that any sympathetic understanding of or reaction to Shylock was wrong because it went against Shakespeare's supposed intention.

This side of the debate was realized on the stage through William Poel's productions of the play (1898 and 1907), in which Shylock was portrayed as a low-comic, racially-typified caricature in the name of "original practices."<sup>14</sup> Thus, the debate over Shylock's intended characterization was actualized in the polarized performances of Irving and Poel. I argue that Tree's 1908 production disrupts this binary of sympathetic *or* unsympathetic characterizations, for his Shylock, as he revealed in a speech given while on tour in the United States in 1911, was a mixture of both:

Most people appear to think that Shylock must either be a demon or a saviour. He is, in truth, a mixture of both – the man – the Jew! But mark the serene impartiality wherewith Shakespeare sits in judgment on the soul of Shylock! He presents in him the vices as well as the virtues of his race ... the love of his daughter commends him to our sympathies – anon his vengeful and cruel nature commands our censure. It is, therefore, ridiculous to present Shylock as a merely sympathetic character.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> Rozmovits, p. 79.

<sup>14</sup> On Poel's productions, see: William Poel, 'Staging the play' and 'Shakespeare's Jew and Marlowe's Christians' in *The Merchant of Venice: Shakespeare: the Critical Tradition*, Vol. 5, ed. by William Baker and Brian Vickers (London: Bloomsbury, 2005) pp. 196-9; 260-7. On the "original practices" movement, see: Patrick Tucker, 'Original Practices' in *Secrets of Acting Shakespeare: The Original Approach* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2017) pp. 173-93; Christie Carson and Farah Karim-Cooper (eds.), *Shakespeare's Globe: a theatrical experiment* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008); Jeremy Lopez, 'A Partial Theory of Original Practice', *Shakespeare Survey*, Vol. 61, (2008), pp. 302-17; and Jenna Steigerwalt, 'Performing Race on the Original-Practices Stage: A Call to Action', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, Vol. 27, no. 3 (2009), pp. 425-35.

<sup>15</sup> Tree, *Thoughts and After-Thoughts*, p. 197.

In this statement, Tree places Shakespeare in the aforementioned role of demi-god, sitting in “judgment on the soul of Shylock,” but Tree claims that Shakespeare’s view, like his own, is impartial. Shylock is merely a man, a Jew, deserving of both sympathy and censure. This interpretation humanizes Shylock. In production, Tree achieved this by framing the character against a backdrop of a wider community, expressed through tableaux and incidental music showing the sights and sounds of Jewish life, culture, and religion. As I will discuss in this chapter, Tree’s interpretation of Shylock is largely shaped by these aural and aesthetic features, including: staging the entirety of his Act 2 (see Figure 3.20) in the Venetian Ghetto; featuring a synagogue as a part of the *mise-en-scene* wherein we see Jews, including Shylock and Jessica, go to pray; the singing of Hebrew chants by extras employed off the streets of the East End; interpolating two tableaux showing the daily life of Jewish people on the Rialto and in the Ghetto (Acts 1 and 2 respectively); and adding in brief moments of pantomime showing aggressive treatment of the Jews at the hands of the Christians.

<b>Tree’s Arrangement</b>	<b>Shakespeare’s Text</b>
1.1 (Venice, Rialto Bridge) + tableau	1.1, 1.3
1.2 (Belmont)	1.2, 2.1, 2.7, 2.9
2.1 (Venice, Jewish Ghetto) + 2 tableaux	2.2, 2.3, 2.4, 2.5, 2.6
2.2 (Venice, Jewish Ghetto)	2.8, 3.1
3.1 (Belmont)	3.2
3.2 (Outside the Court)	3.4
3.3 (Court)	4.1.1-396
3.4 (Outside the Court)	4.1.397-453
3.5 (Belmont)	5.1
*3.3, 3.5, and 4.2 omitted entirely	

Figure 3.20: Tree’s arrangement of the play

The Jewish soundscape and interpolated tableaux provided the foundation for Tree’s revisionist approach to Shylock. For Tree, Shakespeare’s Jew was the sequestered Jew, whether that be the sixteenth-century Jew of the Venetian Ghetto or the Edwardian Jew of the East End.

Though Tree stated it was “ridiculous” to play Shylock as merely sympathetic (a clear jab at Irving’s performances of the role), this does not mean his Shylock did not elicit sympathetic responses. If anything, his characterization evoked a different type of sympathy, one which was not so much focused on the plight of an individual character but rather the plight of the wider Jewish community.

In this section I will argue that Tree uses incidental music as a structural device, not only giving the Jews of the Ghetto a particular soundscape, but also the cosmopolitan and commercial city of Venice as well as Belmont, Portia’s home and a site of romance and festivity throughout the play. Employing near-cinematic approaches to sound design, Tree constantly juxtaposes the sound worlds of these three communities. The music of Venice (outside the Jewish Ghetto) is comprised of popular Italian songs, a tarantella,<sup>16</sup> and a march and fanfare reminiscent of the ceremonial music discussed in Chapter Three that introduces the Doge at the beginning of 1.1. The sound of Belmont, I argue, is that of pastoral England, with Roger Quilter’s “To Daisies” serving as the “song to Portia” throughout the production. The Belmont scenes also contain Humperdinck’s setting of “Where is Fancy Bred” (originally written for Max Reinhardt’s 1905 production) and Sullivan’s “Masquerade Suite” (originally written for Charles Calvert’s 1871 *Merchant* performed in Manchester). As I will explore further, these soundscapes not only aid Tree in characterizing Shylock and responding to the contemporary debate about Shakespeare’s intent for the character, but also allow him to address larger socio-political issues surrounding tensions between Christians and Jews in nineteenth century London, particularly legislation and

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<sup>16</sup> A tarantella is “a folkdance of Southern Italy,” but was “also used in art music” of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In this context, “it is [...] a kind of mimed courtship dance, usually performed by one couple surrounded by a circle of others, accompanied by castanets and tambourines held by the dancers.” Stanley Sadie (ed.), *New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, Vol. 18, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (London: Macmillan Reference, 2001), pp. 575-6.

cultural attitudes related to the influx of Jewish immigrants in the last two decades of the century. As I will detail in due course, the music goes beyond mere accompaniment and atmospheric appropriateness and works to make precise comments on Christian and Jewish religious cultures.

I have structured the remainder of this chapter in three sections. The first provides a more detailed comparison between the productions of Tree and Irving, disassociating Tree's Shylock from Irving's and showing how both the socio-political climates in which these actor-managers staged *Merchant* and their understandings of Shylock, both in conception and performance, differed. This not only corrects the assumption that Tree's production was a mere replica of Irving's,<sup>17</sup> but also uncovers Tree's chief influences, the details of which are vitally important for understanding the interpolated tableaux and incidental music of his production. In the second section, I provide a detailed analysis of Tree's tableaux and Adolf Schmid's accompanying ethnographic music for Venice and the Ghetto, arguing that these features allowed Tree's Shylock to be seen as a part of a thriving, peaceful community and enabled Tree to straddle the lines between historical and topical representations of Judaism. As I will show, the music of the Jews of Venice is constantly cross-faded with that of the Venetian Christians, whose soundscape becomes increasingly threatening as the act unfolds, often accompanying pantomimed acts of violence aimed at Jews. This both provides Shylock with motive for his actions later in the play and challenges the stereotypes often subscribed to both Jewish and Christian groups through inversion; for the Jews in these scenes are presented as decorous, hard-working, and steadfastly religious, while the Christians are presented as raucous, abusive and wholly lacking in religion.

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<sup>17</sup> James Bulman claims that Irving's production "spawned a host of imitators" including Tree. See James Bulman, *The Merchant of Venice*, Shakespeare in Performance series, ed. by Charles Edelman (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1991), pp. 28-52, and particularly p. 51.

In the final section, I discuss the music of Belmont – textually the musical center of the play – and argue that the music Tree chose for these scenes paralleled Belmont with an idyllic, pastoral English landscape. I explore how Belmont’s soundscape compares to that of Christian Venice and question the degree to which Belmont serves as a site of idealized Christian behavior and belief. I also address the musical language of the final scene in Belmont and find that through Tree’s textual treatment of this scene, he offers lessons about the relationship between music and morality. I aim to show that not only does Tree’s production offer new information about cultural responses to *Merchant* in turn-of-the-century London, but also contributes significantly to the theme of this chapter by questioning the singularity of the Protestant community in London. Through his Shylock, Tree suggests that the Jewish communities of London upheld many of the same values as the majority Christian community, and it is through the combined, illusory effects of tableaux and incidental music that the commonality between these groups is actualized.

**Irving’s and Tree’s Shylocks: ‘the two Shylocks are not on the same plane’<sup>18</sup>**

Though many surveys of the performance history of *Merchant* understand Tree’s production as a mere imitation of what Irving achieved, the productions, and their respective Shylocks were distinctly different. These productions occurred in two entirely different socio-political climates, had completely different music and sound designs, and while both actor-managers explored Shylock’s probable origin and ethnic heritage, they did so in entirely different ways. The purpose of taking time to compare Tree’s production to Irving’s is not merely to highlight their differences, but, by doing so, to demonstrate the degree of topicality embedded in

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<sup>18</sup> *The Athenaeum*, 11 April 1909, Harvard Theatre Collection Press Clippings, Box 10.



Tree's approach to the play. I suggest here that Tree's Shylock was not just a departure from Irving's characterization, but more radically, a departure from long-established stage traditions related to *Merchant*. Irving's 1879 production serves as a useful point of comparison due to its extraordinary popularity – it was revived nearly every season until Irving's death<sup>19</sup> – and due to the fact that his sympathetic Shylock was the catalyst for the aforementioned ongoing debate about Shakespeare's "intent" for the character. There are some similarities between Tree's and Irving's visual designs, particularly in Tree's adherence to the conventional style of the late-Victorian pictorial theatre and his inclusion of Irving's interpolated tableau showing Shylock's return to his house after Jessica's elopement, but as I will show in this section, Irving and Tree drew from different influences, staged their productions in different socio-political climates, and used music and sound (or the lack thereof) to underscore decisively different portrayals of Shylock. Clearly demarcating these differences and then exploring Tree's influences in further detail works to reinforce the claims I make in the final two parts of this chapter.

In the twenty-nine years between the productions of Irving and Tree, there was a major shift in the Jewish population in London, which, in turn, marked a shift in thinking about Jewish immigrants and their place in nineteenth-century British culture. The Jewish population in England during this period changed significantly, moving from a "small, predominately middle class" group "largely willing and able to accommodate the demands set for its members' absorption into English society" to a "highly conspicuous and profoundly immigrant community ... many of whom spoke no English, practiced strange religious customs, or exhibited unwelcome political tendencies."<sup>20</sup> As Rozmovits notes, the years leading up to Irving's production were a

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<sup>19</sup> Alan Hughes, *Henry Irving, Shakespearean* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1981), p. 227.

<sup>20</sup> Rozmovits, p. 6.

time when “the British liberal state had invested significantly in an image of itself as different from many of its ‘intolerant’ counterparts by virtue of its favorable treatment of its Jewish minority;” however, “by the 1880s ... this claim was being sorely tested by the mass immigration of Jews from Eastern Europe.”<sup>21</sup> As such, the political and social cultures in which Irving and Tree staged their productions of *Merchant* were vastly different. I do not mean to suggest here that there was not anti-Semitic prejudice in Britain pre-1880, for the anti-Semitism aimed at Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli alone is enough to demonstrate its sustained prevalence,<sup>22</sup> but I do wish to emphasize the fact that with the influx of Jewish migrants, which grew from 60,000 in 1880 to 300,000 by 1914, came a renewed anti-Semitism, a response to the rapidly-changing Jewish demographic, which would not have been present in the preceding decades.<sup>23</sup>

The number of fictional and non-fictional accounts that were published between 1880-1907 describing Jewish immigrants and the conditions in the East End is instructive here.<sup>24</sup> On the whole, these accounts reflect the rapid change in population and the degree to which immigrants were held responsible for the conditions of East London, including housing shortages, sub-standard sanitation, and criminal behavior. Novels depicting Jews that emerged from this period often represented Jews stereotypically, such as George du Maurier’s *Trilby* and

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>22</sup> See David Feldman, ‘Disraeli, Jews and the English Question’, *Englishmen and the Jews: Social Relations and Political Culture, 1840-1914* (New Haven, London: Yale UP, 1994), pp. 94-120.

<sup>23</sup> For more on these statistics, see Feldman, pp. 1-17; 141-6.

<sup>24</sup> A selection of these publications include: William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1890); Andrew Mearns and William Carnall Preston, *The Bitter Cry of Outcast London: An Enquiry into the Condition of the Abject Poor* (London: James Clarke & Co., 1883); Charles Booth, *Life and Labour of the People in London*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition (London: Macmillan, 1902); Israel Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto: A Study of a Peculiar People* (London: Heinemann and Cassell, 1892); Violet Guttenberg, *A Modern Exodus* (London: Greening & Co., 1904); Bram Stoker, *Dracula* (London: Archibald Constable and Co., 1897); George Du Maurier, *Trilby* (London: Osgood and McIlvaine, 1894).

Bram Stoker's *Dracula*.<sup>25</sup> Non-fictional accounts of the East End, often laced with hyperbolic and emotionally-charged descriptions of the area, also perpetuated these stereotypes. Some of these accounts proposed solutions for East London, often calling for Christian charity and intervention. Conversion and assimilation, though met with widespread rejection by immigrants, prevailed as the "solution" to what was perceived as "the Jewish problem." It was also during this period that the Anti-Aliens Act (1905) was passed, the first legislation passed in nearly a century aimed at restricting immigration.<sup>26</sup> As Lara Trubowitz has found, there was a "rhetorical interchangeability" between the words "Jew," "immigrant," and "alien" throughout the 1904-5 parliamentary debates leading up to the passing of this bill, evidenced through numerous examples of apophasis and metalepsis Trubowitz finds in her analysis of the language used by the MPs. Both conservative and liberal politicians in support of the bill wished "to restrict Jewish immigration without having to name Jews as their target ... transform[ing] what could be a distinctly anti-Semitic political platform into a viable and 'reasonable' immigration policy."<sup>27</sup>

For Tree's complex and compassionate portrayal of Shylock to be effective, he needed to find a way of repudiating the narratives and political policies that positioned Jews as villains and blamed them for London's socio-economic problems. Jewish culture, therefore, "had to be positively and authentically represented [and] anti-Semitic myths and stereotypes

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<sup>25</sup> On *Trilby*, see Anna Peak, "'That Flexible Flageolet': Music, Homophobia, and Anti-Semitism in George Du Maurier's *Trilby*" *Interdisciplinary Literary Studies*, Vol. 21, no. 4 (2019), pp. 476-92; and Michèle Mendelssohn, 'Beautiful Souls Mixed Up with Hooked Noses: Art, Degeneration, and Anti-Semitism in *The Master* and *Trilby*', *Victorian Literature and Culture*, Vol. 40, no. 1 (2012), pp. 179-97. On *Dracula*, see Judith Halberstam, 'Technologies of Monstrosity: Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', *Victorian Studies*, Vol. 36, no. 3 (Spring, 1993), pp. 333-52; and Carol Margaret Davison, 'Britain, Vampire Empire: Fin-de-Siècle Fears and Bram Stoker's *Dracula*', in *Anti-Semitism and British Gothic Literature* (London: Palgrave, 2004).

<sup>26</sup> Eitan Bar-Yosef and Nadia Valman, 'Between the East End and East Africa: Rethinking Images of "the Jew" in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture', in *The Jew' in late-Victorian and Edwardian culture: between the East End and East Africa*, ed. by Bar-Yosef and Valman (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 1-27 (p. 13).

<sup>27</sup> Lara Trubowitz, 'Acting Like an Alien' in *The Jew' in Late-Victorian and Edwardian Culture*, ed. by Eitan Bar-Yosef and Nadia Valman (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), pp. 65-79 (pp. 67-8).

counteracted.”<sup>28</sup> One of the ways in which Tree chose to counteract anti-Semitic stereotypes was to provide Shylock and the Jewish community that surrounded him throughout the production with their own soundscape, a break away from musical traditions for staging the play.<sup>29</sup> As Stephen Cockett observes, the music for Irving’s production all belonged to Belmont and the Venetian carnival, and “not a single note in [Hamilton Clarke’s] score for *The Merchant of Venice* is associated directly with the Jew.”<sup>30</sup> Even the overture and entr’actes, which typically ascribed musical themes to main characters in plays, provided no theme for Shylock, and, instead, worked only to “reinforce the melodies and rhythms of the Christian world through anticipation and repetition.”<sup>31</sup>

This also seems to have been true for productions prior to Irving’s. Any musical interpolations, such as Thomas Arne’s eighteenth-century additions for John Phillip Kemble’s 1793 production, were songs for Belmont, often sung by Jessica and Lorenzo (Figures 3.21-3.23). The standard up until Tree’s production was that “the world of Belmont induces surrender to the power of music. By contrast, Shylock’s world allows no such possibility: here music is ““the vile squeaking of the wryneck’d fife’, abhorrent sounds made by physically contorted players ... the imperative in [Shylock’s] world is silence.”<sup>32</sup> What this silence seemed to have communicated to audiences throughout various nineteenth century performances was Shylock’s isolation and perceived villainy. In these productions, Shylock was perpetually, “The man that hath no music

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<sup>28</sup> John Ripley, ‘Sociology and Soundscape: Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s 1908 *Merchant of Venice*’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, Vol. 56, no. 4 (2005), pp. 385-410 (p. 388).

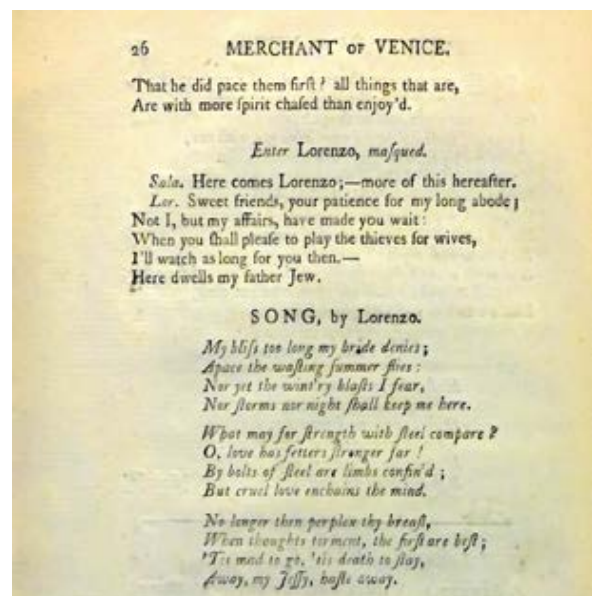
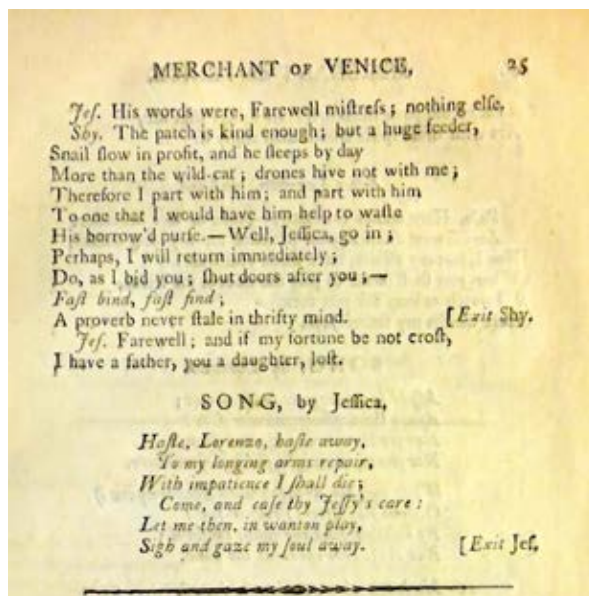
<sup>29</sup> Ciro Pinsuti’s operatic adaptation of the play, which premiered at Bologna’s Teatro Comunale in 1873, anticipated Tree’s use of opposing Christian and Jewish soundscapes to make socio-political comments. See Judah M. Cohen, ‘Shylock in Opera, 1871-2014’, in *Wrestling with Shylock*, ed. by Edna Nahshon and Michael Shapiro (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2017), pp. 387-96.

<sup>30</sup> Stephen Cockett, ‘Serenade in a Gondola’, p. 137.

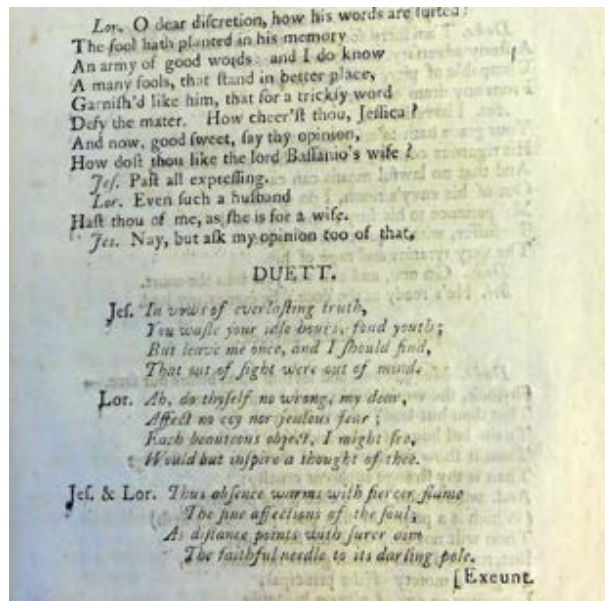
<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 138.

in himself, | Nor is moved with concord of sweet sounds, | ... fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils” (5.1.84-6). By giving Shylock and the other Jews of Venice a soundscape of their own, Tree disrupted the imperative silence of Shylock’s world, and by doing so, also disrupted the notion of Shylock as a lonely, outcast figure. Primarily through this music and the tableaux it accompanied, Shylock became a symbolic figure through which the stories and struggles of other Jews could be read. In this way, music is key to the topicality of Tree’s production, for the Jewish chants that made up the ethnographic soundtrack of Shylock and his community were the same chants one might hear in the East End at the turn of the century. Schmid selected these chants from contemporary sheet music entitled “Mogen Dovid,” composed by leading London Rabbi Herman Davids, who also served as a consultant for Tree’s production.<sup>33</sup> As such, these chants embodied the sound of early-twentieth century London far more than medieval Venice (Figure 3.24).



<sup>33</sup> “Behind the Scenes at His Majesty’s”, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 2 April 1908, *Bristol Theatre Collection*. HBT/TB/39.



Figures 3.21-3.23: Thomas Arne's interpolated songs as they appear in the promptbook for J.P. Kemble's 1793 production.

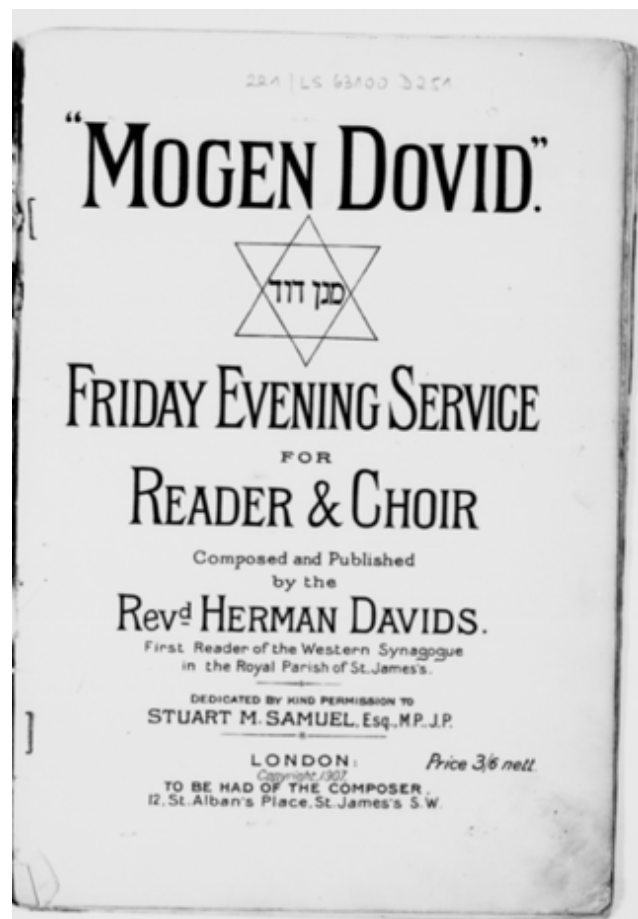


Figure 3.24: "Mogen Dovid" Friday Evening Service for Reader and Choir composed by [Rabbi] Herman Davids.

This contemporary Jewish soundscape subsequently humanized Shylock against an ethnographic backdrop created only through incidental music. By framing Shylock in this way, Tree achieved an entirely different characterization, one perceived as more realistic than Irving's. As one reviewer retrospectively recalled: "Irving's [Shylock] was romantic, Mr. Tree's is realistic; Irving's was an aristocrat among Jews, Mr. Tree's more typical of the race as a whole; Irving's was a majestic and self-contained figure, Mr. Tree's Shylock is a more emotional and human Jew, epitomizing in himself the sorrows, wrongs, and faith of his nation."<sup>34</sup> The adjectives used to describe Irving's Shylock in this review – "romantic," "aristocrat[ic]," "majestic," "self-contained" – versus Tree's Shylock – "realistic," "typical," "emotional," "human" – embody two conflicting stereotypes of a Jew in the nineteenth century: the "plutocrat" and the "alien pauper immigrant".<sup>35</sup> As Eitan Bar-Yosef and Nadia Valman have observed, "'the Jew' [in the late-Victorian and Edwardian periods] was overdetermined: infinitely wealthy and yet abjectly poor; refusing to assimilate and yet assuming a false English identity; cosmopolitan and tribal; 'alien' and yet almost overly familiar; ideal colonizer and undesirable immigrant; white but not quite."<sup>36</sup> A comparison of productions of Irving and Tree, elucidates how these contradictory characteristics were mapped onto their respective Shylocks. In the same way that English society grappled with answering the question "Who are the Jews?", Irving and Tree sought to answer the question "Who is Shylock?", and in seeking an answer, the actor-managers turned to the same historicism that dictated the overarching aesthetic of most nineteenth-century theatrical stagings. To determine who Shylock was, they first had to answer the question, "Where did Shylock come

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<sup>34</sup> *The Athenaeum*, 11 April 1909, Harvard Theatre Collection clippings of Shakespeare productions, Box 10.

<sup>35</sup> Rozmovits, p. 7.

<sup>36</sup> Eitan Bar-Yosef and Nadia Valman, p. 3.

from?” or as Stephen Orgel phrases it in his commentary on the play, “If Shylock is an outsider, what kind of outsider is he?”<sup>37</sup>

Irving’s Shylock was what Orgel calls an “authentic outsider”.<sup>38</sup> His characterization was “rationalized geographically ... as oriental,” inspired by a Levantine Jew Irving saw in Tunis during his travels.<sup>39</sup> Writing to Bram Stoker, Irving stated “I never contemplated doing [*Merchant*] ... until we were down in Morocco and the Levant ... When I saw the Jew in what seemed his own land and in his own dress, Shylock became a very different creature. I began to understand him; and now I want to play the part – as soon as I can.”<sup>40</sup> That Irving’s inspiration for his Shylock was based on a Levantine Jew is instructive, for that situates Irving’s Shylock as an ethnic outsider in Venice, one isolated not just by his faith but by his ethnic origins. He is an immigrant, but not the “alien pauper immigrant.” Irving’s Shylock is Shylock the plutocrat, meant to resemble the Levantine Jew who was “old, but erect, even stately, and full of resource ... [carrying] himself with the lofty air of a king.”<sup>41</sup> By importing this characterization from a place far outside of Venice, Irving underpins his Shylock’s isolation with an idealized exoticism. Distancing his Shylock from London, Irving stated, “he was a type of great, grand race, -- not a mere Houndsditch usurer,” thereby implying that the Jews in Houndsditch, or other parts of East London, are not as dignified as his Levantine Jew. As James Bulman observes, Irving here simply replaces one stereotype with another, transforming Shylock “from a seething, malevolent

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<sup>37</sup> Stephen Orgel, ‘Imagining Shylock’, in *Imagining Shakespeare: a history of texts and visions* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), pp. 144-162 (p. 144).

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 146.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> Bram Stoker, *Personal Reminiscences of Henry Irving* (London: W. Heinemann, 1907), p. 53.

<sup>41</sup> Hatton, p. 155.



Semite into a natural aristocrat.”<sup>42</sup> Herein, we see that Irving’s Shylock draws a sympathetic response through his position as an isolated dignitary, “almost the only gentleman in the play.”<sup>43</sup>

Tree’s Shylock, on the other hand, is not an outsider. Instead, he fits the description Orgel has recognized in multiple productions from the late nineteenth century onwards, particularly those in which Shylock spoke with “London East End or New York Lower East Side Jewish intonations.”<sup>44</sup> Tree’s Shylock was “a member of a recognizable underclass ... the insider we prefer not to know.”<sup>45</sup> To effectively achieve this characterization, Shylock needed to be visible as a part of an insulated Jewish community while also visible as an ostracized member of a wider society. Tree saw the Venetian Ghetto as the perfect setting to communicate this, ultimately choosing to use this locale for the entirety of his Act 2. In this way, Tree showed audiences Shylock’s home in Venice, transcending the view of Shylock as an outsider. The Ghetto scenes provided a picture through which Shylock could be understood as an “insider” in Venetian society, albeit forcibly sequestered, and where his home and daily life could be seen as embodying “the Edwardian social virtues of devoutness, dedication to family, social decorum, and hard work.”<sup>46</sup> This both counteracted dominant narratives in which Jews were stereotyped as unclean, uncultured, and to blame for the social problems of Edwardian East London, and worked to frame the Jewish Ghetto (whether that of Venice or East London) as appealing to the Victorian and Edwardian sense of domestic stability as a symbol of national stability.

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<sup>42</sup> Bulman, p. 31.

<sup>43</sup> Hatton, p. 154.

<sup>44</sup> Orgel, p. 144.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>46</sup> Ripley, p. 388.

As Helen Long states, “the nineteenth-century middle class home was the physical setting for, and embodiment of, Victorian values of moral virtue, industry, thrift and sobriety.”<sup>47</sup> By the Edwardian period, the number of families moving out of the inner city increased, as “health became fashionable and, along with class, underlay the suburban ideal.”<sup>48</sup> This emphasis on health in the home as a symbol of stability and morality had implications for the Jewish immigrants living in London, for as Trubowitz has indicated, “expressions of hysteria over Jewish contagion [ran] the gamut” during this period.<sup>49</sup> Jews were thought of as “carriers of disease” and also as a disease themselves, rampantly spreading through the East End.<sup>50</sup> But Tree’s staging of the Ghetto and his choice to parallel it with the East End boldly suggested that the same domestic stability, morality, and cleanliness celebrated in suburban, largely-Protestant homes was also present, if not *more* present, in Jewish communities. The East End, no doubt, had some of the poorest quality of sanitation and water supply in all of London,<sup>51</sup> but the area’s perceived dirtiness, as Tree emphasizes, was not the fault of the Jewish immigrants living there. In a subtle reminder of this fact, Tree’s *mise-en-scene* for the Ghetto showed clean laundry hanging on clotheslines (Figure 3.26). As I will explore further, such touches in the tableaux and incidental music of the Ghetto worked to try and undo the mythology that the East End had developed by this period as “another country, foreign and even terrifying territory to those who lived in the more comfortable districts and suburbs of London.”<sup>52</sup> Despite the unsanitary

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<sup>47</sup> Helen Long, *The Edwardian Home: the Middle Class Home in Britain, 1880-1914* (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993), p. 12.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>49</sup> Trubowitz, p. 73.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 73-5.

<sup>51</sup> Jim Davis and Victor Emaeljanow, *Reflecting the Audience: London Theatregoing, 1840-1880* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001), p. 46.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

conditions in parts of the East End, the argument that Tree makes through his staging is that one only needs to look below the surface to find its domiciliary qualities. Here, he follows what Israel Zangwill states in the opening to his *Children of the Ghetto*:

Not here in our London Ghetto the gates and gaberdines of the olden Ghetto of the Eternal City; yet no lack of signs external by which one may know it, and those who dwell therein. Its narrow streets have no specialty of architecture; its dirt is not picturesque ... Ntheless, this London Ghetto of ours is a region where, amid uncleanness and squalor, the rose of romance blows yet a little longer in the raw air of English reality; a world which hides beneath its stony and unlovely surface an inner world of dreams, fantastic and poetic as the mirage of the Orient where they were woven, of superstitions grotesque as the cathedral gargoyles of the Dark Ages in which they had birth. And over all lie tenderly some streaks of celestial light shining from the face of the great Lawgiver.<sup>53</sup>

It is through tableaux that Tree reveals the “inner world of dreams” of both Venice, and by comparison, East London. He lifts the haze of stereotype, made thick by the narratives, legislation, and mythology already mentioned, to reveal simple scenes showing the daily life of Jewish people, and through this gives space for the audience to consider that perhaps life in the Ghetto and the values of Jewish people are not so far from their own.

This occurs both within and without the walls of the Ghetto in two interpolated tableaux with which Tree opens his Acts 1 and 2. The opening scene of Act 1, set on the Rialto, is played in front of a cultural backdrop of Jewish commerce (Figure 3.25). Stalls containing brass wares, silks, fruit, and other sundries are positioned along the Rialto, giving the audience a chance to observe Jews as an active part of the Venetian economy. In this tableau, we do not hear the music of the Jews, for they are outside the walls of their ghetto, but their silent presence throughout the opening scene show them as a part of, rather than separate from, the commercial center of Venice. The opening tableau for Act 2 reveals a similar scene (Figure 3.26).

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<sup>53</sup> Israel Zangwill, *Children of the Ghetto: A Study of a Peculiar People*, p. 1.



Figure 3.25: The Rialto (Act 1), painted by Joseph Harker.



Figure 3.26: The Venetian Ghetto (Act 2), painted by Joseph Harker.

The curtain rises to reveal Jews sitting on the bridge conversing, carrying bales of hay, buying and selling goods at a fruit stall, and drawing water from the canal, as Jewish children playfully dangle their legs from the canal bridge.<sup>54</sup> We hear Jewish chant for the first time in the production and see Jessica “up at the front window of Shylock’s house, listening” while her father sits at another window, counting his money.<sup>55</sup> One-by-one the Jews make their way towards the synagogue (upstage left), eventually including Shylock and Jessica, who go arm-in-arm, bowing before entering the synagogue which now swells with the sounds of prayers and singing in Hebrew.<sup>56</sup> (I should mention here that this tableau is interrupted by a couple of “middle class male Christians”<sup>57</sup> who enter on a gondola and are accompanied by popular Italian song, but I will come to analyze their role in this tableau further in the next section.) This backdrop of Jewish life, though romanticized to a certain degree, firmly situates Tree’s Shylock as a member of a thriving, peaceful, reverent community that is very much a part of a wider Venetian society. Rather than being depicted as burdens on Venetian society, the Jews are situated as an active and essential part of Venice’s economy, and as cultural assets rather than cultural hindrances.

These tableaux, I would suggest, show the influence of Heinrich Heine, a German-Jewish poet whose 1838 writings about Shakespeare had been translated into English by Ida Benecke in 1895. Tree quoted two different passages from Heine in 1908 interviews he gave to London papers, showing that the actor-manager was intimately familiar with Heine’s work.<sup>58</sup> A closer examination of Heine’s commentary on Shylock reveals an even deeper influence on Tree,

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<sup>54</sup> Herbert Beerbohm Tree, *The Merchant of Venice* promptbook, 1908, His Majesty’s Theatre, Bristol Theatre Collection, HBT/205/1-4.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.* Tree uses the term “middle class” specifically in his promptbook description.

<sup>58</sup> See ‘New “Shylock”’ in *The Daily News*, 31 March 1908 and Percy Macquoid’s “‘The Merchant’ at His Majesty’s’. *Evening Standard and St. James Gazette*. 4 April 1908.

particularly Tree's choice to stage the Ghetto. In his work, Heine participates in the imaginative exercise of searching for Shylock in Venice:

I at any rate, peripatetic dream-hunter as I am, looked about on the Rialto to see if I could spy out Shylock ... But he was not to be found on the Rialto, and I settled to go in search of my old friend to the synagogue. I could not see Shylock, though I looked about on every side in the synagogue at Venice. [...] I did not see him. But towards evening, when, according to the belief of the Jews, the gates of heaven are closed and no prayer can gain admission, I heard a voice swimming in such tears as are never shed by mortals ... it was a sobbing which might have moved a stone ... they were groans such as could only be produced from a heart which has buried away in its depths the martyrdom suffered by an entire persecuted race for the length of eighteen hundred years ... it was the death-throe of a soul sinking down in its prostration at heaven's gate ... and this seemed to me a familiar voice, and I fancied I had heard it before calling out in its agony, 'Jessica! My child!'<sup>59</sup>

In this passage, Heine specifies the Rialto and the synagogue as the two places in which he searches for Shylock, and through he does not mention the Ghetto specifically, the locale is implied due to the fact that nearly all the synagogues in Venice, even today, are located within the area that was once the Ghetto. Importantly, Heine indicates twice that he cannot *see* Shylock, and only "finds" the character in what he *hears*. Shylock's is the "voice swimming in such tears as are never shed by mortals," and this immortality is suggestive of his symbolic importance as a figure onto which the past, present, and future struggles of Jews can be transferred. Tree capitalized on the malleability of sound and its ability to simultaneously recall and transcend a specific place and time. I argue that it is what the audience heard at His Majesty's, more than what they saw, that moved them closer to drawing topical connections between the Jews on stage and the Jews in London. For while the visual features of Tree's *mise-en-scene* recall Venice, his music, in large part, recalls London.

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<sup>59</sup> Ida Benecke, *Heine on Shakespeare: a translation of his Notes on Shakespeare's heroines* (London: A. Constable, 1895), pp. 145-6.

Multiple reviews reveal that the topicality of Tree's production was not lost on audiences. H. Hamilton Fyfe called attention to the East/West divide present in London during this time, stating, "There is many a Shylock in the City to-day, and many a Jessica in Maida Vale 'ashamed to be her father's child.'"<sup>60</sup> He also observed how the lines between historical realism and topicality were straddled throughout the staging, and saw that "Mr. Tree's Shylock bridges the gulf between us and the Middle Ages."<sup>61</sup> Another unidentified contemporary review corroborates this:

Mr. Tree will try in [act two] to show the popular anti-Jewish feeling of the period – when the alien immigrant question was apparently as acute in Venice as it is in Leeds and the East End of London to-day. Mr. Tree regards such explanation as essential to the understanding by a modern audience of the spirit of Shylock in his dealings with the Christians; and so we shall see the persecution of the Semite by the Venetian in full working order on the stage of His Majesty's as an introduction to Shylock's attempted revenge.<sup>62</sup>

This comment reveals the importance of putting anti-Semitism on display in Tree's production, for he saw it as both essential to Shylock's characterization and as the common link between the historical time and place of the stage world and contemporary London. In Tree's view, it is the anti-Semitic treatment endured by Shylock that both provides the motive for his actions in the play and imbues the character with a sense of transcendent universality. Tree stated in an interview with the *Pall Mall Gazette* (1908) that the universality of Shylock was not just his own take on the character, but that it also was "Shakespeare's very obvious intention ... to present a Jew typical of the eternal struggle of his race against the dominating Christian."<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> H. Hamilton Fyfe, 'The Theatre: "The Merchant of Venice"', *The World*, 8 April 1908, Bristol Theatre Collection Press Clippings, HBT/TB/39.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>62</sup> Unspecified clipping from London paper, April 6, 1908. Harvard Theatre Collection Press Clippings, Box 10.

<sup>63</sup> 'Behind the Scenes at His Majesty's', *Pall Mall Gazette*, 2 April 1908, Bristol Theatre Collection Press Clippings, HBT/TB/39.

This use of Shakespeare's "intent" as an authoritative seal of approval for Tree's approach to Shylock brings us back to the debates that sprung from Irving's portrayal of the character. According to Tree, Shakespeare's intent was moralistic. If his Shylock was meant to be understood as representative of his race, an archetype through which numerous narratives about the struggles between Jews and Christians can be told, then embedded within this character were moral lessons about religious difference, applicable across time and place. Thus, the universality of Shylock and Shakespeare become muddled as both become figures "for all time," harkening back to the view of Shakespeare I explored at the beginning of this chapter. Here, the all-seeing dramatist provides a character that, like Shakespeare himself, can transcend time, place, and circumstance to call attention to a prejudice so embedded in religious history that the "lessons" Shakespeare teaches are not only true of his age, but also true of Tree's, and even of our own.

In the following section, I argue that this view of Shylock as an archetypal figure was communicated through Tree's incidental music and interpolated tableaux. Now that I have established Tree's chief influences, how he understood Shakespeare's "intent" for Shylock, and how his production was a departure from both Irving's staging and other long-established staging traditions, I now conduct a detailed analysis of the music for both the Christians and the Jews of Venice and further explore the religious tensions and anxieties present in Tree's *fin-de-siècle* production.



**Tableaux and Sound Design: “here music is enlisted with the greatest possible advantage to the dramatic effect”<sup>64</sup>**

As I discussed in the previous section, Irving and Tree’s productions of *Merchant* were very different, both in their portrayal of Shylock and the socio-political environments in which they were staged. I have already touched on how Tree used incidental music and tableaux to create contrasting communities of Gentiles and Jews on his stage, and through these devices, creates an atmosphere conducive to eliciting sympathetic responses to Shylock. However, to truly get a sense of the integral role incidental music played in the production, and particularly how this music aided Tree in drawing parallels between the Jews of the Venetian Ghetto with the Jews of the East End and the Christians of Belmont and the Christians of fashionable London suburbs, we must take a closer look at the tableaux Tree provides, and the soundscapes he assigns to the Jewish and Christian communities he constructs through performance. Tree created three musical worlds in this production: the music of the Venetian Christians, the music of the Jews, and the music of Belmont. The following section focuses on the music of Venice, calling attention to the exact moments where this music accompanies tableaux and interpolated moments of pantomime. I argue that the way in which music is deployed throughout this production helps to determine its topical resonance. I should note that my analysis is confined to the scenes of Venice where music is a prevalent feature, meaning that the trial scenes, which went entirely unaccompanied, sit outside the scope of this chapter.

For this section, I am indebted to John Ripley’s work on this production.<sup>65</sup> His work is rooted in a detailed exploration of the promptbook and explores the music of Tree’s production as

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<sup>64</sup> ‘A New Shylock: Tree mounts “The Merchant of Venice”’, *Boston Evening Transcript* (reporting from *The Daily Telegraph*), 18 April 1908, Harvard Theatre Collection, Box 10.

<sup>65</sup> John Ripley, ‘Sociology and Soundscape: Herbert Beerbohm Tree’s 1908 “Merchant of Venice”’, pp. 385-410.

it relates to early cinema and the development of early sound technologies. Ripley pays close attention to the paralanguage of Tree's Shylock – spitting, grunting, sighing, and other guttural responses – and how these sounds work with the music of the production, concluding that in Tree's promptbook, "one confronts what amounts to the plot for a live soundtrack, in which sound becomes a dynamic rather than passive adjunct to picture, a tool for making precise sociopolitical comments."<sup>66</sup> Ripley's attention to the dynamism of Tree's use of sound and its function as a tool for making "precise sociopolitical comments" is foundational to my work; however, Ripley's argument is solely based on what the promptbook provides about the soundscape of the production, not the musical score itself. As such, the following section builds on the work of Ripley. In some instances, the music further solidifies his argument, but in others, I find that the music complicates Ripley's understanding of Tree's production as a "daring and inventive exercise in political Shakespeare."<sup>67</sup> What remains central to both my argument and Ripley's, however, is that the production was both "a celebration of Jewish culture and a condemnation of Christian racism,"<sup>68</sup> and that both of these aspects of Tree's *Merchant* were communicated through tableaux and incidental music.

### **The music of Venice**

As I have already mentioned, Tree opened his first and second acts with tableaux that provided audiences with glimpses of daily Jewish life. The Rialto tableau which opens Act I provides only a *view* of Jewish culture; we do not hear their music. The accompanying music is

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<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 392.

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 385.

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 387.

only that of the Venetian Christians, which ushers the Doge onto the stage in an elaborate procession replete with a cheering crowd, all occurring before Antonio's opening lines. Though the entire music does not survive as a part of Schmid's conductor score, the part books for both the first violin and the piano reduction of the orchestral music provide enough information to assess the general tonality of the music. A procession of court ladies and gentlemen are accompanied on the stage by characteristic light music, which then segues into a fanfare and march, announcing the entrance of the Doge.<sup>69</sup> As all of this occurs, the Jews on the stage selling sundry goods provide what Ripley observes as a "contrast to the lifestyle of aristocratic privilege, represented by the Doge's disruptive procession and cheering crowd" as the Jews are "spatially isolated, decorous, and productively occupied" throughout the scene.<sup>70</sup>

In this tableau, Tree conveys what life might be like for Jews outside the walls of the Ghetto, or in a contemporary sense, what life might be like for Jews outside of East London. Though permitted to be on the Rialto and positioned as "an integral part of Venetian social and commercial life,"<sup>71</sup> the Jews are given no music and, therefore, no voice of their own in this scene. This reveals the Jews' role as unwanted insiders in Venice. Seen, and yet, unheard, they are overshadowed by the carnival and merry making of the Christians. The realism of the tableau was a focal point in reviews, and importantly, the Jews reminded one reviewer not of Venice, but of London: "[T]hese Venetian Jews in high-crowned hats and long gaberdines are drawn from the modern everyday Ghetto of London. They wear no long-locked wigs nor burlesque noses; their beards are real, and their faces, typically Eastern, need no make-up."<sup>72</sup> The contrast of class

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<sup>69</sup> Listen to transcription of cue 1, Curtain and Doge's Entrance, available in Google Drive.

<sup>70</sup> Ripley, p. 393.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> 'Real Ghetto on the Stage', *The Daily Express*, 3 April 1908, Bristol Theatre Collection. HBT/TB/39.

difference between the groups was also apparent. As *Lloyd's Weekly* reported, “the Christians swaggered in silks and feathers, [while] the Hebrews were tattered, unkempt, unprepossessing.”<sup>73</sup> As Tree himself stated, this opening tableau worked to “emphasize, at once and strongly, the fundamental note of the play, namely, the hostile attitude shown by Christians and Jews.”<sup>74</sup>

It is not until the first entr'acte that we hear the soundscape of the Jews, and here Jews become less of a backdrop and more of the central focus. The entr'acte was Max Bruch's “Kol Niedri,” first composed for cello and orchestra in 1880, and inspired by two Hebrew melodies.<sup>75</sup> It opens with a theme inspired by songs “traditionally sung on the eve of Yom Kippur, during the service of Atonement,” a melody which Christopher Fifield claims “has long exerted a great emotional impact on Jews.”<sup>76</sup> Bruch's piece then moves to a second theme extracted from a choral work based on Lord Byron's poem “Oh! Weep for those that Wept on Babel's stream.” As Fifield notes, “the common passage in both works occurs at ... the words ‘*Wo badet Israel den Wunden Fuss?*’ or ‘Where shall Israel bathe her wounded feet?’”<sup>77</sup> The religious meaning in both musical quotations in Bruch's “Kol Niedri” work to anticipate the rest of the Jewish music heard in the Venetian Ghetto, which as we will see, is solely drawn from religious sources.

As the final notes of Bruch's “Kol Nideri” are played in the orchestra, the sound of a Jewish chant (14) begins offstage up left (the direction of the synagogue) and the curtain rises to reveal the Venetian Ghetto at sunset, busy with “general movement and conversation” (Figure 3.27). As the promptbook indicates, this chant is a call to prayer, and “after a moment or so, the

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<sup>73</sup> ‘Mr. Tree as Shylock: Seen at this Best in Gorgeously Appointed Revival, Striking Racial Study’, *Lloyd's Weekly*, N.D., Bristol Theatre Collection Press Clippings, HBT/TB/39.

<sup>74</sup> “‘The Merchant of Venice’ Redecorated’, *Boston Evening Transcript*, 18 March 1908, Harvard Theatre Collection Press Clippings, Box 10.

<sup>75</sup> Listen to professional recording of Bruch's *Kol Niedri*. Link available in appendix.

<sup>76</sup> Christopher Fifield, *Max Bruch: His Life and Works* (London: Gollancz, 1988), p. 169.

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 170.

Jews at the back enter the Synagogue, and one by one the rest follow.”<sup>78</sup> The chant sung is part of the Hashkiveinu prayer, a petitionary evening prayer asking for peace. In number 14, only the first line is sung: “*Ufros aleinu sukat sh’lomecha*” meaning “Spread over us Your tabernacle of peace”<sup>79</sup> and is repeated as the Jews make their way to the synagogue.<sup>80</sup> As the chant finishes, the “loud harsh sound of Hebrew prayer is heard from the Synagogue” which then segues into number 14a, an extended version of 14 with two more lines of the Hashkiveinu: “*V’tak’neinu b’aitza tova mil’fanecha, | V’hoshieinu l’ma-an sh’mecha*” meaning “And guide us with Your good counsel, | Save us for Your name’s sake.”<sup>81</sup> This chant accompanies Shylock and Jessica as they make their way towards the synagogue. The promptbook states, “Shylock and Jessica cross the stage to the bridge, mount it, and when on its centre, Shylock gazing round at his house, salutes it’s solemnity.” The chant then crescendos as “they ... go down the other side of the bridge, and bowing before the Synagogue – enter its doors.” Here, we see Jews as a part of their own community instead of a silenced part of Venetian commerce. The religious devotion of the group is emphasized, and realism emerges as its most striking feature. The nineteenth-century chants of the “Mogen Dovid” and the fact that “real Jews” were recruited from Whitechapel and Houndsditch contributed to the effect, (Figure 3.28) described best in Hilda Thompson’s review:

The effect, which it is impossible to express in words, is wonderful, awesome. In contrast to this grave, reverential, mystic atmosphere are the merry Christian masqueraders who ever and anon pass up the canal in gondolas, singing to musical accompaniment. As their laughter and light-hearted tones die away in the distance, the Hebrew chant swells up again on the air, solemn and impressive, and one

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<sup>78</sup> All subsequent quotations describing action from the production, unless otherwise indicated, are from the promptbook, Bristol Theatre Collection, HBT/205/1-4.

<sup>79</sup> All transliterations and English translations of Hebrew are taken from Rabbi Nosson Scherman, *The Complete Art Scroll Siddur*, ed. by Rabbi Meir Zlotowitz (Rahway, N.J.: Mesorah Publications Ltd., 1984).

<sup>80</sup> Listen to transcription of cue 14 Hashkivenu (short), available in Google Drive.

<sup>81</sup> Listen to transcription of cue 14a, 17a Hashkivenu (full), available in Google Drive.

almost awaits some signal from out the sky, from the God to whom this praise is directed.<sup>82</sup>



Figure 3.27: Blueprint of the Venetian Ghetto, Act 2.



Figure 3.28: Photograph of English Jews employed as extras in Tree's production, as printed in *Lloyd's Weekly News*, 5 April 1908, Bristol Theatre Collection, HBT/TB/39.

<sup>82</sup> Hilda Thompson, 'Stageland: Mr. Tree's Shylock', *Clarian*, 10 April 1908, Bristol Theatre Collection Press Clippings, HBT/TB/39.

This sense of topical realism is heightened by the fact that the Jew's chant is interrupted by what Tree describes as "middle class male Christians" who enter the Ghetto by gondola. As the doors to the synagogue close and the music of 14a fades, 14b begins immediately from the gondola "holding a baritone singer of Italian song, playing guitar, accompanied by two musicians" entering from the righthand side of the stage. The song he sings is a traditional Neapolitan song called "Fenesta Vascia" meaning "The Low Window," referred to in the musical cue book simply as "gondola music."<sup>83</sup> At this juncture, still before any lines of Act 2 have been spoken, Tree has established the sound worlds of the Jews and the Venetian Christians. The music of the Jews is solely religious music, described by Thompson as "grave, reverential, mystic, ... solemn, and impressive". The music of the Venetian Christians, as has been illustrated through tableau twice, is playful, "light-hearted," but disruptive – first a march, later an Italian song. Juxtaposed against the sound of the Jewish chant, this creates a jarring contrast between the sound world of the Jews and that of the Christians. The translations of both the Jewish chant and the Italian song further illustrate the differences in this music. The Jewish chant asks for peaceful protection, guidance, and deliverance, while the Italian song, by comparison, is a superficial, melodramatic expression of unrequited love. Instrumentally, the sound of the Jews is that of the reed organ and chanting chorus; the sound of the Venetian Christians is the guitar and mandolin, instrumentations that will be repeated for continuity throughout Act 2.

As the sounds of 14b fade away and the gondola exits stage left, the tableau ends and the dialogue of the scene begins, opening with Launcelot Gobbo's speech "Certainly, my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew my master" (2.2.1-24). Though this marks the end of the

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<sup>83</sup> Listen to transcription of cue 14b, 16a Fenesta Vacia, available in Google Drive.

tableau, it is only the beginning of Tree's complex, multi-layered sound design for the Ghetto scenes. As I will show, he continues to layer the sound worlds of the Venetian Christians and Jews to make topical, socio-political points. This first happens at the end of Launcelot's speech when the sounds of the mandolin and guitar are heard once again in the instrumental interlude of musical cue 15.<sup>84</sup> This accompanies the first of many pantomimed interpolations that occur throughout the scene:

[Launcelot] runs up stage, crosses the bridge as simultaneously Jessica enters stealthily from the Synagogue doors. [Crescendo music until her exit]. (As the doors open the Jew's prayer is heard, which ceases, when Jessica closes the doors). They [Jessica and Launcelot] meet in the C. of the bridge: Jessica puts her finger to her mouth and exclaims "S'sh" to Lancelot, who with a comprehending glance at where Shylock is, assents. After looking up and down the canal, Jessica comes down the bridge steps and running quickly across the stage exits through door in house, as Launcelot goes down the other side of the bridge.

Within this wordless interpolation, the audience gets a fuller understanding of what the music of the guitar and mandolin symbolize. Number 15 accompanies the moment at which Jessica is seen sneaking out of the synagogue, looking up and down the canal for Lorenzo, and running back to her father's house. Her "S'sh" aimed at Launcelot reveals that she is planning something in secret, and that the music of the mandolin and guitar drown out the sounds of Jewish prayer coming from the synagogue as she exits, foreshadows her eventual conversion and elopement. Through this innovative and detailed sound design, the audience is privy to the planning stages of Jessica's elopement and her desire to cast off her Jewish faith and identity. Jessica is immediately associated with the sounds of the Venetians, not the Jews, a point which is reinforced throughout the rest of the play.

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<sup>84</sup> Listen to music cue 15 instrumental interlude, available in Google Drive.



The next musical cue (15a) establishes Bassanio's music which is stylistically similar to what the audience has already heard in 14b and 15.<sup>85</sup> His entrance (also on a gondola) is accompanied by the song "Rosabella," for which I have no indication of its lyrical or melodic source.<sup>86</sup> At this point in the scene, the song functions merely as a transition, accompanying Bassanio's, Leonardo's, and Salerio's entrance. The dialogue between Bassanio, Launcelot, Old Gobbo, and eventually Gratiano, continues unaccompanied until Gratiano's exit. After this, Tree interpolated another bit of pantomime accompanied by a reprise of "Rosabella" (15b):

As Gratiano is about to exit down R he is met by a company of revellers ... they are surrounded by some 4 ladies, 2 or 3 little girls, and a couple of men. Meeting them are another party of revellers who enter from above the penthouse L. They all join hands in two circles: the larger circle dancing round the singer, and the smaller one by themselves.

Here, Italian song becomes directly associated with the merry making of the Venetians, merry making which is taking place in the middle of the Ghetto. Though there is no photograph or illustration of this interpolation, the description describes them dancing in two circles, a dance not unlike the morris dances described in Part One. Additionally, the property plot for Act 2 indicates that the props used for the revellers were the same ones used for Tree's production of *Merry Wives*, another small indication that the revellers' appearances likely resembled the English rather than the Italians. Such details work to support my argument that the Venetian Christians in Act 2 were intended to exhibit the attitudes of English Protestants, and as the act continues, Tree continues to add both aural and visual layers to encourage this symbolic reading of the scene, gradually building to a climax in the tableau showing Shylock returning to his home to find Jessica has eloped.

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<sup>85</sup> Listen to music cue 15a, 15b, 16 Rosabella, available in Google Drive.

<sup>86</sup> The lyrics, written in English only, I can only assume are original to Schmid.

The next layer comes at musical number 16a, a repetition of “Fenesta Vascia” (14b). The song is heard at the end of Jessica’s declaration of intent to convert to Christianity: “O Lorenzo, | If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife, | Become a Christian and thy loving wife” (2.3.19-21), after which a gondola enters carrying Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, and Solanio. As the song continues, another moment of pantomime occurs, as “two old Jews also enter and as they pass Gratiano and others flick them contemptuously with their gloves. The Jews cringe aside and exit into the synagogue.” This adds another layer of meaning to the mandolin and guitar music that defines the soundscape of the Venetian Christians. Here, the music goes beyond mere disruption and accompanies the antagonization of innocent Jews; the Venetians are not merely interrupting or “making merry” but physically attacking Jews simply crossing the bridge on their way to synagogue. It is at this point that the musical cues begin to follow each other in a more rapid succession, constantly cross-fading between orchestra and stage band and building a tense atmosphere.

The next musical cue (17) is Jessica’s song, which is notably not the sound of the Jews but the sound of the Christians.<sup>87</sup> In isolation, the song is genial, but considering that the audience has just heard the same instrumentation accompany aggression aimed at the Jews, it takes on a more sinister meaning. The song accompanies Lorenzo’s lines describing how Jessica has instructed “How [he] shall take her from her father’s house,” ending at the line “That she is the issue to a faithless Jew” (2.4.30-8). After this line, another pantomimic scene ensues, and its meaning is communicated through the music:

Lorenzo goes to the door [of Shylock’s house] and pulls the bell chain. Jessica appears up at the window (facing audience) with lighted candle and throws him a kiss ... Launcelot now enters from the synagogue (as door opens, prayers heard)

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<sup>87</sup> Listen to transcription of music cue 17 Jessica’s song, available in Google Drive.

and coming to the bridge in pantomime tells Lorenzo that Shylock is approaching. As Lorenzo speaks the next line [...] he and Gratiano get into boat. Jessica closes shutters. Launcelot waits for Shylock at synagogue. At exit of Gondola Jews Chant (17a) heard. Shylock enters, chant dims but plainly heard [under the dialogue].

That Shylock's entrance is accompanied by a reprise of the Hashkivenu prayer (14a) just after he has been described by Lorenzo as a "faithless Jew" is telling.<sup>88</sup> It communicates quite clearly that it is not Shylock who lacks faith but Lorenzo, Jessica, and their Venetian counterparts, who unlike the Jews, are never portrayed as reverent or religious people.

This repeated chant continues beneath Shylock's dialogue as he calls for Jessica and considers if he should go to supper at Bassanio's, fading at Shylock's final lines (2.5.11-9). At Launcelot's mention of the masque another musical contrast develops as the audience hears new music from the Venetians (18) described by Schmid as "Pipes and Drum."<sup>89</sup> The music, played off-stage, is a tarantella with a threatening tonality, written in G minor. This marks a tonal shift in the music of the Venetians, moving from the light-hearted tonality of "Fanestra Vasica," "Rosabella," and "Jessica's song" to the darker, foreboding sounds of the pipes and drum. It is Shylock who draws attention to this in the text, warning Jessica against the "drum, and vile squeaking of the wry-necked fife" (2.5.28-9). That these lines in Tree's production are now accompanied with such a sound heightens their believability. Shylock's warning is genuine. The audience hears the very thing that Shylock fears. Shylock's insistence that Jessica lock up the doors and close the casements is not a sweeping dismissal of music or merry making, but an expression of fear about the revel that Shylock (and the audience) can already hear approaching

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<sup>88</sup> Reprise of 14a, Hashkivenu prayer (full).

<sup>89</sup> Listen to transcription of music cue 18, tarantella stage band, available in Google Drive.

in the distance. This is not just the paranoia of an over-protective father, but a response to a real, ensuing threat, expressed chiefly in the music's tonality.

What follows this is yet another interpolated pantomime in which music makes meaning:

Shylock is in the act of crossing the bridge but in hearing the reveller's music he comes back to Jessica. [Music dims]. He puts his lanterns on the wall piece by the house, and taking his earrings off he places them in Jess[ica]'s hands. As he does so, Drum and Fife music stops and the Jew's chant (18b) is heard from the synagogue. Shylock takes "Leah's" turquoise ring from his finger, puts it to his lips, and then hands it to Jessica. He now kisses her reverently on the forehead and as she bows her head he raises two fingers over it, in the act of blessing. Taking the lantern again he crosses the bridge, mounts it, and when on its centre, he turns round, and gives a last look at Jessica.

This moment illustrates Shylock's love for Jessica, and the accompanying Jewish chant, like the tarantella music, shifts in tonality to emphasize this point. While at this point in the Act the music for the Venetians becomes more sinister, the music for the Jews becomes more somber. The chant is "Oseh Shalom" or "He who maketh peace."<sup>90</sup> The lyrics are "*Oseh shalom bim'romav | Hu ya'aseh shalom aleynu | v'al kol Yisrael | v'Imru Amen*" meaning "He who makes peace in High Places | He will make peace for us and for all Israel | Let us say, Amen."<sup>91</sup> That this music is played at the moment when Shylock last sees Jessica, wistfully looking at her from the center of the bridge, reveals the emotional charge Tree wished to achieve in this moment of the production.

As Shylock turns to exit, the sound of the "Oseh Shalom" fades and the Pipes and Drums music starts up again, marking the entrance of Gratiano, Salarino, and Solanio, disguised by masks and dominos. They cross paths with Shylock on the bridge and "beat him aside with bladders." Here the tarantella is explicitly linked with abuse of Jews, just as "Fenestra Vascia"

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<sup>90</sup> Listen to transcription of music cue 18a, tarantella full orchestra, available in Google Drive.

<sup>91</sup> Listen to transcription of 18a Oseh Shalom, available in Google Drive.

was earlier in the scene. The musical tension that has been built throughout the scene is nearing its climax, which occurs in the final tableau. Rather than being underscored by silence, as Irving's iteration of the tableau was, Tree's is driven by the incidental music and interpolated action. Again, the cross-fading of the contrasting sound worlds works to make meaning here, recapitulating the themes heard earlier in the scene at precise moments, culminating in a heart-wrenching expression of grief from Shylock.

The tableau begins with the elopement of Lorenzo and Jessica under the cover of the masque conducted by Gratiano and Salarino. As Lorenzo and Jessica leave in a gondola at the line, "On, gentlemen; away! | Our masquing mates by this time for us stay" (2.6.59-60), Jessica's song (cue 17) is repeated. Once the gondola is off stage, a large group of "ladies, gentlemen, men, women, and children come on from all entrances" and the tarantella of the revellers is heard once again. This time, however, it is played in the orchestra and not just by the stage band. The sounds are not just of "drums and fifes" on the stage, but of the woodwinds, brass, percussion, and strings of a typical Edwardian orchestra.<sup>92</sup> At this moment, the music of the Venetian Christians enters the liminal space between the stage world and the audience. The change in instrumentation means the tarantella sounds even louder and resembles many of the other popular nineteenth-century tarantellas. Revelers fill the stage accompanied by this music, shouting and laughing, "some with lighted hand lanterns, some with bladders on sticks, and some with drums which they beat continuously." Their costumes are reflective of sixteenth-century dress, as "all are in some way disguised with dominoes, black vizards, funny masks, and large cloaks."

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<sup>92</sup> Listen to transcription of music cue 19a, Tarantella full orchestra, available in Google Drive.

At first, the masquers are not meant to be understood as threatening. As the promptbook indicates, “they dance about shouting and laughing with no other object but to make merry and enjoy themselves.” But the masque descends into chaos at the very moment the Jews are seen exiting the synagogue after evening prayers. As the doors to the synagogue open, the “Osah Shalom” chant is heard once again, and “the Christians at once whisper to one another, ‘The Jews! The Jews!,’ and crouching down by [Shylock’s] house R, they wait. As the foremost Jews ascend the lower bridge, they (the Christians) advance in a body and attack them with their swords and sticks.” At this moment, the sound of the Jewish chant fades and the tarantella of 19a is repeated fortississimo (*fff*), or as loudly as possible. Here again, we have the contrast between the chant of the Jews – a chant that asks for deliverance and peace – while we witness the Christians, accompanied by their tarantella, intentionally attack Jews leaving their place of worship. During this tableau, the Jews are never positioned as the attackers. They “parry the blows to the best of their ability,” but the violence continues relentlessly, including a shockingly visceral moment described in the promptbook: “During the revel, ... one of the revellers brings on from up L the dummy figure (in the likeness of an old Jew) and dragging it up the bridge, after a mock struggle with it, he flings it over the R rail, and the water is seen to splash up.”

If there remained any question of how the audience was meant to interpret this group of revelling Christians, that dissipates as they witness a Jew being dragged from upstage left, the location of the synagogue, and murdered on the canal bridge, the very location where the audience has seen smaller aggressions take place throughout the scene. Even after the murder of the Jew, the revel continues. A bell strikes the hour of nine and the watch (made up of four extras) comes on stage to disperse them, but they cannot be contained. Another six extras playing the part of the city guard enter, and eventually drive the revelers off the stage. On the fifth stroke

of the bell, Shylock re-enters and crosses a moonlit bridge. He sees a sword left behind by the masquers, kicks it and then taps it with his staff, “wondering what it may mean [as] he passes across to his house.” Here, we see Shylock gradually come to understand what has occurred, and unlike Irving’s tableau, which ended with him knocking silently at the door to his empty house, Tree provides the tableau with a more emotional closure. After knocking at the door and receiving no answer:

He waits, then rises, looks up at the casements, and finally tries the door. Finding it unlocked he goes into the house and calls: ‘Jessica!’ (slight pause) ‘Jessica!’ Hearing no reply, leaving his staff downstairs, he rushes up the staircase. As he mounts the top, he calls again, this time with some uneasiness, ‘Jessica!’ He enters alone in the front room (facing the audience), throws the light of the lantern round the room, but discovering no trace of Jessica, he calls her name again: now utterly perplexed he rushes into the back room, calls: ‘Jessica!’ and looks out of the window.

At this point, Jessica’s song is heard a final time as “a small profile gondola is seen to enter up R in the distance.” This is Shylock’s moment of true recognition, as the gondola going off in the distance and the recapitulation of Jessica’s song reveals to him that his daughter is really gone. It is only after this moment that Shylock goes to his coffer and finds it empty. Then, “he utters one long distracted groan, and calling Jessica again he exits from the room, and nearly falls out of the street door [...] With a piteous cry, he lets fall the lantern and bursting into sobs he falls against the wall piece R. at the canal as the curtain falls.”

This marks the end of the first scene of the second act, and when the curtain rises on the second scene, it does so in silence. After the relentless building of musical tension and crossfading between the two sound worlds in the previous scene, the silence is arresting. It offers a place for audiences to pause and process what they have just witnessed. The silence was also wholly unconventional. Curtain drops and raises were almost always accompanied by music of

some kind, so beginning a new scene with no musical accompaniment would have also been conspicuous for audiences very much used to curtain music as a theatrical standard. It is here in the aftermath of the tableau, rather than within the tableau itself, that Tree lets silence speak, for his final scene of act two went entirely unaccompanied. It begins with the picture of a grief-stricken community, showing “two young Jewesses in mourning attire, sitting on the slats outside Shylock’s house, bewailing and lamenting his loss.” This works to reinforce Shylock’s continued place in this community, and emphasizes that Jessica’s elopement is not the only event that transpired the evening prior. Yes, Jessica has eloped with her father’s money and become a Christian, but another Jew has been murdered and many more beaten on their way home from the prayer. It has been nothing short of a traumatic evening for the entire Jewish community, and most importantly, all of these events have occurred in *their* Ghetto, the only place, by force of law, that Jews in Venice can call their own. In context with the play, this provides Shylock a reason for his forthcoming actions. As a review in *Lloyd’s Weekly* stated, “... behind the groupings and melodramatic business of Christians insulting Jews there was suggestion of motive. One knew the reason of Shylock’s intense hatred of Antonio from this treatment of a down-trodden race.”<sup>93</sup> Though the musical layering I observed in the previous scene does not continue into the second, it does not mean that the mistreatment of Shylock has ceased. Tree continues to build on this idea of revealing Shylock’s motive, for the trial scenes are yet to come.

The dialogue of 2.2 begins with Solanio and Salarino discussing the flight of “Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica.” As Solanio mocks the cries of the “dog Jew,” the audience sees Shylock dragged on stage by a “mob of men and women, ... shouting and hooting at him” as they

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<sup>93</sup> ‘Mr. Tree as Shylock: Seen at this Best and Gorgeously Appointed Revival, Striking Racial Study’, *Lloyd’s Weekly*, N.D., Bristol Theatre Collection Press Clippings, HBT/TB/39.



pull him across the bridge. The Jewesses “cross behind to the wall piece where they remain and look on with kindred sympathy.” Dragged on stage and forced to speak to the mocking Venetians about his daughter’s elopement, the sympathy for Shylock continues to build, despite the fact that there is no accompanying, atmospheric music to help create that effect. As the scene continues, the mob of Christians laugh as Shylock describes his daughter’s disappearance. When he attempts to leave after his line “she is damned for it” (3.1.29), he is stopped by Solanio with a sword, a reminder of the Christians’ attacks on the Jews with swords and sticks in the previous scene. As the dialogue approaches the “Hath not a Jew eyes?” speech, Shylock is increasingly taunted by the Christians, and as he speaks the line, “if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge” he leans on the other Jews on the stage for support as he “slowly and solemnly” gives his iconic speech. Tree’s notes on the speech reveal that he gradually became more impassioned as he spoke these lines, climaxing on the word “revenge” (Figure 3.29). The other Jews on stage were scripted to show support for Shylock, particularly after his line “If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? Why, revenge” after which all the Jews on stage shouted, “ah, revenge!”

Although the entirety of the scene and Shylock’s “Hath not a Jew” speech are unaccompanied, the sympathy which the incidental music invokes in the previous tableau hangs like a fog over the stage, and the placement of other Jews around Shylock, constantly supporting him as he delivers these lines, is a visual indicator of what we have already seen and heard in the previous scene, and what Tree himself states is the foundation of his characterization of Shylock. The audience is asked to look beyond Shylock and to have sympathy for *all* of the Jews on the stage, Jews played by real Jewish people living in London’s East End. In this way, Tree brings the tensions that existed between modern-day Jews and Christians in London to the fore, and

through the lens of the Venetian Ghetto, the audience is asked to see themselves as implicit in the wrongful and needless persecution of innocent Jews. What the audience observed in this Act, which had an uninterrupted run time of an hour, was scene after scene of Christians behaving in an “ungodly” manner and Jews displaying the very traits and social virtues routinely celebrated in Edwardian society. This works to question religious hierarchies and stereotypes present in contemporary London. Are the Jews of East London really as dirty, morally corrupt, strange, or threatening as people have written? Are the foundational beliefs of the Jews really all that different from those of Christians? And, are the Jews more devoted to their religion than contemporary Christians to theirs?

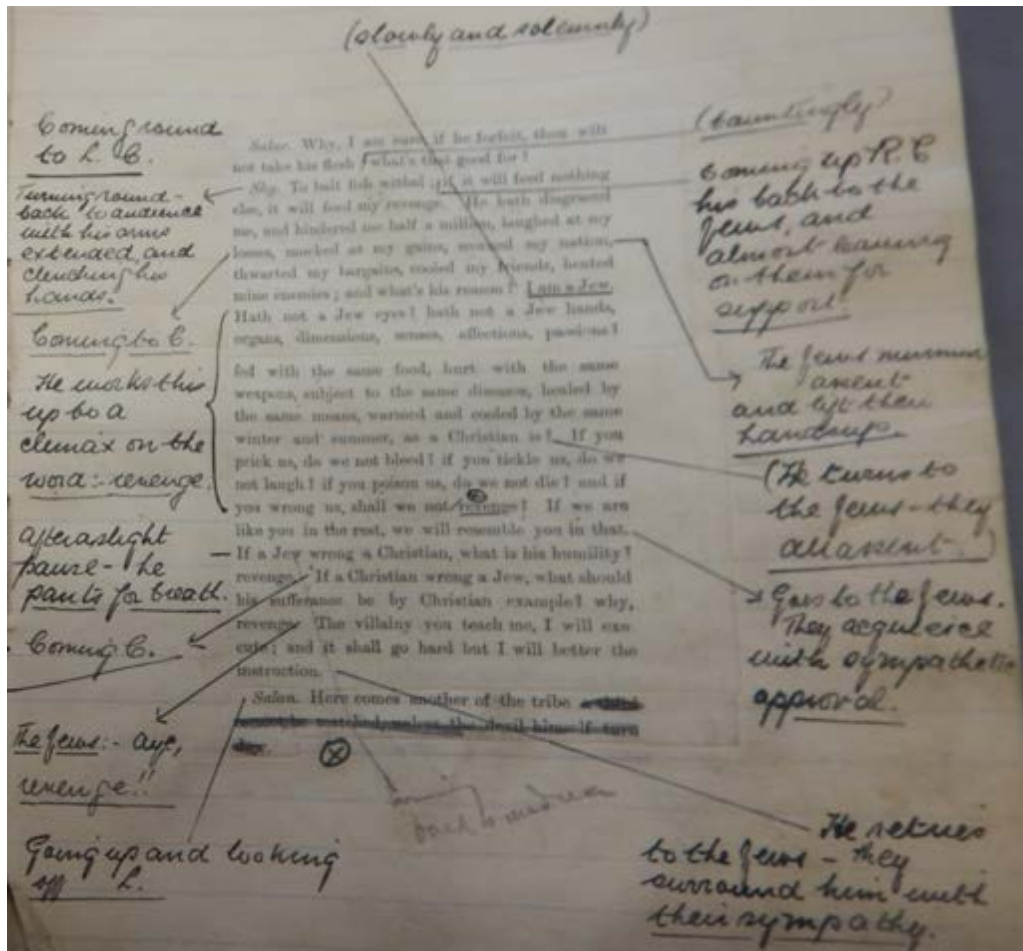


Figure 3.29: Tree's notes on the "Hath not a Jew eyes" speech.

In Tree's Act 2, we have an almost unwavering sense of sympathy created for Shylock, but as I pointed out in the beginning of this chapter, Tree insisted that Shylock was not a wholly sympathetic figure. It is in the Belmont scenes that the duality of Shylock's characterization becomes clearer, not in that Shylock is present in these scenes, but in that the values reflected in Jewish society and culture in the Ghetto are also found in Belmont. In other words, Christian Venice is the inverse of Christian Belmont. The Christians of Venice are examples of how not to behave, so the Christians of Belmont, and chiefly Portia, are the example of how one should behave. The soundscape that defines Belmont communicates this, presenting Belmont as an idyllic English countryside manor accompanied by lyrical music and surrounded by breathtaking landscapes. If Tree's production, like some of Irving's early productions, had ended with the trial scene, then perhaps his Shylock would have been wholly sympathetic. But as Tree himself stated:

Just when we begin to think that Shylock is becoming the martyr-hero of the play, Shakespeare, the altruist, enters upon the scene, and gives us the immortal speech on the quality of mercy, which, bursting the walls of the narrow court, preaches humanity the eternal message of Christian forgiveness. Here is put in consummate fashion the tragedy of a people's oppression; then the whole ancient Jewish wisdom is shattered, flung down, a thing outworn, rent to pieces by the mightier wisdom of the greatest of all Jews.<sup>94</sup>

In the Belmont scenes of Tree's Act 3, the binary created between the raucous Christians and the decorous Jews is disrupted, and in the final scene, we are given a utopian vision of an ideal Christian society embodied in Portia's Belmont.

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<sup>94</sup> Tree, *Thoughts and After-Thoughts*, p. 198.

## The music of Belmont

To understand how the music of Belmont functioned alongside that of Venice, we must first understand what Belmont represents in the play and explore what it came to embody for nineteenth-century audiences. Generally, the Belmont scenes, particularly those in Act 5 of the play, are often viewed as “a coda to the main plot, a festival ... of love and concord and sexuality, combining elements of poetry and comedy, just as weddings do.”<sup>95</sup> John Drakakis sees Belmont as “Venice’s fantasy of itself, a place where the world of fiscal exchange can be transmuted into the mystifying romantic discourses of social harmony.”<sup>96</sup> And from a textual point of view, Belmont is widely considered the musical and harmonic center of the play, the place at which the text calls for music. I have already discussed how Tree broke with musical traditions by providing Shylock with a soundscape of his own, but when we come to the world of Belmont, it seems Tree’s choices for both music and *mise-en-scene* are very much aligned with pre-established stage traditions. In Tree’s Belmont, we hear the lyrical music of England, including works by Quilter, Sullivan, and Humperdinck. This soundscape is predictable, conventional, and simplistic. Music is played at appropriate points or to accompany transitions between scenes, and it is very much separate from the other music of the play. The sound worlds of Venice and those of Belmont never overlap. What emerges as most interesting about this music is that it is almost entirely the music of *fin-de-siècle* London, but, as Sillars has shown, this was entirely in line with the view of Belmont throughout the long nineteenth century.

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<sup>95</sup> Catherine Belsey, ‘Love in Venice’, *Shakespeare Survey*, Vol. 44 (1992), pp. 41-54 (p. 42).

<sup>96</sup> John Drakakis, ‘Jessica,’ in *The Merchant of Venice: New Critical Essays*, ed. by John W. Mahon and Ellen Macleod Mahon (New York: Routledge, 2002), pp. 145-64 (p. 159).

Sillars states that Venice in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries was viewed as “a sea-girt republic splendidly independent of its neighbors that made a living through trade, mirroring the Englishman’s ideal of his own national identity.”<sup>97</sup> As I have shown, this view of Venice and the Venetian as a mirror to England and the Englishman was precisely the parallel that Tree exploited in his production to convey his religiously-charged and topically political point. While the Venice that Tree created in his production portrays Christians, particularly in the Ghetto scenes, as oppressors and antagonists of the Jews, his Belmont is situated firmly within a long-established view of the place as representative of an idyllic English countryside. William Hodges’ painting of Shakespeare’s 5.1 for the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery in 1795 serves as a useful example here (Figure 3.30). As Sillars observes, “the image presents the scene in the garden of Portia’s house in Belmont where Lorenzo explains to Jessica the harmony of the spheres, but the setting is not Italian, but an English Palladian country house.”<sup>98</sup> Reflections of this style also appear in illustrated editions of Shakespeare’s works published throughout the nineteenth century. Kenny Meadows’ illustration, for example, frames Jessica and Lorenzo with loosely Palladian columns looking up at the moonlight (Figure 3.31). Similarly, John Gilbert’s illustration shows Jessica sitting on a pillar with Lorenzo leaning on her lap (Figure 3.32). G.F. Sargent’s illustrations for Charles Knight’s editions provides two perspectives, showing both the exterior of Portia’s house and the piazza and Italian gardens (Figures 3.33 and 3.34). Jessica and Lorenzo, seen in the second image, are once again, are flanked by Palladian architecture and pastoral gardens.

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<sup>97</sup> Stuart Sillars, *Shakespeare Seen: Image, Performance and Society*, p. 197.

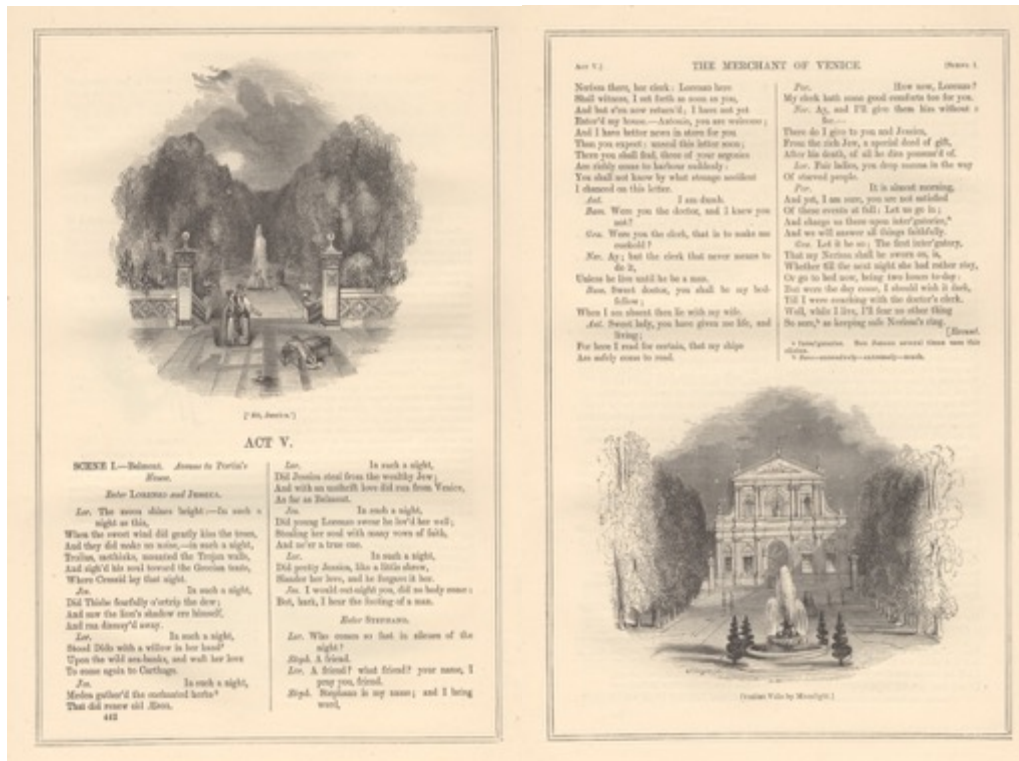
<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 207.



Figure 3.30: J. Browne’s engraving of William Hodges’ “Act V, Scene I. A Grove, & Lawn, before Portia’s House,” originally painted for the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery.



Figure 3.31 (left): Kenny Meadows’ Illustration of Belmont as found in his illustrated editions of Shakespeare. Figure 3.32 (right): John Gilbert’s Illustration of Belmont as found in his illustrated editions of Shakespeare.



Figures 3.33 and 3.34: G.F. Sargent's illustrations of Belmont for Charles Knight's *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakespeare*.



Figure 3.35: Joseph Harker's design of the interior of Portia's house, used for Tree's 1.2 and 3.1.

Unfortunately, Joseph Harker's design for Tree's 3.5 does not survive in existing production papers, but his design of the interior of Portia's house, used for 1.2 and 3.1, reveals the continued influence of the Palladian style on the Belmont scenes even in stagings of the early-twentieth century (Figure 33). What this architectural element of the *mise-en-scene* revealed was a long-held view of Portia's house at Belmont as tantamount to an idealized English manor, "equat[ing] the splendours of the English country house with those of Renaissance Italy."<sup>99</sup> The music of Belmont for Tree's production further solidifies this view, for I argue that this music is of the same character as the music for "Merrie England" discussed in Part One. The sound world of Portia and Belmont is romantic, English light music, widely popular amongst bourgeoisie Victorians and Edwardians, and highly symbolic of an idealized, Arcadian England. Contemporary responses to Belmont, particularly the final scene, reveal that this view of England via Belmont was also inextricably linked to Shakespeare. As Cumberland Clark states, the final scene is "a charming piece of romantic comedy [where] no harsh, discordant tones are allowed to spoil its sweet harmonies ... Sweet sounds of melody float upon the balmy air, and the whole setting *inspires the dramatist* to some of the most wonderful poetry ever written on romance and music and the human soul."<sup>100</sup> Another contemporary literary critic, Georg Brandes, described it as, "a moonlit landscape thrilled with music. It is altogether given over to music and moonshine. *It is an image of Shakespeare's soul at that point of time.* Everything is here reconciled, assuaged, silvered over, and borne aloft upon the wings of music."<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 209.

<sup>100</sup> Cumberland Clark, *A Study of the Merchant of Venice* (London: W. Pritchard, 1927), p. 40. (My emphasis).

<sup>101</sup> Georg Brandes, *William Shakespeare: A Critical Study*, pp. 167-8. (My emphasis).



What Clark and Brandes suggest here is that Belmont is both a reflection of Shakespeare's soul and the source of inspiration for his poetic lyricism in the final scene of *Merchant*. The logic here is circular: If Belmont represents England and England is the home of the revered national poet, then Shakespeare (or at least his soul) can be found in the lyricism and musicality of Belmont. It is as if all of the inspirational forces that nursed Shakespeare as an infant seen in the images at the start of Part Three – the Passions, Nature, pastoral landscapes, a personified Comedy and Tragedy – coalesce in Belmont. Belmont becomes a vision of an idyllic English landscape and, a Christian utopia, a Garden of Eden.<sup>102</sup> John Martin's and Gustave Doré's illustrations of the Garden of Eden (1830 and 1866 respectively) come into view here, for if we compare them to the aforementioned images of Belmont, there are striking parallels (Figures 3.36-3.37). Though absent of Palladian architectural elements, these Edens reveal a similar bucolic landscape as what we see in Belmont. It is also this Belmont that Tree created on his stage, particularly in the final scene. Despite all the musical innovation and political charge of the Ghetto scenes, Belmont incongruously remains what it had consistently been in most Victorian and Edwardian productions: a "sublunary world" with "man-made music and harmony," a heaven-on-earth, a reflection of both England and its national poet.<sup>103</sup> Tree's attitude also reflects how separate these scenes were from the politically-charged scenes in the Ghetto. He

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<sup>102</sup> For comparisons between Belmont and the Garden of Eden, see Thomas H. Fujimura's 'Mode and Structure in *The Merchant of Venice*', *PMLA*, Vol. 81, No. 7 (Dec. 1966) pp. 499-511; W.H. Auden's 'Brothers and Others', in *The Dyer's Hand, and Other Essays* (London: Faber, 1963), pp. 218-37; and, in the context of a modern production, 'The Merchant of Venice' by William Shakespeare, directed by Greg Doran, Royal Shakespeare Company, 1987, Stratford-upon-Avon, UK.

<sup>103</sup> Fujimura, p. 501.

stated, “*The Merchant of Venice* is a comedy after all and I am therefore giving great prominence to the charming love scenes at the end of the play.”<sup>104</sup>



Figure 3.36: John Martin’s “Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden,” painted as a part of a collection based on John Milton’s *Paradise Lost*.



Figure 3.37: Gustav Doré’s “Adam and Eve expelled from Paradise” (1866).

<sup>104</sup> ‘Behind the Scenes at His Majesty’s’, *Pall Mall Gazette*, 2 April 1908, Bristol Theatre Collection Press Clippings, HBT/TB/39.

A few central questions emerge here: how does this Belmont function as a part of Tree's politically minded production? Are the Belmont scenes in Tree's production merely "lyric relief" as Ripley has suggested,<sup>105</sup> or is there a deeper meaning that emerges through a comparison of the sound worlds of Venice and Belmont? Are all of the musical landscapes of this production reconciled in the final scene of the play, a scene in which music, musical language, and discussions about the impact of music on the human soul is at the heart of the scene's thematic importance? To answer these questions, I will first give a brief overview of the sound world of Belmont and then turn my attention to Tree's manipulation of the text in the final scene of the play to see how the musical references in the text worked to reinforce the musical qualities of the overall production.

The first point at which the audience hear the music of Belmont, at least in partial form, is musical cue (2), which serves as the accompaniment to Bassanio's speech describing Portia beginning with the line, "In Belmont is a lady richly left" (1.1.161-176). This speech is given on the Rialto, but the music foreshadows the soundscape of Belmont and works to establish the melody as Portia's theme. The song played is a portion of Schmid's instrumental arrangement of Quilter's popular song "To Daisies," first published in 1906 as a part of an English art song cycle and set to the sixteenth-century poetry of Robert Herrick.<sup>106</sup> During the transition between the Rialto scene (1.1) and the first Belmont scene (1.2), the melody is heard again in its entirety, though still as an instrumental arrangement (3a).<sup>107</sup> As the curtain rises to reveal the interior of Portia's house, the song segues from the instrumental version played in the orchestra to a sung

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<sup>105</sup> Ripley, p. 392.

<sup>106</sup> Listen to transcription of music cue 2, "There is a lady richly left", available in Google Drive.

<sup>107</sup> Listen to transcription of music cue 3a, "To Daisies", available in Google Drive.

version (arranged for voice and harp) played on stage. The words of Herrick's poem are altered slightly to solidify the song as Portia's theme, with the name "Julia" changed to "Portia" in the lines "Stay but till my Julia close | Her life begetting eye."<sup>108</sup> The casket plot dominates the bulk of this scene as arranged by Tree, and so the remaining music consists of flourishes and short, thematic melodies that usher the Prince of Morocco and the Prince of Aragon on and off the stage.<sup>109</sup> Otherwise, the only other music for the scene accompanies the final lines, closing the scene with a recapitulation of Schmid's instrumental arrangement of "To Daisies" (3a).

The use of Quilter's music here is significant, for he was a widely celebrated contemporary composer by 1908, particularly of art songs set to poetry. Trevor Hold hears the music of the Renaissance in Quilter, likening his style to that of Renaissance composer Thomas Campion.<sup>110</sup> Celebrating Quilter's prowess for song composition, Hold claims that "to the musically thin and shallow tradition of the drawing-room ballad, Quilter brought new depth and sensitivity. His achievement was to raise that tradition to a perfection of adventurousness that was never surpassed."<sup>111</sup> I understand Quilter's "To Daisies" in the similar way to Edward German's morris dances (discussed in Chapter One). Both are nineteenth-century reworkings of traditional Tudor musical tonalities and both composers held prominent places in the drawing rooms of bourgeoisie London homes. In context with Tree's production, such music occupies a liminal space between the historicized setting of the play and contemporary society in which the play is

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<sup>108</sup> Robert Herrick, 'To daisies, not to shut so soon', in *The Poetical Works of Robert Herrick*, Vol. 2, ed. by William Pickering (London: William Pickering, 1825), p. 230.

<sup>109</sup> This music sits outside the scope of my analysis here, and therefore had not been digitally transcribed.

<sup>110</sup> Trevor Hold, *Parry to Finzi: Twenty English Song-composers* (Woodbridge: Boydell Press, 2002), p. 163.

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 139, 163.

being staged. The music allows, and even encourages, slippage between these two worlds, often resulting in a romanticized view of both.

It is not until Tree's third Act that the audience sees (and hears) Belmont again. 3.1, set in the same locale as 1.2, concludes the casket plot. The music for Belmont is further enhanced by introducing more popular English light music. The entr'acte played before the opening of Act 3, was from Sullivan's "Masquerade Suite" originally written for Charles Calvert's 1871 production of the play at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester. The dance music of the suite was played, including two pieces entitled "Introduction and Bourree" and "A la Valse."<sup>112</sup> This was immediately followed by Humperdinck's "Introduction and Casket Song," played during the raising of the curtain. His setting of "Where is Fancy Bred" was also utilized as a part of the ensuing scene.<sup>113</sup> Like Schmid's use of Quilter's music, his use of Humperdinck's music is also worthy of further exploration. It was originally written for Max Reinhardt's 1905 production at the Deutsches Theatre in Berlin.<sup>114</sup> Tree and his company visited Berlin one year prior to his staging of *Merchant* (April 1907) by invitation of Kaiser Wilhelm II and performed *Richard II*, *Twelfth Night*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Hamlet*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, and *Trilby* at the New Royal Opera Theatre.<sup>115</sup> It was probably during this visit, and perhaps at the reception at the Hotel Berlin on the 16<sup>th</sup> of April – attended by 200 people associated with the theatre and various

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<sup>112</sup> Listen to professional recording of Sullivan's "Introduction and Bourree" and "A la Valse". Links are available in the appendix.

<sup>113</sup> Listen to transcription of music cue 22, "Where is Fancy Bred", available in Google Drive.

<sup>114</sup> For more on Reinhardt's *Merchant* productions, spanning 1905-34, see: Erika Fischer-Lichte 'Theatre As Festive Play: Max Reinhardt's production of *The Merchant of Venice*' in *Venetian Views, Venetian Blinds: English Fantasies of Venice*, ed. by Manfred Pfister and Barbara Schaff (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1999) pp. 169-180; Frederick Tollini, *The Shakespeare Productions of Max Reinhardt* (New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2005); and J.L. Styan, *Max Reinhardt* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982).

<sup>115</sup> Richard Foulkes, *Performing Shakespeare in the Age of Empire*, p. 136.

German dignitaries – that Tree might have met with Reinhardt, discussed *The Merchant of Venice*, and acquired selections of Humperdinck’s music.

When we compare Reinhardt’s and Tree’s productions, there are various points of similarity that emerge, the most relevant here being how both directed crowds and considered sound integral to the creation of illusion. As Einar Nilson states, “No one before [Reinhardt],” in Germany at least, “had any idea of the significance of different sounds as aids to characteristic atmosphere on the stage ... Reinhardt composes [these sounds] as they rise and fall, mount to a climax and die away, just as you would write a symphony.”<sup>116</sup> The music of Reinhardt’s production was primarily of Venice, specifically “the fantastic Venice of the Middle Ages.”<sup>117</sup> As Dieter Hoffmeir observed, “The hero, the centre, the heart, the essence of the performance was – Venice. Not Shylock, but Venice. That ever-singing, ever-buzzing Venice. A city which rejoiced in the joy of life, its pleasure, delight and exuberance. Which felt like the capital and centre of the world.”<sup>118</sup> Humperdinck’s music sat at the centre of this presentation of Venice as “a frivolous series of *Lazzi*, an uncontrolled fun-and-games.”<sup>119</sup> As Brandes described in his review of Reinhardt’s production, “The air was filled with [Venice’s] melodies. And while your ear caught them, colors and forms danced before your eyes, and Portia’s humble utterances of love, Lorenzo’s learned words on music, and the judge’s wise speech on the magnificence of mercy – all these descended like a message from Shakespeare’s own heaven.”<sup>120</sup> In short, the music of

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<sup>116</sup> Einar Nilson, ‘Music Under Reinhardt’, in *Max Reinhardt and his Theatre*, ed. by Oliver Saylor, trans. by Mariele S. Gundernatsch (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968), pp.124-130 (p. 127).

<sup>117</sup> Review by Georg Brandes quoted in *Max Reinhardt and his Theatre*, ed. by Oliver Saylor (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1968), pp. 330-1.

<sup>118</sup> Dieter Hoffmeir, quoted in J.L. Styan, *Directors in Perspective: Max Reinhardt* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1982), p. 62.

<sup>119</sup> Tollini, *The Shakespeare Productions of Max Reinhardt*, p. 69.

<sup>120</sup> Brandes in *Max Reinhardt and his Theatre*, pp. 330-1.

Venice created a melodic dream-world, aligning with “Reinhardt’s vision of the play as a comedy in an Italian Renaissance setting.”<sup>121</sup>

However, Tree did not choose to use Humperdinck’s music in his Venice scenes, but rather in the Belmont scene of his 3.1, the scene in which Portia delivers her betrothal speech. As Rozmovits notes, this speech was regarded as a show of “exemplary femininity” to Victorian and Edwardian spectators much more than her “quality of mercy” speech.<sup>122</sup> “The Portia who was the paragon of the Shakespeare woman was not the woman in the courtroom but, rather, the woman who held her breath while her true love chose the appropriate casket.”<sup>123</sup> Thus, Tree transfers the idyllic sounds of Reinhardt’s Venice onto his Belmont, and most specifically, onto the scene where the audience sees the exemplar of Shakespeare’s female characters, “ladylike in [her] simplicity, modesty, and generous humility,”<sup>124</sup> obeying her father’s will through her acceptance of Bassanio’s betrothal. As such, Portia and Bassanio serve as the inverse of Jessica and Lorenzo, and thus love in Belmont is inverse of love in Venice. As I have shown, Jessica’s elopement was framed by Tree in a negative light, occurring at the same time as the abuse of Jews at the hands of Christians and accompanied by threatening tarantella music. Portia’s betrothal to Bassanio, however, is framed much more positively, accompanied by Sullivan’s “Bourree” and “Valse” and Humperdinck’s setting of “Where is Fancy Bred.” While in Reinhardt’s production, “both the serene world of Belmont and Shylock’s doleful realm were subsumed into the larger whole of a Venice that lived solely for enjoyment,<sup>125</sup> I have shown how Tree’s Venice did not consume the

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<sup>121</sup> Tollini, p. 64.

<sup>122</sup> Rozmovits, p. 48.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>125</sup> Simon Williams, *Shakespeare on the German Stage*, Vol. 1: 1586-1914 (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990), p. 211.

sound worlds of Shylock or Belmont, but rather sat in contrast to the decorous music that defined both. By borrowing portions of Humperdinck's music for his Belmont scene, Tree transmits some of the carnivalesque feeling of Humperdinck's music for Venice onto Belmont, thus creating a lighter feeling in 3.1, particularly in comparison to the tarantella music of Venice that the audience heard in the act prior. Combined with Sullivan's works, the music anticipates a scene of courtly love between Portia and Bassanio and differentiates the sound worlds of Venice and Belmont by doing so.

Belmont's musical climax occurs in the final scene of the play. The scene, much like 1.2, opens and closes with Schmid's arrangement of "To Daisies," which at this point in the play has firmly been established as Portia's theme. The only other music for the scene is portions of John Thomas' "Reverie for the Harp," which were played off-stage as accompaniment to Lorenzo's speech on the music of the spheres and as the accompaniment to Portia's return home from Venice. Here, it is the language surrounding music, rather than the musical accompaniment itself, that warrants further exploration. Lorenzo's well-known lines beginning with "How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!" begin in silence (5.1.54). It is only after his lines instructing Jessica to sit and "look, how the floor of heaven | Is laid thick with patens of bright gold" is Thomas' harp music heard (5.1.58-9). For the duration of the speech, the harp music *is* the music of the spheres, despite the fact that Tree retained the lines referring to the fact that our "muddy vesture[s] of decay" prevent us from hearing these harmonies (5.1.64). This creates the illusion that both the audience and the characters on the stage are, for a moment, the "immortal souls" who can hear these celestial harmonies. Added to this is the fact that Lorenzo's lines specifically calling for music (66-68) are cut. This music, therefore, is not commanded, but materializes of its own fruition.



From this point onward, Tree cuts a substantial amount of the remaining text that addresses this celestial music. Only Jessica's line, "I am never merry when I hear sweet music" (5.1.69) and four of Lorenzo's lines remain before the entrance of Portia and Nerissa (Figure 3.38). Tree's manipulation of the text renegotiates the meaning of Jessica's final line of the play. In the complete text, Jessica's line follows Lorenzo's call for music to "draw [Portia] home" (5.1.68). When Jessica states that she is "never merry" when she hears "sweet music," it is in response to this music. Her lack of merriment is not a sign of her unmusicality, but rather, as Inge Leimberg states, a sign that "she is not merely delighted by the music but moved, and to be 'moved with the concord of sweet sounds' is all that matters."<sup>126</sup> As Lorenzo tells her in his following line, she is moved because her "spirits are attentive" (5.1.70). However, both of Lorenzo's lines preceding and following Jessica's final statement were cut by Tree, so the meaning of Jessica's lack of merriment is resituated in his production.

Because the harp music being played in this scene is from a celestial source, the music to which Jessica refers is not of earth, but of heaven. She is "never merry" when she hears the "sweet music" *of heaven*. What follows Jessica's admittance, is not Lorenzo's observation that she has an attentive spirit, but rather his cautionary lines: "The man that hath no music in himself, | Nor is moved with concord of sweet sounds, | Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils; [...] Let no such man be trusted" (5.1.83-8). In most productions and readings of the play, these lines refer to Shylock. His earlier rejection of music and dancing (2.5.27) positions the Jew as "the man that hath no music in himself." However, as I have shown, this was not the case in Tree's production, for Shylock and the Jews have music, more peaceful and more decorous than the music of the

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<sup>126</sup> Inge Leimberg, *What May Words Say...? A Reading of The Merchant of Venice* (Madison [N.J.]: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2011), p. 222.

Venetian Christians. The opening tableau in the Ghetto shows Shylock “moved with concord of sweet sounds” coming from the synagogue. He engages with the sound, being moved emotionally and spiritually. The music draws Shylock across the bridge and into the synagogue, where he prays with other Jews of his community. This is far from being fit for “treasons, stratagems, and spoils” as Lorenzo’s line indicates.

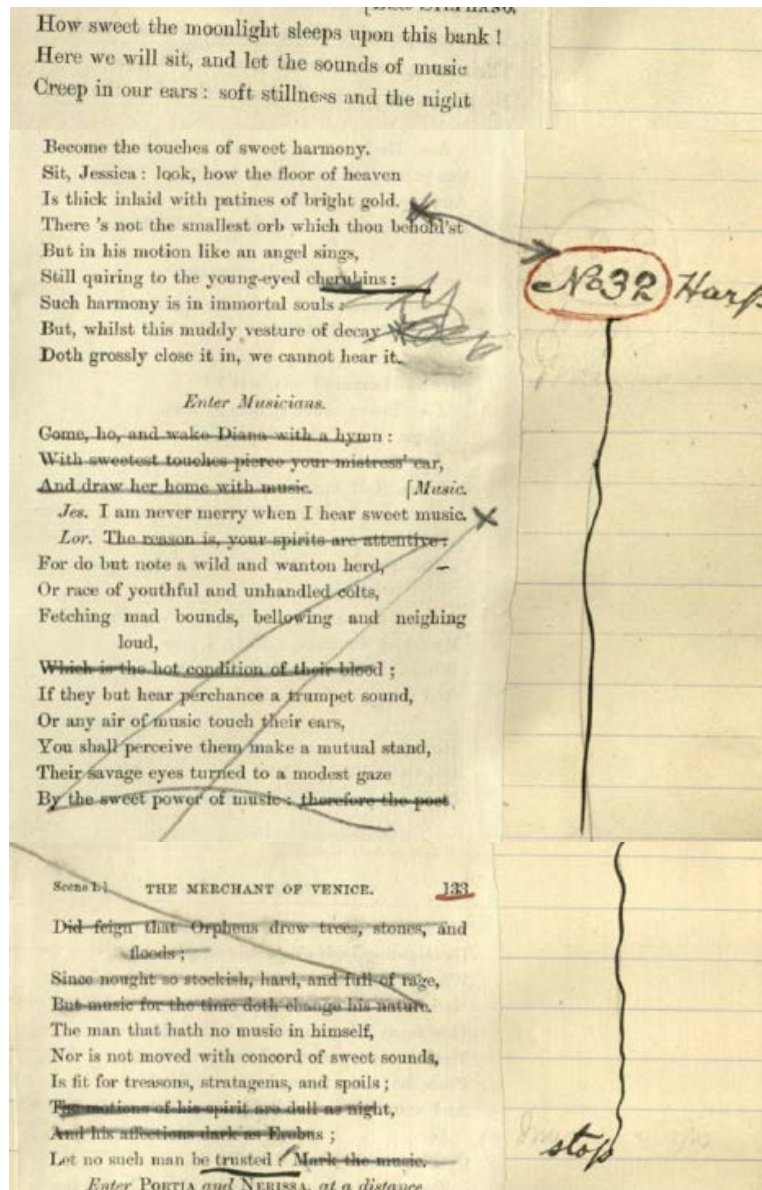


Figure 3.38: Excerpt from Tree’s 3.4 (Shakespeare’s 5.1) in Schmid’s music cue book, showing Tree’s cuts to this passage.

This, of course, begs the question: If not Shylock, then to whom does this line refer? In Tree's production, who has "no music in himself"? There is no straightforward answer here, but I propose two possibilities of how to interpret this line as a part of this musically driven production. Due to Tree's manipulation of the text, which results in a misinterpretation of Jessica's line, it is possible that Lorenzo is speaking about Jessica here. For as I have stated, what is implied is that Jessica cannot hear the celestial music of heaven, suggesting a spiritual block, not because of her former Jewishness, but because of her morally questionable actions. Even though earlier in the production Jessica has her own song, it only accompanies moments in the play where she has engaged in the "treasons, stratagems, and spoils" of stealing her father's money and running away with Lorenzo. Though the audience sees Jessica go to the synagogue with Shylock, being drawn to prayer after hearing the swell of Hebrew chant, she later sneaks out, an act which could be read as a casting off of that music. Also, Jessica's music is not the peaceful chant of the Jews or the English light music of Belmont, but rather the sound of the reveling Venetian Christians, the same people that beat other Jews on the canal bridge and antagonize her father. By the time she reaches Belmont, her music is no longer heard. It is taken over by Portia's music and the music of the spheres, which she admits does not make her merry. Though a purely textual reading of Lorenzo's lines does not suggest that Jessica is the "[wo]man that hath no music," here the meaning of these lines is thrown out of balance, and there is at least a suggestion that Lorenzo is admonishing Jessica, the newly-converted Christian, for not appreciating the music of the heavens. As H. Hamilton Fyfe's review suggests, this led audiences to question the moral credentials of the lovers: "We are expected to sympathise with the lovers of Jessica and Lorenzo, but we cannot blind ourselves to the fact that they played Shylock a very

mean trick, and were little better than common thieves who spent the proceeds of their robbery in riotous living.”<sup>127</sup>

Another possibility is that Lorenzo’s lines do not refer to anyone in the play, but are, instead, projected onto the audience. In true Victorian and Edwardian style, the lines can be extracted entirely from their textual contexts and read as a moral dictum, a way of encouraging the musicality of the populace. Musicality was linked to morality in Edwardian society, seen as a way to both educate and elevate the working classes.<sup>128</sup> As Derek B. Scott observes, amateur organizations like The People’s Concert Society (1878) and The Popular Musical Union (1882) promoted “rational and refined amusement” in areas like East London and were “dedicated to making high-status music known among the London poor.”<sup>129</sup> A closer look at a selection of nineteenth century publications reveals that this passage was routinely extracted from the play to support such causes. It was printed in books of Shakespeare quotations, such as *Carleton’s Handbook of Popular Quotations* (1878) and *Worldly Wisdom from Shakespeare* (1908) and also incorporated into other printed ephemera.<sup>130</sup> Louis A. Robert used the quotation as a caption for an image in his *High art* (1872), showing a desolate scene of both man and beast, with a lone, unused upright piano in the center (Figure 3.39). These publications show that by the time of Tree’s 1908 production, Lorenzo’s quotation, as extracted from the rest of his entire speech, had already accrued a meaning of its own. It was used as a way of emphasizing the importance of

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<sup>127</sup> H. Hamilton Fyfe, ‘The Theatre: “The Merchant of Venice”’, *The World*, 8 April 1908, Bristol Theatre Collection Press Clippings, HBT/TB/39.

<sup>128</sup> See Derek B. Scott’s *Sounds of the Metropolis: The Nineteenth Century Popular Music Revolution in London, New York, Paris and Vienna* (New York, Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008), and Scott’s ‘Music, Morality, and Rational Amusement at the Victorian Middle-Class Soiree’ in *Music and Performance Culture in Nineteenth-Century Britain: Essays in Honour of Nicholas Temperly*, ed. by Bennett Zon (London: Routledge, 2016).

<sup>129</sup> Scott, *Sounds of the Metropolis*, p. 62.

<sup>130</sup> [No author], *Carleton’s hand-book of popular quotations* (New York, G.W. Carleton & co., 1878), p. 122; and [No author], *Worldly Wisdom from Shakespeare* (Philadelphia, H. Altemus company, 1908), p. 59.

music and musical education and to caution against what might happen to an unmusical society. Perhaps, it was in this vein that Tree understood these lines, not as a comment on a particular character in Venice, the Ghetto, or Belmont, but as a comment aimed at the audience, a lesson-in-quotation, aptly positioned at the near-end of a Shakespearean production structurally dependent on music and shown as an integral part of three different cultural milieus.

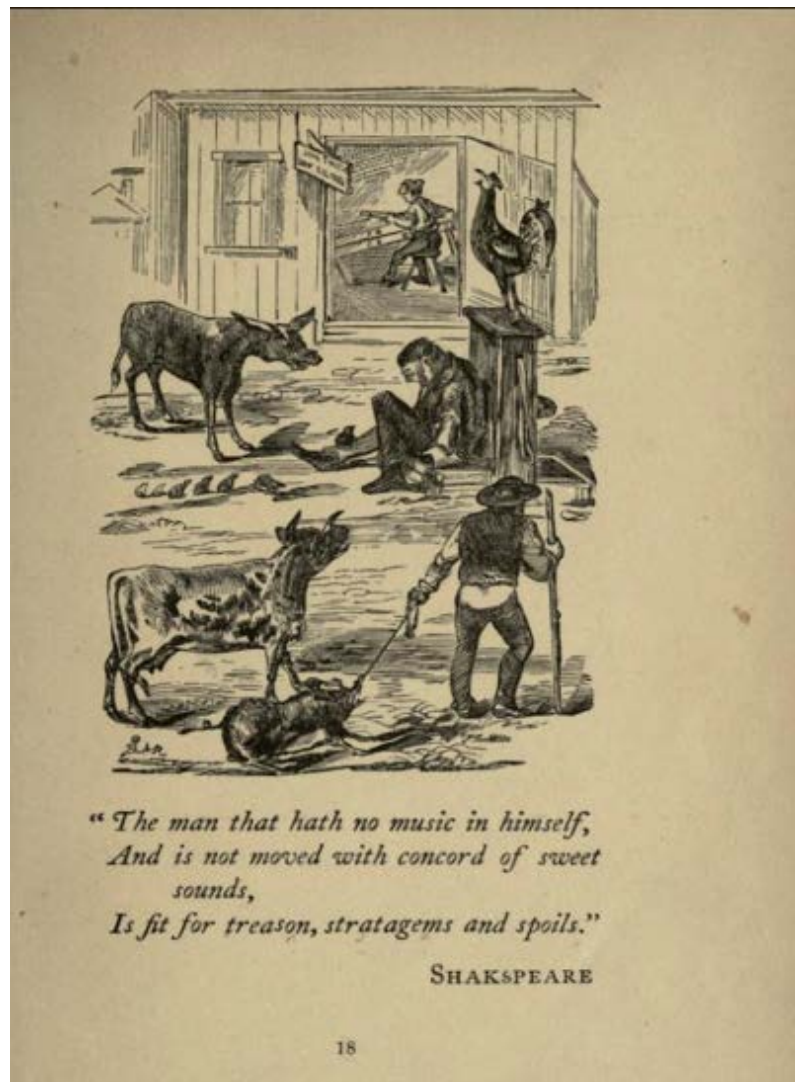


Figure 3.39: Illustration from Louis A. Roberts, *High Art: Pictures from the Poets and Other Notations*.

## Conclusion

Katherine's vision as staged by Kean and *The Merchant of Venice* as staged by Tree used the combination of tableaux and incidental music to comment on topical, socio-religious events in the Victorian and Edwardian periods. While Kean's tableau encouraged a return to the pre-Reformation medievalism typified in the Gothic Revival and the Oxford Movement, Tree's tableaux encouraged a re-evaluation of Christianity and Christian values as they related to the xenophobia, anti-Semitism, and Jewish relations in the early-twentieth century. In both instances, Shakespeare's cultural and religious authority is central to the planning and execution of these productions, relying on his perceived power as an omnipotent creativeness belonging especially to England. In each production, Shakespeare's demi-god status is leveraged by the actor-managers to convey specific "truths" that resonated with religious debates of the period and reflected aspects of the nation's religious culture. In Kean's interpretation of Katherine's vision, Shakespeare is made to support the "truth" of an idealized national religion and to celebrate an inflated image of England's religious heritage and identity via allusions to the Gothic Revival. On the other hand, the "truth" in Tree's *Merchant* far from celebrates England's Christian heritage and identity. Rather, the "truth" Tree sought to convey addresses deep-seated racism inherent in Christian religious cultures. This messaging was more difficult for audiences to negotiate, as it did not elevate the Edwardian self-image nor present a wholly altruistic picture of English Christianity. Instead, Tree's *Merchant* called English society into question, holding a mirror up to their treatment of Jewish immigrants in *fin-de-siècle* London, and asking the audience to see themselves and their religious practices and beliefs in a rather unflattering light.

As such, Tree's *Merchant* is a significant departure from the other tableaux discussed in this thesis, which often reflected back to audiences idealized, aggrandized notions of the nation,

its people, and its history. Of course, such national self-aggrandizement eventually leads a culture to assume an air of superiority, often resulting in the formation of collective prejudices aimed at any perceived “outsider” who might disrupt such generous self-definition. As such, Tree’s criticism of Christians in his production denounces the very same heritage and national self-image that was routinely celebrated on the Victorian and Edwardian stage, as evidenced by the other productions discussed in this thesis. In Tree’s *Merchant*, idyllic morris dances – symbolic of a bygone, pastoral “Merrie England” – now belong to the corruptive, abusive Venetians; stately marches and fanfares – symbolic of a perceptually ancient and lavishly majestic British monarchy – now belong to the Doge; and the fighting mob accompanied by threatening music – symbolic of Britain’s imperial strength as in “The Fight Near Angiers” (Chapter Four) – is now embodied by the reveling Christians, needlessly persecuting the Jews for their racial and religious difference. Thus, the idealized English nation as presented in the other tableaux of this thesis is overturned. Only in Belmont – the epitome of a pastoral utopia – are such signifiers of national identity allowed to remain, relegated to a long-lost Eden from which modern-day London had strayed and to which many in the long-nineteenth century wished to return.

## Coda

This thesis began by seeking to answer a single question: What did music offer Victorian and Edwardian productions of Shakespeare that could not be achieved by words or scenery alone? I have argued through the case studies in this project that theatre music written for Shakespearean productions in London from 1855-1911 offered actor-managers a way of commenting on (and, in many cases, defining) the nation through Shakespeare. The *tableaux vivants* included in these productions – whether expansions on Shakespeare’s text or outright interpolations – provided Victorian and Edwardian actor-managers with theatrical spaces to reflect on English national identity through the cultural authority of the national poet without Shakespeare’s own words getting in the way. Accompaniments for these scenes took over the narrative space usually occupied by dialogue and, in doing so, mediated visual spectacles for audiences through aural stimuli, helping to propagandize a view of England and Englishness rooted in widespread national myths: the myth of Merrie England, the myth of benevolent imperialism, and the myth of national religion. Incidental music imbued recognizable iconography embedded in elaborate scenic designs with ambiance and feeling, and the resulting interplay between sight and sound often fostered a collective, emotional responses, making meaning through seemingly invisible, yet inherently vital, soundtracks. In this way, performances of Shakespeare’s works served as vehicles through which Victorians and Edwardians could understand their nation, its history, and their place within it. By reconstructing and reconsidering the accompaniments for these productions, I have shown that music played a key role in solidifying collective understandings of England and Englishness through Victorian and Edwardian productions of Shakespeare.



While the tableaux and incidental music discussed in this project have focused on Shakespearean productions that repeatedly engaged with expressions of English national identity, that should not suggest that all incidental music written for the stage is designed to comment on national cultures. As Bruce O'Neill's experiment at the 2016 World Shakespeare Congress showed, music can be used to make a myriad of meanings within any given dramatic episode or performance. These meanings depend on the dramatic narrative itself, the overarching aesthetics of the production, the socio-political contexts in which it is being performed, and the nature of the music and how it engages with audiences' emotions. Therefore, on a broader scale, this thesis encourages future researchers and theatre historians to engage with incidental music in their evaluations of dramatic performances not because of what it might say about a nation or culture, but simply because it is an integral and organic part of making theatre, equally as important as costume, set design, acting styles, or text. Throughout the course of this project, I have reconstructed only a fraction of the previously unheard incidental music that remains hidden in the recesses of theatre archives. The Beerbohm Tree Theatre Music Archive at the Boston Public Library alone holds ten additional music manuscripts from Shakespearean productions that have not been heard in their entirety since their original performances.<sup>1</sup> This collection also contains over 45 bodies of music from non-Shakespearean productions that remain unheard and unexplored in modern scholarship.<sup>2</sup> Additionally, the Folger Shakespeare Library's collection of

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<sup>1</sup> Music for Shakespeare productions (or adaptations of Shakespeare) in the BPL's collections that remain unexplored are: John Ames' music for *Richard II* (1903); Samuel Coleridge-Taylor's music for *Othello* (1911-12); George Henschel's music for *Hamlet* (1892); Raymond Rôze's music for *Antony and Cleopatra* (1906), *Henry IV, part 1* (1896), *Julius Caesar* (1898), *Katherine & Petruchio* (1897), *Much Ado About Nothing* (1905), and *The Tempest* (1904); and Adolf Schmid's music for *The Winter's Tale* (1906).

<sup>2</sup> Music for non-Shakespeare productions in the BPL's collections that remain unexplored are: Meredith Ball's music for *Masks and Faces* (1888), *The Ballad Monger* (1887), *Beau Austin* (1890), *A Bunch of Violets* (1894), *The Charlatan* (1894); Hamilton Clarke's music for *Captain Swift* (1888) and *The Corsican Brothers* (1880); Samuel

music from Charles Kean's Shakespeare productions contain six musical scores that have not been heard since their original performance or considered in evaluations of these performances.<sup>3</sup> As such, significant gaps still remain in our collective knowledge about the music for Victorian and Edwardian Shakespeare performance.

This project has demonstrated how being able to hear this music again – even if through rudimentary digitized reconstructions – offers a vital piece of evidence that might otherwise go unnoticed. These transcriptions allow researchers an opportunity to travel back in time and to imagine themselves as spectators in these theatres, entranced by the spectacular scenery, the charismatic actors, and, most of all, the “insistent music” that shaped the emotional contours of these performances.<sup>4</sup> In this increasingly digital age, in which archives continue to look for opportunities to digitize fragile ephemera to provide wider access to these items, my digitization of this music offers a chance for these materials to be disseminated and interacted with *en masse*, allowing theatre historians – or anyone else interested – a chance to consider this music alongside other ephemera. There are also multiple applications for the study of Victorian and Edwardian incidental music in related fields, including, but not limited to: early film, music psychology,

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Coleridge-Taylor's music for *Faust* (1908), *The God of War* (n.d.), *Herod* (1900), and *Nero* (1906); William Furst's music for *The Darling of the Gods* (1903); Edward German's music for *The Tempter* (1893); George Henschel's music for *The Pompadour* (1888), *The Last of the Dandies* (1901), *Macaire* (1901), and *A Man's Shadow* (1889); Pietro Mascagni's music for *The Eternal City*; Frederick Norton's music for *Chu Chin Chow* (1916) and *Pinkie and the Fairies* (1906); Percy Pitt's music for *Flodden Field* (1903); Raymond Rôze's music for *Carnac Sahib* (1899), *The Dancing Girl* (1891/7), *The First Night* (n.d.), *Magdalena* (189?), *The Musketeers* (1898), *Ragged Robin* (1898), *Rip Van Winkle* (1900), *The Seats of the Mighty* (1895), and *Trilby* (1895); Adolf Schmid's music for *False Gods* (1909 – an arrangement of Camille Saint-Saens' music), *The Beloved Vagabond* (1908), *Colonel Newcome* (1906), *The Man Who Was* (1903), *The mystery of Edwin Drood* (1908), *The O'Flynn* (1910), *Oliver Twist* (1905), *Resurrection* (1903), *The Right to Kill* (1915), *The School for Scandal* (1909), and *Joseph and his Brethren* with Granville Bantock and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor (1913); Charles Villiers Stanford's music for *Drake* (1901); and two anonymous scores for *The Van Dyck* (1907) and *Wealth* (1889).

<sup>3</sup> Music for Charles Kean's Shakespeare production in the FSL's collections that remain unexplored are: John Lipcott Hatton's music for *Richard II* (1857), *The Merchant of Venice* (1858), *The Winter's Tale* (1858), *The Tempest* (1857), *Macbeth* (1858), and *King John* (1858).

<sup>4</sup> Poole, p. 24.

musicology, and digital humanities. Further studies on incidental music for the dramatic stage could uncover more about the relationship between soundscapes for the *fin-de-siecle* theatre and those for modern film, the impact of music on the emotions and how this influences spectatorship and audience engagement, the relationship between incidental music and the opera or the symphony, and the new kinds of research, teaching, and scholarship made possible through the process of digital reconstruction. It is my hope that this project inspires such further explorations and encourages my readers to consider the spectacular soundscapes of the Victorian and Edwardian theatre.

## Appendix:

This appendix is split into two parts. The first part lists all previously published and professionally recorded music, with appropriate links for listening. The second part lists all transcribed music discussed in this thesis. PDFs and sound files of these transcriptions are available through a shared Google Drive:

Sound files:

<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PyPGZ4whl5dXqp6r8TUadg8nMUGroUuv>

PDFs:

[https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fuFVYAUeM8Cx5\\_bWnr17Yr3EG73V4fHS](https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1fuFVYAUeM8Cx5_bWnr17Yr3EG73V4fHS)

### List of previously published and professionally recorded music with appropriate links for listening. Published copies of these scores are cited in the bibliography:

#### Part One:

##### Chapter One:

- Edward German's "Morris Dance" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7MAXbT5PQT0> (0:00-2:20)
- Edward German's "Shepherd's Dance" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7MAXbT5PQT0> (same link, 2:20-6:10)

##### Chapter Two:

- Arthur Sullivan's *Merry Wives* Music Recorded by RTE Concert Orchestra (1995), conducted by Margaret MacDonald and Andrew Penny, Tracks 12-16.
  - o Dance of Fairies (note that Prelude not played in Tree's production) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ach8J8IGFSc> (2:29-3:34).
  - o "Love Laid His Sleepless Head" Song – Andante <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ach8J8IGFSc> (same link, 3:35-6:46)
  - o "As I am a true spirit, welcome" Song <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ach8J8IGFSc> (same link, 6:50-9:41)
  - o Dance Allegro vivace <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ach8J8IGFSc> (same link, 9:42-11:32)
  - o Dance with Chorus, allegro vivace <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ach8J8IGFSc> (same link, 11:36-13:57)
- Arthur Sullivan's "Graceful Dance" from *Henry VIII* (originally written for Charles Calvert's 1878 production at the Prince's Theatre, Manchester but used in Tree's *Merry Wives*). Recorded by RTE Concert Orchestra, Dublin, cond. Andrew Penny on "Sir Arthur Sullivan: Incidental Music", Track 10, (Marco Polo, 1992).
  - o <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eNv5ZmDtb20> (7:34-12:14)

#### Part Two

##### Chapter Three:

- Edward German's *Coronation March and Hymn*. Recorded by BBC Concert Orchestra (2012), conducted by John Wilson. Track 16.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UIxNtH1kfHo>

Chapter Four: (No previously published or recorded music discussed in this chapter.)

Part Three

Chapter Five:

- George Frederick Handel's "Angels Ever Bright and Fair" from *Theodora*, HMV 68
  - o Multiple recordings widely available, although I prefer Alma Gluck's 1917 recording as it gives a closer impression of how this song might have sounded in the nineteenth century. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oPpPa7mMbNU>

Chapter Six:

- Max Bruch's *Kol Niedri*, Adagio for Cello, Op. 47
  - o Multiple recordings widely available. I prefer the Israel Philharmonic Orchestra's recording with Jacqueline du Pre, conducted by Daniel Barenboim <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zjelkz7QIGI>
- Arthur Sullivan's *Masquerade Suite*, including "Introduction and Bourree" and "A la Valse" (Nos. 3 and 5) Recorded by RTE Concert Orchestra, Dublin, cond. Andrew Penny on "Sir Arthur Sullivan: Incidental Music", Tracks 3 and 5, (Marco Polo, 1992).
  - o "Introduction and Bourree"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9EKp9RnShaA&t=1s> (6:00-10:20)
  - o "A la Valse"  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9EKp9RnShaA&t=1s> (same link, 12:50-18:04)

**List of unpublished and unrecorded music (PDFs of digital transcriptions and digitized sound files are available on Google Drive):** Please note that these digitized recordings are computerized, and therefore the sound quality is lesser than the professional recordings. All transcriptions are based on autograph copies, and I have done them using the music-writing software Sibelius. If you have trouble accessing these files, please let me know and I will be happy to send them in a different format.

General Introduction:

- John L. Hatton's panorama music (.mov file with coordinating images)

Part One:

Chapter One:

- Hatton arr. "Staines Morris"
- Hatton arr. "Sellinger's Round"

Chapter Two:

- Norman Bath "No. 1, Curtain Music"
- Bath "No. 2, Falstaff theme"
- "No. 27 As I am a true spirit, welcome!" (previously unrecorded segment from Sullivan's score)

Part Two:

Chapter Three:

- Hatton's "Coronation March"

Chapter Four:

- Raymond Rôze "The Fight Near Angiers"
- Rôze "The Granting of the Magna Charta"

Part Three:

Chapter Five:

- John L. Hatton's music for Katherine's Vision

Chapter Six:

- Selections of Adolf Schmid's music for *The Merchant of Venice*, including:

**Venice Music**

- o 1 (Curtain and Doge's Entrance)
- o 14 (Jewish Chant – Hashkiveinu prayer, abbreviated)\*
- o 14a, 17a (Jewish Chant, Hashkiveinu prayer, full)\*
- o 14b, 16a (*Fenesta Vascia*)\*
- o 15 (instrumental interlude)
- o 15a, 15b, 16 (*Rosabella*)\*
- o 17 (Jessica's Song)\*
- o 18, 19 (Tarantella – stage band "pipes and drum")
- o 18a (Jewish Chant – *Oseh Shalom*)\*
- o 19 (Tarantella – stage band)
- o 19a (Tarantella – full orchestra)

**Belmont Music**

- o 2 ("There is a lady richly left")
- o 3a (Schmid's full arrangement of Roger Quilter's "To Daisies")
- o 22 "Where is Fancy Bred?" (Schmid's arrangement of Engelbert Humperdink's music for Max Reinhardt's 1905 production)\*

\* For these transcriptions, I have replaced sung, vocal lines with an appropriate solo instrument, in order to avoid the digitized singers "singing" the line on an open vowel, which doesn't sound very nice. Lyrics are printed in the PDFs on Google Drive.

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