

SHAKESPEARE AND ENGLAND'S EMPIRE, 1780-1800.

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Library who helped me early on with prints in the Oriental and India Office
Collections.

ABSTRACT

This thesis is a study of Shakespeare and imperialism in England between 1780 and 1800. Chapters investigate landscape art and empire in the Boydell gallery, death and imperial subjectivity, gender and form in appropriations of Shakespeare by women artists and writers, caricatures that reference Shakespeare during these years, the use made of Shakespeare by prominent individuals to formulate their identities in the context of empire and the debates on the Quebec Bill in London's parliament in May 1791. The thesis is primarily concerned to explore how gothic forms and representations were integrated into the history of Britain's relationship to its empire; to assess the use of Shakespeare in academy painting and in forms such as engraving, graphic satire, relief sculpture and in writing. The study also emphasises affect: fear of imperial identities, the danger of overseas life, terror, nostalgia, affection in connection to the nation and its spaces, the increasingly imperial reach of relations with revolutionary France during these years, and pleasurable diversion in reappropriations of the plays in varying arenas.

DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis titled ‘Shakespeare and England’s Empire, 1780-1800’ and the work presented in it are my own and have been generated by me as the result of my own original research.

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ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|------|-------------------------------|
| BM | British Museum |
| lwl | Lewis Walpole library |
| OIOC | India Office, British Library |

The Shakespeare text I have used throughout is the small edition in twenty volumes published by Bell in London between 1785 and 1788, *The Dramatick Writings of Will. Shakspeare* 20 vols. (London: John Bell, 1788) unless the text specifies otherwise. This work is abbreviated as follows *BES*, followed by the volume number in Roman numerals.

‘Johnson’s *Life of Milton* offers a number of explanations of the relationship between history and aesthetics. Milton was instrumental in developing a historically grounded conception of literature, even as proto-Romantic bardolatry worked to turn Shakespeare into the genius who transcended history.’

Jack Lynch, *The Age of Elizabeth in the Age of Johnson*

INTRODUCTION

Literary critics have been relatively silent on Shakespeare in the years that close the eighteenth century. The major critical precursors for this study of Shakespeare in England between 1780 and 1800 are Shakespeare scholars, although they also include historians and literary critics who have considered England's relationship to her empire in the eighteenth-century. The pages that follow foreground how the English nation, or its artists, citizens, actors and literary representatives were moved, horrified, exalted, affected or stoical in their response to empire between these years, and how they used Shakespeare to apprehend the empire within national spaces and on terms amenable to the development of the English arts.

The first parameter and limit to the research project is one of dates. A hiatus in the production of knowledge about Shakespeare between 1780 and 1800 existed to some extent. This is not to say that no work existed that took this time span as its object, but that the age of Garrick and the period connected to the Romantic poets have been more intensively studied, for understandable reasons.¹ The most obvious of these reasons read as follows.

¹ See for instance the work of Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986) or Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). Jonathan Brody Kramnick, *The Making of the English Canon: Print Capitalism and the Cultural Past 1700-1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998) pp.107-36 for 'a much fuller discussion of the period's canonisation of Shakespeare'. Vanessa Cunningham, *Shakespeare and Garrick* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008). Allardyce Nicoll *The Garrick Stage: Theatres and Audience in the Eighteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1980). Also some revealing

Shakespeare is, thanks to the eighteenth-century popularisation of his works and restoration of his authorship, a national poet, and more clearly so in the years of David Garrick's Jubilee and at the optimistic mid-century than amidst the confused and often dark imperialism of the end of the century. The established field of Romantic studies makes an accessible object of study of Shakespeare in connection to that period and its literary productions also. The final twenty years of the century, contrastingly, are coloured by a melancholy mood in terms of the national character, new negotiations of what an imperial identity might mean for the nation following the significant war with America, and ongoing violence and bloodshed, at times unpleasant and horrible to contemplate in connection to the extensive and ongoing conflict of the French Revolutionary wars, which increasingly reached far and distant locations around the world and events connected to the empire in the East Indies. Having now reached the end of the research, it occurs to me that it might be pressing also to investigate further cultural appropriations of Shakespeare during the years of the Seven Years War (1756-1763), in order to more fully comprehend intersections of Shakespeare and imperialism after 1780.

A second aim of this research has been to negotiate and create momentum around two areas of study. The first is the new imperial history and the second the study of the appropriation of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century in England. This 'binary star' of knowledges has led to the pursuit of particular resonances in the primary material, and has encouraged me at times to nurture idiosyncratic emphases in order to

discussions in John O'Brian, *Harlequin Britain: Pantomime and Entertainment 1690-1760* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004).

maintain this balance and perpetuate a dual vision onto study aims which remain mobile and contribute to one another's progress. Hence the project does not pursue the history of performance and staging as much as it might do, and although such analyses and research would potentially have contributed to the argument. Instead it presents an interdisciplinary collection of materials investigated, ranging from parliamentary debates and their contexts in the literature of public oratory and oratorical instruction, to graphic satire, to paintings and engravings, a novel, sculpture, gallery spaces, the memoirs and private writings of prominent public individuals, and the place of Shakespeare in representations of political and military events.

In order to keep the dual objects of the second aim in sight and so combine both a focus on imperialism and imperial contexts with the study of Shakespeare, it has made sense to emphasise the workings of affect in representations that touch on and use Shakespeare in the period 1780-1800, and to select representations that particularly emphasise affect or raise questions about interesting elements of its workings in connection to the arts.

Three books in Shakespeare studies that provide a crucial precedent for this research are: Jonathan Bate's *Shakespearean Constitutions* (1989), Michael Dobson's *The Making of the National Poet* (1992) and the volume of *Shakespeare Survey 51* (1998) devoted to the eighteenth century, edited by Stanley Wells.² This collection includes Catherine Alexander's important

² Jonathan Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism 1730-1830* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989). *Shakespeare Survey 51: Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century* ed. by Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). See also the essay collection *Reading Readings: Essays on Shakespeare Edition in the Eighteenth*

survey essay on recent criticism and an article on music and performances of *The Tempest* by Irena Cholij, which exemplifies the innovative scholarly work on Shakespeare in the eighteenth century now possible thanks to the increasing availability of research resources.³ Bate has worked extensively on Shakespeare in the long eighteenth century and his discussions are extraordinarily informative, if frequently concerned with a longer time span than the work presented in this study. *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism 1730-1830* (1989) discusses a historical association of Shakespeare with freedom of government and the ways in which, at times, and particularly noticeably in representations from the English eighteenth century, Shakespeare can serve metonymically to stand for the gothic and free constitution as a recurring political form.⁴ Bate's extensive work to elucidate the place of Shakespeare in the caricature art of the century, in this text and elsewhere, crucially underlies the research presented in this thesis.⁵ It would, like this project, not have been possible without the thorough and scholarly study made by M. Dorothy George into the caricatures in the British Museum collections.⁶ Bate's work is

Century ed. by Joanna Gondris (Madison, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1998). Also Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: Hogarth Press, 1990).

³ A similarly noteworthy recent contribution is Kate Rumbold's work on Shakespeare and the novel. Kate Rumbold, 'Quoting Shakespeare in the Eighteenth-Century Novel', *Borrowers and Lenders: The Journal of Shakespeare Appropriation* 2:2 (2006).

⁴ Bate, *Constitutions*, pp.212-13.

⁵ Bate, *Constitutions*, pp.89-102. Also Jonathan Bate, 'Shakespearean Allusion in English Caricature in the Age of Gillray', *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 49 (1986) 196-210.

⁶ M. Dorothy George, *English Political Caricature: A Study of Opinion and Propaganda* 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1959) and M. Dorothy George, *Catalogue of Personal and Political Satires Preserved in the Department of Prints and Drawings in the British*

foundational for this project also for his emphasis on a notion of the ‘presence’ of Shakespeare within the culture in a wider sense than solely through stage production, and his analysis therefore of events such as Garrick’s Shakespeare Jubilee, Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery and his assessment of Shakespeare in political discourse.

In his analysis of the period 1730-1830 Bate writes that the Jubilee, the Boydell Gallery and the Ireland forgeries were the three most ‘talked-about Shakespearean events of the period’.⁷ The Jubilee falls outside the years analysed as the subject of this study. John Boydell’s Shakespeare Gallery is of interest for this study, with its aesthetic emphases and attention to the involvement of Shakespeare in England’s development as a self-consciously imperial nation, while the Ireland forgeries of 1794-1796 are not, although this is not to say that a study of the imperial implications and resonances of that episode toward the end of the century would not be possible.

The main objective of Michael Dobson’s book is to examine how Shakespeare came to be esteemed both as national poet and as a named author responsible for a body of work. The argument proceeds through an enquiry into various moments in the history of adaptation, editing and commentary and examines public art and performances that are seen to contribute to canonisation between 1660 - 1769. It is the major study of Shakespeare and authorship in the eighteenth century.

Museum (London: British Museum, 1870-1954). Similarly the work of Charles Beecher Hogan, *Shakespeare in the Theatre 1701-1800* 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952-7).

⁷ Bate, *Constitutions*, p.45.

The work of studying Shakespeare in the mid- to later- eighteenth century raises forcibly a question of authority and authorship, and this is assessed in two recent sturdy and informative book-length studies by Simon Jarvis and Marcus Walsh.⁸ Jarvis and Walsh take as their main subject of enquiry editorial hermeneutics and the science of textual revision and reproduction in connection to the works of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century. Walsh's study of literary editing notably joins the study of textual interpretation and collation to questions of religious hermeneutics and biblical commentary. As well it presents a lucid account of the philological innovations provided by Edward Capell's edition of Shakespeare, prepared during the 1750s and 1760s.⁹ His emphasis is on the activity of the eighteenth-century editors as a humanist endeavour and as one that, across the century, restores authorial meanings to the text.¹⁰ Jarvis' study is valuable for its reluctance to map proscribed notions about political and cultural programmes onto editorial processes in the eighteenth century and for its detailed exploration of what Shakespeare's editors sought and were able to achieve in their time.¹¹ My project aims to bring different material to

⁸ Simon Jarvis, *Scholars and Gentlemen: Shakespearean Textual Criticism and Representations of Scholarly Labour 1725-1765* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). Marcus Walsh, *Shakespeare, Milton and Eighteenth-Century Literary Editing: The Beginnings of Interpretative Scholarship* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1997). See also studies by Jean I. Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1995), Colin Franklin, *Shakespeare Domesticated: The Eighteenth Century Editions* (Aldershot and Brookfield, UT: Scolar Press, 1991) and Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: the Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991).

⁹ Walsh, p.31.

¹⁰ Walsh, p.200.

¹¹ See for example his discussion of Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, Jarvis, pp.8,11.

the fore and shed light on its actions and activity and relevance within the reception of Shakespeare's work during the eighteenth century.

A further text worth mentioning that predates this investigation of Shakespeare in the final twenty years of the eighteenth century is Jack Lynch, *The Age of Elizabeth in the Age of Johnson* (2003).¹² This book considers how texts of the mid- to late- eighteenth century used Shakespeare and the memory of Elizabethan England to develop particular views onto the past, and elucidates in some detail how cultural values that came to be seen as Elizabethan informed the forging of both tradition and aesthetic forms in England. It analyses what Lynch calls 'historiographical language, metaphors and methods in the culture of the eighteenth century' in connection to the Elizabethanism of the age and its relation to the Renaissance.¹³ Lynch asks whether it is true to say that there existed contemporaneously with and in the midst of Augustanism a priority for a view toward an Elizabethan age. From the briefest comments on the meaning of words such as 'refinement' and 'cultivation' to revealing analysis of the interrelationship between Shakespeare, Gothicism and the predominant historiographical values of the years 1730-1780, his study has much to add to the debates on authority, authorship, national identity and artistic creativity that have tended to be preferred by recent critics of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century.¹⁴

¹² Jack Lynch, *The Age of Elizabeth in the Age of Johnson* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

¹³ Lynch, p.vii.

¹⁴ Lynch, pp.6, 39-45, 126-135.

William L. Pressly's *The Artist as Original Genius* (2007) emphasises likewise the theme of 'Shakespeare as barbaric goth' and the significance of the history of Britain and a sense of Britain's ancient past in art at the end of the century – a theme which has proved to be of wide significance in my research on Shakespeare in this period.¹⁵ Praeternatural settings, contexts touching Roman stories such as that of the general Belisarius, and the fantastic style of Henry Fuseli, are other subjects common to both Pressly's work and the research presented here.

The tenor of recent work in literary history and theatre history by Jonathan Kramnick and Daniel O'Quinn has similarly informed some of the directions my research on Shakespeare has taken.¹⁶ I think particularly of Kramnick's discussions of Elizabeth Montagu and her role in the construction of literary nationalism, and Daniel O'Quinn's lengthy and rich analysis of subjectivity and spectatorship in accounts of the trial of Warren Hastings. This turn toward investigating events and texts that were

¹⁵ William L. Pressly, *The Artist as Original Genius: Shakespeare's Fine Frenzy in Eighteenth-Century Art* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007). These words are from a few paragraphs on James Barry, pp.146-148. Also relevant would be the work of Martin Myrone in the catalogue accompanying the Tate Exhibition *Gothic Nightmares: Fuseli, Blake and the Romantic Imagination* ed. by Martin Myrone with Christopher Frayling and Marina Warner (London: Tate Publishing, 2006) and the work of literary critics including Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), Colin Kidd, *British Identities Before Nationalism: Ethnicity and Nationhood in the Atlantic World 1600-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), Howard Weinbrot, *Britannia's Issue: The Rise of British Literature from Dryden to Ossian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), Montague Summers, *The Gothic Quest: A History of the Gothic Novel* (1964), James Watt, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict 1764-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) and the collections *Shakespearean Gothic* ed. by Anne Williams and Christy Desmet (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2009) and *Shakespeare and the Eighteenth Century* ed. by Peter Sabor and Paul Yachnin (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

¹⁶ Jonathan Brody Kramnick, *Making the English Canon: Print Capitalism and the Cultural Past 1700-1770* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998). Daniel O'Quinn, *Staging Governance: Theatrical Imperialism in London 1770-1800* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2005).

prominent within the culture of the age, and reading into them for their involvement and role in the construction of various discourses, has informed my selection of paintings and sculptures within the Boydell gallery as prominent objects within this study. Such an approach to literary history also I hope colours the emphasis on stoic nationalism, northern masculinity, revised English republicanism and the genteel appreciation of landscape that I bring out in the analysis of Shakespeare at the Boydell gallery offered within these pages.

Also significant to the means by which I have approached the study of Shakespeare are several book-length works that cross art historical and literary studies, including works by Stuart Sillars and Alan Young.¹⁷ Sillars' work offers the most significant and comprehensive recent analysis of Shakespeare in art in the eighteenth century and the research offered here on

¹⁷ Stuart Sillars, *The Illustrated Shakespeare, 1709-1875* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008) and *Painting Shakespeare: the Artist as Critic 1720-1820* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006). Alan Young, *Hamlet and the Visual Arts 1709-1900* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2002), see also his work on Ophelia in this volume and article on images of Hamlet in *Reading Readings*. Important work in the visual arts by Gill Perry, 'Ambiguity and Desire: Metaphors of Sexuality in Late Eighteenth-Century Representations of the Actress' in *Notorious Muse: The Actress in British Art and Culture 1776-1812* (London and New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) pp.57-80, Heather McPherson 'Picturing Tragedy: Mrs Siddons as the Tragic Muse Revisited', *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 33:3 (2000) 401-430 and 'Masculinity, Femininity and the Tragic Sublime: Reinventing Lady Macbeth' *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture* 29 (2000) 299-333 and Shearer West, *The Image of the Actor: Verbal and Visual Representation in the Age of Garrick and Kemble* (London: Pinter, 1991). Compare Luisa Calè, *Turning Readers into Spectators: Fuseli's Milton Gallery* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2006) and Shearer West, 'The Public and Private Roles of Sarah Siddons' in *A Passion for Performance: Sarah Siddons and her Portraitists* (Los Angeles: J. Paul Getty Publications, 1999), pp.1-40. See also several significant exhibition catalogues prepared by Jane Munro, *Shakespeare and the Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Fitzwilliam Museum, 1997), Jane Martineau's at the Dulwich Picture Gallery and the Palazzo dei Diamanti, Ferrara, from which came the publication *Shakespeare in Art* (London and New York: Merrell Publishers, 2003) and Moelwyn Merchant, *Shakespeare and the Artist* (London: Oxford University Press, 1959), Frederick Burwick's exhibition and catalogue of the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery* ed. by Frederick Burwick and Walter Pape (Bottrop: Peter Pomp, 1996), *Eighteenth-Century Attitudes to Shakespeare: The Catalogue of an Exhibition of Books in the Birmingham Library to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the Birth of William Shakespeare* ed. by C. Parish (Birmingham, 1964); also relevant would be the *Gothic Nightmares* exhibition catalogue and catalogue for exhibition at Nottingham Art Gallery 1961.

the Boydell gallery is in dialogue with his work, as well as with Martin Postle's thorough work on Joshua Reynolds.¹⁸ Young has analysed the representation of characters from the plays in the visual arts.

In eighteenth-century studies the most significant critical precursors to my work are, as I state above, in the field that has been termed the new imperial history: works by Felicity Nussbaum and Kathleen Wilson or the critical essays of Antoinette Burton.¹⁹

Chapters in this work pursue notions of the gothic indefiniteness of territorial boundaries in connection to an aesthetic of empire. Dome-like boundaries, infinite closeness and infinite smallness provide a way in to the analysis of landscape and empire, as depicted in the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery; also a subject of attention is the possibility of eastern paradigms and their relation to English gothic in the arts in chapter one. This chapter analyses a preference for a picturesque over a sublime space in imperial representation. In chapter two the interior space of a masculine, militarised

¹⁸ Martin Postle, *Joshua Reynolds: The Subject Pictures* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

¹⁹ For more work specifically investigating questions of femininity and empire see also O'Quinn. Felicity Nussbaum, *The Limits of the Human: Fictions of Anomaly, Race and Gender in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003). Kathleen Wilson, 'British Women and Empire' in *Women's History, Britain 1700-1850* ed. by Barker and Chalus (Abingdon: Routledge, 2005), pp.260-84 on how empire did not exist 'out there' and on the necessity of thinking empire and nation in relation to one another, p.262. Antoinette M. Burton, 'Introduction: On the Inadequacy and Indispensability of the Nation' in *After the Imperial Turn: Thinking With and Through the Nation* ed. by Antoinette Burton (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2003), pp.1-23, especially p.6. Kathleen Wilson *The Island Race: Englishness, Empire and Gender in the Eighteenth Century* (London: Routledge, 2002). *A New Imperial History: Culture, Identity and Modernity in Britain and the Empire 1660-1840* ed. by Kathleen Wilson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004). Antoinette Burton, 'Who needs the Nation? Interrogating "British History" in *Cultures of Empire: Colonisers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* ed. by Catherine Hall (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), pp.137-53. Mrinalini Sinha, 'Britain and the Empire: Towards a New Agenda for Imperial History' *Radical History Review* 72 (1998) 163-74. Partha Chatterjee, 'Beyond the Nation? Or Within?' *Social Text* 56, 16.3 (1998) 57-69. Himani Bannerji, 'Politics and the Writing of History' in *Nation, Empire, Colony* ed. by Ruth Roach Pierson and Nupur Chaudhuri and Beth McAuley (Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1998).

body, as illustrated in a painting by Joshua Reynolds for Boydell's Shakespeare gallery, receives attention. I examine how a little-known scene in *Henry VI Part II* was, for late eighteenth-century audiences, well-known and provided, through Reynolds' painting, a means by which to contemplate death and to examine its importance for empire. Chapters three and four address the vagueness of classical and gothic reference, and particularly their combination, as used in works by women in connection to the American revolution; and the making of performative public identities on the Scottish and Welsh peripheries and in relation to the government of the East Indies. Chapter Three discusses a subject which has not received much attention in the extant criticism, Mary Wollstonecraft's *Short Residence in Sweden*, and addresses particularly the conjunction of Shakespeare and gothic in this text. Chapter Four is a different and innovative reading of Sarah Siddons the Shakespearean actress through comparison with Warren Hastings. The fifth and final chapter looks into a combination of tears and terror in the debates on the Quebec bill in 1791, and its transference across into graphic satire. The first two chapters look more toward the use of Shakespeare in artworks as they appeared in social spaces; the three final chapters address the passions and deportment of the self in satirical and political contexts, both national and imperial, between 1780 and 1800.

The research for this project was carried out in the surroundings of the Centre for Eighteenth Century Studies at the University of York and, in keeping with the aims of that research centre, is interdisciplinary in scope. I address acting theory, pictorial satire, galleries of painting, book illustration, memoirs of the stage, private correspondence, travel guides, political

speeches and annotated editions, among other texts. The project seeks to emphasise aesthetic and affective criteria over social historical or political ones, though it does not do so to the exclusion of this second set.

In eighteenth-century instances of landscape art, it is more the development of earlier eighteenth-century georgic models, and the presence of a language of agrarian or picturesque form, as translated into the visual arts in connection with Shakespeare that interest me, and the ways in which they might be thought to generate nuances for an imagined landscape in England in view of empire between 1780 and 1800. In the second chapter a specialised interaction of text and painting around the development of theatrical painting is the subject, and its specific complexity in connection to Shakespeare's language. The third chapter takes up the often interacting and simultaneous uses of gothic and classical modelling around interpretations of the plays to consider the application of these aesthetic variants in contemporary interpretations of Shakespeare by women. Later analysis in the fourth and fifth chapters considers the means by which the English words and language of Shakespeare came to be learnt by all, providing a linguistic lens for active citizens under the empire and acting as a tasteful and appropriate preparation for later speech in public life. The pages that follow also explore at points a co-joined characterisation of northern territories with the exoticism of the commercial world in texts that turn to Shakespeare during these years, as well as the negotiation in England of a modern, republican politics through the arts and political priorities of America.

Throughout, I am interested to explore the imperial valences of what are thought of as pure and indigenous English cultural forms and preoccupations: the impurity of origin, for instance, which late eighteenth-century English culture was itself fascinated by, in the arts of oratory, or in native and gothic form, or in superficial usages of Shakespeare's language in various cultural contexts. Above all, the enquiry that follows serves to bring further into the light the ways in which British culture used Shakespeare at the end of the eighteenth century, both in terms of the language and text of the plays and the scenes and characters, to reconcile itself to the implications of its own developing status as an imperial nation.

The subject matter of the thesis unfolds around a notion that empire brings about the possibility of being at home through being elsewhere. It investigates and attempts to improve our understanding of the kind of artworks that are produced in the presence of empire, such as the obsessive popularisation of the representation of death in Reynolds' *Cardinal Beaufort*; the anaemic or anaesthetised response to the passing of time in the nostalgic and repetitive English landscapes of the Boydell Gallery; the unresolved turn away from a discourse of delicacy and of delicate and refined tastes in favour of a vulgar, rough, rude and native Shakespeare, produced by economic pressures on Wollstonecraft's Swedish and Northern journey or, similarly, as introduced by Sarah Siddons in her performances. A significant proliferation in the production of caricature art that makes reference to Shakespeare in the course of these years also comes under consideration.

In many ways to work on Shakespeare in the eighteenth century in England is to enter into that epistemological problem which John Bender identifies as the ‘double jeopardy’ of doing the history of the Enlightenment.²⁰ How, first of all, to recover the cultural effects of a writer who became part of the Enlightenment, if indeed Shakespeare did at all? How to do so, without, as Bender describes the problem, necessarily taking a measure of the Enlightenment on its own terms? My response to these problems post-dates Bender’s article, which seeks to tabulate four main topical trends in new historicist criticism.²¹ These are: the autonomy of the aesthetic as a discursive realm and related questions of the ordering of knowledges; authorship and the question of the authority of canonical texts; the emergence of a transparent and disinterested subjectivity, or the rise of a notion of impartial neutrality; and gendered sexuality in relation to the construction and progress of social forms, which include the family. Bender’s argument is not so much influenced by Foucault as concerned to draw attention to the assumptions inherent within Enlightenment thought, which the new forms of criticism have made main points of focus. The article reads, then, as an exploration of ‘the tenacity of Enlightenment assumptions in eighteenth-century studies’, including the new historicism in its varying forms.²² His title and opening paragraph suggest abstracted and reflexive historiographical discussion, however the argument does not

²⁰ John Bender, ‘A New History of the Enlightenment?’ in *The Profession of Eighteenth-Century Literature* ed. by Leo Damrosch (Madison: University of Wisconsin, 1992), p.75.

²¹ Bender, pp.70-5.

²² Bender, p.78.

follow an inquiry into how eighteenth-century studies might become trapped in its own frame of reference, limited by a logic of rediscovery and recapitulation or weakened and necessarily foreshortened in its processes by a certain inability to attain distance from its objects of enquiry. Instead, the theme of recapitulation provides an allusive reflection on the possibilities inherent to interdisciplinary and multi-textual or multi-generic literary study. A productive ambivalence emerges particularly around the force of impartial neutrality, as both a legacy of the Enlightenment and a concern in the newer forms of history. Is the authority of the text (implicitly, the written text) primary to the operations of this notion? Or is it perhaps that what is at work is a social convention that holds that reason is implicitly neutral and above the effects of being marked by gender? Where does the authority of a text exist and how and in what social forms is it enacted? Such questions are those emphasised by Bender's essay. It is worth stating that Bender does not closely criticise positivist historicism or any claim to transparency with which he suggests it is associated, nor does he describe directly how a form of history which remains trapped within the epistemological frame of its object of study would look. His comment on a 'resonance of its assumptions with those of its objects of study' as a major question for the progress of interdisciplinary researches into this period of English history remains however peculiarly difficult to turn away from in the presentation of a contribution to Shakespeare studies. The task of presenting a historical assessment that does justice both to Shakespeare studies and to the production of knowledge about the Enlightenment and the later eighteenth century is daunting.

Gender and its connection to impartial neutrality and to the significance of social forms such as the family in the context of developments in the empire are important themes for this work and, so too, is the connection of Shakespeare to aesthetic forms. Authorship receives less attention, and is of less interest, primarily because it is of less importance to the use and interpretation of Shakespeare in the examples I have chosen. This is not to say that the authority of the unified text of the works is of no importance. It clearly matters in the Boydell gallery, and to references made to Shakespeare in caricature and political debate. However, I have sought to draw attention to the forms of allusion, appropriation and reference at work on their own terms, which are often complex and require considerable attention to understand, as well as detailed explanations of eighteenth-century contexts.

I have been concerned to pursue how imperial categories and contexts determined an aesthetic framework for the reception of Shakespeare in England, particularly after 1780. A monument in Lichfield to that great Shakespearean actor of the mid-century, David Garrick, bears Dr Johnson's lament and 'disappointment' at his death, an event that he suggests, 'has eclipsed the gaiety of nations and impoverished the public stock of harmless pleasure'.²³ The years following Garrick's death in 1779 in many ways mark the beginning of an era of grieving for the idyllic nation; a passing of the heady optimism and nostalgia Shakespeare seemed

²³ James Boswell, *The Life of Samuel Johnson* 2 vols. (London: Charles Dilly, 1791), II, p.36.

to promise the England of the mid-century.²⁴ A flurry of images of Garrick leaning on monuments of Shakespeare, in woodlands, surrounded by sprites, fairies, country folk and all that is good and English and divertingly Elizabethan was quickly succeeded by a new degree of uncertainty surrounding the place of Shakespeare within the canon (BM 6715). The years between 1780 and 1800 are determined and characterised by difficult renegotiations of Shakespeare as a national poet, and the inclusion of Shakespeare in the reproduction of definitions of the nation amenable to its imperial status.



PLATE 1

This was an era that saw the emergence of global empire and the prevalence of conflicts, particularly during the revolutionary wars with France, pertaining to developments in Britain's empire on a world scale. A new terrain for empire begins to emerge during these years, one that is characterised by Great Britain's status as an imperial nation subsequent to

²⁴ See further Cunningham, Dobson and Christine Deelman, *The Great Shakespeare Jubilee* (1964).

the Seven Years War. This thesis considers ‘empire’ in this period in so far as Shakespeare is used to negotiate decline and recovery, to demarcate peripheries and to determine and interpret instabilities at home. The episode in British history following the loss of the American colonies is that critics including Martin Myrone and Robert Jones have recently characterised as a melancholy, troubled moment in British history. In the second place of importance to England’s sense of empire are relations to the Indian subcontinent and to the near East and classical European sites.

This research has been enabled by the recent investigations of scholars such as Jones, Myrone and O’Quinn into the intersecting vectors of gender and empire in the mid- to late- century. Earlier work by Kathleen Wilson, Felicity Nussbaum or Antoinette Burton has been similarly instructive.²⁵ Such studies make it possible to speak of empire at the end of the eighteenth century in England and to investigate specific historical arenas with considerable authority, upon the basis of existing explorations into the material culture which already detail the intricacies of the Duchess of Queensberry’s relation to her servant or the global transit of ceramics, for instance.²⁶ Much of the research is already in place to enable an

²⁵ Compare note 19 above. Also Kate Teltscher, *India Inscribed: European and British Writing on India 1600-1800* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1995).

²⁶ Nussbaum, *Limits*, p.7. Maxine Berg, *Luxury and Pleasure in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007). Similarly, in the area of literary texts, Rosalind Ballaster, *Fabulous Orient: Fictions of the East in England, 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). Rosalind Ballaster, *Fables of the East: Selected Tales 1662-1785* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005). Also C.A. Bayly, ‘The British and Indigenous Peoples, 1760-1860: Power, Perception and Identity’ in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850* ed. by Martin Daunton and Rick Halpern (London: UCL Press, 1999), pp.19-41. For a discussion of new imperial history and nineteenth-century Shakespeare see Michael Harrawood, ‘Shakespeare in the Caribbean: The Morant Bay Massacre, Jamaica, 1865’ *MLQ* 65:2 (2004), pp.262-92.

understanding of how Shakespeare might fit into the material culture of empire, as lived in England.

My research builds upon areas of scholarship within the new imperial history and aims to extend this scholarship toward the study of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century and to draw it more toward an analysis of art, than into an area of cultural history. The significance of Shakespeare for this new imperial history has not been considered. It is worth noting to some extent that existing research of this kind into British imperial history has primarily occurred along a strand within American criticism and history, and this project seeks to join it up to an enquiry within English literary studies.

In representations discussed in this thesis, East Indian and European locations might be seen as the site of present military conflict or of historical importance; the West Indies and the Americas and the coasts of British Columbia tend to be seen not in historical terms but as sites of future possibility. These were years when American publishers were beginning to produce geographies and to describe the locations of empire: I do not deal in these pages with Dutch, Spanish, Portuguese, French or Danish territories, unless of relevance through territorial conflicts with England.²⁷

The late eighteenth century was when Shakespeare's autograph came into view as an object of public regard; it is also when Bell's edition formalised the spelling from Shakspeare to Shakspeare, and 'rejected the

²⁷ See for example Jedidiah Morse, *American Universal Geography, or a View of the Present State of all the Empires, Kingdoms, States and Republics in the Known World and of the United States of America in Particular* 2 vols. (Boston: Isaiah Thomas and Ebenezer T. Andrews, 1796), I, p.794.

long f in favour of the round one' in printing.²⁸ Bell, nicknamed by Charles Knight the 'Puck of booksellers', was a moderniser and Boydell's edition with its spacious margins and new type is similarly modern in style. Print culture is of considerable importance to John Boydell's edition of Shakespeare's plays, eventually published at the beginning of the nineteenth century. It is monumental in ambition and scope, both typographical and artistic, in that its illustrations were derived from the Gallery and the nine volumes, eventually red morocco bound, were envisaged as a part of the venture by Boydell and others at the planning stage in the late 1780s. It signals a powerful impulse to institutionalise the importance of the plays in an imperial context, and insists on Shakespeare's place as a venerated object for the nation.

Another important edition for this study is the one produced by John Bell, published between 1785 and 1788. Some impulse to institutionalise the authority of the text and name of Shakespeare can be seen in the 'Advertisement' to this edition of the plays, which includes a note on the accuracy of removing the 'A' – so spelling the title Shakspeare rather than Shakspeare – based on evidence from the facsimile of the signature.²⁹

Attending the theatre was a popular activity, and both the main playhouses were rebuilt during this period on a scale significantly larger than the buildings previously standing on these sites: the new Drury Lane

²⁸ Taylor, p.217. William St Clair provides records for the statistics of reading Shakespeare, and the printing of individual plays, and various editions of the works listing book prices including Stockdale's one volume edition of 1784 which had free carriage anywhere in Britain, a cheap 9 vols. 18mo edition of 1786, Nichols' 7 vols. of 1788, Bellamy's 8 vols. of 1796, an imperial octavo in 7 vols. of 1797, an 18mo edition in 9 vols. of 1798. William St Clair, *The Reading Nation in the Romantic Period* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.155.

²⁹ *BES*, I, unpaginated.

theatre opened in Spring 1794, seating 3600; the Covent Garden theatre opened in September 1792, seating 3013.³⁰

England's experience of empire was not always Britain's experience of empire, and the project deals also with this primary and fascinating incongruity, which remained largely undefined and unresolved during these years with Shakespeare often appearing to police and satirise borders between England's local dominions in Wales, Scotland and Ireland and those further afield. Thanks to progresses in the new imperial history what was identified by Daunton and Halpern in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples 1600-1850* as 'the next phase' of work on empire that would 'feed imperial history back into Britain' and 'take seriously the question of how far, and in what ways, the imperial experience contributed to the making of national identity and regional identities in the British Isles itself' has come to pass.³¹ This study aims to enhance our existing understanding of the possibilities of the new imperial history for theatre history and to illustrate uses of Shakespeare between the years 1780 and 1800 in England that served to assimilate and apprehend the effects of empire on domestic territories.

³⁰ *The London Stage Part 5 1776-1800* ed. by Charles Beecher Hogan 3 vols. (Carbondale Southern Illinois University Press, 1968), I, p.xliv.

³¹ Martin Daunton and Rick Halpern, 'Introduction: British Identities, Indigenous Peoples and the Empire' in *Empire and Others: British Encounters with Indigenous Peoples, 1600-1850* ed. by Martin Daunton and Rick Halpern (London: UCL Press, 1999), p.1

CHAPTER ONE

**LANDSCAPE AND EMPIRE IN JOHN BOYDELL'S
SHAKESPEARE GALLERY**

SECTION ONE

‘Can any other publishing enterprise ... match the spectacular pretentiousness, the elaborate preparation, the ambitious and altruistic motives, the lavish spending of thousands of Pounds, the enlisting of so many different artists as illustrators and engravers, the building of a separate art gallery to house the original canvases, a separate printing establishment, a special type-designing firm, and finally a national lottery to bring the project through to a solvency and triumph?’¹ This mid-twentieth century assessment of the project by John and Josiah Boydell to inaugurate a new tradition of historical painting in Britain based in the works of Shakespeare captures well the grandeur and scale of the venture to which those two men committed themselves in the late 1780s.

John Boydell began to make plans for his Shakespeare gallery in November 1787 at a dinner held by his nephew Josiah Boydell in Hampstead. Benjamin West, George Romney, Paul Sandby, William

¹ Lawrance Thompson, ‘The Boydell Shakespeare: An English Monument to Graphic Arts’, *The Princeton University Library Chronicle* 1:2 (1940) 17-24. p.17 discusses an exhibition around the gift to the Library by a B. Burnett Carson of the nine-volume Boydell Shakespeare.

Hayley, Mr. Hoole, Mr. Braithwaite and the publisher George Nicol were also present at this dinner.² Boydell recounts the conversation amongst this ‘private company’ in his patriotic Preface to the gallery catalogue, published in 1789. The apparent neglect of a tradition encompassing ‘the noblest part of the art – HISTORICAL PAINTING’ in England had, he suggested, prompted him to conceive of an appropriate corrective to ‘national Taste’, ‘national honour’ and ‘the advancement of the arts’. Shakespeare was a self-evident focus: ‘no subjects seem so proper to form an English School of Historical Paintings, as the scenes of the immortal Shakespeare’, he wrote.³ The conception of the venture was both commercial and patriotic. Boydell planned that it could be funded by advance subscription to two publications, a large-scale series of plates without text to be published as a Royal Folio and a nine-volume illustrated edition of Shakespeare, including one hundred smaller engravings. This second was to be typeset by his Majesty’s bookseller George Nicol and edited by the celebrated scholar George Steevens.⁴

The new gallery stood in a two-floor building formerly occupied by Dodsley’s bookshop at 52 Pall Mall between May 1789 and January 1805.

² Richard D. Altick, *The Shows of London* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1978), p.106. For details of who was present at Boydell’s dinner see Thompson and T.S.R. Boase, ‘Illustrations of Shakespeare’s Plays in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries’ *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 10 (1947) 83-108, p.95.

³ John Boydell, ‘Preface’, *A Catalogue of the Pictures in the Shakspeare Gallery* (London: John Boydell, 1789), p.vi,ix.

⁴ Boase, ‘Illustrations’, p.96. John Boydell, ‘Preface’, pp.xv-xvi. *The Boydell Shakespeare Prints*, intro. by A. E. Santaniello (New York and London: Benjamin Blom, 1968) is a useful modern edition that reproduces the atlas folio volume of large scale prints, *A Collection of Prints from Pictures painted for the Purpose of Illustrating the Dramatic Works of Shakspeare by the Artists of Great Britain* (London, 1803) and reproduces in an appendix the small prints. The title page of this folio refers, in contrast to John Boydell’s emphasis on an ‘English School’, to ‘the Artists of Great Britain’.

Its contents swelled from thirty-four pictures at its opening; by 1791 the exhibition contained sixty-five, by 1802 one hundred and sixty-two, and it included works by the greatest artists of the age as well as commissioned works by lesser-known painters. The building was refurbished by the architect George Dance the younger and comprised three rooms, each roughly 23'x 40' in size, and a total wall space of around four thousand square feet.⁵ Entry to the Gallery, when it was not closed for engraving, was one shilling, and subscribers received 'Tickets of Perpetual Free Admission'. In 1805 a medal, carrying the image of the bard in the alto-relief sculpture by Thomas Banks located above the entrance of the gallery, was minted in Birmingham for presentation to 'the Subscribers to the Shakespeare'. The medal was engraved with their signatures, so that 'their names might be handed down to Posterity, as the Patrons of Native Genius'.⁶

The printer for John Boydell and his nephew Josiah's venture was George Nicol. As a craftsman he held a role in a changing, urban and elite market. In a paper he authored, affixed to the 1802 folio of prints, he describes his role to improve the 'declining state of printing in London'. Nicol worked at royal command on the second edition of Captain Cook's *Last Voyage* in the summer of 1784. The connection with Cook was reiterated in another paper by Nicol of 1787, one cited at length by Josiah Boydell in his preface to the Royal Folio. In this paper Nicol outlined his typographical ambitions for the entire project at length, repeating that it was

⁵ Boase, 'Illustrations', p.95; Josiah Boydell, 'Preface' to *A Collection of Prints* (London, 1805), reproduced *The Boydell Shakespeare Prints*, unpaginated.

⁶ Josiah Boydell, 'Preface', unpaginated.

his work on Cook's *Last Voyage* which first made him realise the possibility of remedying British deficiencies in printing, type-founding and ink-making as compared with foreign progress and improvement in this arena. Nicol's expertise lay in typography, and he presented his printing of the nine-volume red morocco-bound edition of the works as the fitting product of an imperial city. The manufacture of this edition of the works was his main endeavour under Boydell. The printing project commissioned a new set of type and required ink to be manufactured in collaboration with a Mr Bulmer, John Futz of Mentz and John Baskerville of Birmingham.⁷ Nicol's contribution to Boydell's Shakespeare efforts is best understood in conjunction with the folio of print engravings, as almost all the illustrations were derived from paintings in the gallery. My main concern in this chapter is not with the minutiae of individual works and I do not seek to compare the full-text volumes with the illustrations in the print folio. I am concerned to explore the thesis that the significant imperial themes in the art of the Boydell Gallery are clearly connected to a strand of imperial landscape painting, and that this content has been largely neglected in the extant criticism.

The aims of this Shakespeare gallery were vastly ambitious. Boydell sought to collect the greatest English artists of the age and have them illustrate Shakespeare's works. When his rooms at Pall Mall opened in May

⁷ Thompson calls them 'handsome engravings published with pages of text that were models of typographical beauty', p.18. Nicol's Advertisement as cited by Josiah Boydell read: 'it was found necessary to establish a printing-house on purpose to print the work; a foundry to cast the types; and even a manufactory to make the ink. How much the art of printing has improved since that period the Public can best judge', p.21. On the type prepared by William Martin for George Nicol see Colin Franklin, 'Print and Design in Eighteenth-Century Editions of Shakespeare', *Book Collector* 43 (1994) 517-528 and Daniel Berkeley Updike, *Printing Types: Their History, Forms and Use; A Study in Survivals*, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1937), II, p.123.

1789 ‘several of the Shakspeare pictures’, as was explained in the first edition of the catalogue, were not yet complete. Seven pictures ‘unconnected with the present work’, were therefore hung on what would otherwise be empty walls in the open parts of the gallery, ‘for the sake of uniformity of appearance’. All seven were history paintings of a kind: John Opie’s painting of the death of David Rizzio, Mary Queen of Scots’ private secretary, an *Elijah raising the Widow’s Son* by Northcote, the other five related to the defence of Gibraltar, besieged by the French and Spanish in 1782.⁸ The largest of these pieces, Reynolds’ portrait of George Augustus Eliott, created Lord Heathfield of Gibraltar in 1787, was both historical painting and portrait. As Martin Postle writes of this vast work, which combines the gloomy aftermath of conflict on the seas and a mythic Christian characterisation, ‘in the 1830s, Constable could still nostalgically refer to this portrait as ‘almost a history of the defence of Gibraltar’.⁹ A changing collection of ‘[m]iscellaneous paintings’ continued to be displayed in subsequent years, and are recorded in catalogues each year until the close of the gallery in 1805 – one published in 1790, for example, references depictions of the death of Wat Tyler, the murder of James I, the flight of Mary, Queen of Scots and Hogarth’s *Sigismunda*.¹⁰

⁸ John Boydell, ‘Advertisement’, *A Catalogue of the Pictures in the Shakspeare Gallery* (1789), unpaginated.

⁹ Postle, p.54.

¹⁰ *A Catalogue of the Pictures, &c. in the Shakspeare Gallery* (London: H.Baldwin, 1790), pp.143-4. The catalogue was republished several times between 1789 and 1796 and was published most frequently by Boydell.



PLATE 2

What kind of ‘uniformity’ these miscellaneous works might have lent to the exhibition of the Shakespeare paintings is not immediately apparent. What in particular made a series of paintings of Gibraltar commensurate with the other works in the gallery? Joshua Reynolds had suggested at the end of his Thirteenth Discourse, delivered to the Royal Academy in 1786, that ‘facts and events, however they may bind the Historian, have no dominion over the Poet or the Painter’. The scope of historical painting was conventionally broad, narrative-based, and as wide-ranging as the imagination.¹¹ Its organising principle was not so much the recounting of the events of the distant or not so distant past, as *istoria*, an expression of grand ideas or stories in idealised forms – often, Martin Myrone has explained, through the allegorically aggrandised masculine body.¹² It may be that the Gibraltar works were acclaimed examples of

¹¹ Sir Joshua Reynolds, *The Works of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 3 vols. (London: T.Cadell Jun and W.Davis, 1798), II, p.142.

¹² Martin Myrone, ‘Fuseli to Frankenstein: the Visual Arts in the Context of the Gothic’ in *Gothic Nightmares: Fuseli, Blake and the Romantic Imagination* (London: Tate Publishing, 2006), pp.31-40.

historical painting, and thereby converged with the advertised intention of the gallery. It is only, however, once we begin to consider John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery within the visual rhetoric of landscape painting, addressing the connection of that form of nationally edifying, historical painting advanced by the gallery to an imperial landscape aesthetic, that a potent pictorial rhetoric at work within the gallery becomes apparent.

The first chapter of my thesis is concerned, then, primarily with the affective pressures and national potential of a picturesque aesthetic, as it came to be reformulated and redeployed in connection with the revival of Shakespeare during these years. I address in particular the detailed, accretive work of the picturesque, its celebration and championing of minutely defined locality, and explore the differentiation of that aesthetic from a perceived sublime, grotesque or horrific set of imperial landscapes. In passages on Reynolds' Discourse, I analyse the extent to which it makes sense to think of a colonial and specifically an East Indian context for the highly fanciful works of gothic art and architecture that fed into picturesque art in England during these years. William Hodges' painting of *Jaques and Amiens* offers a particularly productive point of entry for a discussion of the workings of a picturesque aesthetic in the Shakespeare Gallery, and I move to discuss it in the third section of this chapter.

Visitors to the Boydell Shakespeare would have received at the door to the gallery's premises on Pall Mall, included within the price of admission, a catalogue, which reprinted dialogue from the scenes depicted in the paintings.¹³ This catalogue would have enabled the viewer to read the

¹³ *Times*, 11 May 1789.

appropriate text from the plays as they passed around the gallery: Francis Wheatley's 1790 watercolour now at the Victoria and Albert Museum depicts spectators holding just such papers in hand. Visitors would hence have been close to the words of text at the same time as viewing the paintings before them.

There already existed a tradition for painting landscapes from the works of Shakespeare that began with Francis Hayman's four large-scale paintings, made in the 1740s and 1750s for the Prince's Pavilion at Vauxhall Gardens.¹⁴ Sir Thomas Hanmer had commissioned Hayman to produce a frontispiece at around this time also, for an edition of Shakespeare's works which appeared in 1743-4. Hanmer requested a work from *The Tempest*, and had asked for 'a Landskip the most pleasing that can be design'd, varied with woods and plains and Rocks and vallies, and falls of water and all the wild beauties of nature.'¹⁵ The picturesque content of this commission in many ways set the standard for illustrations from the works later in the century. Landscape art is more noticeable a feature of the gallery than many of the significant recent commentators, including Rosemarie Dias, Jane Martineau and Stuart Sillars, have considered.

The steady incursion of an English landscape aesthetic into the Boydell Gallery is apparent in the Royal Folio. The Folio includes notable works by Francis Wheatley, such as the illustration from *A Winter's Tale* IV.III. For this Wheatley painted a shepherd's cot, almost perfectly typecast,

¹⁴ Boase 'Illustrations', p.90.

¹⁵ Recounted by Marcia Pointon, 'Representing *The Tempest* in the Boydell Gallery' in *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery*, ed. by Frederick Burwick and Walter Pape (Bottrop, Essen: Peter Pomp, 1996), pp.103-111, p.106.

that demonstrates a sunlit, bountiful scene, with a young shepherd, arm around a country girl, gesturing freely across an unbroken prospect. The history plays generate paintings that address claims to territory. Rigaud's epic battlefield scene of Shrewsbury plain, where Falstaff appears concealed beneath a shield, is included. Fuseli's *Henry V* II.II shows the treason council at Southampton on the eve of war with France as a classical harbour-front, with placid seas. John Boydell paints Somerset, Suffolk, Warwick, Plantagenet, Vernon and the anonymous lawyer in the rose garden at the Temple, with views onto the Embankment and across the Thames.

Seascapes are equally frequent. Joseph Wright of Derby's *Antigonus Pursued by a Bear* is set in a squally 'Desert Place near the Sea'. The several *Tempest* paintings that open Volume One depict island boundaries. Each represents an oddly impassive, ghostly Miranda beside a decisive, instrumental Prospero or Ferdinand. Fuseli's fantasmic 'The Enchanted Island' shows Prospero, Miranda, Caliban and Ariel, crowded by sea-creatures, shells, a monkey and seated cat and looks outward from Prospero's residence to the open sea. Although not immediately picturesque it does engage conventions of visual proximity and distance, and includes a view outward across land from a site of enclosure.

The gallery had also employed William Hodges to illustrate *The Merchant of Venice*, V.I. The title for the work is *Belmont: A Grove or Green Place before Portia's House*. It depicts playtext references to Dido, Troilus, Thisbe, Troy, Greece and Carthage and brings themes of enchantment, harboured dangers and sorcery within a serene night

landscape. The narrative here is storied and classical, but the landscape view is onto mid-century English garden design, Italianate in inspiration and devoid of the roughness and antique ruination later popularised as picturesque. Fir trees sweep onto a glassy lake, moonlight illumines stone balustrades and a classical portico. A Temple of Venus fills the middle distance, and a torch sends its smoke into the cloudy skies. Stephano approaches with music and Lorenzo and Jessica sit to the fore, in earnest conversation among the ornamental sculptures.

Elsewhere in the Folio, William Hoppner illustrates *Cymbeline* III.IV, in a scene 'Near Milford Haven'. This work depicts Pisanio and Imogen in a blustery landscape of mountains and fast-moving clouds. W. Miller painted from *Henry VI Part 3* IV.V *A Park near Middleham Castle in Yorkshire*, its mock-hunt shown amongst highly detailed foliage and wooded areas.

A frequently repeated theme is imperial and monarchical England. Frontispieces to each of the volumes from paintings by W. Beechey show first King George III in a martial, tempestuous setting reminiscent of Reynolds' *General Elliott* and, second, Queen Charlotte, in serene parkland with open skies and a prospect terminating in a distant country residence. In a work from *As You Like It* I.II, J. Dowman deploys visual prospect. Viewed from a colonnade 'Before the Duke's Palace', the work shows Rosalind presenting a chain to Orlando with exhortations about Arden, the golden age and innate nobility. She celebrates Sir Rowland de Bois as Charles, defeated at wrestling, is carried out in the background. William Hamilton's work from *As You Like It* V.IV, similarly, shows a forest scene with distant

horizons. A painting from *Love's Labour Lost*, IV.I by Gavin Hamilton, engraved by T. Ryder, is of 'A Pavilion in the Park, Near the Palace'. The subject is part recreational deer hunt and part aristocratic masque in rich velvets, silks and heavy cord, and tents and groups in the foreground are countered by a distant view across land.

Although many of the scenes in the print folio do not illustrate England, my concern in this chapter is to highlight the development of an English landscape aesthetic, and to discuss more fully the mood which some of the works for the gallery create and the forms of imperialism with which they engage. It is my contention that many of the works illustrate the knightly 'diversions of *hunting, hawking, shooting* and wrestling' as described in Richard Hurd's 'Letters on Chivalry and Romance', as well as to some extent illustrating the persistence of images of the age of Elizabeth in the later century, with which that text in part concerns itself.¹⁶ However, the detailed connection of these images to a history of imperialism is less self-evident.

Landscapes which engaged feelings of benevolence, melancholy, prosperity and mercy, or Christian terror and respite in eighteenth-century viewers were deployed in new ways as English imperialism developed during these years. The transmission and commerce of forms between domestic shores and the colonies altered explorations of enjoyment, horror,

¹⁶ Richard Hurd, 'Letters on Chivalry and Romance' in *Moral and Political Dialogues with Letters on Chivalry and Romance*, 3 vols. (London: T.Cadell, 1788), III, pp.320, 334.

terror, esteem, plenty and prosperity in art and generated new methods and materials with which to display these affects.¹⁷

It is helpful to think of the Shakespeare Gallery filled out and substantiated by affect-laden illustrations, such as the elements of moving cloud, rugged landscapes, or gentle, enclosing forest scenes. Many of the works, additionally, seem to provide an extreme close-up of points within picturesque landscapes – of the space immediately before the columns of a country house, or an intimate seating area before a lake, the summer house in a designed garden, or beneath and before the trees in some wooded clearing. Often they insert the meetings and conversations of people, in characters and scenes from the plays, gathered in groups or pairs or occasionally individually, into the landscape. These are landscapes newly and artificially lit, by weather or torches, which bring life and events within the territory of the picturesque. It is frequently a fantasmic England before the fall, a protected imagined space, inured against the dangerous spread of empire that is presented: an isolated bubble of tranquillity persisting into the present.

So national tradition is formed and affirmed in the Shakespeare Gallery. And, I wish to affirm, this occurs as much through landscape painting as what might be thought of as historical painting. The frequent recurrence of landscape painting in the gallery has been noted by Frederick Burwick, who suggests that for all Boydell's proclamations about an English school of historical painting many of the 'offstage' paintings, 'can

¹⁷ I have in mind here an analysis of the affective content of the picturesque: Giles Tillotson, *The Artificial Empire: the Indian Landscapes of William Hodges* (Richmond: Curzon Press, 2000), p.25.

only be defended in terms of landscape, not in terms of history or theater painting'.¹⁸ Burwick highlights the contributions of renowned landscape artists within the gallery: in particular Joseph Farington, Joseph Wright of Derby, and Samuel Middiman, renowned for his work in engraving and architectural design.¹⁹ John Boydell was, arguably, trying to wrest an 'English school of historical painting' from a group of artists whose primary skills lay in landscape painting. Furthermore, in a discussion of the *Tempest* paintings and engravings prepared for this gallery, Marcia Pointon has found picturesque or gothic landscape elements to be prevalent, and notes of Francis Wheatley's work: 'Prospero's furniture is of a rustic variety that would not have looked amiss in Horace Walpole's garden or in Pope's grotto'.²⁰ Pointon explores broader parallels between the gallery works and those of an illustrated edition published by Bellamy and Robarts in 1791, commenting on the pervasive presence of landscape as an organising apparatus in the Boydell nine-volume illustrated edition:

[D]espite the necessity for producing "portrait" i.e. vertical rather than "landscape" formats, the compositions of all these book illustrations succeed more or less in incorporating the kinds of landscape elements specified by Sir Thomas Hanmer.²¹

Locality and localisation, as well as an affectionate sense of place, became crucial to Britain's identity as an imperial nation as it developed at

¹⁸ Frederick Burwick, 'The Gallery, the Artists, the Engravings', in *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery*, ed. by Frederick Burwick and Walter Pape (Bottrop: Peter Pomp, 1996) pp.9-23, p.12.

¹⁹ Burwick, 'The Gallery', p.19.

²⁰ Pointon, 'Representing *The Tempest*', p.106.

²¹ Pointon, 'Representing *The Tempest*', pp.107-8.

the end of the century. The domestic territory of the nation known in landscape detail and explored in the work of Linda Colley, Ann Bermingham, John Barrell or Stephen Copley became the object of close attention at John Boydell's 'English School of Historical Painting' at the Shakespeare Gallery. Localism was a privileged mode of expression for British patriotism at this time. Carefully localised views engaged practices of truth-telling, and increased the significance of local detail and knowledge of the landscape. As the work of David Simpson elucidates this was in spite of enclosure, imparkment and the trade in the city and colonies that rendered that localism more and more remote in practicality.²²

A vocabulary of absolute localism or local attachment held a privileged place within the literature, and particularly the poetry of mid- to late- eighteenth-century England, Simpson argues. Simpson writes about the movement away from and return to spots of local attachment in the literature of the early years of Romanticism, as well as exploring the somewhat complex, fractured contemporary response of that literary movement to the 'multilingual privileged ranks [who] are at home everywhere'.²³ He suggests, helpfully I think for a consideration of landscape in the Boydell works, that we might attend to the ways in which a

²² David Simpson, *The Academic Postmodern and the Rule of Literature: A Report on Half-Knowledge* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1995). Chapter 6 'Romanticism and Localism' includes an analysis that has been instructive in the preparation of this chapter. Also see *The Consumption of Culture 1660-1800. Image, Object, Text*. ed. by Ann Bermingham and John Brewer (London and New York: Routledge, 1995), Linda Colley, *Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Pimlico, 2003), essay by John Barrell and Harriet Guest in *The New Eighteenth Century: Theory, Politics, English Literature* ed. by Felicity Nussbaum and Laura Brown (London: Methuen, 1987) and *The Politics of the Picturesque* ed. by Stephen Copley and Peter Garside (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994).

²³ Simpson, *Academic Postmodern*, p.147.

dynamic notion of locality was defined by, and not just conjunctive to, the roaming or movement between nations and places. ‘The small history of localities,’ he writes, ‘...is a history of grand narratives of migration, conquest and exile’.²⁴

Identity connected to the nation developed in various ways in connection to the empire. To champion localism was, also, a way for the middle-class in England to define itself *against* cosmopolitanism, to ‘gesture’, he writes, ‘against the new wealth, and against a subculture that liked to speak French, to travel, and to imagine itself as belonging to a worldwide citizenry’.²⁵ How did locality as displayed in the Shakespeare paintings contrast with the imperialism and martial conflict of the seascapes of the siege of Gibraltar, exhibited at the entrance of the gallery?

There are several interconnected debates here, all of which might have resonances for the Boydell Gallery. The sense of place and locality Simpson describes relies frequently on the argument that locational specificity, or ‘a hallucinogenic particularity’ as he calls it, may in fact point to displacement as its primary determinant. So, valences of language and linguistic preference might be connected to an identification against France; an exacerbated sense of home and of nation might point at the same time to the prevalent increase of movement outside of and beyond the nation’s borders. Poetry might appeal to those who identify themselves with multilingualism and cosmopolitanism. Similarly, the affectionate playing out of landscape locality to be found in the Boydell works suggests a range

²⁴ Simpson, *Academic Postmodern*, p.146.

²⁵ Simpson, *Academic Postmodern*, p.142.

of effects connected to the movements of empire beyond the nation's borders.

I want to move in the remainder of the chapter to emphasise technically and thematically the significance of imagined place within the Gallery, as well as to consider the practical inclusion of the influence of empire within the genre of landscape painting as found within the Boydell Shakespeare gallery.

A trend toward colonialism within gothic or picturesque aesthetics, which frequently confounds Eastern with domestic forms or assimilates Eastern within English representations, has attracted attention already in literary criticism. Anne Janowitz's *England's Ruins* (1990), presents the germ of a now flourishing field of cultural enquiry that seeks to elucidate how national representation in the late eighteenth century developed in conjunction with imperial expansion, rather than separately from or prior to it.²⁶ W.J.T. Mitchell's *Landscape and Power*, similarly, drew attention to what he terms the 'Western-ness', or European imperialism of landscape painting, and insisted that both its modernity and its pictorial logic be exposed.²⁷ Texts by Nigel Leask and Harriet Guest have moved to more thoroughly investigate the imperial reach of the picturesque, and to elucidate some historical contexts.²⁸ Giles Tillotson in a fine analysis of the art of

²⁶ Anne Janowitz, *England's Ruins: Poetic Purpose and the National Landscape* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1990).

²⁷ *Landscape and Power* ed. by W.J.T Mitchell (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 2nd. edition, pp.7,10.

²⁸ Nigel Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing, 1770-1840: 'From an Antique Land'* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2002). Harriet Guest, *Empire, Barbarism and Civilisation: Captain Cook, William Hodges and the Return to the Pacific* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

William Hodges considers how the picturesque provides a highly versatile visual reminder of imperial expansion and semiotic manoeuvres. The imperial picturesque emerges in his account a transferable apparatus, through which colonialists fused the functions of knowledge-gathering and the arts during these years: ‘a universal vision, the domain of the picturesque was extended wherever English artists ventured’, he suggests, whether in Europe or the South Seas or the Middle East.²⁹

The placement of the landscape genre between scientific and aesthetic or social commitments, as well as its facility to generate mood and to create affective states based in a community of feeling and of national sentiment around the prints and paintings is significant to the argument of this chapter. Janowitz’s book is worth returning to, also, for its exploration of how fantastic picturesque landscapes became the preferred visual idiom for the illustration of imperial decline in literature in Britain in the late eighteenth century. Her opening pages consider ruinous prospects in modern English literature that seem to emblemize the end of the British empire. She trawls a scattered landscape of ruin literature, from sites at Ludlow castle to Blake’s *Jerusalem* to work by V.S Naipaul, Hanif Kureishi or Derek Jarman. It is notable that Janowitz refers to these works for their depiction of ‘melancholy’ ‘frightening’ ‘proud’, or ‘benign’ ruined locations.³⁰

Ruination appears in Janowitz as an index of ‘imperial anxiety’, and at the same time an authorising figure for English power around the globe.

²⁹ Tillotson, p.71.

³⁰ Janowitz, p.1.

‘The moment in British cultural history when the ruin was as important a cultural image as it is today... was just as England, in its represented form as “Britain” was emerging as a dominant nation state, and launching a global empire,’ she writes.³¹

Where Janowitz asserts the necessity of an analysis based in affective determinations when attending to the literary forms of late century English imperialism, Nigel Leask’s more recent work *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing* offers a similar analysis of the negotiation by leisured colonial travellers of uncertain and frequently changing terrains of affective encounter. Leask perceptively comments on the ‘curious vision’ of the picturesque in imperial travel writing. The picturesque of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries he writes might be defined for the ways it produces a response that borders away from the sublime and toward horror, or toward taste, distaste and, perhaps more conventionally, the grotesque. Often the detailed and accretive aesthetic of the picturesque objectifies and ameliorates a potentially disgusting awareness of temporalisation: ‘the picturesque landscape is also a *past* landscape which manifests the ruinous agency of time’, he suggests.³² Leask’s considerations of ameliorating, possessive and tranquilizing trends within picturesque aesthetics, as a form of control or response to empire, or perhaps slightly differently as a form of affective downturn relating to the horrible and sublime in colonial encounters, offer useful contexts for the Shakespeare materials I will be considering in this chapter.

³¹ Janowitz, p.2.

³² Leask, p.173.

To review some criticism that takes a slightly different emphasis, and addresses the heroism of real recent martial endeavour. Jonathan Bate in a slightly older work notes that Gillray's satire on the Shakespeare Gallery, *Shakespeare Sacrificed*, presents it as a 'parody' of true history painting.³³ It is worth considering the demand for the inclusion of historical painting in the gallery, before I too fully or wholeheartedly address landscape painting. Marcia Pointon in her study of portraiture, *Hanging the Head*, reminds us that John Boydell had contemporary plans for the Egyptian Hall at the Mansion House, alongside his venture in the exhibition space at Pall Mall. Boydell was to propose on October 31st 1793, in an address to the Common Council of London, that the Hall be altered to become:

A proper place to put pictures or statues, such subjects to be chose, that would represent the great and glorious actions, of departed heroes or of our present commanders by sea and land, that have exerted themselves to the honour and advantage of our king and country.

Pointon comments of this nationalist schema that Boydell, in his plans, 'allied history painting and portraiture in a grand decorative ensemble specifically intended to impress foreigners'.³⁴ This parallel project sheds some light on the status of historical painting within the Gallery and points to how it may have drawn close to landscape painting, as well, in places, as

³³ Jonathan Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism 1730-1830* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), p.51.

³⁴ Marcia Pointon, *Hanging the Head: Portraiture and Social Formation in Eighteenth-Century England* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993), p.26.

to portraiture, in its inclusion of heroes and representations of imperial battles on sea or land.

I want to move, in the second section of the chapter, to address some questions attached to the quality and format of the picturesque as it appeared, in this instance, at John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery. To what extent does it make sense to think of the Boydell gallery as conservative and nostalgic? How do the emotions connected to place come to function in the gallery? There is a need to shed further light on the connections between the illustration of Shakespeare and landscape art, as a product of the late-century empire to be found within the Boydell gallery. How do the picturesque and sublime articulate and contrast with one another as national art develops a proximity to empire? I seek to emphasise a thriving and vigorous picturesque and neo-gothic aesthetic visibly transmitted into the present in new ways in the Boydell paintings and the prints derived from them.

Through a consideration of a single work, Hodges' *Jaques and Amiens*, I will consider the mediaevalism of the gallery in more detail. Both ruination and locality contribute to a restorative nostalgia in this work, and I address how are they developed for this particular instance and in connection to the interpretation of a scene from Shakespeare.

The inclusion of several heroic and martial paintings of the siege of Gibraltar in the Gallery's opening months will form a starting point for a consideration of empire and landscape. I will then move to the reading of the Jaques work in the third section of the chapter.

SECTION TWO

At work in the Boydell Gallery is a form of accretive locality which I suggest in the second section of this chapter was a crucial defining feature of this venture. The works included within the gallery are for the large part highly detailed illustrations whose primary aesthetic determinants are proximity and distance. While engaging landscape terms, perspective is less absorbing in many of these prints than the overwhelming and even looming presence of the primary characters or of buildings in the foreground. In the Boydell prints we find a powerful, often surprising intimacy with the national landscape. The folio celebrates aristocratic life in miniature, at close range, on a vast and detailed canvas. In these distant lands of fable, superstition, feudal revelry and exiled aristocracy, the remote Shakespearean past is brought near and viewed from close quarters, in vast detail. In print after print, Shakespeare's works become a window onto a lost, prosperous aristocratic world of silks and velvet, clandestine forest meetings, chivalric endeavours and night scenes lit by moonlight. The conceit of exiled nobility or aristocracy – the king as wild commoner, or a variation on the theme – recurs. Empire is frequently absent. These are, after

all, works about the material of Shakespeare's plays, largely mediaeval in content and European and mercantile where they do address overseas locales. However, I wish to explore the argument that it does make sense to speak of the development of an imperial aesthetic in connection to the Boydell gallery, and particularly in connection to its late eighteenth-century contexts. Landscape art is a particular focus of this argument.

For some critics, Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery marks a confused and conflicted moment in imperial history concerning the arts. Rosemarie Dias has generated a narrative about the heterogenous, accretive and fluid accumulation of styles within the Gallery and discussed the status of this diversity as a foundation for a national aesthetic.³⁵ Jonathan Bate has queried to what extent the paintings that the gallery produced can be thought of as historical painting at all.³⁶ I emphasise the place of landscape painting within the Gallery in response to the lack of critical consensus surrounding historical painting within Boydell's exhibition space.

Shakespeare seemed to be an opportunity during these years for England's artists to travel ever inward, covering the nation's own imagined territories with a new level of detail and depth. The illustrations in the print folio readily convey an image of the works as a terrible and terrifying wilderness contained and artistically policed. The Shakespeare gallery prints oscillate between the affirmation of national tradition in the post-Garrick years, and a reconfigured emphasis on topic or topography. There is a profound increase in the display and detail of local landscapes and

³⁵ Rosemarie Dias, 'John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery and the promotion of a national aesthetic', 2 vols. (unpublished doctoral thesis, University of York, 2003).

³⁶ Bate, *Constitutions*, pp.51-7.

environments built and arboreal. The at times sublime level of detail registered by the engravings reinforces the notion that Shakespeare contains a sense of ungovernable beauty restrained and ordered, and that this ordering has begun to be clearly translated into the visual arts.

I want in this chapter to elucidate more clearly the connections that almost certainly existed between an aesthetic of detail or a notion of intelligibility of place and time within landscape art, and the colonial project of assembling knowledge about interior landscapes. The Boydell works frequently display the development of an eighteenth-century picturesque idiom rendered acute and particularised as a result of empire. Angelica Kauffman's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* V.III, engraved by L. Schiavonetti, places a private tussle regarding loyalty and property on a path in the forest of Mantua, the four figures on a path enclosed by oak trees, softened rocks and a gently widening, hazy onward vista. *Timon of Athens* generates Opie's graceful work *A Wood*, with a spiteful Timon pouring gold into the apron-skirts of Phrynia and Timandra. The hundred smaller illustrations engraved for the printed edition of the works includes a further set of forest scenes, notably one from *Titus Andronicus*, another *Two Gentlemen of Verona* illustration by Stothard, a *Twelfth Night* scene in Olivia's garden before the abbey, a rustic council from *Love's Labour's Lost* IV.II, a wild Puck by Fuseli, a silvery Ophelia with hair and vestments entangled in the trees, and three *As You Like It* illustrations – Orlando and Adam from II.VI, Oliver with the bloodstained napkin in IV.III, and a romance of shepherd weddings and betrothals from V.IV.



PLATE 3

Conflict is rarely the subject of these folio works and story, fantasy and a fabulous aristocratic past their more frequent subjects. Some scenes are mediaeval or Elizabethan, but it is a thriving, bustling and flourishing land they depict, and at times they fill rural settings with life and activity. Others evoke vaguely picturesque registers, in landscape format, degrees of distance, scale, foreground and background, or the heavily foliated settings for a framed event, the inclusion of distanced buildings along lines of sight. It remains noticeable that a vision of empire as a scene of degraded ruination, corrupt rule and passed greatness is absent from the Boydell Shakespeare prints; so that while the volume bears, as I suggest later in this chapter, some superficial resemblance to travel prints and illustrations, its tone is distinct from these. More frequent is the conceit of the pleasing contemplation of ruins within the landscape. We find Cassandra raving and the rugged seashores painted by Joseph Wright of Derby but grand imperial ruins or scenes of former, fallen greatness are infrequent.

I want next to raise a question about why the scenes of conflict illustrated in the series of Gibraltar paintings at the entrance of the Gallery came to be substituted for the not-yet-ready Shakespeares when it opened in May 1789.

What did that series of paintings illustrate? Governor George Augustus Eliott had led the defence of Gibraltar from July 1779 until March 1783. The most celebrated event of the siege was the battle of September 13 1782, during which 30,000 French and Spanish troops were attacked from sea and land using red-hot cannon shot. The portrait by Reynolds, which was the most prominent of these works, like a contemporary poem by Anna Seward, presents General Eliott as a merciful, righteous Christian hero, protecting Gibraltar, a crucial junction between the Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea during the American Wars of Independence. Such a work inevitably contributed to the national aims of Boydell's Shakespeare gallery. The other works were smaller paintings of this event.³⁷ The siege remained prominent in the public imagination, through the late 1780s and into the 1790s, when diplomatic relations and an exchange of intelligence surrounding affairs elsewhere in the Nootka Sound area off the north-west coast of British Columbia gave rise to retrospective comparison with events at Gibraltar during the previous decade. It would not have been an unfamiliar reference for audiences of the Shakespeare gallery. By the early 1800s *The Siege of Gibraltar* would become a popular entertainment at Sadler's Wells, displayed in a tank of real water with scale models of ships.

³⁷ Burwick ed., *Boydell Shakespeare Gallery* includes a comprehensive list of the paintings. For a full discussion of the Gibraltar paintings, now housed at the Guildhall in London, I direct the reader to forthcoming work by Sarah Monks.

Here sea battles were re-enacted with gunpowder and shot before full houses and to audiences, as Gillian Russell's work has explored, that included out of work navvies and soldiers returned from the colonies.³⁸

General Eliott the naval hero became famed as a technological innovator who pioneered the use of heated shot during the campaign. The *Yorkshire Magazine* documents subsequent deployments of the technology, referring in October 1786 to an 'improved model' of those 'dreadful implements... invented by General Eliott at Gibraltar'.³⁹ So those highly coloured scenes of sublime devastation, 'livid' skies and horror, which fill the middle section of Anna Seward's 1787 poem with 'red bolts' and 'unequal War's disastrous terrors... torn trophies, drenched in blood', place this technical innovation and its impact in 1782 in a literary context.

The poem, even more so than the paintings to be found within the gallery, opposes the light of British mercy, imagined as a silvery, natural light, against the tower of Gibraltar, Calpe, the fortress. The invincible warrior tower is watched over by General Eliott, who appears a Thor-like Northern hero or Norse sea-king. The most celebrated battle of the siege received extensive treatment in contemporary satires. 'Governor Eliott giving the Spaniards a Dose of Hot Balls for their Better Digestion' (October 15 1782) depicts red hot cannon balls descending from Gibraltar, where a British flag is flying, 'The Bumbardment of Gibraltar, or F-t-g

³⁸ Gillian Russell, *The Theatres of War: Performance, Politics and Society 1793-1815* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995). Also Joseph Donohue *Theatre in the Age of Kean* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), p.2.

³⁹ *The Yorkshire Magazine: or, Universal Repository of Arts, Sciences and Various Other Branches of Polite Literature*, 2 vols. (York: T.Wilson, R.Spence, and Crask and Lund, 1786), I, p.349.

against Thunder' (September 1783), 'Oh Lord- Howe they run, or Jack English clearing the Gangway before Gibraltar' (November 2 1782) (BM 6034-6) similarly record the event almost with the speed of news reporting. 'The Cock of the Rock' (May 24 1786) (BM 7018) and 'The Cock of the Rock on his Charger' (January 4 1789) (BM 7622) took up the topic again a few years later with reference to the events of the Nootka Sound and in the United Provinces.



PLATE 4

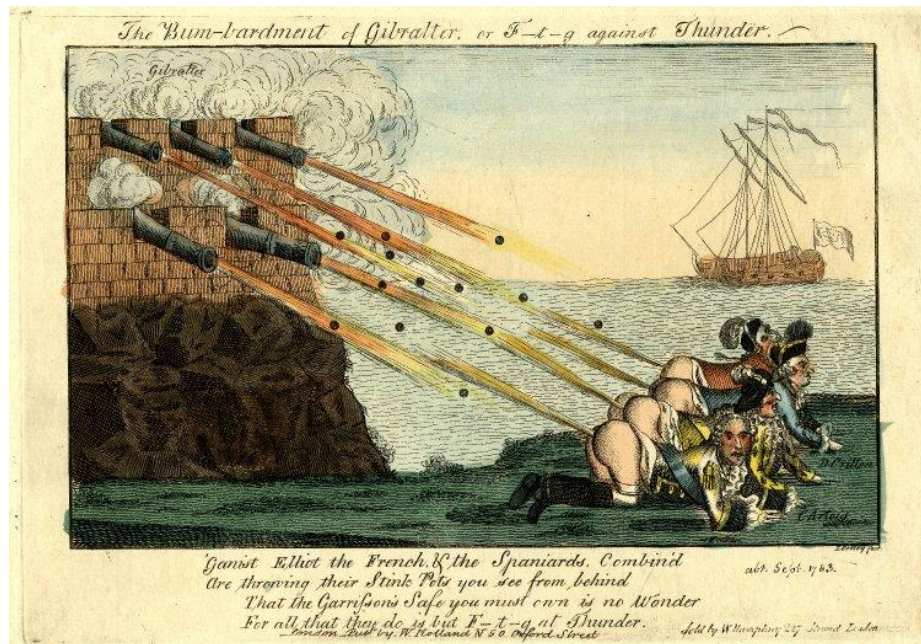


PLATE 5

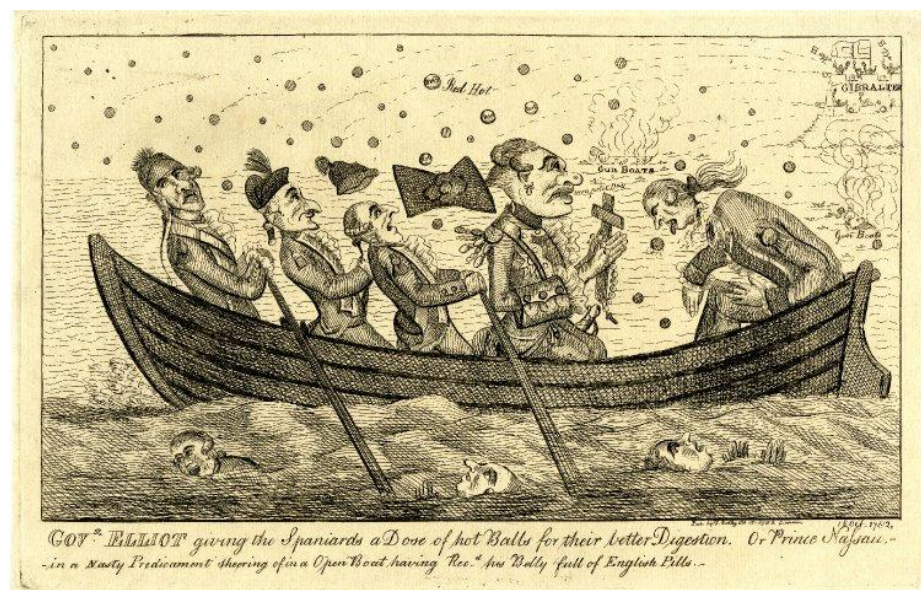


PLATE 6

The complicated affair of the Nootka Sound related to alleged illicit trade with Spanish settlements in the waters around British Columbia. Much like the defence of Gibraltar, these events had implications for British claims to global empire, both at sea and on land. Dorothy George summarises the political and trading question as it stood at the end of 1790:

By the convention with Spain which settled the Nootka Sound crisis on terms favourable to England thus laying the foundations of British Columbia it was agreed that to prevent illicit trade ... the British should not fish within ten leagues from the coasts already occupied by Spain.⁴⁰

Aside from its connection to the Shakespeare Gallery, the affair of the Nootka Sound attracted protracted Shakespearean comparison. Relations with Spain filled graphic satire of the early 1790s, and satirists on occasion turned to Shakespeare's words to delineate Britain's encounters with her European neighbours. The 'Spanish Messenger' (June 20 1790) (BM 7653), on secret diplomacy and communication between England and Spain includes a quotation from *Macbeth*: 'you secret black and midnight things, what is't you do?' This print emerged at a time of high crisis and juxtaposes a line from Shakespeare against a scene illustrating the threat of war with Spain over questions that included within their reach the Nootka Sound. One work on this uneasy diplomatic situation shows 'The English ambassador and his Suite before the King at Madrid' (May 12 1790) (BM 7646) and might be fruitfully compared with Gillray's 'The Reception of the Diplomatique & his Suite at the Court of Pekin' (September 14 1792) (BM 8121), another satire on ambassadorial relations, in which a copy of Boydell's Shakespeare happens to appear on the floor in the foreground.

A further print titled 'Political Sparring' (BM 7671) represents the official stance, that England had appealed to her ally the United Provinces and with Prussia, defended against Spain considered the aggressor.

⁴⁰ In discussion of BM7687. George, *Catalogue*, VI, pp.705-6.

Elsewhere, on a subject connected to the affair of the Nootka Sound, the favourite technique of the *Hamlet* parody was used to satirise British-French relations in the United Provinces. In this work, Dent's 'A permanent Peace on a firm Basis!' (October 12 1787) (BM 7175) amended lines from Shakespeare appear in the characterisation of Pitt, comically devaluing his success in the advance of diplomatic relations with the United Provinces: 'alas, poor Billy, I knew him.. a fellow of infinite Vanity... quite chop-fallen' etc.

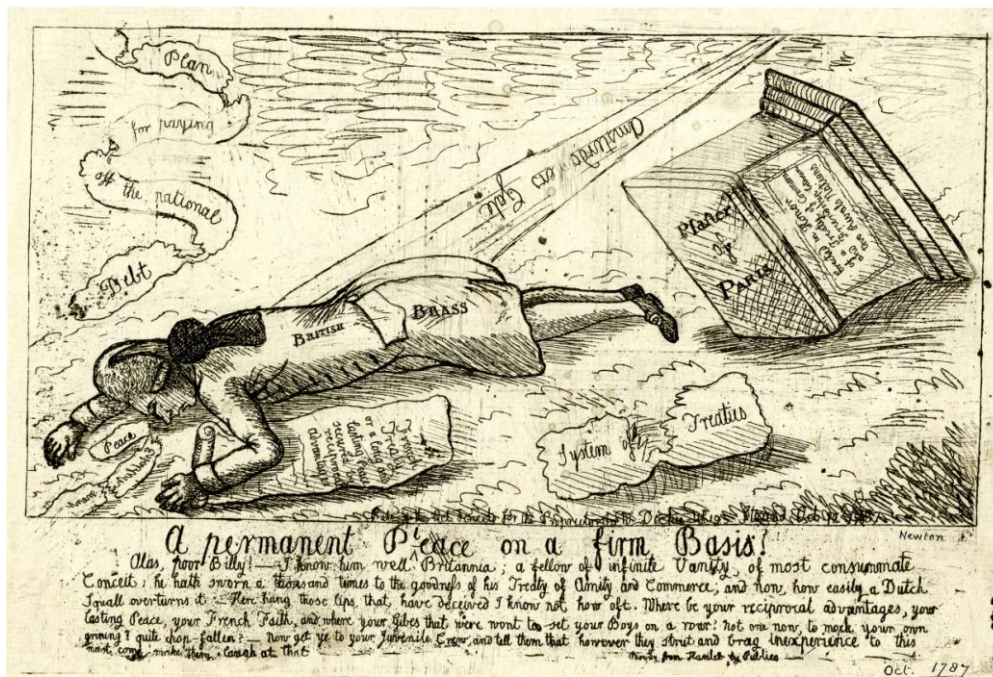


PLATE 7

The use of climatic metaphors and citations from Shakespeare around these representations of the siege of Gibraltar act to enforce national pride. Comedy is produced by displays of fear, secrecy and running, or the hot cannonballs of the sea battle. So the landscape becomes associated with affects which are tangential to the actual triumphant victory, but which in some way produce a victorious excitement. These satires, like other

contemporary works on Seringapatam or the Boydell gallery, bring together landscape, emotion and Shakespeare in the context of empire. The illustration of John Boydell in ‘The Big City delivering the Premature Address’ (November 28 1790) (BM 7681) notably shows him in clothing adorned with three landscapes of imperial consequence in appeal to the King. The first of these pictures, the ‘Death of Chatham’, shows Britannia weeping, with spear broken, while the sun sets behind a hill. The second illustrates the ‘Life of P—t’, with a bare stunted tree and a waning moon. The third is the ‘Shark of Nootka’ and includes Britannia, prostrate by the water’s edge.

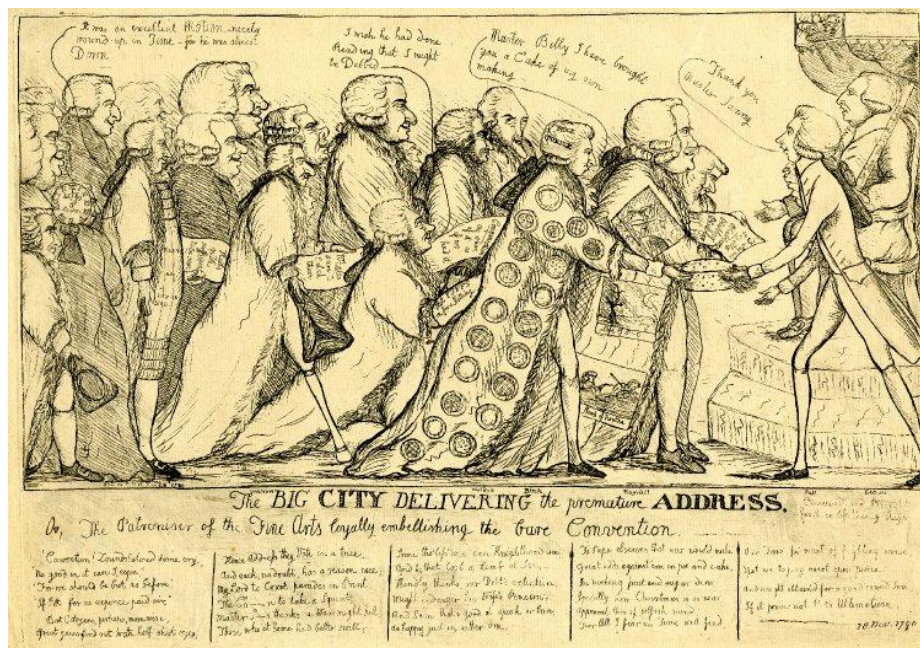


PLATE 8

Relations with France and Spain may have been one reason for the convergence of Gibraltar and Shakespeare in the entrance spaces of the Boydell Gallery, particularly considering extended contexts concerning Nootka and the United Provinces subsequent to the siege of Gibraltar and contemporary with the opening of the gallery. Gibraltar, like the Southern

point of Africa, Ceylon, or Singapore, to be founded immediately after the Napoleonic wars, was a critical location for imperial communication networks at the turn of the nineteenth century. Such places were highly contested nodes in the spread of empire and the struggle to control trade and the interchange of goods and media.⁴¹ The Gibraltar paintings also made specificity or intelligibility of location a major concern for viewers entering the gallery space.

Locality remained a contested field in the Boydell Gallery. It was associated with the parochial, traditional, and customary and at the same time with a newly domestic zone of cultural valuation and taste. These several satires on the Gibraltar conflict form part of a field of material reaching out to the empire. The interpretation of Shakespeare at a junction between imperial and national space also occurs in Anna Seward's ode to martial heroism at Gibraltar in the early 1780s, a classical poem in sixteen stanzas of alternately rhyming couplets.⁴² I discuss this poem briefly next as another contemporary example of locality and picturesque aesthetics.

Anna Seward's homecoming *Ode on General Elliott's Return from Gibraltar* revises the imperial potential of the picturesque in several important ways.⁴³ A recharacterisation of the imperial nation through a set of landscape terms, and more specifically via what I consider to be an

⁴¹ On imperial communication see Fernand Braudel, *The Mediterranean* trans. by Sian Reynolds (London: Collins, 1972-3). Also discussion of Braudel in Saree Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism: Universal Empire and the Culture of Modernity* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.109.

⁴² Guest, p.253 includes a discussion of localism in connection to Seward's fame.

⁴³ Anna Seward, *Ode on General Elliott's Return from Gibraltar* (London: T.Cadell, 1787).

affective downturn from a sublime to a picturesque visual vocabulary is the major achievement of the poem.

Local detail, the points to which Eliott's ships travel, silvery shores, the merciful rescue at Gibraltar, other unnamed points of trade provide a basis for empire imagined as an heterogenous proliferation of space, a highly defined yet indefinite territory, whose borders might expand in any direction, and which is difficult to grasp in its totality. Eliott's ships are readmitted to port after port in the poem, until his celebrated arrival in Britain's 'resounding ports'.⁴⁴ This landscape for empire depends on the architecture of an imperial 'dome', through which British commerce 'floats' to distant ports, and 'widely sail[s]'. The poem connects the spaces of home to an ever-expanding imperial terrain, indefinite in its borders, endlessly definite and sublimely localised in interior. The domestic territory is always a point of return, rather than structurally definitive of the empire; it is also the location of the arts:

'The graceful Arts Britannia's Dome adorn,
And floats her Commerce to the distant Ports.'⁴⁵

It is, I want to suggest, within a range of characteristically imperial resonances for terrible, livid fire-strewn seas and skies, merciful, godly scenes of Christian heroism, or the awaited mellow, golden calm of home shores, such as are found in this poem, that the presence of the Gibraltar works within the Boydell Gallery is best understood.

⁴⁴ Seward, p.10.

⁴⁵ Seward, p.9.

Empire is configured in the poem as a dome-like structure which cannot be easily grasped as a whole, and which is of an over-arching and sublime scale when viewed from any single point. Locality provides the foundation for an imperial space imagined as indefinite in borders, expanding through a series of ruthlessly specific locales. Aesthetic language that moved toward the sublime, often in relatively innovative ways drawing on architectural metaphor or developing similes around vegetation, was used to describe Shakespeare's works in preference to the classical tradition by the final decade of the century. Lewis Theobald had written earlier in the century, for example, of the works as 'a large, a spacious and a splendid dome' with a 'prospect [...] too wide to come within the compass of a single view'; as a 'gay confusion' of various and pleasing objects, drawing 'general admiration'.⁴⁶ Locality, or specificity of place, was of intrinsic importance to the aesthetic ordering of gothic art, a form often identifiable by its rugged, naturalistic, highly detailed, endless proliferation of topicality and one which was increasingly predominant in the characterisation of Shakespeare as a writer. This is a similar formal area to Edmund Burke's discussion of infinity in the *Enquiry*, with its prioritising of affect and discussion of the infinite as a source productive of that 'delightful horror... the most genuine effect and truest test of the sublime'.⁴⁷

Seward's poem seeks to revise and reframe martial conflict in the empire retrospectively, and draws it harmoniously within a celebratory national landscape picturesque. Britain comes into view, beyond the 'livid'

⁴⁶ *BES*, I, p.27.

⁴⁷ *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful* (London: J.Dodsley, 1787) Part II Section VIII, p.129.

and highly coloured scene described at Calpe, in echo of the climatic metaphor in Shakespeare not elaborated by Seward, and depicted after the rain has cleared, 'with added lustre' and shining 'splendor', 'To emerge from ev'ry Cloud that veil'd thy light!' The repetition of 'lustre', 'calm' and 'softened night', of adjectives such as 'gleaming', 'fair' and 'warm', and an atmosphere of 'smiling May', are crucial to the recharacterisation of Britain in this poem, and of British commerce and arts, flying anew after a period of imperial conflict.⁴⁸

To understand how the warmth of the 'Evening hours', with which the 'wintry Tempest's baleful Powers' are dispelled, requires the reader draw not only on an aesthetic vocabulary rooted in the domestic landscape, it demands that the revivification of national ambition be connected to an act of historical recompense with forward-looking commercial and aesthetic aims. So, placid, serene Britain is preserved: reconciled to the resplendent, warfaring realities of imperial combat through a set of descriptive landscape terms, and in hues and shifts of lighting more familiar perhaps from a domestic painterly register than a poetic one. These are all conventions that characterise the development of a picturesque or landscape art which bears similarities to the gothic rather than to classical form and requires individual explication as concerns its use in connection to the works of Shakespeare.

The poem includes a clear depiction of affective downturn: a transfer occurs within it from a sublime or high martial set of scenes to a series of restorative, reconstructive landscape terms. Seward recovers in a footnote a citation from Shakespeare, amidst a description of 'fiery Torrent[s]',

⁴⁸ Seward, pp.6-9.

purpled seas and an enemy engulfed in ‘Flood’ and ‘Fire’. The citation ameliorates a destructive, violent section, and introduces a quality of merciful, Enlightened martial glory, associated with the British heroes, and within which British imperial confidence is righteous, Christian, illustrious, and rightfully spreading, ‘[w]ide o’er the world’. She footnotes lines from the *Merchant of Venice*:

Shakespeare beautifully says of Mercy:

“— it is twice bless’d,

“It blesses him that gives, and him that takes.”⁴⁹

More attention to the aesthetic priorities of the martial Gibraltar works located at the entrance of the Shakespeare Gallery is certainly overdue. I have sought to emphasise what their connection to Shakespeare may have been and gestured toward the import of a prevalent domestic picturesque within the gallery, one which nonetheless like many artistic works from England in these years looked outward toward the empire. National identifications with Shakespeare were, by the later eighteenth century, more readily and openly appearing in connection with empire, and were being used in particularly noteworthy ways by caricature artists to interpret and assimilate the more difficult and inassimilable realities of Britain’s overseas relations. Boydell’s artistic and commercial endeavour projected Shakespeare into a highly imagined, domestically edifying and densely repopulated native picturesque which was also alert to imperial contexts and relations in distant overseas settings and locations.

⁴⁹ This text relates to ‘valiant CURTIS, bending o’er the Prow’.

SECTION THREE

I want now to take these brief critical observations, remarking the relevance of an English landscape aesthetic to John Boydell's Gallery, one stage further and present an analysis in detail of a single work. This section of the chapter will consider William Hodges' *Jaques and Amiens in the Forest of Arden*, from *As You Like It*, II.I. This was a collaborative work with George Romney and Sawney Gilpin, and the engraving was by Samuel Middiman. This is a work which primarily deals in mood, atmosphere and setting: it combines local detail with emotion and exemplifies, more fully, the development of that affection for locality that was a primary contribution of the Boydell Shakespeare to English landscape aesthetics in this period. An analysis of this work will enable me to explain the aesthetic of detail and close discrimination of the surroundings of the natural world that characterises many of the engravings from the Boydell Gallery. I will also seek to explain how the landscapes of elaborate vegetation and architectural

relic prevalent within the Gallery might suggest the influence of an orientalist or orientalising apprehension of feeling, that was itself present in a covert way in the artist Joshua Reynolds' Thirteenth Discourse of 1786.⁵⁰

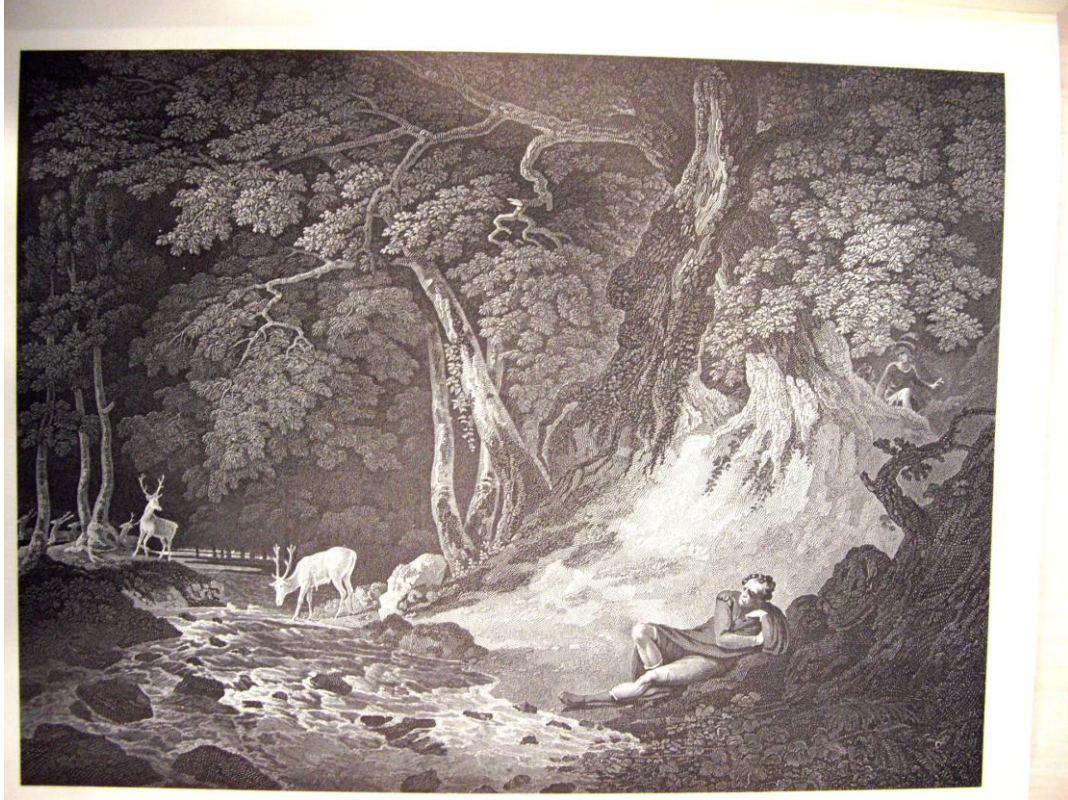


PLATE 9

For the painting from which was engraved as Plate XXV in the Folio, *Jaques and Amiens*, William Hodges was responsible for the landscape scene, George Romney painted the figure of Jaques and Sawney Gilpin the weeping deer.⁵¹ The work is a sophisticated, mythologised picturesque, in which social roughness and the conventional representation of figures of beggars and gypsies within the genre are translated to a storied, fairy-tale setting of exiled nobility and native symbolism. As a view of the Forest of Arden, it offers a thickly foliated mass of closely textured oak and

⁵⁰ This Discourse was published shortly afterwards at the start of 1787.

⁵¹ Burwick, 'The Gallery', p.12.

pine. The horizon is almost obscured by overhanging trees, ivy creeps up the trunks and across the bank where Jaques reclines, and a fast-flowing stream rushes over rocks down the centre of the image. Hodges' depiction of Jaques resembles the character of Antony calling for sad music in Dryden's *All For Love*, Act I Scene I:

I'm now turned wild, a commoner of nature, of all forsaken and forsaking all, live in a shady forest's sylvan scene, stretched out at length beneath some blasted oak, I lean my head upon the mossy bark... while the herd come jumping by to quench their thirst.⁵²

Illustrated is what Frederick Burwick terms an 'offstage event'. It refers to text from the First Lord's account of how he, with Amiens, had followed Jaques, and observed him unawares:

To-day my lord of Amiens and myself
Did steal behind him as he lay along
Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out
Upon the brook that brawls along this wood:
To the which place a poor sequester'd stag
That from the hunter's aim had ta'en a hurt,
Did come to languish; and, indeed my lord,
The wretched animal heaved forth such groans,
That their discharge did stretch his leathern coat
Almost to bursting, and the big round tears
Cours'd one another down his innocent nose
In piteous chase; and thus the hairy fool,

⁵² John Dryden, *All for Love; or the World Well Lost* (London: John Bell, 1792), p.16.

Much marked of the melancholy Jaques,
Stood on the extremest verge of the swift brook,
Augmenting it with tears.

Duke Senior questions Jaques' response – 'But what said Jaques? Did he not moralise the spectacle?' – speaking of his 'thousand similes' of wept accounts, tears in abundance, his misery and solitude, his complaints against vile greed and callous citizenry, waste, ignoble rule and usurpation. Melancholy is emphasised both by the location of the figure of Jaques, off centre in the foreground of the image, and the accompanying textual passage. Jaques' hyperbolic disgust for the wrongs afflicting the noble creature is witnessed by Amiens, a concealed spectator in the rear right of the image, and this too is illustrated in the work.

Landscape, as Frederick Burwick discusses, tends to distance and subdue the action in this work. The painting makes the most of the intricate connection of landscape and language in Shakespeare's text and conveys the scene for the viewer into the familiarity of an eighteenth-century picturesque. Burwick draws attention to the complex variety of visual sentimentalism employed in this work and notes that, 'the reclining Jaques is watching the stag, but is himself being watched by the two figures concealed behind the tree on the bank above him'.⁵³ There is certainly a sense of distance and distanced spectatorship at work in this image, a gesturing toward the notion that Shakespeare has opened a window or a view onto inaccessible reaches: the inhospitable and hospitable and historically distant lands illustrated in the work.

⁵³ Burwick, 'The Gallery', p.13.

A mode of dual spectatorship such as this was, Frederick Burwick argues, definitive of a sub-genre developing within landscape painting at this time. Partly derived from the existing convention of illustrating a picturesque landscape as viewed from a place of concealment or enclosure, the visual conceit continued to be deployed into the early nineteenth century, one prime example being, as Burwick has it, Constable's deeply melancholic painting of the memorial to Joshua Reynolds at Coleorton, *The Cenotaph*.⁵⁴ Scenes where 'the viewer's gaze is directed by the gaze of figures within the scene', he suggests, tended to be used with a degree of experimentation in the late century to create dynamic, affective circuits, transmitting melancholy from onlooker to onlooker. It might be noted, where Burwick does not, that the wounded stag watched by Jaques is also watched by another deer, on the other bank of the river, who has not yet run on with the herd. So the sight lines are extended in yet another direction, toward a group connoting or embodying collective synthesis.

It worth noting here that Nigel Leask analyses how 'the sylvan exile of the melancholy Jaques in Shakespeare's *As You Like It*' would later become part of a nineteenth-century 'literary picturesque', closely connected to fairytale and children's literature. He looks at its subsequent appearance in Emma Roberts' 1835 text, *Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan* and remarks that by the 1830s, hunting, and discussions of this passage in particular, carried allusions to 'the male-Anglo-Indian obsession

⁵⁴ Burwick, 'The Gallery', pp.9-26.

with hunting as a means of eking out the boredom of colonial leisure.⁵⁵ Hence the scene of Jaques in the wood came to mean prevailing in ‘the heat of the day’, and linked fancy to an earned, imaginative, leisured escape from the difficulties of colonial life. The Forest of Arden was readily associated, he says, by Roberts, with the image of undomesticated India held at a distance.⁵⁶

While there is nothing immediately comparable in Hodges’ Arden or in his depiction of Jaques, which draws much more identifiably on eighteenth-century tropes for melancholy and a tradition of sentimentalism as a quantifier of literary taste, recombined with a fantasy of the Restoration as a pre-lapsarian age of nobility and monarchy, the primary reference to distant India is of relevance to my discussion, and I will go on to explore its contemporary resonances later in the chapter.

The Boydell prints were republished throughout the nineteenth century, so this subsequent material discussed by Leask may have inflected the reception of Hodges’ work.⁵⁷ Although not a concern for this research, the material Leask considers can be validly compared with the Boydell prints in other ways. For example, the print from Maria Graham’s *Journal of a Residence in India* (1812) of a Banyan tree scene which includes a high

⁵⁵ Leask, *Curiosity and the Aesthetics of Travel Writing*, p.174. This is part of a fuller discussion of ‘achieving picturesque distance from India and Indians’ in texts on Lucknow, and it addresses travel narratives by women in the early nineteenth century.

⁵⁶ Leask, *Curiosity*, pp.224-5.

⁵⁷ See editions of the plays and edited selections by: W. Dodd (London: Bickers & Son, 1878) including twelve photographs from the Boydell Gallery; C. and M. Cowden Clarke (London: Bickers & Son, 1875); A. J. Valpy (London: A.J. Valpy, 1832-1834); Charles and Mary Ann Lamb, (London: Bickers and Son, 1877); L. Booth et al. (London: Cambridge University Library, 1864) a tercentenary reproduction of the print folio comprising photographs of the original engravings.

level of stipple detail; he also describes a female-imagined zenana, a moonlit elsewhere to ‘the colonial quotidien’ and a place from which the bustling city can be comfortably held at a distance, of ‘gothic towers’ that ‘open onto luxuriant parterres’.⁵⁸ Such areas of imaginary refuge might be thought of as comparable with a fictive emphasis within the gothic register employed by several of the Shakespeare Gallery engravings, as I will elaborate in my discussion of Reynolds.

Rapid affective transfer, and its containment within the generic frame of picturesque landscape art, is an absorbing and ambivalent effect of the Hodges work. The mode of native discovery, and the effect of affective flows attending multiple observation of more or less private spaces are common to other works in the gallery, and come into intriguing combination with the landscape genre in this work in particular. Moreover, such factors are crucial to the extent to which it makes sense to speak of this work as picturesque, within the generic conventions of the age, as opposed to pastoral, or a representation of rural idleness, or as a set of idiosyncratic hybrids of georgic and aristocratic representations of the land with elite literary tastes and manners.

In this work a similar functioning of immanence and relational affect as that described by Burwick has come to predominate. Jaques’ melancholy is contiguous with the sympathetic deer, and only the brook separates the two, while metonymically replicating and merging with – ‘augmenting’ – the flow of tears. It might be correct to say that tears are more fully the subject of the work than any of the individual players, although the

⁵⁸ Leask, *Curiosity*, p.209.

concealed couple who spy on or discover the scene from above provide a form of – perhaps the illusion of – distance. Careful imagination of detail and an affectionate registering of realistic space are critical to the development of this mood laden loco-descriptive picturesque. Viewers were accustomed to the circulation of images of gloomy churchyard scenes with crumbling buildings overgrown with vegetation during these years. Works such as this one by Hodges sought to define literary taste more fully in a connection of the plays with a fondly imagined location drenched with affect: the antique roots of the tree, the carefully delineated leaves of oak and pine trees in the Forest of Arden, the creeping ivy fronds and swift brook that provided a backdrop for the scene from Shakespeare’s play. Such picturesque illustrations, in their simpler form, had already come to suggest a familiar literary landscape, as discussed, for instance, by Simpson, and already promoted a spirit of literary nationalism, a celebration of English place. Illustrations such as Hodges’ *Jaques and Amiens* took this genre into a new arena of emotional intensity, plumbing narratives and characterisations found in the works of Shakespeare and presenting them within landscape works of a quality and a specificity beyond that found in existing examples of the literary picturesque.

What is immediately noticeable about this print, and of most relevance to my argument in this chapter, is the intensity of the detail with which it registers, particularly in engraved form, the leaves, trees, banks of the river and other landscape features. This level of detail is crucial to the successful articulation of affect or emotion, in this work an emphasis on Jaques’ melancholy, in the artistic representation of the scene from the play.

Detail enables the viewer to grasp the brawling brook, the antique oak, the hunter's aim and the wounded stag, and grafts the words of the playtext onto a more fully imagined and visualised terrain. The majority of the Boydell works were engraved in stipple, a labour intensive, expensive process that took some time and was more conventionally, as Marcus Wood explains in a recent account, employed in the engraving of portraits.⁵⁹ Here, in the Folio of engravings, it has been applied to the English landscape, and renders huge areas of leaves, trees, forests, lawns, seascapes and craggy rocks in careful outline.

The use of stipple enabled the Boydell Royal print folio to match the quality of the text edition and present Shakespeare in a book form worthy of the nation of 'Great Britain'. Stipple was well-suited to the emphasis on affect in works containing high shade and rich sunlight; equally it allowed the effective representation of moonlight and deep shadow. Joseph Wright of Derby's nocturnal scenes such as the illustration of *Falstaff on the Road to Gadshill* and his stormy shoreline with *Antigonus Pursued by a Bear* exemplify such works. It seems that the pleasurable immersion in an excitation of affect presented by prints in the Boydell gallery was a significant part of its successful contribution to the arts of a leisured nation. Above all stipple-work deployed in landscape illustration enabled the revelation of particularised, localised space at a new level.

⁵⁹ Marcus Wood, *Blind Memory: Visual Representations of Slavery in England and America 1780-1865* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p.131. Wood writes that stipple was first used by Bartolozzi in his full length engravings of the Holbein's portraits of the court of Henry VIII, and in the 1780s was becoming increasingly widespread in Europe.

The views contained within the folio, taken collectively, amount to a commanding portrait of the nation: innumerable small-scale scenes, at times claustrophobic or confined, often crowded with more participants than appear in Hodges' Jaques illustration. They register in depth the dense detail of richly textured foliage, fabrics and architecture, as depicted in the paintings. Boydell employed at a significant cost Francesco Bartolozzi, the developer of the stipple technique, to work at the gallery. Caroline Watson, renowned for producing exquisite 'finely wrought miniature engravings' also worked for the gallery, and was responsible for the work for Wheatley's *Ferdinand and Miranda playing at Chess* and Reynolds' *Death of Cardinal Beaufort*. The newspapers regularly report those days and weeks when the gallery is closed for the engraving of particular works. Other notable engravers were Jean Pierre Simon and Robert Thew.⁶⁰ The print of Benjamin West's *Death of General Wolfe* (1771) had made John Boydell £15, 000 in fifteen years, and was undoubtedly a primary impetus for the print-centred project at the Shakespeare Gallery. The quality and successful circulation of the engravings was critical for the Gallery's success.⁶¹ Samuel Middiman's rendering of leaf surface and silvered light on the trees, and their density of branches and foliage in the Hodges engraving is one highly successful, representative use of the technique.

Depictions of the English landscape such as that in the Hodges-Gilpin-Romney work of Jaques in the Wood became a central part of Boydell's exercise in developing a 'school of historical painting'. The

⁶⁰ Burwick, 'The Gallery', p.19.

⁶¹ Altick, *Shows*, p.106.

technique of stipple-working tended to produce an effect of depth and texture rather than defined edge and line. It offered the advantage, as Frederick Burwick describes, of ‘enabling the engraver to fill large non-discriminated space, such as open sky or background walls’.⁶² As a practice it offered a different level of detail and definition to that created by conventional line engraving. The resulting prints were a series that depicted landscapes and often the English landscape with rich specificity, comprising fields of minutely registered, three-dimensional texture and representational intensity. At the same time picturesque claims on veracity and life-like representation leached into the gallery from various directions. Landscape painters and renowned English artists, through the Boydell venture, found their works achieved a wider circulation than ever, now combined in a popular and marketable form with the works of Shakespeare.

The Jaques work is characteristic of the engraving project, and comparable with other works from the gallery. Aside from the picturesque landscape settings for Shakespeare discussed earlier in this chapter, forest leaves and trees appear registered in profound detail at several points in the folio. Robert Smirke’s comic *Henry IV Part I* II.II *The Road to Gadshill* is set amongst dense undergrowth, and includes another rustic or rural instance of what might be best thought of as a frolicsome, aristocratic counter-public time. Many of the works illustrate a similar time or space, one that is leisured, luxurious, free from work and determined primarily by languid or languorous immersion in feeling, whether highly wrought melancholy or the

⁶² Burwick, ‘The Gallery’, p.19.

gleeful spaces of fairy and fantastical celebration or emotional aridity and terror of storm-blown seashores, caves, or inland wastelands.

This sense of seclusion or adventure is carried through in several other of the woodland prints. Henry Fuseli's *Midsummer Night's Dream* works provide a view into the detailed and closely inhabited forest floor, offering an almost sublime registering of detail in their imagination of the endlessly receding vertiginous littleness of fairies, sprites, insects and supernatural creatures. Robert Smirke's 'Windsor Park' presents a leisured, private, forest enclosure with a scene of leaves, branches and bark illumined by Falstaff's merry, bacchanalian night-time revels. R. West's *As You Like It* IV.III, is a forest scene of a different kind, set within a decrepit, stormblown landscape, branches scorched by wind and lightning, and boughs bereft of leaves, and depicts Orlando and Oliver in battle with the 'green and gilded snake' and hungry lioness. Rev W. Peters' *Much Ado about Nothing* III.I, shows an 'An Orchard', with dripping creepers, treestumps and an overgrown urn. Two illustrations of the forest floor open and close the folios, George Romney's *Infant Shakespeare*, and a figure of Shakespeare nursed by comedy and tragedy in a glade. In the engravings for these works, stipple results in the close depiction of leaf and bough detail, presenting a forest land of newly imagined intensity, fabricated with a high degree of specificity.

An almost sublime level of detail in the Boydell engravings conveys a powerful sense of ungovernable beauty restrained and ordered: of terrible and terrifying wilderness contained and artistically policed. This is Hanmer's world of 'woods and plains and Rocks and vallies, and falls of

water and all the wild beauties of nature' rendered quaint and charming, and depicted in landscapes 'the most pleasing' and 'varied' that can be designed. However, these prints are not only concerned with a depiction of the nation. It is also within such locations that the drama of colonialism plays itself out. Benedict Anderson writes, in a passage which Homi Bhabha has cited, of that 'backcloth of spacious mansions and gardens filled with mimosa and bougainvillea' which forms the stage-set for imperial expansion.⁶³ The settings for Shakespeare discussed in this chapter of this project are picturesque, or comic, or gothic. They hold off wildness and sublimity; they generate expectation; they stimulate and engage that irritable curiosity within nature familiarly associated with the picturesque, while imitating its distance. However sublime and terrible the coastal storm in Joseph Wright of Derby's painting of *A Winter's Tale*, its atmosphere will not overwhelm the spectator. However detailed the engraving of forest scenes, a Burkean vertiginous littleness is always returned to characters from the plays: the melancholy Jaques, the merry Falstaff or the interpersonal tussles of Orlando and Oliver, or the comic figure of Charles. However terrible the depiction of Cardinal Beaufort's death, it remains an opportunity for self-reflection, though a comfortably extended distant, even almost mediaeval past. Such paintings tend toward the sublime; and yet Shakespeare, as author and representative of the national arts overmasters and bounds the production of the galleries, containing and domesticating the tendency toward the sublime in this collection of paintings, similarly to that affective downturn to be found in Seward's poem.

⁶³ Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991), p.150.

The contents of the galleries, viewed in their entirety in the collection of engravings, might be thought to engage in a reframing of the sublime as picturesque under the protective aegis of Shakespeare's monumental national name. This is an idiosyncratic picturesque – a picturesque that tames and ameliorates Shakespeare's sublime national genius and brings it closer to the haunted and fairy-laden spaces of the English forests. It feeds into the generation of a particular kind of English island narrative, in which the gothic meets freely with the sublime, and both can be admired as constitutive of the landscape of the nation. It must have been particularly overpowering in the crowded and sociable spaces of the Pall Mall galleries, where spectators gathered in proximity to the large-scale works; but not less so in the engravings themselves. Satirical works are of a different quality, miniature by comparison, easily held within the hands of a private gathering.

Marcia Pointon reminds us of the eighteenth-century audience for these Shakespeare prints, and encourages us to think of viewers for the Folio located, 'in the Drawing room of some country house in 1803'.⁶⁴ In fact, the Shakespeare Gallery, as a Gallery of this kind, existed both at 52 Pall Mall *and* in the setting of the country house at a distance from London. As Richard Altick reminds us, the word referred both to the exhibition space and, 'by extension, folio volumes serving the same purpose in the home'. He writes: '[o]f these galleries in the double sense, the most ambitious, as it was the most celebrated, was Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery'.⁶⁵ It is through

⁶⁴ Pointon, 'Representing *The Tempest*', p.109.

⁶⁵ Altick, *Shows*, p.106.

the vicissitudes of eighteenth-century landscape aesthetics, picturesque and sublime, and its locations of reception, that a suitable vocabulary for comprehending the Jaques work is to be found.

I have given some attention to this work's privileging of colour, atmosphere and depth already. I have begun to describe how landscape might be considered a prevalent aesthetic within the Shakespeare Gallery via a consideration of affective currents within the composition of a single work, *Jaques in the Wood*, and have considered particularly its imagination of locality and its sophisticated representation of the moods or affections attached to particular places.

In the final sections of this chapter I want to consider the slightly unexpected, perhaps, significance of gothic form and the localised picturesque to the English imagination of empire within Joshua Reynolds' *Thirteenth Discourse*. This text includes within it a brief discussion of the artist William Hodges, in the midst of an analysis of gothic and picturesque landscape painting, and emphasises his Indian landscape works.

The Hodges work demonstrates a development of existing approaches to landscape prospect and a manipulation of generic landscape convention. A picturesque scene viewed from a concealed location is deployed to illustrate a Shakespearean forest setting, and to imbue an 'offstage' event with intensified meaning and a tangible location. The possible significance of such an elaborate and elaborated imagination of Shakespearean locality to the development of an imperial aesthetic is wide-ranging. Stuart Sillars' insightful chapter on the Boydell gallery discusses the prevalence of identifications of the King as 'Farmer George' in

connection with idealistic and idealised representations of the countryside.⁶⁶

But what imperial and colonial sources existed for forest imagery within the aesthetic writing of the end of the century?

Uncharacteristically, Joshua Reynolds had written on the usefulness of gothic and sublime spaces to the landscape painter in his 1786 *Thirteenth Discourse* to the Royal Academy. While the aesthetic of the picturesque was manifold in its political intricacies, it is possible to more closely identify through a reading of this Discourse a strand that clearly connected domestic spaces with those of imperial anxiety or fantasy.

The ‘affective downturn’ toward the picturesque I found in Seward’s poem on General Eliott, its defaulting on, or reconciliation of, sublime energies was characteristic and vogueish within aesthetic representations of empire in the late century. Comparably, when we turn to Sir Joshua Reynolds’ *Thirteenth Discourse*, we find a similar set of emphases on the contrast and passage back and forth between rugged, sublime and terrible landscapes and an ameliorated picturesque or a carefully, painstakingly outlined loco-descriptive figuring of place. In the passage following on from line 262 in the edition by Robert R. Wark, which imagines ‘a view of nature represented with all the truth of the *camera obscura*’, the academician leads his audience through the cool classical landscape of Poussin’s ancient Rome, through Bourdon’s ‘dark Antiquity of the Pyramids of Egypt’ and through Claude Lorrain’s tranquil and fantastic ‘Arcadian scenes’. The passage immediately precedes a paragraph that will progress to consider more closely the painting of clouds in the works of Titian and Salvator Rosa

⁶⁶ Sillars, *Painting Shakespeare*, p.272. Sillars also notes the prices of the volumes, p.257.

and, by comparison, sky and landscapes painted by Claude. Where, in works by Claude the surfaces of mountain and tree-lined landscape gently ‘gilded with the setting sun’ are described, those he finds in Titian or Rosa show how clouds vigorously ‘roll in volumes’. The affective contrasts continue in the next lines:

whether the mountains have sudden and bold projections, or are gently sloped; whether the branches of his trees shoot out abruptly in right angles from their trunks, or follow one another with only a gentle inclination. All these circumstances contribute to the general character of the work, whether it be of the elegant, or the more sublime kind.⁶⁷

Here, it seems that – in a manner reminiscent of a preference for a picturesque aesthetic over one more sublime – sudden and bold projections within the landscape have come to be diminished or diminished by gently sloped sides of mountains. Angular and perpendicular vegetal formations are supplanted by a series of gentle and accretive, naturalistic variations and developments. An elegant and tasteful, perhaps more picturesque form, is defined by an opposition to one more sublime, with rugged extremities of light and dark, displaying fierce rolling cloud, heavy skies and jagged or mountainous rock surfaces.

These comments on the effects of particular landscapes on the imagination are drawn out in Reynolds’ subsequent discussion, which concerns both the representation of the landscapes of ancient England, and a new comparison with recent colonial influences entering picturesque

⁶⁷ Joshua Reynolds, *Discourses on Art* ed. by Robert R. Wark (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1997), p.238.

landscape art. A few paragraphs later, Reynolds moves to consider architectural gothic, analysing its relevance to the ongoing discussion around 'Landskip-Painting' and naturalism in both garden design and the theatres.⁶⁸ The discussion proceeds as an extended consideration of the related concern to detect and analyse the arts of Poetry and Painting, a still contemporary terminology and one of significance to the endeavours of the Shakespeare Gallery, which displayed above its doorway an *alto rilievo* work of the bard between these twin muses.⁶⁹ Reynolds' discussion of the force of an architectural landscape is as follows:

Thus, for instance, as we have naturally a veneration for antiquity, whatever building brings to our remembrance ancient customs and manners, such as the Castles of the Barons of ancient Chivalry, is sure to give this delight. Hence it is that *towers and battlements** are so often selected by the Painter and Poet, to make a part of the composition of their ideal Landskip; and it is from hence in a great degree that in the buildings of Vanbrugh, who was a Poet as well as an architect, there is a greater display of imagination, than we shall

⁶⁸ Reynolds, *Works*, II, p.129-35. This is contiguous in the Discourse with a long discussion about imitation, naturalism and artifice in Hamlet's advice to the players in which Reynolds coopts for painting the desirability of naturalistic emotion and the achievement of the quality of repose and also emphasises rusticity in Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*.

⁶⁹ As the catalogue described, the work presents Shakespeare leaning on a rugged rock, the ultimate sublime object, between *Poetry* and *Painting*:

Poetry is on his Right-hand, addressing SHAKSPEARE, and presenting him with a Wreath of Bays, while she celebrates his Praise on her Lyre. Her Head is ornamented with a double Mask, to shew she has bestowed the double power of *Tragedy* and *Comedy* upon her favourite Son. SHAKSPEARE is represented as listening to her with Pleasure and Attention. On his Left is *Painting*, who is addressing the Spectator, with one Hand extended towards SHAKSPEARE'S Breast, pointing him out as the proper Object of her Pencil, while he leans his Left-hand on her shoulder, as if accepting her assistance. Boydell, *Catalogue* (London: J.Boydell, 1791), p.14.

find perhaps in any other [...] For this purpose, Vanbrugh appears to have had recourse to some principles of Gothick Architecture; which, though not so ancient as the Grecian, is more so to our imagination, with which the Artist is more concerned than with absolute truth.

*Towers and Battlements it sees

Bosom'd high in tufted trees. MILTON. *L'ALLEGRO*

This discussion in the Discourse is much about Vanbrugh, and it gives Reynolds occasion to comment on Milton's *L'Allegro* and to compare its qualities of contrast and shade with the high light and dark, deep shadow and sun-drenched landscapes of Claude.⁷⁰ He goes on to parallel with the distinction between comedy and farce the 'great terror' and 'violent passion' of true tragedy in the theatre. Rocky paths and precipices are imagined as the products of 'a poetical mind'. They, he writes, 'will have the same superiority over the more ordinary and common views, as Milton's *Allegro* and *Penseroso* have over a cold prosaick narration or description'.⁷¹ That superiority is akin to the skill wielded by the landscape painter in his manipulation of light and dark: so then, 'the powerful materials of lightness and darkness, over which the Artist has complete dominion' are said to 'make a more forcible impression on the mind than the real scenes, were they presented before us'. This is what Reynolds terms 'poetical' landscape as opposed to ordinary, common or prosaick forms, and all these

⁷⁰ Malcolm Andrews discusses the particular citation Reynolds deploys from *l'Allegro* as a popular contemporary exemplar of the picturesque. Malcolm Andrews, *The Search for the Picturesque: Landscape, Aesthetics and Tourism in Britain, 1760-1800* (Aldershot: Scolar Press, 1989), p.45.

⁷¹ Reynolds, *Works*, II, p.129.

distinctions tend to lead toward a preference for the work of the imagination and the artist's genius in re-forming the landscape.

Immediately after the passage on Vanbrugh, Reynolds turns his audience's attention briefly towards, '[t]he Barbarick splendour of those Asiatick Buildings, which are now publishing by a member of this Academy'. He refers to William Hodges, whose *Select Views of India* had been published between 1785 and 1788 and whose *Travels in India* would include on its publication in 1793 comments on architecture that directly attacked arguments for the supremacy of 'Grecian' over 'Egyptian, Hindoo, Moorish and Gothic forms'.⁷² Hodges was the painter of the image of *Jaques and Amiens* discussed earlier in the chapter. What is interesting for my argument in this chapter is how Reynolds does not quite mention – although it hovers in that awkwardness with which the paragraphs do not follow on easily from one another, and is present in the loose sequitur 'in the same manner' – the contribution of Hodges' Indian landscapes to the development of a barbarous and gothic English aesthetic. His suggestion is that these paintings of Indian architecture might, too, provide components for the gothic and for the powerful conjuring, in landscape form, of a lost and distant past: that they may contribute to the work of those who are skilled in the making of English landscapes of imagined antiquity.⁷³

⁷² Reynolds, *Works*, II, p.138; William Hodges, *Travels in India During the Years 1780, 1781, 1782 and 1783* (London: J.Edwards, 1793), p.64. William Hodges' paintings of India were accompanied by a treatise on architecture in which Hodges had attacked the classicism of aesthetic theory. Hodges repeats comments from an earlier pamphlet of his, which is also reproduced in the *Annual Register for 1793*.

⁷³ Terry Castle comments on the difficulty of understanding gothic without architecture in a reading of women's fiction of the eighteenth century. Terry Castle, *Boss Ladies! Watch Out! Essays on Women, Sex and Writing* (London: Routledge, 2002), p.78.

Hodges' Jaques work is typical of an ameliorated, domestic landscape aesthetic, where a fictive national past is registered in high detail. However, there might also have been a significant colonial emphasis attached to the gothic landscape aesthetics which played such a significant part in the fantasmic creation of the national past.

Semantic collocations of Shakespeare with a localised antiquity or English gothic were relatively established, and are traceable in origin to the comments of Joseph Holden Pott in the early 1780s. Pott characterises the nation and national temper or character via landscape features. In his writing, the notion that the fictions of Shakespeare form a parallel to the Gothic ruins of the English landscape echoes Samuel Johnson's thoughts on the affinity of the English tongue, that is the written language itself, to national temper and character: the relics of the works for Pott have 'the same consonance of character, the same congenial beauties' as the gothic ruins to be found across the landscape of England.⁷⁴ In Joshua Reynolds' comments associating Vanbrugh and Hodges, in his Thirteenth Discourse, his new interest in gothic art and architecture merges with an emphasis on colonial art.

The hybrid aesthetic of gothic form perhaps left it peculiarly well placed to apprehend and assimilate colonial encounter, and this is illustrated I think in Reynolds' Thirteenth Discourse.⁷⁵ The picturesque was associated

⁷⁴ Joseph Holden Pott, *An Essay on Landscape Painting* (London: J. Johnson, 1782), pp.57-9. Johnson's comments on Shakespeare's language as 'consonant and congenial' with the national temper are reproduced at *BES* I, p.123.

⁷⁵ An interesting analysis that explores the possibility of collisions between exoticism and the aesthetic of the picturesque is found in Saree Makdisi, *William Blake and the Impossible History of the 1790s* (London: University of Chicago Press, 2003), pp.225-6. Makdisi, discussing William Beckford's *Vathek* addresses the convention of interpreting oriental aesthetics as a 'pathless wilderness of rhapsodies', and analyses how at this time

with travels to other lands under an imperial or colonial communication system: as Copley and Garside point out the aesthetic was shaped by colonialism most obviously in the early idealising visualisations of the Scottish highlands which form a part of the genre.⁷⁶ Hodges had travelled in 1772 with Cook to the Antarctic, and then in 1780 to India, where he had worked at the invitation of the current governor general of the East India Company, Warren Hastings. ‘Asiatick’ architecture could, it seems from the comments in this Discourse, feed happily into the development of the ‘ideal Landskip’ of the native gothic: here, Reynolds makes a gesture to suggest they might transfer into the native architectural gothic.⁷⁷

such an aesthetic was understood to be in conflict with ‘facts, principles and data’. The fanciful came to be defined as a barrier to self-knowledge and self-control because of the ways in which it tipped freely into both the imaginative and the exotic. Literature or literary places understood as fictive and eastern, by implication, might signal an aesthetic relinquishing of self-control, or a form of knowledge akin to that attained by the travel writer or the painter of picturesque ‘views’ of distant lands, within that rapidly changing and developing element of the contemporary art culture.

⁷⁶ *Politics of the Picturesque*, p.6.

⁷⁷ There existed a vibrant contemporary debate over the ethnic specificity of different groups and peoples in England and Northern Germany, which tracked the progress and origin of the ‘Gothic’ peoples, and in which the notion of native forms had extensive currency. Organic and plant forms as the organising structure of gothic art and architecture would for example receive extensive treatment in Friedrich Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art* trans. by Douglas W. Stott (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989) based on lectures delivered at the University of Jena in the first few years of the nineteenth century. The Gothic building, such as the Cathedral at Strasbourg, for Schelling, presented the form of an enormous tree whose branches and boughs stretch into the air. The nave or, comparably, the cloister spaces of monasteries being the depiction of a row of branches which ‘are inclined toward one another above and... intergrown, thus forming a vault or arch’. He discussed too, after the fashion of many contemporary writers, the collusion of origin, which he affirmed to be a coincidental parallel, of the Northern and Gothic variety of this work with the Saracenic architecture, which passed into the west first via Spain. Schelling is at pains to identify a pure, indigenous, German form of the structure, which emerged at the inception of the building arts in these areas, evolving from the veneration of the gods in forest temples, outdoors, beneath the trees. This form he said is identifiable across Holland and England, Windsor Castle being a high example of the style. The Italian form of the architecture is, therefore, derivative, and it appears there mixed with the more recent forms of Italian architecture. p.171. See particularly ‘Construction of the Forms of Art’ § 104 ff.

Contemporary markets for picturesque landscape art reflect Reynolds' emphasis on a confluence of a picturesque aesthetic with sites and subject matter from the colonies. The landscape content of the Boydell Shakespeare prints might be paralleled with publications such as the numerous editions of colonial 'picturesque views' discussed by C.A. Bayly in his work *Imperial Meridian*, collections of illustrations which themselves objectified the degradations of empire and captured it through the eyes of the imperial tourist, traveller, explorer or trader for the enjoyment of a private audience, whether in those colonies or at home in Britain. These depictions 'of places associated with rising or falling empires recorded by Captain Cook's artist ... or the Daniells' were frequently printed with asynchronous parallel classical inclusions, such as the reminiscences of imperial heroes and sets of texts in the style of Tacitus, Livy, Seneca, Caesar.⁷⁸ Colonialism seemed to tend to result more in the representation of contemporaneity than to contribute to the image of a fantastic national antiquity – although Hodges' Jaques work perhaps does reach out toward that antiquity Reynolds suggests in discussion of Hodges.

The Boydell Gallery was genteel and patrician: the Pall Mall audience brought a metropolitan audience to view paintings installing a myth of England, and celebrating the art of highly detailed landscape illustration, while the drawing room spectators of the gallery in Folio form in country houses across the land consumed, amongst the goods empire brought within the domestic space, images of wooded landscapes and mediaeval buildings, peopled with characters and settings from the plays of

⁷⁸ C. A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (London and New York: Longman, 1989), p.161. Compare Geoff Quilley in the Hodges catalogue.

Shakespeare. The Gallery catered to that sector of middle-class England which defined itself with and against the multilingual and cosmopolitan citizens of empire, who '[were] at home everywhere' and whose understanding and appreciation of landscape was becoming newly localised and newly defined. The Shakespeare Gallery paintings imply significant new imperial contexts for the national celebration and recovery of Shakespeare in these later years of the century and the Boydell Folio is one of many new products brought by the developments of empire.⁷⁹

The picturesque was a powerful tool for rendering amenable other parts of the world. That formulation also, simultaneously, enabled a new means of constructing a national identity, through representations of the Shakespearean national past. The next chapter explores the representation of the male body in Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Death of Cardinal Beaufort* from *Henry VI Part II*, Act III Scene III. This work was one of the most celebrated of those produced for the gallery.

⁷⁹ See for example work by Maxine Berg or John Brewer.

CHAPTER TWO

**REYNOLDS' *CARDINAL BEAUFORT'S BEDCHAMBER*: IMAGES
OF EMPIRE AND MASCULINITY**

SECTION ONE

This chapter will explore a claim that Joshua Reynolds was making a connection between Shakespeare's retelling of the death of Cardinal Beaufort and a set of possible imperial contexts. These contexts are primarily textual or allusive, as opposed to the events discussed and illustrated in the material of the previous chapter, such as the Gibraltar works included as part of Boydell's exhibition on its opening. I seek to emphasise how this composition by Reynolds might have emphasised imperial contexts, both through reference to an earlier illustration from the *Germanicus* story by Nicholas Poussin, in many ways a precursor for Reynolds' historical painting, in its emphasis on a representation of affect and through its allusions to religious, superstitious and stoic material. Later in the chapter I will also consider some graphic satires based on Reynolds' painting that brought some of these emphases further to the fore and into contact with specific contemporary imperial questions.

Jack Lynch writes 'the eighteenth century studied the sixteenth to make sense of the seventeenth'. He emphasises how the Elizabethan age

was considered by writers such as Hume and Swift to be the example of perfect balance between the nobles and the commons and the other varying sites of power that were seen to be the legacy of the advance of Protestantism and the Restoration of the English monarchy after the English civil war – or even, in some accounts, after the Norman conquest.¹

Part of my argument and discussion in the previous chapter concerned domestic identity as formed negatively through the exclusion of colonial forms, objects and identities and positively in the development of inward-looking, nostalgic representations for the imagined landscapes of Shakespeare's England. The recovery of an English identity which itself paradoxically turned at times to representations from the colonies for its formation was a primary aim of that chapter. The second chapter of this thesis moves to advance a different kind of argument about eighteenth-century Shakespeare and imperialism in Britain during the twenty years at the end of the eighteenth century. It addresses a single work illustrating a civic and martial scene that was one of the most celebrated of all the Boydell works and is one that distinguishes the project of the gallery as distinctive to imperial 'Great Britain'.

Successfully or accurately reading Sir Joshua Reynolds' *Cardinal Beaufort's Bedchamber* from *Henry VI Part II* is not easy for a modern viewer. The scene is that of Beaufort's terrible death in Act III Scene III. When this painting of the death of Cardinal Beaufort came on display at Boydell's gallery in 1789 it generated more criticism and controversy than

¹ Lynch, p.69.

any other work at the gallery.² And when the 160 paintings and small group of relief sculptures from the bankrupt venture were dispersed in a lottery in 1805, it was the item which again attracted the most attention and subsequently raised the most money at sale.³ T.S.R. Boase notes in an important early article on Shakespeare illustration that, ‘the memoirs of the time are full of talk about this picture, which contemporaries considered to be Reynolds’ final achievement’.⁴ In a 1971 essay, Albert Roe notes that Reynolds’ *Beaufort* picture ‘attracted more notice than any other single painting in the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery’.⁵ Martin Myrone’s fine recent account of its critical reception records that this scene in the play, in which Beaufort fails to repent for the events of his villainous life on his deathbed, ‘constituted for contemporaries one of the highlights of Shakespeare’s works’.⁶ His reference is to Samuel Johnson, who said of the work that ‘this is one of the scenes which have been applauded by critics, and which will

² *Times*, 11 May 1789. See Albert S. Roe, ‘The Demon behind the Pillow: A note on Erasmus Darwin and Reynolds’, *Burlington Magazine* 113:821 (1971) and Bate, ‘Shakespearean Allusion’ also.

³ Postle, p.261. Postle discusses the painting pp.256-65: its sale in November 1805 raised £530 5s. William Moelwyn Merchant, *Shakespeare and the Artist* (London: OUP, 1959), p.70.

⁴ Boase, ‘Illustrations’, p.102. Boase also says Reynolds painted a full scale replica of it, now in Stratford Memorial Library and that ‘numerous smaller versions of it were current’. One writer in 1800 said that it ‘united the local colouring of Titian and the Chiaroscuro of Rembrandt’ and wrote of it as a painting that visitors to London must endeavour to see, James Dallaway, *Anecdotes of the Arts in England* (London: T.Cadell and W.Davies, 1800), unpaginated.

⁵ Roe, ‘The Demon behind the Pillow’, p.470. Thomas Holcroft owned an oil sketch for the painting, which he bought on 16 April 1796 as recounted in David Mannings. ‘Reynolds’s Oil Sketches’, *The Burlington Magazine*, 133: 1061 (1991) pp.491-8. Postle says this work has since been destroyed, p.259.

⁶ Martin Myrone, *Bodybuilding: Reforming Masculinities in British Art 1750-1810* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2005), p.171. Myrone stresses comments in editions of Johnson, Capell and Bell. Albert Roe states, p.470: ‘It attracted more notice than any other single painting in the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery, and brought the highest price when Boydell’s collection was sold at auction in 1805’.

continue to be admired when prejudice shall cease, and bigotry give way to impartial examination'.⁷ The painting has been conventionally called either *Cardinal Beaufort's Bedchamber* or *The Death of Beaufort*.⁸ Boydell paid him 500 guineas for this work. Reynolds' other two works for the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery were of 'the Fairy Puck, or Robin Goodfellow', put together at Boydell's request on a visit to Reynolds' studio,⁹ and a painting from *Macbeth*, in respect of which Boydell had presented to Reynolds an advance payment of £500 and sent at his own expense a prepared canvas, nine feet by twelve in June 1786.¹⁰

⁷ Myrone, p.346 n.41. He also mentions here Francis Gentleman's comments in Bell's edition of 1774 and Edward Capell in *Notes and Various Readings to Shakespeare*.

⁸ In the catalogue it is referred to as: *Second Part of King Henry VI. Act III Scene III. Cardinal Beaufort's Bedchamber. King Henry, Salisbury, Warwick etc.*

⁹ For an account of this see David Mannings *Sir Joshua Reynolds: A Complete Catalogue of his Paintings* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2000), p.557. Mannings records that Puck was exhibited at the Royal Academy, before being sold to Boydell prior to December 1790. Boydell initially hoped for eight pictures from Reynolds Mannings, pp.543-4. Postle pp.249-72 describes Reynolds' contributions to the gallery.

¹⁰ The painting of *Macbeth and the Witches* remained unfinished in Reynolds' studio on his death, when it was sold, after a dispute over payment, for a final sum of £1500, Mannings, p.544. It appears in the Gallery Catalogue from 1793, although incomplete. See *The Letters of Sir Joshua Reynolds*, ed. by John Ingamells and John Edgcumbe (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2000), pp.229-230. A letter of December 10 1791 from John Boydell to Reynolds suggests the slow progress of the *Macbeth* picture: 'It is now so long since my Nephew or I had any conversation with you on the subject of the picture from *Macbeth* that we concluded you no longer thought of us as Purchasers', p.176.

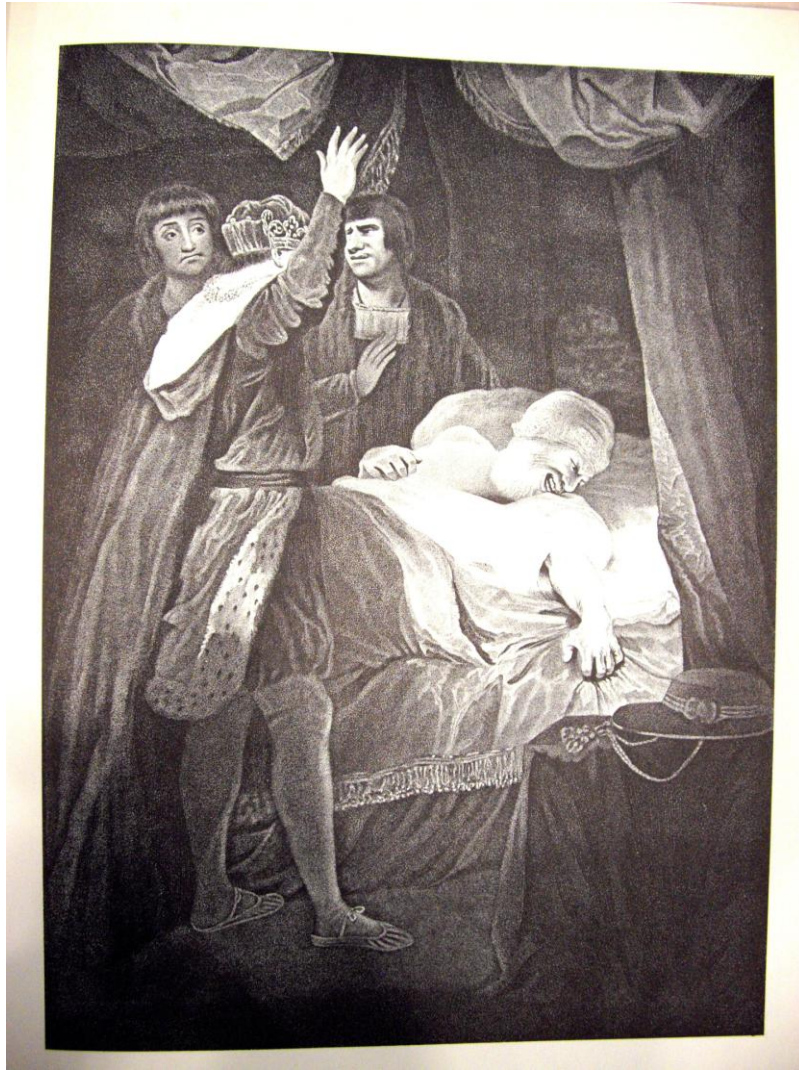


PLATE 10

The significant critical analysis of Reynolds' work to date appears in early articles by Albert Roe, T.S.R. Boase and, more recently, in articles and book length work by Stuart Sillars, Martin Myrone, Jonathan Bate, Martin Postle and Rosemarie Dias. Among this critical field, Roe offers a discussion of graphic satires which emerged in response to the supernatural subject of the work; T.S.R. Boase considers the painting in an article addressing illustrations to the plays across the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; Sillars comments on the extent of neo-classical influence in the work and reads it as a history painting depicting a form of moral struggle

that is not of primarily narrative basis, and makes a limited enquiry about the relevance of this kind of theatrical imagery to moral, national and personal identifications.¹¹ His discussion is more interesting for its illuminating discussion of infant painting and Reynolds' work for the Boydell Gallery of the comic fairy *Puck* seated on a toadstool. Myrone discusses both literary and artistic sentimental contexts for the work, offering also a valuable analysis of a relief sculpture of the dying Germanicus by Thomas Banks 1773 in comparison with the painting;¹² Bate discusses the demon that appears behind Beaufort's pillow and 'Tom Paine's Nightly Pest' in an article on Gillray's use of Shakespeare in his works and Shakespeare in English caricature more broadly; Rosemarie Dias comments on competition and conflict between Joshua Reynolds and Henry Fuseli within the gallery, on the basis of the proximate location of the series of Reynolds works to those of Fuseli as well as thematic concerns.¹³ Postle gives the most detailed and accurate account of the work's genesis and early reception and its sale after the closure of the gallery. He also makes an argument about the fiend included in the work which connects it to the renewed significance of facial expression to Reynolds' painting, as compared with his thoughts on history painting in the 1770s.¹⁴ All the work on this painting to date has addressed the formation of national identity and

¹¹ Sillars, *Painting Shakespeare*, p.202.

¹² Myrone, p.178.

¹³ Dias and Bate, 'Shakespearean Allusions', pp.200-1.

¹⁴ Postle, pp.256-64, 290. He also notes that Charles Lamb spoke of this painting in 1811 and 1813 as the illustration of 'grinning despair' and that Opie in his second academy lecture in 1807 thought that the 'varied beauties of this work' were worthy of lasting consideration and that the illustration of the fiend on the pillow was a great success within the portrait, pp.292, 290.

has not examined possible imperial contexts. This chapter seeks to advance a reading of the work that explores the supraposition of an enlightened, stoic and modern means of identity formation over its primarily gothic, supernatural and highly imaginary subject matter. I argue that this mode of identity offered a significant imperial context to this highly regarded painting, one that has not been considered in the criticism.

Like the Gibraltar paintings and contexts for the Shakespeare works discussed in my previous chapter, there are some external contexts important for the interpretation of Reynolds' painting, and to understanding references that contributed to Reynolds' interpretation of Shakespeare in this work. Reynolds has updated the story of Beaufort's death and corrupt life by drawing reference both to a great classical work by Nicholas Poussin, *The Death of Germanicus*, and to a prevalent eighteenth-century discourse for imperial masculinity, of a resurgent and persistent interest in the stoic philosophy as a means for how to live well. The supernatural themes of the painting identify it as a 'gothic' work and, cojoined with the story from Shakespeare, enable it to assume a generic position within the native gothic. Much in keeping with Boydell's aims, its gloomy mood and fantastical historical narrative also advance the aims of a new English form of historical painting.

In this work Reynolds unites Shakespeare with a concern to define masculine identity under the empire. My thesis in this chapter will be to advance a reading of the painting as a representation of northern European masculinity, as it comes to be defined, in part, against southern European

representations of the male chivalric or adventuring hero.¹⁵ In the discussion contained within this chapter of what Luke Gibbons in the context of an enquiry into imperial discourses terms, ‘the new, neo-stoical concepts of civil society that evolved in the eighteenth century’, I turn to an analysis of Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments* which, in its sixth edition of 1790 was extensively revised to include a renewed emphasis on the stoic philosophy.¹⁶ Moving to consider the literary content and subject matter of the painting, derived from the works of Shakespeare, I also discuss, by way of comparison, that more frequently considered adventuring masculine in *Othello, or the Moor of Venice*.

Cardinal Beaufort’s Bedchamber is a work which combines the mediaeval and historical subject matter of one of Shakespeare’s lesser known plays, one which was not actually presented on the stage during the second half of the eighteenth-century, with a topical and highly contemporary subject matter.¹⁷ Late eighteenth-century audiences would however have been familiar with the *Henry VI* trilogy through the printed text of the plays, and because, as Boase points out, the popularity and

¹⁵ The discussions in this chapter have been informed by a reading of Nicole Loraux ‘Herakles: The Super-Male and the Feminine’ trans. by Robert Lamberton in *Before Sexuality: The Construction of Erotic Experience in the Ancient Greek World* ed. by David Halperin, John J. Winkler, Froma I. Zeitlin (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990) an article in which ‘the hero who suffers’ is found to be inseparable from narratives of exploration and powerful exploits in classical art, p.24. Also on Lessing and the northern aesthetic, on climate, the terrible and melancholy, See the discussion in Tillotson, p.230.

¹⁶ Luke Gibbons, *Edmund Burke and Ireland: Aesthetics, Politics and the Colonial Sublime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p.xii.

¹⁷ Charles Beecher Hogan, *Shakespeare in the Theatre 1701-1800* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1952), p.109.

circulation of all the history plays escalated in a climate of English expansionism and conquest.¹⁸

The man depicted in Reynolds' work is a Cardinal, a religious man, and at this time a politically powerful one. The painting therefore turns Shakespeare toward arenas that are more than national in register. To succinctly summarise its content, the work supplants narratives about the demise and decline of the Roman empire with a location of uncertain definition, in part to be derived from English antiquity, and in part drawing on narrative commonplaces about the tyranny and despotism attached to Eastern varieties of imperial government and land management; in part also optimistic and reconstructive, emerging from contemporary thought and the newer political forms attached to mercantile activity in the empire. I will go on to explain what I mean by these last two statements during the course of the chapter.

While the painting in some way resembles earlier illustrations for editions by Rowe (1709), Hanmer (1744) and by Henry Fuseli (1772) of the same deathbed scene, this is the only of the eighteenth-century illustrations to take its composition from a great work by Nicholas Poussin.¹⁹ If we examine the classical sources for Reynolds' painting it is possible to begin to apprehend the relationship between the painting and any relevant imperial contexts. The painting takes its composition from the classical Poussin painting illustrating the scene of Germanicus' deathbed, from which it can be seen that Reynolds excerpts the central part. The setting for this work is

¹⁸ Boase, 'Illustrations', p.103.

¹⁹ Boase, 'Illustrations', p.103.

the demise and decline of the Roman empire in its more distant outposts. Like Reynolds' work, this great classical painting exhibits a peripheral site of empire. The allusion to this Roman painting would have been important to the eighteenth-century viewer.

Poussin's narrative painting illustrates a story about the containment of imperial grief from Tacitus' *Annals of Imperial Rome*. The story of the *Death of Germanicus* is one about Rome and its empire in the East, a subject popularised among English imperial artists and writers at the end of the century. It is a narrative about the mourning for a celebrated general who dies far from Rome, whose body therefore cannot be properly buried, and it describes the import of that death for the integrity of the republic. At the centre of the original narrative and of Reynolds' painting is the figure of Agrippina grieving over the death of her noble husband, a governor of the Roman Empire in Asia who was despotically murdered by the emperor Tiberius. Tacitus' description includes the friends who gather about Germanicus' bed, the funeral at Antioch, and Agrippina's subsequent ceremonial return journey to Rome, carrying the ashes of her dead husband and accompanied by her children. The text recalls the outpouring of emotion at Rome, where the entire city falls into mourning at the news of the governor's illness and subsequent death. There is 'universal silence and sorrow – no organised display or outward tokens of mourning, but profound, heartfelt grief' accompanied by widespread unease at the emperor's failure to follow appropriate customs and provide due ceremony for Germanicus.²⁰

²⁰ Publius Cornelius Tacitus, *The Annals of Imperial Rome* trans. by Michael Grant (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1956), p.114.

The distance of Reynolds' work from this narrative is apparent in several ways.



PLATE 11

First, Reynolds selected for the composition of his Shakespeare painting a section of the Poussin work which includes no female figures. This is clearly a work about male homosociality; male grouping and reaction direct the interpretation of the scene of death. Second, Reynolds' own idiosyncratic interests as concern the classical and gothic subject matter of the Beaufort work are clearly distinct from the subject matter and the compositional influence of this great Poussin painting, mainly as a result of the Shakespearean topic, although there is also an instability of religious reference that evokes the Poussin work. The painting also involves a native gothic past or fantastic space of English antiquity.

One particular set of representations at work in the composition invoke a contemporary eighteenth-century register. Gothic is, in its

connection to the middle ages, a relatively indistinct term, and one that scholars including Harriet Guest and Jim Watt have acknowledged to be rapidly in flux during the second half of the century.²¹ J.G.A Pocock has traced the relevance of the term, both for its medieval meanings and its appropriation and transformation across the eighteenth century. His analysis demonstrates how it might signal, through the evolution of the ‘gothic’ freeholder, a tension between economic and political forces and authorities, and be implicated in references to the role of the military in social organisation, as well as take on a normative or moral weight and point to the corruption of modern legal and administrative forms or other instances of the exertion of state authority.²² My analysis of the painting identifies its association with a definitively modern and classically derived set of values, as opposed to a pre-modern or mediaeval and superstitious range of references in association with Shakespeare. The resonance attached to the illustration of stoic death also, it is worth noting, exceeds the relevance of ‘gothicism’ in this painting, whether modern or in historical view.

The work depicts a hard and terrible death. The Cardinal is extended at death between competing loyalties before King and country and through

²¹ Harriet Guest, ‘The Wanton Muse: Politics and Gender in Gothic Theory after 1760’ in *Beyond Romanticism: New Approaches to Texts and Contexts 1780-1832*. (London: Routledge, 1992); James Watt, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict 1764-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999) describes how it could be ‘used variously to describe for example styles of architecture, a form of print or type, and anything connected to the Goths themselves, as well as anything generally medieval, or even post-Roman’, p.14.

²² J.G.A. Pocock *Politics, Language, Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), p.95: He identifies ambivalence surrounding the term that relates to changing meanings of property and the military, judicial and administrative functions of government: ‘gothic’ could at once be a term of high praise in political language, yet associated with barbarism in the language of cultural history and aesthetics. To some extent East Indian and British politics shared a discourse about ‘gothic freeholding’ through the contexts of the impeachment of Warren Hastings.

the church overseas and in the empire. He is made to appear within the play a deeply corrupt and denigrated figure, detested from all sides, of whom at this scene Warwick says, 'so bad a death argues a monstrous life'. The painting displays the moment of death as one of possible reconciliation to goodness and religious redemption. The character of the king, centre left, with raised hand calls to Beaufort, the 'dying sinner' as he was called in Humphrey Repton's *The Bee*, in his bed in spasms of pain, to make a sign that he will be reconciled to God.²³ However, there is no sign. The section of play text that accompanied Reynolds' painting No. XXIII in the catalogue highlights the alarming dialogue contained at this point in the play, in which King Henry, Warwick and Salisbury attend the Cardinal's death bed. Unknown to the King, who prays for the Cardinal's departing soul, the Cardinal has orchestrated the murder of the King's protector, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. Reynolds' painting depicts the torment of a terrible death in which Beaufort fails to recognise the King who stands before him, and speaks the words:

He hath no eyes, the dust hath blinded them -

Comb down his hair; look! Look! It stands upright, -

Like lime-twigs set to catch my winged soul!

The subject of the painting is the moment of the King's prayer:

King Henry. Peace to his soul, if God's good pleasure be!-

Lord Cardinal, if thou think'st on heaven's bliss,

Hold up thy hand, make signal of thy hope. -

²³ Humphrey Repton, *The Bee; or, a Companion to the Shakespeare Gallery* (London: T.Cadell, 1789), p.40.

*He dies, and makes no sign: - O God forgive him!*²⁴

Beaufort's reluctance to repent connects the painting to the text and highlights the moment of death. A contemporary text on punctuation gave the example of the 'dash' accompanying the King's pause at the moment of the Cardinal's death 'Hold up thy hand! Make signal of thy hope. –' as the most perfect and correct use of that grammatical mark.²⁵ Closer to the work itself, visitors to the Shakespeare gallery would have received at the door a catalogue, which reprinted dialogue from the scenes depicted in the paintings.²⁶ Reynolds, Boydell himself, the King's sons, the Duchess of Devonshire and many others appear in Francis Wheatley's 1790 watercolour now at the Victoria and Albert Museum., eyes raised to the pictures, to the passages from Shakespeare, or to one another in conversation. It suggests the relationship between word and image was part of the appeal of the painting: the words 'he hath no eyes, the dust hath blinded them' seemingly inviting the spectator to view the scene which has the eyes of the King and his lords, and at once threatening the necessary failing of the viewer who must make the moral judgment with the King, a judgment which is yet, as the work reminds, ultimately a moral stance that only God can take.

The deathbed scene is darkly ironic, and works on multiple levels. It shows the King praying for the soul of the Cardinal at the gates of heaven, unaware of his mercenary role in the death of his protector, and Beaufort alongside, arm outstretched in a grip on the bedclothes and who, in the

²⁴ Boydell, *Catalogue* (1791), pp.46-7.

²⁵ J. Robertson, *Essay on Punctuation* (London: J.Walter, Charing Cross, 1786), says it is used here with 'great propriety', p.131.

²⁶ *Times*, 11 May 1789.

meanwhile of deluded perception, forgets religion, fails even to recognise the King, and takes him for a supernatural presence and then for the figure of death. The King raising his hand is most certainly a reference to the illustration of figures around the deathbed of the *Germanicus* by Poussin who swear to avenge the degraded circumstances of the Governor's death.²⁷ Here, however the King's gesture seems to serve as a moral censure for the figure of the Cardinal, who does not raise his hand in response to the King's prayer. The dying Beaufort offers up the nation's wealth to the King, whom he mistakes for death, in hasty and desperate barter for his own life:

Cardinal. If thou be'st death, I'll give thee England's treasure,
Enough to purchase such another island
So thou wilt let me live, and feel no pain.²⁸

The work takes as its focus the strain of muscles in the arm and face, coloured by emotion, as much as the subject of conflict between religious and kingly powers in the empire. The composition moves further than simply an illustration of the moment of death, and seeks to explore the nature and import of a death that, through recourse to theatrical presentations, affirms and strengthens the empire, or the converse.

The Beaufort narrative also concerns conflicts around court and economic interests. The accompanying extended citation in the catalogue emphasises the Cardinal's location, as a religious figure within both the

²⁷ For the significance of hand gesture and positioning in the painting and their sources in Tacitus see Anthony Blunt, 'Poussin's "Death of Germanicus" lent to Paris', *Burlington Magazine* 115:845 (1973), 533-4, 536. p.533. For the argument that the artist's inclusion of the mourning figure of Agrippina bears a debt to a contemporaneously exhibited Flemish work by Rubens depicting the *Death of Constantine*, also see Blunt, p.533.

²⁸ John Boydell, *A Catalogue of the Pictures &c in the Shakespeare Gallery* (London: J.Boydell, 1794), p.46.

state and the empire. As Jonathan Kramnick reminds us in his reading of Habermas, the dialectic of public and private which is now dated to the later eighteenth century, ‘finds its origin in the separation of state and civil society, the parting of economic production and the patriarchal family from politics and the court’.²⁹ In Act III Sc II we are told that the murder of Gloucester, ‘by Suffolk and the Cardinal Beaufort’, means national commotion:

Warwick. The Commons, like an angry hive of bees,
That want their leader, scatter up and down,
And care not who they sting in his revenge.³⁰

So the moment of Reynolds’ work, though perhaps less evident from the composition which depicts a fairly harmonious group of King and his noblemen, is also one of civil disorder and domestic political turmoil, layering upon Beaufort’s murders a further resonance to a ‘bad’ death.

If Lord Kames writes in his work on ‘The Emotions caused by Fiction’ that the influence of language over the heart is one that ‘strengthens the bond of society’ and ‘attracts individuals from their private system to perform acts of generosity and benevolence’, then the inclusion of this work in the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery might suggest the brink or intensification of privacy’s edge, as it comes to be defined within the discourses of early modernity.³¹ A bedchamber scene could only have such significant import in a primarily kingly, pre-modern setting within which the

²⁹ Kramnick, p.22.

³⁰ *BES*, XIII, pp.72-3.

³¹ Henry Home, Lord Kames, *Elements of Criticism. The Seventh Edition* 2 vols. (Edinburgh: John Bell and William Creech, 1788), I, p.100.

bedchamber functions as a public and powerful arena. However, the date of the work at the end point of the eighteenth-century, at a distance from this Shakespearean subject matter, enables a more contemporary meaning for privacy and social gathering around a death to be explored. Among the figures depicted in Reynolds' work, the decision for how to represent or give form in language, whether visual or in words, or in the hiatus of words, to the meaning and experience of an imperial death appears to be being made.

The appeal of the painting to contemporary viewers may have consisted largely in the complex interplay between word and image that the Gallery made possible. The permeable boundaries between a scene from the playtext and its illustration in painting became of interest elsewhere, too. The work, by Joshua Reynolds from Shakespeare's *Henry VI Part II*, comprised when first composed a dark imp. This figure within the work became controversial shortly after it came on display in the exhibition rooms at Pall Mall. It was associated with a debate on taste and decorum in the reviews. My chapter will move on in a subsequent section to pursue the coming in and out of vision of this particular component of the painting, which appears in the text but which was considered inappropriate in Joshua Reynolds' interpretation of the text. I will look at this representation both within revisions of the work itself and in the graphic satires and caricature works that appeared in the subsequent years. Part of the controversy surrounding the appearance of this element within the work was, I think, attached to its primary significance for the elements of the work that amount to a representation of a good death. To make this part of the argument

clearly, I will need to outline in further depth the rhetoric surrounding the representation of a classically theorised, here reinvigorated, notion of a, possibly stoic, ‘good death’ as it appears in the painting.

The significance of religious meaning within this painting is closely entangled with its complex representation of political affiliation. Stark relief to the gloomy and emotionally demanding subject matter of the ‘dying sinner’ within this work in this work is provided by the king who introduces religious judgement into the scene and, in parallel, the painted form of a group of roundheads – in fact lords and men of court. Are these figures within the work indeed Cromwellian, watching the demise and degradation of Rome? The question is a significant one.

Empire still largely meant negotiating Rome and the European intellectual inheritance of the Roman empire in the later years of the eighteenth century in England.³² Papal Rome and Catholicism were frequently seen as the ghost of the Roman Empire, and England and Englishness celebrated for their distance from the Roman empire. However, as I have glossed in the introduction to this work, American Independence introduced a new understanding of, and new meanings for empire in the later years of the eighteenth century and I think it would be a mistake to presuppose a reading of this painting based on the Catholic content of the story as it appears in Shakespeare’s play. Reynolds was quite probably striving for a form that exceeded the familiar connection of Catholicism to empire (either in its historical sense or through signalling a more

³² *Theories of Empire 1450-1800* ed. by David Armitage. Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998, p.xvi. Also ‘as David Solkin has argued the moral lessons to be drawn from Rome’s decline in the later Empire were very important for mid-century English culture’, Andrews, p.41.

contemporary opposition to Catholic France). Perhaps indeed his efforts to do so account for the considerable popularity of the work and the extent to which it was celebrated by contemporaries.

The representation of imperial, martial death was one in current circulation and was received in late eighteenth-century culture as part of a network of discourses broadly stoic, neo-classical, literary, philosophical and martial in form. This involved works that were not clearly political in tone. Paintings and textual reproductions of the *Death of Chatham*, *Death of Lord Nelson*, *Death of Wolfe*, *Death of Epaminondas* and so on traversed the classical and sentimental perhaps more than current criticism has addressed and suggest the Beaufort work appeared amongst a population of representations illustrating the nobility and heroism of imperial death.³³ There was a contemporary market for dying speeches, not just imperial but republican, national and historical, of public and martial significance, concerning military and classical heroes.³⁴ Michael H. Duffy describes Reynolds' painting as a painting representing peace and death and as the depiction of a group which 'responds to the dying general with a stillness, reverence and acceptance that is an appropriate response to the courage, loyalty and magnanimity of their leader'. He finds this work comparable with an 'aesthetics of mourning' found in artists such as Joseph Wright of Derby, Benjamin West and Gavin Hamilton.³⁵

³³ Michael H. Duffy 'West's *Agrippina*, *Wolfe* and the expression of Restraint', *Zeitschrift für Kunstgeschichte* 58 (1995), p.222. Myrone discusses Chatham and Germanicus and the more sentimental strain of this literary and artistic arena, p.178.

³⁴ George in discussion of BM8294. George, *Catalogue*, VI, pp.705-6.

³⁵ Discussing Ronald Paulson's writing, Duffy, p.207.

What we see in Reynolds' painting is a powerful man confronted by his own fear and dread at his existence as an imperial figurehead. The work illustrates a narrative about masculine heroism and ambition in flawed and grotesque decline. It depicts a religious man in conflict with his state and with the commons, forced to confront his own wayward life and the reflexes of economic venture and gain under a series of events that have forced his sphere of influence beyond the boundaries of the nation and into the uncertain, violent spaces of distant empire.

Perhaps more specifically, the painting derives its subject matter from a domestic conflict between religious or liturgical and parliamentary sites of authority under empire. As such, it illustrates imperial masculinity in a state of development and rapid alteration, similar to those forms that have been identified in work by Martin Myrone and Daniel O'Quinn on imperial and national culture at the end of the eighteenth century, but here appearing in specific connection to the works of Shakespeare. Masculinity is a subject of this painting to an extent that it did not become a focus in the material discussed in Chapter One.

SECTION TWO

The representation of orientalised landscapes within the Boydell gallery was an integral part of the subject matter of the first chapter of this thesis. I looked there at a loosely orientalist politics of time in which images deriving from visits to foreign nations or from colonial voyages come to contribute to a sense of England's past. England – or Europe – seems to derive the very sense of a past, then, to some extent from the Orient. Cardinal Beaufort is an imperial villain primarily through his abuses of economic resources and of communication networks available to him as a result of his post within the church. There is a distinct thread of meaning in this work attached to how the Cardinal's religious office enables him to extend his sphere of influence beyond the nation. In the Beaufort work, too, there exists a degree of what could be thought of as religion-led orientalism, or to put it another way, a sense of difference or alterity that is connected to religious difference or to the distance of the past in the representation of the dying Cardinal. The subject matter emphasises Roman identity; at the same time in Reynolds' depiction it opposes the roman church to the post-Cromwellian monarchy in England and seeks to illustrate the resolution or containment of the Cardinal's life by a semi-judicious grouping made up of the King and a group of influential political men, who might be nobles or citizens. The story from Shakespeare clearly illustrates a conflict between foreign and overseas connections and domestic politics. But in Reynolds' depiction the painting seems to contain and converge different forces, and to

illustrate a kind of violence somehow derived from a source external to the nation, but here carried in limited form within its boundaries.

Julie Ellison, in one of the most illuminating of recent discussions of eighteenth-century affect in *Cato's Tears* provides us with a useful vocabulary with which to apprehend this work by Reynolds, with its subject matter of politics, sensibility and roman masculinity. She discusses the 'politics of emotion' and the 'foundational stories of imperial manhood' in her analysis of significant mid-century formulations for imperial masculine identity.³⁶ Of most relevance to this chapter is her discussion of the racial politics of the representation of suffering bodies, most notably their status for the English empire following the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713.³⁷ She also discusses Cato of the republican party, whose death was celebrated by Cicero and censured by Caesar.³⁸ Where landscape in the Boydell gallery was in some way influenced by colonial East Indian contexts, as in the example of William Hodges' work from *As You Like It*, Reynolds' *The Death of Cardinal Beaufort* depicts instead an interiorised territory. We see depicted here the male body come definitively to contain imperial sensation – and at the same time aestheticised as the object of a social focus.

To some extent, Reynolds' painting is concerned with the persistence of a chivalric culture and set of myths, predetermined by a dialectic of the notion of the sacred land and a venturesome masculinity. The representations of landscape discussed in the previous chapter are in

³⁶ Julie K. Ellison, *Cato's Tears and the Making of Anglo-American Emotion* (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1999), pp.15, 16, 20.

³⁷ Ellison, p.6.

³⁸ Ellison, p.53.

many ways to be discussed in tandem with the figure of the adventuring or exploring hero, that, usually male, figure who passes through the landscape, and makes it intelligible. This theme is particularly mapped out in the print satires I will move to discuss later in the chapter.

The connection of Shakespeare to the definition of eighteenth-century masculinity attached to the stoic model is apparent in that anecdote about Shaftesbury, who in his enthusiasm for such philosophies, condemned his own ‘Hotspur inclination’ and carried a volume of stoic philosophy in his pocket.³⁹ Resurgent interest in the stoic philosophies within Smith’s sixth edition of *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* of 1790 are in line with imperialism’s tendency to celebrate a notion of martial conflict as sensation and intensity of emotion, and to seek out its depiction in art.

Somewhere within the gothic characterisation of this work is a notion of the stoic adventurer and martial leader, which becomes visible when we bring some contemporary texts toward it as companion representations. What variety of imperial masculinity does Joshua Reynolds’ *Death of Cardinal Beaufort* work illustrate? Is my claim that there exists a model for adventuresome, valiant or chivalric masculinity behind the composition tenable? What is the foundation, similarly, for the claim that a form of classical stoic masculinity might have been so significant to the work and to its reception? I will outline my defence for these two claims by arguing for the comparison, first, of this work with contemporary representations of Othello, and second, with passages from Adam Smith’s *Theory of Moral Sentiments*. This closer analysis of the work

³⁹ G.J. Barker-Benfield, *The Culture of Sensibility: Sex and Society in Eighteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p.111.

provides a clearer understanding of both of these varieties of masculinity, in popular or current discourse at the end of the century, and aims to fill out our understanding about how they might have developed in conjunction with the works of Shakespeare.

A gothic notion of the knight errant, Saracenic hero, crusader, or northern scald hero is of some relevance to eighteenth-century interpretations of the character Othello. Perhaps the most immediate and least easily placed of relevant eighteenth-century contexts for Reynolds' painting is the character of Othello, in whom is combined an emphasis on affect as a determinant for masculine imperial identity in the later eighteenth century, and a contrasting response to the psychic import of foreign lands for the domestic reality of empire.

In a recent critical essay Virginia Mason Vaughan has discussed how in the character of Othello 'the stamp of nobility' (a phrase of Carol Carlisle) merges with 'the exaggerated behaviours of an Englishman' (Julie Hankey).⁴⁰ This conjunction of violence and nobility with a steadier, northern European temperament was, she suggests, fascinating to eighteenth-century reworkers of *Othello*. That this painting needs to be understood within a discursive movement to identify and define a northern character and temper, northern modes of dying and heroic imperial conduct, and a distanciation from the southern European temperament is my main claim in this chapter. The notion emphasised by Vaughan that Othello is both 'grand, awful and pathetic' and 'a European' gave structure to

⁴⁰ Virginia Mason Vaughan, 'Race Mattered: Othello in Late Eighteenth-Century England', *Shakespeare Survey* 51 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), pp.36, 49.

contemporary interpretations of his character.⁴¹ Such a combination of what is somehow Englishness and a noble, exaggerated southern European emotion, is to be found in Francis Gentleman's 'amiably elegant' 1777 characterisation of Othello as well as in Boaden, whom she cites.⁴² An emphasis on emotion and temperament as formative of character is important to Vaughan's analysis. The emotions of jealousy and rage, when exhibited, are interpreted Vaughan suggests as the escalation of high feeling beyond a condition of noble restraint and the more usually gentlemanly character of Othello as European individual. However, in the racialised terms of eighteenth-century character description, this escalation of feeling was also understood to be manifested by, or at the least latent within, the southern European or African. Garrick, she suggests, in his interpretation of Othello:

drew on the common assumption that people living in Africa, Ethiopia and Egypt were violent by nature, whereas people from more northern climes were steadier in temperament.⁴³

Vaughan suggests Othello is, during these years, a character in whose representation there comes to be clarified a fine line between southern gentlemanliness and a more definitive Englishness. Othello's 'fiery' temperament, boldness of expression and exaggerated passion are all evidence of his distinctive identity as a southern European or African. Her

⁴¹ Vaughan, p.59. Also see *Public Advertiser*, 29 October 1787.

⁴² Vaughan, p.58.

⁴³ Vaughan, p.59. Compare Michael Gamer for a definition of gothic as northern or Anglo-German vs. southern Mediterranean or oriental. Michael Gamer, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception and Canon Formation* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.49.

citations of Boaden are perhaps the most illustrative: the Moor is ‘grand, awful and pathetic’ but ‘... he was a European, there seemed to be philosophy in his bearing; there was reason in his rage’; Kemble Boaden assesses is ‘too northern, or English, in his self-control...’ in his portrayal.⁴⁴ Her emphasis is on the character of Othello as a man inflected by a noble, extroverted southern European emotion which is in some way in continuity with rather than severely differentiated from an English nobility of the ‘amiably elegant’.

Comparable is the character description to be found within Wolstenholme Parr’s 1795 text *The Story of the Moor of Venice, Translated from the Italian*. This work betrays a preoccupation with the presumed commonality of eighteenth-century character vocabularies, most notably with a premised interest in northern restraint, composure and a watery phlegmatism of temperament. Othello, by contrast, is ‘hasty and violent, free and generous’, reluctant to offer his forgiveness without accompaniment by the most exacting rationality, his mind virile and active in its energies, unable to attain its own tranquillity by the action of the will. He finds solace and self-confirmation in throwing himself into ‘the flinty and steel couch of war’. Quotations are selected that emphasise this is the depiction of ‘a brave and experienced general’: ‘nine moons’ or months ago, he recalls, a cessation of action in the ‘tented field’ results in a sense of loss and fondly recollected greatness. In the quotations, adjectives such as ‘dearest’ are used to refer to his ‘warlike endeavours’ and ‘wandering’ in

⁴⁴ James Boaden, *Memoirs of the Life of John Philip Kemble* 2 vols. (London: Longman et al, 1825), I, p.256. Boaden discusses a performance of *Othello* at the Drury Lane Theatre March 8 1785 in which John Kemble played Othello and Sarah Siddons Desdemona.

martial spaces of distant conflict, and much emphasis laid on his rank and ‘noble temper’.⁴⁵ As a mediaeval, southern European, Italian or Mahometan hero he is brave and direct, dissimulation alien to his being; refined society distant to his experience and its complex codes a source of puzzlement and unintelligibility. He is a gentleman, who enters partially into ‘family affairs and domestic regulations’, but only partially.⁴⁶

The account is not a modern one, simplistically affirming the hardened battle-ready male body in delight at destruction and the carnage of war. More evident is a language of European romance and knightly endeavour. The complexity of characterisation reflects helpfully on the illustration of *The Death of Cardinal Beaufort* in Reynolds’ painting from *Henry VI Part II*. Youthful adventures and hazards test Othello’s nobility just as sentiment and an eighteenth-century language of aestheticised terror are relatively unimportant: his temperament more characterised by overflowing confidence and ‘implacable hatred’.⁴⁷ Perfect in war, it is in romantic and private life that horror, assassination and murder introduce to Othello’s behaviour an uncontrolled ‘impetuosity’ and mark him as alien, a distant hero of foreign lands and principles. ‘Passionate’ suspicion is furthermore racialised; he is the ‘Slave of Suspicion’ where another European would not be so.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Parr, pp.69, 72, 71, 80.

⁴⁶ Parr, pp.74-5.

⁴⁷ Parr, p.72.

⁴⁸ Parr, p.75.

Conversely, Parr's reference to the character of the wounded Philoctetes marooned on the isle of Lemnos, – 'the solitude of Philoctetes is not more wretched nor his anguish more deplorable' – appears in a passage that emphasises surprising comparison. It is surprising, in the racialised terms of the discussion, that this Moorish or black individual should be found to exhibit a sentiment comparable to the northern suffering male, Philoctetes, an elevated character whose pitiful condition is more frequently cited in contemporary comparison with Lessing's Laocoön.⁴⁹ A mixture of gothic in the chivalric or romance sense and Grecian, as well as a more specific imagination-lead, fancy or Rousseauvian derived set of references are all relevant reference points for Parr and evident in the text's opening two paragraphs – so too is the 'theory of emotion'.⁵⁰

Othello was for at least parts of his eighteenth-century audiences the northern European gentleman in a slightly different guise. His elevated passions and mistaken excess identify him as more nearly southern in temperament, although otherwise gentlemanly, courtly and of elevated rank. It is my wish to turn to Othello as a comparison for Reynolds' *Beaufort* to

⁴⁹ Parr, p.76. See Luke Gibbons for a full discussion of appearances in eighteenth-century writing on the significance of the stricken Philoctetes, as a character of emotional excess, who frequently appears in representations or characterisations of the troubled nation within the empire. Gibbons, *Edmund Burke and Ireland*, Chapter 2; pp.59, 40-55, 59-60. See also Caroline A. Jones on how Lessing's preference for the passage in Winckelmann in which Philoctetes appears the character who 'raises no agonising cry' tended toward similar distinctions of temperament in the arts. *Eyesight Alone: Clement Greenberg's Modernism and the Bureaucratisation of the Senses* (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2005) discusses this passage, p.56. 'The civilised Greek can at the same time weep and be brave, whilst the uncivilised Trojan in order to do so must first stifle all human feeling.' The Greek, like Philoctetes, "both felt and feared", he uttered his pain and his trouble' Lessing trans. W.A. Steel pp.30-1. Adam Smith also discusses Philoctetes. Adam Smith, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* ed. by D.D.Raphael and A.L.Macfie (Indianapolis: Liberty Fund, 1976), p.30. Further references as *TMS* identify this modern edition which combines the text of 1790 with earlier editions.

⁵⁰ Parr, pp.65-66.

suggest, through this analysis, that the painting displays a similar concern to identify stoic and northern forms of identity and temperament. Contemporary representations of Othello exhibit similarities to a stoic and gentlemanly role yet are also defined by their distance from it. The Boydell prints included several illustrations of Othello, in bedside poses similar to the famed work of Beaufort and the attendants at his deathbed.

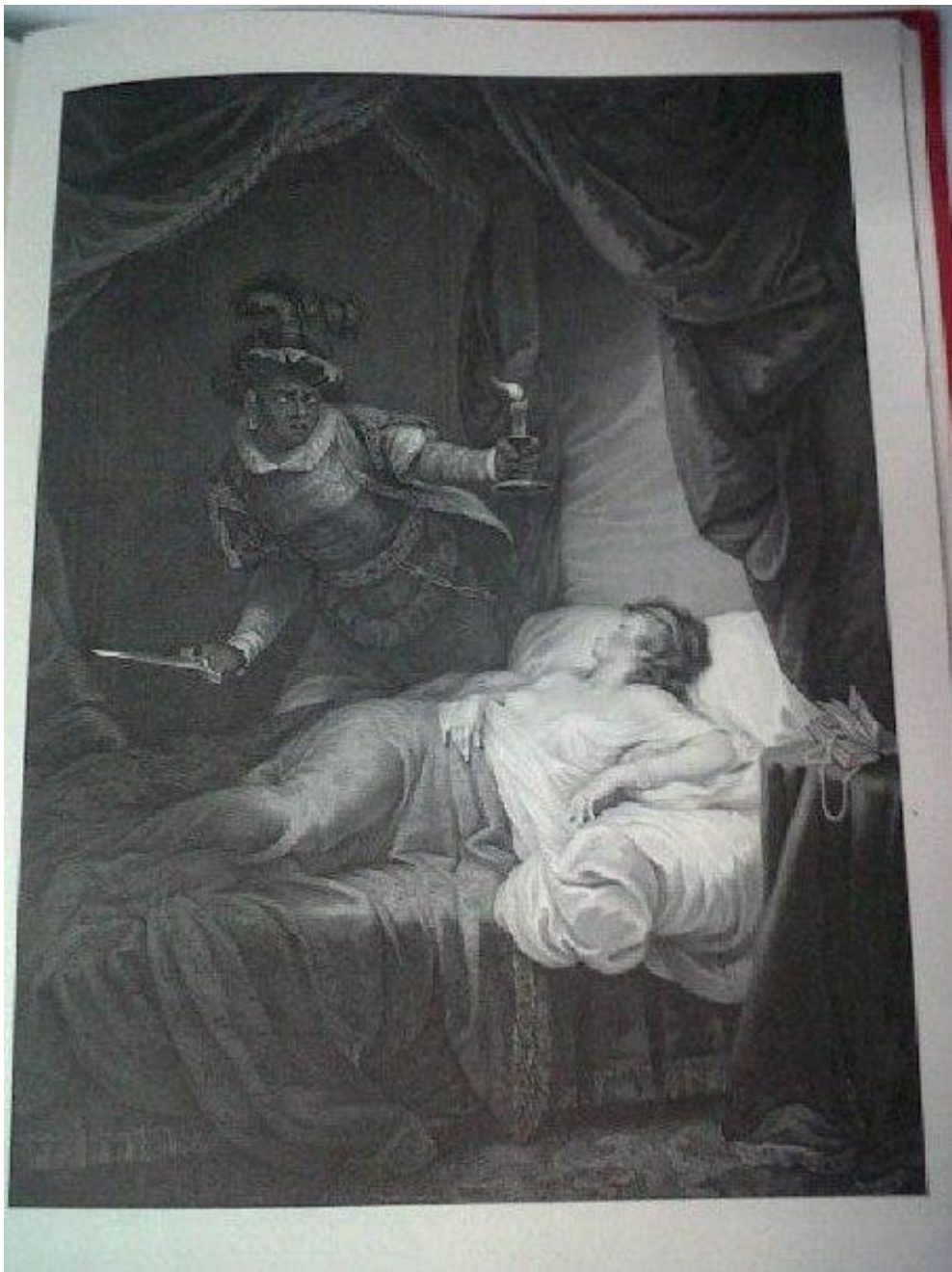


PLATE 12

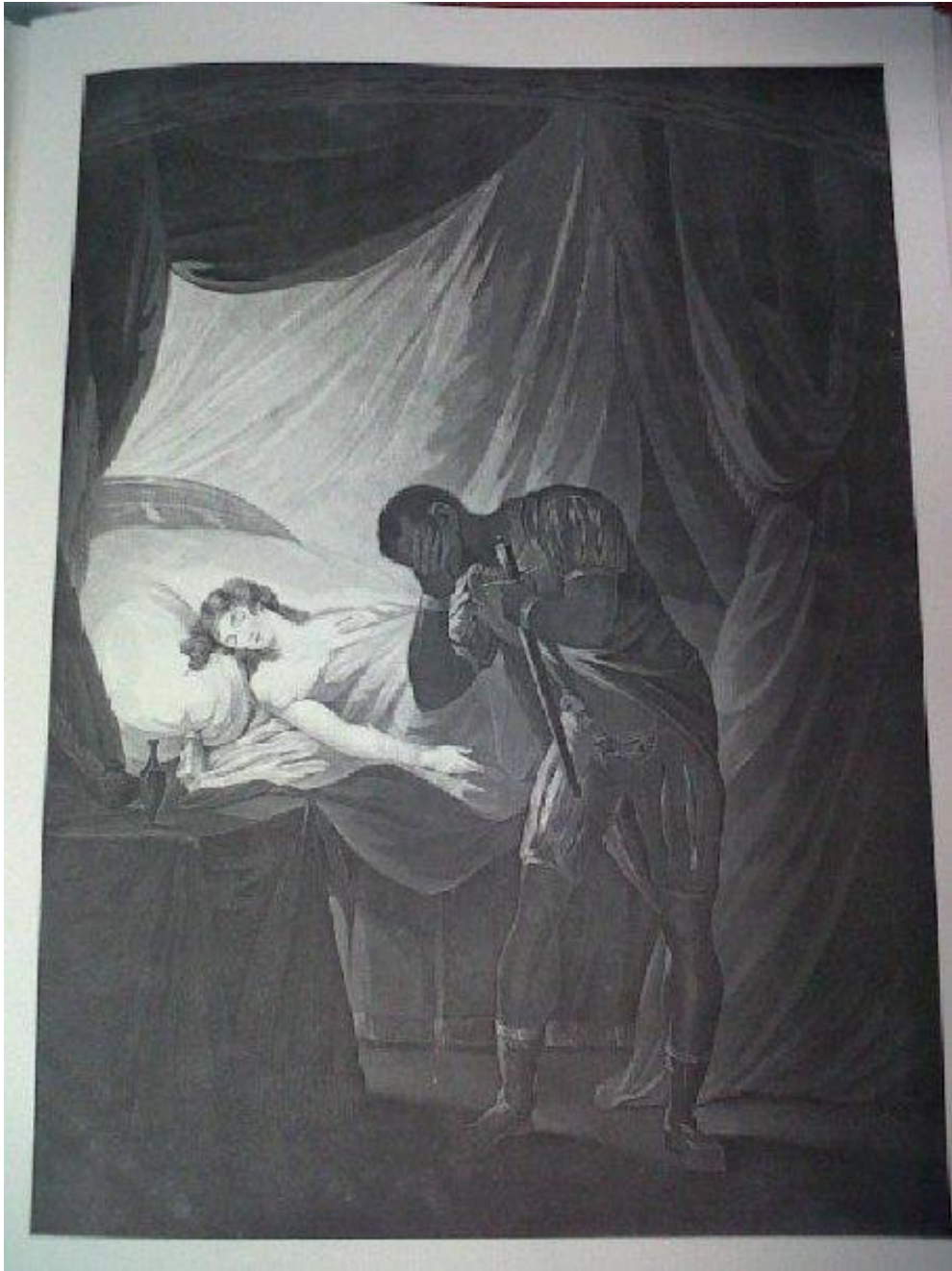


PLATE 13

Like the Beaufort work, these prints display an agonised confrontation with death, and a failure to remain composed. Othello and Beaufort in these representations both fail the stoic ideal of gentlemanly composure and social bonds, if in different ways. However, in Reynolds' work it is a reference to a northern European all-male grouping or form of

socially defined identity that is being made more clearly, and is brought into comparison with the imperial content of the story from Shakespeare and its narrative of conflicted religious power that otherwise contribute to the painting.

Certainly there was a diversity of thanatophilic representation current in the late century. Much of this takes more regularly sentimental and classical images as a subject for public and civic interpretation. The popularity of the notion of how to die well, how to apprehend death well, in artistic contexts and in discourses of male sociality and group and individual identity formation in this period was relatively extensive. There existed something of an overt attention to death and to modes of dying, including in imperial and heroic contexts. Some of the texts dealing with this material are quite unfamiliar or startling today. As well as art, this body of work included a set of texts which returned to the stoic philosophy. I will now move a little further away from the painting and the discussion of comparable contemporary heroes in the drama to discuss stoicism as it appeared in some eighteenth-century texts, aside from Reynolds' painting.

The sixth edition of Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* which appeared in 1790 was, as the Advertisement explained, extensively revised to include an extended emphasis on stoic philosophy, and particularly notions of 'self-command', stoic reserve, ethical theory and, in Parts Six and Seven 'propriety' and 'universal benevolence'.⁵¹ A reading of Smith is crucial to understanding the relevance within the contemporary culture of a vocabulary of stoic forms and ideas for constituting the self.

⁵¹ *TMS*, p.3.

Both new sections and expansions of existing chapters and parts, including an entirely new Part Six and a reordered Part Seven, reshaped the text to address – as Smith put it ‘the Stoical philosophy’ and ‘to explain more fully and to examine more distinctly, some of the doctrines of that famous sect’.⁵² There are passages in Part Seven’s elaboration of stoicism, and in Part Three, which discuss duty, ‘fortitude and firmness’ and the endurance of torture and death ‘with the most perfect patience and equanimity’.⁵³ Usually but not always these entail a discussion of high and gallant nobility, often in straightened circumstances and martial contexts.⁵⁴ One less frequently revisited passage from this heavily reworked edition reads as follows:

Whoever does not cordially embrace whatever befalls him, whoever is sorry that it has befallen him, whoever wishes that it had not befallen him, wishes in so far as in him lies, to stop the motion of the universe, to break that great chain of succession, by the progress of which that system alone can be continued and preserved, and, for some little conveniency of his own, to disorder and discompose the whole machine of the world.⁵⁵

Better known and more frequently cited in proximity to Shakespeare was Smith’s passage:

⁵² *TMS*, p.3. The introduction to the modern edition stresses the significance of these values in the text and insists that Smith’s ‘ethics and natural theology are predominantly stoic’. *TMS*, pp.6, 10.

⁵³ *TMS*, p.156.

⁵⁴ *TMS*, pp.281, 284-5. Several discussions of suicide and voluntary deaths are included within the later additions, and alongside them of appropriate deaths among groups of more or less judgmental or unjust soldiers and citizens.

⁵⁵ *TMS*, p.289.

[T]he man who, in danger, in torture, upon the approach of death, preserves his tranquillity unaltered, and suffers no word, no gesture to escape him, which does not accord perfectly with the feelings of the most indifferent spectator, necessarily commands a very high degree of admiration.⁵⁶

A bad death was a current, legible figure. Samuel Felton for example in his *Imperfect Hints Toward a New Edition of Shakespeare* in 1788 could write of Cromwell's difficult death in comparison with 'the terror of Cardinal Beaufort's last scene', paraphrasing 'what a sign it is of evil life, when death's approach is seen so terrible'.⁵⁷ Smith's famous passage on heroic magnanimity and benevolence states:

We are disgusted with that clamorous grief, which, without any delicacy, calls upon our compassion with sighs and importunate lamentations. We reverence that reserved, that silent and majestic sorrow, which discovers itself only in the swelling of the eyes, in the quivering of the lips and cheeks, and in the distant but affecting coldness of the whole behaviour.⁵⁸

This citation gives I think some sense of how the representation of a dying imperial leader we find depicted in Reynolds' *Cardinal Beaufort* might have been inflected by contemporary stoic ideas, and, equally, received in such a context by contemporaries.

⁵⁶ *TMS*, p.238.

⁵⁷ Samuel Felton, *Imperfect Hints Toward a New Edition of Shakespeare*, (London: Logographic Press, 1788), p.vi.

⁵⁸ *TMS*, p.24.

The subject of Reynolds' work is the moment of death itself, and supplementary to that, the refusal of the Cardinal to demonstrate remorse at the moment of his death for his corrupt and reprehensible behaviour during life. The work might as well have some of Adam Smith's themes behind it. Beaufort is the character who is not sorry for what has befallen him, who does not wish that his life had been otherwise or that he had acted in other ways; who in the presence of God and his King does not seek to introduce heroic or noble sentiment, and who, we see, threatens to 'disorder and discompose the whole machine of the world' by refusing to offer a sign of repentance. Overlaid with a Christian thematic and a complexity that brings the subsequent English Commonwealth into the scene as a setting and context for its otherwise Catholic and mediaeval iconography, Beaufort is at once a detestable and loathsome leader, connected with imperial ambition and corrupt religious and economic spheres of influence that bring down rather than enforce life within the nation's borders and are detrimental to the military, civil, or what Elizabethan politics would have termed the 'nutrimental', strength of the nation in traffic back and forth to its colonies and trading sites.⁵⁹

Not cool and reserved, but rather instead full of importunate lamentations, clamorous, indelicate, excessive in gesture, at the moment of death Beaufort exhibits a slippage of the northern European or Smith-ite stoic ideal. Beaufort is neither magnanimous nor exhibits fortitude: he is not a good model for imperial heroism where, perhaps, Chatham or Epaminondas or even Germanicus clearly were. Hated, then, anti-English,

⁵⁹ Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* ed. by Edwin Curley (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett, 1994), pp.372, 159-65.

and the exhibition of everything that is wrong, Catholic, corrupt, degrading or tyrannical about the realities of the empire that enriched and refined lives in England, Beaufort it seems is in Reynolds' work a figure held up to the viewer so that he might be despised. He refuses to exhibit grief or remorse, and combines this with a lack of restraint: he is resistant to looking back with placid resignation or with magnanimity at his life. It is, perhaps, then, a representation which provokes disgust rather than admiration in its depiction of the failure of the stoic character.

The painting allegorises the superior role of the spectator, or it might be more accurate to say of the mixed spectating group within the gallery space. It foregrounds therefore the spectators, male and female, who adjudicate over this, as a *bad* scene, and authenticate it as an illustration that promotes other more admirable and sustainable proto-modern modes of relating and organising social institutions and political life to those who are willing to await the affirmation of such political modes with patience and equanimity.

Is an orientalist, a chivalric, a gothic or a national traditional element compounded with the interest in representing stoic northern character in Reynolds' painting of Beaufort? If we compare the painting with depictions of Othello produced for Boydell's gallery, we immediately notice that one image of Othello, covering his face in grief, appears as the final print of the Boydell folio. This seems to suggest that there did exist some contemporary interest in the appropriate control of the emotions, and its connection to racial – here orientalised – identity. It would be possible to make further analyses of bedside depictions and death scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*, as

well as others from *Othello* that were comprised within the Boydell gallery works.

It is wrong to consider this scene, either in the originary text from Shakespeare or in Reynolds' painting, as one that takes simple political themes and power as its subject. It is here that the relevance of the stoic philosophy lies, particularly its emphasis on fraternal bonds. If not oriental then, Beaufort is a 'bad' character and one who certainly falls short of domestic – or national – political health. More specifically the painting, I think, is arranged around models for an economic order at least as readily as around political discourses or ideologies. The Cardinal offers to surrender England's wealth and the suggestion within the story of the play is that his misguided actions in life and the murders he has authorised have their root in his poor management of funds and consequent difficulties that have arisen. Liberal, fraternal bonds and allegiances within a relatively small private gathering matter above community in this painting, as in the stoic ideal. To go to a recent political commentator, the American political philosopher Sheldon Wolin, 'the stoic commitment was towards a society which lay outside politics'; in its late eighteenth-century incarnation we find this combined with a Christian and sentiment-led philosophy.⁶⁰ Whether in thanatophilic literature and art or in the writings of Adam Smith, what is to be found in later eighteenth-century interest in the stoic life is a political ideology that works toward an emphasis on relations between men and the conduct of the individual. This is often defined in settings extrapolated from domestic and architecturally interior locations.

⁶⁰ Sheldon S. Wolin, *Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought* (Princeton N.J. and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2004), p.73.

Reynolds' painting offers an artistic demonstration of a point of fissure in the social bond, which is to some extent sutured in art. Beaufort's inability to control emotion allies him to the oriental, Moorish or southern European and identifies his character as distinctly foreign or other – as an orientalist bad self for the domestic viewer, or perhaps one extended at some historical distance and therefore foreign to contemporary values. Regardless of the fact that it is not a very good painting, a discourse on aesthetics that takes an interest in northern climes and temperaments is in evidence in this representation and to some extent locates (or relocates) Beaufort as a meaningful interpretation of the heroic, imperial individual.

The work also turns toward Greek and classical art figures and ideals. This is a moment in cultural history in which the artistic and aesthetic are beginning to be understood as discrete arenas. The artistic representation of bravely suffered pain is of some relevance. G.E. Lessing's writings on the Laocoön group addressed the expression rather than the control of emotion as a noble characteristic.

In the depiction of Beaufort what we see then is an interest in the regulation of feeling and the moment of stoic death being redirected into an area of sentimental literary and artistic endeavour that is not quite that emphasised by Martin Myrone.⁶¹ Myrone draws attention helpfully to some corresponding eighteenth-century favourites for the depiction in art of emotional torment at the moment of death, however the emphasis of his reading is on sentimentalism and the tears displayed in works such as

⁶¹ He also writes on Germanicus in the 1770s as 'readily identified as a sentimental suffering hero', Myrone, p.178.

Thomas Banks' *Thetis and the Nymphs Rising from the Sea to Console Achilles for the Loss of Petroclus*.⁶²

Reynolds' composition is without the celebration or pomp of the *Death of Wolfe*, or the aestheticised and sentimental literary and feminine quality of depictions of the death of Chatham, as discussed by Myrone, and it presents a slightly different arena of emphasis.⁶³ It is not necessarily a new emphasis, however, to interpretations of Shakespeare: Duffy also mentions Raphael Mengs' discussion of stoicism in the 'Poussinesque' *Anthony and Cleopatra* work, which he completed in 1759.⁶⁴

Trends to represent stoicism in the arts might still be thought of in contiguity with other eighteenth-century discourses which concern affect. Thomas Banks also contributed the relief sculpture over the entrance to the gallery spaces, which combined gothic elements and reference to the sister arts, poetry and painting.⁶⁵ Lessing's significant writings on the Laocoön group owe much to a set of eighteenth-century discourses around the distinction of Greek from northern representations of pain and dying and in response to pain and death.

In Lessing, the northern stoic appears in opposition to the Greek who, with his 'hot tears', 'both felt and feared' and 'uttered his pain and his

⁶² Myrone, p.181.

⁶³ See also Duffy article for discussion of the central place of the Belvedere Laocoön in defining the 'stoic ideal of greatness of soul' in aesthetic theory: its depiction of 'goodness, composure and inner strength sufficiently internalised to combat the physical pain and emotional distress being experienced by the Trojan priest and his two sons' in Winckelmann and the philosophical school he represented. His comments on serenity, self-control, order and constancy of the will, in the Stoic and Socratic philosophies, and on the importance of features, gestures and attitudes, the 'moral purpose of expression' are instructive for this argument, pp.208, 220, 224.

⁶⁴ It went on display at Stourhead House in this year, Duffy, p.210.

⁶⁵ See Chapter Three for an image of this work.

trouble'.⁶⁶ In the barbarian, Lessing suggests, heroism occurred as a devouring flame, unstoppable, 'which raged continually and consumed', whilst in the Greek, heroism was 'like the hidden sparks in the flint, which sleep quietly as long as no outward force awakens them'.⁶⁷ At the same time the refusal among the northern races to demonstrate passion or suffering is affirmed: 'we Europeans of a wiser posterity know how to control our mouth and our eyes'; 'politeness and dignity forbid cries and tears'.⁶⁸ There is in this text a movement to align savagery, hardness and cool, stony reserve, or a politeness and dignity that 'forbids cries and tears' with the ancient northern hero, rather than the Greek, and to identify it as specifically northern.⁶⁹ Caroline A. Jones' discussion of the passage in Lessing which is concerned with the reconciliation of barbaric, Nordic ancestry with refined Greek aesthetic and heroic principles is most revealing: 'to master all pain, to face death's stroke with unflinching edge, to die laughing under the adder's bite' was a Greek quality, distinguished from the northern. And so, 'these are the traits of old Nordic heroism.. not so the Greek! The Greek

⁶⁶ 'Laocoön' trans. by Steel, p.30. West, *Image of the Actor* discusses Laocoön, the Apollo Belvedere, Lessing and Winkelmann, p.120. Also Kramnick, *Making of the English Canon* has some useful comments on Lessing and the northern aesthetic, climate and the terrible and melancholy, pp.228-30. The ancient hero must 'conceal all pains': and the depiction of the 'topmost note' of any emotion is seen to 'tie the wings of fancy'. 'Laocoön' trans. by Steel, pp.31, 37. The implication is that this is the region of the divine or greatness of soul and that any depiction will limit it to 'sensuous impression' and that it may therefore be better to avoid such representations in the arts, or to deliberately lower their intensity.

⁶⁷ Lessing, p.30.

⁶⁸ He is discussing Palnotoko, the Danish hero and founder of the town of Jomsburg. As in Smith there is considerable interest in the northern character: 'active fortitude' of 'the first rude ages' and the 'the marks of the ancient Northern hero'. Lessing, p.30.

⁶⁹ Lessing is reading Winkelmann who endures misery with greatness, Jones, p.53. He compares Laocoön with Philoctetes. The other comparison is with the much celebrated work of Timanthes' Agamemnon at the sacrifice of Iphigenia, with his face veiled.

acted from principles whereas the barbarian acted out of his natural ferocity and callousness'.⁷⁰ A picture begins to emerge of the northern hero.

Allusions to the heroism of Poussin's *Germanicus* work are complex in this late-century painting, and lend the characterisation dignity in spite of its theme of degradation and imperial excess. A contemporary interest in stoicism inflects Reynolds' composition, and is opposed to the sentimental emphases of works analysed by Myrone, such as the Banks' *Germanicus* relief. We do not find precisely illustrated here what Adam Smith termed that 'refinement of philosophy', perhaps a refinement of society altogether beyond 'nature in her sound and healthful state'. The interpretation of Beaufort's death scene does I think in the contexts I have provided here become available to the viewer as one that proffers a form of northern European identity, refracted however through stoic forms or discourses, combined with some concern to explore the periphery of the southern European or oriental and the validity of such forms of masculinity for the heroic imperial ideal.

It is finally necessary to observe that this painting depicts not a familial scene, as, contradictorily, does the great Poussin work from which Reynolds lifted the composition for this work, but instead shows a group of public men, gathered in a situation of relative privacy and seclusion, around the scene of the death of an important political figure. The scene is devoid of feminine or female attendants. I want to suggest here that it might act as a barometer for the changing status of masculine identifications in the progress of empire. Where for Rowe illustrating the work in 1709, terror,

⁷⁰ Jones, p.56.

piety, fear and pity were simply notable elements of political life, which a King's rule might reasonably entail, by the end of the century these discourses were overwhelmingly gendered feminine in their significance and circulation. It is worth remarking, before I go on to the discussion of satires which forms the final section of this chapter, the extent to which women are deficient in this representation. This I think lays added emphasis on its significance as a work that seems to be moving toward defining a particular variety of masculinity, or masculine group formation. Women have been neither invited to take part in nor to identify with the represented forms and the cultural coding Reynolds displays, but have, as it were, come to be situated on the other side of culture and of social formation as it occurs here. Their role becomes wholly that of spectators to the culture – bystanders some of whom are innocent and some less so – and here external to the represented scene. Whether this is defining of developments in the English or British culture and society of the age, or a more direct response in art to imperial and martial conflict is hard to simply classify here. It is however necessary to note that Reynolds' classically influenced composition characterises this psychologised and privileged moment as one without female intermediaries.

The social reception of experienced terror, as demonstrated in this work, brings to mind Luke Gibbons' account of a counter to Adam Smith's disinterested stoic spectator. He has in a recent book spent time considering an affective response that emerges in the context of colonialism: a 'colonial sublime' more immanent in quality than other versions of the sublime and associated in particular with Edmund Burke's Irishness. This is seen to

develop in response to the inadequacies of the abstract, impartial spectator when apprehending the specificity of bodies in pain under colonialism.⁷¹ This affective critical vocabulary may go some way toward suggesting why the scene of Reynolds' *Cardinal Beaufort's Bedchamber*, haunted by its obsessive recourse to the figure of 'the busy meddling fiend/ That lays strong siege upon this wretch's soul', might have been of such persistent interest in the later years of the century, and why it came to be repeated in graphic satires responding to revolution in France, or to the ongoing trial in London of Warren Hastings.

SECTION THREE

The proximity of Shakespeare to both a classical vocabulary and a gothicised stoicism in this work is one of its characterising features. Reynolds' other works for Boydell were his heavily supernatural scene of *Macbeth's* witches at their cauldron and a Fairy *Puck* seated on a toadstool, accompanied by the caption, 'through the forest I have gone/ but Athenian

⁷¹ Gibbons, pp.2-4.

found I none'.⁷² The equivalence of the Shakespearean sublime with a native gothic of village superstition, gloomy northern woods, fairy scenes and popular enchantment was considerable during these years. I consider this further in the fourth chapter of the thesis. The figure of the imp within the painting is best apprehended within a vaguely supernatural and native oeuvre, which today is best noticed in Elizabeth Montagu's well-known essay on the Shakespearean supernatural. Montagu's work on the 'praeternatural beings' and on the classical in her *Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespear*, first published in 1769, is of considerable contextual importance for my discussion in this chapter, and elsewhere in the thesis. However, the subject of enquiry here is shorter in range and scope. The imp as it originally appeared in Reynolds' *Beaufort* painting came into contact with imperial questions and relevances in satirical prints that referenced this painting.

It is these satirical images that derive a 'colonial sublime' from the contemporary subject matter of Reynolds' Shakespeare painting *The Death of Cardinal Beaufort* that the final section of this chapter will now move to discuss. Enthusiasm for Reynolds' work and investment in looking at it and returning to it included a significant interest among satirists of the day. This next section addresses a group of satires: 'Tom Paine's Nightly Pest', 'Political Dreamings! Visions of Peace! Perspective Horrors!', 'Nightly Visitors at St Ann's Hill', 'No Abatement', 'The Moment of Reflection, Or a Tale for Future Times'.

⁷² *A Catalogue of the Pictures in the Shakespeare Gallery* (London: John Boydell, 1791), p.86.

Satires that cite words or reference the plays of Shakespeare recurrently dwell on colonial issues. Empire was, however, somewhat problematic by the final decade of the century, as Paine's ironically untroubled American dream in 'Tom Paine's Nightly Pest' hints, and the relation of America to France less than self-evident, and these satires are a reminder of this. It is likely that there was a much wider circulation of these satires, and audience for them, than for Reynolds' painting, although the accessibility of the engraving once it became available in 1790 would have increased renown for Reynolds' work.⁷³

In the satires the main point of emphasis is the illustration of an imperial figurehead depicted in the central part of the picture. Each satire displays a failure of equanimity and they frequently represent the central figure's dreams or anxiety-ridden thoughts. Self-command, or rather its agonised portrayal, is the subject of most of these satires. Many also draw on what Smith found in stoicism, that notion of 'stoical apathy', or the absence of feeling or passion: a notion he connected and compared with the more current notion of Gray's 'pang' of melancholy.⁷⁴ It is relevant to remember that Hume also wrote of a masculine ideal that carried intimacy and feeling in 'The Stoic' and 'Of the Passions', Book 2 of *A Treatise of Human Nature*.⁷⁵

⁷³ For a discussion of the likely circulation of prints across the Continent, Britain and in America during the period 1765-1800, Diana Donald *The Age of Caricature: Satirical Prints in the Reign of George III* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), p.20. She suggests that from 1793 trade decreased with the French revolutionary wars although there was still circulation of prints and resurgences of trade following this date, and considerable popularity of prints among German and Spanish audiences.

⁷⁴ *TMS*, p.143.

⁷⁵ David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature* 3 vols. (London: John Noon, 1739), II. David Hume, *Essays and Treatises* 2 vols. (London: T.Cadell, 1784), I, pp.153-63.

The most noticeable elements of the painting carried over to the satires include the Cardinal's hand grasping the bedclothes. An identifiable and much iterated motif from contemporary acting theory, this hand gesture would have been understood to clearly represent, or to directly signify, grief or horror.⁷⁶ The imp controversially removed from the engravings of the painting signalling an imagined realm of horrors is also a reference; similarly, the audience group of political men, distraught and turning to fear and God for their account; and the bed itself, a symbol of a political and public space specific to the middle ages or renaissance, illustrated in satires that dwell on the wrought and tense psychology of the imperial merchant and Governor, Warren Hastings, or the Atlantic-crossing revolutionary and radical Tom Paine, or the fraught war minister William Windham. I will go on to explain each of these elements.

Superstitious beliefs, haunting and gloomy spirits as a subject running contra the religious content of the work particularly became a focus when it came to be engraved. Recent critical analyses by Emma Clery or Finbar Barry Flood have overlooked the debt of this group of satires to Reynolds' painting, and have also passed over the specifically Shakespearean resonances of the supernatural figures they depict.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ see for example Gilbert Austin, *Chironomia: or a Treatise on Rhetorical Delivery* (London: T.Cadell and W.Davies, 1806), p.366.

⁷⁷ Emma Clery, *The Rise of Supernatural Fiction 1762-1800* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995 or 1999), pp.164-7; Finbar Barry Flood, 'Correct Delineations and Promiscuous Outlines: Envisioning India at the Trial of Warren Hastings', *Art History* 29:1 (2006), p.61.

Whatever the relevance of the character of the imp or fiend, or not, to the reception of the work, the painting's representation of supernatural forces as well as its themes of arbitrary power, corruption, rebellion, terror and national fate, resonated powerfully in political contexts: colonial authority as well as the political upheavals of revolutionary France fell within the scope of the satires to emerge following it, and the presence or absence of the imp in the painting came to provide a subject matter for these satires also.

A reading of this imp would perhaps detail its connection with stoic philosophies. Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* includes a satirical anti-stoic preface by Democritus Jnr., which discusses Chrissipius and includes among its analysis a discussion of devils as a cause for melancholy.⁷⁸ Stoicism may be one potential influence that bears upon the visual depiction of a gothic imp in Reynolds' interpretation of these lines from Shakespeare. Gothicised stoicism was a persistent strain within gothic representation, and signals the mixed inheritance which was often intrinsic to or definitive of gothic. Hurd also points out that the 'gloomy visions of demons and spirits' of paganism and Christian superstitions had in part originated in Platonic and Alexandrian philosophy: they were themselves a part of the classical heritage.⁷⁹ At the same time, and contradictorily, other writers working during these years were seeking to disentangle and clarify the specific,

⁷⁸ Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* 2 vols. (London: J.Cundee, J.Cuthell, J.Sewell, J.Walker and Ogilvie and Son, 1800), I, pp.67-68. Vivienne Brown writes the stoic philosophy also popularised a notion of the stoic daemon or guardian spirit, as for example in Epictetus' *Discourses*, urging self-scrutiny and a contemplation of the genius within each being and of God within the individual. Vivienne Brown, 'The Dialogic Experience of Conscience: Adam Smith and the Voices of Stoicism' *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 26:2 (1992-3), p.240.

⁷⁹ Hurd, III, p.252.

ethnic purity of ‘Gothic’, northern trends and mythologies, and to separate them from classical strands of inheritance.

The compositional debt of the painting to Poussin’s *Death of Germanicus* has often been acknowledged. Myrone notes too that Fuseli’s version of the scene of the death of Beaufort, painted in 1772 and exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1774, and which in many respects bears similarities to the work by Reynolds, ‘bears an obvious resemblance to Gavin Hamilton’s *Andromache Bewailing the Death of Hector* and through him to Nicholas Poussin and the antique’.⁸⁰ It seems that for contemporaries it was the visual representation of torment and horror in Reynolds’ painting, in opposition to the classical composition, that required comment.⁸¹ Reviews when it was first exhibited commented on the tasteless intrusion of the supernatural into the painting in the figure of the imp which was included at the bolster over the Cardinal’s head and mentioned the ‘horror’ of this figure:

the grin of despair and death may be finely painted, but it is an object from which every one turns his eye.... The hand, which is wonderfully painted, would have been sufficient to mark the gripe of death.⁸²

⁸⁰ Myrone, p.170.

⁸¹ Postle, p.259.

⁸² *Times*, 8 May 1789. Roe has a good account of the critical reception and discusses the imp as a revolutionary figure, pp.467, 469. He also discusses articles in the *Analytical Review* for June 1789 and March 1790 that respond negatively to the fiend at the Cardinal’s head in Reynolds’ painting.

Repton's *The Bee* called the figure of the imp '[a] devil, in the character of a Chimney-sweeper, waiting for Beaufort's soul'.⁸³ The *Gentleman's Magazine* described the demon in the painting as 'of the race of Fuseli, father of ghosts and spectres'.⁸⁴ The illustration of the 'departing spirit' or troubling imp at the Cardinal's head was considered inappropriate, or more specifically, lacking in taste, in the work of a great painter and to somehow fail to fulfil the work of artistic genius. The reviewer calls it an object which cannot be contemplated: 'from which every one turns his eye'.⁸⁵

The erasure of supernatural elements from this painting became the main subject of the newspaper reviews. Boydell, it seems, sought to evade the bad press surrounding Reynolds' imp. The pressures of contemporary taste to correct the image were evidently great. The painting was engraved by Caroline Watson, engraver to Queen Charlotte, and who would later provide a frontispiece to the 1798 edition of Reynolds' *Discourses*, and engrave Thomas Lawrence's 1790 portrait of Elizabeth Carter. Between 1790 and 1792 the imp disappeared from the engravings. The first version, published on March 25 1790, around ten months after the painting was first exhibited, includes a demon, prominently visible above the head of the Cardinal, but by August 1 1792, it has been erased from the plate.⁸⁶ The original painting remained on view at the Shakespeare Gallery throughout

⁸³ Repton, *The Bee*, pp.41-2.

⁸⁴ *Gentleman's Magazine LX* Pt.2 (1790), pp.1088-9.

⁸⁵ *Times*, 8 May 1789.

⁸⁶ The best reproduction is to be found in Pressly, p.55. On the two engravings see also Boase, 'Illustrations', p.103; Bate, 'Shakespearean Allusion', p.200; Roe, p.467. Roe inspected the canvas at Petworth in 1969 'with the aid of a long ladder and a bright light', and suggests here that the imp in the painting itself may have been subject to overpainting, but this is disputed by David Mannings in his catalogue entry. Mannings, p.525.

the 1790s. But the absence of the fiend in the engraving – this deliberate *editing* of the supernatural – it seems took on a significance of its own. Perhaps as a consequence of this erasure, the fiend, understood to be mistaken in Reynolds' oeuvre, became of interest to the satirists.

Some of the satires take the political chaos around Hastings and the East India Company as their subject; some move also to consider European imperial, Irish and even French revolutionary politics. I will explore these intricacies of contemporary political reference in the discussion that follows. There are five main satires to be considered here, although one appears in two similar editions.

The first work, William Dent's 'No Abatement' (May 31 1791), locates Hastings in an inner world of imperial violence behind power in the colonies. This is a satire on the lengthy impeachment of Warren Hastings in London, within which Beaufort's guilt becomes both a figure for Hastings' guilt, and national responses to terror and violence in the East Indies amass. Burke appears citing from the Witches Song in *Macbeth* and Hastings in the place of Beaufort, in bed, is attended by devils in the form of North, Fox and so on, and beset by visions of tortured and murdered figures from the East Indies. The images of Windham and Catherine the Great in two other of the satires replicate the gesture of Hastings in this work, agonised and beset by visions he cannot control in his bedchamber.



PLATE 14

Thomas Paine is illustrated among transatlantic terror around legality and jurisdiction in wake of events in France in ‘Tom Paine’s Nightly Pest’ by James Gillray (26 November 1792) (BM 8137/ BM 8132). This satire appears in two versions, both of which demonstrate ‘Pleas’ ‘Charges’ and ‘Punishments’ for ‘Thos. Paine’, and one of which includes a blue imp with a violin playing the *Ca Ira* disappearing through the casement. The other, a mirror image, shows a barred window. The pair suggest apprehensions about a Paine-ite strand of radicalism that stretched from rural England to the shores of America and revolutionary France, challenging the authority of Church, State and the legal process. Colonial guilt and gothic horror, themes from Reynolds’ painting, are also emphasised in this satire.



PLATE 15



PLATE 16

A later satire, 'The Moment of Reflection, Or a Tale for Future Times' (26 December 1796), depicts Catherine the Great of Russia seated on a casket and an array of horrors, but still carries a clear line of allusion to

the Beaufort painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds in Catherine's pose. The Empress grasps at the fabrics of the box on which she is seated and is tormented by visions of violence and political chaos in Poland and Romania, with an impish skeleton approaching her from behind (lwl 08802). It also perhaps alludes to the earlier Dent satire. It is not a satire, but even one of the illustrations for a cheap octavo edition of the plays published by Bellamy and Robarts in 1791 depicts Richard III in a pose derived from the Beaufort painting, and like several illustrations in this edition bears a similarity to the Boydell gallery paintings.



PLATE 17



Published in the year 1798 by W. Woodcut

PLATE 18

The treatment of Irish colonialism in Gillray's 'Nightly Visitors at St Ann's Hill' (12 September 1798) (BM 9244) loosely references Reynolds' Beaufort's death scene, with hovering imps representing faction or discord and bearing a banner that announces 'Confessions of O' Connor Ol Bond'. It also depicts the Irish rebels Lord Edward Fitzgerald, Grogan, a leader of the rebels in Wexford, Bagenal Harvey commander-in-chief at Wexford,

Quigley or O'Coigley and John and Henry Shears before a bed with heavy curtains.⁸⁷



PLATE 19

Though this thesis does not have occasion to discuss British West Indian policy and life in as much depth as East Indian governance and imperial history, one satire from the series demonstrates the war minister William Windham accompanied at his bedside by a figure of Justice in the pose of seated melancholy and an array of references to British and French

⁸⁷ Dorothy George discusses in more detail evidence given by O'Connor, Emmet and Mcnevin to secret committees of the Irish House of Commons and Lords in August 1798 on the Irish conspiracy, and the exact circumstances of execution or death of each character, George, *Catalogue*, VII, p.474.

conflict in the colonies. This work by James Gillray is titled ‘Political Dreamings! Visions of Peace! Perspective Horrors!’ (November 9 1801). It depicts death on stilts in a revolutionary cap trampling a ‘list of British conquests’, ‘Cape of Good Hope, Malta, Egypt, West Indies’, with a terrible vulture in place of the imp at Beaufort’s head, and a fat demon playing the revolutionary song, the *Ca Ira*, at the foot of the bed. This satirical work is, as Roe points out, almost ten years later than the display of the painting and its engraving and the context for a resurgence of interest in the Shakespeare work must exist, perhaps directly associating the Beaufort scene with the Battle of the Nile and the French Revolutionary wars.⁸⁸



PLATE 20

Many of these satires are distinctive for their representation of interior scenes and closed and closeted domestic and bedchamber spaces. Allusion to Shakespearean supernaturalism in the caricatures is fairly free,

⁸⁸ Roe, p.470.

and moves beyond the text of *Henry VI Part 2*. The satires often develop visual representations of horror and guilt in which colonial violence surfaces as a tormenting memory, hounding men in power. Charles James Fox in ‘Nightly Visitors’, for example, seems to be personally identified with Shakespeare’s words as well as with Beaufort, and responds in murderous words from the text of *Macbeth*, ‘Why do’st thou shake thy Goary locks at me?/ Dear Bravest, Worthiest, Noblest of Men!’ when Fitzgerald questions him:

Who planned my Treasons, & who caus’d my Death?

Remember poor Lord Edward, and despair!!!-

The words from the play perhaps suggest the overlay of private intimacy and friendship between the two men across the apparent supernatural horror and revolutionary Irish terror of the image.

In William Dent’s ‘No Abatement’, Burke extemporises freely on the Witches’ Song from *Macbeth*. The satirist employs here a generalised language of Shakespearean terror which is part gothic, part tragic and also bears echoes from *Othello* and *The Merchant of Venice*:

Ay now you are my good spirits,

Black, White, Blue and Grey, torment

Him with a choice of deaths, let

him not rest night nor day, whilst

I raise up those Shades, and thou

My chief Spirit F...s, Source of

the charges, thou Imp of Envy

strip him of his plumage and

hold my Spectacles
to his Eyes, that he may
See as I do, confess, die,
And be dam'd for hoarding
his Riches (OIOC P1765).

Hastings, lying in the bed in place of Beaufort, replies:

If Guilty of these represented Crimes, consequent reflection were
worse than Death.

He is taunted with objects including a goblet, noose and dagger. The spectacles Burke holds before him allow him to see a cloud filled with wronged Indians. Here the end of the trial appears as the end of the world: the image hanging on the wall reads, 'Trial's End: Doomsday'.

While this kind of loose citation is difficult to localise precisely, it seems to summon a string of troubled Shakespearean heroes to compound the torment of the dying Cardinal and combine their angst with the horrible images rising before the central figure. The primary theme is politics, and a Poor Box labelled with the Whig colours 'Blue and Buff' appears in the foreground.

The satires build incrementally on one another. By this I mean that the Catherine the Great satire resembles the work 'No Abatement' lampooning Burke at the Hastings trial and in its depiction of the horrors of political uprising also echoes the satirical depiction of Tom Paine in his bed, although Catherine the Great is affected while the sleeping Paine, it might be noticed, is stoically apathetic. The language of Shakespearean gothic presented a powerful vocabulary with which to respond to the violent

realities of colonial experience and apprehend those aspects of colonial power not easily assimilated into national narratives, such as the current politics in the East Indies. The reference is not always specific only to Reynolds' Cardinal Beaufort work: Henry Fuseli's 1772 painting of the *Death of Cardinal Beaufort* can appear as a visual reference in some of these caricatures as well as Reynolds' painting for Boydell.

Gillray's Tom Paine satire is in close dialogue both with Reynolds' painting and Caroline Watson's engravings, as the Cardinal's death scene is replayed in a rustic futurity of tattered drapes, and Paine barefoot, sleeping beneath his coat, grasps at the straw bed in place of the heavy velvets of Reynolds' image. In appropriating this image, Gillray is trying to co-opt the imagery of the Beaufort painting for other political uses. There is no tormenting imp above Paine's head in this illustration. An imp flees through the window, and above Paine's head appear the faces of Fox and Priestley. His head, covered with a liberty cap, rests on a blue, white and red striped pillow bearing the words 'Vive l'America'. The image is heavily parodic: in both versions it depicts Paine sleeping peacefully, seditious thoughts dispelled from the characterisation. His peaceful expression is, however, at the centre of the satire. In one of these images the imp troubling Beaufort has been removed, only for its horror to surface as abstract legalism in the replacement imagery. The terrors of the three judges are mirrored by a subtler supernaturalism that turns on the absence of the 'fiend' from Paine's thoughts – a fiend which is literally leaving the scene. The satire illustrates political peace and legalistic violence, and the visual emphasis on Paine's undisturbed sleep, Priestley overhead, might well recollect the violence of

the Birmingham riots of July 14 1791, in which Priestley's house at Fair Hill was destroyed, and Priestley himself chased from his bed.⁸⁹ Priestley had cause to cite the scene of Beaufort's deathbed in comments on the moral wealth of the Dissenters and Unitarians in his written text of 1790. He referred to Beaufort's deathbed in response to the conservative cleric Edward Burn's hostilities, identifying Burn with Beaufort.⁹⁰

Little content in these satires is comparable with or similar to the socio-political or aesthetic contexts of stoic groups that I have been discussing so far in this chapter. Yet their very style seems to circumvent and simultaneously reference, through the use of exceptionally violent imagery, the stoic content to be found elsewhere in the contemporary culture, and which might be seen in the painting I began this chapter by discussing or in literary and art works from the period. Much in these satires targets heroism, and assesses a tow of violence around the otherwise celebratory imagining of the masculine imperial individual inserted in the place of Beaufort, whether Windham or Hastings, or even Catherine the Great. Dorothy George does not mention that the two Tom Paine satires make reference to Beaufort or Shakespeare's *Henry VI Part II* in her extensive notes in the volumes cataloguing the British Museum satires.

⁸⁹ The riot was sparked by a dinner celebrating the Revolution anniversary held by the Constitutional Society of Birmingham, which Priestley did not attend. See J.B. Rose, 'The Priestley Riots of 1791', *Past and Present* 18 (1960), p.73. On the relationship of the Revolution societies in England to Revolution in France, see Kathleen Wilson, 'Inventing Revolution: 1688 and Eighteenth-Century Popular Politics', *Journal of British Studies* 28 (1989) 349-86.

⁹⁰ Joseph Priestley, *Familiar Letters Addressed to the Inhabitants of Birmingham, in Refutation of Several Charges, Advanced against the Dissenters and Unitarians* (Birmingham: J.Thompson, 1790), p.139.

Joshua Reynolds' *Henry VI Part II* painting for Boydell's exhibition spaces depicts not a grouped family scene (as, contradictorily, does the great Poussin work from which Reynolds lifted the composition for the work) but instead shows a group of public men, gathered in a situation of relative privacy and seclusion, around the scene of the death of an important political figure. This emphasis on a bedside scene is carried through, if rather perversely, in all of the satires to emerge in answer to the painting. Supernaturalism is as much the content of the Tom Paine satire through allusion to the Beaufort painting, as it is an added theme in the satires, and it is an error to consider the supernaturalism of the satires in isolation from the painting and its references and hence to wrongly infer, as I believe does Emma Clery, the connection of supernaturalism to one political leaning or another.⁹¹

One of the most striking elements of the cultural preoccupation with the *Beaufort* death scene through the final decade of the century is the recurrence of its representation of an eerie, tormented vision of a man in power. While the satires are clearly national and patriotic, the intrusion of colonial subject matter also clearly identifies them as imperial in subject matter. At the same time, as satires, they also demonstrate a significant comic resolution or avoidance of the horrors of empire that they purport to portray.⁹² The satirical responses police and defend what is good for the nation and contributes to life within its borders and identify, through visual dialogue with the artwork, what is destructive, or deathly, usually and

⁹¹ Clery, p.167.

⁹² Chapters 4 and 5 discuss satire as a form of making or as politics with a greater depth of analysis.

ideally kept beyond its borders. The German magazine *London und Paris* described the satire of Windham as a terrible vision of patriotism, writing of him as ‘a mad visionary’:

Ah yes ... the noble patriot has indeed been granted a vision: all hell is broken loose! Now you can see for yourselves the atrocities and horrors of this fine Peace, which have gathered around the deeply-troubled patriot’s bed in the eerie witching hour!⁹³

However the national response to the satire was perhaps more sympathetic to the nation’s encounter with imperial politics, and less limited by the terms of supernaturalism. The works, in their depiction of static military heroes and imperial figures, in grotesque replication of Beaufort’s agonised deathbed throes, also seem to satirise a notion of the sacred land, of the alien yet fruitful territory through which the hero passes, which he renders intelligible. There are some references in vignettes within the prints to ‘Domesday’, perhaps implied as an inevitable effect of imperial striving overseas. In such imagery as the satirical prints derived from the large scale *Beaufort* painting by Sir Joshua Reynolds there is an eighteenth-century hangover of a chivalric culture mingled with notions of religious judgement.

A trend certainly existed and was developed in satire art toward using the figure of a significant individual to represent land and territory. We could consider also a print from the 1760s, ‘The Belligerant Plenipo’s’ (BM 6051) in which bodies appear in place of different countries wronged by imperial advances. These satires evolve into globe or earth images which represent the earth as fought over by often two individuals such as ‘The

⁹³ *London und Paris* 8 (1801) My account of the subject matter of these caricatures owes to Martin Myrone’s catalogue entries, *Gothic Nightmares*, pp.144, 200, 201.

Plumb-Pudding in Danger' (BM 10371) and 'Fighting for the Dunghill' (BM 9268) and also depictions of witches or interior scenes which associate inside space with horrible, often Shakespearean or theatrical supernaturalism as in 'The Manager's Last Farce or Macbeth Act VI Scene II. An apparition of an armed head rises' (lw110453). Though a more intricate image which needs to be considered as part of the entire satire, we could compare the mock-vignette in Dent's 'Raree-Show', on the Hastings trial, which demonstrates a crazed western ruler in India as Lear bearing a dark-skinned Cordelia (BM 7273).



PLATE 21

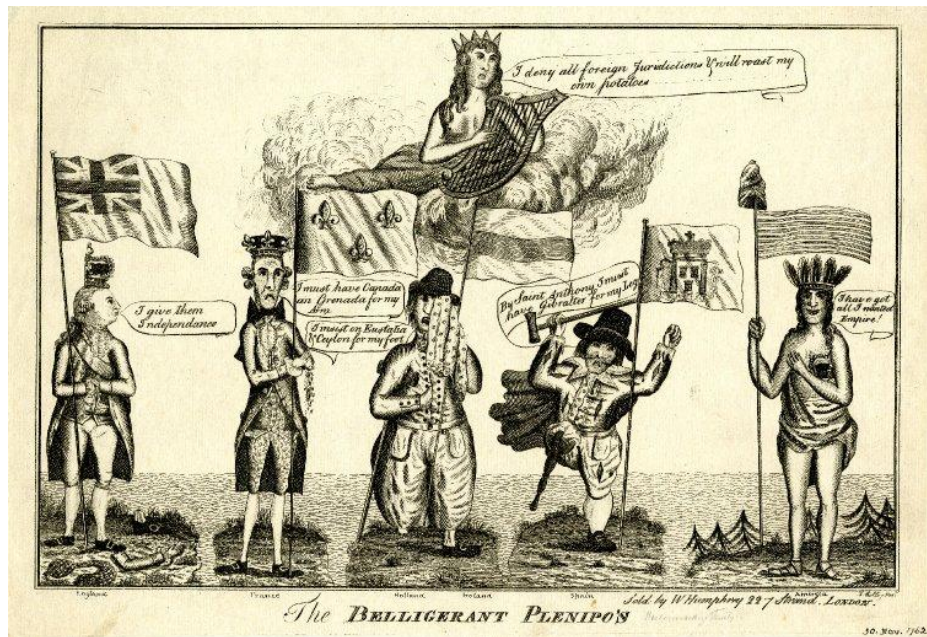


PLATE 22

It is worth noting also that there exist images that demonstrate the simultaneous contemporary affiliation of Englishness to a bumbling, comic heroism, centred around cowardice, deceitful camaraderie and a set of positive images of the English forests, lanes and countryside, which Falstaff is seen to fittingly – even defensively – inhabit. These may, too, of course, exhibit a more complex and ironised relation to noble and venturesome imperial masculinity than I have reason to discuss in this chapter. In many ways, and this is my point here, the territory of imperial art serves, in each of this series of political satires, to affirm boundaries between interior and exterior identities for Englishness.

Westminster Hall draped with silks and velvets for the impeachment of Warren Hastings, previously Governor General of the East India Company, was a vastly theatrical setting, as well as a national stage for the analysis of empire from a domestic viewpoint. Is the subject of Reynolds' work then a contemporary confirmation of masculinised suffering as a

relevant totem for the changing culture? I do not seek to generalise across this diverse collection of figures: Windham was a bitter opponent to the revolution and to the proposed peace with France; Hastings a figure humiliated and brought onto a national stage upon return from India; Paine and Fox sympathetic to both the French and Irish revolutionary movements, although the second more nationally loyal than the first; Catherine the Great a monarch who styled herself as an imperial leader.

Shakespeare is employed in the satirical judgment of moral and commercial corruption in these works, albeit in a scene derived from a painting of a little known scene in a play. Each of the satires offers the illustration and interpretation of a troubled eminent masculine figure at the frontiers of one empire or another: Windham, Hastings, Paine and O'Connor's rebels of Britain's, and Catherine the Great of her own. In Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* the main notions of temperance in the face of pleasure, constancy before pain, and magnanimity and fortitude before danger and death, as well as that notion of the presiding quality of the 'divine Being' 'superintending Power' or 'Superintendent of the universe', have bearing on the composition of Reynolds' painting. These notions are conversely of little, or no, relevance to the satires, and this in itself is frequently a source of comedy. Compare for instance Windham's lackadaisical expression in 'Political Dreamings'.⁹⁴

Where the painting collects spectators in a semi-judicial function around the body of the expiring Cardinal, the satires replace the spectating figures with projections of the central character's own psyche: figures of

⁹⁴ Smith, *TMS*, in the section on ethics Part VII, pp.278, 281.

tortured Indians, abstract symbols of a cold and despotic legal power, chaotic rule in Europe and in the overseas empires, the depravity and deprivation of revolutionary France where rats proliferate, more energetic than the melancholic and defeated female allegories of Justice and Britannia.

Representations of Warren Hastings and William Windham in satire most notably fall within a broad artistic arena for the determination and finer characterisation of the northern European adventuring masculine within the later years of the century, and come to define more closely the content and boundaries of a northern European mercantile identity. What distinguishes the quality and character of domestic Englishness, initially determined through its relation to or differentiation from a proximate southern character, hence comes to be overlaid and more closely characterised during these years via the intersection with the East Indies and incorporation of forms from colonial life in the British sector of the East Indies.

Windham, Burke, Hastings, the leaders of the Irish rebellion, the Empress of Russia all appear in these satirical works with an emphasis on the dread and terror attached to imperial rule. A gothic vocabulary, in the sense of the association with terror, had long existed around Beaufort's death, and is identifiable in texts from earlier in the century. Addison references the scene of Beaufort's death in his 'Essay on the Immortality of the Soul' as an example of the most horrible and abject despair imaginable. Rowe, who had it illustrated for his, the first illustrated Shakespeare edition, in 1709, wrote of it: 'There is so much terror in one, so much tenderness and

moving piety in the other, as must touch any one who is capable either of fear or pity'.⁹⁵

The hallucinatory force of the scene of Beaufort's death bed throes was ripe material for a satirical exploration of colonial power. That this series of caricatures which allude to the Beaufort death scene depict the anxieties and torments of men in power at this late stage in the century, and in doing so draw on an episode which had been illustrated since the beginning of the century, is noteworthy.

The comedy of satires derived from Reynolds' *Cardinal Beaufort's Bedchamber* itself invokes the Falstaffian spirit of celebratory – and triumphant – self-deprecation and cowardice, and conveys an assurance derived usually from the formality of the representation (but increasingly also itself a powerfully identity-forming iteration), of the notion that 'he that fights and runs away shall live to fight another day'.⁹⁶ These satires are both significant displays of national character and an arena in which national character might affirm a supremacy over supernatural horror and other forms of terror. Similar satires connect Falstaff and Shakespeare to the English victories in Madras (BM 7929, 7904, 7939 or lwl 07270).

⁹⁵ Rowe's 'Life of Shakespeare', reprinted *BES*, II, p.481.

⁹⁶ citation from one of the Boydell catalogue entries.



PLATE 23

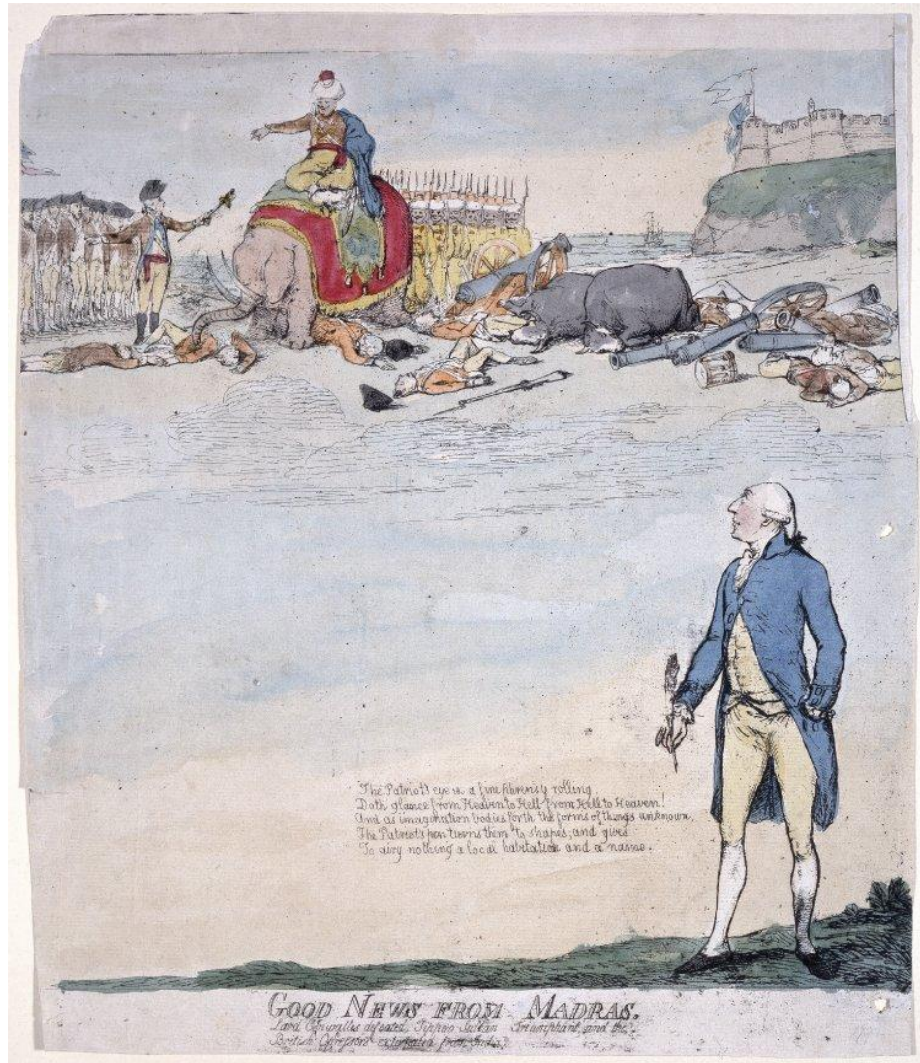


PLATE 24



PLATE 25

Like the great Poussin work from which Reynolds took the composition for this painting, the inclusion of supernatural and gothic elements in the relation of painting to text is significant, and the extent to which supernatural or gothic content appears within the painting, as opposed to the text, requires some attention. The opportunity of Boydell's commission at the end of the eighteenth century was for Reynolds one to explore the cultural connections of Shakespeare to a supernatural and religious, pre-modern belief system and then to emphasise the transition from that world to a more modern one, based in a progressive politics of

social connections. His society did not tolerate his visual exploration of the fiend in painting, and then reinserted it across a series of satirical prints. The painting itself, however, I have wanted to claim, both relies on older classical models and contains a vision of social organisation slightly different to that which has been addressed in existing criticism.

The subject matter of Reynolds' painting includes an eagerness to depict and give concrete visual form to the image of the northern European male whose identity was being shaped persistently by the changes brought to political, social and religious life by the empire. The painting illustrates a collision point of the idealised moment of stoic death – represented and held stationary and immutable – with the celebration or fulfilment of the art form itself as the possibility of fusion with a longed for, and represented, moment of martial death and destruction. Satires deriving from the painting take up the ideology of the tormented imperial leader, and pursue subjects of military, religious, or administrative violence or corruption in comic visual form. These satires seem to dramatise the powerlessness of men in power, and in doing so indirectly affirm national aims and values against which these flawed models of leadership or imperialism might be posed. A broader imperialist move within the culture toward celebrating death as a horizon for the arts goes some way toward explaining the popularity and perceived newness or significance of Reynolds' work, and its interpretation as a major if not *the* single most notable addition by the gallery to the arts and to British Shakespeare painting in these years. This appraisal persisted into the nineteenth century.

The next chapter explores the efforts of two women to apprehend and understand the developmental spread and shape of growth of empire, its private, economic and national pressures, through the works of Shakespeare.

CHAPTER THREE

**SHAKESPEARE, GOTHIC AND NEO-CLASSICAL FORM IN ANNE
DAMER AND MARY WOLLSTONECRAFT**

SECTION ONE

Voltaire spoke of Shakespeare as a writer, ‘endured by a nation, which has seen the tragedy of *Cato*’, intimating the superior style of the tragic drama of Addison.¹ Elizabeth Montagu famously authorised a notion of Shakespeare’s worth in connection to a native aesthetic, one rude, gothic and diverging in its notion of genius from a set of increasingly mainly continental European values for aesthetic worth. Her argument builds on Shakespeare criticism across the century: on Pope’s notion that, ‘one may look upon his works, in comparison of those that are more finished and regular, as upon an ancient and majestic piece of Gothic architecture, compared with a neat modern building’, or Johnson’s defence of Shakespeare against Voltaire’s criticism for example.²

Many critics laud the elements of fancy and imaginative freedom with which Shakespeare’s works are associated, embracing as well the flawed and vigorous native aesthetic they bring with them. Nicholas Rowe

¹ *BES*, I, p.140. Samuel Johnson on Voltaire.

² *BES*, I, p.26.

singled out *The Tempest*, *Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Macbeth* and *Hamlet* for particular praise in his 'Life of Shakespeare', writing 'certainly, the greatness of this author's genius does nowhere so much appear, as when he gives his imagination an entire loose, and raises his fancy to a flight above mankind, and the limits of the visible world'.³ Horace Walpole borrowed his words on the 'buffoonery and solemnity' of Shakespeare as a positive model for a new kind of romance that was both ancient and modern in his Preface to the second edition of the *Castle of Otranto*, even upholding Polonius and the grave-diggers as valid equivalents to the models offered by Greek sculpture.⁴ 'There is as much genius on the British as on the Grecian stage, though the former is not swept so clean', Edward Young similarly wrote.⁵

Even, witches, ghosts and fairies in Shakespeare have for Montagu a 'mysterious solemnity' and appear at the centre of Shakespeare's art, 'they are not brought in as subordinate or casual agents, but lead the action and govern the fable' – this itself an illustration of Shakespeare's greater 'theatrical propriety than the Greek tragedians'.⁶ Richard Hurd is Montagu's authority for the notion 'that the Gothic manners, and Gothic superstitions, are more adapted to the uses of poetry, than the Grecian'.⁷ But what is the validity of the claim that Shakespeare, being engaged in a criticism of the

³ *BES*, II, p.477.

⁴ Horace Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto: A Gothic Story* (London: William Bathoe and Thomas Lowndes, 1765), p.ix.

⁵ Edward Young, 'Conjectures on Original Composition', in *The Works of Edward Young* 3 vols. (London: J.Dodsley, 1798), III, p.201.

⁶ Elizabeth Montagu, *An Essay on the writings and Genius of Shakespear Compared with the Greek and French Dramatic Poets* (London: C.Dilly, 1785), pp.140-1.

⁷ Montagu, p.145. Hurd, III, pp.261-6.

discourse on taste in the last twenty years of the century, lent weight more broadly to the notion that a rude native genius was in some manner superior to the refined delicacies of neo-classical form? This chapter explores this question through a close attention to works by women, generated during the last twenty years of the century. The two women investigated are the sculptor Anne Damer and the writer Mary Wollstonecraft.

Voltaire's sense that Shakespeare's faults might need to be 'endured' was supplanted in this period by a thorough and nuanced appreciation of the gothic. The general aesthetic trend toward an emphasis on the minute, particular, localised and detailed such as I have identified in many of the Boydell gallery landscape works is attached to that rule Reynolds seeks to advance in his criticism on painting that 'many little things will not make a great one'.⁸ The quality of minuteness is recurrently identified by Reynolds with bad painting. The wax-work is a favourite counterexample, proving that, 'the pleasure we receive from imitation is not increased merely in proportion as it approaches to minute and detailed reality.'⁹

Minuteness was a primary characteristic of gothic representation, connected to terror or fear and signals where that genre comes proximate to as well as becomes distinct from sublime representation. In so far as Shakespearean gothic was 'native' its representations tended towards imagery such as that of supernatural ruined locales or the celebration of Druidic culture and the Druids, as Malcolm Andrews puts it, 'frequently

⁸ Reynolds, *Discourses*, p.65.

⁹ Reynolds, *Discourses*, p.193

portrayed as resistance fighters against Imperial Rome'.¹⁰ To some extent this gothic imagery is in opposition to classical authority and amounts to a newly affirmed nationalism in the face of imperial expansions.

One of the primary examples of gothic in this period in connection to the plays of Shakespeare is the edition of Bellamy and Robarts produced in 1791 and reprinted in 1796. Some of the most unusual and gothic illustrations to the plays of Shakespeare in the late century appear in this edition. Its mood is close to that of the popular gothic novel. Within the pages of the eight volumes of this relatively inexpensive edition appear naturalistic, graveyard settings, hung with heavy, drooping foliage; sprite-laden riverside scenes where willows touch the water and women appear in melancholy poses, weeping over Shakespeare's tomb or – as the caption for an image of fairies dancing at the headstone of Shakespeare's grave announces – where 'the fairies by moonlight trip round thy green bed'. A series of frontispieces depict Shakespeare in the company of skeletons and spectres; Shakespeare sleeping attended by sprites and spectres titled 'Fiction attending Shakespeare's Dreams'. Shakespeare's comic and tragic characters appear 'Personified by Infants', as a diminutive Macbeth and Falstaff, prepared for combat. The historic muse, a grand female figure in neo-classical dress, is illustrated 'dictating to Shakespeare'; elsewhere 'an infant Shakespeare' wanders in 'the Realms of Fancy'. These book illustrations supplement more conventional images, such as the ghost in Hamlet and a 'Britannia crowning Shakespeare'.¹¹

¹⁰ Andrews, p.138.

¹¹ *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 8 vols. (London: Bellamy and Robarts, 1791), I, p.51 for 'Explanations of the Allegorical Frontispieces and Vignettes' to all the volumes.

Many of the play scenes are illustrated within a typographical ornament of gothic architecture, and even Titus Andronicus before the Coliseum appears contained within a decaying gothic arch, vines pulling at a crumbling structure which bears, barely decipherable, the name of Shakespeare.¹² The history plays are adorned by illustrations of latticed windows and gothic balustrades, towers and battlements; similarly are the illustrations for *Lear* and *Hamlet*. Shakespeare himself is depicted writing seated in a huge throne.¹³ The Bellamy and Robarts *Shakspeare*, with its allegorical vignettes and literary gothic memorialisation, differs in tone from Boydell's monumental 'National Edition of Shakspeare'.

¹² *The Plays of William Shakspeare*, 8 vols. (London: Bellamy and Robarts, 1796), IV, unpaginated.

¹³ *Plays* (1796), V, VI, VIII, unpaginated.



11

Andromeda rescued from the rock by Perseus

PLATE 26



12 *1841* *1841*
Illustration of the Art House by Bellamy in Volume 1 of the

PLATE 27



PLATE 28



17

La Famiglia di Alcibiade

PLATE 29



The Fairies by moonlight trip round thy green bed.

— Adapted to the Art by William Shakespeare.

PLATE 30



Printed in London by G. G. & J. O. 1789.

PLATE 31

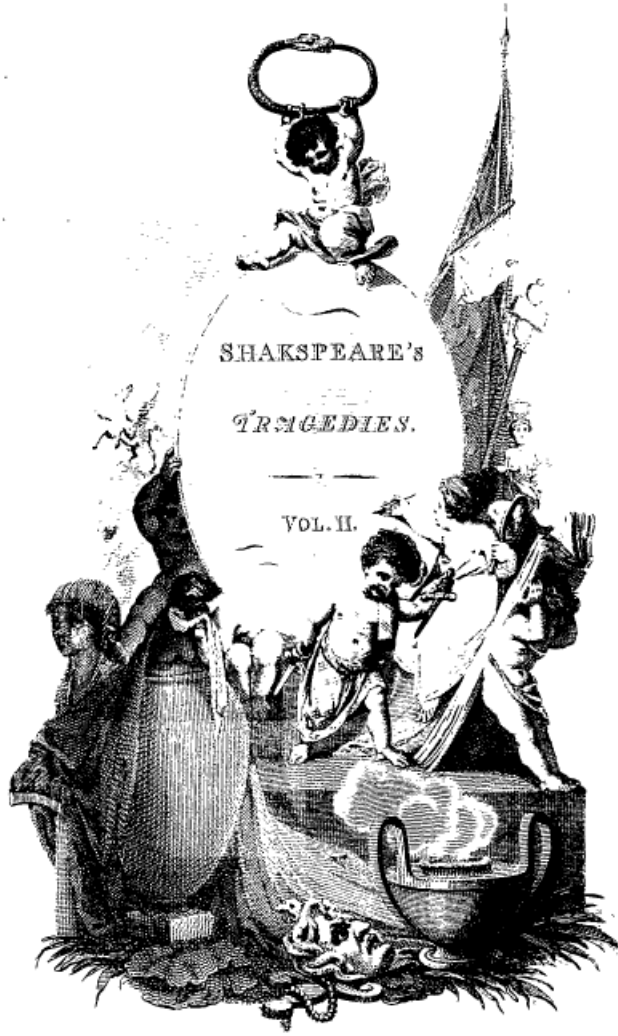


PLATE 32



10

Engraved by Robert Seymour, London, 1804

PLATE 33



PLATE 34

Prefatory material to the Bellamy and Roberts edition includes Mark Akenside's reverential 'Inscription for a Monument of Shakspeare', Samuel Sheppard's stoically mournful 'In Memory of our Famous Shakespeare' and Sir John Gilbert Cooper's weird, spirit-laden 'The Tomb of Shakespeare: A Vision'. This feat of editorial compilation brings graveyard poetry toward the plays to honour Shakespeare and align his works with what is considered here an appropriate form of contemporary literature.¹⁴ Bell's

¹⁴ *Plays* (1791), unpaginated.

‘Prolegomena to Shakespeare’ closed with a section of ‘Commendatory Verses on Shakespeare’ which was more diverse in theme, but also included the works by Akenside and Sheppard.¹⁵ A degree of visual citation from the Boydell Shakespeare paintings within the Bellamy and Robarts edition relocates that esteemed illustration project within a landscape of literary memorialisation as gloomy as it is fantastic.¹⁶ There is a resemblance between the illustration for Richard III Act V Scene III and Reynolds’ *Cardinal Beaufort’s Bedchamber*, as I have noted, suggesting that a lively dialogue existed between the Shakespeare gallery and current illustrated editions even before the publication of the Boydell illustrated *Dramatic Works* in its entirety in 1803.¹⁷ However, Bellamy and Robarts’ edition engages with the discourse on taste from rather a different direction to Boydell’s edition: that is to say it might even be described as tasteless, or as existing outside of the arena of aesthetic taste, apart from an existing privileged relationship of Shakespeare to the discourse on taste by which uses of a vulgar or fallible, divertingly terrible or pleurably capricious gothic aesthetic to recover the plays and their contents becomes a positive characteristic.

¹⁵ *BES*, II, pp.524-58.

¹⁶ In her essay on the *Tempest*, Marcia Pointon has noted the similarity of Joseph Wright of Derby’s painting for the Boydell gallery to Richard Courbauld’s illustration engraved by James Walker for Bellamy and Robarts. Pointon, ‘Representing the *Tempest*’, pp.106-7. There has been little recent critical attention to the Bellamy and Robarts edition, although Colin Franklin writes favourably of it: ‘the gothic scheme of illustration, so different and original, undertaken three and four years before the books appeared, transforms this into an astonishing production’. Franklin, ‘Print and Design’, p.52.

¹⁷ *Plays* (1796), VII, unpaginated

My subject in this chapter is not, as it was in previous chapters, so clearly linked to the nation. It instead concerns how the affects attached to the encounter with empire and overseas engagements came to be transmitted through literature and the other arts. The first subject in this third chapter is how Mary Wollstonecraft visits and writes about Sweden through a reading of Shakespeare. The references to Shakespeare in the *Letters from Sweden* are relatively few, but are worthy of close consideration since the text is one which innovatively combines gothic and travel writing. Empire produced new forms of art. *Letters from Sweden* interests me because as a text by a woman it employs an allusive or vague form of citation that depends heavily on the contemporary association of Shakespeare and gothic. The text associates Shakespeare with overseas economic engagements in a series of idiosyncratic ways. In any analysis of empire and Shakespeare in the last twenty years of the century it is primarily the words of Shakespeare that will be found to direct the English apprehension of empire.¹⁸ But how they come to be used is deserving of attention. In this text, the words of Shakespeare help the author to apprehend in part, but only in part, the foreign landscape through which she travels. The author finds commercialism distasteful, and to some extent retreats into literature.

The second subject of the chapter is an interpretation of overseas economic and political engagement and the comparable distance of Shakespearean pasts as offered by the female sculptor Anne Seymour Damer. I consider a terracotta relief work which she made for John

¹⁸ See for instance the following discussion of words from Samuel Johnson's *Dictionary* (1755) relating to travel and trade.
<http://www.wwnorton.com/college/english/nael/18century/topic_4/johnson1.htm>
[accessed 10/12/2007].

Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery which makes an association between *Coriolanus* and America. The connection to America which interests me particularly is developed in this work through compositional trends and visual associations. The work is again considerably innovative in form and rooted to a commitment to advancing the national arts, and in a regenerative manner broadly lacking in Wollstonecraft's text.

Women were particularly attracted to the works of Shakespeare, and their possibilities for creative endeavours.¹⁹ A consideration of two artworks by women, one literary, one sculptural, will I hope provide a means of looking toward sites within the empire, where much of the analysis in the thesis has so far taken England as its subject. The question of the representation of the gothic is also one which has attached to it a cojoined question about the place of late-eighteenth-century Shakespeares within the discourse on taste. The chapter therefore presents a consideration of the specific effects of the collocation of Shakespeare and gothic form within twenty years from a particular perspective.

In the Boydell gallery as a whole an escalation of interest in representations of the mediaeval English past, the idealised fruitfulness and life of coloured, vegetated and foliated mediaeval or Elizabethan England is evident, as well as a simultaneously increased domestic appetite and market demand for literary and travel texts from the far east, the Orient, Italy or transatlantic areas. Wollstonecraft's Scandinavian text exhibits a similar emphasis on alterity or otherness in the reappropriation of Shakespeare's plays. It is a work that reveals significant textual hybridity, associating

¹⁹ For a recent in depth consideration see Fiona Ritchie, 'Women and Shakespeare in the Restoration and Eighteenth Century', *Literature Compass* 5:6 (2008). 1154-1169.

Shakespearean language and imagery, through a genre of travel writing with northern, foreign and often hostile locations, and taking commercial and economic circumstances as a major concern. Unfamiliarity or distance of the past in the Boydell prints frequently means the evocation by artists of mediaeval, nostalgic and philo-Elizabethan worlds, dominated by rich detail and a relation to Europe which is highly narrativised. This world comes through the Boydell publications to be reflected through Shakespeare's works as a part of national history or the rightful property of a genre of national historical painting. In the *Letters* the gaze onto Shakespeare's works is directed outwards, toward a northern European industrial landscape.

Sweden and the northern countries present primarily a landscape which Mary Wollstonecraft finds alien to her sensibility. As a writer she uses Shakespeare's words at regular intervals throughout the text. Her citations appear in varying ways, and with several effects. The first use of citation operates to render amenable the hostile landscape and to enable her as a female travelling on economic business that she finds in some way distasteful, to distance herself from the local communities and to reimagine them, through her travel writings, as locations she is more comfortable with. The second is a related effect, and concerns her function as a mother making a landscape anew with her daughter, as she travels through it. The third opens out or extends a relation to nation and home.

Wollstonecraft's citation of Shakespeare acts as a transcription or superscription both of the landscape through which she passes and of words from the plays. The text presents a double voice, in that it is distant from

domestic and national concerns yet characteristic of the engagement with empire opened out by English literature during the late years of the century. Literature functions as a way of bringing empire home, while holding it at some distance still and ensuring that its difficult, dangerous or comfortless elements do not intrude upon the carefully reserved national space. National space is in the *Letters from Sweden* largely a space imagined through the words of Shakespeare, and presents a counter to the foreign subject of the travel writing. This is a difficult and a rewarding text because in the course of its writing we see Wollstonecraft, a radical woman who had travelled overseas with enthusiasm in connection to her political involvement in France, negotiating the conservative aims of her own voyage to Sweden. She does so while verbally deploying refractions of the vehemently national and English lens that was the text of the *Plays* by this point in the century.

I will offer now a slightly more detailed outline of Shakespeare criticism, as is relevant to the intervention of women in the sphere of literary and artistic taste toward the end of the century.

A significant early precursor for later accounts of Shakespeare's 'want of learning' was Pope's Preface to the Plays reprinted in Bell's publication of the plays, but the characterisation of Shakespeare's exceptional literary status as both unlearned and natural and as peculiarly feminine can then be traced to a 1696 text, *An Essay in Defence of the Female Sex*, which asserted that a lady did not need a knowledge from the Greek or Latin classics because 'who has given us nobler, or juster Pictures of nature than Mr Shakespear'.²⁰ Shakespeare's 'small Latin and less Greek'

²⁰ Taylor, p.92.

received attention later in Johnson, who opposed his native force to ‘scholastic education’.²¹ Shakespeare’s works presented not a ‘garden accurately formed and diligently planted, varied with shades and scented with flowers’ but a wild ‘forest, in which oaks extend their branches, and pines tower in the air’. The works were a territory full of ‘weeds and brambles’ that gave shelter in parts to ‘myrtles and roses’.²² The aesthetic was primarily one of ‘awful pomp’ and ‘endless diversity’ – Johnson’s terms – of rude, wild, native vigour.²³ The plays might be associated with a blazing abundance of light,²⁴ elsewhere Shakespeare was seen as a mine of unpolished stones and gems, which promised ‘gold and diamonds in inexhaustible plenty, though clouded by incrustations, debased by impurities and mingled with a mass of meaner minerals’.²⁵

Shakespeare’s native genius was associated already through texts such as Pope’s Preface with voyages underground or with journeying inward within built forms, or a mode of mining that chanced upon rich seams and employed an accidental and multi-directional exploration of the natural world to plunder and retrieve unrefined riches. A series of gothic and accretive or naturalistic notions form a significant backdrop to the interpretation of Shakespeare’s works by women such as Wollstonecraft and Damer. To examine their works is to discover critical changes and

²¹ *BES*, I, pp.137, 141.

²² *BES*, I, p.141.

²³ *BES*, I, p.141.

²⁴ *BES*, I, pp.27, 71-2.

²⁵ *BES*, I, p.141.

developments in notions of aesthetic worth and taste, and to elucidate how less canonical works might have related to the much reprinted commentaries on the plays by major Shakespeare editors.

Shakespeare was a popular subject among women artists, who were drawn to the absence of classical learning and affiliation to notions of native or natural genius with which he was frequently associated. Such notions particularly were more accessible to women as a result of the discourse of sensibility ascendant elsewhere. Taste and gender were still viewed according to conventional schema in the late century. A group of connoisseurs this print depicts is clearly an all male group (lwl05692). When women made advances into the arts it was from different foundations and occurred in a different range of forms.

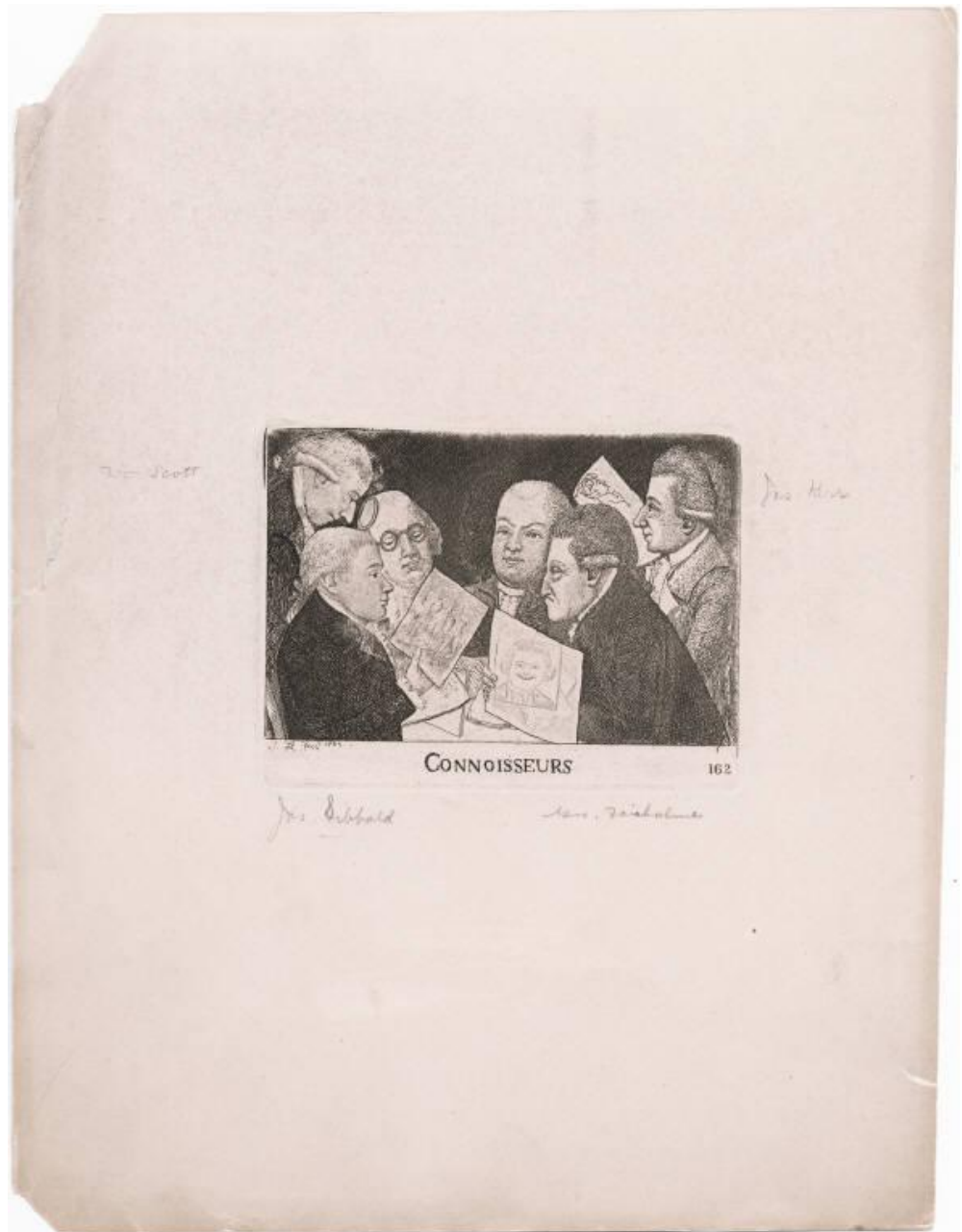


PLATE 35

One of the best succinct accounts of Shakespeare's standing in later century literary and artistic estimations is to be found in Felicity Nussbaum's *Limits of the Human*. Nussbaum discusses Elizabeth Montagu's negotiation in the 1760s of Johnson's 'effeminate', fine and laboured language in *The Essay on the Writings and Genius of Shakespeare*. This text exhibits a linguistic preference for native merit and vigour over Johnsonian

excess and ostentation, and a desire to reclaim Shakespeare on such terms.²⁶ Shakespeare beyond Johnson presents to Montagu a rough and crowded English genius. He gathers material for the histories from a ‘heap of rude undigested annals, coarse in their style and crowded with trivial anecdotes’ and forms from them a new, perfect, living whole.²⁷ Shakespeare is presented in this text as a writer irreducible to, or in some way external to, the culture of taste. His faultiness becomes a forgivable and quaint national quality and the deformity or roughness of the plays is transmuted into a meaningful form of rustic authority or genius. Jonathan Brody Kramnick discusses what he has called Montagu’s particular celebration of ‘ignorant credulity and natural prepossession’, by which he means the rough and sublime boldness, customariness and particularity, native tradition and indigenous Englishness she finds in Shakespeare.²⁸ A second significant interpreter, he has suggested, is John Upton, who engaged in *Critical Observations* (1748) with Shakespearean irregularity and caprice as a deliberate challenge to the discourse on taste. For Upton, suggests Kramnick, Shakespeare provides ‘a way to engage sceptically the problem of taste, its validity, provenance and scope’. Upton’s text offers a criticism of eighteenth-century historicist studies of the works, which he suggests provide only specialist, scholarly knowledge of linguistic history, and do not contribute to the tastefulness or politeness of the modern age.²⁹ Text-based

²⁶ Nussbaum, pp.75-81.

²⁷ Nussbaum, pp.81, 78.

²⁸ Kramnick, pp.228-33.

²⁹ Kramnick, pp.96-7, 102-3.

and editorial criticisms, and particularly an understanding of Shakespeare's works as barbarous and in need of mediation and improvement, as opposed to an interest in theatrical representations, were foundational for the development of eighteenth-century literary interpretation, as Marcus Walsh has argued.³⁰

A gothic model notably is frequently counterposed by commentators with a mechanistic or rationalised understanding of the world – although it did not always make sense to oppose science or the seeking for scientific information to art in analysing emerging aesthetic value-systems at this point in the history of imperial Britain, as the work of Giles Tillotson has done much to elucidate.³¹ In Charles Dibdin's turn of the century *Complete History of the English Stage* (1797-1800) the opposition of Shakespeare to the discourse on taste, which had become increasingly subtle and detailed as the century wore on, was evidence of the aesthetic superiority of the English or British, and demonstrated their difference and distance from French artistic priorities. Voltaire might be across the water, still harping on about the classics and highly-wrought form, but Shakespeare presented 'the motley group of affections that characterise nature in the beings of this world': his works were understood to excite contempt, ridicule, admiration, pity, terror, and his characters appeared the offspring of 'fancy', the invented occupants of an imagined new world who gave 'refinement to

³⁰ Walsh, p.111; also Kramnick, p.87.

³¹ Tillotson, Chapter Two.

virtue, an aversion to vice, and a ridicule to folly'.³² So original is Shakespeare's art that he is considered the best dramatist since Aeschylus.³³

Dibdin celebrates, again, the affiliation of Shakespeare's 'indifferent education' with the elements of 'great and wonderful beauty' to be found in the works; he remarks too upon the 'numerous faults' in the works and their lack of delicacy.³⁴ Shakespeare's art entails a complex apprehension of artifice. Those critics who judge the works harshly on account of their 'faultiness' or 'quaintness' are compared with those scientists who have 'set about to filtrate air' or 'to elucidate light' or those gardeners who 'cut shrubbery into the forms of birds, pyramids, vases and other unnatural objects' – with the implication that such aesthetic judgements are either hopelessly outmoded or absurdly, uselessly modern. Here too, an appreciation of Shakespeare is notably opposed in both examples to mechanistic models, and it is in this opposition to the mechanistic that the appreciation of 'nature in her real form' is defined.³⁵

Hume, for instance, had referenced Monsieur Fontenelle's celebrated example of the hours, minutes and seconds as perceived by machines of different quality in his writings on taste, and that notion of aesthetic judgment as an endlessly elaborate clock or watch, capable of infinite distinctions of degree, remained current in the late century.³⁶ Its persistence

³² Charles Dibdin *A Complete History of the English Stage* 5 vols. (London: C.Dibdin, 1800), III. p.21.

³³ Dibdin, III, p.21.

³⁴ Dibdin, III, p.22.

³⁵ Dibdin, III, pp.18-9.

³⁶ Reprinted in *A Help to Elocution* (London: Fielding and Walker and James MacGowan, 1780), 'On the Delicacy of Taste and Passion [from Hume's Essays.]', p.122.

suggests the significance of vegetal and organic form was contested in an ongoing way within aesthetic discussions, and had become entangled to some degree in a wider process of cultural and semantic reorganisation.³⁷ This new aesthetic vocabulary had debts within religious language and architectural metaphor, as did much of the Shakespeare criticism.

Hume also was a primary figure in discourses that extended and developed the connection of women to the realm of taste or the realm of the aesthetic. Women were in this way connected to the spectacle of the advancement of civilisation. There was an emerging sense also that poetry had the potential to improve and advance civilisation, as Adela Pinch has illustrated.³⁸

While Shakespeare, like Milton, might be seen to be too rough or vigorous and at some level not easily absorbed by the culture of taste or the feminised literary marketplace – for John Upton, too manly for effeminate modern ‘tast’ – women such as Wollstonecraft and Damer seemed to be drawn to the works of Shakespeare and able to respond to his location within aesthetic discussion in fruitful and inventive ways.

Wollstonecraft’s retreat into the language of Shakespeare’s plays for solace and to ‘calm the agitated breast’ in the *Letters from Sweden* entails a

³⁷ A significant precedent for this line of aesthetic discussion was Edward Young, *Conjectures on Original Composition* (London: A. Millar and R. and J. Dodsley, 1759), itself an important source for Herder’s notion of genius in its German translation of 1760 which includes phrases such as: ‘an Original may be said to be of a vegetable nature, it rises spontaneously from the vital root of Genius, it grows, it is not made; imitations are often a sort of manufacture wrought up by those mechanics, art and labor, out of pre-existent materials not their own’. Shakespeare was the primary example for Herder. Gregory Moore, ‘Introduction’, *Selected Writings on Aesthetics* trans. by Gregory Moore (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2006), p.17.

³⁸ Adela Pinch, *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion from Hume to Austen* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1996), pp.53-6.

particular posturing of the maternal, feminine self in relation to landscapes of sublime emotion and gothic architectural form, and opens out a new response to transformed commercial and social relations. Her use of gothic and Shakespeare tangentially is to some extent characteristic of the efforts of women during the 1790s to apprehend or interpret British imperial ambition and expectation. America is a particularly significant context in this regard, and will be important to the discussion in the second section of this chapter.

Shakespeare's works were where a native literary tradition and a newly advanced bourgeois appetite for the arts, such as that promoted by the expensive publications of the Boydell gallery, coalesced. This was dependent in part on the established association of his writings with specific, territorialised forms of native genius: as the writer in the *Aberdeen Magazine, Literary Chronicle and Review* no. LIV Thursday January 28 1790 put it, 'Shakespeare owes his fame, as a sublime and original poet, to never having read as is generally believed a Latin or Greek author. Hence he spoke from nature, or rather nature spoke thro' him'.³⁹

Shakespeare's privileged relationship to nature was to become significant to that strand of thought in the 1790s typified by John Aikin which suggested that, 'a taste for nature is said to be equivalent to a love of liberty and truth', while art and artifice are considered to produce 'slaves to formality and constraint', but the notion was a much older one.⁴⁰

³⁹ *The Aberdeen Magazine, Literary Chronicle and Review* 3 vols. (Aberdeen: J.Chalmers and Co., 1788-1790), III, p.33.

⁴⁰ John Aikin, *Letters from a Father to His Son on Various Topics, Relative to Literature and the Conduct of Life, Written in the Years of 1792 and 1793* (London: J.Johnson, 1793),

Shakespeare had been an ‘artless rustic’ much earlier in the century, his critical output described, like the laws of the nation, as a sometimes vague, irregular but free garden. As discussed in Chapter One, Joseph Holden Pott links Shakespeare’s association with gothic piles and the remains of gothic architecture specifically to the ‘beautiful and venerable ruins’ to be found everywhere in the English countryside, calling them ‘congenial beauties’, admired by ‘refined and classic minds’ such as Pope; ‘consonant’ with the national character.⁴¹ Here the ‘chaste and noble proportions of Grecian art’ are opposed ‘to the more irregular and wild ideas of northern climes’.⁴² The entanglement of this language with English national representation was powerful. The law was considered to be a tender plant that would only flourish if the genius of its soil was proper for it. Abounding with climate and vegetation metaphors it attracted the analogy of the structure of a fountain and its spring, or a tree and its roots, and Shakespeare’s works were accounted for with similar metaphors: ‘twas a fine garden, but it wanted weeding’.⁴³ Often the natural metaphors were marked by a post-restoration critical language: these might be the gardens of a ‘little commonwealth’; they were also elsewhere compared with accretive, irregular, building styles,

pp.148-9. See also here Letter XV on ‘Ornamental Gardening’ on ‘trees cut into shapes, and hedges fashioned like walls’, p.143.

⁴¹ Pott, pp.57-9.

⁴² Pott, pp.57-9.

⁴³ Flecknoe, cited Dobson, p.31. Henry St. John Bolingbroke, *Remarks on the History of England* (London: T.Cadell, 1780), p.8. John Pinkerton, Josiah Tucker, William Falconer, Adam Fitz-Adam, John Gifford and Richard Hurd are also relevant.

added to over time, developing organically and bearing with them aesthetic value judgements.⁴⁴

For Johnson, Shakespeare's style was a forest, ungrammatical and obscure, he came to the English stage 'in a state of the utmost rudeness', his faultiness was an idiosyncratic, English emendation of the Italian mixture of the comic and tragic, serious and ludicrous, laughter and sorrow; and his works presented faults combined with excellencies.⁴⁵ For Warburton, writing in the mid-century, the passage of the works to modern editors was through a rough, uncharted land, where they had lain for many years, like undiscovered relics hidden from view, and now they shook off their husky seed covering, burst forth and arrived before the eyes of 'dazzled admirers' in all their glory.⁴⁶ His is primarily an account of the passage of the plays into print, but again invokes naturalistic language to assert aesthetic worth.

Architectural metaphor was also popular. The phrase 'Shakespeare's anomalies' was coined by Warburton. His history on the origins of gothic architecture was included in the 1751 edition of Pope's works also and included the notion that the nave of a cathedral was a 'long and regular avenue of trees, whose branches, intermixing with each other overhead, form a lofty embowering arch of natural verdure'.⁴⁷ This type of

⁴⁴ Michael Dobson's *The Making of the National Poet* gives the most comprehensive introduction to such descriptions of the works earlier in the century.

⁴⁵ *BES*, I, pp.144, 124, 118.

⁴⁶ *BES*, I, p.72.

⁴⁷ *BES*, I, p.80. Warburton's essay is discussed in Simon Schama, *Landscape and Memory* (London: Harper Collins, 1995). See also Francis Grose *Antiquities of England* on the avenue of trees with intermingled branches and Thomas Maurice, *Indian Antiquities*. Goethe also spoke of Strassburg cathedral as 'like one of god's lofty, widespreading trees, with its thousand branches, its twigs and leaves as numerous as the sea', for discussion of

language was contemporary with the enduring use of gothic and vegetal terms within Shakespeare criticism, and signalled their spreading influence as the century developed. Warburton's negative assessment of Shakespeare's anomalies paved the way for aesthetic revaluations of the 'anomalous', faulty, irregular, naturalistic and post-Augustan later in the century. The mid-century had already seen a period of building in neo-gothic as opposed to Palladian form, and a taste for such architecture, whose relics littered the English countryside, was connected to a growing appreciation of Spenser, Milton, and the Celtic and Nordic bards as well as Shakespeare.⁴⁸ Critics such as Thomas Warton and Joseph Ritson were involved both in the revival of ancient poetry and were contributors to an increasingly historicised and antiquarian-gothic Shakespeare criticism, one that had powerful national significance and underwrote notions of Shakespeare as an original, native genius. Pope's verbal tick 'notwithstanding his defects' remains a prevalent and frequently reprinted one in the last two decades of the century, and appears in various contexts.

For women, then, the attraction of Shakespeare's works was specific. Terry Castle has written on this appeal of Shakespeare's 'gothic rudeness' across the century and the ways in which his status as an 'untutored' genius, without knowledge of Latin and Greek authors, provided women with a point of identification and a set of terms for an entry into criticism. 'The unconscious identification with Shakespeare – the great

this and on Herder's writings on fable and of the sense of God imparted to humanity through the works of genius see the translated edition by Gregory Moore.

⁴⁸ On this, see Christine Gerrard, *The Patriot Opposition to Walpole: Politics, Poetry and National Myth 1725-1742* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

example of “unlettered genius”, she writes, ‘runs like a golden thread through eighteenth-century women’s critical writing’.⁴⁹ Shakespeare was already powerfully associated with a counter-tradition, often particularly a female or feminised space of the less than learned, which was becoming increasingly prevalent in literature of all forms but which had a clear strand of connection to the reception of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century. Shakespeare knew no Greek or Latin, therefore his works were accessible to women who also, more frequently than men, might be uninformed in that area of learning. Women writers had identified with Shakespeare since Behn in the mid-seventeenth century.⁵⁰ Shakespeare’s want of learning was frequently causally related to an association of literary endeavour with the feminine, and as well to that distinguishing feminisation or domestication of the sphere of literary endeavour in late eighteenth-century England described in work by David Simpson. This was an artistic sphere which valorised the natural and unclassical within new social and economic parameters. It also found the drama, and especially the Shakespearean drama, central to the English literary self-image and, as Simpson puts it, ‘further enhanced the cult of immediacy that originated along with the declared commitment of the literary mode to the replication of “life” in all its varieties and complexities’.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Terry Castle, *Boss Ladies! Watch Out! Essays on Women, Sex and Writing* (London: Routledge, 2002) p.13.

⁵⁰ On the central role of women in the revival of Shakespeare across the long eighteenth century, from Margaret Cavendish to Lady Mary Wortley Montagu to the Shakespeare Ladies Club of 1736-7, see Taylor, p.93.

⁵¹ David Simpson, *Romanticism, Nationalism and the Revolt Against Theory* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993) pp.126, 185, 135. It is also the status of literature as ‘at once highly precise (concrete, specific, local) and unpredictable and

I review the considerable tradition for thinking of Shakespeare as faulty, yet lovable and national, or as Harriet Guest has argued, peculiarly able to transform popular passion and discord into ‘lovable national traditions’, as it provides a beginning to an interpretation of the activity Wollstonecraft engaged in when she put *Letters from Sweden* to paper.⁵²

Naturalistic metaphor as a basis for accrediting taste in the arts is also a notable component of the appropriation of Shakespeare as it appears in the text by Wollstonecraft. I want now to move toward exploring my two examples of the interpretation of Shakespeare and to illustrate the extended relevance for Shakespeare beyond the editorial or material-textual which they exhibit.

The first of my examples is a piece of travel writing published in 1796 – the work of Mary Wollstonecraft journeying in the distant and little-known territories around the coastlines of Norway, Sweden and Denmark. The second is a relief sculpture by Anne Damer, engraved for the Royal Folio of Shakespeare prints from the Boydell gallery. Both Wollstonecraft and Damer work at a critical faultline in the predominant aesthetic model of the age, the notion of the sister arts, with its contraposition of poetry and drama to painting and sculpture.⁵³ *Letters From Sweden*, as I will move on to show, draws out gothic emphases within existing Shakespeare criticism and appropriation and lends them a new context. The text gives particular

surprising – methodologically quixotic [and] sensibilitarian’ that makes it ‘feminine’ for Simpson, *Academic Postmodern*, p.179.

⁵² Harriet Guest, ‘The Wanton Muse: Politics and Gender in Gothic Theory after 1760’ in *Beyond Romanticism: New Approaches to Texts and Contexts 1780-1832* (London: Routledge, 1992), p.128.

⁵³ See for example an attempt to define poetry as that which exists through ‘actions’ in Lessing, pp.80-1.

emphasis to the representation of place and landscape using lines from Shakespeare. Damer's relief advances a different and arguably more original or innovative instance of gothic representation.

The proximity to classical form in Damer's relief requires further elaboration for its relation to gothic. Wollstonecraft's Scandinavian journey is, while exhibiting unusually inventive methods of citation, typical of the work of women artists who turn to Shakespeare at the end of the century, not to pursue directly a popular gothic in the recovery, or as Gary Taylor has perspicaciously called it, the *reinvention* of Shakespeare at this time, but to take up and emend the influence of gothic by reintroducing and reformulating it elsewhere in the field of artistic creation. Both she and Damer respond, in highly innovative ways, to current social and cultural parameters for the reception of Shakespeare.

In the *Letters From Sweden* use of the gothic moves very close to the sublime and this seems to work to convey Wollstonecraft's sense of the foreign landscape within which she finds herself. The author employs sublime notions of terror and of an ungraspable, hostile landscape in order to alienate her reader from an economic and industrial setting which, she suggests, itself has revealed unbounded, hostile and dangerous parameters and negative, risk-laden possibilities for the advancement of society.

Citations of Shakespeare in proximity to this sublime, as they appear within Wollstonecraft's text, act to signal that this is a moment at which the reader might be returned to a safe and familiar enclave imaginatively withdrawn from the present situation of the narrator. Often this means the use of the flawed and vulgar or popular qualities with which Shakespeare is

associated, resulting in the creation of a private space by Wollstonecraft for her and her daughter; it certainly allows literature to create a signifying space that deals in a particular way with negative affects experienced overseas and their transfer into a domestic or native English imaginary space.⁵⁴

In his introduction to his 1987 edition of Mary Wollstonecraft's *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark*, Richard Holmes emphasises the literary quality of this piece of travel writing. He remarks a heavy debt to Edmund Burke's notion of the sublime in nature.⁵⁵ A gothic genre defined conventionally through its proximity to and distance from a high aesthetic of the sublime is clearly at work in the *Letters*. Describing the quality and tenor of Wollstonecraft's writing Holmes turns to Robert Southey's words to the publisher Joseph Cottle, which provide a useful summary of the atmosphere of the work:

Have you met with Mary Wollstonecraft's [travel book]? She has made me in love with a cold climate, and frost and snow, with a northern moonlight.⁵⁶

Wanderings through rugged landscapes of a silvery luminosity, among stony forests and freshly mown grass, emotional drama, high cliffs, wild nature, and settings lifted from the Icelandic sagas; all this makes

⁵⁴ The best source for a thorough exploration of these citations one by one is the edition compiled by Tone Brekke and Jon Mee (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), particularly its explanatory notes.

⁵⁵ Mary Wollstonecraft, *A Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* and William Godwin, *Memoirs of the Author of 'The Rights of Woman'* (London: Penguin, 1987), pp.37-8. I have used Richard Holmes modern edition and Mary Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark* (London: J.Johnson, 1796).

⁵⁶ Wollstonecraft, *Short Residence*, p.17.

Wollstonecraft's a work that anticipates high Romanticism. Wollstonecraft's encounter is with an alien, cold, light-drenched land: her Scandinavia is in some ways a land orientalised or rendered other in the imagination, of hazy reality and dangerous discomforts. Even: it is where the imagination seems to explore its own tendencies and qualities. Shakespeare's 'cloud cap't towers' are readily suited to this world. The many distant shores, salt-works and army posts, sailing peoples, legends and haunting silvered light of the country she travels from and to are a cold modern counterpart to the orient of silks, velvets and ruins, superstition, fable and imperial decadence which, I have argued in the first chapter of this thesis, had become an imaginary location for Shakespeare in late eighteenth-century England at the Boydell Shakespeare gallery.

Wollstonecraft turns to literature to imagine and apprehend her relationship with the landscape through which she travels. Some of this literature is gothic and connected to the native folk culture, at some distance from English folk culture but not entirely unrelated to Shakespeare. During the journey, Wollstonecraft visits the collection of early Icelandic manuscripts assimilated by Arni Magnússon, and held at Frederik III's Royal Library or 'public library' in Copenhagen. These works are a primary source for Norse folklore and mythology.⁵⁷

The text presents at times surprising formal characteristics, combining within its epistolary mode considerable literary allusion and even literary topography, alongside those pragmatic details of commerce and particulars of trade, climate, landscape, peoples, government, language and

⁵⁷ Wollstonecraft, *Short Residence*, p.176.

society more conventionally the concern of the late-eighteenth-century travel writer. The narrative exists in continuity with a vogue for gothic atmosphere, rocky promontories, high falls of water, and for the boat journeys and fairy climes of English, Scandinavian or Northern European folklore.

The gothic elements of this text usually derive from the way in which Wollstonecraft cojoins Shakespearean quotations to the landscape or to her impressions about the characters she and her daughter meet on the voyage. References to Shakespeare usually remain indefinite and vaguely defined and appear as part of exceedingly elaborate and extensive textual and landscape description, from which it is difficult to isolate them. In two supplementary notes appended to the text, Wollstonecraft provides details of conversion for the Norway mile to English yards; in this passage she also outlines the details of natural produce, mining of silver, copper, iron and their equivalent value in ship pounds and profits, trade in wood and salted and dried fish.⁵⁸ The notes also provide much information concerning Norway's militia and system of taxation. This kind of material is typical of the context within which Shakespeare citation is used in the text. Elsewhere we find, in Letter Twenty-Four for example, a description of views across the Elbe at Hamburg recounted in terms of an encounter with a flawed and fallen sublime landscape, reminiscent in some ways of familiar eighteenth-century accounts of imperial decadence and corruption; in other ways entirely new. The area around the river Elbe is a place of still, silvery lakes and packet boats, thriving commercially, a flat country compared

⁵⁸ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, unpaginated.

unfavourably with the mountains, rocky coast and poplars of the land of 'sublime emotions' she visits in earlier letters. 'The moving picture,' as she finds it, 'of large vessels and small craft, which are continually changing their position with the tide,' pleases the author and, 'renders this noble river, the vital stream of Hamburg, very interesting'.⁵⁹ Here are left no ruins of a passing civilisation, only lively, bustling commerce for the travel writer to bring within her art. Wollstonecraft attempts to descend and take a walk close to the water's edge by the banks of the river, but cannot find a path and is overcome by 'the smell of glue, hanging to dry, an extensive manufacture of which is carried on close to the beach'.⁶⁰ Industrialism is everywhere: rope-makers obstruct her enjoyment of the countryside. Few trees appear in the description but one, in a desperate gesture toward generic convention, over a memorial to the poet Klopstock's wife in a churchyard. The experience is 'extremely disagreeable'.⁶¹ 'But,' she adds, employing a Shakespeare quotation in her response to this environment, 'to commerce everything must give way; profit and profit are the only speculations – "double-double, toil and trouble"'.⁶² This example is typical of her use of Shakespeare: recurrent, in passing, and difficult to attach precisely to normative or otherwise judgmental values. It stands contrastingly and at some distance from the use of the same phrase made in connection to revolutionary France and its contemporary violent results by Helen Maria

⁵⁹ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.258.

⁶⁰ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.257.

⁶¹ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, pp.257-8.

⁶² Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.257.

Williams in *Letters from France* earlier in the 1790s.⁶³ The text found there reads:

[T]he present French race will not taste the “golden fruit” of revolutionary regeneration, although they “may plant the seeds of general prosperity, sown with toil and trouble, and bathed in blood”.

Wollstonecraft emphasises instead economic degradation. The *Letters* were published in 1796 and are heavily marked by Wollstonecraft’s politics, both in connection with the language of rights around the revolution in France and in connection to her recent failed relationship with the American businessman, Gilbert Imlay, with whose illegitimate child she travels. It has been suggested that the book was addressed to Imlay, on whose behalf Wollstonecraft travelled, seeking the legal recovery of a sum of money equivalent to a merchant ship of silver and bourbon plate which was lost to Imlay while in the trust of a Peter Ellyson or Ellefsen in 1794.⁶⁴ The text progresses to a contemplation of the peacefully sleeping owners of negro ships in the town, whose money is clean and free from the stench of the blood by which it has been gained and whose occupation is termed ‘a lawful calling’. Wollstonecraft employs a moralising and disdainful literary-religious persona to comment in these passages on the dishonesty encountered in securing ‘the discharge of trusts obtained by fraud’ and the ‘whirlpool of gain’ ‘as dishonourable as gambling’ which she sees in

⁶³ There is close discussion of Williams’ use of Shakespeare in Steven Blakemore, *Crisis in Representation: Thomas Paine, Mary Wollstonecraft, Helen Maria Williams, and the Rewriting of the French Revolution* (London: Associated University Presses, 1997), p.215. The citation is from 1:4.12.

⁶⁴ On Imlay’s involvement in clandestine trade of alum and naval materials from the Baltic, his Franco-American shipping connections and friendship with Thomas Christie and on the French merchant ship sailed by Ellefsen for which he obtained illegal papers, see Wollstonecraft, *Short Residence*, p.21-4.

‘commercial affairs’. ‘The interests of nations are bartered by speculating merchants’, she writes, and corrupt dealing brings lucrative commissions into particular hands.⁶⁵

In the *Letters from Sweden, Norway and Denmark*, Shakespeare’s words also enable moments of inward gentleness and maternal contemplation. Wollstonecraft responds often to the landscape she passes through in a language that gives preference to solitariness of perspective and to the innocent credulity of the child’s viewpoint.⁶⁶ In echoes of *Macbeth* and the *Tempest* at the close of Letter Two, restless movement and discomfort are settled momentarily and writing offers solace to a woman overwhelmed by a winter landscape of fir groves, lakes and rocks. Her own sentiments have repeatedly retreated before tireless hospitality, tables of food, coffee and beds made up with crisp white linens. At times Wollstonecraft finds herself woken by birds ‘with the grey of the morn’; elsewhere she chances upon a large party of men and women, around a fire under the shade of lofty trees, boisterously ‘drinking, smoking and laughing’; yet elsewhere, in a post-house beyond Kvistram, a figure in a chemise starts ‘half out of a trunk’ to look at her.⁶⁷ Shakespeare is frequently present peripherally, in that some of these are the settings of his plays, as the boat travels on from Arendal to Gothenburg to Elsinore, or Wollstonecraft plays with *viola tricolor* and wild strawberries with her child

⁶⁵ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.259.

⁶⁶ For example, overwhelmed by alien surroundings and at the mercy of her hosts, moved from house to house at the close of Letter Twenty-Two and at Tønsburg, ‘The country ... wore a face of joy – and my soul was alive to its charms’ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, pp.248, 141.

⁶⁷ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.184.

and a lieutenant at Möllosund describes to her the situation of wrecks and the quality of the commodious bay.⁶⁸ Here literature accompanies her as she fulfils the duties of travel. A moment of gloom on settling her hotel account at Copenhagen gives rise to an imprecise quotation from *Hamlet*: 'How dull, flat and unprofitable/ Are to me all the usages of this world'.⁶⁹ Shakespeare is here implicitly connected to the economically dissolute. At the end of Letter Two, reasoned description gives way to a fantastical, dreamlike, exoticised Shakespearean setting that underpins many of the more matter-of-fact elements of the travel account:

The cow's bell has ceased to tinkle the herd to rest.... Eternity is in these moments: worldly cares melt into the airy stuff that dreams are made of; and reveries, mild and enchanting as the first hopes of love, or the recollection of lost enjoyment, carry the hapless wight into futurity.... Good night! A crescent hangs out in the vault before, which woos me to stray abroad.... Who fears the falling dew? It only makes the mown grass smell more fragrant.

Adieu!⁷⁰

There are allusions to other works such as Gray's *Elegy* and Milton's *Il Penseroso* as well as to Shakespeare. We find imagination and the gothic drawing near to one another in ways that are made possible in this text by the conjunction of travel writing and a woman's free mode of citation from Shakespeare.

⁶⁸ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.10.

⁶⁹ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.232.

⁷⁰ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.25.

The narrator has visions of Ugolino, in a moment of great hunger on the passage out of Copenhagen, soon relieved by a luncheon of bread and a basin of milk which she shares with her child. Those vast galleries occupied by the airy substances of Milton's devils at Schleswig in Denmark precipitate an interior, stoic moment of Shakespearean self-reflection, the setting here a gothic stage of chambers and canopied *fauteuils*:

All the world is a stage, thought I; and few are there in it who do not play the part they have learnt by rote; and those who do not, seem marks set up to be pelted at by fortune; or rather as sign-posts, which point out the road to others, whilst forced to stand still themselves amidst the mud and dust.⁷¹

Shakespeare seems to provide a navigation aid to Wollstonecraft, who is herself frequently lost and ill-at-ease in this landscape.

The text illustrates an economic orient of the north, at some distance from domestic shores and preoccupations. There certainly exists an emphasis in this work on Shakespeare as a writer immersed in Northern atmosphere, in silver forests and magical spirit-laden lands, and the text seeks to reimagine his works sometimes in the surroundings of a Nordic, Norwegian or High German literary imaginary. My concern is how Wollstonecraft's Shakespearean and gothic reference, as it appears within the economic and demographic tenor of much of the writing, provides or opens out a new arena for taste. Her text carries Shakespeare beyond the familiar terms of the native gothic literature – that body of literature which, arguably, has provided her with a way in to her reading of Shakespeare in

⁷¹ Wollstonecraft, *Letters Written*, p.242.

the *Letters*. Instead, the lands around Sweden, Norway and Denmark give rise to a reading of Shakespeare which is gothic in quality, but by virtue of its deployment of the genre of the travel text is distinguished from the English gothic and clearly defers any identification of England as Shakespeare's rightful home.

Mary Favret writes in an essay included in *The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft* on the echo of war in the *Letters from Sweden* and describes what she calls the 'meditation on the value of movement' in this text. Much of her analysis is concerned with the motility of emotion and how it works to draw the single 'I' out into cultural reference, literary citation, convention and similar forms of alterity in the *Letters*.⁷² She also offers an analysis, that is I think the superior account, in her book-length study, *Romantic Correspondence*, of what she describes as the "'open letter" of political controversy' in *Letters from Sweden* and also assesses accurately a combination of commerce and imaginative writing in this text.⁷³ My assessment of Wollstonecraft's text here highlights the use of Shakespeare in the author's account of her relationship with her daughter

⁷² Mary Favret, 'Letters Written During a Short Residence in Sweden, Norway and Denmark: traveling with Mary Wollstonecraft' in *The Cambridge Companion to Mary Wollstonecraft* ed. by Claudia Johnson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002) pp.223, 212, 226. Also of use in this volume are a few pages at the end of the article by Tom Furniss 'Mary Wollstonecraft's French Revolution' pp.59-81. Compare also on biographical writing and rhetorics of life-writing or self-writing the article by Christine Chaney, 'The Rhetorical Strategies of "Tumultuous Emotions": Wollstonecraft's Letters Written in Sweden', *Journal of Narrative Theory* 34:3 (2004) 277-303.

⁷³ Mary Favret, *Romantic Correspondence: Women, Politics and the Fiction of Letters* (Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp.96-7, 110. Particularly useful also is the analysis of economics and commerce in the article by Stephanie Buus 'Bound for Scandinavia: Mary Wollstonecraft's Promethean Journey' in *Mary Wollstonecraft's Journey to Scandinavia: Essays* ed. by Anka Ryall and Catherine Sandbach-Dahlstrom (Stockholm, 2003), pp.221-239. The introduction to this volume has a good survey of the existing literature on the *Letters* and an accurate account of blockade-running as first investigated by Per Nyström in the 1970s, pp.4-5.

and in her efforts to comment upon political and social affairs. It also, I hope, has emphasised the specific affects which come to be attached concurrently to gothic representation and to the version of Shakespeare traduced by this text.

SECTION TWO

Wollstonecraft's text exists at the far extreme of the 'modish nonsense' filling the popular printing presses. The style that predominates within this work is in contrast to the gothic register found throughout contemporary editions of Shakespeare's works. Bell's edition of 1773, prepared from the editions of Samuel Johnson and George Steevens, had carried illustrations by Edward Edwards and Isaac Taylor, artists committed to the Gothic style. Edwards had also designed parts of Horace Walpole's house at Strawberry Hill.⁷⁴ The new illustrations for the twenty-volume second edition of 1785-8 included more famous actors in notable performances; the ghost in *Hamlet* appears prominent, and a scene from *Titus Andronicus* is presented beneath a plaque commemorating 'Shakspere', whose name is overgrown by a

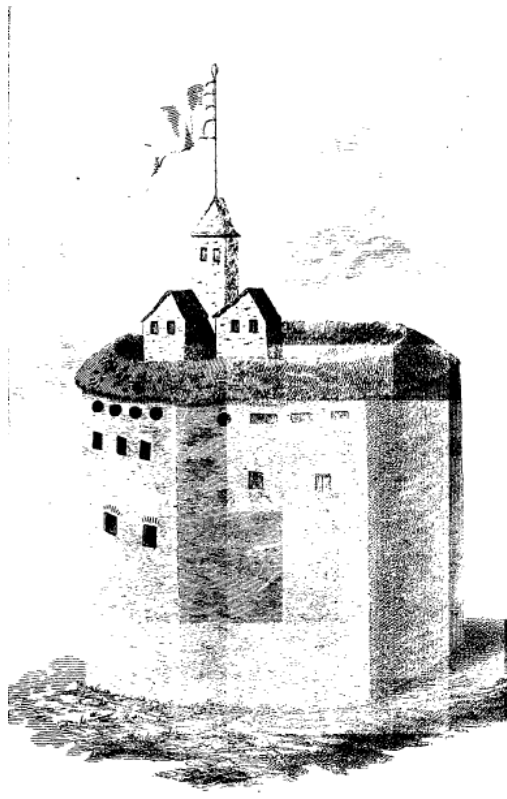
⁷⁴ Boase, 'Illustrations', p.93.

rampant acanthus.⁷⁵ The illustrations are somewhat spooky and antiquated, even where they seek to combine classical gesture and staged scenes within the gothic typographical surrounds.

Bell's edition carefully included a 'List of editions of Shakspeare's plays, both Ancient and Modern', Malone's 'Attempt to Ascertain the Chronological Order' of the plays, and an illustration of 'the Globe on the Bancke-Side, where Shakspeare acted'; these appeared alongside, for example, in a discussion accompanying the text of the *Merry Wives of Windsor*, the illustration of diamond-studded fans taken from the drawings for a text published in Venice in 1598, *Habiti Antichi et Moderni di Tutto il Mondo*.⁷⁶ Wollstonecraft's cold, high northern gothic, I want to go on to suggest in the remainder of this section of the chapter, both might and might not be compared with this contemporary philo-mediaeval, quaintly antiquated, frequently supernatural genre.

⁷⁵ *BES*, XVIII, pp.39, 405.

⁷⁶ *BES*, I, p.233. This particular illustration supported an historical point about the value of such objects in the time of Queen Elizabeth, as compared with the present day *BES*, IV, pp.172, 57.



THE GLOBE THEATRE . —

PLATE 36

The Shakespearean sublime – and I will elucidate this at further length in Chapter Four – by no means precluded the selection of gothic or superstitious locales. Wollstonecraft’s affect-laden Scandinavian landscapes offer at times an encounter with sublime emotion. The situation or ‘posturing’ of the literary self in relation to the landscapes of pleasurable terror and a fairy-lit imagination to be found in the Bellamy and Roberts edition is of a somewhat different tenor. At both levels of description, a gothic or sublime mood or atmosphere and occasionally a comic one exists in large part in connection to such objects as are to be found within the landscape, whether these be gloomy graveyards, expansive northern spaces interspersed with precipices and poplars, or identifiable architectural sites and structures. In the *Letters from Sweden* a Shakespearean sublime

primarily enables Wollstonecraft to paint Scandinavia as a modern-day fantastic orient in high mercantilist costume, and this is coterminous with her inclusion of references to the contemporary popular gothic. Gothic might mean mediaeval revivalism as frequently as a journey into a luxuriant lost Elizabethan past in the contemporary literature. Wollstonecraft's text illustrates a new Elizabethanism, of exotic travel in foreign lands, in place of the distant scenes of Elizabethan England. It makes the popular gothic of the Bellamy and Robarts editions of the works appear at times outmoded, crowded and chaotic, and elsewhere the perfect and fitting companion for her travel through Norway, Sweden and Denmark. The argument will now seek to clarify the parameters of the gothic and sublime influences upon Wollstonecraft's reading and writing as she travels through these Northern nations.

Within the text direct references to gothic occur such as in discussion of the 'large square wooden houses' of Christiana in Norway, which 'display... more than gothic barbarism' and exhibit that sublimity 'characteristic' of huge gothic piles conceived with 'a wildness of fancy'. At these moments of description the 'wildness of fancy' seems to bear that excess which would immediately render identifiable a gothic idiom to the eighteenth-century reader. This is an architecture of a definitively 'commercial spirit', mean in its conception and devoid of 'grandeur or elegance', Wollstonecraft argues, but undeniably the references are gothic and to a gothic northern barbarism which might be distinguished from a southern clement identity with its implicit religious difference, and there

seems an effort, in this reminder of the northern precursors for gothic, to point toward the former rather than the latter identity.

References to architecture are conventional to the definition of gothic, beyond and outside of Shakespeare criticism, as for example in Friedrich Schelling's account of the passage of the Saracenic architecture which passed into the west first via Spain and which he suggests resulted in the Northern and Gothic variety of this work. Schelling would draw a similar comparison as Reynolds suggested was to be found in the works of William Hodges when he directs his reader in the early nineteenth century to consider the drawings of Indian landscapes, temples and buildings for their comparison with the Gothic. 'Foliage as architectonic decoration is in any case of Oriental origin', he suggests, and Indian architecture offers an encounter with the colossal element in Gothic art and architecture.⁷⁷

Definitions of gothic are of course extensively contested and contestable in the study of the eighteenth century. Samuel Klinger's early work on Whig gothic with its ethno-purist strand of enquiry has been followed and updated by work on ethnicity in early England by Colin Kidd, Philip Connell and Howard Weinbrot.⁷⁸ Interdisciplinary, literary and historical studies by Christine Gerrard and James Watt follow in the wake of

⁷⁷ Friedrich Schelling, *The Philosophy of Art*, trans. by Douglas W. Scott (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), p.172.

⁷⁸ See Philip Connell, 'British Identities and the Politics of Ancient Poetry in Later Eighteenth-Century England', *The Historical Journal* 49:1 (2006) 161-192; Guest 'The Wanton Muse'; Kidd; Samuel Klinger, *The Goths in England: A Study in Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century Thought* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1952); Samuel Klinger, 'The "Goths" in England': An Introduction to the Gothic Vogue in Eighteenth Century Aesthetic Discussion', *Modern Philology* 43 (1945) 107-117; Samuel Klinger, 'Whig Aesthetics: a Phase of Eighteenth-Century Taste' *ELH* 16 (1949) 135-150; Katie Trumpener, *Bardic Nationalism: The Romantic Novel and the British Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997); Howard D. Weinbrot, *Britannia's Issue: The Rise of British Literature from Dryden to Ossian* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

J.G.A. Pocock's long century analysis of Whig gothic political thought.⁷⁹ This chapter contributes to the enquiry primarily through its association of Wollstonecraft's Shakespeare in the *Letters from Sweden* with the volume of Shakespeare in the affordable gothic style published by Bellamy and Robarts described above. In the economic resonances of Wollstonecraft's *Letters* an innovative and original association of Shakespeare with gothic, within the parameters of the genre of travel writing, is in evidence and worthy of consideration.

As for the sublime in Wollstonecraft's text, that too requires comment. The use of the sublime in *Letters* recalls the association of Shakespeare with the sublime in another of her works. It is worth noting this later text in connection and by way of brief comparison, as a reminder that Shakespeare was part of the formation and reformulation of current definitions for the gothic and the sublime. These are rapidly changing in the later years of the century and their connection to Shakespeare scholarship has been largely neglected. The much remarked, and arguably sublime, opening to Wollstonecraft's posthumous 1798 novel *Maria* is a passage which is often discussed for its proximity to the genre of the gothic novel. This passage might be seen to be the peer and contemporary of the Bellamy and Robarts edition of the *Plays*.

To read *Maria* alongside the Bellamy and Robarts edition encourages that we attend more carefully to the Shakespearean allusion and

⁷⁹ Gerrard, *Patriot Opposition to Walpole*, especially pp.109-20, 140; J.G.A. Pocock, *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law: A Study of English Historical Thought in the Seventeenth Century* (New York: Norton, 1967) and a significant essay in *Politics, Language, Time* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989); James Watt, *Contesting the Gothic: Fiction, Genre and Cultural Conflict 1764-1832* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999).

implicit reference in its opening passage. The opening words of the novel read as follows:

ABODES OF HORROR have frequently been described, and castles, filled with spectres and chimeras, conjured up by the magic spell of genius to harrow the soul, and absorb the wondering mind. But, formed of such stuff as dreams are made of, what were they to the mansion of despair, in one corner of which Maria sat, endeavouring to recall her scattered thoughts!⁸⁰

The passage clearly objectifies a figure of suffering femininity, crouched in the corner of a castellated tower. The passage also subtly reworks what, it must be understood, was a specifically gothic and Shakespearean variant of the contemporary literary sublime. The debt to Shakespeare in this passage extends beyond the direct *Tempest* citation, ‘such stuff as dreams are made of’, with its implied picturing of cloud capp’d towers, gorgeous palaces, solemn temples, the great globe itself from Prospero’s speech on the close of the revels in Act IV and the allusive reference to *Hamlet*. It is the same passage which Wollstonecraft cites in her description of a Scandinavian night scene. But this example from *Maria* draws nearer to gothic horror and exhibits a form of the sublime absent from the travel text. Elsewhere Shakespeare was beginning to be associated with forms of the sublime specific to the plays. In the *Encyclopaedia: or, a Dictionary of Arts, Sciences and Miscellaneous Literature*, published at Philadelphia in 1798, this same ‘cloud capp’d towers’ passage is cited in order to specifically illustrate the literary sublime and is associated with a description of its

⁸⁰ Mary Wollstonecraft, *Maria, or the Wrongs of Woman. A Posthumous Fragment by Mary Wollstonecraft Godwin* (Philadelphia: James Carey, 1799), p.11.

characteristic dynamic of elevation and descent. It is argued that the passage serves to ‘rais[e] the mind higher and higher till it feel the emotion of grandeur in perfection’:

[A]s, on the one hand, no means directly applied have more influence to raise the mind than grandeur and sublimity; so, on the other, no means indirectly applied have more influence to sink and depress it: for in a state of elevation, the artful introduction of an humbling object, makes the fall great in proportion to the elevation.⁸¹

In the opening lines of her novel, Wollstonecraft seems to deliberately bypass the grand and exemplary status of this specifically Shakespearean sublime, and to write with and against its dynamic of grandeur and humility, noble height and descent. In an imagined gothic emotional wilderness at the start of this novel, a vision of castles, ‘filled with spectres and chimeras... [that] absorb the wondering mind’, is dissolved suddenly like the ‘baseless fabric’ or ‘insubstantial pageant’ within the play. The opening passage reverses and collapses the sight of towers and palaces and not only at the level of the depression or fall that naturally follows the sublime. The conjuring and magic ‘spell of genius’ disperses in the course of that passage to reveal the object Maria, the novel’s heroine, who humbles the gaze of the narrator. So the sublime passage emphasises, rather than evaporates, the actual mansion of despair, with the real figure of Maria seated within it.

Wollstonecraft’s move against the conventions of the gothic novel and into the use of a Shakespearean sublime in the writing of an imagined

⁸¹ *Encyclopaedia; or, a Dictionary of Arts, Sciences, and Miscellaneous Literature* (Philadelphia: Thomas Dobson, 1798), VII, p.110.

landscape is similarly intelligent in the *Letters*. It also arguably has a gendered emphasis. If *Maria* through its engagement of the formal conventions of the gothic novel manages to circumvent the high tone of the Shakespearean sublime and to emphasise an element of ‘fall’ and the humbling immanence of materiality within an imaginative text, the earlier *Letters from Sweden* it might be thought engages with contemporary gothic and sublime aesthetics in connection with Shakespeare in an equally innovative manner. The principal affect exhibited in Wollstonecraft’s text is *accidie*: she is frequently morose, or depressed by her foreign travels. Any degree of excitement or national affirmation attached to victory and colonial advance, in contrast with other works discussed in the thesis, is lacking in her text. This is not to say it fails as a work of art. Indeed if the gothic is an aesthetic discourse in which the primary concern is not taste then Wollstonecraft in her reading of Shakespeare in *Letters from Sweden* fulfils instead that demand for the excitation of affect that clearly does characterise the gothic. And its effect as a literary text is entirely fresh.

SECTION THREE

One of each of Damer's works for Boydell appeared in engraved form on each of the title pages of the two volumes of the Royal Folio of prints: the first from *Coriolanus*, Act II Scene I, the second an illustration of *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act V Scene III. The first of these works is discussed in the third section of this chapter.



PLATE 37

A lessening of imperial ambition and at the same time a proliferation of the art and literature of loss occurred in England following the American colonies' declaration of independence, as scholars including Kate Davies and Martin Myrone have sought to explain in recent years.⁸² Subsequently the French revolutionary wars and the attached intimation of conflict across

⁸² Kate Davies, *Catherine Macaulay and Mercy Otis Warren: the Revolutionary Atlantic and the Politics of Gender* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), Myrone, *Bodybuilding*. See also the following essays: Daniel O'Quinn, 'Theatre and Empire' in *The Cambridge Companion to British Theatre 1730-1830* ed. by Jane Moody and Daniel O'Quinn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); J. Bratton, 'Introduction' in *Acts of Supremacy: the British Empire and the Stage 1790-1930* ed. by J. Bratton (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1991), pp.1-17.

the empire seemed if anything to return the aspirations of British artists to earlier, nostalgic, mediaeval and feudal models and imagery. Constructive American contexts for political rule also became an object for the English gaze in the last twenty years of the century. A resurgence of republican and neo-classical forms, even at times a direct return to works of the 1760s and 1770s does begin to occur. Such styles become, among the range of forms available, an accessible and readily identifiable idiom for the artistic recovery of Shakespeare. This is, I think, the achievement of the relief works which Anne Damer made for the Boydell Shakespeare Gallery. The works were located on either side of the main doors, at the entrance to the gallery building itself, and their stark classicism must have contrasted with the rugged naturalism of Thomas Banks' *alto* relief sculpture, which hung over the main door. The works were made in terracotta and were of the low relief kind.

I will now describe the appearance of the *Coriolanus* work. The speech accompanying the Damer composition in the gallery catalogue tells us that the work illustrates the central character Coriolanus on return from battle against the Volsces in Corioli, who is commanded to rise by his mother who has come to greet him. The scholar Georgianna Ziegler, commenting on this sculpture writes, 'visually and kinetically, the whole movement of the piece ends in the figure of Virgilia, who stands weeping to the far right, both hands held up to her face'.⁸³ The catalogue entry italicises

⁸³ Georgianna Ziegler, 'Suppliant Women and Monumental Maidens: Shakespeare's Heroines in the Boydell Gallery', in *The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery*, ed. by Frederick Burwick and Walter Pape (Bottrop, Essen: Peter Pomp, 1996), pp.89-102. Viewed at <www.shakespeare-gesellschaft.de> [accessed May 18 2010].

for emphasis the words with which the nobleman responds to his weeping wife in Act II Scene I:

My gracious silence, hail!

Wouldst thou have laughed had I come coffin'd home,

*That weep'st to see me triumph?*⁸⁴

Implicit in this work is a notion that it is a challenge to the territory of the republic, and more specifically its refraction by a group of feminine figures, that is being illustrated. The reception of Coriolanus directs the development of the imperial imaginary, and strengthens its tie to the republic. It reinforces or refreshes that tie of the military leader to the republic, which temporarily became uncertain in the pursuit of misguided martial endeavour. The tie exists also between Coriolanus and his mother Volumnia, who is placed in the composition between the returning hero and his wife. Here, as in Coriolanus' own account of battle, female relations appear as a kind of lens through which Rome itself is able to become more noble and vigorous, more chaste, pure and invulnerable than had she previously. This is I think the success of the sculptural scene:

Cor. [after holding Volumnia by the hands in silence]

...O my mother, mother! O!

You have won a happy victory to Rome;

But for your son, -- believe it, O, believe it,

Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,

If not most mortal to him.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ Boydell, *Catalogue* (London: J.Boydell, 1794), p.210. Also Boydell, *Catalogue* (London: J.Boydell, 1791), p.124.

⁸⁵ *BES*, XV, p.140. This appears in Act V Scene III in Bell's edition.

It is those themes of republican femininity and the emotion around homecoming scenes that form the subject of this part of the chapter. The second relief illustrated Cleopatra and places a similarly emblematic feminine within a narrative of heroism and imperial power, here with an allusion to the stoic feminine. I will not discuss the second work in depth, although it is worth noticing that the work presents a stoic group that is committed to a particular version of civic duty.⁸⁶

Republican art illustrating the stories of the Roman empire is one possible context for this relief sculpture. The contemporary artist Gavin Hamilton's painting of a similar scene, *Volumnia's Appeal to Coriolanus* for Boydell's gallery is, as Duncan Macmillan has argued, best categorised alongside his work of *Agrippina Landing at Brundisium with the Ashes of Germanicus* (1723-98).⁸⁷ There are a series of Agrippina works from the 1760s and 1770s, classically derivative in subject matter, but idiosyncratic in style and manner, which set a significant aesthetic precedent for Damer's relief work.

⁸⁶ Compare Sara Gaden 'Gender, Empire and Nation in Sarah Fielding's *Lives of Cleopatra and Octavia*' *Studies in English Literature* 39:3 (1999) 323-38. Gaden's questions about the place of strong, virtuous women in the discourse of civic humanism would sustain further attention in connection to the extent to which this work presents a stoic group which is almost entirely private and domestic, and at the same time not without civic designation. It seems from some of the catalogues that there may also have existed a further *Coriolanus* relief from Act IV Scene V illustrating Aufidius and Coriolanus, although Frederick Burwick and Walter Pape in their comprehensive historical account of the gallery do not make record of this. See Boydell, *Catalogue* (London: J.Boydell, 1791), p.150.

⁸⁷ In the Tate Collections. Duncan Macmillan, 'Woman as Hero: Gavin Hamilton's Radical Alternative', in *Femininity and Masculinity in Eighteenth-Century Art and Culture* ed. by Gill Perry and Michael Rossington (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), p.84.



PLATE 38

The number of British artworks produced during the 1760s and 1770s of the lives of Agrippina and Germanicus includes the following works. The subject particularly attracted an audience during the American war. In 1771 Gavin Hamilton completed his work commissioned by Earl Spencer and titled *Agrippina Landing at Brundisium with the Ashes of Germanicus*; Benjamin West had executed the same subject to a similar composition, for Robert Drummond, Archbishop of York in 1768.⁸⁸ Among the Scottish school of artists around Hamilton, James Nevey and Alexander Runciman were working on the subject, from 1761 and 1769 respectively.⁸⁹ Hamilton's single figure *Agrippina Weeping Over the Ashes of Germanicus*, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1770 and engraved by Alexander

⁸⁸ West's work has the same title.

⁸⁹ Macmillan, p.96.

Runciman c.1775.⁹⁰ Katherine Read, too, had depicted Catherine Macaulay as a Roman matron weeping over the lost liberties of Rome, in a painting Macmillan suggests was closely derived from Gavin Hamilton's *Agrippina*.⁹¹



PLATE 39

Mary Hays included entries on ‘Agrippina’ and ‘Agrippina the Younger’ in her *Female Biography; or Memoirs of Illustrious and Celebrated Women, of All Ages and Countries*.⁹² These pictorial works illustrate the homecoming of the governor’s wife and funeral party, as described in Tacitus’ *Annals*. Agrippina appears returning to Rome and

⁹⁰ Macmillan, p.84. Macmillan reproduces the engraving on p.89.

⁹¹ Macmillan, p.87. Also, see Kate Davies, *Catherine Macaulay and Mercy Otis Warren: The Revolutionary Atlantic and the Politics of Gender* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005) on the Agrippina works by Catherine Read and Gavin Hamilton for an analysis based on the classical republican force of the works. She notably emphasises how feminine virtue is a basis for the civic and public sphere, pp.115-27.

⁹² Mary Hays, *Female Biography; or Memoirs of Illustrious and Celebrated Women of All Ages and Countries, Alphabetically Arranged* 6 vols. (London: Richard Phillips, 1803), I, pp.10-50. My thanks to Pat Rands at York for drawing my attention to Hays.

landing amongst crowds at Brundisium with the ashes of her husband. Frequently the presence of her children, journeying with her, adds a significant component to the composition. The works emphasise the particular variety of imperial mourning this story presents, taking as their subject matter the difficulty attached to the burial of a noble man, treacherously murdered while serving in a distant part of the empire, who had to be buried without appropriate ceremony in a foreign land.⁹³ Agrippina and the group she travels with appear disembarking the ships on which they have travelled, emphasising that section in Tacitus which addresses the failure of the emperor to follow appropriate customs and to provide due ceremony on the arrival of the mourning party at Rome, and highlighting the widow's grief over the death of her noble husband, a governor of the Roman Empire in Asia. The story represents imperial mourning: Germanicus was a popular figure whose august rule had drawn comparisons with that of Alexander the Great. The paintings all emphasise the moment immediately preceding the Roman emperor Tiberius' abrupt formal termination of the widespread grieving which accompanies the death. The story goes that the entire city laments in an outpouring of emotion described at length in the *Annals*, lasting from the moment of the news of Germanicus' illness and subsequent death through to the return of his ashes to Rome. This is a public yet familial homecoming, as it is represented in these popular works, limited only by the corrupt emperor's orders that people cease mourning and return to their ordinary

⁹³ *The Works of Cornelius Tacitus by Arthur Murphy Esq.* 4 vols. (London: G. G. J. and J. Robinson, 1793), I, p.155.

occupations.⁹⁴ The story provides a powerful narrative about the containment of imperial emotion, and metaphorises its appropriate assimilation and incorporation at the level of the visualised city. It is one in which female figures and social bonds, more notably, guarantee the health of the polity and affirm the proper civic reception for the body of an imperial governor who, in death, did not receive the honours due to a nobleman.

Anne Seymour Damer, whose works included a ten-foot high statue of Apollo for the Drury Lane theatre, images of Nelson, Voltaire and the emperor Augustus and a sculpture of the King, was well connected in theatrical and social circles: when she died at Strawberry Hill in 1828, it was in the presence of Mary Berry, Garrick, Sarah Siddons and Joanna Baillie.⁹⁵ Her mother was Caroline Bruce, née Campbell, countess of Ailesbury and the daughter of the fourth Duke of Argyll; her father, the Hon. Henry Seymour Conway, was a prominent public man, closely involved in American politics throughout the 1760s and '70s and renowned for his contributions to Chatham's so-called 'northern campaign' of diplomacy in which England was allied with Prussia and Russia. As a member of the cabinet and commander-in chief for the government, he was later a strident opponent to the American policies of the Shelbourne ministry prior to and during the Fox-North coalition, under which he also served until its dissolution in 1783. Conway was a lifelong friend of Horace and Edward Walpole, who were also his cousins. His mother's sister had been the wife

⁹⁴ *Tacitus*, I, p.160.

⁹⁵ Information about Damer's family derived from <www.oxforddnb.com> [accessed 19/05/10].

of Sir Robert Walpole and Damer spent much of her life in and around Walpole's house at Strawberry Hill. She leaned more toward the classical than the gothic in her own artistic tendencies, read Latin and Greek, and when asked to preferred to sculpt the likenesses of Sarah Siddons and Elizabeth Farren, as she did in 1789, as the form of the muses of comedy and tragedy, *Melpomene* and *Thalia*.⁹⁶

Kathleen Wilson has written on a generalised crisis of the domestic, and connected familial, sexual, civic and imperial arenas in English society of the late century, through which a strengthening of the domestic and familial eventually came about.⁹⁷ She points to the several examples of the Seven Years War, the Peace of Paris, West Indian Planters, Indian nabobs and the American War, which all came to be frequently represented in 'stridently gendered images of family dysfunction, sexual excess, and effeminate aristocratic langour' and as events which precipitated 'troubling' links between empire and effeminacy and 'further undermin[ed] Britons' confidence in its empire of virtue.⁹⁸ The lesson of Rome in particular for Britain at this time was, Barker-Benfield has suggested:

⁹⁶ The most useful recent critical analyses of Damer are by Alison Yarrington. See her insightful article 'The Female Pygmalion: Anne Seymour Damer, Allan Cunningham and the writing of a Woman Sculptor's Life', *The Sculpture Journal* (1997) 32-44. Also her entry on Damer, *An Oxford Companion to the Romantic Age 1776-1832* ed. by Iain McCalman, p.475.

⁹⁷ Kathleen Wilson, 'Empire, Gender and Modernity' in *Gender and Empire* ed. by Phillipa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.19. Compare Kathleen Wilson, *Sense of the People*.

⁹⁸ Wilson, 'Empire, Gender and Modernity', p.19.

one of the subordination of republican manhood to tyranny, imperial ambition, the corruption of courtly manners, and the degenerative effects of luxury, all leading ultimately to effeminacy.⁹⁹

How imperial themes such as this translated in artistic terms is less clear, and almost entirely absent from our understanding of Shakespeare in this period.

Joshua Reynolds, writing in his Twelfth Discourse in 1784, had suggested that the perfect model for sculpture was a fighting gladiator at Rome. Hogarth, earlier in the century had aspired to a similar perfection in the statue of an English boxer. However, by 1803, the zenith of English sculpture was two terracotta classical bas-relief works by the little-remembered female sculptor Anne Damer, placed at the entrance to the Shakespeare gallery and given prominent position on the two title pages of the folio of prints.¹⁰⁰

To some extent contemporary performances of *Coriolanus* are of relevance to this sculpture. *Coriolanus* was performed at this time in Kemble's version of 1789, the theatrical successor to the *Coriolanus* of Nahum Tate first staged in 1682, to Thomson's 1748 adaptation, and the version by the elder Sheridan of 1764, which had 'jumbled together the "Coriolanus" of Shakspeare with that of Thomson' and marked a return to the historical playtext.¹⁰¹ Siddons' biographer Thomas Campbell noted of 'the real Shaksperian "Coriolanus"', 'I venture to state my belief, that it was

⁹⁹ Barker-Benfield, *Culture of Sensibility*, p.148.

¹⁰⁰ Reynolds, *Discourses*, p.213. William Hogarth, *The Analysis of Beauty. Written with a View of Fixing the Fluctuating Ideas of Taste* (London: J.Reeves, 1753), p.80.

¹⁰¹ Thomas Campbell, *Life of Mrs Siddons* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1834), p.175.

never acted genuinely from the year 1660 until the year 1820'.¹⁰² The play was by no means a single entity or stable text in the years between 1780 and 1800.

It does seem that a degree of gothicism was common to contemporary interpretations of the play. Kemble's prompt-book carried over from Thomson Volumnia's attempt to stab herself; a performance of *Coriolanus* at Whitby around this time was augmented by the spectacle on stage of 'a Grand Pitch Battle between the Romans and the Britons'.¹⁰³ The performance of Volumnia by the celebrated Siddons also exhibited significant gothic elements, as Paula Backscheider has explained in detail.¹⁰⁴

Volumnia was played most famously by the Shakespearean actor Sarah Siddons during these years. Her biographer reprints a section from a letter from 'my valued friend, the actor Young', which gives some sense of the high matronly emotion with which that character was contemporaneously associated. Volumnia is described 'rolling if that be not too strong a term to describe her motion':

from side to side, swelling with the triumph of her son. Such was the intoxication of joy which flashed from her eye, and lit up her whole face, that the effect was irresistible. She seemed to reap all the glory of that procession to herself. I could not take my eye from her.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Campbell, p.174.

¹⁰³ *John Philip Kemble Promptbooks*, ed. by Charles H. Shattuck, 11 vols. (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1974), II, p.59. Compare Jane Moody, 'Romantic Shakespeare' in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage* ed. by Stanley Wells and Sarah Stanton (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.44-6.

¹⁰⁴ Paula Backscheider, *Spectacular Politics: Theatrical Power and Mass Culture in Early Modern England* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993), pp.214-5.

¹⁰⁵ Campbell, p.175.

This account of Siddons ‘coming down the stage in the triumphal entry of her son, *Coriolanus*,’ affirms the primacy of physical gesture on the stage, and derives from current thinking about acting and stage-performance an emphasis on the relationship between word and gesture. Here the performance seems to emphasise, as conventionally found in eighteenth-century acting theory, the precedence of eyes, expression, and bodily gesture over voice, and the elaborate entrance attracts comment for its physical force.¹⁰⁶ In the theatres this dramatic entrance was highlighted by the use of stage machinery. The subject of the speech that followed is, too, a form of emotion which found visual expression before words, and it begins with the lines, ‘Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment/ And state of bodies would bewray what life/ We’ve led since thy Exile.’ (Act V Scene III).¹⁰⁷ The speech continues with the weeping, shaking and fear and sorrow of the women who have awaited the return of their men from scenes of war.

Volumnia’s response to her son’s martial endeavours is admonitory. She sees that he shall either ‘as a foreign miscreant, be led/ With manacles through our streets, or else triumphantly tread on thy country’s ruin; and bear the palm, for having bravely shed / Thy wife’s and children’s blood’. In this imagined scene, ‘our streets’, ‘thy country’s ruin’ and ‘thy wife’s and children’s blood’ become the same place, the awkward overlap of ‘our’ and ‘thy’ in the imagined assault on the city in these words the site of

¹⁰⁶ For a detailed analysis of ‘gesture before voice’ in a variety of English and continental theatrical texts, see Dene Barnett with the assistance of Jeanette Massy-Westropp, *The Art of Gesture: the Practices and Principles of 18th Century Acting Theory* (Heidelberg: Carl Winter University, 1987), pp.164-5, 371-6.

¹⁰⁷ *BES*, XV, p.137.

Volumnia's emotional appeal against ill-advised violence. 'Down ladies, lets shame him with our knees', she continues.¹⁰⁸ This speech is less than gothic, although in contemporary performance the powerful figure of Siddons on stage, combined with the themes of brutal and bloody warfare seen to be not in keeping with the interests of the republic and strong femininity, may well have amounted to a gothic effect.¹⁰⁹

The almost excessive republican emotion which also provides content for the speech was, as Alexander Pope and later Richard Farmar had noted, copied from Plutarch.¹¹⁰ The catalogue entry for Gavin Hamilton's painting of the scene for the gallery immediately preceded the entry for the Damer relief works, suggesting they were exhibited in close proximity in the gallery space.

The depiction of Virgilia in Damer's relief work, like that of Agrippina in the *Death of Germanicus*, or the favourite example of noble emotion in eighteenth-century aesthetic writing, Timanthes' Agamemnon at the sacrifice of Iphigenia, is of a figure averted from Coriolanus, weeping,

¹⁰⁸ *BES*, XV, p.137-9.

¹⁰⁹ Backscheider on 'Gothic Drama and National Crisis' in Part III also firmly situates Siddons as an actress of the 'true gothic', who appeared on stage as an 'object of terror', p.204, 208, p.285 n .24. Also Jeffrey Cox writes on Siddons as the epitome of the gothic woman and emphasises how terror over pity in her performances made her 'the perfect actress for the gothic drama', Jeffrey Cox, *Seven Gothic Dramas* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1992), p.53. Also on Siddons' sovereignty over the 'witching hour', see Jeffrey N. Cox, 'Baillie, Siddons, Larpent: Gender, Power, and Politics in the Theatre of Romanticism', in *Women in British Romantic Theatre: Drama, Performance and Society 1790-1840*, ed. by Catherine Burroughs (London: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.34.

¹¹⁰ Richard Farmar, 'An Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare addressed to Joseph Cradock Esq. 1767' in *Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare*, ed. by D. Nichol Smith, 2nd edition (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), p.161.

and covering her face.¹¹¹ The famed painting of Agamemnon and Iphigenia by the ancient Timanthes of Kythnos, from around 400 B.C., was known through Cicero's writings on oratory. As such, and as an example which advocated the use of silence where an emotion could not be adequately expressed, it was familiar to eighteenth-century readers. The passage was frequently repeated in manuals teaching the art of oratory. Another discussion of Timanthes' Agamemnon, by the elder Pliny in his writings on art, also made its way into Elizabeth Montagu's writings on Shakespeare as an illustration of magnanimity of sentiment.¹¹²

Damer has illustrated the homecoming at Rome in a manner that more closely resembles contemporary republican art. Her relief work even seems to echo words from a later scene in the play: '[d]aughter speak you, he cares not for thy weeping'. Brockbank writes that *Coriolanus* depicts a crisis in the growth of the city-state: 'the virtue it breeds almost destroys it'.¹¹³ Volumnia and Virgilia in *Coriolanus* therefore offered promising material from the playtext and an appealing subject from staged versions of Shakespeare to a female sculptor embarking on an interpretive work.

While the Roman setting of the *Annals* remained a highly superstitious one, filled with chants, incantations and curses, and the scene

¹¹¹ Poussin's painting was celebrated 'for having deftly updated the device of Timanthes' in having Agrippina bury her face in a veil', Thomas Crow, *The Intelligence of Art* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1999), p.84.

¹¹² Montagu, pp.48-9. For figures of veiled grief in classical theatre and on other seated, motionless and speechless figures, e.g. Niobe moaning by her children's tomb, and Achilles, or Cassandra before she goes crazy and starts 'raving' in *Agamemnon*, see Kostas Valakas, 'The Use of the Body by Actors in Tragedy and Satyr-Play' in *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession* ed. by Pat Easterling and Edith Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp.79-80.

¹¹³ Philip Brockbank, *On Shakespeare: Jesus, Shakespeare, Karl Marx and Other Essays* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1989), p.124.

of Beaufort's death, in its allusion to Poussin's painting of the *Death of Germanicus*, held violence, darkness and witchcraft among its subjects, the Damer reliefs are devoid of reference to the supernatural, and delineate a cleaner neo-classical form than Reynolds' *Beaufort* painting.

The choice of bas-relief for these works is itself striking, and suggests a regression of artistic terms beyond the reference points of the American revolutionary Agrippina works. Was Damer pursuing a yet purer or more classical foundation for her Shakespeare works than had Reynolds in Poussin or had West or Hamilton in their neo-classical endeavours, perhaps? Giles Tillotson in his discussion of William Hodges' paintings of funerary groups points to the moral-didactic force such narrative group paintings carried and suggests:

such images often referred to known narratives about self-sacrificing sons or loyal widows; in many cases the subjects were drawn from classical antiquity, and commonly they were represented using a characteristic frieze style of composition, derived from antique bas-relief carving.¹¹⁴

Robert Rosenblum, as Tillotson emphasises, has written similarly on the 'didactic type of painting, involving the depiction of a morally exemplary action' that was 'widely fashionable from the 1760s, having been promoted by artists such as Jean-Baptiste Greuze in France and Benjamin West and Gavin Hamilton in Britain'.¹¹⁵ But Damer made bas-relief works themselves. When she did so in the late 1780s, she must have been working

¹¹⁴ Tillotson, p.94.

¹¹⁵ Robert Rosenblum, *Transformations in Late Eighteenth-Century Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1967), discussed Tillotson, p.94.

both within and beyond the moral didacticism of these neo-classical – often Poussin-esque – pictorial works. In depicting groups of people, in scenes from Shakespeare, within a frieze composition, Damer diverged markedly from that rough, native gothic aesthetic outlined in the textual criticism discussed in the earlier part of this chapter. Her works were not, however, ill-placed within the Shakespeare Gallery, whose composite aesthetic, still largely delineated by the notion of the sister arts, comfortably sustained such sculptural works. They also in some way drew reference to America, and while not reiterating exactly the form of republicanism to be found in earlier works such as the series from the Germanicus story by artists such as Hamilton and West or Katherine Read, brought England into contact with republicanism and Shakespeare simultaneously in a relatively unprecedented fashion.

Jane Rendall has invited modern scholars to consider the significance of the Agrippina myth within the textual interventions of late-eighteenth-and early-nineteenth century English and American women, emphasising their identifications with her and the story of Germanicus in their contributions to political debate, as well as their debt to Arthur Murphy's 1793 translation of the *Annals*.¹¹⁶ Both her work and that of

¹¹⁶ Jane Rendall, 'Writing History for British Women: Elizabeth Hamilton and the *Memoirs of Agrippina*', in *Wollstonecraft's Daughters: Womanhood in England and France 1780-1920* ed. by Clarissa Campbell Orr (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1996), pp.79-93, p.83. Rendall reemphasises Howard Weinbrot's argument that Murphy's translation be read as 'a contribution to the emerging identity of a northern and commercial nation with its roots in ancient Britain and an ancient Germany', and opposed to the politics of revolutionary France. Also Jane Rendall, "'Tacitus Engendered": Gothic Feminism and British Histories 1750-1800' in Geoffrey Cubitt ed. *Reimagining Nations* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), pp.57-74. More broadly informative is Gerrard who covers definitions of gothic as encompassing fiercely 'liberty-loving northern races' and endlessly hardy individuals who never submit to tyranny; and Tacitus as an important critic of 'Augustan tyranny and corruption' whose praise in the *Germania* for 'the simple virtues of the liberty-loving Germans, contrasting

Miriam Elizabeth Burstein argue that these stories function within the development of a particular and idiosyncratic form of women's historical writing at this time.¹¹⁷ Like Wollstonecraft, Rendall suggests, Elizabeth Hamilton engaged in a form of generic manipulation in her *Memoirs of Agrippina, the Wife of Germanicus* (1804).

The volumes reaffirm a strand of profane, tribal, household femininity in Agrippina's character that was ambitious, a fresh site for 'an increase of the fame and glory of her race', enabling persistence of the Roman association between female patriotism and civilisation, yet not incompatible with a benevolent and improving Christian and domestic sensibility.¹¹⁸ Agrippina was, then, though imperial and Roman, also proto-Germanic, free, northern, domestic, martial, royal, simple, virtuous. In her efforts to care for house, dress, field and her men at battle, and to retain a place for the arts within a polite and graceful society she emblematised 'the high status of women among the northern tribes' and 'the distinctive destiny of northern Europeans'.¹¹⁹ Not least, perhaps, Hamilton places Agrippina as a figure who held off the barbarism of the Gauls, whom she found 'in a very early stage of civilisation'; her own Saxon and Scottish identifications led to her recovery of Agrippina as historical female defender or safeguard of 'the

with their over-civilised Roman oppressors' for eighteenth-century readers 'had a barely disguised political import' and affirmed that the Britons and their Germanic cousins were 'the well-spring of rugged integrity', Gerrard, pp.109, 113, 140.

¹¹⁷ Miriam Elizabeth Burstein, *Narrating Women's History in Britain, 1770-1902* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2004), Chapter Two 'Spectacles and Sentiments: Disembodying Women's History, 1789-1810', pp.50-77.

¹¹⁸ Rendall, 'Writing History', p.90.

¹¹⁹ Rendall, 'Writing History', p.83.

spirit of liberty inherited from the German forests'.¹²⁰ Hamilton's *Memoirs* work to harmonise superstition, tyranny and degraded commercial relations among the Romans by subsuming these failings within a narrative championing the Christian and domestic.

For another variant of the contemporary notion that Christendom was therefore historically more productive of 'dignified' women than Athens or Rome, where women may be 'polished and even refined', but were not allowed the rank that marks out the treatment of women in a more civilised society, it is helpful to compare William Richardson, 'On Shakespeare's Imitation of Female Characters, Addressed to a Friend'. In an account that draws on and references Millar, Richardson compares 'the wives and daughters of the fierce barbarian', kept as 'domestic slaves' in 'times of great rudeness' with that respect for women and their status as 'companions of men' exhibited in Northern European society, which depends on 'female virtues' 'female affection' and 'female character'.¹²¹

There is much in Rendall's analysis of Hamilton's work that suggests political complexity and an unresolved retreat toward Germanic customs and principles and the history of the years subsequent to the collapse of the Roman republic. In Rendall's analysis, Elizabeth Hamilton's version of Agrippina's story is characteristic of the association of liberty with Anglicisation and an 'Anglo-British', Saxon-based identity which, she

¹²⁰ Rendall, 'Writing History', p.88.

¹²¹ William Richardson, *Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff, and on His Imitation of Female Characters* (London: J.Murray, 1788), p.61. Richardson also wrote on Celtic superstition, on St Petersburg, and earlier texts on Shakespeare's characters of Timon, Lear, Macbeth, on Hamlet and the violence of passions, on other women Miranda, Isabella, Beatrice, Portia, Cordelia.

says, 'marginalised the Scottish past'.¹²² Richardson's text fits into a narrative about femininity and the progress of civilisation, but does not draw the border between British and Anglo-British favoured by Rendall and prefers to connect Shakespeare to a broader notion of the Northern European.

Burstein's argument more emphatically addresses the perceived dangers of a return to the martial heroism of the Agrippina narrative, and argues for a form of 're-Christianization' at work in Hamilton's history. This is a text, she suggests, which affirms historical causality and takes up the viewpoint of a modern, secular and rational writer. She discusses the re-assimilation of the feminine version of Roman and Germanic virtue embodied by Agrippina in the work of a range of political thinkers, painters and historians including Gavin Hamilton, Mary Hays and Helen Maria Williams, emphasising with Rendall the patriotic force of Agrippina's maternal sentiment and elevated manners. In her reading, the re-vivification of Agrippina and Roman versions of femininity is sympathetic to the republican spirit in France, though this is subdued to a Whig, Christian and English variety of history, with its values of reading to identify benevolence and a commitment to causality which was alien to the workings of the Roman mind.¹²³ She also stresses how the Roman mind was seen to be

¹²² Rendall, 'Writing History', p.84.

¹²³ Burstein, pp.71-2. Burstein makes an argument, as does Jane Rendall, about Hamilton's instrumental participation in a mode of gothic history, largely perpetuated by women, which had its own generic requirements and results, and which emerged out of, and returned to the particularities of late eighteenth-century English culture in particular ways, so makes comments such as, 'As participants in revolutionary events women signify in terms not of realism but of Gothic romance'. On trends within women's historical writing at this time, see also Greg Kucich, 'Romanticism and the Re-Engendering of Historical Memory', in *Memory and Memorials, 1789-1914*, ed. by Matthew Campbell, Jacqueline Labbe and Sally Shuttleworth (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), pp.25-29 and

governed by fable, superstition and ‘the fiction of the poets’ and that this was distinguished from the gothic mind.

My argument in the later part of this chapter in some ways responds to the work of Burstein and Rendall through a reading of Damer’s Shakespeare relief. Their efforts to bring scholarly attention toward the significance of the Agrippina narrative within late-century political and cultural life do, I think, shed necessary light on the meanings of Shakespeare in these years, and on the intricacies of definitions for gothic and roman politics and political forms, as well as the attribution of superstition and its place within developing Christian ideologies. Most particularly they illuminate the puzzling conflation of Shakespeare with a gothic or Germanic aesthetic at the century’s end.

Michael Gamer outlines in his *Romanticism and the Gothic* that for writers such as Clara Reeve and James Beattie gothic was primarily associated with a ‘piety, patriotism, respect for women and love of liberty’ that was ‘inherently English’ and implicitly northern or Anglo-German.¹²⁴ While I have not emphasised the Christian and republican architecture of the Agrippina story, this argument does of course have some bearing toward the subject matter of Damer’s *Coriolanus* work, and for its presentation on the title page of the Boydell Royal Folio. It is, I think, significant that her two works came to appear in engravings on these front pages. How then, was the decision made to place them there? Clearly republican and neo-classic in design, were these terracotta sculptures, at the forefront of British art,

Greg Kucich ‘The Last Man and the New History’, *Romantic Circles MOO Virtual Conference* September 13 1997 at <www.rc.umd.edu> [accessed 19/05/10].

¹²⁴ Gamer, p.49.

presented here as emblematic of the ‘Dramatic Works of Shakespeare’ as ‘Illustrated by the Artists of Great Britain’, an affirmation of republican virtue or do they appear evidence of a resurgent spirit of northern liberty? They might have been both domestic, feminine, household objects designed to hold the spirits out and the product of a powerful Christianising, imperial gaze. The work I have discussed celebrates women both as the guardians of civilisation and as gatekeepers of religious and political identities, helpfully guarding against increasing foreign influences within the nation under empire. I think that most of the dualities which arose around competing definitions for the roman and gothic were not simple, nor are they simplistically resolved in Damer’s relief. Certainly women, and figures of grieving women in particular, appear in Damer’s thanatophilic works at the threshold of the nation. Masculine martial power did, it seems, leave off where feminine literary culture and the feminised arena of taste held sway, although associations with the unlearned, native antiquarian and natural, the rugged, wild, rustic and manly meant that affiliations and identifications with existing narratives were never simple as far as Shakespeare was concerned.

The Boydell gallery was an unprecedented metropolitan and commercial opportunity to join the vogue for landscape painting to the bumbling comic Englishness of Falstaff’s merry and faulty heroism, and Jaques’ artful melancholy. By the end of the century, though, England’s mood was graver, and retreat to the feminine, neo-classical and morally instructive forms of Damer’s reliefs more fitting national aspirations. Whether received in the drawing room of an English country estate or

carried to the Chinese emperor as an ambassador of British wealth and taste, these relief works were, at the turn of the nineteenth century, one of the most prominent public instances of how Shakespeare and ‘Great Britain’ came to recombine with one another, and they exemplified a newly restrained, yet forward-looking, form of imperial identity.¹²⁵



PLATE 40

Like Wollstonecraft’s adept refusal of antiquity, her reluctance to wander freely into the national past and decision instead to describe the strange world of commerce and modernity, as she found it travelling, commercially and with Shakespeare in mind, in Sweden, Denmark and Norway, Damer’s works also located Shakespeare within a fresh and gnomic artistic register. For an imperially oriented ‘Great Britain’, her

¹²⁵ James Gillray, *The Reception of the Diplomatique and his Suite, at the Court of Peking* published September 14 1792. Here the Boydell Shakespeare folio of prints appears in a satirical context in connection to British manufactured goods before it has even been presented in a domestic one. The image illustrates Lord MacCartney’s forthcoming mission to China to improve trading relations.

reclusive, restrained republican idiom, morally prescriptive and reserved in outlook, presented within the arts a domestic counterpart to the spread of trade and commerce overseas. By their generic and stylistic proximity to the neoclassical, progressive Scottish works of the 1760s and 1770s, these Shakespeares brought England closer to America and republicanism, but it was a republicanism of a newly English variety.

These works were significant artistic efforts to re-narrativise the nation and describe the English encounter with modernity, within yet uncertain and still undefined generic boundaries. It might in many ways be tasteless to address Shakespeare, the great artist of England, widely celebrated as a national poet, in a text of travel writing, and Wollstonecraft wrote and published as a woman. Hamilton's *Memoirs* were a nascent form of historical writing, with antecedents among the classical writers, but few followed and wrote history on this format subsequently. Damer, similarly, produced a classically influenced relief sculpture yet more classical in influence than some of the republican and American painting of recent years to which it owed its genesis. Miriam Burstein argues that texts such as that by Hamilton, or those later by Lucy Aikin or Felicia Hemans, or indeed earlier texts such as Sarah Fielding's *The Lives of Cleopatra and Octavia* (1757), opposed the stable development of a rational historiography based in the perspective of 'calm, discriminating observers', and so amount to an intrinsically feminine space of endeavour. Neither the work by Damer nor that by Wollstonecraft discussed in this chapter can be said to match the expectations of the contemporary modish gothic text, with its conventional foregrounding of sublimity, atmosphere and antiquarian sensibility.

However, both examples join Shakespeare to a version of gothic that is quite specific in origin and effective according to new terms, and both display an extensive emphasis on femininity and on female roles and relations between and with women.

In Damer's solemn work, engraved for an 1803 publication, and Wollstonecraft's unusual 1796 travel narrative appear singular attempts to reconcile existing Shakespearean strands within national history to the pressures of commercialism and the ongoing extension of trade across the globe, and later in the 1790s, to imperialism and expensive wars. Damer's response to the anxious future for the empire and the uneasy persistence of native British identity is to allude to pure, clean and classical forms in America and in republican art, and by doing so, to fashion a new possibility for national identity formation at the end of the century. Her fresh neo-classicism and clarity of style enabled Josiah Boydell, in choosing to place her sculptures, in reproduction, on the title pages of one of his publications for the Shakespeare Gallery, to express through literature a new level of national and imperial aspiration. Wollstonecraft's *Letters from Sweden* generate, out of familiar passages from Shakespeare, a new apprehension of the exotic, modern commercial world, whose boundaries were being discovered further and further afield. During the wars with France in the later part of the century, in particular, it seems the feminine body might have accrued a sense of 'here' for late eighteenth-century Britain, against which an 'away' or elsewhere of imperial conquest, martial self-assertion and the difference of republican politics could be meaningfully posed. The pressure of empire is evident in Wollstonecraft's comparatively withdrawn

and reluctant interaction with the national content carried by reference to Shakespeare, if we consider the *Letters* alongside the relief by Damer. Both works entail modes of historical reconciliation; both move toward reconciling how Shakespeare could mean, and function, as a poet both of the nation and the empire.

CHAPTER FOUR

**SARAH SIDDONS AND WARREN HASTINGS: SHAKESPEAREAN
IDENTITIES AND PRIVATE WRITING**

SECTION ONE

The opening of this chapter returns to the main trope of the first three chapters and moves to consider imperial connections between Shakespeare and the arts of empire. In this chapter this is considered at the level of characterisation, however, rather than as a discussion of landscape art. The discussion addresses the modalities of identity formation surrounding two very different public individuals in the final twenty years of the century: the former Governor General of the East India Company Warren Hastings on his return to London and subsequent trial for ‘high crimes and misdemeanours’ in the East Indies and the famous Shakespearean actress, Sarah Siddons. Hastings on his return to Britain and Siddons in the later part of the eighteenth century each use Shakespeare to reformulate their own identities in relation to the nation and to the empire. In terms of the representation of Siddons, I look especially at a second-hand account, by her biographer Thomas Campbell. It is a text that is based in part, however, on memoirs written in her own hand. Unlike the research for the rest of this thesis, my discussion of Warren Hastings draws on personal handwritten

papers. The content addressed there is, most frequently, public characterisations of Hastings during the trial, as well as self-portrayals as a demonic monstrosity within the empire. I aim to expose what kinds of imperial identity came to be formulated as these individuals turned toward the plays and words of Shakespeare at the end of the eighteenth century.

No study of Shakespeare in this period would be complete without some attention to modern criticism addressing the famous Shakespearean actress Sarah Siddons. Important recent scholarship on her work and effects of her career includes that by Julie Carlson, Jonathan Bate, Judith Pascoe, Paula Backscheider, Heather McPherson and Shearer West.¹ Characterisations of Siddons as a transcendent icon of femininity, like Burke's Marie Antoinette, 'devoid of sexuality and "animal spirit"', were popular among the Romantics, suggests Carlson.² The Siddons of Carlson's own account, as Jane Moody points out, is more earthbound. She embodies a feminine ideal, and yet she feminises men, destabilising 'the gender

¹ Several critics have discussed further the subtleties of gender differentiation in representations of Siddons, following up meanings for Siddonian sublimity and drawing attention to her masculine characteristics, as well as her popularisation of respectable femininity on stage McPherson, 'Picturing Tragedy' p.428, cites Pat Rogers, '“Towering Beyond her Sex”: Stature and Sublimity in the Achievement of Sarah Siddons' in *Curtain Calls: British and American Women and the Theater 1660-1820* ed. by Mary Anne Schofield and Cecilia Macheski (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1991). Compare McPherson, 'Masculinity, Femininity and the Tragic Sublime', p.319 especially. See also Judith Pascoe, *Romantic Theatricality: Gender, Poetry and Spectatorship* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997); 'Chapter 1: Sarah Siddons and the Performative Female'; on Siddons' masculine power, Backscheider, p.214; Julie Carlson, *In the Theatre of Romanticism: Coleridge, Nationalism, Women* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); see also her 'Impositions of Form: Romantic Antitheatricalism and the Case Against Particular Women', *ELH* 60:1 (1993) 149-79 which discusses Siddons' Lady Macbeth in particular. See also Shearer West, 'The Public and Private Roles of Sarah Siddons', in *A Passion for Performance: Sarah Siddons and Her Portraitists* ed. by Robyn Asleson (Los Angeles: The J. Paul Getty Museum, 1999), pp.1-40; David Piper, *The Image of the Poet: British Poets and their Portraits* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1982).

² Carlson, *Theatre*, p.163. Pascoe, p.20 makes a similar argument and Christopher Reid, 'Burke's Tragic Muse: Sarah Siddons and the "Feminisation" of the *Reflections*', in *Burke and the French Revolution: Bicentennial Essays* ed. by Steven Blakemore (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 1992), pp.1-27.

identifications her roles meant to solidify'.³ Carlson's account of Siddons also privileges a close analysis of the affiliation between what is terrible and what is sublime, and reminds the reader that this affiliation appears, in Burke's depiction of Sarah Siddons for example, in part as an anxiety about femininity.⁴ My analysis is indebted to the emphasis on affect to be found in some of this work on Siddons, and explores particularly the colonial and imperial import of what has been described by some critics as 'Siddons fever': that excitement and hysteria surrounding her performances and public appearances.⁵ However it also takes this inquiry toward its imperial contexts and questions the place of such performances in the empire through a comparison with the public role of Warren Hastings, former governor general in the East Indies.

Identification of the actress specifically with Shakespeare, both in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain, has been the subject of recent scholarly enquiry. Carlson considers, with Jonathan Bate's epochal critical analysis in mind, the extent to which Siddons came to be 'Shakespeare embodied in a woman'.⁶ She has addressed the ways in which attitudes to Shakespeare and discourses of femininity came to be associated

³ Review of Julie Carlson by Jane Moody in *The Review of English Studies* 47:188 (1996) 599-601.

⁴ Carlson, 'Impositions of Form', pp.152-4.

⁵ West, 'Public and Private Roles', pp.15-20.

⁶ Carlson, 'Impositions of Form', p.170 discussing Bate, *Constitutions*, p.142. Carlson, *Theatre*, pp.168-75. The subject of her *In the Theatre of Romanticism* is male Romantic writing and the interiority of Shakespeare in Lamb, Coleridge, Hazlitt and Hunt, but her focus on these writers' responses to Siddons as 'Shakespeare incarnated in a woman' is highly suggestive, as too is her later essay that reads *Siddons as the Tragic Muse* as an image which 'translates the actress out of any particular role and into the embodiment of the Muse which Shakespeare himself personified'. Carlson, *Theatre*, pp.20, 29, 139. Carlson, 'Impositions of Form', p.164.

in late eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Britain, and pursued in detail what it meant, in gendered terms, for a woman to become the nation's best image of the bard.⁷ But this raises the further question of what empire meant for the making of Siddons' stage identity and her negotiation of Shakespeare's roles.

I have chosen to respond to recent critical interest in the career of Sarah Siddons by emphasising empire in the preparation of her roles and the effects of her performances. In order to do so, I look briefly at accounts of Siddons' performances set in Edinburgh and Ireland, where audiences appear foreign in temperament to those she is accustomed to performing before. This section is based in a reading of Campbell's *Memoirs* and explores how she conceived of her effect on an audience. As a close reading of an actress' own record of the process of preparing a role and creating responses in her audience, a consideration of Campbell's *Memoirs of the Life of Sarah Siddons* provides an insight of a particular kind into her reinterpretations of Shakespeare during the later years of the century. The second half of my chapter juxtaposes Siddons' portrayals of, and association with, the pitiful, terrifying and horrific on stage, and the spectacle of Warren Hastings' public appearances during the impeachment in Westminster Hall.

Like the preceding chapters, this chapter seeks to emphasise affect and the kinds of affect associated with the theatres during this period in the developing empire. Siddons, like Warren Hastings, was frequently associated in contemporary representations with fear and terror, and with forms of pity, sometimes with a colonial reference and sometimes devoid of

⁷ Carlson, 'Impositions of Form', p.170.

such reference. Her comic roles were less successful than her tragic roles, as is attested to by Sir Joshua Reynolds' now celebrated portrait of *Sarah Siddons as the Tragic Muse*. Siddons is written of as 'the VIRTUOUS FAV'RITE of a VIRTUOUS QUEEN' in *The Siddoniad: a Characteristic and Critical Poem most respectfully inscribed to the honourable Mrs O'Neil*.⁸ She had a significant public and aristocratic status. If Siddons moved in such circles, and was in a real sense a figure of immense public attention, it makes sense to experiment with a comparison between her and Hastings, whose standing as an individual, also a product of the developing empire, became the object of sustained public scrutiny in England through the early years of the 1780s and until at least 1795. I make this comparison mostly in terms of public emotion and the kinds of emotion that worked to create public space, and while not specifically concerned with the effects of gender upon the enactment of monumental, epoch-defining emotions in the careers of Siddons and Hastings, I do end up drawing some conclusions based on the similarity of these representations.

I will now move toward comparing Siddons' strange and fascinating attempts to describe the workings of her art and its effects on her audiences with Hastings' careful recreation of his private self and curious evasions of his own public notoriety on his return to Britain in 1785.

⁸ *The Siddoniad: A Characteristic and Critical Poem* (Dublin: R. Marchbank, 1784), p.15.

SECTION TWO

The actress Sarah Siddons' development of a stage identity was complex. As one of her biographers, Naomi Royde-Smith, reminds us, Siddons, whose name before marriage was Kemble, believed that she was related to the Blessed Martyr John Kemble, hanged at Hereford in the Wye valley in 1679 on false evidence brought against him in the Titus Oates affair. John Kemble was a Catholic priest who supposedly travelled about the countryside practising secret masses. Siddons herself was baptised as a Protestant, though her brothers were baptised Catholics like their father. Her place and date of birth was July 5 1755 in the Shoulder of Mutton Inn in Brecon and '[r]ightly or wrongly,' Royde-Smith writes, 'Sarah Siddons believed herself connected by some blood-tie, however attenuated, with the gentle martyr whose business took him, as did hers, up and down the beautiful valley and through the passes across to the Welsh mountains of the country they were born in'.⁹ It may be that Siddons performances, and her attraction toward the gothic and mediaeval, gloomy, melancholic, and sorrowful – even as here toward the fantastical and morbid in her own sense of identity, had a complex origin. In her own image at least, she was haunted by a superstitious, old and particularised, as well as rather

⁹ Naomi Royde-Smith, *The Private Life of Mrs Siddons* (London, Victor Gollancz Ltd, 1933), pp.30, 32, 63. She also notes a folk-song about Siddons and Kemble visiting the grave of the Martyr John Kemble. It links Siddons and Kemble directly to the Martyr's tomb in its final verse, pp.57-63.

peripheral, version of English identity, perhaps partly defined by rural Welshness. She certainly spent much of her life travelling for her work as an actress. However, personal circumstances and work also led her to spend a significant part of her time staying with the Irish aristocracy.

For Warren Hastings, conversely, the primary determinants of public appearance were the uncertain relationship between private legal property and political rule or authority under empire in India, that main subject of the misdemeanours addressed for consideration under the impeachment. As well, the somatic and theatrical exigencies attached to his appearance as a public figure, and which he confronted during this period of indefinite identity and reputation are on a similarly significant scale to Siddons' performances. I seek to explore how each of these individuals' public identities came to be shaped by empire. Siddons' identification of her own performances with the nation and her interactions with contemporary trends in Shakespeare interpretation are my first subject.

During the period between 1780 and 1800 Sarah Siddons played across a range of Shakespearean roles including Volumnia in a version of *Coriolanus*, Katharine in Garrick's *Katharine and Petruchio* from the *Taming of the Shrew*, Desdemona, Rosalind, Portia, Ophelia, Imogen, Cordelia in Tate's *Lear*, Cleopatra in *All for Love*, Juliet, and Queen Gertrude.¹⁰ Her Constance in *King John*, played in 1783 at royal request alongside her brother John Philip Kemble, was the first of her performances of suffering female characters from Shakespeare and she described it as '[n]oble in mind, commanding in person and demeanour' saying 'her

¹⁰ Yvonne Ffrench, *Mrs Siddons: Tragic Actress* (London: D. Verschoyle, 1954), p.2.

countenance was capable of all the varieties of grand and tender expression, often agonised, though never distorted by the vehemence of her agitations'.¹¹ Her Queen Katharine was spoken of by a contemporary in terms of its 'potency of terror and wo' and 'saintedly beautiful' sickness and grief.¹² She performed in quasi-Shakespearean dramas such as *Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage*, Garrick's revision of Southerne's 1694 play, Nicholas Rowe's *Jane Shore*, and John Home's *Douglas: A Tragedy*. Lady Jane in Baillie's *De Montfort* made the most of her ability to play a terrible heroine, and she was popular for Lady Macbeth-esque roles such as Hermione in Ambrose Philips' *The Distrest Mother*.¹³ Campbell compares this role with her Lady Macbeth as another woman who convinces a man – here Orestes – to commit a murder.¹⁴ Naomi Royde-Smith says that her *Isabella* was seen to be second only to her Lady Macbeth, the most celebrated of her roles from Shakespeare.¹⁵

While the Shakespeare gallery considered in the first two chapters of this thesis was a fairly exclusive and civic-minded form of national art, accessible only to those who were subscribers or who would pay the shilling entry at the door, Sarah Siddons' performances, or so her biographer

¹¹ Thomas Campbell, *Life of Mrs Siddons* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1834), p.87.

¹² Campbell, pp.169-72.

¹³ Yvonne Ffrench's catalogue of Siddons' first performances in these roles at Drury Lane reproduced Manvell pp.353-5 gives the following dates. *Isabella* *The Fatal Marriage* 1782-3; *Jane Shore* 1782-3; *Belvedira* 1782-3; *Isabella Measure for Measure* 1783-4; *Constance* 1783-4; *Lady Randolph Douglas* 1783-4; *Lady Macbeth* 1784-5; *Alicia Jane Shore* 1786-7; *Queen Katharine* 1788-9; *Volumnia* 1788-9; *Jane De Montfort* 1800. Roger Manvell, *Sarah Siddons: Portrait of an Actress* (London: Heinemann, 1970).

¹⁴ Campbell, p.150.

¹⁵ Royde-Smith, p.126.

Thomas Campbell's account seems to suggest, were public property of a different kind.

An analysis of the effects and contemporary relevance of these performances entails an engagement with moral theory relevant to the theatres and to the theatricalised representation of pity, distress or horror. In roles such as Belvidera, Sigismunda and Queen Charlotte most notably, Siddons made a successful career out of performances of terror, woe and pity, most frequently set before the proto-romantic gloom of melancholic English churchyard settings and mediaeval scene painting.

'Unearthly phenomena ... were matters of belief for the uneducated, the rural,' in the later eighteenth century, Patricia Meyer Spacks writes.¹⁶ They were also phenomena that were perceived, through their connection to the popular literature of gothic, to somehow characterise the works of Shakespeare and all that was Shakespearean and Elizabethan about England. This can be seen in the critical literature most classically in Elizabeth Montagu's essay on Shakespeare. The overlap with literary gothic is extensive and stretches across the century. Addison's *Spectator* essay discussed 'the fairy way of writing' as a realm of great emotional power – as Spacks summarises, one of 'fairies, witches, magicians, demons and departed spirits'. 'The British Character', wrote Addison, 'in all ages is predisposed to a belief in ghosts and witches', and is 'naturally fanciful and gloomy'. 'Best of all' at presenting these objects of supersitition is Shakespeare, whose "noble Extravagance of Fancy" enabled him to give pictures of ghosts, witches, and fairies so natural that readers are convinced

¹⁶ Patricia Ann Meyer Spacks, *Insistence of Horror: Aspects of the Supernatural in Eighteenth-Century Poetry* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), p.195.

that if such beings existed, they would be as Shakespeare describes them'.¹⁷ Spacks' reading of Shakespeare in the eighteenth-century writing of critics such as Addison or Aaron Hill is as that 'model of poetic power in dealing with supernatural material'. The association of Shakespeare with pleasurable gloom by the later century is contemporaneous with an increase in the popularity during these years of the literature sometimes referred to as graveyard poetry, which included Gray, Macpherson, Percy, Edward Young, Robert Blair, James Hervey, Joseph Warton and Thomas Parnell.¹⁸ The frontispiece and tailpiece to Gray's *Elegy Written in a Country Churchyard* are for example comparable with the mood of the Bellamy and Roberts edition, which formed a part of the discussion in my previous chapter (lwl 16202, 16200). Similarly, there was a vogue for blackletter fonts. Local colour and a 'homespun gothic', such as this, was, as Kramnick has argued, definitive of an increasingly particularised national landscape that bore patriotic significance.¹⁹

¹⁷ Spacks, pp.50-1.

¹⁸ The literature includes Young's *Night Thoughts*, Gray's *Elegy*, Thomas Parnell's *A Night Piece on Death*, Joseph Warton *On the Pleasures of Melancholy*, James Hervey *Meditation among the Tombs*, Robert Blair *The Grave*. As far as concerns eighteenth-century Shakespeares, this field is of some relevance to the antiquarian vogue discussed recently in a major study, Nick Groom, *The Making of Percy's Reliques* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999). See also Connell. Warton and Ritson, like Percy, were involved in the revival of ancient poetry.

¹⁹ Kramnick, pp.229, 242.



PLATE 41



PLATE 42

William Henry Ireland, better known for his Shakespeare forgeries, was also a writer of gothic novels. The vogue for gothic itself connected to a philo-Oriental movement in aesthetics and literature more extensive than I have cause to consider in this chapter.²⁰

The striking legibility of female figures of high emotion such as Volumnia in *Coriolanus*, Constance from *King John* or Lady Macbeth in Siddons' repertoire from this period is notable in retrospective accounts of her performing life. One of her early biographers James Boaden writes that 'young ladies of the quality' took an interest in Siddons with 'all the same timidity and curiosity' as if she were a 'praeternatural being'.²¹ Boaden himself called her a 'fiend-like woman' and wrote of the audiences to her performances: 'I well remember [...] the sobs, the shrieks [...] we then indeed knew all the luxury of grief'.

In his account of Sarah Siddons' Edinburgh visit for the summer recess of 1784, Thomas Campbell offers a brief anecdote which involves a comparison with the poet Thomson.²² Siddons, having broken free from the crowds who have flocked to see her at her hotel and in the theatres, is taking a walk in Edinburgh High Street when she is stopped by 'a poor serving-girl of Scotland', with 'a basket of greens on her arm'. Campbell affirms boldly, 'among the veriest vulgar of Scotland Mrs. Siddons had now her devoted

²⁰ Hurd was much concerned with distinguishing the gothic from the heroic or chivalric. See William Wrighte, *Grotesque Architecture, or, Rural Amusement* (London: I. Taylor, 1790) which includes 'plans, elevations and sections' for twenty eight buildings ranging from 'huts, retreats, summer and winter hermitages' to 'chinese, gothic and natural grottoes' to 'cascades' and 'baths' to 'mosques' and 'moresque pavilions' and directions for the 'flints, irregular stones, rude branches, and roots of trees' to ornament them.

²¹ Northcote the painter writes of this incident in Elizabeth Inchbald, *Memoirs of Mrs Inchbald* ed. by James Boaden 2 vols., I, p.171. cited Kelly, *The Kemble Era*, p.39.

²² Siddons appeared eleven times in Shakespearean roles in Edinburgh.

worshippers'. The girl, he recounts with a move into dialect, wanted only to praise Siddons' 'sweet voice... that made me greet sae sair the streen'. Campbell draws the comparison with the poet Gray, who on seeing a copy of Thomson's *Seasons* in a blacksmith's shop had exclaimed, 'This is true popularity!' 'The remark might have been equally applied,' writes Campbell, 'to Mrs Siddons' humble admirer'.²³ The Edinburgh setting places the reader firmly in the territory of the urban picturesque, the miniaturised landscape of her basket and voice rich with local detail. For all the roughness of the girl's accent and her impoverished status, the moment is a harmonious one, and the meeting of the 'veriest vulgar of Scotland' with the great Siddons gives rise to a proliferation or expansion of the aesthetic field. This is a matter not of poverty, but of 'popularity', and the humility of the girl a barely disguised prop for Campbell's own devotion to the actress. It is the serving-girl, rather than Siddons, who is most moved, and her emotional tie to the actress affirms Siddons' popularity and success as an artist.²⁴

Siddons' eleven performances in Edinburgh during the summer of 1784 are those most often returned to by critics as the origin of the term 'Siddons fever'. The performances caused such pleasure amongst crowded audiences that the experience of seeing Siddons perform spilled out of the

²³ Campbell, p.105.

²⁴ As Giles Tillotson, following John Barrell and David Solkin observes, pity, sorrow or distress appear in such picturesque scenes only to colour and heighten exquisite aesthetic feeling, and: 'for all its roughness... the picturesque promotes an ideal of a well-ordered and harmonious land, in which beggars and gypsies "and all such rough tattered figures" give rise not to social concern but to aesthetic pleasure'. Tillotson, p.26.

theatres into medical and legal realms. It became, Campbell puts it, ‘a service of danger’ to attend:

The over-heated houses which she drew occasioned illness to many individuals, and the medical faculty of Edinburgh owed her a token of their regard more immediately than the lawyers, for their practice was increased by a prevalent indisposition, which got the name of the Siddons fever.²⁵

Siddons owed her popular acclaim to representations of pity, sorrow and distress, woe, grief and madness, such as those described in connection with the Edinburgh summer of Siddons fever. The serving-girl stands in metonymically for the countless individuals subsequently touched by Siddons’ art. Recent criticism continues to return to the scenes of Siddons fever: Michael Booth catalogues responses to Sarah Siddons’ portrayals of grief and pain, from foreign visitors’ amazement at the women who ‘fall into hysterics’ during her performances to Hester Thrale Piozzi’s inability to sleep after seeing her in *Isabella* in 1789.²⁶ Shearer West writes engagingly of ‘the waves of emotion that swept through the audience when Siddons performed’ and of the ‘crying, moaning and fainting’ that accompanied her performances.²⁷ My argument in this chapter is indebted to a passage from

²⁵ Campbell, p.104.

²⁶ Michael R. Booth, ‘Sarah Siddons’ in *Three Tragic Actresses: Siddons, Rachel, Ristori* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp.19, 30. He refers to *The Piozzi Letters: Correspondence of Hester Lynch Piozzi* 4 vols., I, p.292. Compare Jonathan Bate, ‘Shakespeare and the Rival Muses: Siddons versus Jordan’ in *Notorious Muse: The Actress in British Art and Culture, 1776-1812*. ed. by Robyn Asleson (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), pp.81-103, p.88 for discussion of her restrained acting of tragedy, delicacy and sublime restraint.

²⁷ West, ‘Public and Private Roles’, p.15.

this essay by West that draws the reader's attention to the phenomenon of Siddons fever. I seek to build on this analysis.

West's discussion of the wave of emotion that swept through the theatre during Siddons' performances is particularly good, and she has suggested that this amounts to 'a safe public enactment of unacceptably violent emotions'.²⁸ For William Hazlitt, who remembered seeing her as a child, 'she seemed to command every source of terror and pity, and to rule over their wildest elements with inborn ease and dignity'. Her emotional range was otherworldly, 'she sounded the full diapason, touched all chords of passion, they thrilled through her'.²⁹ Paula Backscheider, similarly, draws out characterisations of the actress by contemporaries as a 'fiend-like woman' presiding over a gothic stage where pit, gallery and boxes are 'crowded to suffocation' and suffused with the terror of 'the charnel house at midnight';³⁰ Robyn Asleson has considered the currency of 'second- and thirdhand experiences of Siddons-induced emotion' in paintings and prints.³¹ Christopher Reid calls her 'the foremost personator of female distress on the late eighteenth-century stage'.³² 'Siddonimania', 'Siddonalotry' and 'the Siddons fever' are much mentioned in accounts of Siddons' popularity at this time, but I want to offer a closer analysis in this

²⁸ West, 'Public and Private Roles', p.15.

²⁹ *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. by P. P. Howe 21 vols. (London and Toronto: J.M.Dent and Sons), XVIII, p.408.

³⁰ Backscheider, pp.206, 176. The examples are from James Boaden and James Sheridan Knowles and the discussion of Siddons appears in Part Three: 'Gothic Drama and National Crisis'.

³¹ Robyn Asleson, "'She was Tragedy Personified": Crafting the Siddons Legend in Art and Life' in *A Passion for Performance* ed. by Robyn Asleson, p.55.

³² Reid, 'Burke's Tragic Muse', p.6.

part of the chapter of the phenomenon and its meanings in connection to the empire.³³

Siddons fever, as an intimately experienced effect of the theatre and tours and of her celebrity status, seems to have played a crucial role in formations of the nation – in defining its borders and the borders of its cultural community. It was also it seems crucial to the actress for the development of her own private identity. Siddons in the account in Campbell's *Memoirs* is presented as a subject who talks back, entering picturesque discourse from the wrong side and giving a voice to the figure of the young woman, an emblem of impoverished rusticity usually objectified by the genre – even if only in such a way as to affirm the supremacy of her art. This is a passage of Campbell's book based largely on some papers which include recollections of travel and performances in her own handwriting.

In Campbell's Scotland anecdote, cool melancholy appears as a national trait that does not quite coincide exactly with the temperamental qualities appreciated by audiences in England. Closer examination of Campbell's *Life of Mrs. Siddons* reveals that the 'Siddons fever' may well have been of particular significance at the borders of England. Emotional response to Siddons' performances might even, for the sake of argument, have delineated the land north and south of the river Tweed. Siddons' own memoirs, as they appear in Campbell's *Life*, inform us that she was not at all

³³ *Morning Post*, 23 June 1784. 'Siddonimania' cited Asleson, 'Crafting the Siddons legend', pp.47, 92 n.22. Carlson, 'Impositions of Form' on 'Siddonalotry' p.170. See also Carlson, *Theatre*, p.172 on 'Siddons fever'. Royde-Smith, p.97: 'when she shrieked, the house shrieked with her; at her groan young ladies swooned in their boxes'. 'The Pit Door' on Siddons fever, shows a vomiting man, a crushing crowd and women who are having to be revived with smelling salts BM6769.

comfortable performing to Scottish audiences. The people, ‘those northern flints’ as described by Campbell, seemed to her cooler and cannier of temperament than those of the south, and harder to strike into lively response. In the midst of the account of her Edinburgh performances, he remembers a particular instance in which:

As I well remember, she told me she coiled up her powers to the most emphatic possible utterance of one passage, having previously vowed in her heart, that if *this* could not touch the Scotch, she would never again cross the Tweed.

The delivery is greeted with a grave silence, ‘broken only by a single voice exclaiming “*That’s no bad!*” The Edinburgh audience is ‘convulsed’ with laughter and the theatre shaken by ‘thunders of applause’. But the response, Campbell suggests, only terrifies Siddons, her wits and patience already avowedly ‘worn out’ by the usual reserve of the Edinburgh audiences: ‘she had been used to speak to animated clay,’ he writes, ‘but now she felt as if she had been speaking to stones’.³⁴

Siddons is characterised as the animator in this personal recollection, inserted by Campbell in that section of the *Memoirs* which reproduces her handwritten ‘Memoranda’. Where we might expect to find the body of the actress, cold and pallid as in Reynolds’ depiction of her as the *Tragic Muse*, instead it is the audience who appear cool, canny and infuriatingly reticent. Her difficulty in striking from them a lively response becomes an occasion for national differentiation, as the people of Edinburgh, Glasgow, or more generally anyone north of the Tweed confound the actress’ art.

³⁴ Campbell, p.106.



PLATE 43

As the author of the *Memoirs* of Sarah Siddons' life, here transcribing an extended passage from her own writings, which he allows to be interrupted by a personal reminiscence of his own, Thomas Campbell appears deferential, distant, and even wilfully subjects his account to her greater authority on matters of national emotion. In this passage he allows his own voice to disappear almost entirely. Siddons is irritated by the non-compliance of the Scottish temperament: mistress of its direction and manipulation, she has the last word, 'I took my leave... of dear Edinburgh'. The account seems to underline a placement of Siddonian emotion within a

national narrative to which the Scottish people, both of Edinburgh and Glasgow, are unmistakably peripheral, if differently so, their generalised response that of cool and immovable ‘stones’ that cannot be moved by her art.³⁵

The Pygmalion trope is not from Siddons’ own writings, but from a personal encounter with the biographer, recollected here. Her emphatic efforts to move these audiences north of the border, as Campbell notes, at the time told by her ‘with no small humour’, is here *retold* by Campbell, whose own sense of being at home within a territory that exhausts Siddons complicates and overlays the account. It is difficult to delineate exactly where Campbell, who refers here to ‘my Scottish countrymen’, has placed himself as her biographer.

The same nervous exhaustion does not occur for the actress in Ireland where Siddons consorts with the Irish aristocracy at Shane’s castle and attends a ball, entertained by Lord Edward Fitzgerald’s chains of carriages, paradisiacal gardens and lavish dinners surrounded by flagons of claret, musicians and hallways hung with fruit: ‘the luxury of this establishment almost inspired the recollections of an Arabian Night’s entertainment.’³⁶

In Ireland, an affective climate driven by the force of melancholy or the gloomy English gothic stage held less significance, and we find comical, even satirical accounts of the phenomenon of ‘Siddons fever’ or ‘Siddonimania’ at her performances. A satirical text from 1788 by John

³⁵ Campbell, p.104.

³⁶ Campbell, p.108.

O’Keeffe describing Siddons’ first performance in ‘the bewitching, melting, and all-tearful Character of Isabella’ in Smock-Alley in Dublin describes members of the audience fainting ‘even before the curtain drew up’. Elsewhere it includes a weeping orchestra who mistakenly play the overture in one flat rather than two sharps after a lamenting bassoon-player obstructs the first violinist’s vision, and images of the audience forced to stand away from the ground on the benches with tears lapping about their ankles:

One hundred and nine ladies fainted! forty-six went into fits! and ninety-five had strong hysterics! The world will scarcely credit the truth when they are told that fourteen children, five old women, a one-handed sailor and six common-council men were actually drowned in the inundation of tears that flowed from the galleries, lattices, and boxes, to encrease the briny pond in the pit.

‘No age – nay, the Roman theatre, the Stage at Constantinople – Nero himself never performed the scene of madness, of grief, of joy, of woe, of distress, of sorrow, and of pity, so well as Mrs. Siddons!’³⁷

O’Keeffe’s Siddons is one that resembles William Hazlitt’s later reports of the actress’ stage presence, as vast, grandiose, hyperbolic: ‘this star of Melpomene! This comet of the stage!... this Queen and Princess of tears! This Chaos of Shakespeare! This world of weeping clouds! This Juno of commanding aspect!’ She is described through a series of progressively elevating epithets, until finally she ‘soar[s] above all powers of description’

³⁷ *Edwin’s Pills to Purge Melancholy.. with an humourous account of Mrs. Siddons’s first Reception in Dublin* (London: William Holland, 1788), p.viii.

to become ‘Nature itself! ... the most exquisite work of art! ... the bouquet of Parnassus!’³⁸

This account of Irish Siddons fever is one that supplies a bathetic theatrical space to accompany the characterisation of the actress as a supernatural power, melancholic and awful, in her classical performances of terrible woe. Cauliflowers appear along with the muses and Katterfelto beside Shakespeare, Proserpine and Terpsichore, but the ‘sobs and sighs of the groaning audience’ remain at the centre of the writer’s account of the effects of the actress’ performing identity. The aesthetic worth of her presence on stage is less certain, or at least viewed with less reverence, than in Campbell’s corresponding account of her performances in Scotland. Siddons fever, it seems, might be a point both of aesthetic coherence and discord in the staging of the nation.

As an actress, Sarah Siddons was the highest paid Shakespearean performer of her age, by 1784 earning twenty-three guineas and seven shillings a week to her brother John Philip Kemble’s ten guineas.³⁹ ‘It became fashionable for all the ladies to weep, and sometimes to faint’, as the author of *The Secret History of the Green Room* writes, of appearances of Siddons on the stage at Drury Lane around 1782.⁴⁰ Kathleen Wilson’s suggestion that virtue as represented by women, usually in domestic and familial contexts became, ‘increasingly important as a source of moral

³⁸ *Edwin’s Pills to Purge Melancholy*, pp.v-vi.

³⁹ Campbell, p.145.

⁴⁰ *The Secret History of the Green Room: Containing Authentic and Entertaining Memoirs of the Actors and Actresses in the Three Theatres Royal* (London: H.D.Symmonds, 1792), p.10.

authority in the broader imperial polity', is obviously crucial to the hysteria around Siddons' performances in this age and to the notoriety and status as a worthy object of public admiration which she derived from them.⁴¹ However, Siddons was also negotiating a place for performances that projected female piety and propriety within a literary and performance space that preferred supernaturalism and popular superstition in recovery of the plays and oeuvre of Shakespeare, and her career rested on the successful combination of these valences.

Siddons' characterisations drew upon that classical notion that great passions were the property of the well-born.⁴² She combined this emphasis with a style of reinterpretation that made her roles identifiable and appealing to the emerging English middle-classes. Most successful of all were her performances of Lady Macbeth. I will examine some of the ways in which *Macbeth* was seen by contemporary audiences.

In several texts it appears that the play of *Macbeth* was not seen as a tragedy during the final decades of the eighteenth century. Instead, and with reference to Siddons' characterisation in particular, interpretations of this play owed more to a rhetoric of English melancholy and gothic gloom, which is best understood in the context of similar interpretations of Shakespeare's art within a gothic and national register. The play itself is readily found, by editorial convention of the later eighteenth century, to be a history play, not a tragedy, and is located in a group with *Richard II* and

⁴¹ Kathleen Wilson, 'Empire, Gender and Modernity' in *Gender and Empire* ed. by Phillipa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.19.

⁴² Thomas Crow, *The Intelligence of Art* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1999), p.64.

Henry VIII but not *King Lear*. It is also seen to contain much that is described as ‘fairy tale’ and which therefore spills over problematically into an area at times ‘oriental’, although also derived from literature emerging from the crusades. The crusades are read as the moment in history at which supernaturalism from foreign shores arrived in England. However, by the later eighteenth century the association of supernaturalism and Elizabethan England was itself profound and supernaturalism was seen as an English and native quality.

Such subjects concern many of the notes to the play found in a contemporary edition which gives a good flavour of contexts for reception of the play. Bell’s *Shakespeare* of 1788 includes a text called, ‘Observations on the fable and composition of *Macbeth*’ which compiles comments from Johnson, Farmer and Steevens.⁴³ It discusses how the play might have been considered a history play as a result of its problematic supernaturalism. The centrality of enchantment and ‘supernatural agents’ within the events of the play present some difficulties to a straightforward apprehension of it as ‘tragedy’, and it is seen to be an improbable ‘fairy tale’. Resolution to this editorial ambiguity is found in the historical location from which Shakespeare wrote, and in which both the ‘common people’ and the ‘learned themselves’ gave credence to the reality of witchcraft and enchantment as they appear in the play.

Moreover, the essay argues that this credulity of contemporary audiences has a specific historical root. Its period is that of the ‘holy war’.

⁴³ *BES*, X, pp.iii-viii. *Macbeth* is located with King John, between the comedies and the history plays from Richard II to Henry VIII, instead of with the tragedies, which appear in vols. XV-XIX. *King Lear* appears among this second group.

Supernaturalism came out of the East and ‘the first accounts of enchantments were brought into this part of the world by those who returned from their eastern expeditions’. In these ‘Observations’, a military language from St Chrysostum’s *De Sacerdotio* is attached to the historical basis for the supernatural content of the play: ‘the opposite armies horses flying by enchantment, armed men transported through the air, and every power and form of magic’, or elsewhere a ‘military magic’ of the East, are referenced. However, magic is not solely an eastern inheritance. Shakespeare writes at the time of Queen Elizabeth’s trial of the Witches of Warbois, during which King James VI/ I was renowned for his scholarship regarding witchcraft and evil spirits in the *Daemonologie* and was responsible for making illegal within the laws of the nation the conjuring of evil spirits, particularly those requiring ‘the skin, bone, or any part’ of dead bodies or injuries to the living ‘destroyed, killed, wasted, consumed, pined or lamed in any part of the body’.⁴⁴ In discussion of these early Renaissance invocations, sorceries, enchantments the text adds, ‘[t]his law was repealed in our own time’.

The period of King James’ rule is seen as the moment of history, and specifically of Shakespeare’s history plays. King James’ *Daemonologie* has in this text taken on new significance, enabling the foreign to be rediscovered as the familiar past; encompassing ‘military magic’ within national tradition. *Macbeth* is not seen to be a tragedy but a play whose supernaturalism embeds it within a national frame of reference, albeit that of an obsolete orientalist past whose enchantments are held at a distance.

⁴⁴ *BES*, X, pp.i-vii.

There is a similar emphasis on the history of the crusades, and on parallels between the Saracenic armies and the military order of the Christian armies to be found in Richard Hurd, who places ‘eastern tradition’ as told of by adventurers into the Holy Land and the gothic ages with their ‘Monsters, Dragons and Serpents’ alongside one another.⁴⁵ *Macbeth* was, most generally, like other Shakespeare plays, associated with nostalgic accounts of Elizabethan England as a lost realm of theatrical bounty and munificence that recalled the stages of King James as well as those of Queen Elizabeth.⁴⁶ Shakespearean history is not just deeply embedded in magic and fairy tale, but enchantment and supernatural agency characterise this play as a historically situated history play, rather than a tragedy.

In her own descriptions of preparing the roles of Lady Macbeth, by comparison, Siddons casts herself in the role of a heroine from a gothic novel, all candlesticks, rustling silk and horror, spectres and cold staircases.⁴⁷ ‘On the night preceding that in which I was to appear in this part for the first time,’ she writes, ‘I shut myself up, as usual, when all the family were retired, and commenced my study of *Lady Macbeth*... the horrors of the scene rose to such a degree that made it impossible for me to get farther’. The passage continues with descriptions of her own terror,

⁴⁵ Hurd, III, pp.210-28 and especially p.228.

⁴⁶ Matthew Concanen Jr. and A. Morgan, *The History and Antiquities of the Parish of St Saviour's, Southwark* (London: J.Delahoy, 1795), p.192. ‘In the time of Queen Elizabeth theatrical amusements were in great estimation, and from the best accounts that can be collected, it appears, there were in the latter part of her reign no less than ten places for the representation of dramatic pieces, or, as they were then called, histories’, p.193. Concanen cites Malone’s Supplemental Observations to Steevens’ Shakespeare at length, and also Dr Percy on the etymology of the ‘pit’ as derived from the previous use of the theatre as a cockfighting pit, p.199.

⁴⁷ ‘Remarks on the Character of Lady Macbeth’ transcribed in Campbell, p.134. Compare G.J. Bell’s richly detailed notes on Siddons’ Lady Macbeth contained in *Papers on Acting* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1958).

seizing the candle from the table and rushing up the stairs, frightened by her own dress which, made of silk, rustled as she climbed the stairs.⁴⁸

Both self-fictionalisation such as we find in this account and a composite identity comprised of Welsh, Highlands, Celtic, English, aristocratic Irish, Skaldic, gothic and ancient British elements seem to have fed into Siddons' development of her performance style.

Siddons' interpretation of Lady Macbeth is as a figure plagued by nightmarish visions and horror later in life. In contemplating the scene where she sees the ghost of Banquo, she reflects upon the approach of the character's death. This passage is one that recollects Cardinal Beaufort's death scene, and Siddons seems to prepare the role by imagining the errors of Lady Macbeth in life, much like the visions that are seen to pass before Beaufort. Siddons writes of Lady Macbeth dying without repentance:

During this appalling scene, which, to my sense, is the most so of them all, the wretched creature, in imagination, acts over again the accumulated horrors of her whole conduct. These dreadful images, accompanied by the agitations they have induced, have obviously accelerated her untimely end... It is conjectured that she died by her own hand. Too certain it is, that she dies, and makes no sign (132).

Unrepentant as Cardinal Beaufort, who died and 'made no sign', it is tempting to speculate that Siddons' interpretation of Lady Macbeth taunted and tormented on her deathbed may in this verbal echo have been influenced to some extent by the terrible visions of the scene from *Henry VI Part II* recently portrayed in Reynolds' celebrated portrait. Campbell's *Life*

⁴⁸ Campbell, p.134. Further references to Campbell are given after quotations/ references in the text.

also reveals the extent to which Siddons is committed to the heavily supernatural sections of the play and the discussions of preparing a characterisation are in places preoccupied with references in the text to the scorpions, Hecate, insects and the flight of crows (132).

In her recollections on playing Lady Macbeth, Siddons is concerned particularly to illustrate the movement of the character from a woman who was all strength, ambition and savagery to one who achieves a new apprehension of suffering. She imagines the character as one who contains and supports Macbeth's 'confession of his horrors', whilst smothering her own sufferings 'in the deepest recesses of her own wretched bosom', and writes of her relationship to her husband, '[h]is heart has ... been eased, from time to time, by unloading its weight of wo; while she, on the contrary, has perseveringly endured in silence the uttermost anguish of a wounded spirit' (129-133). The preparation of the character is for Siddons an exercise in sexual difference and in the different moral and physical constitutions of men and women, not least in the tendency, perceived as feminine, toward emotional response and in particular the capacity to bear suffering: 'her frailer frame, and keener feelings, have now sunk under the struggle' while he 'perpetrates horrors to the day of his doom'(133).

Jeffrey Cox suggests that Sarah Siddons was the epitome of the gothic woman, and that her popularisation of tears and terror often at the expense of inciting pity made her 'the perfect actress for the gothic drama' (53). This is in a discussion that considers Siddons' performance in Joanna Baillie's *De Montfort*, a production that included extensive scenes of fourteenth-century churches. Part Three of Paula Backscheider's book, titled

‘Gothic Drama and National Crisis’, also firmly situates Siddons as an actress of the ‘true gothic’, who appeared on stage as an ‘object of terror’.⁴⁹ Bakscheider addresses contemporary accounts of Siddons’ Belvedira, a character in which, as in her depictions of Lady Macbeth, she might be seen to approach the gothic rather than the tragic. References to the ‘wildness of her eyes’ and her voice ‘with a horror that chill’d one’s blood’ remind us that the genre of gothic theatre could tend to present something like sublime terror on stage, and could also readily take tragedy into such aesthetic areas.⁵⁰ Joanna Baillie footnotes *Macbeth* to gothic scenes in her plays *Orra* and *Ethwald*, as Michael Gamer has noted.⁵¹ In a broader consideration he also says that Shakespeare’s plays ‘freely employ gothic and supernatural scenes as a means of representing both the passions themselves and character psychology’.⁵²

The connection to the gothic drama is an important context to the manner according to which Siddons prepared her Lady Macbeth. Siddons’ interest in perpetuating a genre of gothic or fairy Shakespeare interpretation is apparent in her selection of a quotation from William Mason to be found in her ‘Remarks on the Character of Lady Macbeth’, transcribed by

⁴⁹ Bakscheider, pp.204, 285 n.24. Aileen Ribeiro draws attention to the convention of performing Belvedira in a ‘Gothick’ black dress from 1780s to the turn of the century. Aileen Ribeiro, ‘Costuming the Part: A Discourse of Fashion and Fiction in the Image of the Actress in England, 1776-1812’ in *Notorious Muse* ed. by Robyn Asleson, p.122. She also discusses Mary Hamilton’s 1802 watercolours of *Mrs Siddons’ Dress as Lady Macbeth* which show her in a gothic-influenced black and red dress and comments on the ‘lovelily dreadful’ shroud-like draperies that Boaden attributes to Reynolds’ influence. Ribeiro, p.120.

⁵⁰ Bakscheider, p.208. She is citing Roger Manvell.

⁵¹ Michael Gamer, *Romanticism and the Gothic: Genre, Reception and Canon Formation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.154, 24.

⁵² Gamer, pp.24, 137.

Campbell and from which the previous analysis was drawn.⁵³ Two lines from his ‘Elegy on the Death of a Lady’ were of enough interest for her to include them in her own text. Almost at the beginning of the text is her description of Lady Macbeth:

captivating to the other sex –fair, feminine, nay, perhaps, even fragile –

*‘Fair as the Forms that, wove in Fancy’s loom,
Float in light visions round the poet’s head’*

These lines in the body of Siddons’ own writings recall the graveyard and fairy illustrations to the edition prepared by Bellamy and Robarts, discussed in Chapter Three.

A striking further instance of the gothic quality of Siddons performances is found in the text of the epilogue, ‘written by Mrs Piozzi, spoken by Mrs Siddons’, for Bertie Greetheed’s *The Regent*. Bertie Greetheed was the son of Lady Mary Bertie, daughter of the second duke of Ancaster, for whom Siddons had worked as a maid in the 1760s.⁵⁴ The play was not Shakespearean in content. The lines of the epilogue, however, combine Shakespeare, nationalism and a strand of clearly gothic (here slightly comic) images of tombs and mediaeval machinery, within an idealised landscape:

[to the Pit]

Britons fight fair, we know; - then who’s afraid?

Unskilled in modern tactics, rule and line,

⁵³ Campbell, p.124. The text dates from 1815.

⁵⁴ Royde-Smith, p.70.

The floating engine, and th' insidious mine,
Our bard disdains; with antiquated art
He drives his battering-ram full at your heart.
In no false colours trickt, we court your praise,
His rustic muse can't breathe in tight-lac'd stays;
Caverns and castles she delights to tread,
Grief swells her bosom, fear distracts her head,
'Till visionary champions round her rise,
Who force weak barriers, and slight bonds despise
...
while Shakespeare's tomb o'erlooks the plain below ...⁵⁵

Landscape metaphors of a 'rustic' and gothic quality delimit Siddons' stage as one that is clearly English, whatever the content of the play that has just culminated before the assembled audience. Shakespeare's tomb is in the privileged position of prospect, overlooking a landscape and inviting the audience to engage also in contemplating this pleasurably gothic and ruinous outlook. The prefatory dedication to Siddons by Greatheed is also profusely nationalistic. He offers this work simultaneously to the country and to Siddons:

your talents were in my view while I composed the poem, which I
here lay before my country; to draw a character worthy of you was
my ambition; and if I have succeeded, I am fully satisfied.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ The play was unsuccessful, and ran for only 9 nights. Bertie Greatheed, *The Regent: A Tragedy. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury-Lane.* (London: J. Robson and W. Clarke, 1788), pp.74-5.

⁵⁶ Greatheed, p.iv.

Siddons' fame must have been compatible with a gothic stage setting, and, similarly, Mrs Piozzi evidently considered such an aesthetic trend a suitable and favourable context for her art.

My thesis does not seek to inquire into performance history. However, it is worth remarking as part of this argument the highly supernatural staging of a production of *Macbeth* which opened the new Theatre Royal Drury Lane just after Easter of 1794, and in which Siddons played Lady Macbeth against her brother John Philip Kemble's *Macbeth*. The production boasted 'entirely new' machines, scenery and costume and a set which included 'vast crowds of witches and spirits' filling the stage and Hecate with a 'companion spirit' flying backwards on a cloud. Reviews for this production, which employed fourteen scene changes which came down from the ceiling stated that, '[t]hunder rolled through the whole play'.⁵⁷

The actress was associated with the Shakespearean supernatural and the interpretation of horror for the stage early in life. Aged twelve, she played Ariel in *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island* at Worcester.⁵⁸ A mixture of classical forms and northern skaldic, or faery and supernatural mythology, and to some extent Scandinavian mythology are to be found in Siddons' roles from Shakespeare. These performances should also be understood within a context of revivals of stories from the ancient British, which were more prevalent than is conventionally remembered by modern criticism. This literature – and the theatre and art connected with it –

⁵⁷ *Morning Chronicle* 21 April 1794 and 22 April 1794, reproduced in *London Stage Part 5*, III, pp.lxi, lxiv.

⁵⁸ Royde-Smith, p.66.

included stories that might be described 'gothic', populated by characters such as Vortigern, Elfrida and Ethelred.

Emphasis on the equivalence of the Shakespearean sublime with a native gothic of village superstition, gloomy northern woods, fairy scenes and popular enchantment was not uncommon. One of Hurd's letters argues that 'gothic manners' are 'more poetical than the Heroic'; in the next he wrote that appearances of the Gothic in Shakespeare so exceeded the classical that 'the former have, by their nature and genius, the advantage of the latter in producing the *sublime*'.⁵⁹ Superstition and the haunting of English villages is in some way a constituent of this gothic convention.⁶⁰ At the same time, its scope is extensive, and not restricted to the local. In Hurd, the play *Macbeth* is considered the endpoint of an aggregation, whose supernatural content comes together from parts derived from the magic of the Danish or northern nations, parts from the necromancy of the 'barbarous ages', and Christian superstition and native myths. Greek and Roman supernaturalism also influence this aggregate. The 'gloomy visions of demons and spirits' from pagan and Christian superstition in part originated in Platonic and Alexandrian philosophy and were themselves a connection to a classical heritage, Hurd reminds the reader. The combination of natural and moral monstrosity in the witch-scenes in *Macbeth* are his specific example.⁶¹

⁵⁹ Letters VI and VII. For Hurd too, the best plays in Shakespeare were those that contained Gothic or magical 'manners and machinery'. Hurd, III, pp.192, 260-6.

⁶⁰ Hurd, III, pp.259-60.

⁶¹ Hurd, III, p.252. Hurd is citing Warburton here on the 'Gothic system of prodigy and enchantment... an aggregate' and on the 'Danish and Northern intermixed with the Greek and Roman enchantments and all these worked up together with a sufficient quantity of our own country superstitions'. III, pp.254-6.

Patricia Meyer Spacks argues, as part of a discussion of Burke's *Enquiry*, that the witches in *Macbeth* and the Ghost in *Hamlet* are the two major instances of the sublime taken from Shakespeare in aesthetic writings on terror in this period.⁶² Such examples can be found in James Beattie's *Dissertations Moral and Critical*, in which the witches' cave in *Macbeth* appears as 'the true sublime'. Similarly, Macbeth's stuttering speech before and after the murder of Duncan 'excite[s] horror' but is genuinely sublime.⁶³ Elsewhere in aesthetic writings *Macbeth* drew comparison with classical art.⁶⁴

The annotations to several contemporary editions include an interest in Scandinavian folklore alongside classical mythological figures. Macbeth's witches are the Fates of the northern nations or the three handmaids of Odin. They appear amongst a mixture of the northern and the Greek and Roman superstitions. So Hecate and the Valkyries both appear in the play.⁶⁵ The Valkyries are named in detail: Gunna, Rota, Skullda, Scogula, Hilda, Gondula and Geiroscogula, as the cup-bearers of Odin.⁶⁶

⁶² Spacks, pp.96-7.

⁶³ James Beattie, *Dissertations Moral and Critical* 2 vols. (Dublin: Exshaw, Walker, Beattie, White, Byrne, Cash and McKenzie, 1783), II, p.383.

⁶⁴ The aesthetic resonances of particular scenes and 'points' in *Macbeth* were diverse in this period and the one following it. I am indebted to Mary Fairclough for pointing out a comparable reference from Fuseli's lectures to the Royal Academy in 1805, in which Macduff pulling his hat over his eyes is compared with examples from Greek and Renaissance art where characters are covering their faces. *Lectures on Painting by the Royal Academicians Barry, Opie and Fuseli* ed. by Ralph N. Wornum (London: Bell, 1889), first lecture.

⁶⁵ *The Plays of William Shakespeare* 15 vols. (London: T.Longman, 1793), VII, pp.34.7. Discussion by Warburton.

⁶⁶ *Plays of William Shakespeare*, VII, p.348. Note by Steevens. The same discussion can be found in *BES*, X, p.18, n.

Similarly, there are in the notes to other editions discussions of ‘weird’ as an anglo-saxon word related to ‘weyward’.⁶⁷

This association of supernaturalism with the uneducated and rural found, as I have suggested, Shakespeare’s works and all that was Elizabethan located in continuity with folk culture and an antique English landscape. Hester Piozzi writes of how her mother used to refer to the old Globe theatre, then demolished and lying in a pile of rubble before her window on the banks of the river, as the ‘ruins of Palmyra’.⁶⁸ The choice of this tag and its recounting in this text in such a way implies that folk knowledge and an oral culture exist in privileged connection to the works of Shakespeare. It also suggests that the making of local knowledge of this landscape could on occasion entail a cultural association with orientalist representations of magic and superstition.

Accounts of the ways that earlier civilisations apprehended their cultural relics can be found in an eighteenth-century traveller’s text such as Robert Wood’s *The Ruins of Balbec and Palmyra*.⁶⁹ Oriental sites such as

⁶⁷ *The Dramatick Works of William Shakespeare* 8 vols. (Edinburgh: W.Gordon, N.R.Cheyne, I. and L.Fairbairn and Silvester Doig, 1792), I, p.53. Also includes a reference to the Valkyries.

⁶⁸ Handwritten marginal note to her *Observations and Reflections Made in the Course of a Journey through France, Italy, and Germany*. See ‘Original Memorials of Mrs Piozzi’, *Atlantic Monthly* 7:43 (1861), p.617. Hester Thrale’s marginal notes in this copy, which belonged to the young actor William Augustus Conway, are also discussed in the Preface to *Autobiography, Letters and Literary Remains of Mrs Piozzi Thrale* ed. by Abraham Hayward 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1861).

⁶⁹ Robert Wood, *The Ruins of Palmyra, Otherwise Tedmor in the Desert* (London, 1753). For other contemporary accounts of Palmyra see C.F. Volney, *Travels through Syria and Egypt in the Years 1783, 1784 and 1785* 2 vols. (London: G.G.J. and J.Robinson, 1787), II, pp.278-91. Concanen, p.231. *The Ambulator, or the Stranger’s Companion in a Tour Round London* (London: J.Bew, 1782), p.203. Volney emphasises its critical location between the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf as an emporium and caravan halt for ‘the valuable commerce that has at all times subsisted between India and Europe’, p.289. A section of Volney including a visionary tale of a spirit-led flight above the Ruins of Palmyra, was translated in *One Pennyworth of Pig’s Meat, Or Lessons for the British Multitude*.

these tended to sustain, for writers, a breadth of conflicting attitudes to the past and to cultural relics. They might, particularly, be locations where antiquity was not yet clearly isolated from the presence of magic and the supernatural. A barbarous and eastern attitude to cultural relics is, arguably, at work in Hester Thrale Piozzi's conversational reference to the stickiness of her mother's nickname for the site of the Globe Theatre as the 'ruins of Palmyra'. Distinctions of class begin to be affixed as the term passes outward and is transferred onto the workers at the Thrale brewery:

When it lay desolate in a black heap of rubbish, my Mother, one day, in joke, called it the Ruins of Palmyra... after they had laid it down in a grass plot, Palmyra was the name it went by, I suppose, among the clerks and servants of the brew-house; for when the Quaker Barclay bought the whole, I read that name with wonder in the writings...

The text concludes, '[t]here were really curious remains of the old Globe playhouse, which, though hexagonal in form without, was round within'.⁷⁰

The inhabitants of haunted places, or the locals who believe in haunted buildings and locales, are frequently represented in narratives as spokespeople of incomprehension and terror, who apprehend these magnificent places by turns as magical or supernatural, or banal and inconsequential. The parallel of greatness between Shakespeare's Globe and an extensive site of classical ruins in the Near East is barely sustainable. It is only in the context of supernaturalism, as circulated among folk

⁷⁰ 'Original Memorials of Mrs Piozzi', p.617. Morris R. Brownell, "Hester Lynch Piozzi's Marginalia", *Eighteenth-Century Life* 3 (1977) 97-100.

communities, that it finds momentum. Shakespeare the playwright was himself identified with ghostliness, and contemporary histories liked to attach this connection to the entire area of the Globe theatre. The Globe was a theatre where, ‘Shakespeare first trod the stage, but in no higher character than the ghost in his own play of Hamlet’.⁷¹

Magic and folk knowledge and Shakespeare mix happily in other anecdotes that relate to Piozzi’s comment on the ruins of the Globe theatre. The local antiquarian Matthew Concanen writes about how local people thought the entire area haunted by spirits. In his 1795 local historical guide to the borough of Southwark, when the new brewery buildings that came to stand on the site must have been in the early stages of construction, he writes of the demolished buildings of globe-alley where the theatre had been located, as a ghostly locale, ‘avoided by the young and the superstitious as a place haunted by those imaginary beings called evil spirits’.⁷² Gloomy landscapes populated by ghosts and witches were seen to be stereotypically British.⁷³

It is not contradictory to explain that, at the same time, oriental locales particularly seemed to be connected with a severance of history in favour of the supernatural.⁷⁴ The ruins of the Globe theatre produce a

⁷¹ Thomas Pennant, *London; or an Abridgement of the Celebrated Mr. Pennant’s Description of the British Capital, and its Environs* (London: W.Bentley, 1790), p.43.

⁷² Concanen, pp.192, 225.

⁷³ Spacks, p.51.

⁷⁴ See, for example, Sir Joshua Reynolds comments in Discourse VI of 1774 on exotic, magical places as the exemplar of superstition and of ‘former grandeur and long-lost science’ in a way that would now be described orientalist, and that Wark suggests may refer to Wood’s text on Palmyra. Reynolds *Discourses* p.94. For Guthrie, writing on ‘Turkey in Asia’, in his comments on ‘The Origin of Nations, Laws, Government and Commerce’ Palmyra had two histories, the ‘sacred’ history upheld by the ‘Asiatics’, in which it, with

productive epistemological haze for Piozzi, facilitating an encounter with the exotic 'here-ness' of the past, its crude, haunted and superstitious spaces circumscribed by a sardonic erudite and literary tone. The emphasis remains however that this example of local Shakespearean history is both more highly fictive and highly formalised in configuration than we might at first think. Shakespeare is associated with myth and superstition first, the stories and oral culture of a highly localised often uneducated and uninformed body of people second, and the work of literary history with its priorities in accuracy, documentary evidence and book antiquarianism only subsequently. Perhaps it is through such anecdotes and cultural forms that a sense of the Shakespearean English past comes about in the later years of the eighteenth century.

Baalbec, owed its origins to the time of Solomon, and the 'profane', in which Palmyra does not appear before the time of Marc Antony. William Guthrie, *A New System of Modern Geography* (London: C.Dilly, G.G.J and J.Robinson, 1792), p.666. In discussion of the religions of Greece, Italy and India alongside one another and on Gothic aesthetics being like Grecian with an Asiatic turn See Asiatic Society of Bengal, *Asiatic Researches; or, Transactions of the Society, Instituted in Bengal, for Inquiring into the History and Antiquities* 20 vols. (London: J. Sewell and others, 1799), I, p.221.

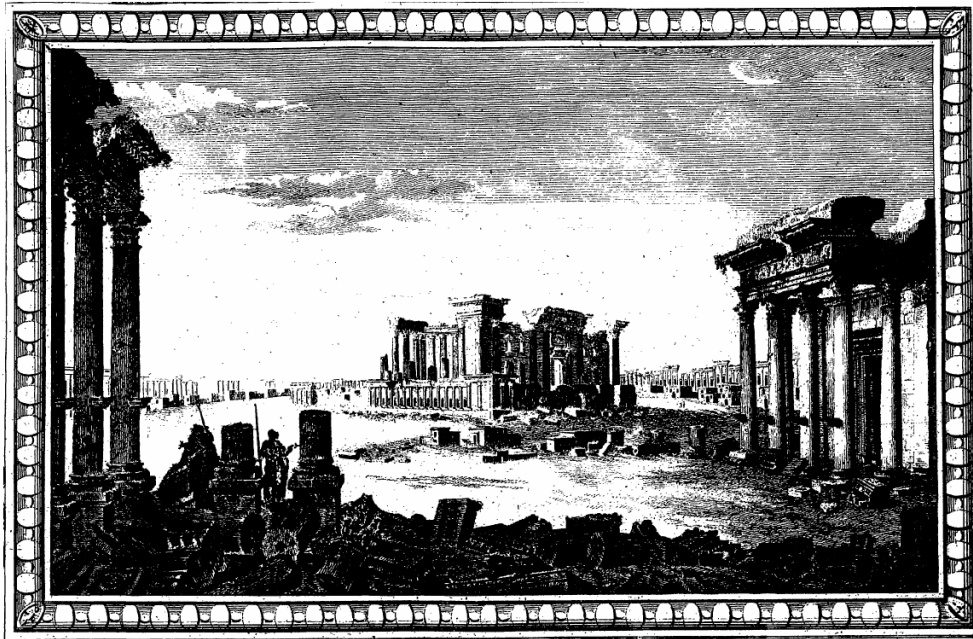


PLATE 44

Part of the former site of the Globe theatre, ‘encircled with a gravel walk and planted with poplars and other trees’, was still visible and ‘known by the name of Palmyra’ when Dr Johnson used to walk alone there on his visits to Mr Thrale at the brewery in the last decade of the century.⁷⁵ Jonathan Kramnick has written of historical specificity as a particular product of modernity, suspicious of anachronism and aestheticism, yet coopting that ‘desire of pleasure’ and ‘incredulity’ attached to reading Shakespeare in the Johnsonian vein.⁷⁶ In this late century instance of the withholding of historical specificity in favour of an emphasis on the haunted

⁷⁵ Concanen, p.231.

⁷⁶ Kramnick, pp.242, 203.

area termed 'Palmyra' on the Bankside in London, an apparent aestheticism and anachronism in the recovery of Shakespearean England leans toward the languages of colonial exploration. To recover Shakespeare in the Johnsonian vein is to uncover a zone of pleasure, like the pleasure ground. It is also to turn toward an orientalist discourse about an ignorant, benighted populace, which might be connected with a sublime, ungraspable, ever distant and almost terrible imaginary space; or might be quaintly gothic and populated by fairies and tales of haunting. This discourse is also profoundly nationalist, and formative of a strong national identity with little regard for the empire itself. National affection for the sprite-laden, deeply forested lands of England entails as well the turning back of an orientalist text toward the landscape of London. The national past, its superstitions, magic and ignorant populace has somehow been located at an irretrievable distance in time, established in the same language as the distant east.

English culture undoubtedly annexed to itself territorial elsewhere in the course of producing a sense of Shakespearean antiquity in the later years of the century. However this is not to ignore the fact that there were also indigenous sources for gothic affect, as it came to be redeployed in connection with Shakespeare's works in the final years of the century. Part of the contemporary vogue for the terrible, as exemplified by Siddons' performances in *Macbeth*, engaged an urgency to define the northern English or British character through the climatic and temperamental. Climate, many historians of the eighteenth century have argued in recent

years, provided the main determinant and prevailing theory of race.⁷⁷ Jonathan Bate writes of the Romantic poets' enthusiasm for the northern quality of *Macbeth* and of how Schlegel amidst his interest in the history plays wrote of 'the hardy north' and the 'energetic heroic age'.⁷⁸ In more recent work by Shruti Kapila, the racialised language of northern temperament to be found in the work of nineteenth-century anthropologists in India has come under scrutiny.⁷⁹ More clearly, the climatic notion (as opposed to one occult or physiological) of 'melancholy' can be traced to George Cheyne's 1733 book, *The English Malady* in which 'nervous distempers' and 'lowness of spirits' were attributed to the English climate. A richness of diet and the prevalence of sedentary occupations are interpreted as characteristically English in this text. The place of melancholy within literary culture and art is increasingly complex by the late eighteenth century. Andrews argues for the 'morbid emotionalism' of meditations on death in ruined abbeys and country churchyards until, 'melancholy itself is a source of pleasure to a cultivated mind' for John Aikin in the 1790s.⁸⁰

⁷⁷ See Roxann Wheeler, *The Complexion of Race* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2000), pp.2,21. John O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain: Pantomime and Entertainment 1690-1760* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004), p.122. For a helpful discussion of Lessing and the Northern aesthetic, and on climate and the terrible and melancholy, see Kramnick, pp.228-30.

⁷⁸ *The Romantics on Shakespeare*, p.13. Bate also discusses Schlegel's comments on *Henry VI Part II* and the appeal of Shakespeare to German national drama including Wagner.

⁷⁹ Shruti Kapila, 'Race Matters: Orientalism and Religion, India and Beyond c.1770-1880', *Modern Asian Studies* 41:3 (2007), p.479. She discusses the 'stronger northern nations' in the writings of the anthropologist J.F. Blumenbach in relation to 'Hindoostan'. The importance of climate to racial classifications forms much of this discussion. There is particular emphasis on how encounters with the Indian subcontinent were understood to 'effeminise' the northern nations.

⁸⁰ Andrews, *Search for the Picturesque*, p.44. Also for example David Hume discusses the conversion of melancholy passions into pleasure. Hume, *Essays and Treatises*, I, p.235.

So, when Siddons never failed to signify in Scotland, where climate and temperament would normally identify character, this is not to say that the Scots were expected to be more emotional, but that the Scottish people had somehow become embroiled in Siddons' self-characterisation. For the actress, commenting on her art in a private setting, Scotland will not be moved to distress, anguish or pity as she expects and the response of audiences in Scotland is puzzling, baffling, and not readily interpreted.

Late eighteenth-century depictions of melancholy in the context of empire are crucial to national identifications, and at times flag points of crisis in the progress of the nation against its empire. As well, the figure of melancholy perhaps begins to appear as a reiterated affirmative marker for an autonomous aesthetic arena. Siddons' personal association with melancholy, as well as horror and tragic pity in representations was relatively extensive. The *Tragic Muse* painting by Joshua Reynolds is the most frequently recollected illustration of the actress as the figure of melancholy today: she spoke of it herself as a depiction of the 'chilly and concentrated musings of pale melancholy'.⁸¹ Royde-Smith even suggests in an observation that has not been followed up in recent criticism that the *Tragic Muse* painting may have been based on her depiction of the character of Sigismunda 'seated in melancholy rumination' at the start of Act III in Thomson's *Tancred and Sigismunda*.⁸² What she is doing embodying melancholy in an illustration of tragic pity and terror is not self-evident and

⁸¹ Campbell, p.100. Siddons' own accounts of putting together the *Tragic Muse* painting and the 'strongly affected' response of viewers in the years subsequent to its first exhibition in 1784 are to be found here.

⁸² Royde-Smith, p.187.

arguably requires some understanding of the gothic and ancient British as variables also influential upon her stage roles. The actress' association with melancholy came to be satirised in such works as a print on Reynolds' play *Werter*, adapted from Goethe's novel of that name, which shows Siddons as 'Figure F: the Tragic Muse in a Werter Hat, sitting under a Weeping Willow in a melancholy Posture with a Brace of Pistols cocked' (BM 7054, See Fig F).

Magic was gothic and English, it was also Eastern and connected to folk traditions and oral cultures. *Macbeth* was a play which contained all these resonances, and they formed the contemporary context for Siddons' great performances of the terrible, and also of sickness and woe in the central female role.

SECTION THREE

No character of the empire was more melancholy than Warren Hastings on his return to England in the years preceding the impeachment. In private writings he emerges as a figure supported in his gloom by close friends. Elsewhere, in more personal notes and poems, some of which it seems had

no audience other than himself, he indulges in exercises in self-writing that almost approach the exhibition of self-loathing, representing himself as that figure of horror presented by the press and by his political opponents, caricatured over again, in escalated versions of terror and colonial depravity.

“You cannot stir, but like a comet to be wondered at.” And it is too much and must be irksome to blaze constantly and be always gazed at’. David Anderson wrote to his friend Warren Hastings in October 1785, encouraging the former Governor General of the East India Company on his recent return to England to persist in seeking ‘some fixed place of residence in the Country’ where he might withdraw from public attention. Anderson pressed the importance of private assembly among friends, and wrote of the need for a space in which that might occur. ‘If I put a right interpretation on that passage of your letter of 19th in which you speak of being held up by the Public as an object of their notice,’ he writes, ‘I think you would find a peculiar advantage in having a place of retreat, where you might enjoy the ease and society of your select friends.’ Hastings had recently failed to secure his family estate. To strengthen their friendship around this time the two men were planning to exchange portraits. Hastings’ likeness was to be painted by Reynolds; Anderson’s by Raeburn. The lines about ‘being held up by the public as an object of their notice’ as well as the reference to a ‘comet’ introduce an allusion to Shakespeare’s *Henry IV Part I* which is pursued in the rest of this letter. Anderson continues the allusion more covertly: ‘If we could consult the opinions of Futurity we would probably find that plain *WH* in circumstances rather straightened is the noblest and most illustrious sequel to the Character of the late Gov. Genl. of Bengal

India.’ His vision is of Hastings as a modest man, like Shakespeare’s King Henry, a fallen commander, ‘in reputeless banishment/ A fellow of no mark nor likelihood’, the greater for his humility. The fond and affectionate references to Shakespeare are prompted by a material concern that the painting need be fairly modest since, as Anderson explains, the place he imagines for it in his house is of limited size - ‘a half length will be as much as it can well hold’.⁸³ The image of ‘plain W H’ invented by Anderson as the successor to Warren Hastings, Governor General of the East India Company is a striking one. It imagines Warren Hastings out of the public eye, in retirement on his country estate where he would be less easily ‘held up by the Public as an object of their notice’. But what did Hastings, who spoke of himself in connection to his public identity during the trial and these years on his return to England as a figure ‘[i]mpeach’d, revil’d, acquitted and forgot’, make of his own identity?⁸⁴

The almost unrecognisable ‘plain W H’ would have undoubtedly been appealing to Hastings at this time. Little could Hastings have imagined the notoriety and public attention he would shortly be subjected to as part of the impeachment process in Westminster Hall, beginning in February 1788. This chapter is about the different public identities formed in the context of empire. My analysis of the making of local and national identities will now turn away from Sarah Siddons’ Shakespearean roles. Of particular note in

⁸³ British Library, Anderson MSS, MMMMM(L)CDXVIII, fol.370. The Reynolds portrait discussed here was never painted and Hastings eventually commissioned Lemuel Abbot for the likeness. Raeburn’s David Anderson is in the collection of the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC <<http://www.nga.gov>> [accessed 10/01/06].

⁸⁴ BL, Hastings MSS, M(XL)CMI, fol.63. ‘Verses Written on the Hindoo temple erected by Mr Osborne in Melchet Park’. The lines are in a part of the poem that discusses a bust or sculpture of Hastings that was placed in the temple.

the closing sections of this chapter is the place of satire that drew on the works of Shakespeare, both visual and textual, in the representation of Hastings and the impeachment.

Whilst Siddons was playing Queen Katharine in *Henry VIII*, at the beginning of 1788, the former Governor General of the East India Company was preparing for public scrutiny as a figure who commanded attention for being a product of the empire more monstrous, more terrible and awful, than any the nation had yet seen. As was the case with Siddons' performances, it was particularly among women that emotions of sickness and woe, feverish excitement and awe came to be described in connection to his public appearances. In many ways, indeed, he is a figure comparable with Siddons for this association with horror, terror and woe.

The Hastings' trial is an event which, since its opening in Westminster Hall on February 13 1788, has attracted comparison with the theatre. Until its close in 1795 it was one of the great public events at the end of the eighteenth century, spoken of by the historian J.H. Plumb in 1950 as 'the greatest public sensation of the seventeen-eighties'.⁸⁵ Critical and historical interest in the trial has been relatively extensive in recent years, with book and chapter length studies including work by Siraj Ahmed, Saree Makdisi and Daniel O'Quinn building on significant early work by the historians P.J. Marshall and C.A. Bayly.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ J. H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century* (Baltimore, 1950), p.171.

⁸⁶ Siraj Ahmed, 'The Theater of the Civilised Self: Edmund Burke and the East India Trials' *Representations* 78 (2002) 28-55. Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism*, pp.100-121. Daniel O'Quinn on 'Inchbald's Indies: Domestic and Dramatic Reorientations', *European Romantic Review* 9:2 (1998) 217-30. Also a version in O'Quinn, *Staging Governance*, pp.125-221. P.J. Marshall, *The Impeachment of Warren Hastings* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965). C.A. Bayly, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830* (London and New York: Longman, 1989). C.A. Bayly, *Empire and*

Large scale trials were viewed as entertainment in London of the late century, attended by large audiences – as to some extent were political debates. Pastor Moritz, a German visitor, writes that he went daily in 1782 to the gallery of the House of Commons and preferred the entertainment to be found there to most other amusements.⁸⁷ Saree Makdisi, following Sara Suleri and David Musselwhite, has explored at length how Warren Hastings himself was less on trial during the grand and eventually lengthy public spectacle of the Hastings’ impeachment than English sovereignty in the East Indies more broadly. Its seven year span was, he writes, ‘one of the great “trials of empire” and of the colonial project itself, in which Hastings’ own status as the accused became less and less relevant as the proceedings dragged on’.⁸⁸

By all accounts the primary orator at the Hastings impeachment, Edmund Burke, did not draw large crowds in the longer term. Nicholas K. Robinson, mentions that those ‘suffering from Burke’s prolixity’ during the trial, ‘called him “the dinner bell”’.⁸⁹ Joseph Pearson, the doorkeeper of the House of Commons reputedly said of his speeches during the trial, ‘he never

Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India 1780-1870 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999). Also Julie Stone Peters, ‘Theatrical Orators, Spectacular Trials, Testimonial Catharsis’.

⁸⁷ See Barrell, *Imagining the King’s Death* and Chapter 2 in Pascoe on trials as public events. See also George, *Catalogue*, VI, p.xi, xix.

⁸⁸ Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism*, p.111. On the zemindars and reform in connection to the trial John R. McLane, *Land and Local Kingship in Eighteenth-Century Bengal* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993). For a more general overview of workings of the East India Company Holden Furber, *John Company at Work: European Expansion in India in the Late Eighteenth Century* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 1948).

⁸⁹ Nicholas K. Robinson, *Edmund Burke: A Life in Caricature* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996) p.79. Discussing a caricature of April 1785, James Sayer, ***** [*Burke*] on the Sublime and the Beautiful.

rises but I have directly to open the door to let the members out'.⁹⁰ However, in the earlier days of the trial there was clearly a form of excitement and affective lure around the event which resembles stories of Sarah Siddons' public appearances.

We have many accounts of the extensive anticipation surrounding the great audiences, the tickets to seats at the trial which sold for up to fifty guineas each, and particularly of the spectacular and theatrical opening few days. Gilbert Elliot, one of the managers of the trial, describes the excitement among audiences preparing to attend as resembling the enthusiasm of a theatre audience. As in the instances of Siddons fever, overextended emotion and the press of women at the stage door form part of the description of the event:

The audience will have to mob it at the door till nine, when the doors open, and then there will be a rush as there is at the pit of the playhouse when Garrick plays King Lear ... the ladies are dressed and mobbing it in the Palace Yard by six or half after six ... some people and, I believe, even women – I mean ladies – have slept at the coffeehouses adjoining Westminster Hall, that they may be sure of getting to the door in time.⁹¹

Descriptions of women among the audiences attending the trial are of much significance in newspaper reports of its opening days. The *Times* reports the first day as a 'blaze of beauty', presenting a spectacle of femininity and 'style of dress' unsurpassed since the trial of the Duchess of Kingston. 'Hair-

⁹⁰ Simpson, p.6. Cited from *The Memoirs of Joseph Pearson*.

⁹¹ Cited Sara Suleri, *The Rhetoric of English India* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), p.53.

dressing' amongst fashion-conscious women attending the trial had begun, it reports, at 'twelve at night', with curls still being 'twirled' at nine the next morning.⁹² By the end of the week, the *Morning Post* regrets that public interest in the trial seems to be waning, and that the glorious spectacle of 'fair ladies' has diminished. 'On Wednesday the benches destined for the Peeresses and their daughters were crowded; yesterday not twenty ladies appeared on them'. Accounts of the trial by Fanny Burney and Anna Barbauld are among the most vivid remaining today. *The Lady's Magazine* ran the trial as a feature between March and August 1788, and recounted in monthly instalments the order of affairs, charges raised and content of the speeches. It included in March and April of 1788 two plans of the various seating areas in the Hall: 'A View of the Court sitting on the trial of Warren Hastings Esq. in Westminster' and 'An exact Representation of the Building in Westminster Hall, erected for the Trial of Warren Hastings, Esq, on Wednesday, the Thirteenth of February, 1788'. The second shows 'the Lord Great Chamberlain's Box for Ladies' in prominent position at the centre and front of the image.

⁹² *Times*, 14 February 1788. See also the *Morning Chronicle* on this event 'our report is faithful when we say, though the exhibition was grand and impressive, the scene was not so full, or rather so crowded, as on the occasion of the less important trial of the Duchess of Kingston'. There is a similar account in the *Public Advertiser*, 18 February 1788.

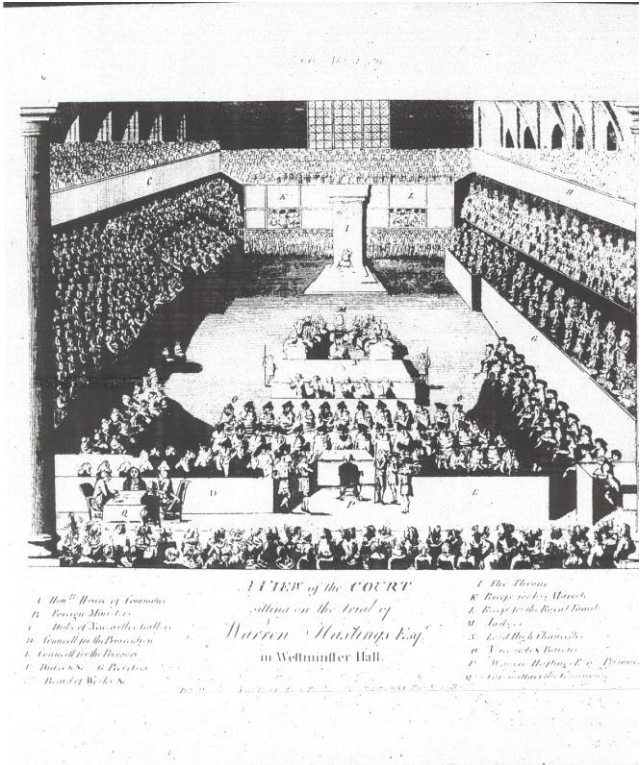


PLATE 45

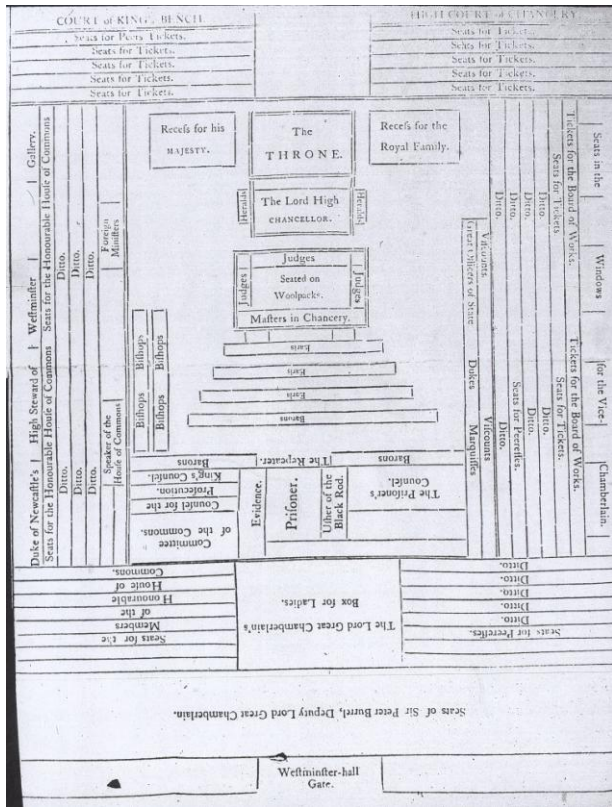


PLATE 46

In its early months, the trial of Warren Hastings collected and refracted a national gaze of unprecedented intensity upon England's developing empire. Hastings described his own place at its centre, less favourably, in a paper of 'Observations', written at the end of the first session of the trial. In this text, he recalls his own appearance in Westminster Hall in the third person, the subject of Burke's attack:

The Butt of alternate Reproach and Ridicule; to be compelled in all that Time to sit, as he has done, the common gazing stock of thousands of Spectators assembled for the purpose, of both Sexes, and of the finest Families in the Kingdom; to see their Attention riveted to an Orator bellowing the grossest Invectives, to hear their Bursts of Laughter, and even the Claps, as of theatrical Applause.⁹³

The atmosphere Hastings recounts resembles a place of entertainment more readily than a legal court. The newspapers took up this mood and tell us that Edmund Burke, troubled by a severe cold and a hoarse voice, took clarified honey in expectation of meeting his audience. His opening oration spanned four days, for the most part unhindered, while other business in the House of Commons waited.⁹⁴ 'The trial itself was regarded,' Suleri writes, 'not as an indictment of one culture's ability to obliterate the other but as a theatrical exercise in single combat between Hastings and Burke'.⁹⁵ Her metaphor draws on another genre of public entertainment, the boxing match, or

⁹³ Cited P.J. Marshall, *The Writings and Speeches of Edmund Burke*, ed. by P.J. Marshall, 9 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2000), VII, p.20. Also BL, MSS, M(XXX)CCXXV, fol.97.

⁹⁴ *Public Advertiser*, 21 February 1788. Mr Burgess' motion for the modification of debt legislation postponed because the Hastings debate was taking up so much time.

⁹⁵ Suleri, p.50.

gladiatorial contest, and the comment perhaps refers indirectly to satires of the trial which did indeed represent the encounters of the different individuals participating as the conflict between fighters.⁹⁶

The impeachment of Warren Hastings was foreshadowed in the politics of 1783, when Fox proposed his East India Bill and the Fox-North coalition came to be formed, with the intention of dealing better with affairs in the colonies and in the East Indies. The coalition is a pivotal moment around which images of horror and instabilities of state allegiance or government accrue in connection to East Indian politics. Fox most particularly was criticised for his assumption, as it was seen, of excessive power, in the course of this episode in colonial politics.

Hastings was evidently not a theatre actor, while Sarah Siddons was. However, the use of military combat, theatre and politics as interchangeable metaphors around the Hastings impeachment in part signals an unstable meaning for the word ‘actor’ as it existed during the final years of the century and spanning across this period of investigation into affairs in the East Indies. Seventeen Eighty Eight was the year in which the status of actors, strolling-players and performers underwent a formal change in English law. As Gillian Russell points out, ‘[t]he theatre of Tate Wilkinson – urban, commercialised, ‘legitimate’, was until this date constantly shadowed by that of the strolling player – predominantly rural based and unrespectable’. It was only in 1788 that there was a change in the law classifying all actors, including Wilkinson, as ‘craftsmen, rather than rogues and vagabonds’:

⁹⁶ See Robinson and BM7854 ‘The Battle of Whigs, or the Meal Tub Plot Discovered’ (May 7 1791).

as a profession, acting retained the stigma of immorality and criminality. Even after 1788, strollers were still regarded with suspicion by magistrates and some local notables.⁹⁷

Much of the material representation of the Hastings impeachment, where it draws on the language of the theatres and on theatrical forms, bears an undertone of recent, and in some senses persistent, perceptions of the immoral, improper or indecent status of the theatre performer.

Jay Fliegelman has argued in comments on John Quincy Adams that it was indeed only during the later part of the eighteenth century that a sense of political actor came to be clearly differentiated from a notion of stage actor. The word instead more accurately refers to a speaker of any kind, ‘whether that speaker is a lawyer’, whom Adams calls “an actor of truth”, ‘or a stage actor’ whom Adams calls an “imitator of truth”. Adams concludes his *Lectures on Rhetoric and Oratory* by tracing the history of the word, beginning with the notion of the public accuser who bears no relation to the stage and moving on to the ‘modern sense’ of actor. Adams identifies its appearance in the decade before the Revolution, with precise reference to those who work in the theatres, and to some extent the argument of this chapter takes its impulse from these comments to explore the meaning of that word in the late 1780s and mid 1790s.⁹⁸

⁹⁷ Gillian Russell, *The Theatres of War: Performance, Politics and Society, 1793-1815* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), p.159.

⁹⁸ Jay Fliegelman, *Declaring Independence: Jefferson, Natural Language and the Culture of Performance* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993), pp.92, 93. Fliegelman suggests a specific meaning in connection to stage actor is associated particularly with Whig-Tory politics: ‘Dr Johnson doubtless meant it an insult upon Lord Chatham, when he described him as “the great actor of patriotism”’.

The Hastings trial is an event which lasted seven years and which has been the subject of extensive critical and historical interest. I do not intend to rehearse that field here. However, a brief description of the material arguments presented for consideration is necessary to provide background for an analysis of Hastings' self-characterisations and the ways in which he came to be represented. In his speech of December 1 1783, concerning the future administration of the East India Company, Fox had spoken of the Company's capacity to function as a 'state in the disguise of a merchant'. In his speech of December 1 1783 Burke stressed the 'near twenty years' he had already spent on the question of the affairs of the East India Company and 'the structure of Anglo-Indian legislative practice in general'.⁹⁹ An awkward suspension of the Company between, as Burke put it in his opening speech to the impeachment in 1788, 'two sorts of powers' had been a matter for Parliamentary discussion at least since Fox's East India Bill of 1783.¹⁰⁰ Mary Poovey stresses that the status of the company continued to be 'half commercial enterprise, half administrative instrument' until the early nineteenth century.¹⁰¹ Recent analyses such as those by Poovey and Siraj Ahmed tend to focus on the question of this indefinite relation between private, legal property and political rule or authority under empire and its relevance to the impeachment proceedings.

⁹⁹ Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, V, p.451. Suleri, pp.25, 44. also describes the presentation of Burke's charges at the trial as proliferating excessively around the question of legal indictment, characterised by 'overwhelming detail', 'an overabundance of facts' p.51.

¹⁰⁰ Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, p.280.

¹⁰¹ Mary Poovey, 'The Limits of the Universal Knowledge Project: British India and the East Indiamen' *Critical Inquiry* 31 (2004), pp.190-1. The Company's roles were again reviewed in 1833.

The argument is derived itself from sections in Burke's opening speech to the impeachment in February 1788. If the Company 'can be considered as a public body at all', Burke noted, then the Charters granted by the Crown and the grants and charters derived from the Moguls bestowed on it a peculiarly divided sovereign status and resulted in a situation in which a corporate body, an 'English Corporation' had become 'an integral part of the Mogul Empire'.¹⁰² In the example of India, commercial and territorial authority and sources of revenue had become confused in the process. Poovey analyses the ways in which the question Burke spoke of in phrases such as, 'the same power was a Trader, the same power was a Lord', added a degree of complexity to the processes of rule:

Assets which are commercial in form, may be territorial as respects the right of property; assets which are territorial in form, may be commercial as respects the right of property.¹⁰³

Ahmed, similarly, emphasises that this meant a potential crisis of sovereignty in the development of British rule in the East Indies:

The irony of British India in particular and the mercantile companies in general was that merchants, the class of people above all identified with private interest, had suddenly acquired precisely what they were unqualified for, unregulated public authority.¹⁰⁴

Burke's opening speech reminded his audience that these 'two sorts of powers' had been discussed in Parliament in recent years during debates

¹⁰² Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, p.281.

¹⁰³ Poovey, 'Limits', p.189.

¹⁰⁴ Ahmed, 'Theater', p.31.

concerned with the East India Bill of 1783.¹⁰⁵ The historical roots of the East India Company ‘at about the latter end of the reign of Elizabeth’, and its origin in a charter, ‘confined merely to commercial affairs’ might have been considered to make a separation of colonial (or trade-based) and indigenous sovereignty possible.¹⁰⁶ However, he affirms that by ‘about the end of the reign of Charles the Second’, and following the Charters of 1661, 1668, 1683 and 1686, the repeated exercise of powers of naval discipline, law, martial, local, civil and criminal jurisdiction, and of the powers of peace and war, meant that the Company had clearly overstretched the reach of the original charter. It begins at this date to be possible to speak of it as a ‘subordinate sovereign power’.¹⁰⁷

For Saree Makdisi in his analysis, the economic outcome of the trial in Indian territories in the longer term is of interest. He considers how eventually, as a consequence of the trial, during the later years of the eighteenth century, ‘the British, following the trial of Warren Hastings, and through the Parliament settlement act of 1793, completely destroyed India’s indigenous structure of land-ownership (by transforming the *zamindars* from revenue collectors for the Mughal provincial governors to essentially private landlords in the capitalist sense)’.¹⁰⁸ What is important for the material construction of Burke’s impeachment speeches of 1788, however,

¹⁰⁵ Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, p.280.

¹⁰⁶ Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, p.282.

¹⁰⁷ ‘The East India Company did not seem merely a Company formed for the extension of British commerce, but in reality a delegation of the whole power and sovereignty of this kingdom sent into the East. In that light the Company began undoubtedly to be considered, and ought to be considered, as a subordinate sovereign power.’ Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, p.283.

¹⁰⁸ Makdisi, *Romantic Imperialism*, p.77.

is something closer to mercantile comedy. In these speeches, the analysis of Hastings' character enables him to present a caricature of sovereignty in British India as a monstrous figure, insecure at the roots of power, illegal in practice. As concerns my argument here, it is necessary to note that the impeachment proceeding was relatively inconclusive, and that Hastings was eventually acquitted.

In terms of the individuals and material discussed within this chapter, Warren Hastings did wish for David Anderson's presence at the trial in October 1788 and two letters survive requesting him to come up for the trial.¹⁰⁹ An overlap between the theatres and the political stage was evident during the trial. References to Shakespeare, a popular source among those who spoke against Hastings, during the trial, and in the satires that emerged from it, may have slightly different roots to those we might assume today. Fliegelman's argument around the syntax of the word 'actor' must be of some relevance. Many of the speakers do use Shakespeare in their orations and this is reflected in a variety of representations that surround the events.

The remainder of this chapter is interested in the circulation of a range of highly gendered, current meanings for pity and fear, and their uses in representing Hastings as his prominent place on the public stage was negotiated in England. Public representations of Hastings provide a ready comparison with Siddons. I shall show that Shakespeare was as crucial to the public identity of Warren Hastings as to that of the actress.

¹⁰⁹ Note of letters of October 27 and October 29 1785 from Hastings to David Anderson. BL, Anderson MSS, MMMMM(L)CDXVIII, fol.373.

I will now move to discuss a range of satires on expression and tragic acting, in which the use of Shakespeare came to be combined with the representation of the Hastings trial. These satires at times take as their subject horror and terror; at times sublime woe and theatrical exhibition. Sara Suleri mentions that the relationship of Iago to Othello characterised Burke's condemnation of Hastings' character.¹¹⁰ Much more extensive discussion would be possible of the precise references to Shakespeare in speeches, particularly those by Edmund Burke, during the impeachment of Hastings. However, I have chosen in this chapter, in order to draw a comparison with Siddons, to address the representation of horror in satire. I seek to comment specifically on the following series of satires which turn to Shakespeare in making such a characterisation.

Hastings is most concerned about displays of his public persona as monstrous and ridiculous in Burke's impeachment speeches.¹¹¹ A tendency towards self-satire in his private papers is apparent in the citation already offered of his description of himself as, '[t]he Butt of alternate Reproach and Ridicule... compelled... to sit, as he has done', and to become 'the common gazing stock' of the amassed audience to the trial. While not immediately Shakespearean, this characterisation from a handwritten paper of 'Observations' is a good place to begin a consideration of satire during the trial.

¹¹⁰ Suleri, p.45. I have not found many references in Burke's own speeches against Hastings to Shakespeare. He does make reference to *Macbeth* in describing Hastings on June 3 1794. Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VII, p.337.

¹¹¹ Sheridan himself used the name 'monster' many times in descriptions of Hastings and it is necessary to notice that the writer mentions the words of Hamlet to the ghost while recounting the details of Sheridan's oration, *The Celebrated Speech of Richard Brinsley Sheridan Esq. in Westminster Hall on the 3d 6th 10th and 13th of June 1788* (London: C.Foster, 1788), p.46.

Hastings' theatrical picture of himself at the trial in this self-authored piece is subtly inconsistent. Beneath an evident irritation he feels at having been cast as the central character in a comic spectacle, he seems to remember the scene in contradictory terms, himself the object, alternately, of 'Reproach' and 'Ridicule', as 'common gazing stock', yet observed by 'the finest Families of the Kingdom': both a clownish character, a fairground booth attraction amongst bellowing comic orators, and simultaneously appearing before a polite audience who offer 'the claps, as of theatrical applause'.

Forms of satire and comic theory were vastly complex by the end of the eighteenth century. More common by the last decades of the century were mature forms such as Cowper's critique in *The Task* of the culture of sensation, in which he analyses the spectacle of exquisite pain in the fox hunt of Book III, as 'detested sport, that owes its pleasures to another's pain', and includes an entertaining description of the arriving post. Hastings' words recall the purest models for satire in the arts. Dryden earlier in the century in his Preface to Du Fresnoy's *The Art of Painting* had written of the association of caricature with comic theatre. The jumbling of characters and figures intended to cause laughter is transferred in this text by Dryden from its application to Horace's *Ars Poetica* to the representation of comedy on stage. 'Laughter is indeed the propriety of a man, but just enough to distinguish him from his elder brother with four legs', he writes, before going on to describe high and low forms of comedy. Buffoonery was broadly considered by the late century to be 'Shakespearean' in quality, and

a pleasure-giving mixture of the serious within comic genres particularly associated with Shakespeare.¹¹²

Public scrutiny led Hastings to retreat into satire in a verse, in which he presents a caricature of himself, ‘Proposed to be inscrib’d upon W. Hastings Portrait. Written by himself’:

A mouth extended fierce from Ear to Ear,
With fangs like those which wolves and tigers wear,
Eyes, whose dark orbs announce a sullen mood,
A lust of rapine and a thirst of blood.
Such Hastings was, as by the Commons painted
men shuddered as they look’d, and women fainted
When they display’d him to the vacant throne,
And bad the peers the labour’d likeness own.¹¹³

This satire to be found in Hastings’ private papers is almost a description of some of the images of Napoleon in contemporary graphic satires. ‘Horror Personified’ (May 17 1797) is annotated with the words:

Let thy eyes, like saucers be
Frighten all the World but me (lwl 08980).

¹¹² This material is not exclusively relevant to the period 1780-1800 though can be found in Johnson, who was still much referred to in this period. *BES*, I, pp.117-9.

¹¹³ BL, Hastings MSS, M(XL)CMI, fol.51. Verses collected by Charlotte Blunt later Imhoff, when she married Charles Imhoff, Hastings’ stepson.



PLATE 47

Other representations resembling this caricature are found in satires addressing Egypt, terror and the French Revolutionary Wars: ‘Anticipation, or Ways and Means, or Buonaparte really taken’ shows Bonaparte from Egypt as the same figure as the horror face, with saucers or huge orbs for eyes (lwl 09291/ BM 9241).¹¹⁴ Fox is shown here weeping within a fairground booth scene in which signs announce, ‘to be seen here alive, the noted Boney-Part, from Egypt’. The resemblance between Bonaparte as a fairground monster-horror and that in Hastings’ caricature is remarkable, and draws a parallel between India and politics in France or the Battle of the Nile that might not otherwise be immediately apparent.

¹¹⁴ Also BM9336 ‘The Ghost of Buonaparte’ January 1 1799 references Cairo, Egypt and the Battle of the Nile and BM9250 ‘Extirpation of the Plagues of Egypt’ which illustrates Nelson and terror. BM8446 ‘Democracy of France’ with beheaded Louis XVI, a characteristic representation of France and Revolution associated with terror and gratuitous violence, comparable with BM8825 ‘Thoughts on a Regicide Peace’ which shows the horror face of French Jacobin.



PLATE 48

Horrors from the colonies presented in the form of entertainment at a fairground booth are the subject of a major satire on the Hastings trial, within which appears reference to Shakespeare. The body of the public, assembled in William Dent's 'The Raree-Show' of February 25 1788 at the opening of the trial, is an audience of a distinctly different character to that depicted in the *Lady's Magazine* diagrammatic illustrations.¹¹⁵ Here political life appears caricatured as a farce or grotesque, within which Burke, Sheridan and Fox demonstrate a medley of 'Antic gesticulations' and 'Apish gestures' which manuals on public speaking, such as that of Le Faucheur, identified as undesirable traits in an orator, more fitting the performer in the Roman or Greek pantomime than the politician.¹¹⁶ The

¹¹⁵ 'The Raree-Show' is illustrated in Chapter Two.

¹¹⁶ Michel Le Faucheur, *The Art of Speaking in Publick; or an Essay on the Action of an Orator; As to his Pronunciation and Gesture. Useful in the Senate or Theatre, the Court,*

court, meeting beneath the distinctive architectural window of Westminster Hall, appears less comparable with a theatre auditorium than the fair at Smithfield. The implicit theatrical character of the audience of the *Lady's Magazine* is here pronounced, as it demonstrates not a polite social gathering, but a riotous crowd, similar to that Wordsworth saw in Bartholemew Fair:

a dream
Monstrous in colour, motion, sight, shape, sound!
Below, the open space, through every nook
Of the wide area, twinkles, is alive
With heads; the midway region and above
Is thronged with staring pictures and huge scrolls,
Dumb proclamations of the prodigies
... buffoons against buffoons
Grimacing, writhing, screaming.¹¹⁷

the Camp, as well as the Bar or Pulpit (London: N.Cox, 1727), p.202.

¹¹⁷ William Wordsworth, *The Prelude: The Four Texts*, ed. by Jonathan Wordsworth (London: Penguin, 1995), pp.288-90, 1.658-672. This is Book VII of the 1805 version. The previous lines read:

'[Lifted] above the press and danger of the crowd
Upon some showman's platform. What a hell
For eyes and ears....
Anarchy and din
Barbarian and infernal'.

Other parts of the passage describe [Music, the silent beggar who stood against the wall]: fiddle, saltbox, kettle drum, trumpet, 'silver-collared Negro with his timbrel', equestrians, tumblers, and so on:

'Albinos, painted Indians, Dwarfs,
The Horse of Knowledge and the Learned Pig
The Stone-Eater, the man that swallows fire,
Giants, Ventriloquists, the Invisible Girl'

A waxwork, clockwork, puppet shows, 'the Bust that speaks and moves its goggling eyes'. The fair is seen to be a 'Parliament of Monsters', of tents and booths, a chaos of movement. Compare the audience promised by a current popular song, thronging to the fair with its 'fools in many postures, to please the gaping crowd':

Ye lads of London city, come listen to my ditty,
Likewise ye lasses pretty, who love to see the fair

The distinction between moral spaces, such as those of the court or of religious speech that existed for Le Faucheur is carried through in the tone of this image. For Le Faucheur, the speech of playhouses is understood to corrupt the pulpits, turning them into ‘theatres of Pomp and Vanity’, abusing the ‘Graces of Good speaking and gesture’, exciting instead ‘Wantonness, Profanity and Immorality’.¹¹⁸

In the ‘Raree-Show’, the audience are depicted forgetting virtue and decorum for a moment, striving to get a glimpse, for their two-pence, just as Dryden would describe the crowd massing around a booth at the fair.¹¹⁹ Where Burke, Sheridan and Fox appear modestly seated in the bottom left corner in the *Lady’s Magazine* ‘View of the Court’, in Dent’s caricature the illustrations of the three figures occupy the centre of the image, with three banners above them advertising ‘The Prodigious Monster arrived from the East’, ‘The Oratorical Tragedy, or the power of the pathetic over the beautiful’ and ‘Dancing on the Tight-Rope’. The freak show of ‘Alexander the Great’ and ‘Alexander the Little’ are advertised beneath, on posters at the entrance to the booth that demonstrate an array of optical devices, lenses

To Smithfield trudge along, and join the motley throng,
You all may gain admission to see their exhibition...
here’s puppet-shows and drolls too...
Here’s Connolly O’ Briant, will show the Irish giant,
And you may all rely on’t, his statue’s eight feet high,
Now here’s the learned swine, the noted porcupine,
If that you have not more sense, they’ll take away your halfpence,
And in a little time, you’ll be as wise as them.
What pushing and what driving, against each other striving,
While many are contriving, your pockets for to glean. *A New Song for
Bartholemew Fair* (London, 1788).

¹¹⁸ Le Faucheur, p.202.

¹¹⁹ ‘A very monster in a Bartholemew-Fair, for the mob to gape at for their two-pence.’ Charles-Alphonse Du Fresnoy, *The Art of Painting translated into English with an Original Preface, containing a Parallel between Poetry and Painting by Mr Dryden* (London: Bernard Lintott, 1916), p.xxviii.

and glasses. Thurlow calls, with little success, to be allowed through the crowd.

A lapse of mercantile character has become a vast satire on the inefficacy of legal precedence at this comic tribunal. Aside from the visual pun on the high tragedy of Lear with Cordelia in his arms in the banner on the left within the image, the illustration of female audience members in the central banner appears with a citation from *Hamlet*: 'He would drown the stage with tears, and cleave the general ear with horrid speech'.

A deformation and distortion of Burke, Sheridan and North into grotesque clowns and mountebanks, bearing 'sublimity' 'attic' and 'argument' and of the audience into a Bartholomew fair monstrosity in *The Raree Show*, encourages the eighteenth-century viewer to consider theatricality, commerce and leisure as moral questions awkwardly, and comically, central to the impeachment process (BM 7273). The *wholly* female audience to Burke's speech in the central banner, combined with the citation from Shakespeare, poses a degree of abstraction against the image of chaotic pleasure and commotion in the main crowd.¹²⁰

Peripheral entertainments such as those commonly advertised on playbills, the magic lantern show, phantasmagoria, spectacle, tightrope walker, or the short 'Laughing' afterpiece or interlude were significant in caricatures of the trial by Gillray and his imitators. Two works are titled 'Camera Obscura' and 'Galante Show'. Both include Polonius' words, 'very like an ouzle'.¹²¹

¹²⁰ George notes Burke's speech as the cause of audience weeping. George, *Catalogue*, VI, p.463.

¹²¹ Flood, p.61.



PLATE 49



PLATE 50

The 'Raree-Show' satire tests the ability of its audience to laugh, properly, at their own mercantile character. They might for a moment have become Dryden's laughers at the fair, enjoying 'a kind of bastard pleasure ... taken in at the eyes of the vulgar gazers, and at the ears of the beastly audience', like the audience displayed within the print, but they might, too, exercise comic judgment, and identify in their own behaviour a trifling breach of morality and propriety, or virtue and decorum.

Hastings, it seems, in private correspondence, uses Shakespeare as a defence – a moral defence – against the spectacle that is being made of him. Moral laughter, at the same time, in satires retained something of Dryden's

sense of being poised on the edge of the monstrous. Comedy might approach horror, and many eighteenth-century writers on comedy are careful to advise the avoidance of this territory.¹²²

Suffering, in Siddons' performances, conversely, signalled a different moral territory as of relevance. John Aikin's 'On the Impression of Reality attending Dramatic Representations' describes watching Siddons' Belvidera in terms of the differences which can be drawn between reality and illusion and pity and terror, between genuine suffering and spectacles of terror and distress. The stage should 'approach as near a resemblance as possible of reality', he concludes. Believing Mrs Siddons to be Belvidera is crucial to the moral response, suggests Aikin. 'If I shuddered and turned pale at the real spectacle, I do the same at the first recollections': the imagination or recollection of a spectacle of suffering is the test of moral response. 'Why should not equal power be granted to those artificial methods?... I sob, weep, am almost choked with the mixed emotions of pity, terror and apprehension, and totally forget the theatre, the actors and the audience... [s]hall the cold critic now tell me, I am sure you do not *believe* Mrs Siddons to be Belvidera'. He compares the workings of the mind that recollects a real scene *favourably* with an imagined scene in a theatre, finding these two 'operations of fancy' 'indistinguishable' in their effects: the effect of 'genuine sympathy' at the suffering of a fellow creature is relevant whichever.¹²³

¹²² For the wealth of writings on moral judgment in comedy across the eighteenth century. See Dryden, Preface to *Du Fresnoy*; Francis Grose, *Rules for Drawing Caricatures with an Essay on Comic Painting* (London: S.Hooper, 1788), p.4.

¹²³ John Aikin, 'On the Impression of Reality Attending Dramatic Representations... Communicated by Dr Percival' in *Memoirs of the Literary and Philosophical Society of*

The language of ‘drowning the stage in tears’ employed within the ‘Raree-Show’ may well reference the area of the moral judgment attendant on the spectacle of suffering, but is, in an eighteenth-century context, more specifically a reference to the principles of public oratory.¹²⁴ Use of the Shakespearean stage within the art of caricature appears elsewhere among the material culture of the Hastings trial. In the context of the impeachment we find quite specific references of this kind. In the text *A Short Criticism on the Performance of Hamlet by Mr Kemble* (1789) the writer includes a reference to Betterton’s performance of the ‘start’, and a passage well-known and recently reiterated by Garrick, in connection to East Indian politics:

Hamlet But where was this?

Marcellus Upon the platform where we watched

Hamlet Did you not speak to it?

Horatio My Lord, I did.

Manchester 5 vols. (Manchester: C.Wheeler, T.Cadell, 1793), IV, pp.98, 103-7. Aikin animadverts throughout this text against Dr Johnson on imitation in the theatres, attacking Reynolds’ adoption of Johnson’s ideas at the end of the essay. This is a form of literary commentary that discusses the *Arabian Nights*, the *Castle of Otranto* and Smollett in quick succession. Compare Aikin, ‘On the Pleasure Derived from Objects of Terror’ on the ghost of Hamlet, and *Macbeth* descending into the witches cave and the tent scene in Richard III, here compared to Jaffeir and Belvedira, the death of Wolsey or the death of Shore; ‘Genii, giants, enchantments and transformations’ in the ‘old Gothic tale and Eastern romance’, as well as Milton and “stories “of forests and enchantments drear””. John Aikin and Anna Laetitia Barbauld, *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose* (London: J.Johnson, 1792), pp.121-2, 126.

¹²⁴ Compare indexes of rhetorical texts such as *Le Faucheur*. The full passage is discussed in Chapter Five.

Here we are to determine a question which hath occasioned as great a dispute in the dramatic, as Mr Fox's East India Bill or Mr Hastings's trial, hath in the political world.¹²⁵

Hamlet first seeing his father's ghost was a 'point', and the actor's performance of the moment when he is said to 'start' a passage well-known to audiences. Interpretation of it by the primary actor was of interest.¹²⁶

'Cheyt-Syngs Ghost' (?1788) has Warren Hastings in the pose of terror made famous by Betterton, in a satire which references the moment on stage in which Hamlet knocks over the chair at the sight of his father's ghost (lwl 06385). Hastings is shown in the place of the Danish prince shrinking in terror at the apparition of Cheyt Singh's ghost. Siddons also appears here, laden with rubies and pearls in the centre of the image, seated behind a table and wearing a vast hat adorned with ostrich feathers. The background of the scene is made up of shelves laden with rupees and the turban of Cheyt Syng, while his ghost, visible from the upper thighs upwards and with left-hand raised approaches in a cloud of smoke. The patterned carpet looks like printed cotton.

¹²⁵ John Philip Kemble, *A Short Criticism on the Performance of Hamlet by Mr Kemble* (London: T.Hookham, 1789), pp.7-8.

¹²⁶ This scene was the first printed image of *Hamlet*, in Tonson's 1709 edition edited by Nicholas Rowe. For discussion of this performance history see Marvin Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003). On 'points' see also *London Stage*, I, p.cxiv and Joseph R. Roach, *The Player's Passion: Studies in the Science of Acting* (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1985), p.167.



PLATE 51

Siddons appears in a comparable satire on the place of terror and horror at the Hastings impeachment, ‘The Orators Journey’, published February 7 1785 (BM 6776). Here the actress appears seated with the emblems of tragedy, sandwiched between Fox and Burke on horseback, and bearing the cup and dagger which are the attributes of pity and terror. Her gaze is lifted with sublime gravitas as in Reynolds’ painting of the *Tragic Muse*. Nicholas Robinson mentions that this satire references Siddons’ badly received performance of October 5 1784, but the presentation of Siddonian pity and terror in a relation of equivalence and extreme proximity to current politics in the East Indies is also noticeable.¹²⁷ Lady Macbeth’s words, on stage associated with the thrill of terror, ‘That which hath made them drunk hath made me bold’ are included in the work alongside a satire on Burke’s sentiment-loaded speeches, ‘now we’ll show the Mahratta’s

¹²⁷ Robinson, p.81.

something sublime and beautiful'. Fox warns, 'No prolixity B__ke. Here's no procrastination', and a sign points out the way, 'The Road to Perdition', which it seems East Indian politics signals more broadly. Siddons' grave demeanour seems the only element in the work that is able to compete with a desolate landscape, barren apart from signposts that read '1 Mile to Perdition' and 'To Popularity'. The horse struggles to bear its passengers through this landscape. It is snorting and animated, and boisterous as the exchange of comments between Burke and Fox.

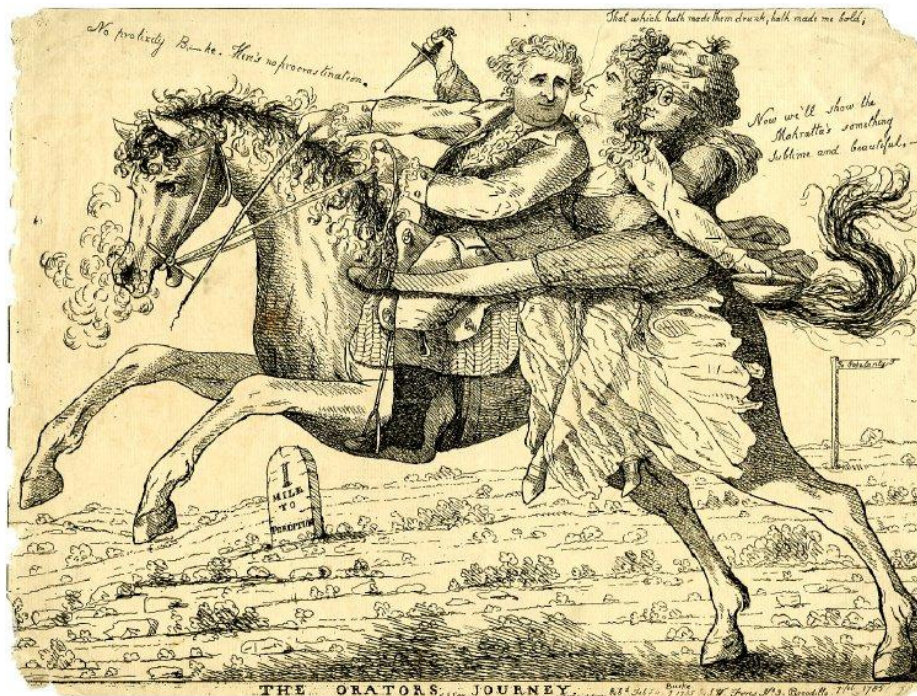


PLATE 52

The depiction of Warren Hastings in the elaborate clothing of an Indian nabob in 'Cheyt-Syngs Ghost', is evident as well in the two satires on the impeachment and its preliminary discussion in parliament, 'Sublime Oratory, a Display of It' and 'Political Banditti'. Neither satire references Shakespeare, but they are worth commenting on in the course of a discussion of horror in satire as both depict Hastings as a figure who

remains unmoved, dispassionate and stoic, while other figures in the prints exhibit, to the point of caricature, states of sublimity or terrible monstrosity. In 'The Political-Banditti assailing the Saviour of India' (1786), Fox's gestures are 'burlesqued', says Dorothy George, in the actions of frenzied rage and dagger wielding (BM 6955). George claims that Hastings is not caricatured here, but his expressionless and unmoved stance contrasts markedly with the chaotic colonial scene.¹²⁸ Ramberg's 'Sublime Oratory – A Display of It' (March 5 1788) takes sublimity and native or counterclassical aesthetics as its subject (BM 7270). It presents an image in which a mud-throwing, prancing satyr is juxtaposed against a cool, condescending Hastings, once again exhibiting no particular passion. Westminster Hall is sketched in the background.



PLATE 53

¹²⁸ George, *Catalogue*, VI, p.305.



PLATE 54

A third satire, ‘The Trial vide. Merchant of Venice’ shows a timid Hastings with feathered turban and Fox as Shylock (BM 7321).¹²⁹ In order to interpret the apparently highlighted function of expression in this range of satirical material it is necessary I think to emphasise the background of native aesthetics associated with the area of the Shakespearean sublime. Siddons was an exemplary exponent of this genre, and the crucial role of her gesture and expression in performances is apparent in George Romney’s *Sidonian Recollections*.¹³⁰ Horror and pleasurable fear in connection to Siddons’ public identity as a performer, as depicted in Romney’s work, was

¹²⁹ For discussion of this print see Henry Angelo, *Reminiscences* 2 vols. (London: Kegan Paul, 1904), I, p.325.

¹³⁰ Romney’s *Sidonian Recollections* are ‘readily identifiable as Le Brun’s “acute pain”, “fear” and “horror or fright”’ says Alan Hughes, ‘Art and Eighteenth-Century Acting Style. Part III: Passions’, *Theatre Notebook* 41 (1987), p.132. Horror, ‘L’Horreur’, from Le Brun is reproduced *Shakespeare Survey* 51, p.111. It shows knit brows, mouth drooping. Compare also Montagu on expression and the passions, pp.50 ff. Jennifer Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions: the Origin and Influence of Charles Le Brun’s Conférence Sur L’Expression Générale et Particulière* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994).

also a popular subject in satires of Siddons such as 'The Diamond Eaters, Horrid Monsters' (1788).



PLATE 55



PLATE 56

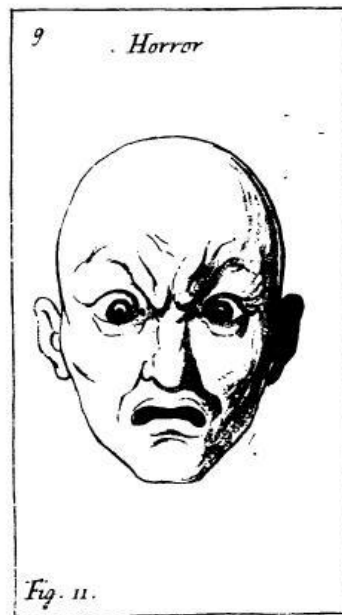


PLATE 57

Why might Hastings appear stoic and unmoved in satires such as 'Political-Banditti assailing the Saviour of India', 'Sublime Oratory a Display of It' or 'Diamond Eaters, Horrid Monsters'? The answer is, I think, to be found in the imperial content of the satires and the impeachment proceedings. Public figures such as Siddons and Hastings were crucial to the domestic negotiation of imperial affairs. While Siddons becomes a figure for the nation in privileged association with Shakespeare and is associated with popular forms of Shakespearean horror, public recognition of Hastings in connection to the impeachment suggests a more problematic internalisation and assimilation of imperial identity. Hastings is, then, *not* Shakespearean in his distance from the sublime native aesthetic and in his

expressionless pose, in which he seems unwilling or unable to respond to the horror displayed before him.



PLATE 58

I do not think that the tendency to represent Hastings through the absence of passion necessarily amounts to a failure of sympathy, nor of moral judgment. Rather it signals a specific imperial context for the representation of emotion and expression, one whose social meaning was

gendered, as is clearly suggested by the reception of Siddons' fever during these years.

Taxonomies and lexica of expression had attained a sophisticated circulation, and appeared with considerable textual self-referentiality, during the later years of the eighteenth century. The willingness of the culture to enquire into its own modes of self-expression and methods of representing emotion were themselves already subject to extensive satirical analysis, as Simon Schaffer's work has analysed.¹³¹ It is fair to say that viewers of these Hastings satires would have been highly attuned to the performance languages surrounding both acting conventions and those of public oratory.¹³²

Siddons' tragic gestures had drawn particular interest in satire, and the actress would often appear alongside other 'public characters' such as Fox, Pitt, Grenville or Burke.¹³³ The *Attic Miscellany* print 'How to Harrow

¹³¹ Simon Schaffer, 'Self Evidence', *Critical Enquiry* 18:2 (1992), p.331 discusses John Byrom.

¹³² This note provides a brief summary of pictorial satire on theatrical affects. As well as satires directly depicting terror, often combining references to Shakespeare, there was a trade in prints of audiences displaying contrasting emotions. See Iw110325-7, 'Specimens of Dramatic Phrenzy' 'Like Dire Macbeth' or BM9369, 'Transparencies' (1799) which links terror and theatrical technologies and Iw110962, 'Perceval's Magic Lantern' a theatre spectacle on politics, showing the horrid tragedy of Raw Head and Bloody Bones fairies. Some of this print material bore specific reference to players of the age, and some was generic. Specific to Siddons and Jordan: BM7216, 'For the Benefit of Mrs Siddons' (November 1787) displays six spectators at a play, all 'with expressions of deep melancholy', looking left and companion print BM7217, 'For the Benefit of Mrs Jordan' (November 1787) shows Mrs Jordan and a laughing group looking right. These are comparable with the broader subject fashionable Tragedy and Comedy satires, but are more specific and demonstrate Siddons and Jordan directly. And similarly BM9098 'At a Tragedy'. Its companion print is BM9099 'At a Comedy', both are by Dighton. And the Cruikshank pit scene BM8776 'Effects of a Tragedy'; BM7606 Rowlandson 'Comedy Spectators' and 'Tragedy Spectators' (1789). BM8279 'Tragical Readings' shows 'As You Like It' and 'Orlando Furioso' advertised alongside 'Part of Mr Sheridan's speech in Westminster Hall' with the companion print BM8278 which illustrates 'Comic Readings'.

¹³³ BM7591 shows Siddons rehearsing in the Green Room with tragic gesture. 'Public Characters' shows Mrs Siddons, Fox, Pitt, Grenville etc.

Up the Soul' lampoons Siddons' gesture within a series more broadly satirising gesture that includes material on barristers (BM 7616, BM 7718). Orators and politicians appear in some series. The theatricality of public speech was a wide area for satire. Comparably, satires also exist directly parodying canonical material, such as twenty prints on the depiction of expression in painting, in a series titled 'Le Brun Travestied; or Caricatures of the Passions' (Rowlandson 1800).¹³⁴ One from a set in the Walpole library entitled 'Terroure or Fright' is accompanied by text which reads, 'this passion is frequently excited by dressing up frightful objects to represent sprites, apparitions etc and frequently practised with success in country villages etc.' (lwl 09754).¹³⁵ A shared semantic territory between the actions of the entertainer or stage actor and the politician or public actor is of some import to these satires. However, plenty of the material displays extensive attention to the idiosyncracies of the green room or some variety of 'pure' rural comedy.

¹³⁴ BM9628-32. From this series: 'Rapture' – an elderly bearded Jew looking up in ecstasy at a ballad singer and her bawling infant, 'Desire' – an elderly man ogling a young sleeping woman, 'Sadness' – the death of a lapdog, 'Despair' and 'Scorn' – a rich woman in finery sneering at the poor.

¹³⁵ 'The End of a Barn Transformed into a Hobgoblin', 'A Gown Metamorphosed into a Ghost' are comparable. lwl08890, lwl08892.



PLATE 59

In some of the satires on the impeachment, Hastings, as colonial outsider, is depicted as humourless and devoid of horror, or, conversely, as a source of horror. English territory is connoted by the possession of satire: an ability to derive comedy from the spectacle of the legislative business of the trial, and hence to control and regulate the making of political space, perhaps helps define national boundaries.

The ways in which satirists expel or assimilate the terror and horror associated with imperial conflict and martial advance is not entirely predictable. When satires on the Hastings impeachment reference Shakespeare it tends to be in connection to a representation of affective hyperstimulation and a broadly native aesthetic based upon sublimity and

gothic terror popular in the theatres. An apparent incongruity of representations of sublimity and horror in satires of Hastings, where he appears stoic is, I think, of most interest.

I do not seek to define fully the role of Shakespeare in satire. Satire is, I want to suggest, one area where the boundaries of the nation came to be reconstructed amidst the imperial conflicts of the Hastings trial. Gender, crucial to contemporary meanings for pity and terror and their applications as imperial culture developed, is also clearly crucial in an interpretation of these satires. The theatrical representation of horror, its particular association with femininity, means that these satires of Hastings appear particularly puzzling. The impeachment certainly signals a degenerate moment in the late century development of England's empire and its translations into satire point to a collision of empire with the discourse of effeminacy. Warren Hastings, in his self-creation as an English nobleman, in retreat at his country mansion on return from the East Indies, and negotiating a path away from the hysterical mediatised attention of his trial for 'high crimes and misdemeanours', became there a reluctant object of contemporary comic representation.

Hastings' own accounts of his public appearances reveal an obsessive and egotistical interest in his public image, and a consciousness of himself if not as a significant public actor then as a public individual. In relation to Anderson's citations of Shakespeare in the discussion of the making of his and Hastings' portraits, portraiture becomes a way of evading recollection of personal events. Hastings is made monstrous by empire; he makes himself monstrous in angry, humiliated riposte in private writings.

Some satires depict him as stoic, foreign to English gloom and gothic postures. He retreats in letters to a space free from satire and the politics of public life and where, instead, he is able, along with his friends, to use the words of Shakespeare as a veil or transparency against the world, and to defend himself against the spectacle that is being made of him.

His friend's turn to the words and characters of Shakespeare's plays suggests an uneasy and masked construction of identity in the wake of life in the colonies and on return to the seclusion of private life in England. Anxiety is certainly the prevalent affect, and Hastings a man clearly 'troubled' by the spaces for identity which imperial representation have made available to him. Terrible and horrible representations, when a positive quality attached to women within the empire, become instead a negative totem which Hastings must negotiate when contemplating his own identity in private writings. Dispassionate, terrible femininity, in a great and celebrated artwork such as *Siddons as the Tragic Muse*, conversely, might become iconic, or even totemic, in the making of social space. When transposed across the failed imperial hero, such as Hastings, the representation of the terrible can come to signal what is necessarily external, expelled by the powers of empire.

Clearly these are affective discourses of relevance to the empire, at least as much as contemporary discourses about virtue, or pity and suffering femininity, or luxury and eastern refinement. 'For women, then,' in Julie Carlson's analysis, 'public space is hard to come by since it is filled with men whose "manly" nature depends at once on enhancing their "feminine"

properties and on keeping their females as property at home.’¹³⁶ Carlson analyses Burke as a political man who makes ‘power gentle’ and civic duty ‘lovely’ and, in doing so, she argues, ‘in effect ... goes public as a “woman”’. Her analysis encourages me to consider gender more closely in drawing this section to a conclusion.

How significant were the plays of Shakespeare in the formulation of public identities under the empire during the final years of the eighteenth century? This chapter has followed through an unstated argument about how the discourse of acting-oratory has a gendered dimension at this time, one in which roles for masculine and feminine are poised in particular ways across boundaries of the public and private, political and theatrical and domestic and imperial. I have not expanded at great length on gender in my concern with the field of the actor-orator in this period, although it is evident that the varieties of public speech available to Siddons as a female stage actor and to Hastings as a public and political figure in Westminster Hall had distinct functions, and did operate in distinct public arenas, if they did not create entirely distinct audience experiences.

It is tempting to draw a comparison between Siddons and Hastings in closing this chapter, and to provide a more conclusive comment upon the working of theatricality or theatrical culture at the Hastings trial. It would be, I think, false to do so, however. It makes sense only to comment briefly that Hastings does tend toward a portrayal of himself as a virtuous suffering feminised character in some of his private correspondence, and that this

¹³⁶ Carlson, *Theatre*, p.152. Reid compares Burke’s vision of Marie Antoinette with Sarah Siddons’ performances. It comes under discussion in Carlson’s text with regard to how Burke transfers sympathy from one suffering wife and mother to another and maintains aristocratic privilege through the “embourgeoisement” of “private and ‘feminine’ values”. p.165.

appears in striking juxtaposition when considered alongside Sarah Siddons' stage performances of Shakespearean terror and woe. A potentially Shakespearean characterisation of the fallen martial hero, who may yet be redeemed, does not transfer successfully into more public representations in satire, where horror seems the most powerful and persistent affect. It would be true to say that a favourable association of Shakespeare with gothic and sublime forms comes into play, as a primarily nationalistic genre in Siddons' self-representations and, as far as this analysis allows me to conclude it, in her stage performances. Against this setting appears the characterisation of Hastings, as stoic, imperial, and foreign of temperament. Or, conversely as a monster, who appears before his adoring female audiences, terrible to contemplate, at the same time, to some extent, just as was Siddons.

CHAPTER FIVE

BURKE AND FOX AT THE QUEBEC BILL DEBATES, MAY 1791:

SHAKESPEAREAN ORATORY AND GRAPHIC SATIRE

SECTION ONE

This chapter moves away from the discussion of horror in the creation of public identities to devote attention to the place of Shakespeare in satire, more particularly to interrogate appearances of Shakespeare within a single instance of what Dorothy George calls ‘comic history painting’, that innovation which proliferated after around 1784 and which broadly incorporates the illustration of political events in caricature.¹ I will examine a few days in May 1791 during which the affects available within English representations of empire developed in nuance and intensified in range through a turn toward the works of Shakespeare. Jonathan Bate notes, in his analysis of caricature, that it is between the mid 1780s and the Regency that ‘Shakespearean allusion issued more widely and more brilliantly than at any other time’.² In my investigations of Shakespeare during the final twenty years of the eighteenth century in England, I have found a considerable increase in Shakespeare reference within the expansion of the genre

¹ George, *Catalogue*, V, p.xii.

² Bate, ‘Shakespearean Allusion’, p.209.

identified by Dorothy George to occur in particular connection to politics in the East Indies.³ There are certainly occurrences of satirical representations of Shakespeare that relate to the West Indies, as well as to European and domestic politics and to events during the French Revolutionary Wars, including the Battle of the Nile also. I have chosen in this chapter to address an isolated incident within the history of English parliamentary debates of the last twenty years of the eighteenth century. It is one that in part is involved with the division of the new from the old Whigs, although this is not my primary concern here. Its two main characters are the Anglo-Irish statesman Edmund Burke and the opposition politician Charles James Fox, and the event was one that concerned British involvement in North America. Fox's oratory was celebrated by contemporaries, more so than was Burke's.⁴ Both politicians however were popular subjects for caricature.

The focus of the final chapter of this thesis is the debate around the proposed new constitution in Quebec which was conducted in London's parliament in 1791. The primary speakers in this discussion of the future of this territory in its relation to British political affairs, were Edmund Burke and Charles James Fox. Consideration of the Bill was put off, at the request of Sheridan, within the house on April 21 1791. Fox, instead, along with a mutual friend, paid Burke a private visit on the morning of April 21, to discuss the nature of the arguments he intended. When the house did gather for the debate, Burke stated early in the proceedings, 'he did not wish to

³ George, *English Political Caricature*, I, p.189.

⁴ Susan Staves, 'The Construction of the Public Interest in the Debates over Fox's India Bills' in *The Intersections of the Private and Public Spheres in Early Modern England* ed. by Paula Backscheider and Timothy Dykstal (London and Portland, Oregon: Frank Cass, 1996), p.184.

meet his friend as his adversary and antagonist'. 'Dear, however, as was his friend,' the record states, 'there was another object still dearer... the discharge of his duty'.⁵ The discussions that unfold in connection to this question are less about the potential for republicanism in Canada such as had recently taken hold in France, and consider rather more frequently the question of the transfer of nobility across from France to Canada. This political situation places new demands on forms such as oratory and political print satire. Much of the speech in the house does however concern the debate, pressed by Burke, about the inclusion of the politics of the revolution in France within the proposed Quebec Bill, and the events of the French revolution were not irrelevant to this moment in British imperial politics. Burke's criticism of the revolution in France has some influence, and in places terms of affection and love for one's country and suspicion of new principles of government come to be deployed freely. However, the events in France and the connected recent political uprising in the French West Indies form a more persuasive and substantial part of the debates, and it is here that citations from Shakespeare came to be used by the speakers. This pattern of allusion caught the interest of satirists and then moved across into caricature.

A major date during the debate is May 6 1791. On this day the committee sat to discuss the Quebec government Bill, which concerned the provision of a legislature at a distance for the people of Canada, partly based on the declaration of rights recently prepared in America and, more

⁵ *Cobbett's Parliamentary History of England from the Earliest Period to the Year 1803* 36 vols. (London: T.C.Hansard, 1817), XXIX 1791-1792, pp.359-430. Subsequent references are given after quotations and references in the text.

extensively, in the right of possession held by the English for thirty years previously. Edmund Burke raised the question of the American Bill of Rights, which he sought to discuss in comparison with the constitutions of America, France and Great Britain. Reflecting on debates earlier that week, the record states, ‘he desired it to be recollected, that, however dear he considered his friendship, there was something still dearer in his mind – the love of his country’ (365). The French constitution, he considered, had brought disastrous wars to the French West India colonies. The record cites Burke’s own words describing the recent unrest in Saint Domingo:

Pandora’s box, replete with every mortal evil, seemed to fly open, hell itself to yawn and every demon of mischief to overspread the face of the earth. Blacks rose against whites, whites against blacks, and each against one another in murderous hostility; subordination was destroyed, the bonds of society torn asunder and every man seemed to thirst for the blood of his neighbour.

Burke then chose the following words, originally included in the Dryden and Davenant version of *Macbeth* to describe further to the house the violence which had occurred in these territories:

Black spirits and white

Blue spirits and gray

Mingle, mingle, mingle.⁶

These are words from a song that originates in a Restoration version of the play, and were written to be sung by the witches. The inclusion of the song persisted and was performed in versions of the play throughout the

⁶ *BES*, X, p.65.

eighteenth century.⁷ They proved to be of interest in satires in connection to the Quebec Bill debates. The existing record in Cobbett goes on to describe Burke's insistence that progress on the debate should occur on the basis of a consideration of events in the French West Indies. His words are recorded as follows:

All was toil and trouble, discord and blood, from the moment that this doctrine was promulgated among them; and he verily believed, that wherever the rights of man were preached, such ever had been and ever would be the consequences.

French troops were sent to subdue the clashes, and upon arrival affiliated themselves to the rebellion and killed their general, cutting off his head. Burke reads an account of these events in St Domingo to the house, then likens the despatch of a constitution based on the rights of man to Quebec to the delivery of 'a bale of infected cotton from Marseilles' (367).⁸ The language is one of terror and connects France with a strand of terror and gothic political violence. Burke then begins to tell a story about a royal party called to halt, but officials in the house seek to move the debate onward and insist that the clauses of the Quebec Bill should be read paragraph by paragraph.

Burke's emphasis on events in St Domingo did not meet with approval from his friend of many years, Charles Fox, who when he rose to speak mentioned that Burke 'might as well be talking about the Gentoo government, or that of China, or the government of Turkey, or the laws of

⁷ The song appears usually in Act IV Scene I. For detailed records of which performances included the song see Hogan, pp.362-3.

⁸ He speaks also of a 'cargo of the rights of man'.

Confucius'. He insists that a discussion of the French revolution is in no way appropriate to the debate and that 'his right hon. friend had risen up and abused that event', apparently only out of spite for his own connection to those political interests. Other speakers similarly insisted that the debate be returned to the question of whether they ought to, in fact, give the British constitution to Canada (399). Burke in response again condemned the French revolution, which he called, 'the work of folly and not of wisdom, of vice and not of virtue'. He continued to question how much of the thinking of the revolution was to be borrowed across and included within the Quebec Bill, and insisted further that the house should debate this issue.

Burke's prime concern here is that doctrines influenced by France or indebted to France would subvert the English constitution. The language within which he speaks of the English constitution is one of affection and of the principles cherished in the hearts of Englishmen, while that used to condemn the revolution in France is of 'horrors', a flow of 'horrible consequences' and terror, 'tyranny, anarchy and confusion' (383, 386). He even discusses the Gordon riots of 1780 in connection to this argument (387). Burke sees the British constitution as an object to be 'guard[ed] against innovation' and saved from 'the danger of those new theories' (397). 'The constitution of this country' is, he suggests, for its people, 'the eternal jewel of their souls', and he worries that it risks being jeopardised by 'a wild and visionary system', which founds 'confusion and disorder'. At this point several other men of the house, including Pitt, Mr St John, Lord Anstruther and Lord Sheffield insist that the debate on the French revolution is neither 'regular' nor 'orderly' in this question of the Quebec Bill, and they seek to

return the debate to the clauses of the Bill, which are to be read a second time, paragraph by paragraph (372-7).

In his rejoinder Fox engages with his friend's arguments. He touches on comparisons with Cicero and Caesar and offers his opinion of those principles 'which his right hon. friend had ridiculed as chimerical and visionary', but which he suggests are in fact the basis of the British constitution as well as of the French (378). In responding to this comment Burke, the record states, assumed 'a grave and governed tone of voice' and insisted that this was 'the most disorderly speech that perhaps ever was delivered in that house'.

His friend he feels misrepresents him, and as his response continues he turns the debate toward the question of personal relations between himself and Fox. 'A personal attack had been made upon him from a quarter he never could have expected, after a friendship and an intimacy of more than two-and-twenty years'. He begins to reference confidential and private conversations and condemns the speech of his friend on the French revolution, where he suggests through allusion that his friend has challenged him to the equivalent of a boxing match in the house.⁹ The quarrel is quite specifically about the improper method by which Fox has addressed Burke: 'the right hon. gentleman was no stranger to the grounds he meant to go upon', says Burke, as he refuses that there is anything 'disorderly' to the discussion of the theme of the French revolution within this debate,

⁹ Fox is associated with boxing elsewhere, for example in 'The Political Contest' which displays Fox and Pitt in a fist fight, with reference to Hastings and the East Indies (BM7136).

particularly as far as concerns the already established necessity of discussing the American constitution.

During this section of the debate, Fox threatens to leave the house if Burke proceeds with his discussion of France, and then when he subsequently does so, the record states, he is accompanied by twenty or thirty members of the house who have mistaken his departure for refreshment for the action of threatened departure from the debate. Burke meanwhile, in his plea to win the opinion of the house, addresses the chair with a biblical phrase: 'I am not mad, most noble Festus, but speak the words of truth and soberness'.

The moment within the debates that so captured the interest of caricature artists was the culmination of the argument between Fox and Burke. At this point in the debate, Fox rises to make his reply to Burke, but his mind is so much agitated and his heart so much affected by what had fallen from Burke, the record has it, that it is some minutes before he can proceed. Tears trickle down his cheeks, and he strives in vain to give utterance to feelings that dignify and exalt his nature (388). Fox comments on a friendship and intimacy with Burke of duration of twenty-five years. This disagreement on the subject of the French revolution is, he says, the first instance of such an interruption of their friendship. Fox points to his criticism of Burke's book on the revolution, which he condemned in public and private, and says he feels hurt, and that his friend's conduct sprung from an intention to injure him (389-94). There is some discussion of the loss of America in 1783, and Fox compares Burke's dread of the French revolution with Falstaff's, remarking 'I fear this gunpowder Percy, though he be dead'

(393). Elsewhere in retort to Burke, Fox makes a comparison between his affection for the English constitution and Cordelia's character in *King Lear*, saying that where he is accused of republicanism his sentiments toward the English constitution would be better described through an analogy to Cordelia's upright sensibility, moral temperament and direct affections (423). He asserts also that the word 'republican' is operating as an insult in these debates; attempting it seems to slow any parallel with France (401). The debate on the Quebec Bill drew to a close on May 16 when the Constitutional Act was passed. It proposed that Upper and Lower Canada be created, clarifying the mixed state of English and French law which had been the situation in Canada since the Quebec Act of 1774, and was in force by the end of 1791.

Marc Baer's reminder in the final chapter of *Theatre and Disorder* that, 'audiences in late Georgian and Early Victorian playhouses knew a great deal of Shakespeare, and this seems to have been true in parliament, the press and throughout society', is pertinent to a discussion of those satires which emerged from the Quebec Bill early in the 1790s.¹⁰ Similarly, Leo Braudy has argued, 'the rapid diffusion of books and pamphlets, portraits and caricatures' brought 'a new quality of psychic connection between those who watch and those who... perform on the public stage'.¹¹ It is perhaps a feature of developments in print culture that led orators to use Shakespeare as freely as they did in parliament at this time. Graphic pictorial satire, comparably, was an artistic arena within eighteenth-century culture where

¹⁰ Baer, *Theatre and Disorder*, p.17.

¹¹ Leo Braudy, *The Frenzy of Renown: Fame and its History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp.380, 452.

oratorical, fictive and theatrical uses of Shakespeare's language could converge freely. This is a feature of the culture with precedents earlier in the century, but its distinctiveness to the years following the India Bill and Coalition government of 1783 is readily noticed in a study of Shakespeare during the eighteenth century's final twenty years. Joseph Roach puts it that, 'as Quintilian realised long ago, when you choose to reveal your innermost emotions in the public forum, the act of revelation itself elaborates the true feeling into a kind of fiction that is, for better or worse, a work of art'.¹² These kinds of revelations interested caricaturists.

I will begin with a consideration of Charles James Fox's role in the Coalition of 1783 and involvement with the affairs of the East India Company in the early 1780s. Shakespeare citation begins to be used widely in satirical representations of the colonies at this moment in the early 1780s. Multiple satires which offer depictions of Fox weeping during the debate on the Quebec Bill were produced in rapid succession. These form the main subject of analysis in this chapter. I consider how rhetorics of tears functioned in association with citations from Shakespeare in the speeches delivered in England's parliament. The appearance of the text of the witches' song from *Macbeth* in satires surrounding the Quebec Bill is also noticeably recurrent, and I offer some suggestions about the different oratorical actions deployed by Burke and Fox in view of this emphasis, as well as analysing its presence in satire.

In the Shakespearean content of Burke and Fox's speeches on the Quebec Bill, supernaturalism and violent deathly scenes are emphasised.

¹² Roach, *The Player's Passion*, p.226.

The representation of death in the low art of caricature is particularly noticeable in contrast with the content of the speeches. The satirists tend to prefer comic or depreciative illustrations with respect to imperial contexts and representations and the satires frequently include a play on authority and the determined public personas of the politicians involved.

In the debate, Burke plays a game of rhetorical pay-offs, throwing a language of Shakespearean witches and revolutionary horror at his audience and inviting, by return, their political allegiance. Fox, contrarily, is the constitution. Temporarily he becomes Cordelia to Lear, and by contrast invites his audience to identify with that love for the nation demonstrated in that part of Shakespeare, to share in it with him. Fox's citation of Cordelia in 1791 recalls the discussion in William Richardson's 'Essays on Shakespeare's Dramatic Character of Sir John Falstaff, and on His Imitation of Female Characters; to which are added some general Observations on the Study of Shakespeare'.¹³ William Richardson, a professor at Glasgow University, included a consideration of Cordelia in the second section of this 1788 text. This part of the text addresses Shakespeare's presentation of female characters, and considers a range of other women, including Miranda, Isabella, Beatrice, Portia, and so on. It is ripe as a source for an eighteenth-century reading of Shakespeare's women.

In the section on Cordelia, the fifth female character considered, the text upholds the example of her 'noble propriety and grace' 'silent and majestic sorrow' and 'distant but affecting coldness of the whole behaviour'. Most interestingly for this reading, the author cites Adam

¹³ Richardson, *Essays*, p.77.

Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments* at some length, finding its account of the action of the passions appropriate to the description of feeling and reason combined with a model of amiable gentleness. The full passage, as cited from Smith, begins as follows:

What noble propriety and grace do we feel in the conduct of those who, in their own case, exert that recollection and self-command which constitute the dignity of every passion, and which bring it down to what others can enter into? We are disgusted with that clamorous grief, which, without any delicacy, calls upon our compassion with sighs and importunate lamentations.¹⁴

Richardson's emphasis on Cordelia's 'tone of thought' seems to be influenced by his reading of Smith. 'Her sense of propriety imposes restraint on her expressions of sorrow,' but this is not at the expense or abandonment of feeling. She is 'full of sensibility, and of a delicate structure', and her 'sense of propriety... does not in the smallest degree impair her tenderness and sensibility'.¹⁵ Richardson presents a late eighteenth-century version of stoic identity, adapted to the presentation of a female character. Shakespeare's character is considered to be one of 'contending emotions' and 'corrected severity': in Cordelia, 'severity' is 'mitigated and brought down by fine sensibility, and the softness of the female character'.¹⁶ This text suggests that the character of Cordelia directly connoted female stoicism for eighteenth-century audiences. By identifying with a female

¹⁴ Richardson, *Essays*, p.81. Compare *TMS*, p.24.

¹⁵ Richardson, *Essays*, pp.82, 79.

¹⁶ Richardson, *Essays*, pp.82-3.

character from the plays, Fox does not so much identify himself as feminine as invoke a form of politics that would demand the association of societal and national affections with the presence of morally improving and appropriate female characters. It was however in some way feminising to find the new constitution in Canada a matter for discussion in England's parliament, and demanded careful negotiation of current politics in France. Perhaps the choice of the model of Cordelia's temperament was intended to insert a stoic and morally guiding strand to an argument which was increasingly depending upon the illustration of terror in rhetoric. Fox attempts to turn national feminisation around the Quebec Bill to his advantage by hitching his arguments for lauding his country to Shakespeare's Cordelia, but fails as Burke at the same time takes the upper hand and paints a lurid, distant landscape of horror, bloodshed and violence in the colonies against the placid shores of home.

In what way does Fox lose the argument? Fox weeps; his tears become the subject of much caricature; while at the same time he identifies with a variety of Smith-ite stoicism refracted and apprehended through William Richardson's characterisation of Cordelia. He claims that his affection for the English constitution is best expressed in the restrained manner of Cordelia, as opposed to the extravagant gestures and rhetorical flowers of Goneril and Regan (423). He responds to Burke's rhetoric of dervishes, devils and wild ungovernance, that at times turns to citations on shapeless and substance-lacking monstrosity or hell and chaos from Milton, with a move into the rhetorically austere, and implicitly plain and English which Cordelia's modes of affection and reserved speech are seen to signal

(418-9, 423). Burke, who attacks Hastings in some of his comments, as well as condemning revolution in France and Haiti, rhetorically invokes scenes of spirit-led violence, addressing his listeners through displays of emotion that in Fox's eyes are disorderly, excessive and irregular. Burke's Miltonic rhetoric is clearly more forceful than an invocation of the temperament of Cordelia, almost performatively so. Fox in this sense both exhibits more femininity in his speech and in this choice of role model seeks to define his political stance in more positive terms than does Burke, whose arguments are pejorative, almost bullying, condemnatory and at times clearly designed to create fear in his audience. Does he perhaps lose the argument, and in so doing, transfer the responsibility for overseas affairs and imperial politics to Burke? Fox's choice to identify himself as Cordelia may carry more extensive gendered undertones and bear clear political signifiers other to those of monarchical connection, in view of the references to varieties of passion and delicate feminine sensibility found in William Richardson's text.

The chapter centres on the Shakespearean content of satires from May 1791, surrounding the Quebec Bill debates. Later in the chapter I turn to the prevalent role of Shakespeare within a body of largely forgotten literature designed for rhetorical and oratorical improvement and instruction. Before turning to the satires, I want to offer some rationale for my investigation. Much of this literature of oratory and rhetoric is intended for the improvement of the young, although other parts of it are designed for use in the preparation for acting or for parliamentary speech – and similarly for use by orators in legal, military or religious fields. The chapter turns

towards this literature for the reason that it has become clear to me, through this research and a consideration of these satires, that an amendment to the influential arguments of Joseph Roach is required in connection to the representation and uses of Shakespeare in late eighteenth-century England. Roach suggests that oratory decreased rapidly in significance in favour of sentimental discourses and the physiological theories proliferating in the late century. He reads the evolution of these physiological models originating in seventeenth-century texts, and argues:

[t]hus, while rhetoricians were still busily elaborating a theory of performance on what was essentially the same model of the body available to Quintilian, a profound paradigm shift was underway in physiology, particularly in the exploration of the relationship between the nervous system and emotional responses.¹⁷

However, the increasing ‘obsolescence of the oratorical mode’ he traces in the modification of Cicero, Demosthenes and Quintilian through eighteenth-century acting theory, as well as a range of other sources, is inapplicable to the material surrounding the Quebec Bill debates. This is partly because of the profound connection of Fox as a politician to oratorical models and forms. But it is also because there did still exist extensive parallels, both textual and practical, between Shakespeare and the texts of classical writers. In addition the oratorical forms recommended and practised in connection with Shakespeare’s texts remain considerably indebted to models from classical oratory. An increasing presence of eighteenth-century sentimental literature within those texts which purported to display the most ideal

¹⁷ Roach, *Player’s Passion*, p.57. Also the discussion throughout Chapter Three of this book.

models for public speech, whether that of stage actors and actresses or legal men and parliamentary rhetors, was contiguous with the presence of excerpts from Shakespeare, and, counter to Joseph Roach's argument for 'the obsolescence of the oratorical mode', this occurred alongside the continuing presence of oratorical models. Indeed gestural models continue to be of significant importance and the connection of Shakespeare's texts to oratorical models and modes, many of them classical, requires a considerable amendment to Roach's analysis of how orators and stage players 'discover the passions of the mind with their bodies' in the late years of the eighteenth century.

Similarly, the rhetoric of tears or political lachrymosity, as the recent work of Julie Ellison and Paul Goring investigates, extends further than an eighteenth-century paradigm of sensibility.¹⁸ The works of Shakespeare are distinguished in as far as they tend partly to be apprehended among a literature and culture of 'sensibility', in which natural and gothic forms and modes of high affect predominate. As texts they also extend reference toward a prevalent classical idiom. The notion that seventeenth-century natural philosophy came to dominate the practice of public oration and the actor's speech in late eighteenth-century culture advanced by Roach is not supported by my research into Shakespeare during this period. In the texts on oratory that I have examined in the course of this research soliloquies from Shakespeare and great classical orations continue to be reprinted alongside one another at the end of the century. Classical oratory persists, similarly, as a particularly potent motif in graphic satire, and speeches from

¹⁸ The phrase 'political lachrymosity' comes from Paul Goring, *The Rhetoric of Sensibility in Eighteenth-Century Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Shakespeare take prominent places within the newly configured textual space for improving eloquence, pronunciation and the practice of the spoken language amongst young Britons. The third section of this chapter will move to discuss this material.

Illustration of Charles James Fox in satires reaching back to the early 1780s is of considerable note for its connection of the opposition politician with the words and works of Shakespeare. In satires on both the Westminster elections and the Coalition and related politics around the East India Bill Fox appears a repeated figure. His oratory and qualities as a vaguely ‘Shakespearean’ national and patriotic individual are frequently emphasised. He is associated with Oliver Cromwell and with a saturnalian, diverting and festive quality within the culture of Shakespeare revival.¹⁹ The association of Fox with national festival and a gothic or vegetal aesthetic is clearly patriotic, and contrasts with the form of gothic horror Burke asserts in his Quebec Bill speeches. I will outline a few examples of this material. It recalls the form of Shakespeare revival popular during the 1760s and around Garrick’s Jubilee.

Fox is illustrated in ‘The May Garland or Triumph without Victory’ (May 26 1784) as part of the scene of a saturnalia procession, borne aloft in a chair decorated with a thicket of branches, two hearts and the words ‘sacred to female Patriotism’ on a flag (BM 6600). Some festive and patriotic Shakespearean reference appears again in satires of the early 1780s around the Westminster election such as ‘Bottom, Snout and Quince’ (BM 6534) or ‘Falstaff and the Merry Wives of Windsor’ (1788). (BM 7345).

¹⁹ As in satires titled ‘The Mirror of Patriotism’ by James Sayers (BM6380) or ‘The Historical Painter’ by William Dent (BM6408).

Patriotism is a frequent subject in satires, as for example in ‘Liberty and Fame introducing Female Patriotism to Britannia’ (1785) in which the British lion and Britannia are depicted with the citation

‘She smiles, --

infused with a fortitude from Heaven’ *vide Shak’s Tempest.*(BM 6599)

Shakespeare seems to endorse the British emblems.

Fox’s oratory is illustrated in a multipartite satire, ‘Two New Sliders for the State Magic Lantern’ (29 Dec 1783) which although it includes no direct Shakespeare reference does exhibit an emphasis on oratorical conventions and gestures that is carried through in satires throughout the 1780s and 90s (BM 6287). George describes this satire by saying it includes ‘minute’ but ‘very expressive’ figures and a melancholy Burke.

Oratorical poses cross freely into satire. Fox is illustrated in the pose of Garrick as Hamlet, where the Ghost is Oliver Cromwell in a different satire titled, ‘The Ghost of Oliver Cromwell’ (February 14 1784). In this work a witch appears beside a cauldron which is ornamented with skulls and grotesque masks. Fox is horror struck, his hands held out, and the hair rising on his head like the famous wig worn by Garrick in this role earlier in the century, says M. Dorothy George of this image (BM 6410). Garrick’s ‘point’, as was the phrase in the eighteenth century theatres, is the subject of many satires throughout the later part of the eighteenth century, and a successful transfer of oratorical astonishment into a theatrical setting. The Folger Shakespeare library is the best resource for investigating these images further, as well as the reiteration and modification of the gesture,

originally developed in Betterton's performances of the character, in actors of the following generation such as Master Betty, Kean and Kemble.²⁰



PLATE 60

²⁰ <www.folger.edu/Content/Collection/Digital-Image-Collection/> [accessed 15/06/10]. Other notable illustrated performers are Mr Barry and David Garrick. Betterton's start, perhaps the most renowned and reproduced moment in eighteenth-century Shakespearean performance may best be understood through a recourse to gesture and the expressive body of the orator, suggests the work of Paul Goring. He notes that Charles Gildon borrowed extensively from an influential *Essay Upon the Action of an Orator* (1702?) when writing his *Life of Mr Thomas Betterton*, p.9. Similarly, Billingsgate jades as female orators are illustrated alongside laughing and crying philosophers in *A Lecture on Heads...by George Alexander Stevens, Esq. with additions by Mr Pilon* (Dublin: William Porter, 1788), pp.35-6. For points in Thomas Davies and Betterton See Roach, *Player's Passion*, p.83, and *The London Stage Part V 1776-1800 vol1*, p.cxiv and 'transitions', See West, *Image of the Actor*, p.107.



PLATE 61

Garrick remains a reference point in satires of Fox in the 1780s and 1790s, perhaps as a result of the pastoral and patriotic legacy of the Garrick era. He is illustrated in a satire on the elections of 1784 which draws into its subject matter additional reference to Fox's involvement with East Indian contexts and the political situation surrounding the East India Bill. Here he appears as 'Charles the Third, King of All the Orkneys, and would be, Monarch of the East, or The Effects of a Bad Conscience' (June 1784). The image is a clear reference to Hogarth's painting of Garrick in *Richard III*, also a work from earlier in the century, in which the Shakespearean character is depicted at the battle of Bosworth haunted by those he has murdered (lwl 05591). Fox is dressed as a Tudor monarch and gesticulates in horror in an image which includes theatrical bed curtains and conceals

Fox's left foot behind an armoured helmet. Modified lines from the play contribute to the comic martial atmosphere and elevated oratorical affect which provide the subject of this print:²¹

if we be conquered, let men conquer us,
and not these bastard Britons, whom my father
Has in their own land, cheated, spurr'd and trod on
And left them on record an heir of shame
Are these men fit to be the heirs of England?

There is a clearly gendered subtext for the illustration of horror in this scene as a serene female is illustrated to the rear of the image, unaffected by fear or supernatural terror.

Stage presentations or settings were frequently the source of comparisons with modern politics, and were often the cause for references to events further afield within the empire.²² The illustration of Garrick's terror as the political turmoil around Fox's role in Britain's politics in connection to the colonies and the empire in 1783 and 1784 in 'Charles the Third King of all the Orkneys' is an image of this kind. It provides a self-image for a community which is able to subtly caricature, in a civilised fashion, its own political situation.

²¹ See also theories of laughter and the proximity of comic to fearful scenes, as well as discussions of the moral-didactic force of comedy in eighteenth-century comic theory texts relevant to the interpretation of satires: Justus Möser, *Harlequin or a Defence of Comic-Grotesque Performances* trans. by Joach. Andr. Fred. Warnecke (London: W.Nicoll, T.Becket, P.A.De Hondt and Mr.Drybutter 1766), Francis Grose, *Rules for Drawing Caricaturas: With an Essay on Comic Painting* (London: S.Hooper, 1788) or the canonical preface by Dryden to Charles-Alphonse Dufresnoy's *The Art of Painting* with his comments on Horace's *Ars Poetica*.

²² 'Our theatrical representations afford plenty of these ridiculous absurdities, where we frequently see the chamber of Cleopatra furnished with a table-clock and harpsichord, or a piano-forte; or the hall of a Marc-Antony with a large chimney garnished with muskets, blunderbusses, fowling-pieces, &c. and a picture of the taking of the Porto-Bello.' Grose, p.29.

In images such as this which concern the empire, what is not English tends to become the object of ridicule, and this ridicule can, according to the codes of caricature illustration, frequently be conveyed through use of those images which conventionally carry the severest domestic or native association. Fun is poked at British society, but only in such a way that foreign associations and the impurities of colonial politics can be held at a safe and civilised distance. Fox, as a result of his association with the native and patriotic, frequently becomes the focal point for satires that exert a decisive imperial gaze.

An idealised, even utopian, island narrative comes to be satirised in 'Reynard's Hope, a Scene in the Tempest with Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban' (April 15 1784) (lwl 05508). Fox appears as Stephano, the Prince of Wales as Trinculo and Lord North as Caliban in the work, which is by Dent. The Prince of Wales wears a feathered headdress. Though the subject of the caricature is the Coalition parliament and extensive dispute around the role Fox was seen to be assuming on domestic soil, in connection to his relationship to the Prince of Wales, the setting is a distant island retreat, which functions as an illustration in miniature of the nation. The ship the 'Royal George' is moored close to the shore and altered words from the play appear. 'By Jove, I'll lick your shoes and obey your nod/ And his, for he's Bacchus, the bloated God', is spoken by the figure of Caliban who shows the head of North. Fox pointing a finger, and drinking with the Prince of Wales says, 'I'll be King and you'll be Viceroy' and the Prince of Wales, 'Give me dear woman and give me good wine/ And you may govern all things else as thine'. This satire may reference Joseph Wright of Derby's

painting of *The Tempest* Act VI Scene I, engraved by Robert Thew, in which Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo appear in miniature, to the rear and right of the image at the shoreline, beneath a stormy sky and framed by the view outward from Prospero's Cell.²³



PLATE 62



PLATE 63

The use of a gothic or rural visual language in depictions of Fox is noticeable. A transnational visual rhetoric in connection to the works of Shakespeare during these years is also increasingly prevalent, particularly in satire, although this does reflect the content of parliamentary debates such

²³ See also 'Tempest. The Last Act But One, with Stephano the Drunken Butler' including a terrified Sheridan (BM8618), and 'Shakespeare's Prophecy or the Last Act but One in the Tempest, or the Jack Daws in Borrowed feathers' with Ariel, Prospero and hounds.

as those around the Quebec Bill and the increasingly complex constitutional status of politicians like Charles James Fox who were involved with foreign politics. Transnationality in these instances does not so much resemble Elleke Boehmer's work on transnationality and the legacy of imperialism, within which she discusses how subjugated former colonial nations compare themselves with one another and derive models of identity formation from looking toward one another.²⁴ Transnational comparison in satires of the 1780s and 1790s reveals Shakespeare's words in action instead as a formative or experimental space within which the nation apprehends the empire. This chapter concentrates on the portrayal of tears and terror within the satires on the Quebec Bill. I will begin by giving a brief consideration of transnational reference in satires of this period.

American contexts are as significant as French to the appearance of Shakespeare in satires of the late century. America is frequently compared with Ireland, and Ireland with India, similarly. Luke Gibbons has identified and analysed closely the working of such transnational comparisons in his particularly helpful work, *Edmund Burke and Ireland*.²⁵ A collection of speeches titled 'Beauties and Deformities of Fox, North and Burke' (1784) includes in its index, 'Lord North, charged in the most direct terms with the loss of America'; similarly, North's ignorance is blamed for 'the capture of General Burgoyne', and he is 'compared with Sir Robert Walpole for

²⁴ Elleke Boehmer *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature: Migrant Metaphors* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp.49,52

²⁵ See for example Gibbons, *Edmund Burke and Ireland*, pp.208, 173. Also, Radhika Mohanram, 'Dermographia: Written on the Skin or, How the Irish Became White in India' *European Journal of English Studies* 9:5 (2005) 251-70. Transnational reference is also a part of George's analysis of the satires at the end of the century, for comments on this concerning the India Bill Prints: George, *Catalogue*, VI, p.xi.

corruption ... charged with having lost Half the Empire by it' and 'suckled with the milk of the treasury'. Lord North 'reminds Mr Burke of Pericles' and in the language of stage tragedy 'freezes Mr Burke's blood, and harrows up his soul'.²⁶ This last is a deployment of theatrical language clearly comparable with widely circulated contemporary images of Sarah Siddons, as tragic actress. In this text, Shakespearean allusion works with productive vagueness to enable Coalition politics to stretch across from what is its main subject, East Indian to American colonial settings.

A work from 1784 provides further helpful context. Titled, 'The Viper: A Proof Designed by Hypocrisy. Executed by Ingratitude' this satirical print seems to depict Lady Leadenhall as Cleopatra, or Britannia, or the East India Company simultaneously (lwl 06382). Her shield is broken and the image shows her with a viper biting at the surface of her breast. This image merges Indian and domestic politics via an obscure merging of Egypt and India within a hybrid assemblage. 'Is this the Return for having fostered you into power?', says Lady Leadenhall while a Scottish clad figure, open-mouthed, catches excrement from the windows of Whitehall or the India House. Fox's head looks down as a radiant sun and Britannia sits on a box or plinth inscribed 'India Com.^y' The snake is inscribed 'Declaratory Bill'. A broader area within a certain sector of aesthetic writings on India and gothic in the mid to late century comprises an extensive transnational

²⁶ *The Beauties and Deformities of Fox, North and Burke, Selected from their Speeches, from the Year 1770 down to the Present Time* (London: J.Stockdale, 1784), unpaginated.

comparison with north Africa which was of relevance in Burke's speeches against Hastings and to satires around the Hastings Bill.²⁷

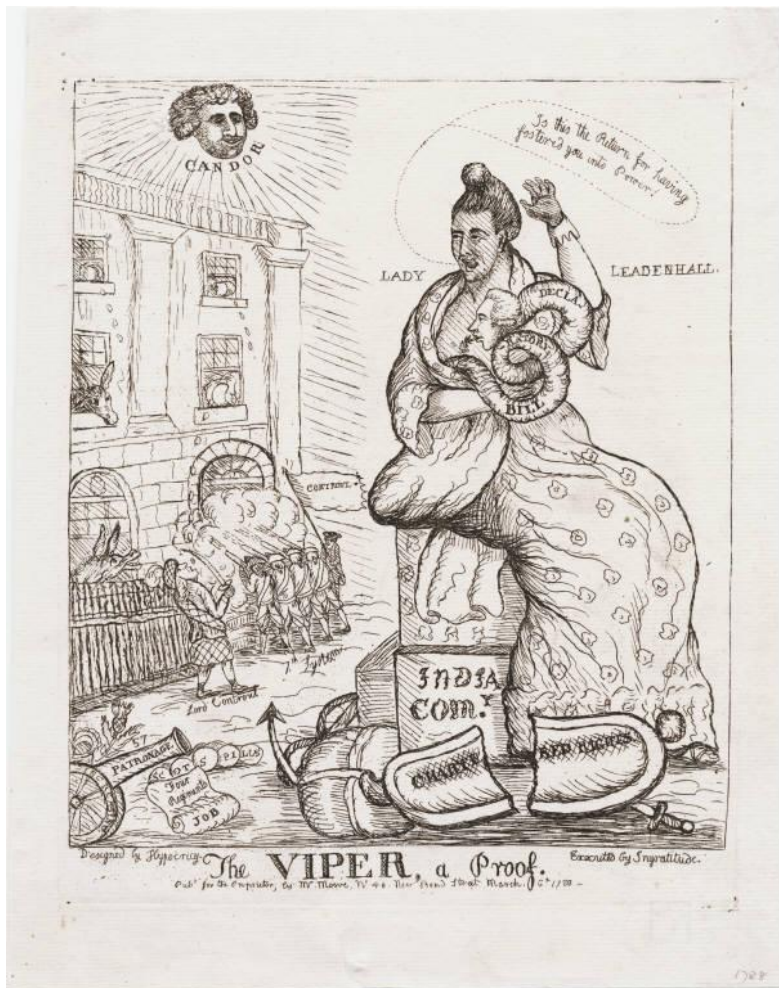


PLATE 64

²⁷ In images and negotiations of imperial space and identity, India is sometimes to England as was ancient Egypt to Greece and Rome, as for example in the writings of William Hodges:

‘They are certainly objects of very great moment, whether we consider their high antiquity, grandeur, magnificence or different style of architecture, and their claim to the attention of our enlightened age is at least similar to that which the monuments and antiquities of Egypt have still among us, and had thousands of years ago, to the attention of their nearer justly-inquisitive and enlightened neighbours, the Grecians and Romans.’ William Hodges, *A Dissertation on the Prototypes of Architecture, Hindoo, Moorish and Gothic* (London: 1787), p.2.

This comparison was of relevance to the consumption of goods from the East, and Maxine Berg argues that trade of luxury goods gave rise to geographical and metaphorical confusions between oriental or north African and Asiatic or Indian space. Maxine Berg, ‘In Pursuit of Luxury: Global Origins of British Consumer Goods in the Eighteenth Century’ *Past and Present* 182 (2004), p.95. Also on connections of Indian and Egyptian identities in early nineteenth-century thought, Kapila, p.484.

‘The Horrors of War, a Vision’ (August 20 1782) shows a scene in *Richard III*, a landscape with Britannia, a rhinoceros and a map showing the British Empire in the year 1775. A reclining figure addresses the phantom of America, a black in a feathered headdress, with words from Shakespeare (BM 6024). The words ‘shake not thy gory locks at me’ appear, and she replies ‘dreadful carnage of my children’. Gillray illustrated ‘Tommy Paine’ as a tailor, ‘The Little American Taylor’ (May 23 1791), in a satire that was an answer to Burke’s *Reflections* and included French imagery. Paine’s *Rights of Man* had appeared in 1791 amid colonial controversy, including American. It was dedicated to Washington. Accompanying the image is text that reads, ‘Fathom and a half, Fathom and a half! Poor Tom! Measure of the Crown for Revolution’s Breeches’ (BM 7867/ 1w1 07167). Use of Shakespeare in satires frequently reflects the extent to which American politics and British came proximate to one another during the final years of the century.

Meanwhile, satires that reference classical art such as ‘The Infant Hercules, or Britannia Roused’ entangle the East India Bill and the American war. ‘Thunder, Lightning and Smoke or the Wind shifted from the North to the East’ (1788) shows ‘America lost, India preserv’d’, with Warren Hastings in nabob dress, again stoic of expression and exhibiting a pose like Garrick’s *Hamlet* on seeing the ghost (1w1 06416). The ‘Empire of the Sea’ (December 1783) on the Fox-North Coalition illustrates the loss of East Indies feared to replicate the loss of America, ‘for ever, ever, lost to England’ and combines Fox, North, Burke, and the East and West Indies in its references (BM 6291). In a work titled ‘Pillars of the Constitution and

Coalition' again Ireland, East Indies, America all appear in conjunction in the form of broken pillars intended to signal the constitution (BM 6485). A final example, 'The Grand Irish Air Balloon constructed on the same principle as the American Air Balloon' (1784) has the 'History of the American war' inscribed on its rudder. My argument here is that transnational comparison was becoming the norm, rather than the exception, in the apprehension of empire during this period.²⁸

An interplay between Fox's patriotism and a fragmented transnational image of the empire, or of Britain's relation to its colonies or former colonies, is reflected in the satires on the Quebec Bill. I will move now to discuss these satires.

SECTION TWO

In a satire which recalls the association of Shakespeare with gothic art and architecture discussed earlier, 'The Quarrel between the Political Builders – Opinions diametrically Opposite' (May 11 1791), Fox is illustrated as lachrymose, and Burke 'pugnacious', as Dorothy George records it (BM

²⁸ Compare the transatlantic scope of *The Historical Painter* (BM6408).

7856). Here, while again addressing the aesthetic field of Burkean horror and restrained familial affect in Fox's speeches, the falling out has been reframed entirely as an argument about architecture. France's new constitution was referred to during the debate as 'the work of Goths and Vandals' and this work seems to extrapolate these words.²⁹ Gothic art is a loose reference to the disordered structure of political life in the wake of the French Revolution, and this was a subject debated during parliamentary discussion on the Quebec Bill. The subject of the satire is the Quebec Bill debates but as George points out 'a paper inscribed *Revolution* protrudes from Burke's pocket'. His speech is lengthy and references his own text on the Revolution:

I thought you had a better taste in Architecture I say it is a Building of untempered mortar built by Goths and Vandals – where everything is out of place and inverted – See what my book says on the subject.

Fox holds a handkerchief to his eyes, saying: 'After working so many years together in the same shop it forces Tears from me to think we should quarrel ab^t a paltry building_ though I must own in my opinion it is a STUPENDOUS FABRIC OF HUMAN WISDOM'. The image also includes a black spirit who says 'Brother Brother we are both in the wrong'. The caricature again includes lines that read 'Black spirits and white, Blue Spirits and Grey, Mingle Mingle. Hubble Bubble. Toil and Trouble etc.' Gothic architectural form in this satire is used in comparison with both the

²⁹ *The Parliamentary Register; or, History of the Proceedings and Debates of the House of Commons 1780-1796* 45 vols.; 23 March 1791-10 June 1791 (London: J. Debrett, 1791), XXIX, p.348.

French Revolution and the possibility that its politics might infiltrate the new constitution in Quebec. The witches' song from *Macbeth* facilitates this use of gothic form as part of a negative transnational comparison between Quebec and France associated with Burke's arguments. Fox attempts to recover gothic form on positive terms and to connect the gothic building within which they appear to the hereditary establishment of the English constitution.



PLATE 65

Fox's patriotism is again the subject of a print by James Gillray, 'The Impeachment or Father of the Gang, turn'd King's Evidence' (May 1791). Illustrated 'overcome and stupefied with Grief', in this satire, Fox is associated with the fissure between pro-Revolutionary, Jacobite and similar politics and Burkean conservatism. The emotion of his declamations (he appears here with a handkerchief, weeping at the end of a twenty-five year friendship) appears as part of an elaborate Shakespearean reference that

places Burke in the role of the voice of reason, while at the same time his speech is overdrawn with an allusion to a more complex distinction of emotion and authority from *Henry IV Part I*:

Behold the abettors of Revolutions... I know them all and have a while upheld the unyok'd humour of their wickedness. vide Burke's speech on the Quebec Bill. I have bore with them 'till the measure of their iniquity is full....there exists at the present moment, a junto of Miscreant Jacobites, who are aiming at the overthrow of the British constitution.____ vide Burke's speech on the Quebec Bill – (BM 7861/lwl 07149).

Burke in fact cited different words from Shakespeare. However, the anxiety surrounding the 'o'ertthrow of the British constitution' is well conveyed by the satire, which clearly draws a comparison between domestic politics and those of Quebec. Again the subject of the satire is the Quebec Bill.



PLATE 66

In 'Launce and his dog Crabbe', Fox is shown as Launce, the servant of Proteus, from the *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Act II Scene III, accompanied by a dog with the head and spectacles of Burke (BM 7866). The space of the image is largely occupied by an extended speech by the character of Fox on weeping:

Nay, 'twill be this hour I have done weeping; all the kind of the Launces have this very fault: I have receiv'd my proportion like the prodigious son, and am going with Sir Protheus to the Imperial's court. I think Crab my dog be the sour'st-natured dog that lives: my mother weeping, my father wailing, my sister crying, our maid howling, our cat wringing her hands, and all our house in a great perplexity; yet did not this cruel-hearted cur shed one tear! he is a stone, a very pebble-stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog.... I am the dog; no the dog is himself, and I am me; ay, the dog is the dog, and I am myself...now the dog all this while sheds not a tear, nor speaks a word; but see, how I lay the dust with my tears.'

Relations with father, mother and shoes also form part of this speech, which I have abbreviated. 'I'm now Mr Pitt's in Downing Street and I'll bark at all the Whigs I meet', replies Burke. Again, tears identify the subject of this satire to be the Quebec Bill debate. Once again the place of emotion in radical politics, or politics perceived to be revolutionary is being negotiated. The use of words from the plays is more extensive than in the debates and it seems that Shakespeare's words prove for satirists a fertile means by which to explore and extend that negotiation.



PLATE 67

Fox's tears are again the subject of 'The Wrangling Friends, or Opposition in Disorder'. In this satire, Fox appears weeping with a handkerchief, holding one hand at his heart over the loss of the twenty-five year friendship. Burke is shouting about the friendship in the words, 'Black Spirits and White, Blue Spirits and Grey', and a boy appears with a bucket of tears in the foreground mopping the floor, so extensive is the weeping of the main character. Burke's left foot is on a copy of the Canada Bill (BM 7855/ lwl 07156).



PLATE 68

In the ‘Battle of Whigs, or the Meal tub plot discovered’, the quarrel is illustrated as a boxing match. Burke in an outfit covered with Fleur de Lys designs has one hand behind his back reaching for a fish and loaves from Pitt who takes them from a barrel full of fish and loaves inscribed ‘Meal Tub’. His words are, ‘A Plot! A horrid Plot! a faction of Black spirits and White, Blue Spirits and Grey Mingle Mingle Mingle Devils that Mingle may with enormous appetites prepared to devour the very victuals of the Constitution but don’t be frightened – I’ll repel the infernals for in such a glorious cause I dare fight them all with one hand the other tied behind.’ Fox, weeping replies, ‘I am struck all of a heap and could cry my eyes out at seeing my own friend and dear master so much out of Order!!’ (BM 7854). A number of satires draw on these words. Also on the lines from the witches’ song in *Macbeth*, ‘Black spirits and White, Blue spirits and grey, mingle mingle’, this satire is harder to localise and the use of the citation

less evidently supernatural or contra-political than in other images. Burke appears the defender of an English and possibly religious territory, while Fox is the confused recipient of his words, and cannot perceive that there is a threat of the kind Burke fears.

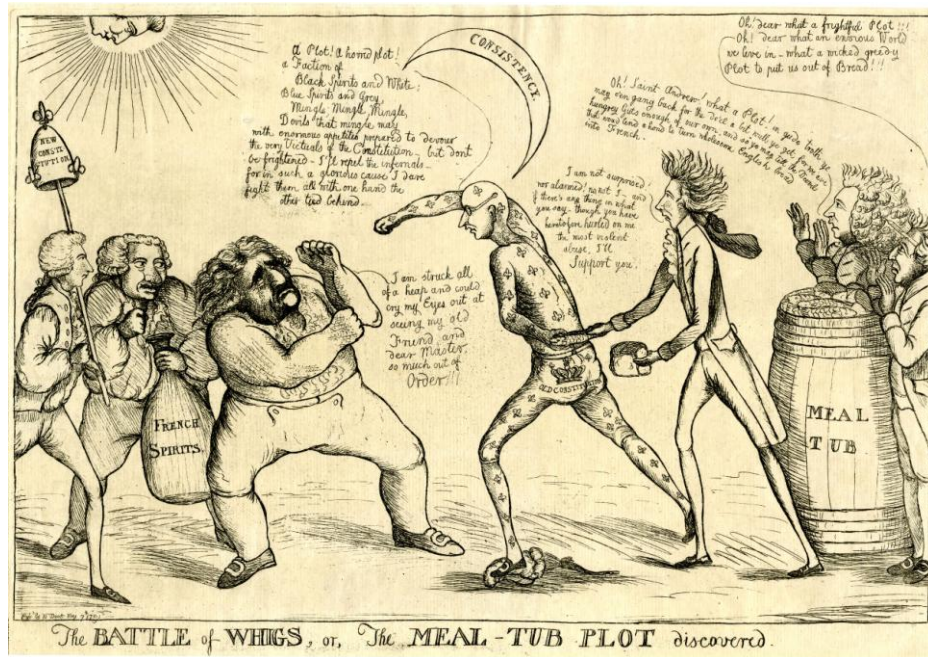


PLATE 69

A final print, ‘Political playthings for Prostitute Patriots’ makes more allusive use of the witches’ song in a satire on Fox and Burke’s quarrel and has Burke utter in response the words, ‘Thanks my noble master – all the wierd sister of Beaconfield prophesied is now fulfill’d!’. Burke is being crowned by Pitt and has his left foot raised on a stool and hand on his thigh (BM 7865). ‘The Ghosts of Mirabeau and Dr Price Appearing to Old Loyola’, with an amended quote from *A Winter’s Tale* – ‘do not repent these crimes, for they are heavier than all thy woes can stir’ – arguably also depicts the three witches in incantatory gestures, Burke kneeling with rosary and cross in their midst (BM 7864).

It is difficult to define how the citations or excerpts used in satires such as this operate. Certainly the staging of the lines from the Davenant version continued. John Philip Kemble ‘gave body to the invocation, “Black spirits and white/ Blue spirits and grey”, by introducing four bands of children as imps’ in the version of *Macbeth* which would reopen the new Drury Lane theatre in 1794, Linda Kelly writes of the later staging of the scene.³⁰ However the satires predate this significant production of the play at the end of the eighteenth century, devised to match in expense and celebrity the new premises.

One possible explanation follows. The divide between the new and old Whigs is in some way entangled within the events of the debate on the Quebec Bill. Burke employed the same language of horrible incantations and darkness in his 1791 ‘Letter from the Old to the New Whigs’ as he deploys in speech against Fox during the debates in May 1791. The exchange between Burke and Fox on the Quebec Bill is well summarised in the moment of Fox’s identification with Cordelia’s stoicism and the politics of national affection he presents contained within that identification. His rhetoric of tears and stance of affectionate dedication is opposed in character to the images of horror Burke deploys in his description of the French West Indies, in which he embellished his oration with a citation from *Macbeth*.

It is worth looking more closely at the kinds of citation from Shakespeare employed by Burke and Fox, as well as the ways in which

³⁰ Linda Kelly, *The Kemble Era: John Philip Kemble, Sarah Siddons and the London Stage* (London: Bodley Head, 1980), p.97. Siddons was Lady Macbeth in this version of the play, which has been much discussed in recent criticism. Among the children appeared the black-eyed urchin Edmund Kean.

caricaturists reiterate them. Fox tends to cite Shakespeare in support of his own constitutional affiliations and strength of national connection. He uses Falstaff's words 'I fear this gunpowder Percy, though he be dead'.³¹ So his reply displays a modest comic nationalism which draws on cowardice and the irrepressible Englishness of Falstaff, in contrast to Burke's usage of the languages of horror and gothic light and shade. Similarly, Fox suggests that he is himself like Cordelia in his love for the English constitution, which resembles Cordelia's simple, unaffected and unreserved love for King Lear.

There exists a discrepancy between the language through which Burke deploys some of the gothic, terrible or supernatural passages in eighteenth-century versions of Shakespeare, as he considers the new state of France with its new politics as 'evil' or 'productive of evils', and his depiction in caricatures as the upright classical orator. Satires tend toward perpetuating characterisations of Burke earlier in the period under consideration as Cicero against Hastings' Verres; presenting him as a parliamentary man or a classical orator. The discontinuity in gothic imagery perhaps acts as a source of comedy. Or it might offer evidence that a citation from Shakespeare does not necessarily communicate anything about a politician's political motivations and affiliations, nor does it necessarily reflect on his character as a public or private man.

Fox's citation of Shakespeare in his speeches differs, as does his connection to the tradition of classical oratory. Where he makes reference to Cordelia or to Falstaff it is with the intention that he might be readily identified with that character, and that that identification might reflect on or

³¹ *Parliamentary Register*, XXIX, p.346.

offer enhanced information about his national political affiliations, temperament and intentions, however willingly he has cited the French constitution.

The citation of the witches' song from *Macbeth* is revealing. There are a series of references to the words of the witches' song, with its line 'black spirits and white, blue spirits and gray' in the satires. This set of examples overlaps with the series of satires which show Fox weeping and includes 'The Battle of Whigs, or Meal Tub plot discovered' and 'The Quarrel between the Political Builders – Opinions diametrically Opposite', which I have already discussed. The song is also used to mock the character of Joshua Reynolds in 'Titianus Redivivus', a later satire on events at the Royal Academy and in 'No Abatement', a print about Burke's speeches at the Hastings trial (BM 9085/ lwl 09402). In 'Titianus Redivivus' Reynolds appears in the foreground citing the witches song 'black spirits & white, blue spirits & grey, mingle, mingle, mingle! – You that mingle may'. 'No Abatement' is dated May 31 1791 and draws Burke's language at the Quebec Bill debates into the subject of the Hastings impeachment and East Indian politics, where the politician's point of discussion had been revolution in the West Indies and its similarity with the revolution in France.

'Revolution Anniversary, or Patriotic Incantations' (July 12 1791) includes a similar quotation or illustration of a witches' scene (BM 7890). Priestley, Fox, ?Towers and Sheridan appear all wearing large favours and the gathering is annotated:

when the hurly burly's done...

Bauble Bauble melt with trouble

Fire burn and Nation bubble

And hither ye discontented come,

To the tat, tat, tat, too of our Drum'

Sheridan holding a book says 'Drury's prompt book. Cauldron scene Macbeth'.

Images on the wall read 'Fanaticism', 'Wat Tyler', 'Republicanism', 'Jack Cade', and the image also includes the words 'Hurly Burly' and 'Cash we can make with paper'. Fox is smiling in the image.

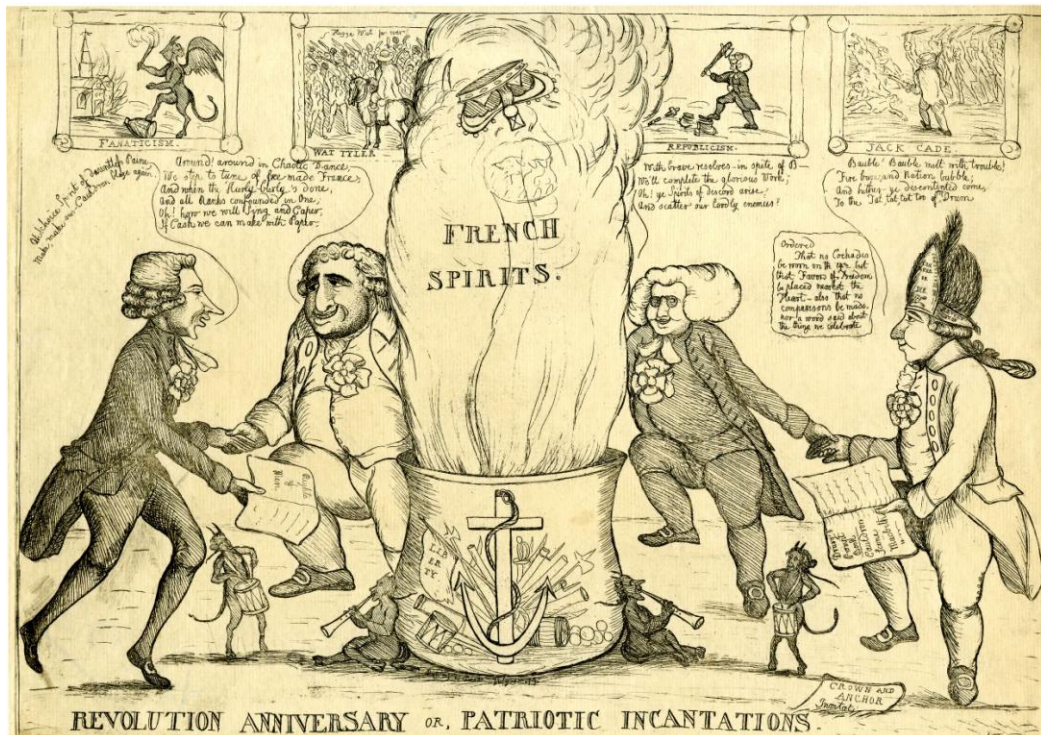


PLATE 70

The witches' song, or witches' cauldron scenes, when depicted in satires such as this frequently reiterate the depiction of Fox in shadowy parliamentary dealings, for example as Guy Vaux, and attach an atmosphere of a murky, superstitious, pre-civic or ancient English society to Foxite patriotism. Where connected to Burke in satires, the witches' song tends to act to demean Burke's character, and to bring the politician in terms of his

image or public character into close connection with words which he had himself cited within a context of disgust, and which were intended to signal political aversion.



PLATE 71

SECTION THREE

An article on political sincerity and accountability by Christopher Reid, discussing the publication of proceedings in newspapers after 1770, “Whose

Parliament? Political Oratory and Print Culture in the later Eighteenth Century”, is also of use in an interpretation of the Quebec Bill satires. It reminds us that it was not the case that events in parliament were purely sincere and factual, and that they became comic or connected to literary allusion only subsequently in satire.³² It also emphasises the relatively advanced or prominent status of oratorical cultures in eighteenth-century society and their complex relationship to print culture.

The use of tears in oratory is a sophisticated action and it received extensive commentary in the literature on public declamation. An instance of tears in parliament or, to use the phrase of Paul Goring, ‘political lachrymosity’, requires further interpretation. The satire of the ‘Raree-Show’ from several years earlier, discussed in my second chapter, also contains extensive oratorical reference, in part specifically Shakespearean. The print includes a banner reading ‘the oratorical tragedy or the power of the pathetic over the beautiful’. This banner shows the stage drowned in tears in conjunction with words from a soliloquy from *Hamlet* ‘He would drown the stage with tears and cleave the general ear with horrid speech. Hamlet’ (BM 7273).³³ Here the language from *Hamlet* connects to a

³² Christopher Reid, “Whose Parliament? Political Oratory and Print Culture in the later Eighteenth Century” *Language and Literature* 9:2 (2000) 122-134.

³³ Tears are a conventional subject in a vast number of satires on political life during these years. ‘The Patriotic Pleader’ shows Erskine who was famous for eloquence and tears in criminal conviction cases (BM8374). ‘Tears of Sensibility – Sympathy a Poem’ shows Fox, Erskine, Bedford, Sheridan of the Whig club ‘weeping copiously’, tears splashing to the table and streaming to the ground, where bottles float (BM9227). ‘The scholar lamenting the death of his master’ (May 6 1791) shows Fox weeping with handkerchief to cheek; Burke with outstretched arm in connection to the Burke Fox quarrel (BM7870). Similarly, ‘The Volcano of Opposition’ (May 6 1791) shows Burke and Fox; Fox with a handkerchief says, ‘Talk not to me of comfort the derision of the world thrown on my poor old master will break my heart’ (BM7863). Fox is shown weeping alone in ‘The Political Weeping Willow’ (May 13 1791) (BM7860) and in ‘Charley Boy crying for the Loss of his Political Father’ (lwl07160).

sentimental idiom that is both eighteenth-century and classical in content: clearly sentimental because of the all female audience pictured yet also distinctive in its reference to an oratorical style that celebrates the pathetic.

The full passage does not imply this interpretation:

what's Hecuba to him, or he to Hecuba,
that he should weep for her? What would he do
had he the motive and the cure for passion
that I have? He would drown the stage with tears...(Act II Scene

II)³⁴

However, the association between Shakespeare and sentimental response comes about because of the specific connections between oratorical culture and sentimentalism at this moment in the later eighteenth century.

The interpretation of bodily action such as tears and oratorical modes designed to rouse horror and terror in the audience advanced in this chapter is indebted to several strands in recent scholarship. Joseph Roach on orature in *Cities of the Dead*, as well as his earlier work on acting theory in *The Player's Passion*, and Julie Ellison's writing on masculinity and stoic drama in her analysis of theatre and liberal politics in *Cato's Tears* are useful comparative texts for an analysis of the oratorical uses of Shakespeare's language. Paul Goring has written on political lachrymosity and on Fordyce's 'manly tear' and his text is useful for the analysis of the satires on the Quebec Bill.³⁵ Ian Donaldson's 1973 article 'Cato in Tears:

³⁴ *BES*, XVIII, p.67.

³⁵ Goring, *Rhetoric*. The significance of oratory for the new formations of the public sphere in the late years of the eighteenth century both in America and Britain has also been explored by Jay Fliegelman. He argues that changes in thinking about rhetoric and oratory in America in the 1750s and 1760s were crucial to the formation of the 'natural

Stoical Guises in the Man of Feeling’, to which Ellison’s study is indebted, is a further helpful text.³⁶ I have become interested in my work in attending more closely to the textual evidence for a culture of oratorical performance which included Shakespeare during the late eighteenth century. Research in this area fills out a neglected but significant contextual space that joins up theatre with political oratory and the passions.

Much of the contemporary literature directly addressing oratorical practices is designed for use by young people as part of their education, or in the preparation of the youth of the nation for public life. It is also in these texts, I realised during the course of my research, that Shakespeare comes to be juxtaposed frequently with colonial issues and settings. In these books, Brutus’ funerary orations on Caesar’s body and Antony and Ventidius’ exchanges ‘in a shady forest’s sylvan scene’ come to be reprinted alongside speeches by William Windham and General Wolfe. Such texts are the contemporary sources for Cicero’s oration on Verres, a source for Burke’s orations on Hastings. Several of these texts are worth examining.

The relevance of oratorical literature to the satires considered in the earlier part of this chapter can be seen in James Burgh’s *Art of Speaking* (1795).³⁷ This text is a helpful and relatively simple starting point from which to apprehend this diverse body of literature. The conclusion

theatricality’ of speech on which the American constitution was founded. Fliegelman, pp.29-32.

³⁶ Ian Donaldson, ‘Cato in Tears: Stoical Guises in the Man of Feeling’ *Studies in the Eighteenth Century III. Papers Presented at the Third David Nichol Smith Memorial Seminar* ed. by R.F.Brissenden. (Canberra: University of Toronto Press, 1976). A review of *Cato’s Tears* by G.J.Barker-Benfield, *William and Mary Quarterly* 57:4 (2000) 8420-5 references Donaldson’s article as an important precursor to Ellison’s study.

³⁷ James Burgh, *The Art of Speaking* (Danbury, Connecticut: Edmund and Ephraim Washburn, 1795).

recommends the use of the volume for places of education and private tutors, and the text as a whole instructs youth to translate from the ancients, especially the orators, and mark ‘the emphatical words with lines under them, and the various humours or passions on the margin’.³⁸ The youth under instruction should then commit these to memory in order to learn to speak with ‘ease and gracefulness, and with propriety as to tone of voice, looks and gesture’ and without ‘too often recourse to their papers’. The volume is intended as ‘Lessons’ and this is visible from the layout of the texts on the page, which include directions in the margins for which action to perform at each part of the speech.

An earlier text, *The New Art of Speaking or a Complete Modern System of Rhetoric, Elocution and Oratory* (1785) lauds Burke and Fox as ‘the best models of modern elocution’ and elaborates extensively on the passions, from shame to anger to love to pacification to friendship and many others.³⁹ The text reproduces the words of Cicero, Demosthenes, Brutus and Caesar, Andromache and Hector. A similar work, *Exercises in Elocution*, published at Warrington, includes Antony and Ventidius’ exchange of words ‘in a shady forest’s sylvan scene’, General Wolfe’s oration and many others from Shakespeare including *Henry V* and the *Trial of Shylock*. John Stirling’s *A System of Rhetoric* includes many orations from Shakespeare from Othello’s defence before the Senate, to Brutus’ oration on Caesar’s

³⁸ Burgh, *Art of Speaking*, unpaginated.

³⁹ *The New Art of Speaking, or a Complete Modern System of Rhetoric, Elocution and Oratory* (London: Alex Hogg, 1785), p.7.

death, to Iago inciting Othello to jealousy.⁴⁰ This text was first published in 1733 and the latest English edition appeared in 1795.

Burgh's text particularly is interesting, as it clearly deploys a similar logic to the works of Charles Le Brun on expression, but applies the principles to passages from Shakespeare. The contents list 'terror', 'anxiety', 'plotting', 'cruelty', 'horror', 'pity' and so on and an 'index of passions and humours' is appended. The full text includes examples that range from the scene of Banquo and Macbeth with the dagger, visions of ghosts, 'Cicero's Oration against Verres', Falstaff and Mrs Ford, Marius against the Romans, scenes from *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*, *Othello*, some *Merchant of Venice*, some *Midsummer Night's Dream*, instances of 'terrible description' and 'Thor and Woden and ancient British Art'.⁴¹ Texts such as this demonstrate the centrality of the passions to interpretations and appropriations of Shakespeare, and perhaps elucidate the relevance of oratorical texts on the 'art of speaking' to British culture's reception of the works in the later eighteenth century.

The passions are similarly emphasised in John Walker's *The Academic Speaker, or a Selection of Parliamentary Debates, Orations, Odes, Scenes and Speeches*.⁴² In this text orations delivered in the context of

⁴⁰ John Stirling, *A System of Rhetoric* (London: J.Rivington and Sons, T.Longman, B.Law, S.Crowder, C.Robinson and R.Baldwin, 1787).

⁴¹ Burgh, *Art of Speaking*, pp.327-9. Jennifer Montagu insists, correctly I think, that it is in eighteenth-century discourses on rhetoric that one finds the fullest and most thorough discussion of the passions, Jennifer Montagu, *The Expression of the Passions: The Origin and Influence of Charles Le Brun's Conférence Sur l'Expression Générale et Particulière* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), pp.50ff.

⁴² John Walker, *The Academic Speaker* (London: G.G and J.Robinson, T.Cadell and W.Davies, 1797). See also for example *The Melody of Speaking Delineated, or Elocution Taught like Music, by Visible Signs* (London: G.G.J. and J.Robinson and T.Cadell, 1787) and *A Rhetorical Grammar or Course of Lessons in Elocution* (London: G.Robinson and

colonial wars and extensive orations from Shakespeare appear reprinted alongside one another. The extracts and passages are collected under titles such as ‘parliamentary debates’, ‘declamation’, ‘vehement passion’, ‘reflexion and argument’, ‘grief and tenderness’ and ‘comic humour’. Under the heading ‘Declamation’ appear ‘Brutus on the Death of Caesar’ ‘Othello’s Apology to the Senate’ ‘The Bishop of Carlisle in Richard II’ ‘Lord Clifford’s Speech to Henry VI’ a series of speeches from Henry V and ‘Glocester’s speech to the nobles’. The first section in the volume, ‘Parliamentary Debates’, is followed by sections which include passages from Livy, Homer, Akenside, Pope, Vanbrugh, Swift, Leland, and Addison. ‘Antony’s Funeral Oration over Caesar’s body’ also appears here. A section titled ‘elements of gesture’ anthologises Shakespeare to exemplify ‘the adaptation of the action to the word and the word to the action’.⁴³ It includes illustrations of a boy preparing to speak, and demonstrates a box demarking space with careful directions for how he should hold his body.⁴⁴

T.Cadell, 1785) and *Elements of Elocution, Being the Substance of a Course of Lectures on the Art of Reading* 2 vols. (London: T.Cadell, T.Becket, J.Dodsley, 1781), all by John Walker.

⁴³ Walker, *Academic Speaker*, p.1.

⁴⁴ See *The New Annual Register for 1788* (London: G.G.J and J.Robinson, 1789), p.257 for a review of ‘Domestic Literature’ that considers Mr Walker’s work on grammar, elocution and the instruction of ‘young persons in the accomplishment of speaking in public with an easy and graceful action’. His new ‘Academic Speaker, &c. to which are prefixed, Elements of Gesture’ elicits approbation, both for the various plates ‘deduced from the principles of perspective’ with which it is illustrated, and for the author’s preference for parliamentary debates, orations, odes and speeches over plays in the exercises for use in schools.

Plate III. Fig. VI.



To be placed Sheet A.

PLATE 72

John Wilson's *Principles of Elocution, and Suitable Exercises* (1798) devotes its attention to improving the arts of expressing emotion. This Edinburgh teacher of elocution included much Shakespeare alongside both modern orations by Windham and similar public figures and passages discussing the rise and decline of arts at Rome. Patriotic emotion; guilt, pity, mercy, peace; the example of the person perishing in snow; rules for reading

verse and various other exercises in the art of moving the listener are included in the contents of the text.⁴⁵

A Help to Elocution (1780) advertised among its contents instructions ‘On the Marks and Characters of the Different Passions and Affections of the Mind’. Here can be found entries on ‘pity’ ‘suffering’ and ‘grief’ and comparisons of Shakespeare with statuary.⁴⁶ William Enfield’s *The Speaker, or Exercises in Elocution* includes content on the passions and acting, and extracts that range from Shakespeare to Demosthenes.⁴⁷ The eighth edition included such extracts as ‘on the pain arising from virtuous emotions attended with pleasure’ from Akenside, many passages from Shakespeare including Antony’s funeral oration over Caesar’s body, words from Cato, and orations intended to demonstrate philosophical melancholy. Richard Turner’s *The Young Orator* or Walker’s *The Academic Speaker* were among the foremost places that Hamlet’s soliloquy on death came to be reprinted between 1780 and 1800.⁴⁸ *The Eloquent Orator, Being a Collection of Pieces in Prose and Verse* includes the example of the Duke and Jacques from *As You Like It* as a demonstration of philosophical melancholy.⁴⁹ *The Oratorical Instructor* seeks to train the expressive body

⁴⁵ John Wilson, *Principles of Elocution, and Suitable Exercises and Elegant Extracts, in Prose and Verse* (Edinburgh: J.A.Pillans and Sons, 1798), p.61.

⁴⁶ *A Help to Elocution* (London: Fielding and Walker, 1780).

⁴⁷ William Enfield, *The Speaker, or Exercises in Elocution* (Belfast: William Magee, 1795).

⁴⁸ Richard Turner, *The Young Orator, Containing a Collection of Essays in Elocution* (London: Richard Hindmarsh, 1783).

⁴⁹ Alexander Mather, *The Eloquent Orator, Being a Collection of Pieces in Prose and Verse Selected from the Best English Writers, Ancient and Modern* (Aberdeen: John Boyle, 1785).

of the orator using funeral orations from *Julius Caesar*, from *Hamlet*, *Henry V* and other scenes from Shakespeare.⁵⁰

Among the influential authors of texts on oratory, rhetoric and elocution across the mid- to late- eighteenth century and into the early nineteenth century are to be found John Walker, John Wilson, Francis Gentleman, Thomas Sheridan, George Wright, John Shaw, Alexander Mather, William Scott, Richard Turner, Mr Cresswick (a pseudonym of Mary Wollstonecraft), Hugh Blair, James Burgh, Luigi Riccoboni, Henry Siddons' translation of J.J. Engel, Michel Le Faucheur, Joseph Dana, Thomas Holland, John Stirling, Jean Siffrein Maury.⁵¹ Some texts are more directly intended for the instruction of stage actors; some are intended for mature public orators. Many display a multiplicity of uses for an education in oratory, still vaguely or partially classically derived.

Mather, Scott, Turner, Walker, Wilson and Dana were particularly intended for the instruction of the young. For women there were specially

⁵⁰ *The Oratorical Instructor, Being a Collection of Pieces for the Use of Those Desirous to Attain Eloquence* (London: W.Wilson and W.Collins, 1798).

⁵¹ Francis Gentleman, *Introduction to Shakespeare's Plays, Containing an Essay on Oratory* (London: John Bell, 1773); Thomas Sheridan, *A Course of Lectures on Elocution* (Providence, Rhode Island: Carter and Wilkinson, 1796); George Wright, *The Gentleman's Miscellany* (London: Chapman and Co., 1793) and *The Lady's Miscellany* (London: Chapman and Co., 1793); John Shaw, *A Methodical English Grammar, Containing Rules and Directions for Speaking and Writing the English Language with Propriety and Accuracy* (London: J.Richardson, J.Prescott, 1785); William Scott, *Beauties of Eminent Writers Selected and Arranged for the Instruction of Youth in the Proper Reading and Reciting of the English Language* (Edinburgh: William Scott, 1797); Mr Cresswick, *The Female Reader or Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose and Verse, Selected from the Best Writers and Disposed Under Proper Heads for the Improvement of Young Women* (London: J.Johnson, 1789); Hugh Blair, *Essays on Rhetoric* (London: J.Murray, 1781); Luigi Riccoboni, *Declamation, or an Essay on the Art of Speaking in Public* (London: Lewis Riccoboni, 1790); Henry Siddons, *Practical Illustrations of Rhetorical Gesture and Action* (London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1822); Michel Le Faucheur, *An Essay Upon Pronunciation and Gesture* (London: C.Hitch, 1750); Joseph Dana, *A New American Selection of Lessons in Reading and Speaking, to Which are Added Elements of Gesture* (Boston: Samuel Hall, 1792); Thomas Holland, *Exercises for the Memory and Understanding* (Manchester: George Nicholson, 1798); Jean Siffrein Maury, *The Principles of Eloquence* trans. by John Neal Lake (London: T.Cadell and C.Dilly, 1793).

designated exercises in works intended for women by Cresswick, Charles Vyse and Hester Piozzi.⁵² There were texts without advertised authors such as *Elegant Extracts* and the *Edinburgh Repository* as well as more specialist works such as the *Index to the Remarkable Passages and Words Made Use of by Shakespeare* by Samuel Ayscough, and a text by J.H. Emmert which used plays ‘to facilitate the study of the English language’ which similarly included extracts from Shakespeare.⁵³ George Saunders’ *A Treatise on Theatres* with its detailed notes on optics and phonics also reflects the demands of an oratorical practice within the culture.⁵⁴

These anthologies might be thought of as educating individuals, teaching them to value the action of different emotions on those around them, and to generate social capital on the basis of control of their own deportment and portrayal or the incitement of various emotions. Selfhood is derived from an ability to engage with one’s audience, and to direct their response through particular performances and evocations of emotion, much

⁵² Hester Piozzi, *British Synonymy* 2 vols. (London: G.G.G. and J.Robinson, 1794). Charles Vyse, *The New London Spelling Book or the Young Gentleman’s and Lady’s Guide to the English Tongue* (London: G.G.G. and J.Robinson, 1791). A related sub-category includes texts with titles such as *Entick’s New Spelling Dictionary: Teaching to Write and Pronounce the English Tongue with Ease and Propriety* (London: C.Dilly, 1786).

⁵³ *Elegant Extracts...Selected for the Improvement of Scholars at Classical and Other Schools in the Art of Speaking In Reading Thinking Composing and In the Art of Life* (London: C.Dilly, 1784). *Edinburgh Repository for Polite Literature* (Edinburgh: T.Brown, 1793). Samuel Ayscough, *Index to the Remarkable Passages and Words Made Use of by Shakespeare* 3 vols. (London: J.Stockdale, 1790). The Preface states that the book may be carried in a post-chaise ‘for amusement in a journey’ or ‘if a company of gentlemen should happen, in conversation, to mention Shakespeare, or to dispute concerning any particular passage, a volume containing the whole of his plays may, with great convenience, be fetched by a servant out of a library or closet. In short, any particular passage may at all times and with ease be returned to’ I, unpaginated. J.H. Emmert, *The Theatre, or a Selection of Easy Plays to Facilitate the Study of the English Language* (Gottingen: J. Chr. Dieterich, 1789).

⁵⁴ George Saunders, *A Treatise on Theatres* (London: I. and J.Taylor, 1790). On pronunciation dictionaries, J. Nist *A Structural History of English* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1966), p.278.

as Sarah Siddons sought to direct and mold the responses of audiences as if she were engaged in a Pygmalion-esque inspiration of life into a sculpted form. Caricatures, on the other hand, and as we have seen in the previous chapter, tend to translate these emotional code systems of gesture, expression and action bluntly into political or literary settings and to comic effect.

In political or other forms of oratorical behaviours, the art of deploying, presenting and manipulating emotions through citation of Shakespeare works to escalate the social and political status of the speaker. Reiterated in satires and caricatures, however, similar citations provide an opportunity to devalue emotion and to derive a valueless, but humour-filled space from literary allusion and references. Alternatively, they provide the opportunity to overextend and reiterate the emotion derived from a specific, single moment. The form of literary allusion and reference which develops through these satires is complex and its use of Shakespearean language intricate.

Eighteenth-century texts purporting to instruct in the practice of delivering orations in public life are a useful contextual resource to the emphasis on the expressive elements of Burke and Fox's speech found in the Quebec Bill satires. Rhetorical devices to draw a response of horror or sympathetic tears from the audience to an oration can be recognised through a study of such texts. The fact that oratorical conventions pass into satire in this period is of interest in itself. Tears, for example, are a plentiful subject in satires at this time, and such satires a rightful subject of study in themselves. There are significantly more prints around the Quebec Bill

debates on the subject of tears, but which I do not discuss here because they include no reference to Shakespeare. Those prints that include reference to Shakespeare are evidence that the reception of Shakespeare during the later eighteenth century was still (although this is not to suggest that this would have reflected stage practices) heavily interconnected with specific modes of oratorical and rhetorical preparation.

When the image of Burke is reproduced in a satire such as the *Newmarket Humane Society*, in a pose which superficially resembles Opie's Boydell gallery painting of *Romeo and Juliet* Act IV Scene V, in which the Capulets are shown at the discovery of the body of Juliet, who appears dead, it is likely that there was some reference within such a print to the capacity of Burke as an orator to incite sympathetic emotion, fear, terror, tears or a variety of affects, in his audience. The influence of the thoughts of such literature on social decorum is also to be found in the gestural emphasis in these images. See for example the expressive face of Fox in 'The Battle of Whigs' or the illustration of Dundas and Rose, their hands raised in a gesture of horror and their hair on end who stand behind the 'meal tub'.



PLATE 73

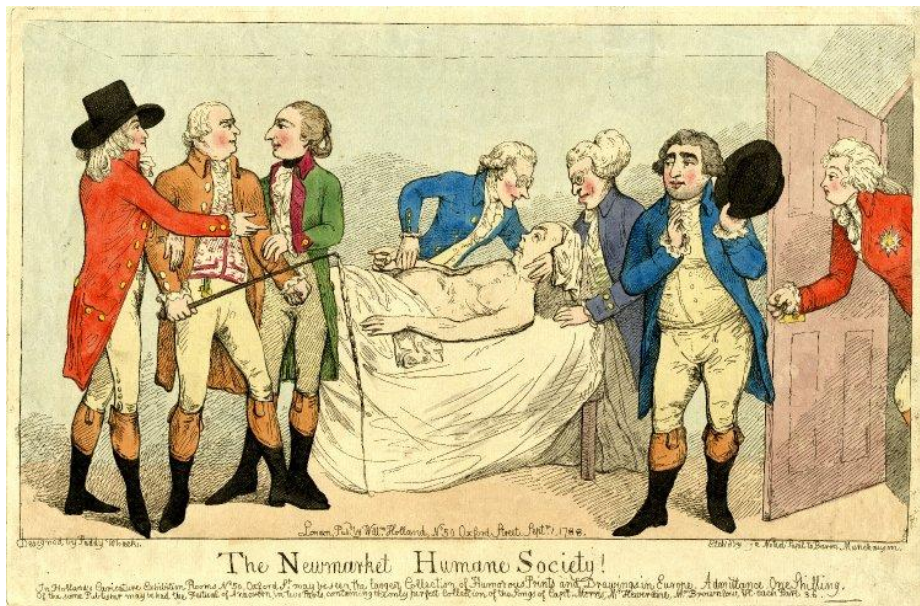


PLATE 74

In ‘The Wrangling Friends’, Burke is shown with an expression of loftiness in argument and Fox exhibits crude astonishment. Aside from the obvious declamatory oratorical postures in ‘The Impeachment’ or ‘Cicero against Verres’, Lady Leadenhall in ‘The Viper’ exhibits reproach and Fox

in the posture of Hogarth's *Richard III* painting in 'Charles III' appears in a multifarious illustration that recalls the stage and painting but owes also to oratorical form. The image of copiously weeping women in the smaller insert with a visual reference to *Hamlet* in the 'Raree-Show' is a reference primarily oratorical in content, and would have been recognised as such by viewers of the print. More broadly of relevance to the diversity of satires this chapter considers, index entries to texts on oratorical methods and conventions which point out to the reader 'how to draw tears from both his own and his auditors eyes' and signal passages on how the ancient actors drew tears, or point to examples such as Orestes bringing the theatre to lamentation and weeping can be found as early as Michel Le Faucheur's 1727 *Essay upon the Action of an Orator*, a work which continued to be reprinted throughout the eighteenth century.

Julie Ellison is interested in the charges of feminine sensibility levelled by one man against another in parliamentary and political contexts and here my account can enter briefly into dialogue with hers.⁵⁵ In the majority of the satires, Burke's oratory is seen to overmaster Fox's, and Fox is cast into the position of a feminised spectator, weeping. However it is not the case that Fox is the feminised individual here, in spite of the fact that it is he who cites Cordelia. On the contrary, Fox is indirectly accusing Burke of not exhibiting *enough* sensibility in his attitude to the constitutional debate. By weeping he suggests that England possesses feminine qualities that set it apart as a nation, and that Burke has not been true to the innate or native gentility of England in his approach to the debate. Fox seeks to lead

⁵⁵ Ellison, p.20.

by example to the correct path for manly Englishness. His lachrymose and reluctantly martial character is, he wishes to argue, more tasteful and more patriotic than Burke's scenes of horror. Burke's criticism of the violence attendant on recent imperial expansion is trumped by his opponent's Falstaffian and nationalist anti-heroism. Fox's servile dedication to the English constitution is at once an open, disingenuous affection for the constitution, and is like Cordelia's in its rhetorical restraint and gestural force. Britain hence distances herself from empire, through his speech, and native sentiment comes to be reaffirmed over imperial rhetoric and modes of address.

The oratorical tactics of Edmund Burke, by contrast, ranged over more imperial territory. Burke, who relied on Cicero's orations against the governor of Roman North Africa, Verres for his attack on Warren Hastings during the contemporaneous impeachment process, even said that Hastings should have had recourse to Cicero in his government practices.⁵⁶ Not quoting Cicero was, he implied, a quality of a corrupt, or ill-informed, foreign ruler: 'if he had lived with us, he would have quoted the example of Cicero in his Government, he would have quoted several of the sacred and

⁵⁶ It was Burke himself who drew the much discussed parallel in his speeches against Hastings with Cicero's orations against Verres. *The History of the Trial of Warren Hastings* (1796) includes descriptions of Burke's reference to Cicero on Verres, pp.3, 8, 143. Also Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, pp.28-9, 30, 63-4 and VII, p.662. Julie Ellison reminds us that Cicero's orations against Verres have a history of reportage in contexts of colonial conflict. She describes their resurgence in 1804 in the *Portfolio*, 'a conservative federalist magazine published in Philadelphia by Joseph Dennie in the context of the Barbary war. 'North Africa and North America become zones in which non-European and European men meet in order to be glamorized as troubled sons and lovers experiencing crises of authority' Ellison, pp.163, 18. Cicero's disgust at Verres' yielding of part of his naval squadron to the Syracusan Cleomenes is given as one significant employment of the word '*imperium*' meaning 'power' or part of our power or empire over the corporate nature of the *res publica* in J.S. Richardson, 'Imperium Romanum: Empire and the Language of Power' *Theories of Empire 1450-1800* ed. by David Armitage (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1998), p.7.

holy prophets, and made them his example'.⁵⁷ Burke's oration against Fox's politics at the Quebec Bill debates relied too on the prosecution of one form of colonial government, in comparison with another. The notion of an orator commenting on a 'distressed province' linked Burke and Cicero, says P.J. Marshall in his edition of the speeches.⁵⁸ In speeches of February 20 1786 he spoke directly of the prosecution in 70 AD of the governor of Sicily, who was brought to punishment by Cicero on account of his 'mal-administration of the province committed to his care'.⁵⁹ It is clear that the colonial content of these political events when illustrated in satires developed latent classical comparisons, alongside the interpretation of Shakespeare or appropriation of words from the plays.

Graphic political satires produced on the subject of the Hastings impeachment do reinforce the parallel between Cicero and Burke and recall (or anticipate) the depiction of Lady Leadenhall that draws comparison between Egypt and India, or depictions of Fox alongside Cicero and Demosthenes.⁶⁰ Perhaps repeated illustrations of Burke as Cicero demonstrate his exemplary status as a politician bred on domestic soil, with the correct principles to advance native politics, as opposed to in a distant

⁵⁷ In speech of February 16 1788, Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, p.367. Burke modelled his oration on Cicero. 'Burke's speech which finally opened the impeachment early in 1788 has all the characteristics of a Ciceronian oration on the corruption of imperial justice, with Hastings cast in the role of the latter's notorious Verres', Richard Bourke 'Liberty, Authority and Trust in Burke's Idea of Empire' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 61:3 (2000), p.458.

⁵⁸ Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, p.29. Cicero was in print in the later century in the editions prepared by William Duncan, John Rutherford and Charles Whitworth.

⁵⁹ Marshall, *Writings and Speeches*, VI, p.63.

⁶⁰ There are satires that illustrate Burke as Cicero. See 'Cicero against Verres' BM7138/lwl06161. This satire alters 'Rome' and 'the Republic' to 'British People' and 'Warren Hastings', Robinson, p.93. 'The Impeachment' is similar lwl05932.

province within the empire. Similarly that favoured depiction of Fox alongside Cicero and Demosthenes, where he is illustrated usually stepping down in a disordered fashion from an alcove or set within a darkened interior, asserts an alternative form of domestic or national identity for an orator, distinguished by the way in which it breaks from a classical tradition (BM 8067/ lwl 07422).⁶¹

Orations of Cicero are a particular favourite in the anthologies. Cicero is considered adept at the per-oration intended ‘to raise commiseration to the accused’ which regularly filled the forum with tears, and the example is favoured by John Seally in his 1788 *Lady’s Encyclopedia*.⁶² Heroes and the male leaders of empires in the classical world were not excluded from the appropriate display of tears, which might signal their considerable compassion, or ‘energetic virile suffering’ as Marjorie O’Rourke puts it in a discussion of the extensive legacy of public shows of emotion in ancient Rome across the centuries. This tradition was recovered by eighteenth-century writers on oratory, who concerned themselves with how best to move their audiences. A ‘pleading, repenting, longing, sympathetic audience’ were some of the effects intended by the successful engagement of the orator’s skills.⁶³ Among the primary examples from Shakespeare that came to be anthologised as a demonstration of manly

⁶¹ The work described is ‘The Patriot Exalted’. See also BM7902/ lwl07429 ‘Design for a new Gallery of Busts and Pictures’ (March 17 1792); BM7644 ‘A Demosthenean Attitude’; BM6784. Pitt was also illustrated as Cicero. BM7672 ‘A Ciceronian Attitude’ (September 1790) and in BM6784 and BM7670 ‘A Ciceronian Attitude’ (September 1 1790).

⁶² In John Seally, *The Lady’s Encyclopaedia* 3 vols. (London: J.Murray and W.Creech, 1788), II, p.74. ‘Celebrated heroes or founders of empires’ is the final section of this volume.

⁶³ Marjorie O’Rourke Boyle, *Loyola’s Acts: The Rhetoric of the Self* (Berkeley and London: University of California Press, 1997), p.68.

tears were the funeral oration of Antony weeping over Caesar's body or the speech of Brutus proclaiming his love for Caesar.⁶⁴

Transgeneric comparison that finds caricature comparable with practices of oratorical delivery is characteristic of later eighteenth-century culture. Sarah Siddons, too, discusses tragic performance through a comparison with a series of other arts, from statuary to the gothic novel to music, and this is repeated in Hazlitt. Anna Larpent's diaries record her readings in Roman history in preparation for teaching her boys.⁶⁵ In Plutarch, actors are the servants of tragedy, her dressers and litter-bearers, and she is an inanimate statue to which they are 'as encaustic painters and gilders and dyers'; or they are *technītae*, skilled workers like sculptors, artists or craftsmen in metal.⁶⁶ The notion of the sister arts was one that remained significant to the interpretation of Shakespeare in this period, and we find the depiction of poetry and painting in relief sculpture over the doors of the Boydell Gallery, or a return to it in the writings of an actress like Siddons.

Dorothy George raises the significant point that the integrity of the friendship between these two men must itself also be questioned. It is supposedly lost at this moment of conflict, through the particular rhetorical exchanges of the debate on the Quebec Bill. She argues that it is more

⁶⁴ *Oratorical Instructor*, p.51. See Dene Barnett for a reproduction of the gestural notations for 'The Speech of Brutus on the Death of Caesar' in a later text by Gilbert Austin, pp.206-7, 178-80.

⁶⁵ Anna Margareta Larpent, *A Woman's View of Drama 1790-1830: The Diaries of Anna Margareta Larpent* (Marlborough, Adam Matthews Publications, 1995), Reel 2.

⁶⁶ Jane Lightfoot, 'Nothing to do with the *technītae* of Dionysus?' in *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession* ed. by Pat Easterling and Edith Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.212.

correct to say this was a political friendship. If this is so, and in the context of eighteenth-century oratorical theory particularly, it would again be wrong to suggest that Burke's reasoned rhetoric around the horrors of revolutionary France and its repercussions mark out a line of reason against which Fox's weeping appears a moment of genuine emotion, overflowing into the political space. Fox's rhetoric of affection was, rather, as artfully contrived and as reasoned as Burke's language of terror. In the context of these debates then, what occurred was less a public display of private feeling than an oratorical exchange in an art with its own demands and predetermined arenas of conflict. Fox even says later in the debates that Burke has been speaking in terms of 'light and shade' as if to emphasise the aesthetic content of the event.⁶⁷ Indeed it seems that by responding to Burke's citation of the 'Black Spirits and White' song in these terms Fox seeks to repossess Burke's language, and to complain that its import is primarily aesthetic – and aesthetic in a manner that Burke almost certainly did not intend. According to this reading, Fox might be thought to subvert and transcend Burke's speech and to move his audience into a rhetorical space that is more definitely an aesthetic one. His tears act by way of commerce, and are a form of oratorical coin which he might be thought to pass to Burke in exchange for winning the aesthetic higher ground and perhaps the debate itself.

Would it true to extend this argument and say that the satires represent Fox's emphasis on the aesthetic content of this rhetorical exchange more fully than Burke's wish to incite horror among the audience?

⁶⁷ *The Parliamentary Register*, XXIX, p.345.

What is important for the outcome of the debate is that Fox's tears were not received and not accepted. This was a failed transaction and Burke emerged victorious. The satires, in general, do not represent more fully either Fox's playful and literary use of language or Burke's emphasis on horror and gothic politics. They seem to have their own rules and idiosyncracies of style and to locate Shakespeare's words in entirely different and altogether new settings.

Much of the speech in the house on May 6 concerns the debate, pressed by Burke, around the inclusion of the recent political processes of the revolution in France within debates on the proposed Quebec Bill. This is reflected in the satires, which also comprise a transnational emphasis and a nationalism more complicated in form than that of the rustic patriotism associated with Fox. Shakespeare, accordingly, comes to be used within complex political contexts in increasingly sophisticated ways. Sometimes this includes a surprising emphasis on oratorical and gestural modes perhaps infrequently iterated elsewhere. Sometimes it means an allusive and barely localised image derived from a play on scenes from Shakespeare's plays of the witches' song, witches' cauldron, or other horrific moments such as the 'gory locks' speeches or the fantastic intrusion of *Macbeth* or the *Merchant of Venice* into Westminster Hall.

Rhetoric could be gory and bloody – classically it was acceptable to display blood, wounds and so on in words.⁶⁸ This became an element of colonial culture and of Britain's response, in so far as it turned to the words of Shakespeare, to its own empire. Almost always the oratorical literature

⁶⁸ O'Rourke Boyle, p.29.

provided a tool with which to respond more carefully to empire, and it enabled the circulation of uses of Shakespeare to do so.

In 'A Recent Escape', Fox appears as Macbeth and Pitt as Banquo in riding clothes covered in mud (BM 8705/ 1w1 08656). The words accompanying the stage gestures of each character respectively read:

'Why dost thou shake thy Dirty locks at me

Thou canst not say I did it – Muddy Banquo.'

'These are the blessed effects of your patriotism, and be D—to you'

In several satires violence is largely verbal and connected with these lines. The same quotation appears in *Nightly Visitors at St Ann's Hill* (1798) which shows Fox and the Irish politician Lord Edward Fitzgerald in an image framed with a theatrical bed curtain (BM 9244). Fox sits up in terror as Lord Edward Fitzgerald, right hand on his breast, says 'who first seduced my youthful mind from virtue?/ Who planned my treasons, & who caused my death?/ Remember poor Lord Edward, and despair!!!' Fox replies 'why do'st thou shake thy, Goary locks at me?/ Dear bravest, worthiest, noblest, best of Men!/ thou canst not say, I did it!'. This image also includes the illustration of a row of headless bodies, kneeling. Similarly, the quotation is used in the 'Ghost of Tyrie' (August 24 1782) and 'The Funeral Procession of Miss Regency' (April 29 1789). In the first of these images, Fox raises his hand in a theatrical pose of astonishment, with right arm uplifted and left down and adds 'why do you shake your gory locks at me you cannot say I did it'. The satire is a reference to Tyrie tried in August 1782 over naval intelligence leaked to enemies (BM 6030). In the second, Burke appears as Ignatius Loyola, with Fox weeping, and the same quote altered. Dressed in

priest's robes Burke's speech includes a Shakespearean lament with other reference points, 'Our cloud capt towers/ Our gorgeous palaces/ Our solemn temples/ Yes our great Regency itself/ Is Dissolved/ And like the Baseless Fabric of a Vision/ Not a Wreck left Behind'. Fox, weeping, says to Sheridan 'Why dost thou gloat and hang thy lip at me/ Thou canst not say I brought her to this end' and Sheridan also is shown weeping (BM 7526).

Use of the witches' song as a refrain in satires seems to emphasise the dilemmas and disintegration of empire, until zones of engagement flow into one another, and satires reference Quebec, France, India, West Indies, America alternately.

Shakespeare was a part of the development of increasingly subtle deployments of affect in the response to empire. The oratorical literature facilitated this and, to some extent, corresponded with the use of excerpts in satire that emphasised particular affects. Accounts of slavery and debates on slave politics and uprising, or concerning liberty and the wisdom of republican identifications, in so far as they occur or not, in these satires remains distant from the debates to be found in work on empire such as Marcus Wood's recent work *Slavery, Empathy and Pornography*.⁶⁹ Of that book Laura Chrisman has written, 'how to give appropriate aesthetic representation to slavery, how to properly remember racial terror, are questions running through this book'.⁷⁰ Wood writes specifically against empathy and its functioning in white forgetting of slavery. To return to the

⁶⁹ Marcus Wood, *Slavery, Empathy and Pornography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

⁷⁰ Laura Chrisman, 'On Not Remembering Slavery' *Cambridge Quarterly* 33:2 (2004) 177-80.

satires this chapter discusses is a reminder however that the question of empathy and its functioning or not, and of how to appropriately represent racialised terror within politics was one that preoccupied, and even directed, political life and debate in the parliament of late eighteenth-century England.

This research bears more significantly perhaps upon recent research in acting theory and on the expressive body, and takes that research in a direction that attends to its development within and in connection to imperial formations and contexts. Where Joseph Roach has emphasised the prevalence of natural philosophy for changes in the practice of acting as the eighteenth-century progresses, and the diminished emphasis of the oratorical mode, my research suggests a rather different outcome. It seems that, in terms of acting theory and the science of the preparation of the body for public speaking, that the converse is true, and that the conjunction of Shakespeare and oratorical discourse came to be newly invigorated at the end of the century, and even took up a critical function in the national response to the challenges of empire, both in parliamentary speech and in satires.

I do not seek to draw a connection between the performances of plays and the behaviour and speeches of public orators, but it is worth noting that Fox's tears more broadly were notorious in connection to his attendance at the theatres. The actress Sarah Siddons speaks of 'the illustrious Fox, of whom it was frequently said, that iron tears were drawn

down Pluto's gloomy cheeks.'⁷¹ It is clear that the primary qualities relevant to the event at the Quebec Bill debates were oratorical rather than theatrical. Uses of Shakespeare in Fox's, and Burke's, orations appeared within a context that understood Fox to be the modern equivalent of Demosthenes, and Demosthenes and Cicero are frequently illustrated in satires alongside the image of Fox. Burke drew directly on Cicero in orations against Hastings, and this is reflected in satires on that subject. Texts on the practice of public oratory drew on Cicero and other classical writers, alongside Shakespeare, and Addison, Pope, Livy, Homer, Akenside, Swift and so on. Shakespeare was received partly within the culture of performative oratory, and this was an area which increasingly drew toward preparing the youth of the nation to make an active contribution to various areas of national life. That satires of the Quebec Bill debates should highlight Fox and Burke's oratorical exchanges and Burke's use of the witches' song from *Macbeth* tells us that this element of the culture of Shakespeare revival and reception in the late eighteenth century had a wide influence at the century's end.

⁷¹ Campbell, p.100: 'and these great men would often visit my dressing-room, after the play, to make their bows, and honour me with their applauses'. She refers here to the 'glorious constellation' of Reynolds, Burke, Gibbon, Sheridan, Windham and Fox.

CONCLUSION

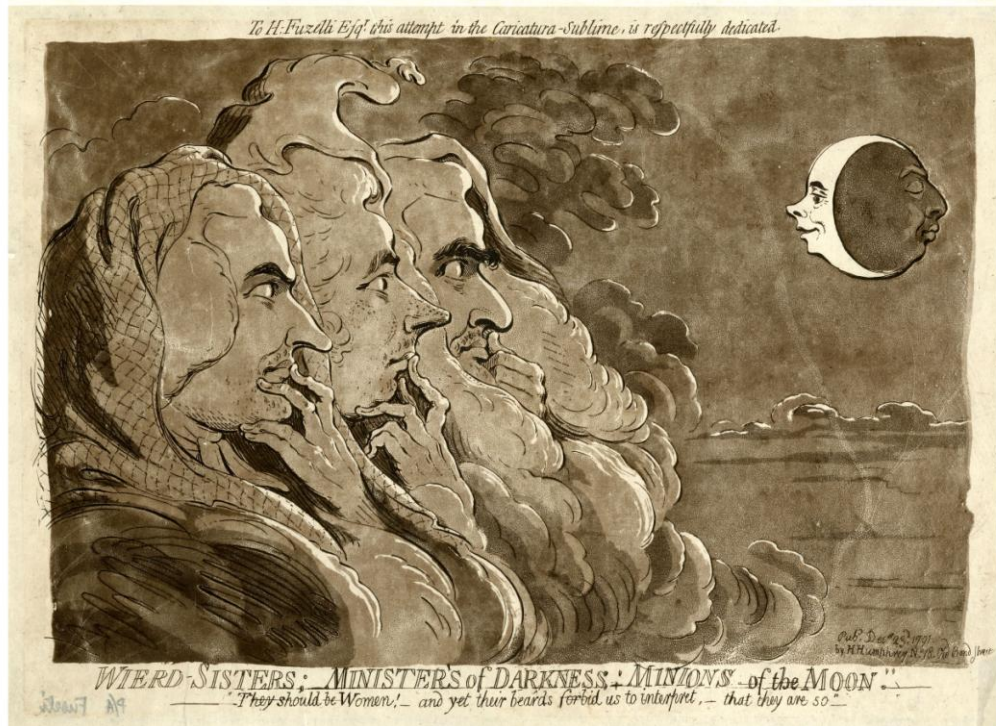


PLATE 75

This thesis makes a slightly different point from Jonathan Kramnick's argument about the displacement of a model of work by a model of affect in the cultural valuations of late eighteenth-century English life.¹ It seeks not to restrict investigation solely to the restaging and adaption of plays on the stage. I hope I have provided an account instead of how empire affected the response to Shakespeare's works in late eighteenth-century England, and came into play in varying public and private arenas where the reception and use of the plays has been recognised, but the way in which they brought

¹ Kramnick on the aesthetic weight of ancient Englishness, and its privileged relation to the 'standard of taste', p.84.

citizens into closer contact with the empire, giving them a means by which to apprehend it and a vocabulary through which to ameliorate it within the domestic space, has not received so much critical attention.

These twenty years saw Shakespeare involved in the politics of monarchy, more so than in the mid-century. Events such as the East India Bill and formation of the Coalition government in the early 1780s introduced crises of authority in connection to the empire and colonial politics that, while in no way connected with the revolution in France in 1789, came to build accretively in combination with it in representations through 1789 and the 1790s.

The Coalition was a moment that brought to the fore conflicts of parliamentary and monarchical authorities under the empire. That transnational comparison was the norm rather than the exception in the apprehension of empire during this period is also demonstrated in this research. This is particularly evident in caricatures.

Although the number of slaves needed to sustain cotton production in Great Britain and Ireland rose from 13000 in 1760 to 158000 in 1799, slavery is a subject relatively absent from the Shakespeare satires of these years, while their imperial content, like that of the response to Shakespeare's plays more generally, is relatively extensive. It may be that this continued to be the case into the nineteenth century. Macaulay's *Minute on Indian Education* linked Adam Smith and Shakespeare in the context of a form of Christianised stoicism merged with education and the

dissemination of a more organised form of imperialism.² But the century looked backwards as well as forwards. Queen Elizabeth was a stoic figure for David Hume, as Barker-Benfield has emphasised, and versions of stoicism popular in representations of Shakespeare, while classical, could also nod toward a philo-Elizabethan, mediaeval or renaissance tradition.³ The notion that women were creatures from which one might learn manners and civilisation clearly influences the interpretations and appropriations of Shakespeare considered within this thesis.

In the satires discussed in Chapter Five, apart from extensive and repeated recourse to the moment at which Fox wept in oratorical exchanges with Burke, the witches' song appears a recurrent feature. The interaction of Shakespeare with imperial developments was notable for its inclusion of supernaturalism, but the connection of that supernaturalism to empire and to classical forms and imagery within the broad processes of the 'gothic' has not been fully investigated in Shakespeare scholarship. I hope that this study redresses that lack of information, within a limited time span, in its examination of the final twenty years of the eighteenth century.

If C.A. Bayly, following a trope activated by Linda Colley, talks about 'forging' identities under the sail of the developing British empire, what was the role of Shakespeare in *forging the past*, forging a national tradition at this time?⁴ This research aims to replace Shakespeare within the

² Gauri Viswanathan, *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (London: Faber and Faber, 1990), p.128. Makdisi, *William Blake and the Impossible History*, p.258.

³ Barker-Benfield, *Culture of Sensibility*, pp.135, 139.

⁴ Bayly writes, 'British history itself has recently been transformed by a new emphasis on the "forging" of identities, a word that captures the ambivalence of the process as both

history of Britain's cultural forms under the empire, albeit with a limited time-period for the conduct of an investigation. This was an age of multiple adaptations and variations on Shakespeare's plays, many of which remained current in the years 1780-1800. This thesis has not sought to investigate the intricacies of staging or textual variation across editions or performance copies. Many of the eighteenth century texts engage in cross-textual comparison themselves, and it was a favourite activity of Shakespeare's eighteenth-century historical editors. Simon Jarvis and Marcus Walsh have provided helpful studies of this area of interest in so far as print culture and history is concerned, while in the area of performance history much work remains to be done. This project directs itself to what Lewis Gordon terms 'Crusoe or Prospero studies', identifying those trends within the new imperial history that consider the reception and effects of empire on domestic soil and on domestic identity, rather than 'Friday or Caliban studies' which are those that would study the overseas colonies or communities within the empire themselves. It makes no claim to do otherwise.⁵

The enquiry presented here in the first two chapters has taken the form of investigating national identity construed as modest, local, irregular, various and diverse in the first chapter on landscape in John Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery; or as the root of a gothic, sober, and a cool northern gothic imperial identity in the second chapter. The third chapter moved to

creation and counterfeiting. Cited Daunton and Halpern, 'Introduction', p.3. Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation, 1707-1837* (London: Pimlico, 2003).

⁵ Lewis R. Gordon, 'A Questioning Body of Laughter and Tears: Reading *Black Skin, White Masks* through the Cat and Mouse of Reason and a Misguided Theodicy' *Parallax* 8:2 (2002), p.14.

consider innovation and creativity in women's responses to Shakespeare in the final decades of the century, with a particular focus on how Mary Wollstonecraft and Anne Damer look outward from the nation through the lens of Shakespeare's works. This part of the thesis considered in close detail the extent to which a turn from a discourse of delicacy and of delicate and refined tastes occurs in the final two decades of the century. The remaining two chapters of the thesis examined the generation of affect in late century Britain more fully. Chapter Four considered how Warren Hastings and Sarah Siddons each constructed a public identity for themselves, using the works of Shakespeare, and did so through an investigation into private handwritten papers. The fifth chapter of the thesis looked to caricature art depicting the falling out, both political and personal, of Edmund Burke and Charles James Fox during parliamentary sessions on the Quebec Bill in early 1791. Throughout, I have been interested to inquire into how, if as Luke Gibbons has argued, it is at this point in imperial history that the 'impartial' spectator merges with the 'imperial' spectator, Shakespeare became a part of the imperial present.⁶

⁶ Gibbons, *Edmund Burke and Ireland*, p.98.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

| | |
|-----------|---|
| 1778 | Franco-American Treaty of Alliance |
| 1779-80 | Agitation of Gordon Riots and 'No Popery' |
| 1775-83 | American Revolutionary War |
| 1783 | Fox-North Coalition |
| 1784 | Pitt's India Act |
| 1787 | First Australian Colony |
| 1788-95 | Prosecution of Hastings |
| 1789 | French Revolution |
| 1791 | Slave Rebellion in Haiti |
| 1792-1805 | Revolutionary Wars |
| 1798 | United Irishmen Rebellion |

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