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SYMBOLIST REACTIONS TO SHAKESPEAREAN AND ELIZABETHAN  
DRAMA IN FRANCE

*City University of New York*

Ph.D. 1981

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SYMBOLIST REACTIONS TO SHAKESPEAREAN  
AND ELIZABETHAN DRAMA IN FRANCE

by

FERNANDE BAYDA

A dissertation submitted to the  
Graduate Faculty in Comparative  
Literature in partial fulfill-  
ment of the requirements for the  
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The City University of New York

1981

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## ABSTRACT

SYMBOLIST REACTIONS TO SHAKESPEAREAN  
AND ELIZABETHAN DRAMA IN FRANCE

BY

FERNANDE BAYDA

Adviser: Professor Daniel Gerould

This dissertation attempts to explore the contributions to the revival of Renaissance English drama in France made by the group of men of letters who frequented Mallarmé's Tuesday night literary meetings. We will refer to them as the symbolists, who include Marcel Schwob, Maurice Maeterlinck, Georges Eekhoud, Paul Claudel, Paul Fort and Lugné-Poe.

This study deals only with the plays which the symbolists have translated, and criticized for production on their stage. Each play represents an aspect of the drama which they considered to be important. The study seeks to recapture the mood of the symbolists when they revived each play for their stage.

The symbolists chose The Tempest because of the enchanted unreality of its subject and setting, which broke with the conventions of their time. They chose The Cenci because

of its unusual plot of incest and patricide, and the very deep philosophical questions it raised. They chose Marlowe's Doctor Faustus because they felt it reflected their philosophy of a quest for the ideal. When they produced their version of Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, they delved into the fatal attractions of incestuous love and the motivations behind it. This interest in strange love led them to stage Otway's sado-masochistic play Venice Preserved. When they chose to produce Measure for Measure, they selected that play because it had been labelled by Walter Pater as a philosophical play equal to Hamlet. The study shows the important part Hamlet had in symbolist criticism on the drama. Marcel Schwob translated Hamlet for Sarah Bernhardt; the translation is an aesthetic document on how Hamlet should be translated and interpreted for the stage.

This dissertation brings to life the Macbeth performed at Maeterlinck's abbey home in Normandy, which was translated and heavily annotated by Maeterlinck. This translation is Maeterlinck's aesthetic statement on the significance of Macbeth in the realm of the drama.

The efforts of the symbolists at the Théâtre d'Art and the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre perhaps paved the way for the many productions of Elizabethan drama on the twentieth century Paris stage, and Antonin Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty which included The Cenci as a prime selection. The symbolists searched for an ideal drama, but it was Artaud who followed in their footsteps.

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## INTRODUCTION

In France the symbolist revival of Renaissance English drama came about as a ramification of a revolution that occurred in the domain of ideas about the year 1886. The focal point of this intellectual dispute revolved around the symbolist and naturalist movements whose philosophies were diametrically opposed. By 1891, the symbolist movement in literature had reached its peak and an aesthetic had developed. For the stage, it favored the type of drama produced by the pens of Maurice Maeterlinck and Paul Claudel over the work of Emile Zola or Scribe and Sardou. The symbolists promoted a theatre portraying occult manifestations, fatality, and inner conflicts. All of the latter are elements which abound in Renaissance English drama. This was a reaction to the naturalistic school of thought, and to the well-made plays of Sardou and Scribe. At the same time, the group of men of letters who worked with Paul Fort and Lugné-Poe saw in the Elizabethan dramatists a confirmation of what they felt the drama should be; thus they were very specific when they selected plays for the symbolist stage, and chose only plays that reflected a philosophy or dramatic technique with which they agreed.

Even before 1891, there was the beginning of an awareness of a special kind of English drama in France. As early as 1883, a volume entitled Essais de littérature anglaise by James Darmesteter was made available, and almost simultaneously, the lady symbolist, Tola Dorian, produced a translation of Shelley's Elizabethan-type drama, The Cenci. Shelley's play had the distinction of being prefaced by A. C. Swinburne, the famed critic and English friend of the symbolists. These books were followed by Gabriel Sarrazin's Poètes modernes de l'Angleterre, a book in which Sarrazin discusses in detail The Cenci and identifies its spirit with that of the Elizabethan era. In 1887, Félix Rabbe, another habitué of the symbolist circle, translated the works of Shelley, which were followed by a translation of the works of Marlowe in 1889.

Active symbolist criticism and contributions per se do not begin until 1886, when Hamlet is produced by the Comédie-Française and is reviewed by Mallarmé, who declares it to be "le drame essentiel."

CHAPTER ONE

## SYMBOLIST INTEREST IN ELIZABETHAN DRAMA

This chapter seeks to bring to the attention of the reader the critical contributions that were made by three key members of the symbolist group on the subject of Renaissance English drama. Stéphane Mallarmé, Algernon Charles Swinburne and Georges Eekhoud, who were respected members of the symbolist group, often discussed the English dramatists at gatherings which were attended by the men of letters and the pioneers of what was to become the symbolist stage. Mallarmé often spoke of Hamlet because of its philosophical contents and because the title role lent itself to suggestive interpretations which were at the core of Mallarmé's theories on the drama. Algernon Charles Swinburne contributed significant criticism on the personality of Hamlet in his studies on Shakespeare, which did not go unnoticed by the men of letters who participated in the English Renaissance revival in France. Georges Eekhoud undertook to study the Elizabethans so that he could understand their theatre by understanding their habits and peculiarities. It was this atmosphere of discussions and studies that promoted the interest which led to the translations and productions of the English drama on the symbolist stage.

MALLARME CONTRIBUTES AESTHETIC CRITICISM ON HAMLET

When Mallarmé reviewed Hamlet in 1886 for the Revue Indépendante,<sup>1</sup> he had long been preoccupied with that play. There is written evidence that as early as 1862, Mallarmé identified himself with Hamlet as can be attested in a letter he wrote to his friend Cazalis:

Que vous serez désillusionné, quand vous verrez cet individu maussade qui reste des journées entières la tête sur le marbre de la cheminée, sans penser: ridicule Hamlet qui ne peut se rendre compte de son affaissement.<sup>2</sup>

It was with Hamlet the thinker that Mallarmé identified himself. The Hamlet theme and character remained a topic of interest for Mallarmé and his circle. The habitués of Mallarmé's Tuesday nights were familiar with their master's fascination with the topic and with the picture of the Prince de Danemark by Manet which hung in his dining room.<sup>3</sup> Between 1867 and 1870, Mallarmé worked on "Igitur," a poem in which the hero is conceived as a type of Hamlet, yet more impersonal. The poet conceives him as "dénué de toute

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<sup>1</sup>Stéphane Mallarmé, "Théâtre," Revue Indépendante, nov. 1886, p. 38.

<sup>2</sup>Stéphane Mallarmé, Oeuvres complètes (Paris: Gallimard, 1945), p. 1564.

<sup>3</sup>Pierre Brunel, Claudé et Shakespeare (Paris: Armand Colin, 1971), p. 18.

anecdote," and as "placé en face de soi-même et choyant dans les mystères." For Mallarmé, this is the introspective hero par excellence, but there is a difference between "Igitur" and Hamlet; the difference is that Igitur's self divides into the body and the spirit--so that the hero becomes pure thought, while Hamlet analyses himself and his situation in relation to what surrounds him.

Mallarmé had pre-conceived theories on Hamlet when, in 1886, he served as critic for the Revue Indépendante and reviewed that play as it was performed by the Comédie-Française. This was the famous production in which the great actor Mounet-Sully had the lead role. Mallarmé included in his review of the play five lines from Théodore de Banville which indicate how fondly Mallarmé thought of Hamlet the hero:

Et cependant, enfant sevré de gloire  
 Tu sens courir par la nuit dérisoire  
 Sur ton front pâle aussi blanc que du lait  
 Le vent qui fait voler ta plume noire  
 Et te caresse, Hamlet, ô jeune Hamlet!<sup>5</sup>

Mallarmé perceives Hamlet as the adolescent who will haunt lofty spirits by the mourning garb he wears and by the struggle he undergoes to affirm himself. Hamlet, for Mallarmé, exteriorizes on the stage the unique character of an intimate and occult tragedy.<sup>6</sup> Hamlet's name on the

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<sup>4</sup>Stéphane Mallarmé, Oeuvres complètes, p. 427.

<sup>5</sup>Banville, quoted by Mallarmé, Revue Indépendante nov. 1886, p. 38.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid.

posters exercised on the critic a fascination which he likened to anguish. He called Hamlet "la pièce par excellence" and Hamlet "le seigneur latent qui ne peut devenir." Mallarmé likens Hamlet to the juvenile shadow of all of us, stemming from myth; he sees the Hamlet drama as a solitary one, and Hamlet the man, as a solitary walker in a labyrinth, prolongs the anguish because of the suspense his unaccomplished mission creates. The Hamlet-type drama seems to be for Mallarmé the very reason for the existence of the stage and the golden realm of thought which the stage protects. The subject is "l'antagonisme des rêves chez l'homme avec les fatalités à son existence départies par le malheur."<sup>7</sup>

Mallarmé found it difficult to review Hamlet without going into his own concept of what the drama should be. He does, however, give credit to Mounet-Sully, who was able to communicate a malevolent mood in the production, thus setting the tone. The actor playing Horatio does not fare as well in the review, neither does the one playing Laertes who, Mallarmé remarks, acts as if his travels and double loss are of special interest to the audience. The Laertes episode has too much relief for Mallarmé's taste because he feels that Hamlet's story should spotlight the

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 39.

imaginary hero, half-mad with abstraction. From Mallarmé's point of view, Laertes' strong character portrayal took away from Hamlet's reality; the central figure in the play is Hamlet, the others are satellites: "tout se meut selon une réciprocité symbolique des types entre eux..."<sup>8</sup>

Mallarmé sees Polonius as the spectre of what Hamlet would become if he had lived. Ophelia is seen as the idealized version of Hamlet's youth (but her effort is spoilt for the critic because the actress playing Ophelia brings to the stage the wordly lessons of the conservatoire.<sup>9</sup>

Laertes' and Ophelia's performances were contrary to what Mallarmé's ideal for the stage was. For him the power of the dream was infinite, and it was exactly the dreamlike quality which he found missing in the performance; he was also critical of the lack of distancing which the too famous actors could not accomplish. The exception was in the way the role of Hamlet was interpreted. Here again Mallarmé has an interesting viewpoint; Hamlet, who is a stranger no matter where he goes, can accomplish this distancing and contrast by his funereal aspect and presence. In addition to the role lending itself to distancing, Mallarmé gave Mounet-Sully credit for being able to place everything in perspective by one gesture, thus cancelling the negative

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<sup>8</sup>Mallarmé, Revue Indépendante, p. 40.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 41.

effect of the too mondaine Comédie-Française troupe and recapturing the atmosphere intended by Shakespeare with masterful tact. Mounet-Sully accomplished this by having looked into the text.<sup>10</sup> The actor had instinctively deciphered the role, and his elegant desolate charm set a pace for each painful quiver.

Ainsi m'apparaît rendue la dualité morbide qui fait le cas d'Hamlet, oui, fou en dehors et sous la flagellation contradictoire du devoir, mais s'il fixe en dedans les yeux sur une image de soi qu'il y garde intacte...prêt toujours à se ressaisir. Joyau intact sous le désastre.<sup>11</sup>

Mallarmé found that Mounet-Sully's role interpretation was one which portrayed outward insanity while at the same time showing that the hero had a capability for introspection into the self. This gave an image of Hamlet that is whole despite his inner conflicts. In this respect, Mallarmé found the tragedian-actor sovereign as mime and thinker, for he interprets Hamlet mentally and outwardly in the way that he exists in the minds of fin de siècle thinkers.

In his review, Mallarmé was explaining how he felt the role should be interpreted. Already the year before, the critic had made known what he considered to be an ideal drama in an article entitled "Richard Wagner: Rêverie d'un poète Français." Remoteness and distancing were the primary requisites which the poet sought in art. Mallarmé wrote

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., p. 42.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

...La certitude de n'être impliquée lui ni personne de ce temps dans aucune entreprise pareille, l'affranchit de toute restriction apportée à son rêve, par le sentiment d'une impéritie et par l'écart des faits.<sup>12</sup>

Hamlet does obey some of the rules of the above formula. and consequently becomes an ideal play. The Hamlet legend is remote in time and place from close-of-the-century Paris, and the ghostly manifestations are acceptable creations of the poetic imagination and of Hamlet's disturbed state. In Mallarmé's opinion, the Comédie-Française detracted from the play by having the actors wear Elizabethan costumes; by doing this the play was encapsulated in the Elizabethan period.

#### SWINBURNE CONTRIBUTES ANALYTICAL VIEWS AND THE LINK BETWEEN THE SYMBOLISTS AND THE RENAISSANCE ENGLISH DRAMA

Mallarmé, who was corresponding with Swinburne, wrote that the Englishman was working on a Shakespeare article as early as 1875, when he had to interrupt it to write Erechtheus.<sup>13</sup> Mallarmé's views on Hamlet were in accordance with Swinburne's view of outward insanity; but deep clarity of vision when it came to looking inward. Swinburne made his view plain in the "Study of Shakespeare":

the signal characteristic of Hamlet's inmost nature is by no means irresolution or hesitation or any form of weakness, but rather the strong conflux of contending forces. That during four whole acts Hamlet cannot or does not make up his mind to any

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<sup>12</sup>Mallarmé. Oeuvres complètes, p. 542. This article also appeared in the Revue Wagnerienne, 8 août, 1885.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid., p. 1620.

direct and deliberate action against his uncle is true enough; true, also we may add that Hamlet had somewhat more of mind than another man and might properly want somewhat more time to do so.<sup>14</sup>

Swinburne disagrees with Goethe's theory that Hamlet's hesitancy is through "innate inadequacy to his task and unconquerable weakness of the will." He also disagrees with Hugo's view that Hamlet failed to act through "inmedicable scepticism of the spirit and through nebulous intellectual refinement."<sup>15</sup> The Swinburne theory disproves Goethe's and Hugo's. In the play, Swinburne finds one practical point which precludes the acceptance of half-heartedness. The practical point is the inclusion of Hamlet's

compulsory expedition to England, his interception of the king's letter and his forgery for a substitute for it against the lives of the king's agents, the ensuing adventure of the sea-fight, with Hamlet's daring act of hot-headed personal intrepidity, his capture and subsequent release on terms giving no less patent proof of his cool-headed and ready-witted courage and resource than the attack had afforded of his physically impulsive and even impetuous hardihood, all this serves no purpose whatever, but that of exhibiting the instant and unscrupulous resolution of Hamlet's character in time of practical need.<sup>16</sup>

Swinburne then comments that Shakespeare could have spared his pains since to most students and actors, Hamlet will remain the embodied emblem of irresolution, half-heartedness and doubt. The key to Hamlet's character as Swinburne sees it

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<sup>14</sup>Algernon Charles Swinburne, The Complete Works, ed. Edmond Gosse, C. B. and James Thomas Wise (New York: Russell and Russell, 1925), p. 120.

<sup>15</sup>Ibid.

is that Hamlet

should seem to accept for himself and even to enforce by reiteration of argument upon his conscience and his reason, some such conviction of suspicion as to his own character, tells much in disfavor than in favor of its truth.<sup>17</sup>

This negates the argument of irresolution and focuses on Hamlet's ability to introspect. Swinburne further explains that a man whose natural temptation was to swerve from action would hardly be the first and last person to suspect his own weakness. He sees Hamlet as

the one only unbiased judge and witness of sufficiently sharp-sighted candor and accuracy to estimate aright his poverty of nature and the malformation of his mind...<sup>18</sup>

and further asserts that Hamlet

with his native bias towards introspection... was assuredly...the one only man to be troubled that such might be indeed the solution to his riddle.<sup>19</sup>

The English critic understood that Hamlet diagnosed himself as irresolute, and speculates that an irresolute character would rationalize that such irresolution would be the solution to a seemingly irremediable situation.

The philosophical beauty of Hamlet does not escape Swinburne, who points out that there are two great passages in that play, and that the "supreme soliloquy" is

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<sup>17</sup>Swinburne, p. 122.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

passed up by actors. Here Swinburne is referring to the soliloquy on "reason and resolution" which eclipses on philosophical and poetical grounds the magnificent monologue on suicide and doubt which is obviously passed up by actors because of its length.<sup>20</sup>

Swinburne is mentioned at this point in the dissertation because he was read by the symbolist group and is often quoted in their criticism. Furthermore, they had the opportunity to converse with him at Mallarmé's. If he did not influence their literary taste, he at least had some influence on what they translated and produced, as will be seen in the following chapters. It is, therefore, no wonder that in 1899 Marcel Schwob, the erudite symbolist and Anglo-ophile, undertook to translate Hamlet, while reiterating Mallarmé's views in the introduction. The translation was approached in such a scholarly manner that it can be deemed a symbolist aesthetic document on Hamlet in French.

#### EEKHOUD CONTRIBUTES AN APPRECIATION OF THE LANGUAGE AND THEMATIC CONTENT OF THE RENAISSANCE ENGLISH DRAMA

Mallarmé's aesthetic opinions and Swinburne's in-depth study on "The Age of Shakespeare," were not isolated examples of symbolist interest in Renaissance English drama. We owe

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

to Georges Eekhoud, the Belgian novelist and symbolist writer, an in-depth study of old England entitled Au Siècle de Shakespeare. In that study, Eekhoud describes in detail life in England, the English countryside, London, life at court, and the theatre.<sup>21</sup> The section on the theatre contains valuable information made available to French readers, which would supplement the works of Taine and Mézière which were also known and quoted by the symbolists.<sup>22</sup>

The Belgian symbolist makes some interesting comments on the conditions under which the Elizabethan theatre unfolded and on the fate of actors in those days. For the most part actors were treated little better than vagabonds and were subject to arrest for vagrancy; yet under Elizabeth and her younger brother, Edward IV, some young boys were taken from the chapel choirs and pressed into the queen's service for acting purposes. They were known as "children of revels to the queen." Eekhoud who studied Hamlet carefully brings that out in the dialogue between Hamlet and Rosencrantz. Hamlet comments on the childishness of those apprentice comedians pressed into the king's service. (Hamlet act II, scene ii). Those children, Eekhoud remarks were made to play parts in such plays as would not be fit for children their age three centuries later, namely: 'Tis Pity She's a Whore by John Ford.

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<sup>21</sup>Georges Eekhoud, Au Siècle de Shakespeare (Bruxelles: Paul Lacomblez, 1893), p. 131.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid. p. 132.

For the sake of his readers, he describes The Globe and the Black Friar theatres, where Shakespeare's plays were held, in primitive conditions. Boxes and galleries surrounded the floor called "yard" because it resembled the yards of inns in which the plays were held; it was also known as cockpit because cockfights were held in those inns. There were neither benches nor seats; the spectators stood, without shelter from a ceiling, without a floor, often exposed to rain and mud. Those who occupied the "ground" were called the groundlings.<sup>23</sup>

The Black Friars had a ceiling, but its similarity with The Globe was that the stage was not set apart by the orchestra except for a few stakes. The musicians were seated in a cage overlooking the stage, which had two levels: heaven and hell. When the play was a tragedy, the edges of the stage and the sky were draped in black instead of the usual blue.<sup>24</sup>

Some privileged spectators were allowed to sit on the stage; since there were no benches, these gentlemen lay on the straw. This reclining position was not unusual for the gentry of those days, as the few stools available were reserved for the ladies. In support of this, Eekhoud cites the scene of the play in Hamlet (Act III, scene 11) in which

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 135.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., p. 137.

Hamlet tells Ophelia, "Lady, Shall I lie in your lap?" Eekhoud informs us that those privileged enough to recline on the stage usually lent a hand to the stage hands, and he quotes Dekker on the subject "...by sitting on the stage you have a signed patent to stand at the helm to steer the passage of the scene." This latter quote by Dekker according to H. Taine whom Eekhoud cites, seems to establish the existence of some mobile scenery at this early date.<sup>25</sup> Everyone on the stage helped; this is why Eekhoud comes to the conclusion that Hamlet drags out the corpse of Polonius to lend a hand, and Falstaff carries the corpse of Harry Percy in the same manner. Eekhoud, who knew every line of Hamlet, comments on Hamlet's recommendations to the clown of the troupe: to speak only the words assigned to him, because on the Elizabethan stage the clown often improvised for his own benefit in accordance to the responsiveness of the crowd.

What Eekhoud found amazing was that the public theatre appealed to the nobility, who itself participated in the elaborate "masques" at court; yet those bedecked and bejeweled spectators preferred to patronize the theatre where often a bucket was placed on the ground for the beer drinkers' use.<sup>26</sup> Eekhoud attributes this love for the theatre to the

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<sup>25</sup>Ibid, p. 139.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., p. 144.

fact that the Renaissance people "felt" more than they pondered. In his own words:

Tout ce monde de la Renaissance ressent encore plus qu'il ne pense, et pense tout haut et vibre et s'épanche.<sup>27</sup>

At the English theatre, outbreaks of violence were not unknown, and an actor playing an unpopular part ran the risk of being clubbed.

In addition to Au Siècle de Shakespeare, Eekhoud contributed a series of articles entitled "La Pléiade Shakespearienne," which appeared at intervals in La Société Nouvelle. The articles discussed Marlowe, Beaumont and Fletcher, and John Ford. From reading Eekhoud, we know that he has read Swinburne's work on Marlowe and shares his view on the language of Tamburlaine.

Swinburne admire beaucoup ce Tamerlan aux Barbares opulences; il vante "cette truculence titanesque qui chasse come un simoun à travers l'arène sonore de ses dix actes féroces."<sup>28</sup>

Eekhoud himself finds that the words with which Marlowe endows Tamburlaine are poetic cascades of beautiful sounds:

Et cette éblouissante déclaration d'amour du fruste Tamerlan à Zenocrate, dans laquelle il lui promet des chars d'ivoire traînés par des cerfs blancs comme le lait pur, pour lui faire traverser les étangs de glace et escalader les montagnes dont sa chaude beauté fera fondre les couronnes neigeuses!<sup>29</sup>

Eekhoud's appreciation of Marlowe's language does not limit

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., p. 144.

<sup>28</sup> Georges Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne," La Société Nouvelle, année 1895, p. 192.

itself to Tamburlaine; further in this dissertation his comments on Edward II and Doctor Faustus will be discussed in detail. The Eekhoud criticism in "La Pléiade Shakespearienne" is original in that it manages to isolate an element for discussion which had heretofore not been singled out before: strange love. The Belgian saw that the most poignant of the Elizabethan dramas had themes that dealt with strange love. Eekhoud himself was so fascinated with this subject that in 1899 he published his own version of strange love. His book was called Escal-Vigor and the theme centered around a young nobleman who unashamedly confesses his love to his idol, in this case a peasant youth. Eekhoud was a novelist with the stature of a dramatist in his ability to depict character and to evoke anguish and passion,<sup>30</sup> but he devoted many hours to the study and translation of Renaissance English plays which fascinated him. His first attempt at translating an English play centered on The Duchess of Malfi; which was published in Brussels in 1890. Doubtless Eekhoud was influenced by Swinburne<sup>31</sup> who places Webster second to Shakespeare in the galaxy of English poets,<sup>32</sup> and credits him with the ability to depict the most grotesque events without violating good taste.

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<sup>30</sup>Remy de Gourmont, Le Livre des Masques (Paris: Société du Mercure de France, 1908-10), p. 124.

<sup>31</sup>Georges Eekhoud, Edouard II, tragédie de Christophe Marlowe précédé d'une étude sur l'auteur (Bruxelles: Société Nouvelle, 1896), p. 30.

<sup>32</sup>Swinburne, "The Age of Shakespeare," p. 281.

One can understand why The Duchess of Malfi would appeal to the symbolists and to Georges Eekhoud in particular. It is an introspective and passionate play that falls within the theme of strange love: both physical and incestuous. An examination of some key passages in the translation indicates how successfully Eekhoud was able to read, and then translate, Webster's great work.

In the Eekhoud version, the Duchess appears as a great lady who understood herself and her rank, as well as her overwhelming passion for a man who is not her equal by birth; in Renaissance days such a misalliance was considered anathema. The Duchess rationalizes her passion by convincing herself and her lover that he is her equal by virtue if not by birth. She declares herself unto Antonio without any feminine wiles, while at the same time lamenting her birth that is keeping him from admitting his love. Eekhoud translates:

Tu m'as laissé sans coeur; le mien loge dans ta  
poitrine. J'espère qu'il multipliera les amours...

The beloved steward trembles at the words and the Duchess continues to plead:

Ne fais pas de ton coeur un si piteux morceau de  
chair qu'il ne me craigne plus qu'il ne m'aime!

The Duchess calls him "seigneur" and begs him to have faith as she unblushingly takes him for her husband.

Homme, réveille, réveille toi! Je dépouille ici  
tout vain prestige et ne t'apparais que comme une  
veuve qui réclame un époux...<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>33</sup> Georges Eekhoud, La Duchesse d'Amalfi, La Société  
Nouvelle, année 1893, p. 112.

The above declaration of the Duchess to Antonio is preceded by the following words:

Aujourd'hui elle paie ses dettes. O notre malheur à nous qui sommes de haute naissance! Forcées de nous déclarer parce que personne n'ose se déclarer à nous!<sup>34</sup>

Conscious of her rank, she had started to speak to Antonio by referring to herself a "she" and "us of high birth" and "we". When Eekhoud translated the passage, he very sensitively picked the "notre" and the "nous" for the beginning of the confession and ended with the humble "je" after the Duchess had declared herself.

After her marriage to Antonio, when she has already given him three children, the Duchess' love and concern for him show in Eekhoud's translation:

vous avez raison de m'aimer, Antonio, je vous ai introduit dans mon coeur avant que vous ayez daigné m'en demander les clefs!

She understands that love mixed with danger is of the sweetest kind. That was quite an insight into the nature of love on the part of Webster at the early date when he wrote the play. Her foreboding was justified because at that very moment her brother Ferdinand enters her chamber and overhears her:

Un jour mes frères vous surprendront dans votre sommeil. La présence du duc à la cour aurait dû, me semble-t-il, vous retenir dans votre propre lit. Mais vous m'objecterez que le plus doux est l'amour mélangé d'inquiétude...Avez vous perdu votre langue! A la grâce de Dieu. Que je meure ou que je vive, je vivrai et mourrais en princesse...

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<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 112.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 243.

In the last two lines, the Duchess knows she has been discovered and resolves to die stoically, as a princess. Webster opposes her stoicism to Ferdinand's sadism, and Eekhoud captures in translation Ferdinand's obsession with his sister. It is with the blood of their [his] race that Ferdinand is obsessed. Her blood, body and soul have been defiled by the misalliance:

Malédiction sur elle! Que j'épargne son âme! Mais à l'époque où le sang de notre race y coulait noble et immaculé son coeur valait mieux que son âme, que cette âme qu'il loge à present, cette âme pourrie que tu voudrais consoler.<sup>36</sup>

Those are blasphemous words coming from a Christian, but Ferdinand is not thinking rationally. His is a feeling of intense rage which demands revenge, so he inflicts mental torture in addition to her physical suffering.

Eekhoud finds the scene of the Duchess' death to be extraordinary, yet typical of the English theatre in which naked realism mingles with poetic beauty:

Dans La Duchesse d'Amalfi de John Webster, parmi les images funéraires qui phosphorent dans les apprêts du supplice de la Duchesse, la patiente, la gorge déjà serrée dans le fatal lacet, fait cette recommandation à sa camériste. "N'oublie pas de donner un peu de sirop à mon petit garçon pour son rhume, et fais reciter ses prières à ma petite fille avant de la coucher."<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne", La Société Nouvelle, année 1897, p. 106.

Webster had a tendency to depict sudden repentance in villains, and in The Duchess of Malfi he gives Ferdinand a moment of extraordinary insight into his motives: first, incest and second, greed. When Ferdinand hears that his murder sentence has been carried out, he becomes mad with grief:

Que je revoie son visage!...Pourquoi n'as-tu point pris pitié d'elle? Qu'el homme excellent et accompli tu eusses fait si tu l'avais cachée dans quelque couvent! ou même si, puisant l'audace dans la bonté de la cause tu t'étais jeté, l'épée nue, entre sa faiblesse et ma vengeance...

Ferdinand recognizes that his actions were prompted at a time when his reason was shattered by his jealousy:

Dans un moment d'égarement je t'ai commandé d'aller tuer ce que j'avais de plus cher au monde et tu m'as obéi. Rapelle-toi le cas. En quoi m'atteignait sa mésalliance. Je confesserai, à la rigueur, mon espoir de la voir rester veuve: ses biens ayant dû revenir, dans ce cas, à mes enfants...

He also recognizes that his anger was not caused altogether by greed.

Mais quelle a été la cause de mon ressentiment? Son mariage. Il creusa dans mon coeur le lit d'un fleuve de fiel...<sup>38</sup>

Self-knowledge is attained by Ferdinand at the moment his world has crumbled. This is his last lucid moment before he plunges irrevocably into madness. It is at this moment that Webster chooses to bring us deep within his soul.

Georges Eekhoud explored the subject of strange love both

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid., p. 271.

critically and creatively. He wrote a poignant study on Marlowe<sup>39</sup> which preceded his translation of Edward II. The critic approaches the subject of the homosexuality of the deposed and martyred English king with great sensitivity. Eekhoud's sensitive understanding of homosexuality caused him to be prosecuted at law when his book Escal-Vigor was published in 1899. He had been accused of preaching pederasty and the great literary men of his time came to his rescue: José de Hérédia, Maurice Barrès, Anatole France, Emile Zola, Catulle Mendès. Escal-Vigor was "exculpated from the accusation of intentional pornography and its gifted author came short of apotheosis on the spot."<sup>41</sup>

When Eekhoud translated Edward II, he called it the most perfect of Marlowe's works because he had a deep understanding of human nature, which he reveals in his own work as well as in his analysis of the work of others. About Marlowe, he writes:

De toutes les pièces de Marlowe, Edouard II est peut-être la plus parfaite. Elle soutien même brillamment la comparaison avec les chefs-d'oeuvre de Shakespeare. L'abdication forcée d'Edouard II est bien plus pathétique que celle de Richard II,

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<sup>39</sup>Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne," La Société Nouvelle, année 1895, pp.189-202.

<sup>40</sup>Georges Eekhoud, Escal-Vigor (Paris: Mercure de France, 1899).

<sup>41</sup>Editor's introduction to Georges Eekhoud, A Strange Love. (Panurge Press, 1930), p.9.

dans le drame shakespearien de ce nom. Et dans tout le théâtre il n'y a rien d'analogue à la poignante mort d'Edouard. L'action, très intéressante progresse de scène en scène depuis l'insubordination des feudataires du roi au retour de Gaveston, son favori, jusqu'à la mort d'Edouard, qui je le répète l'emporte en pathétisme, en émotion terrifiante sur n'importe qu'elle scène de toute la littérature dramatique.<sup>42</sup>

Eekhoud analyses that tragedy in detail, starting with the note pregnant with meaning calling Gaveston home, and Gaveston's ecstatic reflections when he reads the king's command which Eekhoud translates carefully:

Mon père est décédé. Viens, Gaveston, partage le trône avec ton meilleur ami.

and Gaveston ecstatically relishes the king's words:

Ah mots qui m'enivrent de délices! Quelle plus grande félicité pour Gaveston que de vivre le favori d'un roi! Doux prince, j'acours. Ces lignes, ces lignes de ta main, ces lignes amoureuses m'auraient déterminé à nager depuis la France jusqu'à cette grève, et comme Léandre, haletant sur la plage à l'approche de son amante... Que m'importe la haine de l'univers entier pourvu que je puisse reposer sur son coeur!...<sup>43</sup>

Eekhoud goes into detail when he analyses Gaveston's reaction; he quotes and comments on the entire passage of fantasized pleasures Gaveston will provide the king in order to retain his favor. Gaveston will set the mood:

Il me faut des poètes voluptueux, de beaux esprits, des musiciens, qui n'auront qu'à pincer une certaine fibre pour soumettre le roi à toutes mes fantaisies. La musique et la poésie font des délices.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Georges Eekhoud, Edouard II, tragédie de Christophe Marlowe précédé d'une étude sur l'auteur (Bruxelles: Société Nouvelle, 1896), p. 41.

<sup>43</sup> Eekhoud, Edouard II, La Société Nouvelle, année 1896, p. 621.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

At night Gaveston will provide the king with sumptuous entertainment:

Aussi le soir, je lui offrirai des masques à  
l'Italienne, de tendres discours, des comédies,  
de vivant tableaux...

In the daytime, Gaveston will turn the palace grounds into a sylvan scene:

Et le jour, lorsqu'il se perdra dans ses jardins, mes  
pages déguisés en nymphes et en sylphides viendront  
le lutiner, et mes hommes métamorphosés en satyres  
paissant le gazon des pelouses, accorderont leurs  
pieds fourchus en une ronde antique.

Eekhoud excuses his inability to render Marlowe's exquisite verse in French as beautifully as it is done in English:

Sometimes a lovely boy in Dian's shape  
With hair that gilds the water as it glides

He translates the above passage in prose in the following way:

D'aventure un aimable enfant, sous les traits de  
Diane, dorant l'onde furtive aux reflets de sa  
blonde chevelure...<sup>45</sup>

and he apologizes for not being able to render them in French as effectively as they are done in English. The translator appreciated the sensuality of image created by the language of Marlowe.

In the next scene, Gaveston meets the king and the fierce barons, who declare their anger at the king's broken promise and the return of the abhorred favorite. Eekhoud analyzes the actions of the king who remains staunch to

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<sup>45</sup> Georges Eekhoud, Edouard II, La Société Nouvelle, année 1896, p. 621.

his friend:

Le roi menace le récalcitrant et s'opiniâtre dans son attachement pour le favori. Il bravera, il mettra au défi tous les seigneurs de son royaume, il tiendra tête à son peuple, à son église, à sa reine. Il n'a d'attachement que pour celui que tous abhorrent et méprisent, il verse devant lui son trésor, jette à ses pieds les dignités, lui donne son sceau, se donne lui-même.<sup>46</sup>

Though Eekhoud enumerates the king's actions he does not pass judgment on the man who is so beguiled by his loved one that he has lost his sense of perspective: Edward II rejects his French queen; dissent ensues; the favorite is exiled; and Mortimer's following triumphs. Eekhoud writes about Edward II's actions after Gaveston is captured:

...Il faut lire ces alternatives de feinte soumission et de révolte manifeste, il faut entendre hurler et gémir la passion du roi, il faut assister à ces efforts des impulsives et fougueuses natures pour se contraindre, il faut les voir s'effrener, se débrider l'instant d'après.<sup>47</sup>

Eekhoud cannot but pronounce his admiration for what he called "une oeuvre prodigieuse," pure art, which has escaped the control of moralists, and bids us listen to the king's reaction when he hears that Gaveston has been butchered:

Le Roi (s'agenouillant) Par la terre, notre mère commune, par le ciel et les astres qui l'animent, par ma dextre et le glaive de mes aïeux, et par tous les prestiges attachés à ma couronne, je veux immoler à mon Gaveston autant de têtes et de vies que je possède de manoirs, de castels, de cités et de bastilles! (Il se relève.)<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>46</sup>Eekhoud, Edouard II, précédé par une étude sur l'auteur, p. 44.

<sup>47</sup>Ibid, p. 45.

<sup>48</sup>Eekhoud, Edouard II, Société Nouvelle, année 1896, p. 803.

In the study, Eekhoud shows real compassion for the captive king at the castle of Berkeley; he comments that the description of Edward II's calvary was written by Marlowe to glorify the martyrdom of the king who was smothered beneath a table by Mortimer's assassins. He brings out that in analogous situations in Shakespeare, there are no similar instances of a crescendo in physical torture and mental despair; yet Edward II acknowledged his fatal love to the very end.

The translator of Edward II understood that the character of the king was treated by Marlowe with great compassion. He points out that there are no sermons in the play. This shows how tolerant and generous the pagan spirit of the sixteenth century was, and especially Marlowe's spirit, which could not bear the prejudices of the masses. By Marlowe's account, Eekhoud finds the passion of Edward II so sincere, so imperative and so completely devastating that one can excuse and even side with him--against the treacherous queen and the wicked barons--especially since the guilty king expiates for his sins by a long agony of humiliations and torture. He compares the love of Edward II for Gaveston to Nessus' tunic enveloping Hercules. When Gaveston is dead, the king takes on another favorite, thus remaining true to his nature.<sup>49</sup>

Eekhoud sums up his analysis of the play by showing that in the drama as perhaps in real life, Edward II was his own

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<sup>49</sup>Eekhoud, Edouard II, étude sur l'auteur, p. 47.

executioner, rendering censors and judges unnecessary. What Eekhoud felt about Marlowe's drama is best described in his own words:

...Noble et tragique théâtre que n'apprécieront jamais les consciences pharisiennes! Théâtre de vie, théâtre de révolte, théâtre de Prométhées rompant toutes les entraves et ravissant tous les feux, préférant peut-être les caresses lacérantes du vautour aux lécherries des amours domestiques et contrôlées! La soif de disposer complètement de soi-même!<sup>50</sup>

Georges Eekhoud was able to contribute another critical observation to his readers. He observed that English Renaissance drama contained some of the purest elements of friendship, that type of friendship which was known in olden days, and which has almost disappeared from our mores.

Rien de plus fervent et de plus enflammé dans l'expression de la tendresse d'homme à homme que les sonnets de Shakespeare.<sup>51</sup>

Eekhoud selects examples from Shakespeare: Hamlet and Horatio, Brutus and Cassius, Achilles and Patroclus; the critic devotes a section of "La Pléiade Shakespearienne" to Beaumont and Fletcher who were the authors of plays glorifying friendship, and who themselves were bound by a devotion which never faltered. According to Eekhoud, Beaumont and Fletcher have created pairs of friends who were even more closely bound than they were to each other:

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<sup>50</sup>Eekhoud, Edouard II, étude sur l'auteur, p. 48.

<sup>51</sup>Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne", La Société Nouvelle, année 1896, p. 1974.

Par la chaleur et l'énergie de la tendresse, même  
par les délicatesses et les subtiles intimités,  
par les entières communions d'âmes, leurs amis  
égalent et dépassent quelquefois les amants.<sup>52</sup>

Georges Eekhoud was so fascinated by Beaumont and Fletcher's devoted characters that he translated Philaster which contained an example of excessive platonic love. In that play, the page Bellario has built a cult to his master which has never been matched. At the end of the play, the devoted Bellaro is found to be a woman, but until the end, nothing betrayed Bellario's disguise but a highly emotional and passionate language which was not often found in men:

O mon cher maître, si j'ai commis une faute, c'est par ignorance. Daigne m'instruire; au besoin, ma volonté suppléera à mon intelligence. L'âge et l'expérience enrichiront mon âme de plus de talents. Et si j'ai réellement commis une action blamable, ne me considère point pour cela comme un vaurien incorrigible. Quel patron poussera la sévérité à l'égard de son apprenti jusqu'à le renvoyer sans un avertissement, dès la première peccadille? Oh, inflige-moi plutôt n'importe quelle correction et je te promets de m'amender; oh, tout plutôt que de me chasser, de me détacher de toi; ô maître, je t'en supplie...<sup>53</sup>

The weeping page begs his master to inflict upon him any punishment rather than to send him away; Bellario was being placed in the service of the beautiful Princess Arethuse by Philaster, his master. Though Philaster is ready to shed tears at his beloved page's sorrow, he has no choice but

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<sup>52</sup>Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne", La Société Nouvelle, année 1896, p. 174.

<sup>53</sup>Georges Eekhoud, trad. Philaster ou l'amour qui saigne (Bruxelles: Bureau du Coq Rouge, 1895), p. 34.

to place his most trusted and cherished follower with the Princess at the same time as he is telling him this:

Ton affection plaide avec tant éloquence pour que je te garde auprès de moi, que, je t'assure, je suis aussi prêt à verser des larmes en songeant à la séparation.

It was not considered unmanly for a friend to weep at his friend's sorrow, and Philaster does just that.

Hélas! Je ne te chasse pas; tu sais bien que ce sont mes intérêts qui t'appellent ailleurs. Puis, si tu vis auprès d'elle c'est comme si tu logeais chez moi. Mets-toi ça dans la tête. Il en est bien ainsi. Et quand le moment sera venu où tu auras bien rempli la lourde mission dont j'avais chargé un être si faible que toi, c'est avec joie que je te reprendrai de nouveau; je te le promets, je te le jure sur ma vie...Non, ne pleure plus, mon tendre garçon! Sèche tes larmes...Il est plus que temps de te rendre auprès de la princesse.<sup>54</sup>

Firmly, but understandingly, Philaster sends his precious "tendre garçon" to live with the woman he adores.

The devotion of the page knows no bounds; though he is being sent away to further his master's love suite, Bellario shows no resentment--only sorrow:

Eh bien, je pars. Mais puisque je dois vous quitter, cher Seigneur, et que nul ne peut me dire où je vivrai encore pour vous servir avec le plus de dévouement, agreez cette prière d'adieu: Le ciel bénisse vos amours, vos combats, tous vos desseins! Les malades que vous aimez, puissent-ils obtenir leur guérison! Que le ciel haïsse ceux que vous maudissez, fusse-je même un de ceux-la!<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Georges Eekhoud, trad. Philaster ou l'amour qui saigne (Bruxelles: Bureau du Coq Rouge, 1895), p. 35.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

He even implores heaven to bless his master's struggles in love as well as in battle--and Philaster is not insensitive to his page's devotion:

L'attachement de certains pages pour leur seigneur est étrange. J'ai lu des merveilles sur ce chapitre. Toutefois, si j'en crois ses discours et sa physiologie, cet enfant-là accomplirait par amour pour moi des exploits inconnus dans l'histoire. Un jour viendra, j'espère, où je pourrai royalement reconnaître sa fidélité.<sup>56</sup>

Eekhoud translated the whole of Philaster very sensitively. The affection of the page for the master and the master's appreciation are rendered in a simple prose style.

In his analysis of Philaster, Eekhoud calls the love of Bellario for Philaster so absolute and superhuman that it does not hinder the Princess who will marry Philaster. On finding out that Bellario is a woman, the Princess comes out with the most surprising lines in dramatic history as she takes Bellario by the hand:

Eh bien, viens, vis avec moi, vis aussi librement que moi-même. Celle qui aime mon seigneur, maudite soit l'épouse qui voudrait la haïr!<sup>57</sup>

The above are the words of a woman to a woman.

Georges Eekhoud managed to have Philaster staged at the Odéon, on April 1, 1897. As was the custom at the Odéon, the play was preceded by a lecture. This time it was given by

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<sup>56</sup> Ibid., p. 35.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid. p. 134.

Leopold Lacour.<sup>58</sup> The Annales du théâtre described the address as being elegant and eloquent; the speaker talked of Shakespeare and his influence on the English theatre, and pointed out the difference between him and Beaumont and Fletcher. Lacour explained that the significance of the latter two lay in the fact that they highlighted pure and platonic love, and brought to the stage a different type of woman:

la femme sacrifiée et glorieuse, faisant abnégation de ses affections personnelles pour faire le bonheur de son maître et ami.<sup>59</sup>

The symbolists as a group were interested in unusual women who were guided by their convictions, no matter what the circumstances were: Beatrice in The Cenci, Annabella in 'Tis Pity She's a Whore, Isabel in Measure for Measure, Bellario in Philaster; they can be credited with having translated these plays in an effort to depart from the insignificant drama that then flourished on the Paris stage.

Eekhoud's sensitive and original criticism is important because of his interaction with other symbolists, who read his work, as he read theirs. Both Maeterlinck and Lugné-Poe who were to become keystones of the symbolist theatre knew Eekhoud. Therefore, it is not at all strange that when they ventured into the production of Renaissance English drama, they selected 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Venice Preserved since both plays revolve around strange love relationships.

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<sup>58</sup>Noel and Stoullig, Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique, 1897, p. 166.

<sup>59</sup>Ibid., p. 167.

CHAPTER TWO

## THE SYMBOLISTS REVIVE THE PUPPET THEATRE

During the early days of the symbolist phenomenon, there were many meetings, discussions and exchanges of ideas, but there was no symbolist stage to serve as an avenue for the production of their drama. Mallarmé had already made known his view of what the ideal drama should be when he wrote "Richard Wagner Rêverie d'un poète français." The requisites were remoteness and distancing: "...la certitude de n'être impliqué, lui ni personne de ce temps dans une entreprise pareille."<sup>1</sup>

In 1888, a group which called itself Le Petit Théâtre fulfilled this exacting requirement, and in addition for its third performance, it performed none other play than Shakespeare's The Tempest. Thus the Petit Théâtre was a pioneer in the revival of the Elizabethan drama. The Petit Théâtre was the group headed by Henri Signoret, the founder of the Revue de chefs-d'oeuvre et de curiosités littéraires. The theatre was located in the Galerie Vivienne<sup>2</sup> which runs between the Rue Vivienne and the Rue de Petits Champs just above the Palais Royal and the Banque de France.

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<sup>1</sup>Mallarmé, Oeuvres complètes, p. 542.

<sup>2</sup>John Henderson, "Mysticism, Mime, Marionettes," The First Avant Garde (London: George G. Harrap & Co., 1971), p. 122.

THE PETIT THEATRE DES MARIONETTES STAGES THE TEMPEST

Paul Margueritte, well known in symbolist circles for contributing Pierrot assassin de sa femme to the pantomime,<sup>3</sup> wrote a monograph giving us a detailed account of the origins of the enterprise of Henri Signoret.

The Petit-Théâtre was inaugurated with the productions of Cervantes' Le Gardien vigilant and Aristophanes' Les Oiseaux. At the time Paul Margueritte gives us this detailed account:

Le Petit-Théâtre était charmant. Décors de Rochegrosse et de Doucet, marionettes fort belles et donnant l'illusion de la vie, voix justes et familière de lecteurs tels que les poètes Maurice Bouchor, Raoul Ponchon, Amédée Piegéron et Félix Rabbe--gestes, couleurs et paroles--se fondait dans un ensemble amical et plein d'harmonie.<sup>4</sup>

The harmony of Henri Signoret's enterprise was arrived at by the concerted efforts of artists in all disciplines of the performing and creative arts.

Paul Margueritte gives us some background on Henri Signoret, whose ambition had been to bring to his public the revelation of the Indian theatre, the marvels of the Greek theatre and the Mystères of the Middle Ages. Signoret, who was already publishing the Revue des chefs-d'oeuvre wanted to capitalize on the idea and found a theatre of master-pieces. The idea at first seemed impractical to his friends who objected as follows:

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<sup>3</sup>Jacques Robichez, Le Symbolisme au théâtre (Paris: L'Arche, 1957), p. 77.

<sup>4</sup>Paul Margueritte, Le Petit-Théâtre (Théâtre des Marionettes), (Paris: Librairie Illustrée, 1888), p. 5.

comment donner à dix ou vingt acteurs l'éducation qui leur permettrait d'interpréter, avec une entière connaissance et dans un fidèle esprit, les chefs-d'oeuvre dramatiques de tous les temps et de toutes les races? Il arrive que le jeu d'un excellent comédien le met en relief au détriment de son rôle.<sup>5</sup>

For Signoret and his friends, the actor was detrimental to the role. The actors having been eliminated, the marionettes remained as a possibility.

...Elles sont dociles, infatigable, toujours prêtes. Et tandis que le nom et le visage trop connus d'un comédien de chair et d'os imposent au public une obsession qui rend impossible ou très difficile l'illusion, les fantoches impersonnels, êtres de bois et de cartons, possèdent une vie falote et mystérieuse. Leur allure de vérité surprend, inquiète. Dans leurs gestes essentiels tient l'expression complète des sentiments humains.<sup>6</sup>

Paul Margueritte was not the only one to feel that the real live actors detracted from role interpretation; he goes on to cite an article very favorable to marionettes written by Anatole France, who at the time was publishing a column in Le Temps under the heading of La Vie littéraire:

S'il faut dire toute ma pensée, les acteurs me gâtent la comédie. J'entends les bons acteurs. Je m'accomoderais encore des autres! Mais ce sont les artistes excellents, comme il s'en trouve à la Comédie-Française, que décidément je ne puis souffrir. Leur talent est trop grand: il couvre tout. Il n'y a qu'eux. Leur personne efface l'oeuvre qu'ils représentent.<sup>7</sup>

Anatole France was of the same opinion as Paul Margueritte that flesh and blood actors detracted from the role, and

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<sup>5</sup>Margueritte, p. 7.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 8.

<sup>7</sup>Anatole France, La Vie littéraire (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1888), p. 148.

Margueritte felt that the marionette was superior in certain types of performances. He cites Les Oiseaux as an example:

Là, le raccourci ajoutait à l'illusion. Ces masques de comédie antique, ces mouvements simples et rares, ces poses de statues, donnaient au spectacle une grâce singulière; le comique voulu par le poète s'y tempérerait de gravité hiératique, et ce fut avec raison que M. Jules Lemaître écrivit, à ce propos: "...ce théâtre de marionettes est encore ce qui peut nous donner l'idée la plus approchante de la représentation d'une comédie grecque de Péricles."<sup>8</sup>

Signoret's dream had come true; the marionette theatre was a reality; and it had not been easy to pass from the dream of such an enterprise to its performance. "Tout était à créer, à trouver."<sup>9</sup> Everything had to be created or searched for. The idea of the pupazzi was discarded, as was the idea of puppets tied to strings. What was needed was a sophisticated marionette, guided by interior invisible wires. Fortunately, Henri Signoret had the support of his friends:

M. Signoret rencontra l'appui le plus dévoué, non seulement chez les poètes et écrivains de ses amis, qui consentirent à prêter leurs concours comme lecteurs, mais encore chez un groupe de jeunes artistes, pour la plupart élèves de l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts, des collaborateurs précieux, à qui M. Signoret dut de voir exécuter la partie matérielle de son oeuvre.<sup>10</sup>

A world in microcosm had to be created for the Petit-Théâtre. Painters were needed for the décors, translators, readers, musicians, and of course technicians for the marionettes.

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<sup>8</sup> Margueritte, p. 8.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

Altogether, a staff of forty was involved; all were completely devoted and materially disinterested.<sup>11</sup> A student at the Ecole des Beaux Arts, M. Leon Baille engineered the physical theatre itself.<sup>12</sup> Baille was one of the best puppet technicians of the troupe and understood the special need of the marionettes.

A good description of the Baille theatre is given by Charles Le Goffic who wrote an erudite and well-documented article in the Revue Encyclopédique of June 18, 1894, on the Petit-Théâtre. Le Goffic describes the stage as a cube which rested directly on the boards of the stage, but with an opening of 75 to 80 centimeters large remaining underneath; in that space the machinistes or puppet technicians worked.<sup>13</sup> The bases of the marionettes were also placed in this opening, with suspended bridges connected to the two halves of the stage. The marionettes rose and descended on those suspended bridges; but there was an inconvenience to this whole procedure. This was that the spectators were forced to be on the same level as the stage.<sup>14</sup> After construction, the cubic theatre had to be decorated. From Paul Margueritte's monograph, we learn that the cimaise and

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<sup>11</sup>Ibid.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>13</sup>Charles le Goffic, "Le Petit-Théâtre des marionettes," La Revue Encyclopédique, 18 juin, 1894, p.254.

<sup>14</sup>Ibid.

the encadrement were painted by M. Daniel Monfried, and the lower part of the framework by Ludovic Dubois and Gibelin cadet.<sup>15</sup>

Paul Margueritte also gives us an interesting account of the mechanism of the marionette which was invented by M. Edmé Armand, also a student at the Ecole des Beaux Arts; but it was perfected by M. Belloc, who won an award for his medallions at the Salon of 1888. The system used for the marionettes was both simple and ingenious. As an eye witness, here is the account Margueritte gives us of what he saw in the workshop:

...Prenons, dans l'atelier, une des poupées, à l'état embryonnaire. Nous voyons, supportée par une tige de fer traversant un socle creux, une planchette de bois, à laquelle s'adaptent des bras et des jambes, également en bois, et que font mouvoir des ficelles. Celles-ci aboutissent, à l'intérieur du socle, à des pédales que font jouer les machinistes; à chaque pression de la pédale correspond un mouvement. Il y en a de plusieurs sortes: abaissement de la tête, flexion des bras et des coudes à droite et à gauche et en avant, flexion des genoux pour s'asseoir et des jambes pour marcher.<sup>16</sup>

The marionettes were constructed from an iron bar going through a hollow base, and a wooden plank to which were attached the arms and the legs which could then be moved by wires ending inside the base. The first rehearsal was a strange sight; the marionettes were still skeletons but their movements followed the intonations of the reader.<sup>17</sup> The

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<sup>15</sup>Margueritte, p. 10.

<sup>16</sup>Ibid.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 11.

skeleton now needed a body; and we have a detailed account of how the bodies were made up: in a plaster mold layers of paper were pasted together giving a kind of cardboard appearance; this material was used for the front of the body. In another mold, by the same procedure, the back of the body was made. The wooden board was adapted to this frame and then joined together carefully at the edges. They were then decked by Mme Billat the costume designer who matched colors dexterously. That, however, was not all that was needed: the wooden hands still had to be carved, the plaster legs still needed to be done, and the head of plaster and étoupe needed to be shaped.<sup>18</sup>

The heads for Les Oiseaux and Le Gardien vigilant which required talented sculptors were crafted by Armand and Belloc; Belloc, the student of Mercié, had already done an excellent medallion for the salon of 1888, sculptured the heads for La Tempête which were then painted by Maillol.<sup>19</sup>



Dans La Tempête.

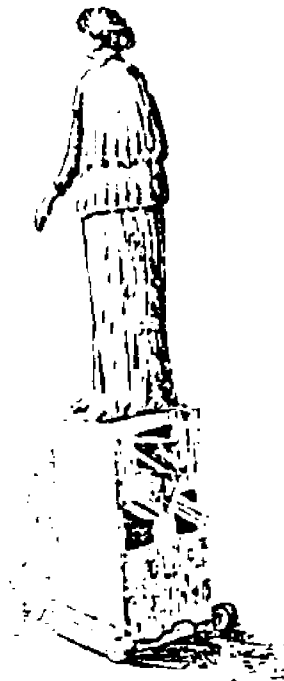
Dans Les Oiseaux.

Têtes pour les marionnettes du Petit-Théâtre.

<sup>18</sup>Margueritte, p. 11.

<sup>19</sup>Ibid.

The mechanism of the marionettes still had to be perfected, as we are told by Charles Le Goffic. They were on a base that was too narrow, and the iron bar which fixed the body to it was too high; this gave the marionettes a disagreeable sense of agitation. For The Tempest, the marionettes had been perfected; the base had been raised, thus lessening the oscillations of the body. The puppets were thus solid while keeping the 75 to 80 centimetres in height. The left and right head movements were added to the up and down ones, and finally, two more levers on the keyboards permitted the heretofore immobile legs to activate. The marionettes were now able to advance by a simple movement of the base.<sup>20</sup> Le Goffic includes a picture of a perfected marionette in his article.



Une marionnette  
(Le Goffic, dans *Les Merveilles de l'Art*.)

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<sup>20</sup>Le Goffic, p. 254.

The Petit-Théâtre was becoming quite sophisticated. For the production of La Tempête it inaugurated its orchestra: there were six musicians, a quatuor à cordes, a flute and a harp (invisible backstage). For the first performance, there was also acquired a small keyboard instrument analogous to the cembalo of the gypsies, the celesto, having a range of two and a half octaves and the harmonious tone which gave it its name. The celesto had been lent to Signoret by M. Merklin, an organ maker. The Petit-Théâtre also acquired two female and one male singer.<sup>21</sup> Also, Paul Margueritte's account gives credit to those who took part in the production of Le Gardien Vigilant and Les Oiseaux. The translation for the Spanish play was by Amédée Pagès, and for the Greek play by Félix Rabbe (whom Margueritte identified as the translator of Shelly and Marlowe). For the Spanish play M. Rochegrosse did the street scene in Madrid; for the Greek play, M. Doucet painted a Greek countryside scene consisting of two exquisite canvasses: "deux toiles mieux que des décors, de vrais tableaux."<sup>22</sup> M. Cassimir Baille wrote the music for the final chorus of Le Gardien vigilant and the tender

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<sup>21</sup>Le Goffic, p. 255.

<sup>22</sup>Margueritte, p. 13.

modulations of the nightingale which was played by the flutist M. A. Lacroix. The readers were Maurice Bouchor, Raoul Ponchon, Félix Rabbe, G. Chance, Passot, Duteil d'Ozanne, and Mme Berthelet; the puppet technicians were Leon Baille, Belloc, Ludovic Dubois, Mazeroux, Raybaud, Armand, Gibelin aîné, et cadet, Ticot; M. G. Fraipoint designed the program.<sup>23</sup>

The purpose of Paul Margueritte's article was to recapitulate the history of the Petit-Théâtre and to introduce La Tempête which had been translated from Shakespeare by Maurice Bouchor--especially for the Petit-Théâtre. Paul Margueritte indicated that La Tempête was quite difficult to stage, because of its changing scenes: ships tossed around by waves, apparitions of celestial beings, a table served by spirits, dogs giving chase at the sound of the horn; and gave credit to the painters of the décors; M. Doucet painted one part of the island; M. Tanoux painted the other, while M. Gibelin and M. Anguille painted the ship which carried the Duke of Milan; M. Maillol painted a large tree in front of which sat Ariel playing the flûte.<sup>24</sup> The puppet technicians for La Tempête were the same as those of the preceding plays.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>Margueritte, p. 12.

<sup>24</sup>ibid.

<sup>25</sup>ibid. For the readers of the play, see appendix.

Paul Margueritte concludes his narrative by proudly stating that there was only one precedent set for the Petit-Théâtre. The precedent was set in England in the sixteenth century, when the marionettes played tragedies amongst which was Julius Ceasar.<sup>26</sup>

The Petit-Théâtre was now both technically and psychologically ready to produce La Tempête. All the technical difficulties had been overcome. Maurice Bouchor the translator of The Tempest, wrote a foreword informing the public that this was a true translation and not an adaptation of that marvelous masterpiece which in his opinion was the most divine of Shakespeare's comedies.<sup>27</sup> Bouchor explains that in order not to prolong the show unnecessarily, he had suppressed here and there some lines from the text, but the whole reduction was insignificant. Bouchor points out that in England none of Shakespeare's plays were performed in such an integral manner as La Tempête would be performed by the little actors of the "salle Vivienne." The arrangements of the scenes have not been tampered with; none has been deleted and no additions were made, claims Bouchor.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup>Margueritte, p. 15. See appendix.

<sup>27</sup>Maurice Bouchor, La Tempête (Paris: Parvillez, 1888), avertissement, p. 1.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 2.

In the foreword, Bouchor justifies his use of prose, explaining that one of the things which render adaptations dangerous is the necessity felt to imitate in verse the plays of Shakespeare. They are reedited for the public because a prose adaptation would not be justified. In verse, it is only possible to imitate loosely the English text. If the translator is a real poet, his version will have the advantage of rhythm and rhyme, but it will deprive the reader or listener of marvels. This is how he justifies his own use of prose.

En outre, nous pensons que le vers alexandrin ne correspond nullement à l'iambique des poètes anglais, et que, donnant une impression tout autre, il contribue à fausser l'esprit du texte. Enfin notre sentiment de l'unité, l'allure héroïque de notre alexandrin ne nous permettent pas de mêler sans cesse ni même à aucun moment, la prose parmi les vers. Or, c'est ce que Shakespeare fait avec une entière liberté, et n'est-il pas bien étrange de s'acharner à mettre de la prose en vers, -- quand notre vers est déjà très inapte à donner une idée du vers anglais? Shakespeare a l'esprit, l'humour, la fantaisie, et tout cela peut encore être mis en vers, mais ce qu'il y a de plus génial, de plus profond, de plus irresistible dans son comique exige la prose, fut écrit en prose et ne doit être traduit qu'en prose.<sup>29</sup>

To prove his point, Bouchor cites The Tempest in which it is impossible to have Stephano and Trinculo speak in verse without giving a false idea of these two sublime

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<sup>29</sup>Bouchor, p. 3.

characters.<sup>30</sup> For this and the above reasons, Bouchor translated the bulk of The Tempest in prose. However, the parts that were to be sung were translated in verse.

Fortunately for us, the Bouchor translation has survived in its entirety, but unfortunately, the prologue which Bouchor added to the translation for the performance could not be found. It is possible for us to examine the poet's effort at rendering the mood in translation, which he feels was intended by Shakespeare. Language is a very integral part of Shakespeare's work and without careful interpretation the mood can be missed.

Georges Eekhoud, an expert on the Elizabethans, made a very interesting comment with regard to the language used by Shakespeare in the opening scene of The Tempest. Eekhoud informs us that Shakespeare had a thorough knowledge of the boatswain's art:

La première scène de La Tempête démontre chez Shakespeare une connaissance si approfondie du métier de matelôt, qu'on pourrait croire que lui aussi a écumé les mers. Pour atteindre à ce degré de compétence, il a dû s'entretenir fréquemment avec les marins les plus experts de l'époque, et aucun traité m'avait paru encore sur cette branche. Lord Mulgrave a consacré, en 1821, à La Tempête un curieux article critique... maritime, dans lequel il constate qu'un loup de mer n'aurait pas donné des commandements plus efficaces et plus opportuns et ne se serait pas servi de termes plus techniques et mieux appropriés à la manoeuvre, que ceux du bossman mis en scène par le poète.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Bouchor, p. 3.

<sup>31</sup>Georges Eekhoud, Au Siècle de Shakespeare (Bruxelles Paul Lacomblez, 1893), p. 22.

Bouchor, therefore, had a real problem in translating the opening scene of The Tempest:

Le Maître d'Equipage. Voilà, capitaine; où en sommes-nous?

Le Capitaine. Mon brave, parle aux matelôts; qu'on se mette vivement, ou nous courons à terre. Vite! Vite!...

Le Maître d'Equipage. Baissez le mat de hune! Vivement: plus bas, plus bas! Essayons de mettre à la cape sous la grande voile...<sup>32</sup>

considering the difficulty of translating this passage Bouchor handled it well. Even the vous terms do not seem out of place because the orders are shouted to a group.

The more lyrical passage in Act I, scene ii, between Miranda and Prospero lends itself more easily to translation and Bouchor does recapture both the lyricism and the seventeenth century flavor. Miranda's compassionate nature comes through in the passage. She suffers with those she saw suffering in the storm, and reflects on the beautiful ship which was doubtless carrying noble creatures when it was dashed to pieces. The cries of the unfortunates pierced her heart, and oh! how she wished she was a powerful god; she would have dove into the sea, into

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<sup>32</sup>Bouchor, p. 2. See appendix for English.

the earth, before it would have swallowed the noble vessel with its cargo of souls.

Miranda. Mon père bien-aimé, est-ce par votre art que rugissaient ainsi les vagues sauvages? Oh! j'ai souffert avec ceux que je voyais souffrir. Un beau navire, qui sans doute portait de nobles créatures, se briser en pièces! Leurs cris me frappaint au coeur: pauvre êtres, ils ont péri. Si j'eusse été quelque dieu puissant, j'aurais plongé la mer dans le sol avant qu'elle eût englouti le noble vaisseau et son chargement d'âmes.

Prospero. Calme-toi; plus d'angoisse. Dis à ton coeur plein de pitié qu'il n'y a eu aucun malheur.

Miranda. O le funeste jour!

Prospero. Aucun malheur. Je n'ai rien fait que pour l'amour de toi, de toi, ma chérie, toi ma fille qui ne sais pas ce que tu es; car tu ignores ton origine et si je suis autre chose que Prospero, possesseur d'une grotte misérable, ton père et rien de plus.

Miranda. Le désir d'en savoir davantage ne se mela jamais à mes pensées.<sup>33</sup>

Prospero is the concerned father as he tells her to calm herself and her anguish. His devotion to his daughter is unmistakable. Prospero's bitterness at being the owner of the lowly grotto is felt in the above translation, as well as Miranda's simplicity and happiness at never wanting to know more than what she presently knew of her existence.

Caliban's cursing speech in Act II, scene ii, is extremely difficult to translate. Without attempting to recapture the seventeenth century curses, Bouchor had to

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<sup>33</sup>Bouchor, p. 42. See appendix.

settle for a word for word translation; yet Caliban's tale of woe comes through in the translation. Caliban's hatred is clear, his vindictive nature can be seen when he curses Prospero, and his ability to reason is shown when he reflects that Prospero sets the spirits on him for offenses; yet Bouchor also captures Caliban's vulnerability when he sees Trinculo, and mistaking him for a spirit, lies down on his face, hoping he will not be seen.

Puissent toutes les pestes que le soleil pompe des marais, bourbes et fondrières tomber sur Prospero! Que la moindre place de son corps soit infectée d'une maladie! Les esprits qui le servent m'entendent, mais je ne peux pas m'empêcher de le maudire. Il leur faut un ordre pour me pincer, m'effrayer par des apparitions, me plonger dans la vase, m'égarer par des feux-follets dans les ténèbres; mais pour la moindre vétille, il les lance après moi. Tantôt, sous forme de singes, ils me font la grimace en grinçant, et puis ils me mordent; tantôt, sous forme de porcs-épics, ils se roulent sur le chemin où je vais pieds nus, et dressent leur pointes sous mes pas. Parfois, je suis tout enveloppé de serpents qui, de leurs langues fourchues, sifflent à me rendre fou. Là, justement, là! (Entre Trinculo)

Voici un esprit; il vient me tourmenter parce que j'apporte mon bois trop lentement. Je vais me jeter à plat-ventre; peut-être qu'il ne m'apercevra point.<sup>34</sup>

The next character to speak in Act II, scene ii, is Trinculo, who bespeaks his mind in a soliloquy worthy of his pecuniary preoccupations.

Qu'est-ce que c'est que ça? un homme ou un poisson? mort ou vivant? C'est un poisson. Il sent le poisson; une odeur rance, une odeur de vieux poisson; c'est une espèce de merluche, et pas des plus fraîches. Drôle de poisson! Je suis allé en Angleterre une fois:

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<sup>34</sup>Bouchor p. 42. See appendix.

si j'y étais maintenant avec ce poisson-là, même en peinture, il n'y a pas un badaud de la foire qui ne me donnerait sa pièce d'argent. Ce monstre, en Angleterre, ferait un homme riche. Dans ce pays-là n'importe quelle bête singulière vous enrichit un homme. Ils ne donneront pas un liard à un mendiant boiteux, et ils en lâcheront dix pour voir un Indien mort--C'est qu'il a des jambes comme un homme! et des nageoires faites comme des bras! Chaud, sur ma parole...Je lâche mon idée. Ce n'est pas un poisson, c'est un insulaire que la foudre aura tué.<sup>35</sup>

Trinculo's language is ordinary. It could not have stood versification; Bouchor was right, but it was not as difficult to render in translation as it was to translate Caliban's language.

Trinculo is followed on the stage in the same scene by Stephano, who enters singing, holding a bottle. Bouchor stated in his foreword that it was more natural to render the translation for the songs in verse. Songs are more difficult to translate, and Bouchor achieves verse and rhyme at the expense of fidelity in translation; but he does capture the drunken seaman's mood reflected in the song:

Trois mat'lots, et pui moi et l'canonier,  
 Et l'patron de not'bateau  
 Nous aimions Madelon, Marion, Margoton  
 Mais pas un n'en pinçait pour Cateau.  
 Cette sale rogue,  
 Qui nous appelle ivrognes,  
 Dit que le goudron ne sent pas bon!  
 Pendez-moi cett'Cateau  
 Qui n'aim'pas not'bateau...  
 Vite en mer! mes garçons, il faut partir.<sup>36</sup>

When Stephano stops singing and assumes ordinary dialogue Bouchor is more successful in rendering a faithful translation.

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<sup>35</sup>Bouchor, p. 43. See appendix.

<sup>36</sup>Bouchor, p. 44. See appendix.

Qu'est-ce que c'est? Il y a des diables, ici? On nous joue des farces avec des sauvages et des hommes d'Inde? Ha! Ha! je n'ai pas évité la noyade pour avoir peur de vos quatre jambes. Car il a été dit "l'homme le plus convenable qui ait jamais marché à quatre pattes ne peut pas le faire reculer." Et on le dira encore, tant que Stephano respirera par les narines.<sup>37</sup>

If the forced verses of the songs seem strange, to an analyst of the translation, they may have sounded very pleasant to the audience of La Tempête who heard them sung accompanied by heavenly music. The translation of Ariel's song in the first act, fares no better than Stephano's drunken song:

Ton père gît à cinq brasses profondes  
 Sous les calmes eaux;  
 Deviennent corail au baiser des ondes.  
 Ce sont deux perles que ses yeux;  
 Il n'est rien de lui que la mer ne change  
 En une fleur étrange  
 Un joyau merveilleux.

La vague le pleure;  
 Les nymphes des eaux sonnent d'heure en heure  
 Son glas...  
 (bruit de cloches)  
 Ecoutez! L'air frissonne;  
 J'entends la-bas  
 La voix des cloches. Sonne,  
 Sonne le glas.<sup>38</sup>

How can the beauty of "Full fathom five thy father lies" be recaptured in translation; or "Those are pearls that were his eyes." When Bouchor returns to prose in the same scene

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<sup>37</sup>Bouchor, p. 44. See appendix.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid., p. 23. See appendix.

he again becomes a sensitive and accurate translator, as can be seen from Ferdinand's words:

The ditty does remember my drowned father:  
This is no mortal business nor no sound  
That the earth owes: I hear it now and above me.

The above lines are translated by Bouchor thus:

La chanson parle de mon père noyé. Ce n'est  
point là une oeuvre mortelle; de tels sons  
n'appartiennent pas à la terre.<sup>39</sup>

and the reading is very accurate.

In his foreword to La Tempête, Bouchor wrote that he studied Shakespeare for twenty years before he ventured to translate him for the Petit-Théâtre. The troupe at the Petit-Théâtre were honored by an intellectual élite audience who have made known their impressions of this performance. Also, Anatole France, who was no symbolist, wrote a nine page article devoted to Signoret's La Tempête.

Il y a une heure à peine que la toile du Petit-Théâtre est tombée sur le groupe harmonieux de Ferdinand et de Miranda. Je suis sous le charme, et comme le dit Prospero "je me ressens encore des illusions de cette île."<sup>40</sup>

Concerning the marionettes themselves, he was full of praise:

La main qui les tailla imprima les caractères de l'idéal ou tragique ou comique.<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>39</sup>Bouchor, p. 23.

<sup>40</sup>Anatole France, "La Tempête," La Vie littéraire (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1888) p. 292.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

He was full of praise for the sculpturing of the heads:

Sa Miranda a la grâce fine d'une figure de la première Renaissance italienne et le parfum des vierges de ce bienheureux XV<sup>e</sup> siècle qui fit reflourir pour la seconde fois la beauté dans le monde. Son Ariel rappelle dans sa tunique de gaze lamée d'argent, les figurines de Tanagra, parce que sans doute l'élégance aérienne des formes appartient en propre au déclin de l'art hellénique.<sup>42</sup>

In his review of the play, Anatole France does not neglect to mention the voices of the marionettes. Miranda and Ariel spoke with the pure voices of Mlle Paule Verne and Mlle Cecille Dorcelle. The voices of the masculine actors of the drama were rendered by the poets Maurice Bouchor, Raoul Ponchon, Amédée Pigéon and Félix Rabbe; last but not least Anatole France mentions Coquelin cadet who recited the prologue and spoke for the clown, Trinculo. Of the translation, France says

Elle m'a beaucoup plu et j'ai grande envie de la lire à loisir. Elle est en prose, mais d'une prose rythmée et imagée.<sup>43</sup>

The play itself is considered, by Anatole France, as a beautiful fairy tale, as well as a piece of social criticism:

...un traité de magie ou un symbole de moral c'est enfin une pièce politique, une étude sociale qui laisse bien loin, pour la justesse l'étendue et la profondeur des vues, ces tragédies d'Etat dont on faisait grand cas dans notre XVII<sup>e</sup> siècle français.<sup>44</sup>

The character who impressed Anatole France the most was Caliban,

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<sup>42</sup>France, p. 294.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 296.

who he says also impressed Ernest Renan. France was impressed by Caliban's speech in Act I, scene ii:

Cette île est à moi par Sycorax ma mère; tu me la voles...je te montrais toutes les richesses de l'île, les sources d'eaux douce, les bassins de saumure, les endroits stériles et les endroits fertiles. Que je sois maudit pour l'avoir fait! Que tout les sortilèges de Sycorax, crapauds, escarbots, chauve-souris, s'abattent sur vous! Car je suis à moi seul tous vos sujets, moi qui étais mon propre roi et vous me donner pour bauge ce rocher dur, tandis que vous accaparez le reste de mon île.<sup>45</sup>

In the review of the play France emphasizes the point that The Tempest is a piece of social criticism: the island being a microcosm, with Ariel as its minister who executes orders, and Caliban as subject who demands from the ruler all that he desires--including the daughter of his prince.

The critic Jules Lemaître who was a dramatist himself, saw La Tempête, and reviewed it favorably, although he did not seem to be a lover of Shakespeare in particular:

Je viens de relire, pour me préparer à la représentation du théâtre des Marionnettes, la traduction de La Tempête. C'est une lecture fort pénible. Sur soixante-dix pages, il y en a cinquante qui sont insupportables. Le comique de Shakespeare est inepte. Il me ferait absoudre le mot de Voltaire: "C'est un sauvage ivre." Il est vrai que les vingt autres pages sont d'un grand poète.<sup>46</sup>

Lemaître found only twenty pages to be worthwhile in the entire reading of The Tempest, but this did not prejudice him against the marionettes nor against Bouchor's translation.

<sup>45</sup>France, p. 296.

<sup>46</sup>Jules Lemaître, Impressions de théâtre (Paris: Lecène, Oudin, 1891, p. 268.

...Il me reste à dire que la représentation a été des plus intéressantes. La traduction de M. Bouchor est excellente et, heureusement assez libre et abrégée de moitié. Les marionnettes ont beaucoup d'allure et de couleur. Les acteurs cachés psalmodient leur rôle plutôt qu'ils ne le jouent, et ils ont raison. Ce n'est, en sommes, qu'une lecture "illustrée" par les mouvements des petits personnages, d'une silhouette simplifiée et d'une vie incomplète. On les voit comme un rêve. Ce genre de représentation est peut-être ce qui convient le mieux à des drames très lointain, très singuliers et irréels, comme Les Oiseaux (qu'on nous donnait l'été dernier) et comme La Tempête.

Jules Lemaître found the meeting between Ferdinand and Miranda memorable:

Rien de plus délicieux que la rencontre de Miranda et de Ferdinand. Miranda, fille intacte de la solitude, c'est presque l'Eve primitive, car elle n'a jamais vu d'autre homme que son père. Or, dès que le prince apparaît, le coeur de Miranda est à lui...

"Tu t'imagines, dit Prospero à la jeune fille, qu'il n'y a pas au monde de figures pareilles à la sienne, parce que tu n'as vu que Caliban et lui. Petite sottise, c'est un Caliban auprès de la plupart des hommes; ils sont des anges auprès de lui.

"Mon affection est donc des plus humbles répond Miranda, car je n'ai point l'ambition de voir un homme plus parfait que lui." Et je ne sais rien de plus tendre, de plus naïvement ni ardemment amoureux que la conversation des deux enfants lorsque Miranda voit Ferdinand pliant sous un fagot de bois: "Hélas! dit-elle, je vous en prie, ne travaillez pas tant. Mettez ce bois à terre, et reposez-vous: quand il brûlera, il pleurera de vous avoir fatigué... Si vous voulez vous asseoir moi pendant ce temps, je vais porter ce bois. Je vous en prie, donnez-le moi, je le porterai au tas."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Lemaître, p. 271.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

Miranda's innocence fascinated Lemaître, who felt that Shakespeare was able to render a primitive Eve, tenderly in love, willing to bear the burden placed upon her Ferdinand, and Bouchor was able to recapture the mood even in the translation. The symbolist critic, St. Vel, who also saw La Tempête, called it "une adorable féerie ou drame fantastique..."<sup>49</sup> and hailed the production as a victory for the symbolists and symbolism:

Sur la scène du Petit-Théâtre triomphe la convention et fleurit le symbole. Qu'elle convention plus forte, en effet, que celle qui consiste à substituer des bonshommes et des bonnes femmes de cartons à des acteurs bien grimés, lesquels d'ordinaire règlent leurs gestes sur la diction et marchent sans décrire des angles droits.<sup>50</sup>

St. Vel uses the word convention for the conventional world of make believe as opposed to the naturalist world of make believe which sought to duplicate reality. St. Vel comments that were the illusion more complete, the viewer would be completely subjugated by the drama and would not enjoy the pleasure of analysing impressions.

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<sup>49</sup>U. Saint Vel, "Le Théâtre symboliste: Shakespeare et les marionnettes," Revue d'Art Dramatique, 1er décembre, 1888, p. 288.

<sup>50</sup>Ibid.

With regard to the play itself, St. Vel found that

The Tempest was full of symbols:

tout est symbole dans ce drame, les personnages sont des êtres deux fois fictifs, des représentations d'idées, depuis Caliban, grossière enveloppe des instincts de la multitude jusqu'au subtil Ariel, grace, poésie, transfiguration des facultés les plus hautes de Prospero.<sup>51</sup>

Jules Lemaître also shared St. Vel's view that the characters in The Tempest stood for ideas:

Prospero, c'est l'âme; Caliban, c'est la matière; Prospero, c'est l'humanité supérieure, Caliban c'est la basse humanité; les autres sont l'humanité moyenne. Iris et Ceres représentent le naturalisme antique; Prospero l'esprit de la Renaissance; Ariel la poésie septentrionale et médiévale, Ouf! Quoi encore? Prospero, c'est la science; Ariel, c'est le rêve...<sup>52</sup>

Lemaître goes on to quote a series of symbols, which would have amazed Shakespeare himself. Lemaître, together with Anatole France and St. Vel, shared the thought that The Tempest was the representation of social ideas set in a little world. St. Vel adds that while the mysterious, the unknown and the infinite do not seem subjects to be put on the stage, Shakespeare does it in The Tempest. The critic St. Vel also finds the play to be highly moral:

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<sup>51</sup>St. Vel, p. 298.

<sup>52</sup>Lemaître, p. 269.

Celle-ci glorifie la miséricorde et le repentir:  
tous les artifices de Prospero ont pour but  
d'éclairer la conscience de ses ennemis.<sup>53</sup>

Another viewer who was also delighted with the performance of La Tempête was Ernest Renan, the renowned philosopher, who had already published two books dealing with Caliban:

Caliban, suite de la Tempête, drame philosophique in 1878;  
and Caliban et l'eau de jouvence, published in 1886. Ernest Renan adressed the following letter to Maurice Bouchor:

Paris, 17 Novembre, 1888

Cher Monsieur Bouchor,

Votre traduction est un vrai chef-d'oeuvre. La couleur de l'original est parfaitement conservée en une langue qui au point de vue des exigences françaises est de la plus rigoureuse correction. Votre charmante soirée d'hier m'a fait goûter plus que jamais la merveille de Shakespeare. Presque tous les mots profonds sont admirablement rendus, malgré la froideur inévitable de vos acteurs de bois qui ne peuvent rien souligner. Je vous félicite bien vivement. Je voudrais voir cette pièce représentée sur un grand théâtre par de vrais acteurs, par les premiers acteurs du monde, devant un public de philosophes et de rois. Ce qui me frappait hier soir, c'est combien cela ressemble à Eschyle, au Prométhée, par exemple, merveilleux de grandeur, inaccessible au vulgaire. Votre traduction servira le jour où viendront pour ces hautes choses aristocratiques les réparations d'une critique éclairée.<sup>54</sup>

The translation was well appreciated by Renan.

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<sup>53</sup>St. Vel, p. 271.

<sup>54</sup>Ernest Renan cited by Le Goffic, p. 256. Renan's letter was printed in Le Figaro a few days after the performance.

At the première of La Tempête everything did not run smoothly. The marionette playing the prologue turned its head so violently that it presented the back of its head to the public, and the technicians had to recall the rebellious marionette into the aisle to bring it back into line. It soon became apparent that the male marionettes having their legs exposed, being free of robes, showed their wires as soon as they turned around or advanced. The movements designed for the legs were too sharp and angular; an alternative would have been absolute immobility which did not seem less unpleasant. In the future, plays that required long robes would be selected by the Petit-Théâtre.<sup>55</sup>

The play was difficult to perform, but Le Goffic was the only viewer who seemed to be aware of the difficulty of performing the play. The puppeteers were six in a pit, measuring two meters in length; they showed an amazing ability to move about. Le Goffic describes them as devils in a holy-water fount, as they struggled to go about their work.<sup>56</sup> He was a very perceptive viewer; he also noticed that the exits and entrances of the marionettes were accompanied by a musical leitmotif peculiar to each of the marionettes. The purpose of the musical leitmotif was to fill in the emptiness as the stage was empty of its little actors.

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<sup>55</sup>Le Goffic, p. 254.

<sup>56</sup>Le Goffic, p. 256.

Bouchor himself admitted that staging a puppet show was not an easy feat. In the introduction to the Mystères Païens (La Naissance de Boudha, Les Yeux de Kounala and Les Mystères d'Eleusis), he explains the difficulty. Neither Shakespeare nor the great poets who have followed him on the puppet stage could have predicted the slow movements of the marionettes, and the extreme difficulty for them to accomplish even the most simple gestures. No doubt their clumsiness could be remedied. The complicated mechanism which should have permitted Sebastian and Antonio to draw their swords suddenly in La Tempête was impractical. At the precise moment, the puppets representing Sebastian and Antonio had to be marched off to the aisles, and returned sword in hand.<sup>57</sup>

On the whole, the response to the puppet theatre was favorable. Some like Emile Faguet, the critic for Le Soleil, felt that the Petit-Théâtre freed itself from historical encumbrances, and favored poetic legends mixing smiles and emotions.<sup>58</sup> The Petit-Théâtre was inclined towards the mystical which was now in vogue, and on which Jules Lemaître was to elaborate in his preface to the Annales du théâtre et de la musique, 1892.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Maurice Bouchor, préface, Mysterès Païens (Paris: Flammarion, 1920).

<sup>58</sup> Emile Faguet, quoted by Robichez, p. 76.

<sup>59</sup> Jules Lemaître, "Le Mysticisme au théâtre," Annales du théâtre et de la musique, 1892, préface.

According to Adolphe Aderer, the collaborator of Sarcey for the newspaper Le Temps, even Francisque Sarcey had a kind word for the marionettes of Henri Signoret:

Votre souvenir restera (ô petites marionettes), et qui voudra traiter de l'histoire dramatique de ces dernières années ne pourra vous passer sous silence.<sup>60</sup>

The traditional and caustic critic of Le Temps could not pass them by in silence.

The symbolists themselves took great pleasure in the revival of the puppet theatre because it did away with the burdensome personality of the actor. This was a problem argued by Mallarmé in his criticism of Wagnerian drama. Mallarmé felt that the Wagnerian hero had too much relief.<sup>61</sup> At another time, in his discussion of the Mounet-Sully production of Hamlet at the Comédie-Française, Mallarmé made the same point.<sup>62</sup> The critic St. Vel saw the puppet theatre as a victory for symbolism, because in it conventions are acknowledged, sought after and pushed to the extreme. Another symbolist critic, Adrien Rémacle, is more precise on this idea of the victory for symbolism through the medium of the puppet theatre:

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<sup>60</sup> Sarcey, quoted by Adolphe Aderer, Le Théâtre à Côté (Paris: Librairies-Imprimeries Réunis, 1894), p. 67.

<sup>61</sup> Stéphane Mallarmé, "Richard Wagner: Rêverie d'un poète français," Revue Wagnerienne, 8 août, 1895.

<sup>62</sup> Stéphane Mallarmé, "Notes sur le théâtre," Revue Indépendante, 1er novembre, 1886, p.37-43.

l'exécrable geste appris, banal [...] suppriment l'intermédiaire entre le spectateur et le poète. Et encore la lenteur hiératique de leurs mouvements, l'invu de leurs gestes régulièrement saccadés, tout cela est très artistique, parce que tout cela crée un monde à part, reculé de nous, loin de la rampe, où le réel des idées et des types se présente à notre esprit nu, grâce à l'irréalité évidente de la représentation.<sup>63</sup>

Another symbolist, Albert Mockel, also formulated a couple of years before Rémacle a similar aesthetic on acting. Mockel, who distrusted the actor, dreamed of a more abstract theatre which he thought he found in pantomime.<sup>64</sup> Mockel had a dream:

Et je rêve, quant au décor, je rêve de scènes très au loin, ou parmi les chansons du chœur populaire, de naïfs personnages immobiliseraient un geste sur fond d'or.<sup>65</sup>

This distrust of the actor is also found in Maurice Maeterlinck who two months after Mockel's article published an article of his own in La Jeune Belgique. He wrote:

Tout chef-d'oeuvre est un symbole et le symbole ne supporte jamais la présence active de l'homme.<sup>66</sup>

In addition to Mallarmé, St. Vel, Adrien Rémacle, Mockel and Maeterlinck, Arthur Symons, not a Frenchman, but a full-fledged member of the Paris symbolist circle, also formulated

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<sup>63</sup>Adrien Rémacle, Mercure de France, 1892.

<sup>64</sup>Albert Mockel, L'Esthétique du symbolisme, ed. Michel Otton (Bruxelles: Palais des Académies, 1962) p. 29.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., this quotation originally appeared in La Wallonie, t. v, 1890, pp. 211.

<sup>66</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck, "Le Théâtre," La Jeune Belgique septembre 1890, pp.311.

his distrust for the living actor:

The living actor, even when he condescends to subordinate himself to the requirements of pantomime has always what he is proud to call his temperament; in other words, so much personal caprice, which for the most part means wilful misunderstanding; and in seeing his acting you have to consider this intrusive little personality of his as well as the author's.<sup>67</sup>

For the symbolists, the Petit-Théâtre was an answer to the intrusive personality of the actor. The evident irreality so desired by the symbolists had been achieved by the little actors of the Petit-Théâtre.

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<sup>67</sup> Arthur Symons, "An Apology for Puppets," Plays, Acting and Music (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1903), p. 3. This excerpt from "An Apology for Puppets" was included in an article entitled "The Marionettes of Henri Signoret" which appeared in The Mask, vol. 5, 1909.

CHAPTER THREE

## PAUL FORT'S THEATRE D'ART

The Théâtre d'Art under the direction of Paul Fort staged two English plays. The first to be produced was Shelley's The Cenci, which though not Elizabethan in chronology, was intended by its author to be an Elizabethan type play. The second to be produced was Marlowe's Doctor Faustus. Both plays were carefully selected by Paul Fort and his reading committee; they were examples of what the committee considered to be meaningful, philosophical drama, which at the same time reflected the spirit of the fin de siècle and the mal de siècle. Beatrice Cenci's questioning of the moral system that condoned rapist-murderers and punished the avengers, and Faust's quest for some meaning beyond the ordinary vision of man, were subjects that were discussed in depth by the symbolists who translated and criticized the works of Shelley and Marlowe. The translations, criticism and productions of The Cenci and Doctor Faustus are one more example of symbolist interest in Renaissance English drama which re-enforced their own theories that the drama should be a meaningful experience, and not empty entertainment.

SHELLEY'S PSEUDO ELIZABETHAN DRAMA THE CENCI IS STAGED  
BY PAUL FORT'S THEATRE D'ART

Two years after the production of La Tempête at the Petit-Théâtre, the symbolists acquired their own stage. A symbolist and enthusiastic champion of the symbolist theatre, Camille Mauclair, remembers the birth of the Théâtre d'Art at a symbolist gathering. Paul Fort who was then twenty years old declared to Alfred Vallette of the Mercure de France: "Je fonde le Théâtre d'Art, je vais vous jouer tous."<sup>1</sup> It was apparent to Paul Fort that what the symbolists lacked was a theatre.<sup>2</sup> So far there had been many theories, but few present at the gathering had plays ready for production. Camille Mauclair recalls that in order to satisfy Paul Fort they came up with an impressive list of plays:

Le programme de Paul Fort était splendide. Il comprenait toutes les pièces injouées et injouables, et toutes les grandes épopées, depuis le Ramayana jusqu'à la Bible, des dialogues de Platon à ceux de Renan, de La Tempête à Axel, de Marlowe au drame chinois, d'Eschyle au Père Eternel.<sup>3</sup>

In order to produce these plays, Paul Fort had to enlist the help of decorator-painters and actors who were willing to work for no wages. Among the decorators were Gauguin, Vuillard, Bonnard, Maurice Denis, Bernard Sérusier. The actors and actresses included Margueritte Moreno, Suzanne Despres, Lugné-Poe, de Max and Lucien Guitry. Paul Fort had at the same

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<sup>1</sup>Camille Mauclair, Servitude et grandeur littéraire (Paris: Librairie Ollendorf, 1922), p. 97.

<sup>2</sup>Henderson, p. 92.

time the ardent support of men of letters who encouraged him in his enterprise. Among them one could count Moréas, Henri de Régnier, Laurent Tailhade, Albert Samain, Emile Verhaeren, Vielé-Griffin, Georges Le Cardonnel, Stuart Merrill, Claudel, Rodenbach, Fontainas, Dujardin, Herold Rettée, Van Lerberghe, Mockel, Saint-Paul Roux, André Gide, Camille Mauclair, Pierre Louys, Péladan, du Plessy, and the musicians Debussy and Chausson!<sup>4</sup> With this enthusiastic support, the Théâtre d'Art was well on its way. The first performance of the Théâtre d'Art proved to be a very undistinguished affair.<sup>5</sup> It was held on November 18, 1890, at the Salle Duprès and the program was made up of the following:

Victor Hugo's Sur la lisière d'un bois  
 Victor Hugo's Les Gueux  
 Alexis Martin's Le Débat du coeur et de l'estomac  
 Mme Rachilde's La Voix du sang  
 Jules Mery's Morized<sup>6</sup>

The second performance made theatrical history with Shelley's pseudo-Elizabethan drama which was selected to give the Théâtre d'Art a new orientation--away from romantic or parnassian type performances which had been given. Though Shelley is certainly a romantic, The Cenci had been conceived by him as an Elizabethan type drama. The Cenci family had a gift for introspection which appealed to the symbolist men of letters.

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<sup>4</sup>Pierre Bearn, Paul Fort (Paris: P. Segher, 1960), p. 67.

<sup>5</sup>Henderson, p. 92.

<sup>6</sup>Robichez, p. 114.

By the time The Cenci was staged, symbolist interest in Elizabethan drama was well rooted in their circle, and the influence of A. C. Swinburne had spread--as can be seen from the plays the group selected for translation and production. In his study called "The Age of Shakespeare," Swinburne had placed Shelley next to Shakespeare in the galaxy of English poets.<sup>7</sup> Once again, Swinburne played a role in the promotion of the English drama when he contributed a preface in French to the Tola Dorian translation of The Cenci,<sup>8</sup> written expressly for that translation. In the preface, Swinburne calls Shelley's drama "un drame à la façon de Shakespeare." For the symbolist group the attraction for The Cenci lay in the fact that it contained elements from Hamlet, Macbeth, and The Duchess of Malfi, all rolled into one. It resembled Hamlet in the introspective scenes, Macbeth in brutality, and The Duchess of Malfi in the incest-sadist motif; yet Shelley, according to Swinburne, developed those themes to a degree to which they had never been developed before:

Depuis Webster, l'héritier et le confrère de Shakespeare, jamais de vers pareils n'avaient retenti sur la scène anglaise.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>A. C. Swinburne, The Complete Works, p. 120.

<sup>8</sup>Percy Bysshe Shelley, Les Cenci, trad. Tola Dorian avec préface d'Algernon Charles Swinburne (Paris: Lemerre, 1883). Tola Dorian was a wealthy Russian émigré who was a patron of the Théâtre d'Art.

<sup>9</sup>Swinburne, preface to Tola Dorian translation of Les Cenci, iv.

In the preface, Swinburne explains that because Shelley met with so much resistance to his work, he had to have The Cenci printed in Livorno. Referring to an anonymous reviewer of Shelley who thought he saw hell open up and to have heard the howls of the damned when he read the play, Swinburne agreed that the subject was infernal, but defended the principles it stood for:

cette poésie infernale prêchait en effet la révolte contre la paternité tyrannique et corruptrice, non seulement des comtes Cenci, mais des Jehovahs doublés de Moloch. Cette Béatrice ne se contentait pas de frapper un père incestueux et ravisseur; elle s'en prenait à la providence louche et féroce incarnée dans ses hommes d'Eglise ou de loi qui laissent agir les tyrans, et qui s'acharnent sur les vengeurs.<sup>10</sup>

In the preface, Swinburne emerges as the champion of Beatrice Cenci, who takes up the issue with Providence.

Tout le drame se résume dans cette seule et sombre idée, le duel à mort d'une conscience immaculée et sévère avec la force infâme des choses et des hommes.<sup>11</sup>

According to Swinburne, the poet was criticized for having his heroine utter "Je veux vivre." A girl who has been through Beatrice's ordeal should want only death. Swinburne wrote that this cry is the utterance of an indignant soul rather than the cry of a terrified girl, who recoils only before the abyss of the unknown region after death--where perhaps she would again be subject to her monstrous father. She says:

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

Deviens-je folle?...Doux ciel, pardonne-moi d'aussi lâches pensées! Mais s'il n'y avait ni Dieu, ni ciel, ni terre dans le monde vide! le monde immense, gris, sans lumière, profond, inhabité!...

The words of Beatrice are reminiscent of the Hamlet soliloquy on suicide and doubt, except that in the undiscovered regions after death, it is her father's spirit she fears:

Si toutes choses alors devaient être l'esprit de mon père, son oeil, sa voix, son attouchement, m'enveloppant, comme l'atmosphère et le souffle de ma vie morte! Si quelquefois, sous une forme plus semblable encore à lui-même, la forme même qui m'a torturée sur la terre, il venait masqué de rides et de cheveux gris, m'enlacer de ses bras d'enfer, fixer ses yeux sur les miens, et m'entraîner en bas, en bas! Car, n'était-il pas le seul tout-puissant sur terre, et toujours présent? Même mort, son esprit ne vit-il pas dans tout ce qui respire, et ne fabrique-t-il pas toujours pour moi et les miens la même ruine, le mépris, la douleur, le désespoir.<sup>12</sup>

The girl fears the abyss after death from which no traveler ever returns. This fear is at the same time Christian, Elizabethan, and Shakespearean; while Hamlet ponders the question "to be or not to be?" Macbeth fears that his assassination of Duncan might "jump the life to come." On philosophical grounds, the symbolists and Elizabethans shared this angoisse métaphysique and the nostalgie du néant.

The production of Les Cenci was preceded by a critical interest in Shelley. Gabriel Sarrazin devoted a significant chapter to Shelley's drama, in his book on modern English poets.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>12</sup>Félix Rabbe, "Les Cenci," Shelley: Oeuvre poétiques complètes (Paris: Nouvelle Librairie Parisienne, 1918), p.111.

<sup>13</sup>Gabriel Sarrazin, Poètes modernes de l'Angleterre (Paris: Ollendorf, Editeurs, 1885), pp.73-127.

It is evident that Sarrazin had read Swinburne's introduction to Les Cenci,<sup>14</sup> and to Swinburne's criticism, Sarrazin added a discussion of that play. He called the play "not a legend," but an episode which took place in a noble family of the sixteenth century. This is an episode which has remained famous in Rome and in all the Italian Peninsula where the tale is told readily to tourists.

Sarrazin summarizes the tale in his work, pointing out that though The Cenci is a grim story, it is with similar grim stories that the English theatre of the Renaissance peopled its plays. The theatre of Webster, Ford, Ben Jonson, Shakespeare and Marlowe abounded in such stories set in Italian surroundings. The dramatists' heroes are equal to and worthy of the Cencis, or of the many horrors that can be picked from English history. Sarrazin tells his contemporaries that the English whose minds have been spiced by the reading of their national history, do not find any dramatic mixture too strong for their palate. With that, he goes into a description of a guided tour of the Tower of London and the Tower of the Lollards where the tour guide tells you of the torture of Sir John Oldcastle, in the same room where he was hung by the arm-pits, while he was being roasted on a small flame and bathed in vinegar. When they toured the cell of Guy Fawkes, Sarrazin thumbed through the catalogue of torture methods and understood the effects of

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<sup>14</sup>Ibid., p. 123.

those tales of ancient England, especially in the atmosphere of the London fog, and understood the grim plots in which the dramatists of the English Renaissance dabbled; and he also understood why a person like Shelley with a sweet and angelic disposition did not hesitate to choose that incestuous subject, for beneath the story of Beatrice Cenci lay a struggle to the death between the forces of good and evil. Sarrazin enters into a psychological analysis of two principal characters in the drama, starting with Count Cenci. He tells us that there is no need to look very deeply to find the elements of his monstrous disposition. They are stacked one by one in sixty lines in the first scene of the first act.<sup>15</sup>

In the first act of Les Cenci, the count revels in what Sarrazin calls an act of Anglo-Saxon paganism in which the clan leaders drank the blood of their enemies in skulls. If the count does not drink the blood of his sons, it is because he cannot overtly do so, according to civilized mores. Instead, Cenci raising his cup of wine drinks to the death of his sons while wishing the wine was a sacramental mixture of their blood. It is Count Cenci's evil nature that fascinated Sarrazin; the count has extreme consciousness of his cruelty. Cenci was one of those medieval Christians who feared God, yet believed he could sin with impunity because he had

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

bought his absolution from the church at a high price. The count was so evil that he feared the air would hear his thoughts; the asides which Shelley wrote for the count and the monologues are terrifying journeys into his dark soul. Cenci rejoices in the meditation of the incest he is about to commit and shivers with delight at the thought of it:

C'est une terrible chose que de toucher à un forfait tel que celui que je médite aujourd'hui; je suis comme ces hommes assis grelottant sur le talus humide de rosée, qui essaient avec leur pied le courant glacé, une fois dedans...avec quelles délices l'esprit palpite en s'ouvrant à la joie!<sup>16</sup>

Count Cenci is fully aware of the magnitude of the evil he is about to commit:

L'acte auquel je pense aura bientôt tout éteint pour moi; je porte en moi des ténèbres plus épaisses et plus profondes que l'ombre de la terre, ou l'air interlunaire, où les constellations éteintes dans le nuage le plus sombre, ténèbres dans lesquelles je m'achemine en sûreté et sans être vu à l'exécution de mon dessein...Que n'est-il accompli!<sup>17</sup>

He feels safe in darkness, for he must hide his evil thoughts from the daylight.

Le soleil qui voit tout brille encore; j'entends le bruit de la foule affairée dans les rues, je vois le brillant ciel à travers les panneaux des croisées. C'est un jour éclatant, large et lumineux, bruyant, éblouissant, soupçonneux, plein d'yeux et d'oreilles; pénétrant les plus sombres recoins de son insolente lumière. O ténèbres, venez! Et cependant que me fait le jour? et pourquoi désirerais-je la nuit, moi qui fait une action qui doit confondre à la fois et la nuit et le jour?...<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Rabbe, Les Cenci, p. 35.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 37.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

His intent is to inflict such guilt on his daughter that she would have to seek darkness to hide her shame.

C'est elle qui tâtonnera à travers un brouillard égarant d'horreur; s'il y a un soleil dans le ciel, c'est elle qui n'osera pas regarder ses rayons, ni sentir sa chaleur, qu'elle désire donc la nuit.<sup>18</sup>

Sarrazin sees Cenci as a demon lodged in human form, so hateful, that the reader wishes the two assassins hired by Beatrice to come quickly and despatch him into the hell he represents. It is true that Cenci is an unusual character, but he is not an impossibility. His originality lies in the mixture of inherent and acquired cruelty which mark his nature. The critic sees Cenci as convinced of a demoniacal mission but also a believer in God; a sadist yet a believer with no sense of remorse. Shelley has molded Cenci into a product of the Italian decadence and of the Italian Middle Ages. Sarrazin writes about Shelley's Count Cenci:

Le poète a reproduit avec une rare fidélité l'une des faces de l'âme Italienne, la face d'airain.<sup>19</sup>

In contrast to the clay figure of Cenci, his daughter Beatrice is the "moral sense" and she symbolizes conscience, even as she appears in the first scene with Orsino. She tells him that as a priest he should not talk to her of love. Sarrazin analyzes her as a soft northern blonde, who bows gently to any will in the dramas of the Elizabethans. If it was not for Shelley's preface warning of her conflicting

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<sup>18</sup>Felix Rabbe, Les Cenci, p. 35.

<sup>19</sup>Sarrazin, pp. 83-127.

behavior, one would not guess the iron will she will later display. In Sarrazin's analysis, Count Cenci attempts to tame his daughter by rape; the daughter cannot live without revenge, suicide is not a way out. Since in this mortal world there is no tribunal or law that can avenge her suffering, she will avenge herself and does act by murdering her father. From the strange combination of crime and shame, Beatrice Cenci develops a personal philosophy of the moral concept of the universe, and that is how she leaves behind her those who surround her; she crushes those who oppress her by her thoughts made grand and developed by her suffering. Sarrazin classifies her concept as dark, bitter, miasanthropic, pessimistic, worthy of a Christopher Marlowe or a Thomas Hobbes. Sarrazin speculates that had she been pardoned and returned to a normal life, free of the paternal nightmare, Beatrice Cenci would have returned to a more equitable concept of her surroundings. He recognized that in the surroundings in which Shelley permits her to live and die, her moral universe would always have dark horizons. At this point, the critic feels that he has arrived at the crux of the matter inherent in the pessimism of Beatrice Cenci. Amidst the traps that Orsino has set for her, and those of all her accusers, she could not but consider the universe to be a double-edged lie; an axe always ready to behead the innocent. She recognizes tyranny as a

power which seizes and does not let go; and she recognizes the cowardliness of her co-conspirators. Trapped, she suffers anguish which she is able to verbalize when her loved ones fail to be true to themselves:

Mes angoisses sont celles de l'esprit, celles du coeur et celles de l'âme; oui, de l'âme la plus intime, qui pleure au-dedans d'elle-même des larmes de fiel brulant, de voir, dans ce monde méchant où personne n'est vrai, de voir les miens mentir à eux-mêmes, quand tous les abandonnent, et lorsque je considère toute la misérable vie que j'ai vécue, et maintenant la misérable fin, le peu de justice témoignée par le ciel et la terre à moi et aux miens, et quel tyran tu es, et quels esclaves sont ceux-ci, et quel monde nous formons, oppresseurs et opprimés...ces tortures-là me forcent de répondre. Que voulez-vous de moi?<sup>20</sup>

Philosophically she takes inventory of her life and in a flash of revelation finds that the world consists of the oppressor and the oppressed. The wounds she has suffered are incurable. There is no longer a belief in a redemptive paradise. Faith has yielded to rebellion, and Beatrice Cenci has become an atheist who talks of the unknown horrors after death.<sup>21</sup>

Sarrazin's personal interpretation of that work was that the play was an indictment against tyranny in disguise, so that it could be staged; and that Shelley chose a case of personal tyranny instead of a governmental one. Sarrazin sees her now as an idealization of Shelley's own personality; therefore, her cry emanates from Shelley's heart.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>20</sup>Rabbe, Les Cenci, p. 105.

<sup>21</sup>Sarrazin, p. 120.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

Swinburne has another view; he writes that Count Cenci was seen by Shelley's unfavorable critics as the spokesman for the sick mind of the poet, while in reality Shelley toned down the real Francesco Cenci's crimes to mention only one percent of them. Cenci is an idealized villain, who Swinburne feels would be more credible if he were toned down; but were he to be stripped of his magnificent curses, what remains would be repulsive. In Shelley's idealized version even God works for him: Cenci invokes death for his sons and God grants instant death. Cenci rules his world.<sup>23</sup>

When Paul Fort staged Félix Rabbe's translation of The Cenci, the play had only been performed once, that was in London in 1886. The play had been performed before a select audience invited by the Shelley Society.<sup>24</sup> Needless to say, it was not well received because of the incest theme which offended English sensibilities, and especially the ladies. The French audience who had been prepared for the play by the symbolist literature which preceded the performance were more receptive. The Revue Bleue wrote of Les Cenci:

une pensée maîtresse traverse l'oeuvre et l'anime  
toute entière: "la lutte" comme a si bien dit  
De Quincey "entre les ténèbres et la lumière...la  
fragilité de l'innocence et de la justice...<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>23</sup>A. C. Swinburne, preface to Les Cenci, trans. Tola Dorian, ix.

<sup>24</sup>George Viollat, La Revue Bleue, 31 janvier 1891, p.158.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

On philosophical grounds, the play was accepted, but the reviews were mixed concerning the staging. The criticism ranged from polite mention of Shelley's talent, to apologies for the Théâtre d'Art's limited resources, to praise for Félix Rabbe's word for word translation.

From the theatrical point of view, the naturalist playwright and critic, Jean Jullien in La Plume, suggested that some minor characters would benefit--if they were placed more in the limelight--but that it may have been Shelley's intention to highlight only the two antagonists. As for the translation, Jullien found that it was regrettable that Rabbe did not have more theatrical expertise; some idiomatic English expressions when translated into French provided merriment for the audience. Jullien found that the inexperienced actors interpreted this tragedy as a melodrama. He also made an avant-garde suggestion for a better staging of Shelley's play:

L'oeuvre dépasse le cadre de nos scènes, bonnes tout au plus pour représenter un incident de la vie journalière; il faudrait un cirque immense avec une estrade en plate forme sur la piste, des artistes géants et pas d'oripeaux, pas de toiles peintes. Je me rallie pour cette oeuvre générale et sur-humaine au théâtre tout nu, que M. Sarcey conseillait naguère pour la représentation des piécettes de M. Jules Lemaître.<sup>26</sup>

As for the acting, Jean Jullien was almost apologetic. In his praise, he seems to be afraid to voice any criticism of the young actors who performed for art's sake:

Ils doivent être malgré tout félicités de nous avoir montré ce que la prudence anglaise et l'ineptie

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<sup>26</sup>Jean Jullien, "Théâtre d'Art: Les Cenci," La Plume ler février 1891, p. 61.

française prohibent. M. Prad est du métier, il a joué Cenci en bon comédien, mais rien qu'en comédien. Mlle Camée a tenue le rôle écrasant de Beatrice avec force et habilité, dans les deux derniers actes et là a fait preuve d'un réel talent, bien qu'un peu trop déclama-  
toire et pas assez entre cuir et chair.<sup>27</sup>

Jean Jullien is less generous with Paul Fort about whom he writes that in the future, he should restrict himself to plays that are more in line with his resources, and advises him especially to refrain from acting in the role of prelates.

Henry Gauthier Villars, the friend of the symbolists writing under the pseudonym of Willy in Le Chat Noir, was a lot less generous than his colleague of La Plume.

devant un public avachi de stupéfaction, la puissante représentation des Cenci (Rabbe fecit) fut massacrée cette semaine au Théâtre d'Art, par une troupe de charcutiers en délire. On connaît le prénom de Shelley: Percy, puisse-t-il arriver malheur aux ineptes perroquets qui en ont voulu traiter.<sup>28</sup>

Mme Rachilde, the lady symbolist poet and critic, was more critical than Jean Jullien but more generous than Willy. She calls the evening at the Théâtre d'Art stormy, and found the word-for-word translation to be more concerned with preserving English idiom than with the way it sounded to French ears. Mme Rachilde is objective in her assessment of those who blamed any flaw in the translation on the performers:

Si Shelley n'a pas paru, dans la langue de M. Rabbe absolument sublime, c'est que Mlle Camée, la Beatrix, est un peu maigre!...Je n'ai pas qualité pour juger

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<sup>27</sup> Jean Jullien, Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Willy, "Le Chat Noir au Théâtre," Le Chat Noir, 24 janvier 1891, p. 3.

Les Cenci. D'ailleurs, à l'heure actuelle, tel journal important, qui se refuserait brutalement à parler de l'oeuvre géniale d'un artiste de notre pays, c'est émerveillé durant trois colonnes sur l'oeuvre du célèbre mort étranger.<sup>29</sup>

Mme Rachilde shows a sense of humour in her account about the actors:

Il y a plus, cependant. M. Paul Fort a découvert deux artistes dramatiques de sincères talent: M. Prad, qui a su donner du père de Beatrix une idée très satisfaisante; l'inceste a peut-être ses vilains côtés, mais M. Prad, lui, a une bien belle prestance, une tête énergique, de superbes jambes, une diction chaude et claire...j'arrive à la prétendue maigreur de Mlle Camée. Toutes les femmes de grand talent ont commencé par être maigres, ô Willy!...<sup>30</sup>

Rachilde found that Mlle Camée's slenderness did not detract from the way she learned and understood her roles. She interpreted the awesome role of Beatrice with ravishing grace.

In the Mercure de France, Alfred Vallette criticized Félix Rabbe's translation, but praised Paul Fort's courage in undertaking the overwhelming task of rendering fourteen tableaux of a play deemed unsuitable for the stage by its own author. Vallette found that there were errors of judgment made in interpretation and in the scenic background, but deemed the entire effort to be worthwhile.

Au total, il est indéniable qu'ait réussi cette périlleuse aventure de dégager, suffisante, l'impression incluse en son drame par l'un des plus grands poètes de l'Angleterre, aussi l'un des plus difficiles à bien entendre.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup>Mme Rachilde, "Un Orage artistique," Le Carillon, 25 janvier 1891, p. 31.

<sup>30</sup>Ibid.

<sup>31</sup>Alfred Vallette, "Les Cenci," Mercure de France, mars 1891, p. 192.

Vallette praised the entire cast, except for Paul Fort who at the last minute had to step into the role of the prelate Orsino.

George Viollat writing for La Revue Bleue says, of Les Cenci, that there are few tragedies that have such powerful emotions, despite the fact that the characters are exceptional and fall outside the realm of the norm. Cenci's implacable hatred for his children and his incestuous passion for his daughter, the terror and contempt that he arouses in them, the energy with which Beatrice prepares his death, and her lamentable punishment, all these are different elements in the struggle between the powers of fate, evil, weakness and the frailty of innocence and justice.

All in all, Les Cenci was a powerful play, and its staging at the Théâtre d'Art was a bold undertaking. The Théâtre d'Art was congratulated for undertaking to adapt and produce a foreign play.<sup>32</sup> In an objective assessment of the effort, George Viollat recognizes that what the Théâtre d'Art had accomplished was the breaking with the tradition of giving poetical adaptations of foreign works that were more or less incorrect, but the effort should have been carried a little further. Shelley's tragedy should have been interpreted as artists would interpret a work of art. Count Cenci should never have been played as a vulgar débauché.

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<sup>32</sup>George Viollat, La Revue Bleue, p. 158.

The role of Beatrice was played indifferently, without emotion, especially when she received the news of her father's death. Lucretia's role was rendered even more insignificant and Orsino's role was transformed into a comic figure destined to amuse the entire audience. The scenery should have been attended to more carefully; it is not a question of costuming or furnishing, but a question of adapting the décor to the words or feelings of the characters. Like Mme Rachilde in Le Carillon, George Viollat found it strange that the public accepted without complaint the oversights of the Théâtre d'Art. Viollat gives an example of an improvement that could have been made without it being too costly. In the second act, Cenci left alone meditates on his criminal designs; how much more dramatic it would have been, suggests Viollat, if

on eût montré réellement "le brillant ciel à travers les panneaux des croisées," et si nous avions vu "ce jour éclatant, large et lumineux pénétrant les plus sombres recoins de son insolente lumière..." dont le vieillard demeure un instant effrayé!<sup>33</sup>

What is remarkable is that the Théâtre d'Art with its meager resources and unpaid actors, actresses, decorators and technicians managed to stage that play at all--a play which was deemed unstageable by its very own author, yet the Théâtre d'Art managed to produce it despite its lengthy dialogues. The production of Shelley's pseudo-Elizabethan drama paved the way for further staging of Elizabethan dramas by Paul Fort, and then Lugné-Poe at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre.

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<sup>33</sup>George Viollat, "Les Cenci," La Revue Bleue, p. 159.

THE SYMBOLIST DOCTOR FAUSTUS

The Théâtre d'Art was on the verge of collapse in early 1892, due to lack of funds and an unfortunate tendency to produce too many one-act plays and poems packed into one evening. In the hope of putting the Théâtre d'Art on sound footing, Paul Fort undertook the ambitious project of staging Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus. The powerful drama appealed to the turn-of-the-century poets who found analogies between Faust's quest for knowledge, beauty and meaning, and the pessimism known as le mal de fin de siècle: "Dégout, lassitude, angoisse métaphysique, nostalgie du néant sont les caractéristiques essentielles de l'âme décadente."<sup>34</sup> These symptoms were discussed in detail in Guy Michaud's Message poétique du symbolisme, published in 1885 and Paul Bourget's Les Essais de psychologie contemporaine, also published in 1885.

Félix Rabbe, who translated the works of Marlowe in 1889, preceded the translation by a study on Marlowe. His piece of scholarly criticism is of special interest because it supports the theory that A. C. Swinburne was a respectable and influential figure in Mallarmé's circle. Félix Rabbe writes in the study that he considers Swinburne to be "le poète le plus éminent de l'Angleterre actuelle qui est en même temps un brillant et éloquent critique."<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>34</sup>Guy Michaud, Message poétique du Symbolisme, deuxième partie: La Révolution poétique (Paris: Nizet, 1885), p. 236.

<sup>35</sup>Christopher Marlowe, Théâtre, trad. de Félix Rabbe (Paris: Savine, 1899) vol. 1, p. 1.

Rabbe translates and quotes Swinburne's view of Marlowe as it appeared in the introduction of the 1875 edition of the works of George Chapman.<sup>36</sup>

...lui seul, Marlowe a été le véritable Apollon de notre aurore littéraire, la brillante étoile du matin annonçant le plein jour d'été de la poésie anglaise à son apogée.<sup>37</sup>

Swinburne saw Marlowe as the guiding light announcing the dawn of a great awakening in English poetry. Rabbe continues to translate Swinburne:

Le génie de Marlowe est absolu, le divin créateur du vers blanc anglais, l'une des formes les plus élevées de l'harmonie du langage, ou de l'expression poétique. Il l'a découvert et amené à la vie par la simple force d'un instinct original et divin, et à sa mort si prématurée et si malheureuse, la plus déplorable pour nous de toutes les morts, excepté celle de Shelley. Il laissait ce merveilleux instrument si près de la perfection que, Shakespeare d'abord, puis Milton durent l'apprendre de lui avant d'essayer d'y apporter quelque variété ou quelque perfectionnement.<sup>38</sup>

In addition to the influence of Swinburne, Félix Rabbe also acknowledges the influence of Stendhal, Mézières and Taine as disseminators of the English Renaissance drama in France. (Eekhoud, also, acknowledges the latter two critics.) On reading Mézières, Rabbe felt that he did not give Marlowe the attention he deserved,<sup>39</sup> while Taine left the realm of literary

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<sup>36</sup>George Chapman, The Works of George Chapman with an introduction by A. C. Swinburne (London: Chatto and Windies, 1875).

<sup>37</sup>Swinburne quoted and translated by Félix Rabbe, Théâtre, p. 2.

<sup>38</sup>Ibid.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid.

criticism to enter that of philosophy, examining men, passion, instinct, flesh and blood:

Ce ne sont plus des abstractions qui écrivent ou qui chantent, mais les écrits du prosateur, les chants du poète sont le cri de leur âme...<sup>40</sup>

Rabbe observes that Taine's interest centered on the poets themselves, and that Taine was especially fascinated by Marlowe.<sup>41</sup> He analyses Taine's criticism which differs from Swinburne's view that Marlowe had a passion for ideal-beauty which resounds in the purity of his verse. What Taine saw was the violent dramatist who shed on the stage floods of blood and ardent metaphors, in accordance with the violence of his temperament. For Taine, the poet of Hero and Leander is obscured behind the creator of Tamburlaine. Rabbe, however, sees harmony between the tone and the theme of Tamburlaine, which points to the ability of the dramatist:

Le dialogue de Tamerlan dénote une espèce d'humour essentiellement anglais, qui est, par sa violence et sa crudité plus qu'homérique, parfaitement en harmonie avec le ton général du drame.<sup>42</sup>

Though the latter drama is packed with passion and eloquence, Rabbe finds it overly ambitious and less and less to his liking than Marlowe's later plays. Particularly, he agreed with Eekhoud that Edward II is without fail the most perfect of Marlowe's works, and that it set the pattern for the national historical drama later developed by Shakespeare into a popular

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 9.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 10.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., p. 70.

genre. Rabbe, also finds that Marlowe had the ability to take the story of a king without redeeming qualities and manage to move the audience to tears. To lend support to his view, Rabbe quotes Charles Lamb:

La scène de sa mort, dit Charles Lamb, dépasse en pitié et en terreur toute autre scène ancienne et moderne.<sup>43</sup>

Rabbe understood that Marlowe was able to accomplish this moving scene by surrounding his doomed hero with such repulsive characters that one cannot decide who is the more guilty, the greedy barons, the hypocritical queen or the infatuated king.

Rabbe's study on Marlowe covered the Faust legend, which he informs us spread in the Christian world and especially in those countries influenced by the Reformation; and in England Marlowe had the honor to be the first to write on a subject that has tempted so many spirits since. Rabbe's interest in Doctor Faustus is significant, because he also was a habitué of Mallarmé's literary gatherings, and his view of Marlowe's play is the following:

Dieu et le diable se disputent une âme, une conscience humaine, et cette âme se débattant, tantôt faible et découragée, sous l'étreinte de la puissance infernale qui doit enfin triompher de son corps, mais non d'elle.<sup>44</sup>

In this struggle between good and evil, Rabbe judges that Marlowe gave Satan the lead role, just as Milton did after him in Paradise Lost.<sup>45</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> Ibid., p. 71.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 75.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., p. 76.

With respect to Goethe's Faust, Rabbe informs us that Goethe was familiar with Marlowe when he wrote his poem. He cites an English work of 1869 on this subject:

I mentioned Marlowe's Faust. He, Goethe, burst out into an exclamation of praise; "How greatly is it all planned." He thought of translating it.<sup>46</sup>

Goethe's familiarity with the English Faust is relevant since Rabbe ventures that the German could have found in the Faust legend the first idea of his Helen; but to find the seed for Goethe's mystical symbolic drama, Faust, Part II, in the scene Marlowe devoted to Helen is to have very sharp eyes. There was nothing mystical in Marlowe's mind, according to Rabbe who sees Helen as a symbol of antique beauty. He understands the Helen episode to be

l'occasion d'un épithalame passionné et merveilleusement poétique en l'honneur de l'Hélène d'Homère, d'un hymne de foi à la Renaissance.<sup>47</sup>

If the Faust of Marlowe is guilty, continues Rabbe, it is because he is guilty of Marlowe's own sin, the one of having renounced God for Jupiter, the Blessed Virgin for Venus and to have drunk till oblivion at the fount of the ancients.<sup>48</sup> This latter view of Rabbe on Marlowe is reiterated by Georges Eekhoud in "La Pléiade Shakespearienne." Eekhoud ventures that Marlowe put his own spirit on the stage and that

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., p. 77. Rabbe quotes from H. Crabb Robinson II, Journal, 1869, p. 439.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., p. 77.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., p. 78.

son héros ne fait-il que trahir cette fièvre  
d'indépendance et de curiosité de la science  
défendue qui le tiraillaient et qui faillirent  
le conduire au bûcher.<sup>49</sup>

In the Eekhoud study on Marlowe, he sees Faust as a type of character personifying the conflict between religious dogma and science. In comparing Marlowe's Doctor Faustus to Goethe's, Eekhoud found that the sombre melancholy of Marlowe's Mephistopheles is more impressive than

la verve caustique et malicieuse de l'esprit du  
mal dans le Faust de Goethe.<sup>50</sup>

Eekhoud sees infinite despair in Marlowe's Mephistopheles, and an infinite and grandiose conception of hell and damnation in the lament which he quotes in English in the Pléiade:

Why this is hell, nor am I out of it.  
Thinkst thou that I, who saw the Face of God,  
And tasted the eternal joys of heaven,  
Am not tormented with ten thousand hells  
In being deprived of everlasting bliss!<sup>51</sup>

Eekhoud analyzing Taine concludes that Taine saw Faustus as

l'homme vivant agissant, naturel, personnel, non pas  
le symbole philosophique qu'a fait Goethe, mais  
l'homme primitif et vrai...sur la pente et les points  
de son précipice.<sup>52</sup>

Rabbe's and Eekhoud's analyses are keys to the way the symbolists looked upon Marlowe's play. In addition to their views, we have a preface to Rabbe's translation of Marlowe's

<sup>49</sup> Georges Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne," La Société Nouvelle, année 1895, p. 193.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., p. 194.

<sup>51</sup> Marlowe quoted by Eekhoud. Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Taine quoted by Eekhoud. Ibid.

works by Jean Richepin,<sup>53</sup> the active participant in the Petit-Théâtre enterprise, who was another of the Tuesday night faithfuls at Mallarmé's. Richepin gives us additional insight into how the symbolists felt about the English Renaissance. He attributes the cause of the Renaissance to a yearning for a return to Greek and Roman antiquity and a rejection of the values of the Middle Ages which were considered barbarous. At the time Richepin wrote the preface, he signaled a symbolist preference for a return to the Middle Ages:

Aujourd'hui, au contraire le moyen age nous semble le précieux creuset où les races modernes se sont peu à peu élaborées, amalgamées en métaux neufs, dans une lente alchimie dont les ténèbres étaient nécessaires.<sup>54</sup>

Richepin tells us why the Renaissance was so attractive to his contemporaries.

Parceque la Renaissance a eu comme nous, quoique avec des raisons différentes l'amour effrené de toutes les manifestations de la vie, et surtout de cette manifestation suprême: la revolte.<sup>55</sup>

The revolt was against the structure and dogma of the Catholic Church, and in addition it freed the individual:

Parce que la Renaissance a comme à notre époque, déchainé l'individu.<sup>56</sup>

Richepin also saw an analogy between the fin de siècle cult of individuality and that spirit which manifested itself during the Renaissance, and he sums up the similarities:

<sup>53</sup>Jean Richepin, préf. Félix Rabbe, Théâtre 1, v.

<sup>54</sup>Ibid.

<sup>55</sup>Ibid.

<sup>56</sup>Ibid.

Parce que la Renaissance est dans l'histoire de l'humanité, ce qu'est notre fin de siècle--un tremblement de terre et d'orage, une halte en pleine anarchie libre, une de ces heures où l'on fait ribote d'existence.<sup>57</sup>

While the men of the Renaissance drank on the ruins of the scholastic Middle Ages, and rejoiced at the rediscovery of pagan antiquity, the fin de siècle revelers drank to their own ruin, in their aimlessness and pessimism. Richepin discovered that Marlowe had the immense ability to depict this revolt, drunkenness and ardent life; sometimes pushing the description of reality to the degree of horror. Because of this ability, he concludes that Marlowe, his heroes and their language are more typical of the spirit of the Renaissance:

Un Tamerlan, un Barabas, un Faust, un duc de Guise, en ont l'ardeur frénétique, le souffle furieux, la féroce et superbe audace d'ambition, de crime, de sacrilège, avec ce je ne sais quoi qui fait aimer les monstres quand ils sont beaux. La langue que parlent ces héros est comme leur caractère, véhémence, rugissante, exaltée.<sup>58</sup>

Richepin also compares Marlowe to Shakespeare, and comes to the conclusion that the latter whose language is sonorous is mild compared to Marlowe's, but it is the Marlowe hero that stood for the ideal dramatic character:

Marlowe...symbolise notre idéal dans des héros démesurés au verbe grandiloquent, à l'orgueil impie. Aujourd'hui comme alors il y a des âmes monstrueuses et superbes, pour qui le monde est tout à la fois un lupanar et un champ de bataille, et pour qui la vie est intéressante dans ses laideurs et ses crimes autant que dans ses grâces et ses vertus.<sup>59</sup>

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

The Richepin preface is yet another symbolist document attesting that those "âmes monstreuses et superbes pour qui le monde est...un champ de bataille" appealed to the symbolists. It is a credit to Paul Fort and his supporters that they staged Doctor Faustus. In England "it had not been seen within living memory"<sup>61</sup> and it was not until July of 1896, that William Poel of the Elizabethan Stage Society undertook to produce the play--which incidentally; was preceded by "a prologue specially written for the occasion by Algernon Charles Swinburne."<sup>62</sup> The symbolist production of La Tragique histoire du Docteur Faust took place before the English one, so it can be safely said that Paul Fort and his group of supporters were pioneers in the revival of that English drama when they staged that translation in ten tableaux, which they introduced by three prologues and a chorus.<sup>63</sup>

Paul Fort worked against great odds; his resources were limited and he was not free to choose the prose translation of Félix Rabbe. He found it necessary to use the translation of F. de Nion in collaboration with Cassimir Striinsky, because he was heavily supported by La Revue Indépendante whose

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<sup>60</sup>Richepin, preface v.

<sup>61</sup>Robert Speaight, William Poel and the Elizabethan Revival (London: Heinemann Ltd., 1954), p. 113.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid., p. 116. See appendix.

<sup>63</sup>Robichez, p. 498.

rédacteur en chef was none other than François de Nion.<sup>64</sup>

Earlier he had been supported by the Mercure de France until May or June of 1891.<sup>65</sup> Thus the translation of Félix Rabbe was passed by for the de Nion-Striensky translation half-verse and half-prose version.<sup>66</sup> Although the de Nion-Striensky translation does not exist in any library to our knowledge,<sup>66</sup> there are enough reviews and commentaries about this performance to give us an idea of how the production was undertaken.

There was a philosophical dispute between the translators concerning the Helen of Troy scene; Cassimir Striensky aimed at rendering the real Faust. In the program which the Théâtre d'Art prepared for the performance, Striensky wrote that Faust, the man is the personification of the quest for knowledge: "l'insatiable désir de tout connaître et de tout savoir."<sup>67</sup> Striensky also perceived Faust as the symbol of the man of science of the Middle Ages: "le savant, le mage synthétique de tout l'effort du moyen âge."<sup>68</sup> In addition, Striensky explained Faust as the man of the 1890's would see him in France; Striensky thought that they saw only the lover

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<sup>64</sup> Robichez, p. 135. Note 78.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., p. 110. Note 39. Fort's reading committee consisted of Alfred Vallette, Mme Rachilde, Saint-Paul Roux and Jules Renard.

<sup>66</sup> Alfred Bourson, L'Art Social, février 1892, quoted by Robichez, p. 135.

<sup>67</sup> Robichez, p. 134. See note 76.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

Marguerite, which he feels is contrary to Marlowe's intention "qui craint d'amoinrir son personnage en lui prêtant l'inquiétude de la femme."<sup>69</sup> He explains the scene of Helen of Troy by venturing that "Hélène est la Renaissance elle-même, la beauté antique re-apparue."<sup>70</sup>

Striinsky's collaborator on the translation, F. de Nion, had a different view on the Helen scene:

Une extraordinaire explosion de jeunesse remplit la pièce...ce n'est qu'à la fin, au moment suprême, que cette explosion se condense, se restreint se personnalise en un amour...l'amour de Faust de Germanie pour Hélène de Troie.<sup>71</sup>

F. de Nion's vision of Faust leans towards Taine's as explained by Eekhoud above: Taine sees Faust as "l'homme primitif et vrai, l'homme emporté, enflammé, esclave de sa fougue et jouet de ses rêves."<sup>72</sup> Taine's Faust is not at all the philosophic creation of Goethe's imagination. Concerning the Helen of Troy episode, F. de Nion sees it as an idealized dream which is consonant with the platonic loves glorified by the symbolists, as in Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's Axel, where Axel and Sarah choose to die at their moment of supreme happiness rather than fulfill their love on earth.

With all the discussions, analyses and philosophizing concerning Faust, the production at the Théâtre d'Art should

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<sup>69</sup>Striinsky quoted by Robichez, p. 134.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

<sup>71</sup>F. de Nion, quoted by Robichez. Ibid.

<sup>72</sup>Hippolyte Taine, Histoire de la littérature anglaise (Paris: Hachette, 1895), 9<sup>ème</sup> édition, tome ii, p. 44.

a successful aesthetic document demonstrating how Marlowe's Doctor Faustus should be interpreted and performed. Unfortunately, the results were far from that. The reviewer for La Plume found the Faust that Paul Fort's theatre rendered to be "plus humain et plus idéal que celui de Goethe,"<sup>73</sup> but he was critical of the translation which was rhymed when it should have been in prose.

From the theatrical point of view, Willy in Soirées Perdues describes the evening. He very accurately brought out the fact that the Théâtre d'Art disposed of little funds, and found it to be a lack of judgment which allowed it to produce such a play. For Willy, it was nevertheless a memorable evening. He was entertained by the scene with the pope and the cardinals:

Le pape, les cardinaux, les moines, l'archevêque de Reims, cinq ou six diables à pagne rouge à teint ocre, à toupet de feu, et Francisque Sarcey au balcon ont entretenu toute la soirée une gaieté charmante.<sup>74</sup>

Francisque Sarcey was the arch-enemy of the symbolist stage, but in his review of the Marlowe play for Le Temps he showed great generosity:

Je ne dirai rien de la représentation donnée à la Gaieté-Montparnasse par le Théâtre d'Art. Ces jeunes gens nous ont joué La Tragique histoire du Docteur Faust de Marlowe... Il est trop difficile de se

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<sup>73</sup> J. L. Croze, "Théâtre d'Art," La Plume, 15 fevrier 1892, p. 99.

<sup>74</sup> Willy, Soirées Perdues (Paris: Tresses et Stock, 1894). p. 135.

faire, à travers une interprétation si insuffisante et si cahotée, une idée de l'oeuvre du grand poète anglais. J'attendrai qu'ils soient mieux outillées ou qu'ils jouent des oeuvres plus en harmonie avec leurs ressources.<sup>75</sup>

The reviewer for Le Figaro was less generous:

L'opposition de l'idéalisme et du matérialisme est une chose nouvelle ajoutée à la légende par Goethe. Le Faust de Marlowe ne s'en doute pas. Il se contente de faire la fête et, surtout, de se divertir d'une foule de farces que nous appellerions des fumisteries...des cardinaux, et des diables vraiment impayables.<sup>76</sup>

Even Camille Mauclair, the staunch supporter of the symbolist stage was amazed at what happened to Marlowe's play in translation:

Nous eussions souhaité que cette belle oeuvre, humaine, puissante et attachante, échappât à l'incroyable adaptation qu'on nous fit entendre ce soir.<sup>77</sup>

Mainly it was the versification that rendered it unbearable:

Pourquoi avoir versifié cet ancien texte, sans se rendre compte que la poétique, même romantique, ne s'adapte point à une oeuvre antérieure de tant d'années.<sup>78</sup>

This resulted in an ennui mortel which fell over the audience composed mainly of young poets, who broke the monotony of the evening by harassing Francisque Sarcey, the conservative critic of Le Temps. Despite all the drawbacks, Mauclair found

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<sup>75</sup>Francisque Sarcey, "Théâtre d'Art" Le Temps, 9 février 1892, p. 9.

<sup>76</sup>Henri Fouquier, "Théâtre," Le Figaro, 6 février 1892, p.3.

<sup>77</sup>Camille Mauclair, "Calendrier," La Revue Blanche, février 1892, p. 119.

<sup>78</sup>Ibid.

there were enjoyable moments: when the knight was endowed with the pair of horns, and when the stablehand took off in terror.

From Willy's account in Soirées Perdues, it is possible to reconstruct the performance. The seven deadly sins made their appearance. Pride, greed and avarice behaved well; but luxury in a blood-red mantle came on the stage to say "je préfère la peau d'une jolie femme à de la morue frite."<sup>79</sup> Two of the deadly sins, envy and sloth, refused to go on the stage unless they were paid their wage for acting. This resulted in their remaining on the sidelines during the performance. Willy had one piece of very logical criticism: the actor who played Faust and who was supposed to be twenty-four years older at the end of the play, wore the same suit from beginning to end.

The Marlowe play which was to have been the salvation of the Théâtre d'Art was an acknowledged failure, because of the versification and the lack of funds for the necessary theatrical props. Soon after, the Théâtre d'Art closed its doors, and the symbolists turned to Lugné-Poe for the production of their plays and for the revivals of the Renaissance English dramas.

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<sup>79</sup>Willy, Soirees Perdues, p. 191.

CHAPTER FOUR

## LUGNE-POE STAGES TWO STRANGE-LOVE PLAYS

The symbolist men of letters were fascinated by love relationships that did not fall within the classification of domestic love. The love of Axel for Sara in Villiers de l'Isle-Adam's Axel, of Faust for Helen of Troy, of Bellario for Philaster, of Horatio for Hamlet are examples of ideal love. The symbolists were also interested in unusual love relationships such as could be found in John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and Thomas Otway's Venice Preserved. In Ford's play, it is the devastating, compulsive passion of Giovanni for his sister Annabella that is brought to the foreground. In Otway's play it is a series of involvements of couples who are already committed. Jaffier who worships his wife is drawn to Pierre. Pierre who is involved with Aquilina is drawn to Jaffier. Belvedira who adores her husband, Jaffier, is still drawn to her father who has persecuted her. Aquilina who loves Pierre maintains a sado-masochistic relationship with an aging senator.

The symbolists were interested in strange loves, and they had the courage in the late 1800's to stage two plays which had hitherto been termed offensive because they violated decorum and the sensibilities.

MAETERLINCK'S TRANSLATION OF JOHN FORD'S 'TIS PITY SHE'S A WHORE

The story of Paul Fort's Théâtre d'Art, which was forced to close its doors in March of 1892, is one of unrewarded efforts at founding an independent symbolist theatre; yet in a way the venture was not altogether a failure because it gave birth to the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre of Lugné-Poe. When it opened its doors, the symbolists who had flocked around Paul Fort, rallied around Aurélien Lugné-Poe. In 1894, he was being counselled by Stéphane Mallarmé, Marcel Schwob and Maurice Maeterlinck; all three men of letters were avid devotees of the English drama, and Marcel Schwob suggested the staging of Ford's drama 'Tis Pity She's a Whore to Lugné-Poe.<sup>2</sup> The following year he was counselled by Henry Bauer of L'Echo de Paris in the choice of Otway's Venice Preserved.

Lugné-Poe followed in the footsteps of Paul Fort when it came to choosing Elizabethan plays or Elizabethan-type plays. Both plays selected for production had unusual love themes; and the incest in The Cenci at the Théâtre d'Art was followed by the incest of Ford's play at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre, and the tragedy of love and scatological-sadism of Thomas Otway.

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<sup>1</sup>Robichez, p. 144.

<sup>2</sup>Aurélien-Lugné Poe, Acrobaties (Paris: Gallimard, 1930) p.69.

<sup>3</sup>Robichez, p. 144.

Otway's play had been performed in Paris in 1827,<sup>4</sup> and Ford's had been discussed and translated in Contemporains de Shakespeare, John Webster et John Ford in 1865.<sup>5</sup> In 1882, the literary historian Alfred Mézière emphasized that dramatic art in England had a short but glorious history coinciding with Shakespeare's arrival in London, but outside those years (1560-1460), one sees only an occasional masterpiece such as Venice Preserved. Mézière's comment is an indication of French taste which grouped the pseudo-Elizabethan Otway play together with the works of the other dramatists in the Shakespearean galaxy.<sup>6</sup> Hippolyte Taine also identified Venice Preserved with the Shakespearean era, and found in The Orphan and Venice Preserved the sombre imagination of Webster, Ford and Shakespeare because of their gloomy idea of life, their atrocities and their murders.<sup>7</sup> It was Taine who gave Ford's play 'Tis Pity She's a Whore the innocuous title of Annabella when he classified it among those

mélodrames sincères fabriqués, non pas comme les nôtres, par des littérateurs de café pour des bourgeois paisibles, mais écrits par des hommes passionnés

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<sup>4</sup> Mme Vergne, Théâtre Anglais ou collection des pièces jouées à Paris: Venise sauvée (Paris: 1827).

<sup>5</sup> Ernest Lafond, Contemporain de Shakespeare, John Webster et John Ford, précédé de notices sur la vie et les ouvrages (Paris: Hetzel, 1865), p. 334.

<sup>6</sup> Alfred Mézière, Prédécesseur et contemporains de Shakespeare (Paris: Hachette et Cie, 1881), p. 3.

<sup>7</sup> Hippolyte Taine, tome iii, p. 38.

et experts en fait d'actions tragiques, pour une race violente, surnourrie et triste.<sup>8</sup>

Taine's judgment was correct that Ford's drama was written by an expert dramatist for a violent and gloomy audience, therefore yielding the following:

Théâtre unique dans l'histoire, comme le mouvement admirable et passager d'où il est sorti, oeuvre et portrait de ce jeune monde, aussi naturel, aussi effréné et aussi tragique que lui.<sup>9</sup>

Maurice Maeterlinck, who had read Taine, played a tremendous role in the production of Annabella. He translated the work and preceded it with a preface which he had published as an article in L'Echo de Paris. Maeterlinck found Ford's incestuous drama to be fort beau as he explains it in a letter to Lugné-Poe who was to produce it. Maeterlinck found it easy to rid the play of its two auxiliary plots:

Il ne reste plus que le drame de l'inceste qui, vraiment, vu ainsi d'affilée, est fort beau... il n'y a que la boucherie de la fin que je n'ai pu nettoyer.<sup>10</sup>

The preface to Annabella also appeared as the article mentioned above in L'Echo de Paris. In it Maeterlinck stressed the place the play held in the Shakespearean cycle.

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid., tome ii, p. 59.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., tome ii, p. 24.

<sup>10</sup>Maeterlinck quoted by Lugné-Poe, Acrobaties (Paris: Gallimard, 1930), p. 270.

In another letter to Lugné-Poe, Maeterlinck elaborates on the element that he finds so appealing in Ford's drama; and at the same time provides us with the clue that Lugné-Poe knew of Georges Eekhoud's efforts in the translation and promotion of Elizabethan drama. Maeterlinck explains to Lugné-Poe the structure of *Annabella*:

Comme dans tous les drames de ce temps, il y a double intrigue, deux pièces en une, dont la seconde était pour amuser les matelôts du parterre, avec des plaisanteries de bordel.<sup>11</sup>

In the letter, he explains to Lugné-Poe that the double intrigue would necessitate numerous décors. In a post scriptum to the letter he adds:

Puisque nous en sommes au temps d'Elizabeth, tâche donc de lire la traduction de La Duchesse de Malfi de Webster, par Georges Eekhoud dans La Société Nouvelle (numéros de janvier, février et mars, je crois).<sup>12</sup>

In the preface to Annabella, Maeterlinck informed his readers that Shakespeare had both predecessors and successors:

On dirait que son âme agit déjà sur d'autres âmes avant d'être née; et elle ne se taît pas lorsqu'elle est morte.<sup>13</sup>

The Belgian poet sensed that Shakespeare was not an isolated phenomenon, and that the Elizabethan era was the center of one

<sup>11</sup>Maeterlinck, quoted by Lugné-Poe, p. 271.

<sup>12</sup>Ibid.

<sup>13</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck, Annabella (Paris: Paul Ollendorf, éditeur, 1895), préface v.

of the most beautiful and tumultuous movements in the English drama, which he very appropriately labeled the mare poetarum, and which was unknown to the average man of letters with the exception of Hippolyte Taine, who Maeterlinck says, explored this stormy ocean and came back dazzled by the masterpieces which he discovered. Taine found about forty poets and fifty masterpieces.<sup>14</sup> Maeterlinck explains that this stormy ocean starts with Marlowe and encompasses Otway, and can be likened to a crown of masterpieces which orbits the brow of the author of Hamlet, while at the same time containing all that the English call Elizabethan drama.

Maeterlinck explained that John Ford lived at the center of this great poetic whirlwind, which fell on seventeenth century London, and that his originality lay in the fact that he is the most profoundly feminine of all the poets of the Shakespearean galaxy; his female characters are different from the ones of his contemporaries. In Ford's work, the female is no longer the beautiful apparition, tender or tragic, who loves or suffers, telling us only the incidentals pertaining to her love or her suffering. The man who has created Annabella has descended into the dark regions where all the souls look alike:

et à mesure que l'on descend ou que l'on monte on s'approche de la grande source profonde, incolore, uniforme et commune de l'âme humaine.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., préface xiii.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., xv.

Maeterlinck finds Ford to be Racinian at times, and finds that his heroines have an interior life which is at the same time tender, strong and silent. This ability to give characters an interior life is a gift which gives each word that is uttered a meaning it does not have elsewhere. Wherever this gift exists, the drama is modified, becoming more discreet, deeper and graver, and this succeeds in eliminasting all romantic exaggerations and overemphasized passions. He found Ford's heroines to be more intimately alive than many others without its being obvious why this is so. This can be seen in Annabella.<sup>16</sup>

Robert Davril's Le Drame de Ford makes apparent connection between 'Tis Pity She's a Whore and the appeal it held for the symbolist group:

La morbidesse de Ford, ce freudisme avant la lettre, ce goût du pervers marquent surtout une curiosité et une inquiétude d'âme...<sup>17</sup>

Davril sees a tendency in that author to magnify real love by means of splendid lyrical dialogue, pride, and pathetic scenes which remind him of Villiers de l'Isle-Adam in Axel or Elen, who disdainfully relegates carnal love to the servants while he reserved sublime love and dignified death to the aristocrats.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, préface xv.

<sup>17</sup>Robert Davril, Le Drame de Ford (Paris: Marcel Didier, 1954), p. 497.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

In the preface to Annabella, Maeterlinck gives us his view of Annabella, who he says looks like any other young lady. She shows she is quite ordinary in everyday life. She jokes ordinarily with her nurse and her suitors, but as soon as it is a question of her passion, everything that is deep, tender and heroic in a woman manifests itself in her once banal appearance. She becomes the adorable mistress; she is pure; she is tender and everything that is subtle and noble matures in her because she is in love. This is especially so because she must love in secret, with fears and tears, says Maurice Maeterlinck.<sup>19</sup>

The play has, of course, other particularities which appealed to its translator. The action, for example, and the characters develop admirably in silences, and the intervals which existed between each scene are as fruitful as the scenes. When the action ceases on the stage, life continues and the passion of the absent characters evolves naturally within the spectators, so that the unexpected happenings do not surprise us.

Maeterlinck, also, finds Ford to be profoundly discreet. His heroines speak very little, and in the most tragic moments they say only two or three words, all of them simple.<sup>20</sup> Despite all this simplicity, Maeterlinck finds that Ford was able to create in his Annabella the following:

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<sup>19</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, préface, xv.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid., xvi.

...le poème terrible, ingénu et sanglant de l'amour sans merci. C'est l'amour charnel dans toute sa force, dans toute sa beauté, et dans toute son horreur presque surnaturelle.<sup>21</sup>

There seems to be a contradiction in Maeterlinck, the author of fairy tales, of Pelléas et Mélisande, of Les Aveugles and L'Intruse, when he finds so much beauty in the magnetic force of carnal love, since love is either idealized in his fairy tales or non-existent in plays such as L'Intruse or Les Aveugles.

Maeterlinck's summary of the play gives us an idea of how he understands Ford's incestuous drama. Giovanni and Annabella are brother and sister. They have loved each other for a long time in silence, perhaps without knowing it. All of a sudden, in one of those moments of revelation their eyes are opened to the truth. They meet trembling in a room in the paternal household; and love explodes, cruel, fierce--already tremulously feeling its way under the guidance of death. They kneel and embrace: Annabella says "Aime-moi mon frère ou tue-moi," and Giovanni answers "Aime-moi ma soeur ou tue-moi."<sup>22</sup> Maeterlinck neither condemns nor condones the fraternal lovers, but assesses that they have embarked in what he calls the "tourbillon du malheur," and the drama unfolds in a march towards death. Nature follows its course; Annabella is pregnant and she has to get married to Soranzo, who soon finds out

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<sup>21</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, préface xvi.

<sup>22</sup>Ford, translated and quoted by Maeterlinck, Annabella, préface xviii.

the truth in a scene that is as poignant as it is violent. Soranzo tries to drag from Annabella the name of the father of her child. It is at this moment that Annabella defying violence and death rises to great stature:

Annabella. Vous ne le saurez jamais.

Soranzo. Quoi?

Annabella. Jamais. Si je le dis que je sois à jamais damnée.<sup>23</sup>

The more she resists the more violent Soranzo threatens her.

Soranzo. Je ne le saurais pas, s...? Je t'ouvrirai le coeur et je l'y trouverai!...<sup>24</sup>

Maeterlinck could not persuade himself to use Ford's vile but contemporarily adequate language, so he follows the "s" above by the "...", while the defiant mother-to-be continues to infuriate her husband, consciously egging him on to her death:

Annabella. Faites, faites.

Soranzo. Et de mes dents, et membre à membre j'ecorcherai l'infâme!

Annabella. Ha! ha! le bonhomme est joyeux!

Soranzo. Tu ris? tiens, p..., dis-moi le nom de ton amant. Je hacherai ta chair. Qui est-ce.<sup>25</sup>

Once again Maeterlinck resorts to the "..." to avoid the use of an obscene word, but he manages to heighten the intensity of the scene by the frequent use of the exclamation mark.

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<sup>23</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, p. 47.

<sup>24</sup>Ibid.

<sup>25</sup>Ibid.

Annabella's singing of the Italian song infuriates Soranzo even more: Che morte più dolce che morire per amore?

Soranzo. Je traînerai par le cheveux, je traînerai dans la poussière ton corps couvert de lèpre et de luxure...<sup>26</sup>

Soranzo shakes her as he is talking while Annabella only responds by continuing her maddening song: Morendo in grazia dee morire senza dolore.

Maeterlinck labels Annabella's words in the above scene in the following manner:

des mots magnifiques arrachés comme des pierreries dans une tempête, aux abîmes éternels de l'âme humaine.<sup>27</sup>

Maeterlinck writes that in the story of literature, there does not exist a scene that is more beautiful, more sweet, more tender, more cruel and more desperate than the scene in which Annabella and Giovanni say good-bye. Annabella dressed in her wedding gown and lying on her bed informs her brother that their hour has come, and he weeps for what he has to do.

Giovanni. C'est vrai, je pleure, ce sont les larmes funéraires que je verse sur ta tombe. Elles ont sillonné mes joues, le jour où je t'aimais sans pouvoir te le dire...Ma belle Annabella, si je te répétais ici l'histoire de ma vie, ce serait perdre du temps.<sup>28</sup>

Giovanni was suffering from the moment he discovered his love, yet at the moment of his death he expresses no remorse. On

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<sup>26</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, p. 47.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid., préface xxix.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 72.

the contrary, he sees his actions as a tribute to the sacred love he bore for Annabella:

Giovanni. O vous, tous les esprits de l'air et tout ce qui existe par delà, souvenez-vous que nuit et jour, le matin et le soir, le tribut que paya mon coeur à l'amour sacré d'Annabella, ce furent ces mêmes larmes qui la pleurent à présent...

Giovanni continues in the same manner, determining that only death shall part them as he prepares to stab Annabella:

Prie! Puisqu'il faut nous séparer, va-t-en, l'âme toute blanche, va-t-en occuper dans le ciel un trône d'innocence et de sainteté, prie, ma soeur, va prier...<sup>29</sup>

Though incestuous, Annabella is still deeply religious; at the moment of her death she invokes her guardian angels, while Giovanni joins her in prayer. Annabella forgives him with all her heart, as Giovanni stabs her during the kiss of death. Then Giovanni, frenzied and bloodied, enters into the banquet hall with Annabella's heart on the point of his dagger. The drama ends in what Maeterlinck calls one of those furious massacres in which the English dramatists frequently indulged.

The translator of Annabella finds the tragedy very simple, very human, but objected that in its original form the tragedy had two sub-plots too many. One dealt with Soranzo's persecution by his old mistress, and the other dealt with a gross comedy about Bergetto a suitor of Annabella and his valet

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<sup>29</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, p. 72.

Poggio. Maeterlinck found these extraneous episodes unnecessary, while agreeing that in Ford's time it was necessary that the playwright cater to three classes of spectators; thence the three plots in the action were juxtaposed. Maeterlinck felt that the two parasite plots had no roots in the story of Annabella, and eliminated them:

pour la dégager de ce qui la souillait il a suffi de la cueillir dans ces broussailles sans qu'il ait fallu déplacer une réplique ou supprimer un vers.<sup>30</sup>

This trimming down of Ford's play met with criticism; Gustave Kahn writing in La Société Nouvelle called it a concession to French taste which he deemed a betrayal of Ford:

C'est le tort de Maurice Maeterlinck d'avoir réduit aux proportions d'une tragédie classique ce drame touffu. C'est un tort qui très admissible pour un arrangeur de planches rémunératrices, ne se conçoit pas chez le vrai lettré et le poète qu'est l'adaptateur d'Annabella.<sup>31</sup>

Maeterlinck predicted the unfavorable reaction to his purified tragedy, which resulted in some scenes being non-continuous with the ones that preceded. The preface to Annabella, in part was published as a critical article in L'Echo de Paris; in it Maeterlinck explained to the public:

Les intervalles qu'il y a entre les scènes sont aussi féconds que les scènes elles-mêmes. Lorsque l'acte cesse, la vie continue et la passion du personnage absent évolue naturellement en nous-mêmes de sorte que ses transformations inattendues ne nous surprennent pas.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, préface xix.

<sup>31</sup>Gustave Kahn, La Société Nouvelle, décembre 1894, p. 732.

<sup>32</sup>Maeterlinck, L'Echo de Paris, 6 novembre 1894, p. 3.

Thus, according to Maeterlinck, action and characters evolve from the silent intervals resulting from the trimming down of the play. When analyzing Maeterlinck's above comment, Jacques Robichez in Le Symbolisme au théâtre comes to the conclusion that Maeterlinck is giving us one of his appealing but empty theories. Not only does he transform Annabella to conform to French taste by eliminating the sub-plots, but he also relates Ford's drama to his own theatrical aesthetic on the use of silence to enhance the plot.<sup>33</sup> Very little happens on the Maeterlinck stage in which words are usually ordinary, but Maeterlinck's plays are full of undercurrents which overflow with subjective emotions. In an article which Maeterlinck wrote for Le Figaro, he commented:

Au temps des grands tragiques de l'ère nouvelle, au temps de Shakespeare, de Racine et de ceux qui les suivent, on croit que les malheurs viennent tous des passions diverses de notre coeur.<sup>34</sup>

In Maeterlinck's view, man was the master of his destiny, whereas in the Greek universe man was a lot less master of his world when "la fatalité régnait sur les hauteurs." In Ford's play, his heroes are doomed from the very beginning by their uncontrollable passion. The contemporary drama, according to Maeterlinck, stresses fatality; this is a sign of the new drama which does not linger on the effects of the

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<sup>33</sup>Robichez, p. 300.

<sup>34</sup>Maeterlinck, "A Propos de l'Oeuvre," Le Figaro, 24 septembre, 1894, p. 8.

misfortunes, but on the misfortunes per se. In Le Figaro, Maeterlinck is again giving us a very philosophical view of man's fate:

hérédité, volonté, destinée, tout se mêle bruyamment dans notre âme: mais c'est l'étoile silencieuse qui règne.<sup>35</sup>

According to Maeterlinck, Ford presents Annabella and Giovanni as being born under an unlucky star--and Giovanni knows it:

Giovanni. Perdu!...Je suis perdu! et mon destin m'a condamné à mort! Plus je lutte et plus j'aime, plus j'aime et moins j'espère, et ma perte est certaine. J'ai essayé en vain tout ce qui eût pu guérir mes incurables et infatigables blessures. Oh! si l'Eglise ne nous défendait pas de faire un Dieu de notre amour et de nous prosterner devant lui!..<sup>36</sup>

The force that propels Giovanni towards Annabella is so great that he wants to deify it, and build a cult to it. Giovanni has prayed to heaven for help until he has

fatigué le ciel de mes prières, et j'ai tari la source de mes larmes. J'ai désseché mon sang dans mes jeunes sans fin. J'ai tenté tout ce que la sagesse et la science pouvaient me conseiller. Mais hélas! tout est songe et fables de vieillards inventés pour effrayer les jeunes coeurs. Je suis toujours le même. Il faut que je parle ou que j'éclate. Ce n'est pas mon désir, je le sais, main mon destin qui me pousse désormais.<sup>37</sup>

Giovanni feels, fights, and surrenders. This was the appeal that Ford's characters had for Maeterlinck; the Renaissance dramatist let his characters evolve. First there is recog-

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<sup>35</sup>Maeterlinck, "A Propos de l'Oeuvre," p. 3.

<sup>36</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, p. 10.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid.

nitition; then the characters delve into the dark regions of the self where all souls resemble one another; then they act according to their nature.

There was a lot of publicity preceding Ford's play. Maeterlinck's articles in Le Figaro and L'Echo de Paris, and an erudite conference by Marcel Schwob, on the night the play opened, were designed to prepare the audience for the production of Annabella. Marcel Schwob introduced the incestuous subject by telling his audience an analogous tale.<sup>38</sup> A prince and princess had sealed themselves in a tomb with a sumptuous feast in preparation of a life of pleasure; but even in the tomb God's wrath had found them and consumed them by his fire. Like the prince in the story, Giovanni told his sister, "Fais ton choix; aime-moi, ou tue-moi, ma soeur," and Annabella gloriously gave him back his knife and ordered him to live.<sup>39</sup> She too, like the princess in the fairy tale had loved her brother silently, for a long time, and did not dare make the revelation. The difference between the prince and princess in the fairy tale and Ford's doomed heroes is that Annabella and Giovanni continued to live in the real world, where the punishment came from within themselves, and the world around them. Annabella was forced to marry because she was with child.

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<sup>38</sup> Marcel Schwob, "Annabella et Giovanni," Mercure de France, décembre 1894, p. 323. The story is undocumented and may be of Schwob's creation.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

Her husband immediately discovered her crime. Death lurks above them all the time. In Ford's play love is stronger than death, pushing Giovanni to kill Annabella.<sup>40</sup>

The love of the brother for the sister was not seen by Schwob as an ordinary love: he found Giovanni's love to be grand and elevated. He translates a passage from Ford thus:

Si jamais les temps futurs apprennent l'histoire de nos affections étroitement enlacées quoique peut-être les lois de la conscience et de l'usage puissent nous blâmer justement, pourtant quand on connaîtra notre amour, cet amour effacera l'infamie qui en des incestes ordinaires n'inspirerait que de l'horreur.<sup>41</sup>

Schwob's conception of Giovanni is that of an individualist who believes neither in heaven nor in hell, and who fears neither fate nor death. In his lecture, Schwob said that Annabella saw her brother as a hero and glorious being superior to men, and adds in a strong statement, "Nous n'avons pas le droit de le voir autrement."<sup>42</sup>

Schwob's admiration is for Giovanni's individuality and courage, but not for his deed. The lecturer explained Giovanni in terms of Macbeth. Macbeth is a murderer, yet when he cries that he is tired of the sun and would like to see the entire universe ruined, as he dons his armour for his last battle, we admire him and our heart is with him. To understand Giovanni and Macbeth, it is necessary to understand the age of the Elizabethans, an age of tragic heroes, and of the most noble adventurers on land and on sea; the age of Sir Walter Raleigh,

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<sup>40</sup>Schwob, "Annabella et Giovanni," p. 323.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

of treasure hunters and battle wounds. Those are the heroes with which the plays of the Black Friars, the Globe and the Red Bull theatres were peopled. Those are the heroes who affirmed their rights in moral theory--as the others won their rights in practice among men. Shakespeare was not an isolated phenomenon in creating characters of stature, Schwob informed his audience. Two other poets paralleled the bard of Stratford-on-Avon: John Ford created Giovanni and Cyril Tourneur showed us Vindice, the hero of revenge as well as Danville, the hero of atheism. We thus have three titans fighting the world and its mores, who are condemned to perish, but who affirm their individuality in the face of the universe.<sup>43</sup>

Schwob showed the influence of Shakespeare on Ford in the structure of the play. He showed the similarity between Romeo and Juliet and the drama of Annabella. With certain modifications, one would find in Ford's play the characters of the friar, the old Capulet, the nurse, Romeo and Juliet. In Ford, dramatic conflict is pushed one step further--whereas Romeo and Juliet are separated by hatred, Annabella and Giovanni are bound by blood. Romeo and Juliet have the excuse of their love when they defy their families. Annabella's and Giovanni's love is sin itself.<sup>44</sup>

As for the setting, Schwob said that Ford picked the

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<sup>43</sup>Schwob, "Annabella et Giovanni," p. 329.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid.

Italian peninsula for his drama. The land of poison and love always attracted the English poets from Elizabethan times to the time of Shelley and Browning. It is in Parma that John Ford saw the setting where the drama of *Annabella* was to unfold, and it is in Parma where he situated the play.<sup>45</sup>

Georges Eekhoud who was present at the performance of *Annabella* when it was produced by the Théâtre de L'Oeuvre at the Nouveau Théâtre on November 6, 1894, tells us in "La Pléiade Shakespearienne" that he found the Maurice Maeterlinck adaptation excellent, although it did away with the secondary plots. Perhaps, wrote Eekhoud, Maeterlinck was mistaken in trimming the story to the bare essentials. Some comic scenes, one or two foolish characters would have accentuated by contrast the excessively bloody aspect of the main intrigue. Eekhoud especially regretted that Maeterlinck did away with the Bergetto episode which he felt brought an effect both comical and macabre to the play. The clownish Bergetto dies, the victim of a jealous rival. With his last breath the young man wails his suffering in a very crude and "naturalistic" effect.<sup>46</sup>

Eekhoud warned his readers that despite the subject of the play, it must not be thought that John Ford was obsessed with abnormal behaviour. On the contrary, John Ford liked to approach the most difficult situations, and the ones that least

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<sup>45</sup>Schwob, "Annabella et Giovanni," p. 329.

<sup>46</sup>Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne, John Ford," La Société Nouvelle, année 1896, p. 101.

conformed to the norms of his society. John Ford's dramas differed from Shakespeare's in that they demonstrated a tone of defiance, and Eekhoud comes to the conclusion that from Ford's choice of themes

il n'imaginait ces outrances et ces transgressions que pour les magnifier et en imposer la logique et la raison d'être aux conventions pharisiennes et aux stagnantes symetries.<sup>47</sup>

John Ford met the challenge of working on plots that were not only greatly complicated but were also the most non-conformist. Eekhoud speculates that Ford must have experienced a great satisfaction to create characters and situations that were out of step with the events of public life. The reader of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore who is attracted by the salacious title is soon transported into the cerebral realm of anguish and of the suffering of the flesh.

Georges Eekhoud and Marcel Schwob differ on their interpretation of the character of Giovanni. Eekhoud sees Giovanni as a suffering soul trying to rationalize his passion for his sister; while Schwob sees him as an assertive soul trying to assert his individuality. Both views are contrary to Maeterlinck's that Giovanni is fenced by heredity, will and destiny. Eekhoud sees Giovanni hating himself at times: prejudice, education and the law condemn him in his own eyes and take sides with the masses against his individuality; yet the more

<sup>47</sup>Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne," p. 101.

he resists, the more he loves.<sup>48</sup> The subject of 'Tis Pity She's a Whore had caused John Ford many problems; the puritans objected to it on moral grounds.<sup>49</sup> In order to avoid public displeasure when it was produced in 1894, the symbolists made sure the public was properly prepared for the incestuous theme: Maeterlinck's article in L'Echo de Paris, the Schwob conference and the Maeterlinck article in Le Figaro provided a background for the work so that an uninitiated theatre-goer would not recoil from the spectacle.

As usual, the critics had mixed feelings about the performance. Francisque Sarcey, the critic for Le Temps wrote an interesting review of the play that was both objective and caustic. Sarcey was caustically thankful to Lugné-Poe for exhuming John Ford's play, which he found to be an interesting but not a beautiful work of art, and which he believed belonged more to the realm of archeology than to that of dramatic art. The play was more for reading than for acting, that critic felt:

L'interprétation à notre avis en a faussé le sens.  
L'auteur du seizième siècle met en scène un frère  
et une soeur. Giovanni et Annabella, qui s'aiment.  
Ils s'aiment de cet amour chaud, impétueux, irrésis-  
tible qui bouillonnait dans les veines des hommes de  
ce temps-là.<sup>50</sup>

Though Ford published in the seventeenth century, Sarcey like the Frenchmen lumped all the drama of the period together. The critic found that the lovers in the play justify their passion by subtle reasoning, which is characteristic of the time, since

<sup>48</sup>Eekhoud, "La Pleiade Shakespearienne," p. 103.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid., p. 101.

<sup>50</sup>Francisque Sarcey, "Critique Théâtrale," Le Temps, 12 novembre 1894, p. 8.

all those people had been fed with scholastic teachings. He compares the reasoning of the lovers to the letters of Héloïse which were full of reasoning and subtlety, for the most passionate lover dons the most refined forms of logic. Sarcey had no quarrel either with the story or with the philosophical implications, but he objected to the acting.

Lugné-Poe, et sa partenaire Mme Berthe Bady ont eu la singulière idée de nous jouer ces scènes enragées les mains jointes, les yeux au ciel, l'allure mystique, la démarche lente, la voix blanche et monotone, comme un saint et une sainte descendus d'une fresque de Giotto: Rien de plus contraire au texte...du moment que l'on adoptait cette interprétation, il fallait, pour donner à l'oeuvre une certaine harmonie, l'imposer aux autres artistes.<sup>51</sup>

This strange way of acting was very disturbing for Sarcey since the other actors in the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre troupe were not constrained to adopt the manner of Lugné-Poe and Berthe Bady whose acting was so slow, and voice so monotonous that they seemed two saints out of a painting. It so happened that the role of Soranzo was awarded to the most noisy and sonorous actor of that time, Damoye.<sup>52</sup> Sarcey found the scene in which Soranzo drags Annabella by the hair to be both violent and brutal, and justifiably so. He does not share Maeterlinck's and Schwob's enthusiasm for that scene, nor Eekhoud's appreciation that only certain passages in Othello and Philaster can equal it.<sup>53</sup> Eekhoud also quotes Taine, who

<sup>51</sup> Ibid.

<sup>52</sup> Robichez, p. 302.

<sup>53</sup> Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne," La Société Nouvelle, année 1896, p. 104.

calls Annabella's defiance of Soranzo an act of adoration for Giovanni:

C'est acte d'adoration, dit fort justement Taine, est comme une rose qu'elle cueille et dont elle s'enivre; j'ajouterai une rose au parfum exhilarant qui plonge la patiente dans une sorte de frénésie sardonique.<sup>54</sup>

Sarcey does not see Annabella and Giovanni as martyrs, and he is therefore amazed by the butchery:

Croiriez-vous qu'ensuite Giovanni tue lui-même Annabella pour qu'elle n'appartienne plus à personne, lui arrache le coeur de la poitrine, l'enfile de son poignard, et brandit ce morceau de chair rouge devant son père et le mari de sa soeur, et tout cela d'un air suave, d'un pas mesuré et glissant.<sup>55</sup>

All in all, Sarcey was neither impressed by the contents of play nor by the acting.

Camille Mauclair, the symbolist reviewer, wrote a generous article in La Revue Encyclopédique. He called the undertaking of the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre laudable; even the choice of the play was fortuitous for the opening of the theatrical season. The l'Oeuvre, wrote Mauclair, undertook to do what no other theatre of Paris would dare because of the incestuous subject of Annabella and the financial risk involved in such an undertaking.<sup>56</sup> The Théâtre de l'Oeuvre was serving its purpose:

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<sup>54</sup>Taine quoted by Eekhoud, "La Pléiade Shakespearienne," La Société Nouvelle, année 1896, p. 105.

<sup>55</sup>Sarcey, "Critique Théâtrale," Le Temps, 12 novembre 1894, p. 8.

<sup>56</sup>Camille Mauclair, "Annabella," La Revue Encyclopédique, 1er décembre 1894, p. 516.

On n'ira à l'Oeuvre que pour des cérémonies uniques, d'art. Ailleurs on exigera de riches décors, ou des acteurs célèbres, là on attendra l'ouvrage d'art caractéristique et singulier, réalisé avec toute la bonne volonté possible.<sup>57</sup>

As for the selection of Annabella, Maclair was in complete agreement with Schwob, Maeterlinck and Eekhoud. Maclair wrote that Ford was one of the greatest geniuses of the seventeenth century English poets, but even so agreed that the toning down of the brutal language by Maeterlinck was necessary because he considered Ford's language shocking to modern ears. Maclair also found the scene of Soranzo's wedding night fascinating:

...dans une fureur où Ford sème les pierreries d'un style sinistre, il veut arracher à sa femme le nom de son amant. Elle le brave et tandis qu'il la meurtrit de coup, elle chante entre ses dents, un des plus beaux défis héroïques que le théâtre ait vus, deux vers d'une chanson populaire d'amoureux d'Italie.<sup>58</sup>

Camille Maclair also liked the last act, especially the scene in which Soranzo and Giovanni render their last breath, and Giovanni dies shouting one last time the accursed name of Annabella. Maclair pointed out that in the original play it is the priest who according to English custom says the last words "'Tis Pity She's a Whore." This is a moralistic summing up of the play.

When it came to analyzing the acting, Camille Maclair

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<sup>57</sup> Ibid., p. 517.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

agreed with Francisque Sarcey that the acting of Lugné-Poe and Berthe Bady (who acted in the restrained style cultivated for Maurice Maeterlinck's Pelléas et Mélisande) was insufficient at times for such a violent and passionate play; yet with all their shortcomings, the actors of the l'Oeuvre were preferable to the accomplished and renowned actors seen on famous stages; they lived and suffered nobly. As for Damoye, he fit very well into the brutal-ranting role of Soranzo.

For the scenery, two admirable décors were painted by Louis Anquetin, who had painted some of the most beautiful portraits since Manet. Mauclair describes it thus:

Une vue de Parme, pleine d'air et de clarté, avec ses clochetons légers et ses exquis campaniles, et une tapisserie immense où des chevaliers d'or, parmi les trompettes et les oriflammes, s'escortaient de femmes nues et de guirlandes: un Veronese éclatant comme le drame.<sup>59</sup>

All in all, Camille Mauclair praised Maeterlinck's contribution: the translation as well as the introductory article published in L'Echo de Paris. Mauclair calls Maeterlinck a great poet and an excellent adaptor, as well as the most profound and passionate critic of Ford since Hippolyte Taine; Mauclair called Annabella an enormous success, and underlined the fact that when Annabella battered by her furious husband sang the languid and insolent Italian song, a shiver ran through the audience which the well-made drama of Sardou could never have produced in any one.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>59</sup>Ibid.

<sup>60</sup>Ibid.

GYL PENE'S TRANSLATION OF THOMAS OTWAY'S  
VENICE PRESERVED

Encouraged by the favorable reception of *Annabella*, Lugné-Poe chose Otway's Venice Preserved to open his 1895, and third season of the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre. Venice Preserved had been identified by Taine as Shakespearean and Elizabethan. He had classified that play and The Orphan along with the works of Webster, Ford and Shakespeare because they included a gloomy idea of life, were full of atrocities, and murders. They were also pictures of irresistible passion which left behind them devastation and death.<sup>61</sup>

Taine found that Otway, like Shakespeare, represented on the stage human transports and rages: a brother violating his brother's wife, a husband perjuring himself for his wife. Otway depicted weak and violent souls, the sport of chance, and the prey of temptation. Taine also contends that like Shakespeare, Otway has also found the language to express those passions: poignant and living words which lay bare the depths of humanity.<sup>62</sup> Taine also observed that Otway had conceived the genuine woman--Monimia in The Orphan and above all Belvedira in Venice Preserved. Finally, Taine makes the observation that

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<sup>61</sup>Taine, Histoire de la littérature anglaise, t. iii, p. 193.

<sup>62</sup>Ibid.

like Shakespeare, Otway has found at least once the following:

...la grande bouffonnerie amère, le sentiment cru de la bassesse humaine, et il a planté, au milieu de sa tragédie la plus douloureuse, un grotesque immonde, un vieux sénateur qui se délasse de sa gravité officielle en faisant le soir, chez sa courtisane, le farceur et le valet. Comme cela est amer! Comme il a vu vrai en montrant l'homme empressé de quitter son costume et sa parade.<sup>63</sup>

The above scene describes Taine's view of Otway's inclusion of the sado-masochistic scene involving the senator and Aquilina. Taine found that The Orphan and Venice Preserved were gleams of the past because Otway, for the most part, wrote obscene comedies.<sup>64</sup> Maeterlinck, who was influenced by Taine, included Otway in the Shakespearean cycle which he defined as a galaxy of poets starting with Marlowe and ending with Otway.<sup>65</sup>

Lugné-Poe had the production of Venise Sauvée preceded by a conference, like the one that preceded Annabella. The lecture was given by Laurent Tailhade who informed his audience of the origins of the play, and of Otway's intention when he wrote it. The origin of Venise Sauvée was Saint-Réal's Conspiration des Espagnols contre Venise; but Otway embellished his characters. Tailhade informed his audience that Otway was not concerned with morality, and that his characters are far from saints. In addition, Otway's aim was not to concern himself with historical

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<sup>63</sup>Taine, Histoire de la littérature anglaise, t. iii, p. 194.

<sup>64</sup>Ibid., p. 195.

<sup>65</sup>Maeterlinck, Annabella, préface v.

accuracy but to portray living characters logically rendered. To do this he reduced a conspiracy against a corrupt government to a love story. The heroes are two sets of lovers whose domestic squabbles set in motion the wheels of a plot which must obliterate the nobility and return the power seized by the senators to the people.<sup>66</sup>

The symbolists, who as we have seen, were attracted to strange-love themes, decided to include the sado-scathological scene between Antonio and the courtesan Aquilina, which the English players who had visisted Paris in 1827 had pudivement supprimée.<sup>67</sup> Like Ford's play, Venise Sauvée is a tragedy of strange passion. The love of two friends, Jaffier and Pierre, transcends marital and heterosexual love. Jaffier, torn between love for his wife and duty to his friend utters this cry from the bottom of his heart as he is kissing Belvedira in Act V, scene ii.

Oh! that my arms were rivetted  
Thus around thee ever! But my friends, my oath!  
This and no more. (kissing her)

and Belvedira replies, begging for one more kiss:

Another, sure another  
For that poor little one you've taken such care of;  
I'll give it him truly.<sup>68</sup>

Belvedira, who cannot receive one more kiss from her husband, begs one for her son for whom she feels jealousy.

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<sup>66</sup>Laurent Tailhade, "Venise Sauvée," Mercure de France, décembre 1895, p. 335.

<sup>67</sup>Mme Vergne, Théâtre anglais ou collection des pièces anglaises jouées a Paris, Venise Sauvée, 1827, p. 297.

<sup>68</sup>Thomas Otway, Venice Preserved. ed. Malcolm Kelsall (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1969), p. 80.

The scene between Sanator Antonio and Aquilina was commented upon unanimously. Only once before had such an example of sado-masochism been portrayed in French literature; that was in Emile Zola's Nana, which may have been inspired by Otway. Marcel Fouquier writing in La Nouvelle Revue said

L'Oeuvre a enfin représentée Venise Sauvée d'Otway. Mélo assez fastidieux, encore que Shakespearien. La scène célèbre du vieux sénateur qui chez la courtisane fait le boeuf et le chien a été fort applaudie. On était venu pour ça et pour la conférence de M. Laurent Tailhade. Mais ce poète lyrico-combatif s'est borné à une lecture du Larousse. Encore une façon d'étonner son public.<sup>69</sup>

The play was also reviewed in Le Figaro, by Henri Fouquier.<sup>70</sup> The latter was dismayed by the whole evening at the l'Oeuvre. He found it a burden to sit through what he called an incoherent play. There were too many scenes, and the bell which was constantly ringing for the change in scenery gave him the feeling of being in a church. Fouquier conceded that for many of the spectators, however, this was a sacred performance, and if any one of either sex dared to laugh he was rebuffed by the aesthetes. As for Tailhade, Henri Fouquier agreed with his colleague Marcel Fouquier of La Nouvelle Revue that the lecture was read stiffly, while Tailhade was pouring out some of the observations of Hippolyte Taine. This was no personal reflection on Tailhade, Henri Fouquier added; however, the

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<sup>69</sup> Marcel Fouquier, "Venise Sauvée," La Nouvelle Revue, 15 novembre 1895, p.125.

<sup>70</sup> Henri Fouquier, "Venise Sauvée," Le Figaro, 9 novembre 1895, p. 9.

curtain rose on a poor décor, a Venice piazza which would have been better replaced by curtains with writing; the tapestries were painted with animals and Fouquier could not figure out if one of the animals was a spider carrying a locomotive or a horse carrying a mindmill.<sup>71</sup> All in all, Fouquier found the entire effort of the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre to be a most clumsy drama. He sums the plot thus: everybody is unhappy in the play; Pierre is angry because the rulers are corrupt, so he plots to overthrow the government. Aquilina is unhappy because she does not have enough money, and has to put up with the attentions of the old Antonio. Jaffier's friend tries to rape his wife, and because of the ramifications arising from the attempted rape, Jaffier betrays the plot. When Jaffier overcome with remorse kills himself on Pierre's body, Belvedira becomes insane. Strangely enough Pierre who is a lover himself cannot understand or forgive Jaffier who acted only out of love. As for the famous senator's scene, Fouquier calls it hors-d'oeuvre. One sees old Antonio in a red dress arriving at Aquilina's who is almost naked in a flimsy dress. He wants to prove that despite his old age he is fit for love, and asks his beloved to whip him. Fouquier said it was a scene to make one blush. The spectacle of sadism was too real, nothing less than scatological sadism. The worst part of the experience for Fouquier, was that some of the spectators mistook for art the base, sick experience of erotic curiosity. Fouquier put the blame on the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre which lent itself to this.

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<sup>71</sup>Henri Fouquier, "Venise Sauvée," Le Figaro, 9 novembre 1895, p. 9.

Despite his obvious disenchantment, Fouquier had a kind word for two of the actors: Garnier as Pierre and Mme Munte as Aquilina. He found that the senator's scene was played with a terrifying reality, and for the rest one can praise the effort.<sup>72</sup>

As had been the case with the other symbolist revivals of Elizabethan drama, the initiated excused the shortcomings of the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre because of the unique service it was rendering by staging those plays which no conventional theatre would dare touch. Camille Mauclair, in his review of the play for La Revue Encyclopédique, once again came to the rescue of Lugne-Poe's effort. While acknowledging that the play was not a good selection, he found that it had two redeeming scenes. He calls the senator's scene "une scène géniale," and the one between Jaffier and Pierre at death's door "éloquente et noble." Mauclair's account of the senator's scene is the most complete and commented account that exists of that performance. At Aquilina's house where the conspirators are about to meet one sees Antonio the

brute dont Otway a tracé la figure d'une façon incroyable. Il se traîne ridiculement aux pieds d'Aquilina qui en est écoeurée et lui arrache de l'argent en l'insultant et en se refusant. On rit du stupide vieillard, mais tout à coup on ne rit plus, on a presque peur. En grand costume d'apparât,

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<sup>72</sup>Henri Fouquier, "Venise Sauvée," Le Figaro, 9 novembre 1895, p. 9.

le vieil Antonio bavant, immonde de gâtisme et de luxure autant que de folie sadique, se fait cracher au visage, imite le boeuf, le crapaud, supplie Aquilina de le fouetter, de le piétiner, et il sort en une crise de volupté animale, à quatre pattes, jappant comme un chien sous les coups de fouet et les coups de pied de la courtisane.<sup>73</sup>

The effects of this scene at first judged grotesque, then terrible, were remarkable on the audience at the l'Oeuvre. Never before had such a picture of moral decay been shown in the theatre. Mauclair wonders how Otway could even dream of having such a scene staged, and how this playwright became such a keen psychologist all of a sudden. Mauclair describes Otway's scene:

sobre, net, étonnant de tact, de brièveté: car l'inouï de cette scène c'est que rien n'y est forcé de ton, rien n'y est déclamatoire.<sup>74</sup>

Mauclair comments that it is the first time, and the only time that a writer before the Marquis de Sade described this:

l'image du sadisme, de la volupté, de la salissure, et de cette affection spéciale, dernier degré de la bassesse cérébrale, que nos criminalistes designent sous les termes de scatophilie ou d'animalisme.<sup>75</sup>

and since the first performance in 1682 at the Dorset Garden, it was only staged again in 1755 by the boys of Winchester,

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<sup>73</sup>Camille Mauclair, "Théâtre de l'Oeuvre: Venise Sauvée," La Revue Encyclopédique, décembre 1895, p. 425.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

<sup>75</sup>Ibid.

Otway's old school.<sup>76</sup> The English troupe that gave Venise Sauvée in 1827 had eliminated the scene of Antonio and Aquilina in order to conform to French taste.

The scene which Camille Mauclair calls éloquente et noble is the one in which Jaffier tears himself away from his wife's embrace and runs to the torture chamber to be with his friend. The remorseful and humbled Jaffier begs forgiveness:

Laisse-moi approcher de toi en me traînant à genoux et prosterné vers la terre. Comment oserai-je regarder ce visage que j'ai livré à l'outrage, et qui avait coutume de me sourire toujours avec tant d'amitié. Il brille en ce moment d'une si mâle vertu, qu'il me semble que je ne suis rien devant toi, et que je suis plus digne de tes duretés que de tes embrassements.<sup>77</sup>

In the above passage the language of Otway is worthy of the language of Beaumont and Fletcher in which pairs of friends demonstrate unequalled devotion; in the passage below, again in the tradition of Beaumont and Fletcher, Pierre forgives the friend whom he loves:

Tu es cher à mon coeur bien que tu m'aies offensé dans mon honneur. Je ne puis oublier que je t'ai aimé. Je te prie, Jaffier, pardonne-moi le traitement brutal qu'emporté par la passion je t'ai fait subir. Je suis prêt à partir pour la terre du repos, et je voudrais que les vœux charitables de tous les braves gens comme toi repandissent la bénédiction sur mon voyage.<sup>78</sup>

The above words are a confession of betrayed love and an absolution to the sinner. The forgiven Jaffier stabs his

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<sup>76</sup> Thomas Otway, Dictionary of National Biography (London: Oxford University Press, 1968), vol. xiv, p. 1246.

<sup>77</sup> Gyl Pène, trad. Venise Sauvée, Revue des Chefs-d'Oeuvres (octobre 1884-décembre 1884), p. 99.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid.

friend and himself to spare Pierre the ignominious torture at the wheel.

Though the plot of Venise Sauvée was considered banal, the friendship of Pierre and Jaffier was beautifully rendered. Gémier was a great actor in the role of the senator; Lina Munte was admirable in the role of Aquilina, and Philippe Garnier was very noble as Pierre; but it was Gémier who drew a longer comment from Mauclair:

Il y a fait pressentir en quelques infléxions, en quelques gestes, l'obscur animalité de l'homme primitif, donné à force d'intelligence la sensation de la brute--et c'est très fort et très beau.<sup>79</sup>

The public was so terrified by this scene that they forgot about the other shortcomings of the play. Mauclair does not mention the décor which so displeased the critic of Le Figaro, but we have a clue as to what it looked like:

une place publique traitée en teintes plates sans nuances, et une tapisserie rouge ornée d'un éléphant et d'un monstre à tête de cheval.<sup>80</sup>

As for the Tailhade lecture, Mauclair was kind to the speaker but questioned the wisdom of these lectures before curtain time.

There seems to have been no complaints regarding the translation which is attributed to a Gyl Pène. Robichez seems

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<sup>79</sup>Camille Mauclair, "Théâtre de l'Oeuvre, Venise Sauvée," La Revue Encyclopédique, décembre 1895, p. 425.

<sup>80</sup>Robichez, p. 307, note 108. This décor was by Louis Hayet described in Paris, 10 novembre 1895.

to think that Gyl Pène is Lugné-Poe himself, who translated the work--perhaps with the help of his father who knew English well. If the helper had belonged to the group of actors or supporters of the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre, he might not have opted for anonymity.<sup>81</sup> The translation of Venise Sauvée appeared in La Revue des Chefs-d'Oeuvres of October 10, 1884.<sup>82</sup> If Robichez's conjecture is correct that Lugné-Poe is the translator, then he would have been only fifteen years old when he translated it.

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<sup>81</sup>Robichez, p. 303.

<sup>82</sup>Ibid., p. 522.

CHAPTER FIVE

## SYMBOLIST SHAKESPEARE

The symbolists' initial aim had been to introduce the French public to Renaissance English drama through by staging the Elizabethan dramatists. Now they were ready to perfect their staging by emphasizing archeological reconstruction and improved translation. Lugné-Poe produced Measure for Measure in the way he felt the Elizabethans would have produced it. Marcel Schwob translated Hamlet for Sarah Bernhardt, in the way he felt a Renaissance play should sound in French, and Maurice Maeterlinck translated and produced Macbeth in his abbey home at Saint Wandrille, Normandy. Maeterlinck's effort resulted in the most spectacular and unforgettable performance of Macbeth that had ever been staged.

The Lugné-Poe performance of Measure for Measure is an aesthetic document by the symbolists as to how a Shakespearean play should be staged. The Schwob translation is a symbolist aesthetic document on meaning and language in Hamlet. The Maeterlinck translation is heavily annotated by the translator, who makes it his aesthetic document on Macbeth while at the same time formulating a dramatic theory centering around the language and dramatic technique used by Shakespeare in Macbeth.

AN ARCHEOLOGICAL RECONSTRUCTION OF MEASURE FOR MEASURE

Lugné-Poe produced Mesure pour mesure at the Cirque d'Eté on December 8, 1898, to open his sixth season, after extensive study of Elizabethan staging in England. Lugné-Poe's efforts at reviving the Elizabethan drama did not go unnoticed in England. Across the channel, William Poel of the Elizabethan Stage Society invited the founder of the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre to England for the performance of The Two Gentlemen of Verona which took place on November 30, 1896.<sup>1</sup> Lugné-Poe who had already made some analogies between the objectives of the Elizabethan Stage Society and the article of Alfred Jarry "De l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre,"<sup>2</sup> enthusiastically accepted the invitation to be a guest of William Poel. In an article, written by Lugné-Poe and published in the Mercure de France, October 1896,<sup>3</sup> he commented on the similarity between their ideals; at the same time he decided that finally a theory on stage settings, actors, and décors should be written. This theory would dictate a mode of staging that would serve to combat the foolishness of the modern French theatre. Coming from Lugné-Poe, whose whole mission was to combat the demands of the naturalistic and traditional stage, such a dictum

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<sup>1</sup>Robert Speaight, William Poel and the Elizabethan Revival (London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1954), p. 120.

<sup>2</sup>Alfred Jarry, "L'Inutilité du théâtre au théâtre," Mercure de France, septembre 1896, p. 90.

<sup>3</sup>Lugné-Poe, "A Propos de l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre," Mercure de France, octobre 1896, p. 90.

seemed a little out of order--since he was an advocate of freedom in both staging and acting. He, however, felt very strongly about the need for a radical change in the theatre. That change would effect a return to the simplicity of the ancients. In England, Shakespeare had been played for years in the open air in an effort to recapture the mood of Shakespearean performances in Elizabethan times; but the purity of Shakespeare had been violated by the thoughtlessness of those who produced a play and who did not hesitate to alter the plays to suit their needs:

les représentations que donne M. Ben Greet, dans les champs, mutilant ses auteurs comme cela se fait dans la plupart des théâtres de nos voisins--l'effort du théâtre de campagne aura été très suffisamment note.<sup>4</sup>

Playing Shakespeare out-of-doors was definitely not enough especially when the plays were mutilated. To remedy this alteration of the plays, the Elizabethan Stage Society was formed; its goal was to restore Elizabethan productions to their original purity. The Society was composed of men of letters, architects, artists and archeologists who worked to counteract the influence of critics, stage managers, and censors, who saw fit to rearrange the works of Shakespeare and the masters of the English theatre, and Lugné-Poe praised the effort of the Society.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Lugné-Poe, "A Propos de l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre," p. 90.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., p. 91.

The French champion of the English Renaissance drama extracted and translated a few lines from an article by Alfred Dillon which appeared in England in April of 1895, in the Westminster Review, and quoted them in his Mercure de France article.

Il est nécessaire d'examiner les différentes versions des adaptations successives de Shakespeare pendant ces deux cents dernières années pour comprendre la profonde indifférence que l'on avait pour l'art dramatique. Les noms de Davenant, de Dryden, de Colley Cibber se trouvent en tête de beaucoup d'adaptations. Elles contiennent des expériences avec le texte qui s'étendent à des scènes entières, et qui consistent souvent en élégance, en grâces à la manière du xviii<sup>e</sup> siècle, dans les vers Shakespeariens! Et alors que l'on permettait de telles libertés, qu'elles étaient même recommandées, faire des transpositions dans les pièces ou même transposer le texte d'une pièce à l'autre était regardé comme une faute vénielle. Pendant les jours glorieux de Garrick, Tate était considéré comme ayant fait faire des progrès d'art à l'oeuvre de Shakespeare pour avoir donné une bonne fin au Roi Lear, bien qu'il fût avéré que Shakespeare après bien des travaux, avait rejeté une pareille conclusion.<sup>6</sup>

The Elizabethan Stage Society aimed to play the dramatists as they had been played in their own time. In order to accomplish this objective, it was necessary to build a special stage--far different from the modern stages, because in Elizabethan times only special theatres and winter theatres had roofs. Ideally, the Society needed a rectangular structure, or perhaps an octagonal one as was the custom in the countryside. Too poor to build its own theatre, the Society had to be content to rent space and to superimpose a portable replica of the Elizabethan stage.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Lugné-Poe, "A propos de l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre," p. 91.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., p. 92.

In order to acquaint his countrymen with sixteenth century English settings, Lugné-Poe included a diagram of such a stage in his article,<sup>8</sup> explaining that the rectangular stage protruded into the theatre in such a way as to reach one third of the seated audience. This portable stage obeyed very closely the stage directions set forth by Shakespeare, and would lend itself well for use in the cirques parisiens. In such quarters, the public would also be able to dispense with the pancartes which informs the viewers of the change in simple, ancient settings. Lugné-Poe is very informative on the subject of the pancartes. He claims that Alfred Dillon objected to this practice which came into being way after Shakespeare's time. In original Shakespeare productions, the locality of the scenes was arrived at from the dialogue of the players. Due to the distance of the audience from the stage, it is doubtful whether many spectators were able to read the signs, or that many could read them even if they were close enough to see them. The ancient authors would not have wished to detract the audience from the dialogue.

In an article entitled "L'Inutilité du théâtre," Alfred Jarry had stressed a return à l'antiquité, à cette naïveté savante. Lugné-Poe concludes that Jarry's view was in agreement with Dillon's that the modern spectator's demand for specifics destroys the mystery of the theatre. Lugné-Poe was quick to see

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<sup>8</sup>Lugné-Poe, "A Propos de l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre," p. 92.

the rapprochement between the philosophy of Dillon and that of Jarry, and he adds that both Maeterlinck and Jarry were not thinking of scenery when writing Les Sept princesses and Ubu Roi respectively.<sup>9</sup> One must bear in mind that when Lugné-Poe wrote about Jarry's article, the pressures to conform to traditional stage settings were so great that Jarry felt even Ibsen who created the Peer Gynt fantasy had to conform in his later works. Circumstances now favored change, and Lugné-Poe urged his peers to capitalize on the spirit of the times. He was for radical change:

Je veux supprimer votre rideau rouge ou même faire accepter par vos acteurs, qui ont terminé logiquement le premier mouvement des passions de leurs personnages vers mon but, qu'ils sortent de scène, et que ce soit à ce moment, scène vide ou non (et je préfère scène vide), la pause pour le public.<sup>10</sup>

Lugné-Poe understood that the great Will himself gave these directions because the ancient theatres had no curtains, and the exits of the actors had to be done before the public.<sup>11</sup> The French director recommended that there be little or no décor and that the stage settings be eliminated from the list of requirements for the play. Lugné-Poe felt that the best scenic designer only produced "his" conception of what the setting for a play is. In this manner, it would be up to the

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<sup>9</sup>Lugné-Poe, "A Propos de l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre," p. 95.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 96.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 98.

audience to imagine the décor.

Lugné-Poe also had a word of advice for the actor who, he felt, must forget he is an actor and be able to become an unknown entity: "un quelconque! bras ballants, gestes immobiles."<sup>12</sup> What Lugné-Poe favored was a simplicity of motion; a slight movement of the little finger could have more significance than the first pose of Mounet-Sully. An author may have suggested the motion of an arm describing a circle, when writing stage directions, but to exaggerate the motion would be to violate the work of art, wrote Lugné-Poe. In addition, he felt very strongly on the subject of diction for the actors. The tone should be perfectly harmonious--with no shrieking. The actors should not have to toil to persuade the audience; taut nerves should only be revealed by the wetness of the eyes.<sup>13</sup> In such a theatre as Lugné-Poe describes, the tone of the play would be set by the concerted will of the audience and author, whereas the actor would only be the link between them. This was in accordance with Dillon's view as it appeared in the Westminster Review. In an article published in French, in England, Lugné-Poe commented on Dillon's views with which he was in perfect agreement:

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<sup>12</sup>Lugné-Poe, "A Propos de l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre," p. 98.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

M. A. Dillon, a montré combien il était odieux de vouloir collaborer aux oeuvres des vieux maîtres et rejeté l'enguirlandement des décorations outrancières, répudiant encore les procédés de diction de mime de l'acteur moderne, procédés trop mesquins et trop intimes.<sup>14</sup>

By the time Lugné-Poe's articles had appeared, he had had two adventures with the Elizabethan drama. The two productions at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre had shown no inclination towards the precise reconstruction which the Elizabethan Stage Society practiced piously. In fact, Lugné-Poe had shown an originality of interpretation which demonstrated utter disregard for literary history. In adapting Annabella, Maurice Maeterlinck applied his own aesthetic yardstick to the play, and Lugné-Poe who perhaps had no choice in the matter because of financial difficulties went along:

C'est le tort de Maurice Maeterlinck d'avoir réduit aux proportions d'une tragédie classique ce drame touffu. C'est un tort qui, très admissible pour un arrangeur de planches rémunératrices, ne se conçoit pas chez le vrai lettré et le poète qu'est l'adaptateur d'Annabella.<sup>15</sup>

Maeterlinck had taken it upon himself to do some editing since the gross scenes offended his sensibilities. The critic for La Société Nouvelle pointed out that the gross scenes which Maeterlinck disliked are sometimes brutally enjoyable and are

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<sup>14</sup>Lugné-Poe, "Du Spectacle," Tomorrow, October-November 1896, p. 229.

<sup>15</sup>Gustave Kahn "Théâtre," La Société Nouvelle, décembre 1894, p. 732.

peculiar to the poets of the English Renaissance, at the same time as they were necessary to a segment of their public.<sup>16</sup>

Lugné-Poe felt he had to shorten Venise Sauvée when he produced it. He did this by omitting the scene of Belvedira's madness. This time also, he departed from Elizabethan norm in the manner in which he handled the décor. The two scenes were painted by the talented Louis Hayet, and were deemed to be "d'une somptuosité inconnue à l'Elizabethan Stage Society."<sup>17</sup> When Annabella was produced at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre, Sarcey had caustically commented that the production was more pertinent to the field of archeology than to that of dramatic art.<sup>18</sup> He was in error; it was not till Lugné-Poe undertook to produce Measure for Measure that he had become entirely committed to archeological reconstruction. By that time, he had already been the guest of Poel and Dillon for the performance of The Two Gentlemen of Verona, and he subsequently, enthusiastically, discussed their work in the "Shakespeare sans décor," article which appeared in 1897.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Gustave Kahn, "Théâtre," La Société Nouvelle, décembre 1894, p. 732.

<sup>17</sup>Robichez, p. 307. See note 108.

<sup>18</sup>Francisque Sarcey, "Critique théâtrale," Le Temps, 12 novembre 1894, p. 8.

<sup>19</sup>Lugné-Poe "Shakespeare sans décor," La Nouvelle Revue, mars 1897, p. 143.

"Shakespeare sans décor," is a reiteration and an enlargement upon his "A Propos de l'inutilité du théâtre au théâtre." In the latter article, Lugné-Poe had discussed the simple scenic requirements of the Elizabethan stage. In "Shakespeare sans décor," he now stressed the importance of the authenticity of the costumes. In England, the Society used Elizabethan costumes and heeded the author's wishes where shown. Lugné-Poe tells us that there were frequent allusions to clothes in Shakespeare's works, and it would have been an archeological faux-pas to dress the players in contradiction to the text. If the author was silent and the play dealt with Greek or Roman heroes, they would wear the Renaissance costume with which Veronese dresses his Alexander and Holbein dresses his courtiers.<sup>20</sup>

The production of The Two Gentlemen of Verona which Lugné-Poe attended was at Merchant Taylor's Hall. He found it delightful! He noticed that the diction of the actors was regulated to evoke Shakespearean English; the costumes gave a marvelous and naive impression of the English sixteenth century, and there were a thousand details of a charming and sombre art which are at best described in Lugné-Poe's own words:

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<sup>20</sup>Lugné-Poe, "Shakespeare sans décor," La Nouvelle Revue, mars 1897, p. 149.

On sait qu'un de nos deux héros, Valentin (l'action étant déjà fort engagée, au troisième acte de nos éditions, je crois), est exilé par son père. Il doit partir, mais ne croyez pas, comme nous l'avons vu jusqu'alors dans la pièce, qu'il sortira de scène par une des deux baies de droite ou de gauche. Bien mieux, tout affligé, désolé, il s'en va au milieu du public, continuant de jouer son rôle, et à peine est-il sorti par le fond (public), que nous l'entendons dans une antichambre attaqué par des outlaws.<sup>21</sup>

Lugné-Poe was especially impressed by the actor's movements among the spectators, and by the action taking place off stage which could be heard. This arrangement made it possible to stage additional scenes without interrupting the play for a change of décor:

De cette sorte plusieurs des scènes extérieures, si fréquentes dans Shakespeare, se passaient derrière nous et nous entendions tout, sans que l'action cessât une minute sur la scène. Sylvia se sauve, courant après son amant; un serviteur l'accompagne et tous deux nous dépassent et s'enfoncent...dans le corridor derrière nous. Puis c'est le duc, courant avec d'autres seigneurs après sa fille et tombant à son tour dans l'ambuscade des outlaws qui ont pris pour chef Valentin. En passant à côté de nous, ils ont donné leurs dernières recommandations aux domestiques restés en scènes...

The actors were still acting and speaking their lines as they went by. The re-entrance was a spectacular one effected to the sound of drums. Lugné-Poe continues the description in the same paragraph:

...enfin tout le monde rentre au ronflement du tambour des outlaws, ramenés dans l'honnête voie par Valentin qui les fait se soumettre (en scène maintenant) au duc devenu leur prisonnier. Cette sortie imprévue au moment de l'action se compliquait; cette rentrée un peu triomphale des bons outlaws à travers la salle, tout concourrait à nous faire revivre naïvement et sincèrement à l'époque glorieuse et florissante de l'Angleterre dramatique.<sup>22</sup>

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<sup>21</sup>Lugné-Poe, "Shakespeare sans décor," p. 150.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid.

The Elizabethan Stage Society, for that performance, even reproduced authentically the music for the song Who is Sylvia. A researcher of Shakespearean music by the name of Mr. Dolmenestch dressed himself in Elizabethan garb and led his quartet for the song.

Dolmenestch used restored original instruments: a Venetian virginal dated 1550 which had pleased the great queen herself; two violas: "une viole d'amour et une viole de Gamba de Crémone."<sup>23</sup> Lugué-Poe was dazzled, charmed and impressed by the whole performance, and he thanked Poel and Dillon for having enlightened a Frenchman in the ways of the Elizabethan stage.

Lugué-Poe returned to Paris where he once again was faced with the realities and hardships of keeping his innovative theatre open. For his sixth season he had to produce a play that was a guaranteed success, in order that his theatre may survive. His English friends and Walter Pater suggested Measure for Measure.<sup>24</sup> Pater had put Measure for Measure on the same plane as Hamlet in his critical volume Appreciations.<sup>25</sup> That play had again come into the limelight when it was played in London in 1898. It is not known whether Lugué-Poe saw it but the Mercure de France mentioned it in its monthly théatrical review:

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<sup>23</sup>Lugué-Poe, "Shakespeare sans décor," p. 162.

<sup>24</sup>Robichez, p. 462.

<sup>25</sup>Walter Pater, Appreciations (New York: Johnson, 1967).

Le Irving Amateur Dramatic Club a donné trois matinées de Measure for Measure, qui prenaient un intérêt, particulier de l'extrême rareté du spectacle et de l'essai critique de Walter Pater sur la pièce. Le Club s'est acquitté à souhait de sa tentative ambitieuse. Les amateurs qui tenaient les rôles peuvent être félicités d'avoir pour la plupart évité l'imitation d'acteurs professionnels actuels et fameux. Les dames, en particulier, dans les rôles d'Isabella et de Mariana, réussirent mieux que la plupart des actrices professionnelles...<sup>26</sup>

The mood was set for the production of Measure for Measure by the symbolist group, but Lugué-Poe had tremendous difficulties with the production. The first of them was of course financial. A letter from Romain Rolland to Lugué-Poe attests to this:

Votre lettre me fait de la peine. Ne vous désespérez pas. Ayez encore patience, et si c'est possible, donnez-moi quelques détails sur le résultat de vos efforts pour organiser l'Oeuvre.<sup>27</sup>

Lugué-Poe wrote to Romain Rolland enlisting his help with the Elizabethan music since he was determined to have a precise reconstruction of the entire Elizabethan setting:

Pouvez-vous m'indiquer des sonneries anciennes de trompes ou de tambour p. mesure p. mesure [sic] Je ne puis mettre la main sur celles de la Elizabethan Society?<sup>28</sup>

Romain Rolland promised to help. On November 6, he wrote to Lugué-Poe the following:

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<sup>26</sup> Alfred Vallette, "Théâtre," Mercure de France, septembre 1898, p. 895.

<sup>27</sup> Romain Rolland, Correspondance Rolland-Lugué-Poe, année 1898, (Paris: L'Arche, 1957) p. 151.

Je vais m'occuper de votre affaire. Je connais bien de la musique de cour (clavecin et danses ou chœurs) du XVI<sup>e</sup> S. anglais ou français, mais je n'ai pas en ce moment de fanfares sous la main. Je vous trouverai cela sans doute...<sup>28</sup>

Romain Rolland researched the Elizabethan music and suggested a fanfare militaire because any other arrangement would have been too costly, and put to music the words for the song Who is Sylvia at the beginning of the fifth act:

Take, o take those lips away,  
That so sweetly were forsworn;  
And those eyes that break of day,  
Lights that do mislead the morn:  
But my kisses bring again, bring again  
Seals of love, but seal'd in vain, seal'd in vain.

The song was translated thus:

Oh! loin, oh! loin de moi tes lèvres que j'adore  
Sur une autre je sais que leur charme s'est mis.  
Tes yeux ou de ma joie étincela l'aurore;  
Ils regardent une autre; ils sont mes ennemis  
Aussi rends-moi, rends-moi mes baisers et mon âme  
Tant de baisers sur toi semés,  
Oui rends-moi mes serments sceaux d'éternelle flamme  
Par toi tant de fois blasphémés!<sup>29</sup>

Lugné-Poe had long contemplated recreating a Shakespearean production in its archeological accuracy. A croquis of the décor by Robert Hista can be found in the review Le Petit Bleu of December 12, 1898.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>28</sup> Romain Rolland, Correspondance Rolland-Lugné-Poe, année 1898, (Paris: L'Arche, 1957), p. 151.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>30</sup> Robichez, p. 463. Due to the condition of this review, it was not possible to duplicate the croquis at the Bibliothèque National in Paris.

The choice of Measure for Measure was not a random one. Walter Pater a longtime habitu  of the symbolist circle saw it as a play with a purpose whose design is the following:

the revelation of the instability of human nature and the tyranny of circumstances over human action, so that the play satands forth as a companion to Hamlet... Consider, says Pater, this little world of pleasure and desire that Shakespeare sets before our eyes. Not one of the persons he draws is really ill-natured: all are capable of kindness and friendship, and in presence of danger they can show a real and moving dignity...they rise to unexpected heights and fall to unexpected depths...

A. J. Farmer, citing Pater, continues to say that Measure for Measure is also a philosophical play:

Words as profound as those of Hamlet fall from the lips of a thoughtless youth; the cold saintly Isabella finds words of fiery eloquence at the suggestion of shame; an austere judge reveals the utmost corruption though a momentary contact with supreme purity. These beings are at the mercy of events which will change the whole current of their life.<sup>31</sup>

The choice of Measure for Measure was then quite in line with the introspective, philosophical plays that had hitherto been produced by the symbolist group. In Act III, scene i, Claudio who is about to die voices his fear of death--a fear that reminds us of the angoisse m taphysique which pre-occupied the symbolists at the turn-of-the-century.

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<sup>31</sup>Walter Pater cited by A. J. Farmer, Walter Pater as a critic of English Literature (Grenoble: Richard et Didier, 1931), p. 21.

To die and go we know not where;  
 To lie in cold obstruction and to rot;  
 This sensible warm motion to become  
 A kneaded clod; and the delighted spirit  
 To bathe in fiery floods, or to reside  
 In thrilling regions of thick-ribbed ice;  
 To be imprison'd in the viewless winds,  
 And blown with restless violence round about  
 The pendent world; or to be worse than worst  
 Of those that lawless and incertain thought  
 Imagine howling!--'tis too horrible!<sup>32</sup>

Notice that in Shakespeare the greatest share the same fears. Hamlet and Macbeth are both afraid of the life to come after death, and so is Claudio. They speak with a sad resignation of the infinite obscurity which crowns our temporal lives.

In addition to the play being philosophical, it was a microcosm of pleasure and desire, which brought into focus the strong character of Isabel, whose individuality and logic is out of the ordinary. Since Claudio must die at any event--some day--whether by decree or when God wills it, Isabel who is a novice does not find it necessary for her to sacrifice her body and soul to save her brother.

The subject of the play was appealing, and Lugné-Poe saw to it that every detail was followed in accordance with the guidelines set by the Elizabethan Stage Society. His Shakespearean effort was recognized by all to be a pioneer effort in France. The Mercure de France praised the production but criticized the versified translation by Louis Ménard, and found that despite the "archéologie de la mise en scène,"<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>William Shakespeare, "Measure for Measure," The Complete Works of Shakespeare (New York: Avenel Books, 1975), p. 110.

<sup>33</sup>Alfred Vallette, "Mesure pour mesure," Mercure de France, janvier 1899, p. 225.

Mesure pour mesure remained a masterpiece. The Mercure de France appreciated Lugné-Poe's efforts at reconstruction, but expressed a doubt that traditional scenery would take away from Shakespeare's beauty.

Traditional critics such as Noel and Stoullig of Les Annales took a more caustic view. They reprinted a notice which had been distributed to the spectators:

L'Oeuvre a souhaité attirer l'attention des amateurs et des artistes sur la possibilité de "représentations spectacles". La mise en scène élizabéthaine y conduisait les recherches de l'Oeuvre. Cependant dans une salle comme le Cirque d'Eté, on a été forcé de tenir compte des difficultés pratiques du local et des règlements de police sur le décor...

The critics for Les Annales continued to say that they would have preferred "un hall où le public eût été assis de trois côtés;" This was an arrangement which would have permitted more authenticity. They also said the following:

Toutefois, le champ est ouvert aux idées qu'une semblable mise en scène peut suggérer: la partie comique devrait permettre, très clownesquement réglée, des évolutions de chiens, chevaux, etc. Le drame n'y peut rien perdre; quant aux indications de lieu, il est acquis maintenant que le texte suffisait à l'indiquer.<sup>34</sup>

Noel and Stoullig were not impressed by the setting at the Cirque d'Eté, which they felt lent itself more to feats by dogs and horses than to a legitimate play.

Once again Lugné-Poe experienced difficulty in carrying out his project. Les Annales described the setting negatively:

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<sup>34</sup>Noel et Stoullig, "Mesure pour mesure," Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique, année 1899, p. 577.

En réalité, la mise en scène "éizabethaine" consistait en ceci: Au-dessus de la porte du cirque qui donne accès à la piste, on a dressé, surélevés de quelques marches, un décor et un proscenium. Le décor représente une maison avec un balcon, fermée par des rideaux. Le proscenium, très vaste, entre, pour ainsi dire, dans la salle, sans rampe, sans séparation, ce qui est très nuisible à l'illusion. Les acteurs entrent et sortent tantôt par le devant, traversant les rangs du public. On ne sait d'où ils viennent; on ne sait, quand ils jouent, où ils sont. Car, il est inexact de dire que le texte nous l'apprend.<sup>35</sup>

What Noel and Stoullig described was a perfect Elizabethan setting, which they did not appreciate. The unbending critics complained that the place was cold, the accoustics were bad, and that they could hear nothing. They deemed the experiment to be a failure. They went so far as to suggest that the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre may have invented the concept of playing sans décor in order to be able to produce at low cost, while banking on Shakespearean snobs to make the venture profitable. They did not even appreciate the puns in the comic parts, which they found to be horrible.<sup>36</sup> Both Shakespeare and Lugné-Poe seemed to be persona non grata.

The Revue Blanche had an altogether different view of the performance:

La représentation de Mesure pour mesure sur une estrade selon les traditions de la société éizabethaine nous a prouvé en effet que le drame peut fort bien se passer

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<sup>35</sup>Noel et Stoullig, "Mesure pour mesure," Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique, année 1899, p. 578.

<sup>36</sup>Ibid.

de cartonnage et que l'illusion scénique n'est pas indispensable à l'oeuvre d'un poète. Le vers suffit, il évoque et a soi-même crée son décor.<sup>37</sup>

The critic for La Revue Blanche found that the staging worked well because it was a Shakespearean play, but raised the question as to what would happen when it would not be Shakespeare. It was already regrettable that the translation was poor, and that the play was not one of Shakespeare's best, but on the whole the effort was lauded.

Malgré ces réserves, félicitations M. Lugné-Poe de cet essai de renouveau artistique et signalons à l'admiration populaire les noms bien méritants de M. M. Sarter, Mitrecy et Philipon.<sup>38</sup>

The critics were unanimous on one point; the translation was deemed poor. The translation does not exist in any library, but Robichez was able to study the first four acts in printing proof form at the Archives Nationales in Paris. He chose three examples to show how clumsy the French sounded.

I am a woeful suitor to your honour  
Please but your honour hear me. (II,2)

Jacques Robichez informs us that the above couplet was translated into the following tercet:

Je suis par mon devoir tenue  
D'implorer pour un très grand bienfait monseigneur  
De me voir exaucée aurais-je le bonheur?<sup>39</sup>

The simple thought was stretched out into three lines, losing its meaning in the process.

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<sup>37</sup> "Mesure pour Mesure," La Revue Blanche, tome xviii, janvier-avril 1899, p. 68.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid.

<sup>39</sup> Robichez, p. 464.

Consider the following line: "Why do you put these sayings upon me?" which Robichez informs us was changed into "Enfant de tes dictons cesse le vain effort."<sup>40</sup> In the fourth scene of Act II, Shakespeare's lines that were so full of meaning are completely chanted.

Ay, as the glasses where they view themselves  
Which are as easy broke as they make forms.  
Women--Help heaven! men their creation mar  
In profiting by them. Nay, call us ten times frail  
For we are soft as our complexions are.  
And credulous to false prints.

Ménard created the following abberation:

Si le frêle miroir que notre orgueil réclame  
Périt comme l'éclat dont il est réflecteur.  
Notre faiblesse est due au sexe corrupteur.<sup>41</sup>

According to Jacques Robichez, there was a heated quarrel over the verses between the director and the translator; it was so intense that they had to resort to the arbitration of Jean Jullien.<sup>42</sup> Even in its amended form, the translation was found unaimously clumsy, and it ruined what would have been a perfect effort--since costumes, décor, scenery and music had been piously reproduced. The acting was good and evocative of sixteenth century England; all this was appreciated by the critics.<sup>43</sup> Yet, once again fate had conspired against Lugné-Poe; he had been forced to accept the Ménard translation because the latter had agreed to pay a part of the production cost.

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<sup>40</sup>Robichez, p. 464.

<sup>41</sup>Ibid.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid. See note 137.

<sup>43</sup>Ibid., p. 463.

MARCEL SCHWOB AND EUGENE MORAND TRANSLATE  
HAMLET FOR SARAH BERNHARDT

The Théâtre de l'Oeuvre closed its doors after the sixth season, and the symbolist stage per se came to an end; yet individual symbolist efforts still persisted in the promotion of Shakespearean drama. Marcel Schwob and Eugène Morand undertook to translate Hamlet for Sarah Bernhardt. There had been a history of translations of Hamlet, none of which was deemed satisfactory, and the famous actress who was alerted to the pitfalls of imperfect adaptations which had marred her performance of Lorenzaccio "sought a scholarly text in prose."<sup>44</sup> Prior to 1899, Mounet-Sully played the Hamlet of Clarétie and Meurice which was considered truncated:

Its unpardonable sin...was the omission of the part of Fortinbras: after the silence of the Prince, there was no peal of ordnance to signal the return of order to the body politic.<sup>45</sup>

Before that, there had been a Dumas translation which very romantically created a Hamlet who lived on at the end of the play.<sup>46</sup> The omission of the Fortinbras episode in the Clarétie and Meurice translation disturbed both Lugné-Poe and Mallarmé

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<sup>44</sup>Gerda Taranow, Sarah Bernhardt (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1972), p. 218.

<sup>45</sup>Peter Brooks, "The Rest is Silence," in Jules Laforgue Essays on a Poet's Life and Work ed. Warren Ramsey (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1969), p. 92.

<sup>46</sup>Ibid.

who in a response to an enquête by the *Revue Blanche*,<sup>47</sup> emphasized the dramatic necessity of Fortinbras to the play. Mallarmé sees Fortinbras "Alors placé, certes comme contraste à l'hésitant en tant qu'un général..."<sup>48</sup> The general, symbolizing action, opposes the hesitancy of the dreamer Hamlet. Lugné-Poe and Mallarmé were in agreement that any alteration of an original Elizabethan play was a transgression. (That was already expressed in Lugné-Poe's Tomorrow article cited above.) Even though Mallarmé found Fortinbras to be essential to the play, he once again seized this opportunity to reiterate that Hamlet is the only hero of this tragedy, and that none of the secondary characters should assume real importance. Mallarmé further identified Hamlet as a turning point in Shakespeare's work:

La pièce un point culminant du théâtre, est dans l'oeuvre de Shakespeare, transitoire entre la vieille action multiple et le monologue ou drame avec soi, futur.<sup>49</sup>

Mallarmé himself favored the dramatic monologue type drama which he felt, together with some of his contemporaries, was the drama of the future.<sup>50</sup> He himself was the author of two

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<sup>47</sup>Stéphane Mallarmé, "Hamlet et Fortinbras," Oeuvres Complètes (Paris: Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1956), p. 1564. This article was originally published in La Revue Blanche, of August 1896.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid.

<sup>49</sup>Ibid.

<sup>50</sup>Mallarmé, "Théâtre," Revue Indépendante, 1er novembre 1896, p. 300.

such poems, "L'Après-midi d'un faune," and "Hérodiade."

The Schwob and Morand translation ought to be considered a symbolist aesthetic document showing what they thought a translation should be. Unfortunately, Mallarmé never lived to see it. Schwob and Morand approached the translation with the philosophy that Shakespeare was a linguistic contemporary of Henry IV and Louis XIII of France; and they wished to convey the language spoken in France during Shakespeare's time.<sup>51</sup>

The introduction to the Schwob and Morand Hamlet is an erudite study of that legend and of important criticism relative to Shakespeare's Hamlet. Schwob who had read Mallarmé's review of Hamlet for the Revue Indépendante, supported the latter's view:

Sur la portée générale du drame, une page admirable a été écrite par Stéphane Mallarmé dans Divagations. La pièce y apparaît sous sa vraie couleur poétique, île désoléé dont les grèves s'affaissent incessamment dans l'océan de la mort. En quelques lignes Stéphane Mallarmé a évoqué l'idée qui doit surgir d'Hamlet. Ce n'est pas une analyse, mais une vision.<sup>52</sup>

On the question of Hamlet's madness, the two translators thought along the lines of Edgar Allen Poe, who wrote about madness in his Marginalia; Poe understood that madness is both partial and real, and that it is exaggerated by simulation. Schwob and Morand include Poe's view in their preface stressing

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<sup>51</sup> Marcel Schwob and Eugène Morand, trad., La Tragique histoire d'Hamlet Prince de Danemark (Paris: Librairie Charpentier et Fasquelle, 1900), introduction xxvi.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., xix.

"la folie est partielle et réelle: mais elle est exagérée par la simulation."<sup>53</sup> Edgar Allen Poe wrote the following concerning Hamlet's madness:

It must have been well known to Shakespeare that a leading feature in certain more intense classes of intoxication (from whatever cause) is an almost irresistible impulse to counterfeit a further degree of excitement than actually exists. Analogy would lead any thoughtful person to suspect the same thought. He felt it through his marvelous power of identification with humanity at large--the ultimate source of his magical influence upon mankind. He wrote Hamlet as if Hamlet he were, and having in the first instance, imagined his hero excited to partial insanity by the disclosures of the ghost, he (the poet) felt that it was natural he should be impelled to exaggerate the insanity.<sup>54</sup>

The translators' comments on Poe's views are not an isolated example of symbolist interest in Edgar Allen Poe, who was made familiar to them through Baudelaire and Mallarmé.

In addition to the influence of Mallarmé and Poe, the translators were swayed by the Swinburne analysis, since they too arrive at the conclusion that Hamlet acts only suddenly. Their aim was to understand Hamlet, so that they could render a faithful translation. They examined the First Quarto of 1603, the Second Quarto of 1604 and the Folio of 1623, and noted that the different role of Gertrude distinguishes the first quarto from the second. What they were concerned with,

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<sup>53</sup> Marcel Schwob and Eugène Morand, xix.

<sup>54</sup> Edgar Allen Poe, "Marginalia," The Works of Edgar Poe, ed. J. H. Ingram (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1883), vol. 3, p. 469.

however, were the problems inherent in Hamlet himself. Schwob and Morand write the following:

La première difficulté, c'est l'attitude singulière d'Hamlet vis-à-vis de l'âme de son père, en présence de Marcellus, Horatio et Bernardo. On en trouvera la véritable explication dans l'Histoire de la littérature anglaise de Taine. Hamlet est pâle comme sa chemise; ses genoux s'entrechoquent de terreur, et il essaie de plaisanter, comme un enfant chante dans l'obscurité, pour ne pas avoir peur. La sueur coule de son front quand il murmure true-penny et old mole; et dans son angoisse, il s'efforce de se familiariser à l'idée horrible en parlant son langage d'étudiant: "Hic et ubique."<sup>55</sup>

In the above quotation, Schwob and Morand are citing Taine, who explains that when Hamlet's friends come up, Hamlet treats them with the speeches of a child or an idiot, no longer master of his words. Hamlet covers his nervousness with a fitful gaiety befitting a schoolboy rather than the serious man Hamlet really is.

On Hamlet's madness, they have little doubt that William Shakespeare accepted the tradition of simulated madness: "que le poète lui fait déclarer lui-même à la fin du premier acte."<sup>56</sup> They also point out that nowhere is Hamlet struck by the same madness which characterizes Lear or Ophelia. Schwob and Morand found Poe's observations to be penetrating and completely applicable to the scene with Ophelia in the second act which they describe as "pas sincère." They came to the

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<sup>55</sup> Marcel Schwob and Eugène Morand, xx.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

to the conclusion that Hamlet had only one honest encounter with Ophelia:

La seule vraie rencontre d'Hamlet et d'Ophélie c'est la scène muette où il lit dans son âme, désespéré et lui dit un adieu silencieux et éternel.<sup>57</sup>

When he does see her again, his first word denotes an estrangement. She is no longer Ophelia; he calls her nymph. Schwob and Morand analyze the situation this way: Ophelia, like Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, has been assigned to spy on him: "elle a laissé jouer de sa beauté contre son honnêteté."<sup>58</sup> Hamlet's bitterness understandably turns to anger when at the moment he is about to leave, he feels the presence of Polonius and the king. Does Ophelia know? Here Hamlet takes another look at her. Schwob and Morand describe the scene thus:

Comme dans leur entrevue silencieuse, celle qu'Ophélie a dite à Polonius, il la regarde longtemps; enfin il lui demande: "Où est votre père?" Le trouble de la réponse d'Ophélie lui en dit assez. Hélas, elle savait que Polonius était là: elle aussi, elle a menti et elle l'épie. Cette fois la colère éclate, sincère et forte. Mais en même temps Hamlet, qui se sent observé et qui doit jouer son rôle de folie simule une folie plus grande.<sup>59</sup>

They also come to the conclusion that Hamlet feigns a greater madness than the one he suffers from. They perceive Hamlet as an actor who plays the role of a madman. This is the view of A German scholar whom they cite (Carl Rohrbach, author of Hamlet erlautert, published in Berlin in 1859), who had written

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<sup>57</sup> Marcel Schwob and Eugène Morand, xxi.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

on Hamlet's histrionic talents. Rohrbach's argument as paraphrased by Schwob and Morand reads thus:

Hamlet, dès le début, porte avec ostentation des vêtements de deuil, et songe qu'on peut l'accuser de jouer un rôle. Il aime à parler. Il fait des discours à Rosencrantz et à Guildenstern, aux comédiens, à sa mère, à lui-même...Il connaît les comédiens, s'intéresse à leurs aventures, il est amateur raffiné de théâtre et dans la préparation même du spectacle tragique qu'il a imaginé, il distribue des conseils de diction.<sup>60</sup>

The Hamlet that emerges from Rohrbach's observations is then a director, a stage manager, a playwright and an actor. He reminds us of the Hamlet of Laforgue in the Moralités légendaires; Laforgue's Hamlet reflects the following:

an intimate awareness of the theatre's ways and means. A scenario as well as a nouvelle, it brings together soliloquy, gesture and dramatic dialogue in depicting the vivid interplay of the real and make believe. Hamlet is himself both actor and playwright seeing life and art as performance and masquerade.<sup>61</sup>

The Hamlet of Laforgue is the philosopher idealized by Mallarmé, but a parody of the philosopher; he is a writer who will use his talent to avenge his father:

Pour le drame dont il est l'auteur, il a des complaisances d'homme de lettres épris de son propre talent.<sup>62</sup>

He also becomes an actor in the play:

Ophélie morte, il s'enfuit avec l'actrice Kate qu'il finit par confondre avec elle. Mais il se

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<sup>60</sup>Schwob and Morand, xxiii.

<sup>61</sup>Haskell M. Block, "Laforgue and the Theatre," in Jules Laforgue Essays on a Poet's Life and Work, p. 91.

<sup>62</sup>Pierre Brunel, Claudiel et Shakespeare (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1971), p. 21.

se détourne un instant de l'illusion et retrouve  
au bord de sa tombe, le souvenir de sa vraie fiancée:  
alors la réalité se venge et il trouve la mort.<sup>63</sup>

It is in the cemetery that Laforgue's Hamlet meets Laertes and  
accidental death, at which moment he once more parodies the  
symbolist Hamlet: "Un Hamlet de moins; la race n'en est pas  
perdue, qu'on se le dise."<sup>64</sup> Laforgue's Hamlet was an artist  
as can be seen from the passage Hamlet quotes to the actors  
Kate and William:

Un coeur rêveur par des regards  
Pur de tout esprit de conquête!  
Me répéter si extenué d'art!  
O Lune de miel  
Descendez du ciel!<sup>65</sup>

When Laforgue's unimpressive hero does achieve his objective  
and the play reveals the king's guilt, he decides that they  
have been punished enough and leaves. This is not only  
Hamlet the playwright, but also Hamlet the clown.

Marcel Schwob and Eugène Morand contributed an interesting  
analysis of the last act in Shakespeare's Hamlet. They raised  
the question as to why Hamlet comes to the cemetery. Their  
explanation is that it is not an artificial complication of  
the plot that brings him there to discover Ophelia's coffin,  
but that Hamlet comes to the cemetery to study death:

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<sup>63</sup>Pierre Brunel, p. 21.

<sup>64</sup>Jules Laforgue, Moralités Légendaires (Paris: Mercure  
de France, 1964), p. 19.

<sup>65</sup>Ibid., p. 36.

jusqu'ici Hamlet ne la connaît pas au moins la mort méditée d'avance. Il a tué Polonius, mais à l'improviste, dans un coup de surprise, à travers une courtine, sans voir la chose en face. Maintenant il se prépare à tuer de propos délibéré, à faire oeuvre de mort. Il sera ouvrier de mort, donc il vient interroger l'ouvrier de la mort. Comme il voudrait avoir l'habitude de ce qu'il veut faire.<sup>66</sup>

Schwob and Morand studied every aspect of Hamlet: the actor, the madman, the philosopher, the instrument of death, and they were satisfied that they had approached the translation and analysis of that play with almost scientific methodology. From this point on, the translation was in the hands of Sarah Bernhardt who produced the play, which opened in Paris on May 20, 1899, at the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt.

In her interpretation of the title role, the famed actress followed the recommendations of the translators. She portrayed Hamlet's madness as being sometimes simulated and sometimes real. She stressed the scene of the play within the play in which the guilty Claudius escapes, shouting for lights.

As usual there were mixed reviews. The reviewer for Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique,<sup>67</sup> found the play to be too literal and too long. As for the interpretation of the role, he found Hamlet to be as follows:

plus violent peut-être et plus nerveux que mélancolique et rêveur, mais d'une nervosité et d'une violence qui forcent l'attention en entraînant l'admiration...  
Je crois que jamais la scène des comédiens n'avaient été jouée de la sorte.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>66</sup> Marcel Schwob et Eugène Morand, xxv.

<sup>67</sup> Noel et Stoullig, Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique, année 1899, p. 167.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

The scene of the play within the play was especially effective and when the king escapes crying "des flambeaux! des flambeaux!" Hamlet is convinced. John Hansen, reviewing the play for the English National Magazine found the scene to be so fascinating that he described it in detail in his article:

There the king sits on a tribune on one side of the stage, bending over a balustrade. The players perform at the opposite side. Hamlet stealthily climbs up the tribune, seizes a torch, holds it close to the king's face with his own face an inch or two from his guilty uncle's, glowers into his eyes menacingly.<sup>69</sup>

Sarah Bernhardt had mastered the art of theatricality in this performance. The British critic also found the scene of the poisoned queen to be memorable, because of the actress's immense theatrical resourcefulness. When the queen falls poisoned across the same tribune at which the king had been sitting, her hair streams over the edge and Hamlet reaches up and kisses it. "There again," write John Hansen, "the French subtlety of expression is ample. Hamlet's filial love was unconquerable."<sup>70</sup> Hansen's criticism is significant because it is an English view of Hamlet being presented in French by the French. He writes that

to an English ear accustomed to the flow of Shakespearean verse, the prose version sounds rough, unadorned and insufficient, not to say ridiculous in spots where the rendering is particularly matter

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<sup>69</sup>John Hansen, "Hamlet," National Magazine, August 1899, p. 470.

<sup>70</sup>Ibid.

of fact, as for example: "the funeral baked meats did solidly furnish forth the marriage tables, converted into "le rôti des funérailles a été servi froid aux tables des noces." But the expression bordering upon farce comedy is born when Hamlet exclaims in the player scene "Wormwood! Wormwood! which the Frenchmen turned into the cry of "absinthe, absinthe."<sup>71</sup>

Sarah Bernhardt also performed Hamlet for the English at the Stratford Memorial in Stratford-on-Avon, where the town was decorated for the occasion. There the English gave the actress a "standing ovation."<sup>72</sup>

In France, the translators showed themselves sensitive to criticism. In the introduction to Hamlet which was published in 1900, they wrote:

En France en nous a accusé d'avoir recherché l'archaïsme et en Angleterre en nous a reproché des néologismes.<sup>73</sup>

In their own defense they wrote the following:

Les critiques d'ici n'ont point songé que le style du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle n'est plus celui d'à présent. Mettre une période de Shakespeare à la mode d'à présent, ce serait à peu pres vouloir traduire une page de Rabelais dans la langue que parlait Voltaire.<sup>74</sup>

The Revue Blanche which always supported the symbolist efforts in the theatre lauded the translation:

Après avoir traduit en toute fidélité le texte anglais, ils ont aussi traduit le leur, le transposant en un langage soigneusement rythmique et

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<sup>71</sup>John Hansen, "Hamlet," National Magazine, August 1899, p. 470.

<sup>72</sup>Ibid.

<sup>73</sup>Schwob and Morand, introduction xxvi.

<sup>74</sup>Ibid.

suranné qui parut comme une version contemporaine de l'original. C'est un noble effort d'art dont il convient de féliciter hautement M.M. Morand et Schwob...<sup>75</sup>

but the reviewer was critical of the performance because the role of Hamlet was portrayed as a

héros antique encore, poursuivie par une fatalité attardée, non point en l'homme moderne que nous a légué impérissablement Shakespeare.<sup>76</sup>

The Hamlet portrayed by Sarah Bernhardt was not for the Revue Blanche the fin-de-siècle Hamlet made familiar by Mallarmé, but Les Annales praised the actress for her interpretation: "peu à peu la folie qu'il (Hamlet) jouait d'abord devient réelle."<sup>77</sup>

Across the seas, in England, John Hansen who had also found the performance memorable, found some weakness in the interpretation:

The chief point of attack in Mme Bernhardt is a lack of proper melancholy, the critics forgetting that whereas the northman would say "to be or not to be" with tears in his voice, the southman would say the same with a smile on his lips.<sup>78</sup>

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<sup>75</sup> Alfred Athy, "Hamlet," La Revue Blanche, tome XX, septembre 1899, p. 223.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Noel et Stoullig, Les Annales du théâtre et de la musique, année 1899, p. 177.

<sup>78</sup> John Hansen, "Hamlet," National Magazine, August 1899, p. 470.

The symbolists who had been fascinated with the characteristics of Hamlet, the man, participated in an investigation conducted by the Revue Blanche on that subject. Mme Rachilde the female symbolist writer, had a very definite view of Hamlet with whom she identified because of her androgynous condition which "exercised a wide appeal for the decadent writers: and the androgynous Rachilde was a very popular Parisian phenomenon."<sup>79</sup> Here is what Rachilde thought of Hamlet:

Hamlet maigre...est uraniste, pour cela même capable de chasteté et de platonisme. Nul mieux que lui ne peut connaître la suprématie de l'amour sur la sensualité qui n'est que l'effigie de la passion "au couvent!" c'est-à-dire "plus haut; vers le dieu!" c'est-à-dire "à l'amour de l'être au delà de la mort!<sup>80</sup>

Rachilde sees Hamlet as a perfectly modern monster who never existed in Shakespeare's time and recognizes that he reproaches his mother for having conceived him, since the androgynous condition would be an ideal one. Mme Rachilde was also very definite about Hamlet's madness:

J'ajoute que jamais il (Shakespeare) ne l'a voulu fou, et pour cela il mit en regard de sa simulation la véritable folie touchante et réellement idiote d'Ophélie.<sup>81</sup>

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<sup>79</sup>Peter Brooks, "The Rest is Silence," in Jules Laforgue Essays on a Poet's Life and Work, ed. Warren Ramsay, p. 100.

<sup>80</sup>Mme Rachilde cited in "Enquête sur la physionomie et le caractère d'Hamlet," La Revue Blanche, tome xix, Juin 1899, p. 284.

<sup>81</sup>Ibid.

In the same survey, Romain Coolus preferred the Sarah Bernhardt Hamlet which he found more real than the "tonitruant, hernanique et formidable" Hamlet of Mounet-Sully. Coolus imagined Hamlet to be tall, lymphatic and nervous, pale of complexion and blonde-haired with blue eyes.<sup>82</sup> Alfred Jarry thought Hamlet to be "un petit homme de tempérament sanguin" who practices his madness in front of Ophelia and whose gestures have a certain abruptness.<sup>83</sup> The symbolists did have a conception of Hamlet which differed with each person. They could not answer the question whether he resembled Shakespeare physically for the very good reason that they were not well acquainted with the great English bard.

When Schwob and Morand undertook the translation of that play, they were more concerned with the problems of translation than with the problems of Hamlet's physical appearance. They used the Edward Dowden edition of The Works of Shakespeare printed in 1899, as their tool, in conjunction with the folio of 1623 and the quarto of 1604. In the notes to their translation, they bring out some of the problems they had to deal with. In Act I, scene i, ll. 79-80, of the Dowden edition of Hamlet, they sought to amend the punctuation in accordance with the folio of 1623:

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<sup>82</sup>Romain Coolus cited in "Enquête sur la physionomie et le caractère d'Hamlet," Ibid., p. 284.

<sup>83</sup>Alfred Jarry cited in "Enquête sur la physionomie et le caractère d'Hamlet," Ibid.

Marcellus. Who is't can inform me?

Horatio. That can I,  
At least, the whisper goes so! our  
last king...

In the folio of 1623, the coma after the "I" is a period; but Schwob and Morand preferred to emphasize the "I" in their translation by the period.

Qui est-ce qui peut bien m'informer?

Moi, je le puis. Du moins, voici  
le bruit qui court: notre feu roi...<sup>84</sup>

Again in Act I, scene ii, l. 247, they were troubled by Dowden's use of the word "tenable" when Hamlet invokes Horatio to secrecy:

Let it be tenable in your silence still.

They researched the line and decided to use the word "treble" instead which they translated as

...triplez encore votre silence...<sup>85</sup>

In Act I, scene iii, ll. 103-109, in the exchange between Polonius and his daughter, Ophelia used the word "tenders":

He hath my lord of late made many tenders.

Schwob and Morand noted that the word was substituted for an equivalent manifestations, so as to communicate the puns of Polonius in French:

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<sup>84</sup>Schwob and Morand, p. 10.

<sup>85</sup>Schwob and Morand, p. 23.

Il m'a monseigneur, en ces derniers temps, donne  
bien des manifestations de son amitié.<sup>86</sup>

In Act I, scene iv, ll. 36-38, they followed Dowden's example in reading "eale" as evil in the following passage:

Une once de vice met toute la noblesse  
d'un être en jeux par son scandale.<sup>87</sup>

In the same act, a few lines down, Dowden's punctuation breaks when Hamlet addresses his father's ghost. Schwob and Morand punctuate the same way:

Je t'appellerai Hamlet, roi, père!  
Royal Danemark, oh. réponds moi!<sup>88</sup>

In scene v, l. 33, the ghost used the words "roots itself" while talking to Hamlet. Schwob and Morand translated them thus:

Je te trouve apte. Il te faudrait être plus  
morne que l'algue grasse qui croît nonchalamment  
aux berges du Léthé si tu ne te remuais en ceci.<sup>89</sup>

The translators followed Dowden's inclination rather than the Folio of 1623 for the above lines.

Schwob and Morand were puzzled by the word "truepenny" in Act I, scene v, l. 150, which they translated as bonne pièce in the passage where Hamlet becomes very nervous after he has seen the ghost, and he and the watchmen are pledging themselves to silence:

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<sup>86</sup>Schwob and Morand, p. 27.

<sup>87</sup>Ibid., p. 30.

<sup>88</sup>Ibid.

<sup>89</sup>Ibid., p. 34.

Ah! ah! mon gaillard, tu l'as dit!  
Tu es donc là, bonne pièce?<sup>90</sup>

The above lines were substituted for "Art thou there, true-penny?"

In Act II, scene ii, ll. 100-101, Schwob and Morand wanted to capture Polonius' play on words "and now remains/that we find out the cause of this effect;/or rather say the cause of this defect," which they translated as

...Et maintenant, reste à découvrir la cause de cet effet, ou si j'ose dire, la cause de ce qui l'a défait...<sup>91</sup>

In Act III, scene ii, l. 241, they would have been forced to use medical terminology for "In the secret parts of fortune?" They used the contemporaneous equivalent which was prevalent at the end of the XVI century and the beginning of the XVII.

Au comment-à-nom de la fortune?"<sup>92</sup>

Schwob and Morand faced particular problems with coarse words. From reading Dowden, they realized that Act III, scene ii, l. 125, had an obscene connotation: "country matters." They explain how they handled this specific problem in the notes to their translation:

elle a été traduite en sens absolu et en équivalence par une plaisanterie empruntée à un rondeau manuscrit de Henri Baude, à la fin du XV<sup>e</sup> siècle.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>Schwob and Morand, p. 38.

<sup>91</sup>Ibid., p. 51.

<sup>92</sup>Ibid., p. 74.

<sup>93</sup>Ibid., "notes," p. 175.

For "Do you think I mean country matters?" they wrote:

Pensez-vous que je le comprenais en rustaud?"<sup>94</sup>

In Act V, scene ii, l. 298, they chose for the queen's words:

"fat and scant of breath," the following:

Il a chaud, il est hors d'haleine.<sup>95</sup>

They had discussed the above line in their introduction and had come to the conclusion that Hamlet was hot and not fat.

The above examples are just some of the difficulties they encountered in translating Hamlet. The notes to the translation discuss a number of other passages which they found problematic. A later study by Christian Pons who studied the translations of Hamlet by French writers, mentions that although the two scholars took great pains with the most popular passages, they still met with difficulties. On the negative side, Pons writes:

ils n'évitent pas toujours les affêteries symbolistes et ils éludent encore la plupart des difficultés de transpositions.<sup>96</sup>

Pons continues with his analysis:

Le Hamlet de Schwob persiste à prendre les armes contre un océan de peines.<sup>97</sup>

Shakespeare wrote "to take up arms against a sea of troubles," while Schwob and Morand substituted "par un dormir" for "and by a sleep." On the positive side, Pons praises Schwob

<sup>94</sup>Schwob and Morand, p. 85.

<sup>95</sup>Ibid., p. 160.

<sup>96</sup>Christian Pons, "Les Traductions de Hamlet pas des écrivains français," Etudes anglaises, XIII<sup>e</sup> année, no. 2, avril-juin, 1960, p. 120.

<sup>97</sup>Ibid., p. 122.

and Morand on the translation of "when we have shuffled off this mortal coil" which becomes "quand nous avons secoué cet enlacs mortel." Pons is ambivalent about this passage:

enlacs n'évoque rien de très clair et donne un tour affecté à la puissante expression Shakespearienne.<sup>98</sup>

The Pons criticism comes much later than the symbolist era and studies the Hamlet in question along with other translations.

By the time Hamlet was produced, Mallarmé was already dead, and the symbolist group per se had disintegrated. Maurice Maeterlinck was quiet on Hamlet, but Claudel who continued writing in the symbolist tradition, had a very favorable reaction to the translation which Schwob forwarded to him in America; and on March 17, 1900, Claudel wrote to Schwob to thank him for the translation which he found admirable:

Aussi quand dans cette nouvelle traduction, j'ai entendu le Hamlet retentir avec l'éclat indigne et le discours reconquérir un accent et un timbre comme natifs, j'ai été d'abord comme désemparé et assourdi. On se demande quelle est cette étrange vieille pièce française; et de ce Danemark je ne sens pas moins qu'aucun Kent ou Sussex ma Picardie ou ma France. Il semble que le magnifique morceau d'anglais ait lui-même worked out son image dans le français.<sup>99</sup>

Claudel who read the introduction commented on the remarks about Poe's Marginalia with reference to Hamlet's madness and

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<sup>98</sup>Christian Pons, p. 122.

<sup>99</sup>Pierre Champion, Marcel Schwob et son temps (Paris: B. Grasset, 1927), p. 269.

Schwob's reference to Hamlet's histrionic character, who is understood by the translator to be playing a role since the apparition of the ghost. Claudel has some original views on Hamlet which he considers to be a drama about death because in the cemetery scene Hamlet, the child, questions the grave-digger, the wizeman. Claudel also sees it as a drama of death because the diverse destinies of the protagonists are so intertwined that one deed dooms all.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> Pierre Brunel, Claudel et Shakespeare (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1971), p. 91.

MACBETH AT THE MAETERLINCK' ABBEY HOME  
AT SAINT-WANDRILLE' NORMANDY

The crowning effort of the symbolist contribution to the revival of the Shakespearean and Elizabethan drama on the French stage was accomplished with the staging of Macbeth at the home of Maurice Maeterlinck and the famed actress Georgette Leblanc--the Abbey of Saint-Wandrille in Normandy.

The idea to stage Macbeth on the grounds of the abbey originated with Georgette Leblanc who writes in her Souvenirs, "I soon discovered that all the marvels of Saint-Wandrille seemed to have been made for Macbeth."<sup>101</sup> The actress had a marvelous intuition, for the fourteenth century abbey is set near a stream bordering on a forest, and its architecture melds enchantingly the style of many centuries, from the twelfth to the eighteenth.<sup>102</sup> Mme Leblanc had the brilliant idea of staging Macbeth both in and out-of-doors, following the exigencies of the text, and the surroundings lent themselves remarkably to that. The actress decided that the first act would begin outside the castle. For this, she felt that the east facade of the abbey would be perfect for Macbeth and Banquo to have the fateful meeting with the infernal

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<sup>101</sup>Georgette Leblanc, Souvenirs: My Life with Maeterlinck trans. Janet Flanner (New York: E. P. Dutton, 1932), p. 246.

<sup>102</sup>Gaston Sorbet, "Macbeth," L'Illustration Théâtrale, 28 août, 1899, front and back cover.



witches on the blasted heath on their return from battle.

In Mme Leblanc's Souvenirs, she describes how this production came about. Originally, she was working with the Victor-Hugo translation; but she was not very happy with it. According to Mme Leblanc, Maeterlinck became involved in the project when she asked him for a series of corrections to the Hugo work. The corrections did not satisfy the actress who convinced Maeterlinck to complete the translation.<sup>103</sup> Georgette Leblanc's dream of staging Macbeth was considered an "impossible dream by everyone she knew, not excepting Maeterlinck."<sup>104</sup> She knew that "all the settings were there... the enormous chambers of the Castle of Dunsinane, the court of honor, the endless moors, the cloister, the ruins, the

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<sup>103</sup> Leblanc, p. 246.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

forest.<sup>105</sup> The arrival of King Duncan at Inverness was spectacular. We are fortunate to have been able to obtain the following print from Theatre Magazine of October 1909.



From *L'Illustration*

Act I. "Voyez, voyez, notre hôtesse honorée!"

ARRIVAL OF DUNCAN AND HIS RETINUE AT MACBETH'S CASTLE

For this scene, Georgette Leblanc chose the court of honor. In preparation for the arrival of King Duncan, Mme Leblanc grouped the spectators as if in boxes before the high windows opening on the court of honor; she used both sight and sound effects:

From afar sounded a fanfare of trumpets and at once the great gates of the castle swung upon their hinges.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., p. 248.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., p. 249.

In order to use the abbey as a setting, the actress-director had to use a plan of action. She divided the abbey into sectors, establishing general headquarters, and creating officers to take on responsibilities. "Naturally, all the men of the army had to be in period costumes which would allow them to come and go freely."<sup>107</sup> It can be seen that Mme Leblanc took great pains with every aspect of the production. She mentions in her Souvenirs that she could have easily accommodated fifteen hundred spectators for the performance, but she reduced the number to sixty because she wanted to preserve the purity of the performance.

On the night of the performance, she knew that there were persons who were incredulous of her idea; so she hid and watched for their reaction.

I watched them before the first tableau...I heard laughter from the shadowed terraces where the audience was waiting; but a second later when in the middle of the heath the first green of the witches' flames sprang up, the laughter ceased before the magic of beauty.<sup>108</sup>

What Georgette Leblanc had wanted most was to make the tragedy live and she succeeded. She had the facade windows lighted up, lending an air of festivity to the cloister as if in preparation for a reception, while in the darkness of the hills, she managed to simulate an approaching torch bearing

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

<sup>108</sup>Ibid., p.

cavalcade; one even heard the sound of hoofs, while flames flickered on and off among the trees. The actress would never forget the moment when she welcomed King Duncan to Inverness/Wandrille. She remembers that the next day, the reviewer for Le Figaro, George Bourdon wrote: "It was not because of the cold that one shivered and truly those who lived through those unique moments would never forget them."<sup>109</sup>

Maeterlinck who had been sceptical of the whole idea from the very beginning and who had agreed to the performance on the condition that Georgette Leblanc handle all the details herself, condescendingly attended the performance. He too was amazed at the effect. Georgette Leblanc quotes Maurice Maeterlinck in her Souvenirs:

The beauty of the night with its effulgence and magnificent shadows attached itself to the garments, the words, the gestures, the thoughts, of the protagonists, and in this way the two fathomless nights--that of human consciousness and that of the earth--mingled together and exchanged their gloomy fires.<sup>110</sup>

Gaston Sorbet of L'Illustration Théâtrale wrote that he would never forget the tumult within Macbeth himself or the sighs he uttered during his solitary, nocturnal pacing: "les soupirs qu'on entend pousser au chatelin lorsqu'il se promène tout seul durant les heures du matin."<sup>111</sup> The most

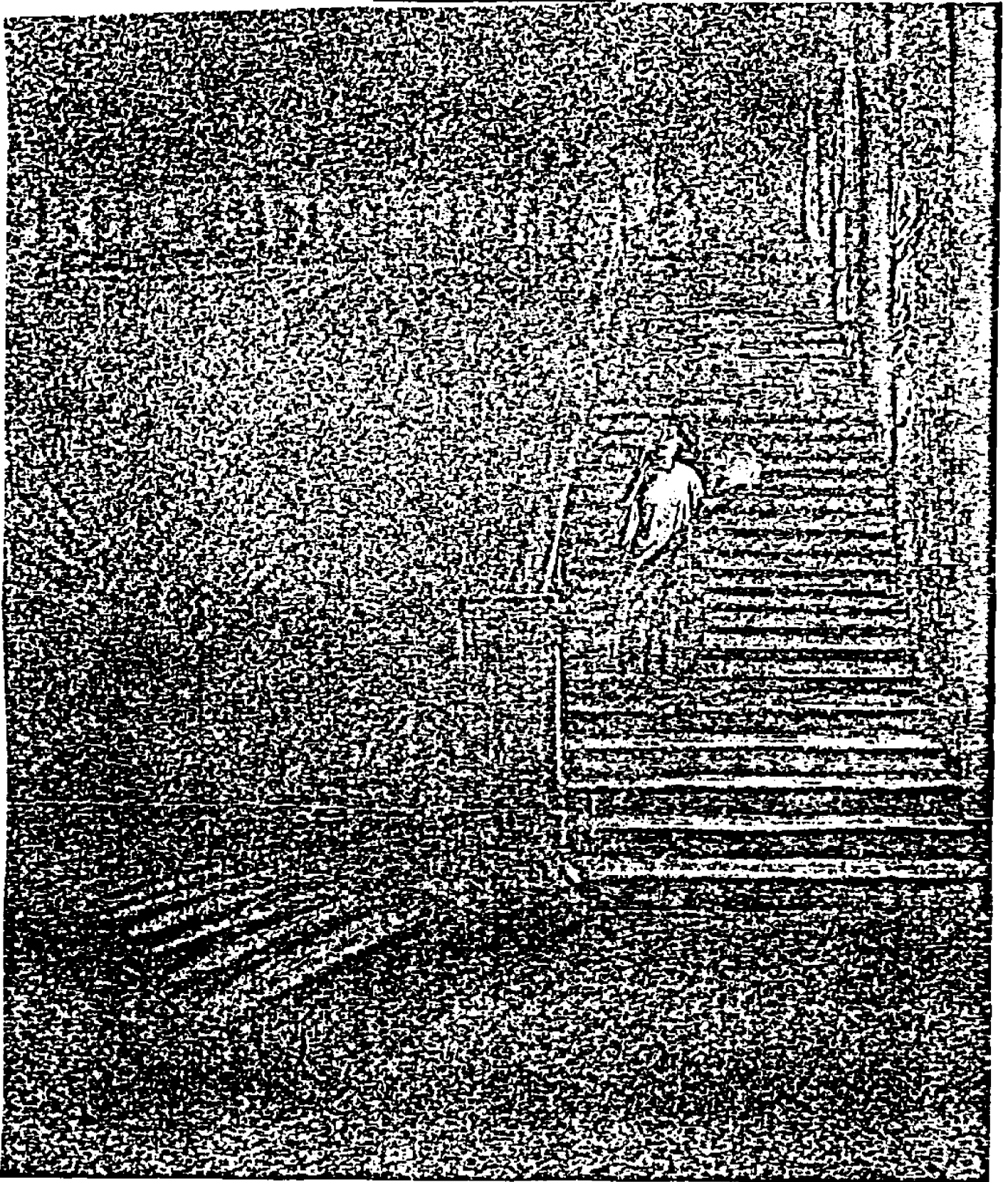
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<sup>109</sup>George Bourdon quoted by Georgette Leblanc in Souvenirs, p. 251.

<sup>110</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck quoted by Georgette Leblanc, Ibid.

<sup>111</sup>Gaston Sorbet, L'Illustration Théâtrale, back cover.

memorable photograph of Macbeth at Saint-Wandrille was reproduced and enlarged by Theatre Magazine.



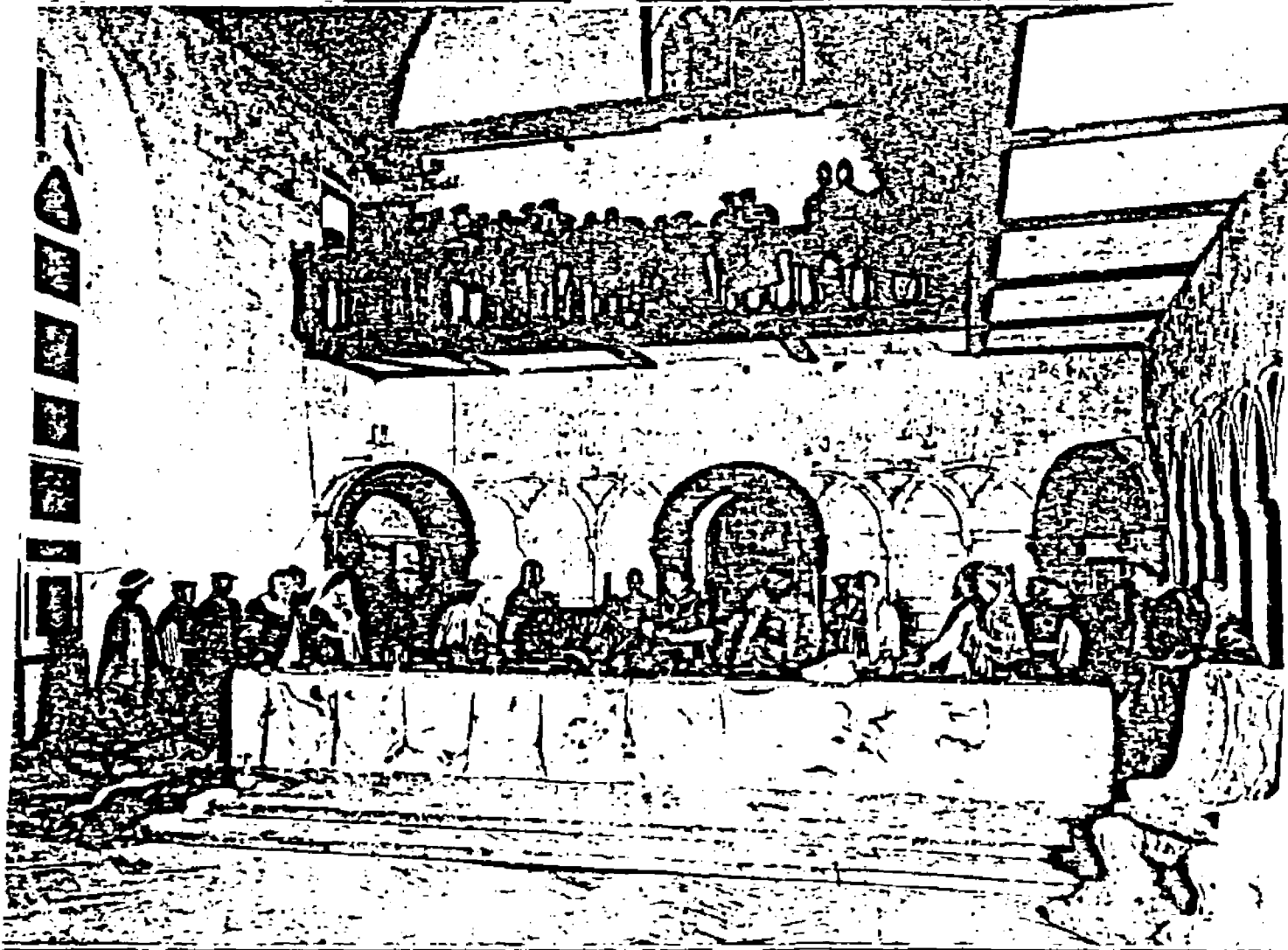
Act V. "Tous les parfums de l'Arabie ne purifieraient pas cette petite main-là! . . . Ob! Ob! Ob!"  
LADY MACBETH DESCENDING THE STAIRCASE OF WANDRILLE ABBEY IN HER SLEEP

Who could forget the fifth act of Macbeth after they saw Georgette Leblanc as Lady Macbeth descending the staircase of the abbey in her sleep, and uttering "Tous les parfums de l'Arabie ne purifieraient pas cette petite main-là!...Oh! Oh! Oh!" The setting created a feeling of eeriness, magnifying the terror inflicted by her stricken conscience. Lady Macbeth was carrying a candle in one hand as she was descending the staircase. In her sleep, she was staring at the other hand, in a motion that brought it towards her face. This caused a reflection to be projected on the opposite wall because of the candle she was carrying in the other hand; hence the guilty hand was magnified a hundredfold! and the light of the candle illuminated her torso and face which bore the marks of terror. If a prize could be awarded for a well staged scene, the scene of Lady Macbeth descending the staircase would win it outright.

The Illustrated London News gives us a picture of Macbeth in the Great Refectory in Act II, scene ii, in this scene Macbeth refuses to return to the room where Duncan lies dead. Filled with horror he exclaims: "Le regarder encore! Je n'ose pas!" The same magazine also gives us a print of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth in the Capitular Hall of Saint Wandrille in which Lady Macbeth is consoling her husband, Act III, scene ii; she is telling him: "Deridez ce front soucieux, soyez brillant et enjoué."<sup>112</sup>

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<sup>112</sup>"Macbeth", The Illustrated London News, September 1909, p. 323.



The Illustrated London News also gave us a print of the refectory scene shown above, in which it is possible to view the spectators looking down on the cast of Macbeth from a balcony overlooking the hall. The spectators and the cast blend remarkably well in that photograph.

Theatre Magazine gives us yet another print of the great refectory. This photograph is taken during Act III, scene iii, when Macbeth exclaims: "Allons! Qu'une bonne digestion seconde l'appetit." This is the scene in which Banquo's ghost enters the banquet hall.<sup>113</sup>



<sup>113</sup>"Macbeth," Theatre Magazine, October 1909, p. 143.

Altogether there were two performances at Saint Wandrille, which can be reconstructed from the impressions they left on the spectators. The performance Sorbet attended was the second one. A friend of his, Abel Bonnard had attended the first one, and Sorbet quotes Mr. Bonnard's impression of the first performance in his own article:

De place en place, à travers les salles, les galeries, les vestibules, sur les terrasses dans l'ombre des ruine, je voyais se dresser les personnages, et c'est toute la pièce que scène par scène, durant plus de deux heures je vis se développer, frissonnante et atroce.<sup>114</sup>

From the front windows, from the balcony of the mess hall, from the arcades of the cloister, the spectators watched; and Gaston Sorbet called them "...les témoins invisibles de l'oeuvre énorme, soudain redevenue vivante dans ces architectures qui sont ses contemporaines."<sup>115</sup>

Sorbet informs us that Mme Leblanc did not reveal the actors' identities, so that the work of Shakespeare alone would be the sole attraction. As for the actors, for the privilege of participating in this performance, they were content to remain incognito.

Theatre Magazine contributes some interesting and informative comments on the settings for the scenes:

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<sup>114</sup>Abel Bonnard, quoted by Gaston Sorbet in L'Illustration, août, 1909, back cover.

<sup>115</sup>Gaston Sorbet, Ibid.

In the refectory of the castle, Lady Macbeth was seen reading the letter in which Macbeth (Severin Mars) announced that he has been saluted by the king's messenger and the witches as Thane of Cawdor...Thence from the refectory the fifty spectators passed out into the night to see Duncan and his cortège enter the château.<sup>116</sup>

Theatre Magazine also informs us that the scene in which Macbeth sees the dagger was also played in the refectory. Theatre Magazine does not reveal to us that it was Severin Mars who played Macbeth versus Georgette Leblanc's Lady Macbeth.

All in all, the performance is memorable; one could just imagine the effect of Birnam Wood coming to Dunsinane. If one takes into consideration that the year of this performance was 1909, it must be admitted that Georgette Leblanc, in her role as director, preceded the advanced techniques of the cinema which allowed her spectators to look in unobtrusively on the protagonists of Macbeth. From the point of view of theatre, the performance was a success.

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<sup>116</sup>"Macbeth," Theatre Magazine, October 1909, p. 143.

CONCLUSION

## SHAKESPEARE, MAETERLINCK, CLAUDEL

## THE INFLUENCE OF SHAKESPEARE ON MAURICE MAETERLINCK

Maurice Maeterlinck wrote an introduction to Macbeth which can be considered his aesthetic document on that play and on William Shakespeare. Maeterlinck considered Macbeth to be part of a group of masterpieces encompassing Hamlet, King Lear, Othello, Anthony and Cleopatra and The Tempest. The Belgian was specific on his selection; though he considered Hamlet to be "l'un des points les plus élevés, sinon de la vie intellectuelle, du moins de la vie émotive de l'homme,"<sup>1</sup> he found Le Roi Lear to be significant because the play explores "et magnifie de plus vastes abîmes..."<sup>2</sup> Maeterlinck, however, wrote of Macbeth, "je crois que Macbeth l'emporte sur les deux autres."<sup>3</sup>

Maurice Maeterlinck viewed the tragedy of Macbeth to be a legendary-dramatic biography--a difficult genre to develop because the playwright is necessarily limited by the

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<sup>1</sup>William Shakespeare, La Tragédie de Macbeth, trad. nouvelle avec une introduction et des notes par Maurice Maeterlinck. (Paris: Librairie Charpentier, 1910), introduction, v.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

life of the hero, and it is rare that a human life is lived as skilfully as it is in a well developed tragedy. The Belgian realized that Shakespeare did not have an easy time developing that tragedy. In addition to being limited in the area of invention, Shakespeare was also dealing with two uncharismatic characters, who lived their life in a gloomy atmosphere. Despite all those setbacks, the symbolist critic considers Macbeth to be a masterpiece; Maeterlinck writes "qui oserait signaler une oeuvre dramatique qui égale les trois premiers actes de Macbeth."<sup>4</sup>

Maeterlinck conceded that in Corneille and Racine, one could find scenes that were more pathetic, maybe more noble or heroic, or perhaps more harmonious; he also conceded that among the Greek tragedians there were scenes that were more pure and more grandiose, and that perhaps among Shakespeare's contemporaries (Webster, Beaumont and Fletcher, and Ford) there could be discovered more poignant situations, but Maeterlinck could not think of three plays that could equal the first three acts of Macbeth:

mais nulle part on ne découvrira trois actes dont la substance tragique soit aussi dense, aussi sombrement plantureuse, aussi naturellement profonde; où, tout en demeurant aussi simple, aussi journalière, en apparence, elle soit cependant d'une qualité poétique aussi haute, aussi ardente, aussi précieuse.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>4</sup>Maeterlinck, introduction to La Tragédie de Macbeth, viii.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid.

Maeterlinck views the tragedy as the story of two crowned assassins, who in addition to being repulsive--with little moral value--are of mediocre intelligence. He finds their crimes vulgar, and no redeeming factor can veil their horror. From the dramatic standpoint, at first glance, it would seem that the only way to sustain dramatic interest would be to concentrate on the victim, but Maeterlinck points out that Shakespeare did not do that. The victims appear but for a fleeting moment:

Le poète entend bien concentrer tous nos regards et toutes nos sympathies sur les meurtriers. Il aura donc à vaincre deux difficultés insolites: premièrement nous intéresser à des héros antipathiques et médiocres; ensuite élever l'oeuvre au-dessus de la médiocrité morale et intellectuelle de ses héros...<sup>6</sup>

In order to elevate the work above the mediocrity of its heroes, Shakespeare expresses himself through the voice of his characters. In Corneille, some character would express the tragedian's view; in the Greek tragedies the chorus serves the same purpose; but Shakespeare enters into the character by shattering his calm:

Il ébranle systématiquement la raison de ses protagonistes, et ouvre ainsi la digue qui retenait captif l'énorme flot lyrique. Dès lors, il parle librement par leur bouche...<sup>7</sup>

Maeterlinck's observation that Shakespeare succeeded in entering into the secret conscience of his characters by means

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<sup>6</sup>Maeterlinck, introduction to La Tragédie de Macbeth, ix.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., x.

of madness is correct. Hamlet and Lear pour out their innermost thoughts when their world is shattered, and Macbeth's guilt causes him to hallucinate in the dagger scene. Maeterlinck found Macbeth to be a good lesson in the study of dramatic poetry since it manages to achieve beauty without elevation of thought or language, great deeds or eloquence. Those three elements were at the heart of his own aesthetic theory on the drama. In Shakespeare he found support for his own creative work. As early as September of 1890, when La Princesse Maleine was acclaimed by the literary public, Maeterlinck had acknowledged in a letter to Octave Mirbeau (the friend who brought Maeterlinck to the attention of the literary public) that when he wrote that play he was influenced by Shakespeare. Maeterlinck wrote:

Dans ma pauvre Princesse, je ne vois que du Shakespeare...Vous avez eu tort de me prendre pour un grand poète, je suis un enfant qui tâtonne.<sup>8</sup>

Macbeth, itself, long influenced the work of Maurice Maeterlinck. Its influence is so significant that it warranted an in-depth study by a modern scholar, Christian Lutaud, who calls the influence of Macbeth on Maeterlinck "un exemple du fonctionnement de l'imagination créatrice chez Maurice Maeterlinck."<sup>9</sup> In the study, Lutaud calls Macbeth an example

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<sup>8</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck cited by Robichez, p. 84.

<sup>9</sup>Christian Lutaud, "Macbeth dans l'oeuvre de Maeterlinck," Annales Fondation Maeterlinck, vol. 21, 1975, p. 21.

of symbolist theatre,<sup>10</sup> because in that play men do not conflict, wills do not conflict, but interior life, human conscience in its uniqueness is symbolized and concretized on the stage by real drama: the dagger, the sleep walking, the banquet. According to Lutaud, Macbeth figures for the Belgian writer as an example of interior fatality, of destiny as it exists within the human being; the being assuming more or less unconsciously the responsibility for his destiny.<sup>11</sup> Maeterlinck's essay "What is Tragic in Daily Life," sheds light on what he considered to be tragic. Maeterlinck saw a tragic element in the life of everyday which he considered more akin to the true self that is in us than the tragedy that lies in great adventures.<sup>12</sup> Maeterlinck clarifies this for us. The undertones in King Lear, Macbeth and Hamlet are "la destinée ou la fatalité qu'on aperçoit intérieurement sans que l'on puisse dire à quels signes on la reconnaît."<sup>13</sup> The Shakespearean heroes, in the plays mentioned by Maeterlinck, were suffering from an interior fatality. Maeterlinck felt that it was an ancient error to imagine that it is at the moments when great passions or others of equal violence possess us that we live our truest life. His view was that day-to-day living is the true drama of life, and this view in-

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<sup>10</sup>Christian Lutaud, "Macbeth dans l'oeuvre de Maeterlinck," p. 39.

<sup>11</sup>Ibid., p. 23.

<sup>12</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck, "Le Tragique quotidien," Le Trésor des humbles (Paris: Mercure de France, 1896), p. 162.

<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

fluenced his creative works. Maeterlinck the philosopher and Maeterlinck the dramatist sought to reconcile fatality and heredity in a kind of ideal drama of the Macbeth type. In his essay La Sagesse et la destinée, he writes the following:

Où se trouve la fatalité dans Hamlet, Le Roi Lear et Macbeth? Son trône n'est-il pas assis au centre même de la déraison du vieux roi, sur les marches inférieures de l'imagination du jeune prince et sur la cime des désirs maladifs de Cawdor?<sup>14</sup>

In all three tragedies fate combines with the characters' in-born traits to create the tragedy. Maeterlinck's view is that heredity and fatality combines to shape a man's life. If the tragedy lies in Macbeth's morbid cravings, then it is indeed he who is responsible for his downfall even though fate has conspired to place the three witches on his path. Fate plays an important part in Maeterlinck's philosophy on the drama; Maeterlinck explains this in "L'Evolution du mystère,"

...pour qu'une passion soit réellement fatale dans une âme consciente...il faut l'intervention d'un Dieu, ou de tout autre force infinie et irrésistible. Ainsi Wagner a eu recours au philtre dans Tristan et Yseult, Shakespeare aux sorcières dans Macbeth...Otez de Macbeth la prédestination maudite, l'intervention de l'enfer, la lutte héroïque contre une justice occulte, qui à tout moment, devient visible par les mille fissures de la nature révoltée, et le personnage principal n'est plus qu'un assassin odieux et forcené.<sup>15</sup>

Note that Banquo, who is also confronted by the three witches and who is promised a crown for his progeny, reacts with

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<sup>14</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck, La Sagesse et la destinée (Paris: Fasquelle, 1898), p. 42.

<sup>15</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck, "L'Evolution du mystère," Le Temple enseveli (Paris: Fasquelle, 1902), p. 129.

caution to the witches' prophecy and does not let ambition cloud his moral values. Maeterlinck had made known his views on fate and heredity at the time of the production of *Annabella* and *Giovanni* at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre in an article in Le Figaro.<sup>16</sup>

In the introduction to the translation of Macbeth, Maurice Maeterlinck acknowledges that he has read Taine. The translator was doubtless influenced by Taine's view of Shakespeare's ability to depict ordinary life. Maeterlinck cites Taine's view of Shakespeare:

Il accepte la nature et la trouve belle tout entière; il la peint dans ses petites choses, ...il ajoute les coulisses à la scène. Il ne songe point à ennoblir, mais à copier la vie humaine...<sup>17</sup>

To explain the above citation, Maeterlinck continues quoting Taine:

Les grandes conversations, chez lui comme dans la nature, sont précédées ou suivies d'actions frivoles, de petites conversations, de sentiments vulgaires. Les fortes émotions sont des accidents dans notre vie; boire, manger, causer de choses indifférentes, exécuter machinalement une tâche habituelle, rêver à quelque plaisir plat ou à quelque chagrin bien ordinaire, voilà l'emploi de nos heures. Shakespeare nous peint tels que nous sommes; ses héros saluent, demandent aux gens de leurs nouvelles, parlent de la pluie et du beau temps, aussi souvent et aussi vulgairement que nous-mêmes, juste au moment de tomber dans les dernières misères ou de se lancer dans les résolutions extrêmes. Hamlet veut savoir l'heure, trouve le vent piquant, cause des festins et des fanfares que l'on entend dans le lointain...<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck, "A Propos de l'Oeuvre," Le Figaro 24 septembre 1894, p. 8.

<sup>17</sup>Taine cited by Maeterlinck, La Tragédie de Macbeth, p. 184.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., p. 185.

It is the above ordinariness of language in Shakespeare that appealed to Maeterlinck, and from this he was to find support for a dramatic language that was of his very own creation.

Throughout the entire translation, Maeterlinck underlined the importance and the tragic beauty of scenes, which at first glance appear to be of minor interest, and whose dialogue seems to be of a banal nature or "d'une nature quotidienne,"<sup>19</sup> if we are to use Maeterlinck's exact terminology. In fact, these scenes are the perfect illustration of the phenomenon which Maeterlinck considers to be the tragic in daily life. In a long note in the translation, Maeterlinck confirms the fact that he had read the De Quincey essay "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth."<sup>20</sup> The De Quincey essay must have been often discussed at Mallarmé's, for it was translated by Marcel Schwob who acknowledges in a footnote the following:

Ce paragraphe est cité par Mallarmé, dont nous respectons le texte dans son essai sur La Fausse entrée des sorcières dans Macbeth.<sup>21</sup>

De Quincey shows that the interest in Act II, scene ii, lies precisely in the fact that it projects an ordinary daily occurrence--a knocking on the gate--upon the murderer who is frozen in his own world. Maeterlinck writes:

<sup>19</sup>Lutaud, "Macbeth dans l'oeuvre de Maeterlinck," p. 33.

<sup>20</sup>Maurice Maeterlinck, La Tragédie de Macbeth, p. 70

<sup>21</sup>Marcel Schwob et Pierre Leyris, De l'Assassinat considéré comme l'un des Beaux Arts (Paris: Gallimard, 1963), p. 17.

lorsque l'acte est accompli, lorsque l'oeuvre de ténèbres est achevée, le monde de ténèbres s'éloigne comme un cortège dans les nuages. On entend frapper à la porte: et cela nous apprend que la réaction a commencé. L'élément humain a reflué sur l'inferral, le pouls de la vie reprend ses battements, et le rétablissement du cours de l'existence dans lequel nous vivons nous rend d'abord profondément sensible l'épouvantable parenthèse qui l'avait suspendu.<sup>22</sup>

The knocking on the gate which restores the order of things is followed by the porter's monologue which is described by Christian Lutaud as "un exemple de langage quotidien, celui du petit peuple, et qui symbolise l'irruption du monde vulgaire et journalier, après la scène de grandeur tragique."<sup>23</sup>

The scene was so important to Maeterlinck that he took time and space in the footnotes to the translation to discuss Samuel Taylor Coleridge's condemnation of that scene, with which Maeterlinck seriously disagrees. Maeterlinck calls that scene "la scène la plus indispensable, et par sa situation et sa couleur...la plus Shakespearienne du drame."<sup>24</sup>

De Quincey had written about that scene:

...in the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm or passion, jealousy, ambition, vengeance, hatred, which will create a hell within him; and to this hell we are to look.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>22</sup>Maeterlinck, La Tragédie de Macbeth, p. 70.

<sup>23</sup>Lutaud, "Macbeth dans l'oeuvre de Maeterlinck," p. 33.

<sup>24</sup>Maeterlinck, "La Tragédie de Macbeth," p. 72.

<sup>25</sup>Thomas de Quincey, Collected Writings, ed. David Masson (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1890), vol. x, p.392.



ordinary manner of events that have taken place:

Old Man.                    On Tuesday  
last,  
A falcon towering in her pride of place  
Was by a mousing owl hawk'd at and kill'd.

Ross. And Duncan's horses,--a thing most  
Strange and Certain--  
Beauteous and Swift, the minions of their race,  
Turned wild in nature, broke their stalls, flung  
out,  
Contending gainst obedience, as they would  
Make war with mankind.

Old Man. Tis said they eat each other.<sup>28</sup>

Though Ross and the old man are discussing hearsay, the strange happenings are not irrelevant to Duncan's death. The Elizabethans believed that nature was disturbed when great men died unnatural deaths. There is such a passage in Hamlet; Horatio who is awaiting the apparition on the ramparts, tells the watchmen in Act I, scene i:

In the most high and palmy state of Rome,  
A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,  
The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead  
Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets;  
As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,  
Disasters in the sun; and the moist star  
Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands,  
Was sick almost to doomsday with eclips;  
And even like precursor of fierce events,--  
As harbingers preceding still the fates,  
And prologue to the omen coming on,--  
Have heaven and earth together demonstrated  
Unto our climature and countrymen.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>28</sup>William Shakespeare, "Macbeth," The Complete Works, p. 1054.

<sup>29</sup>William Shakespeare, "Hamlet," Ibid., p. 1072.

Maeterlinck commented upon the unnatural happenings in Macbeth in a footnote to his translation.<sup>30</sup> This type of metaphysical manifestation was attractive to Maeterlinck who perfected the use of such passages for the purpose of evoking terror in the characters in his plays. In "Le Tragique quotidien," he wrote that an old man, seated in a chair, interpreting without comprehending the silence of doors and windows lives in a reality that is more significant than the lover who strangles his mistress, the captain who conquers in battle, or the husband who avenges his honor.<sup>31</sup>

Maeterlinck specialized in a type of drama that can be described as the drama of passive terror. The old man sitting in a chair described above is the blind protagonist of L'Intruse. The latter is a play about death:

A family consisting of a blind grandfather, an uncle, a father, and three girls await the mother's recovery after childbirth. A relative is expected. The father and the uncle are convinced the mother is out of danger. Only the blind grandfather senses the hopelessness of the situation. The visitor finally arrives--in the form of death.<sup>32</sup>

L'Intruse was produced by Paul Fort's Théâtre d'Art on May 20, 1911, and was praised for its power of suggestion, and for its ability to render non-physical sensations with

<sup>30</sup>Maeterlinck, La Tragédie de Macbeth, p. 93.

<sup>31</sup>Maeterlinck, "Le Tragique quotidien," Le Trésor des humbles (Paris: Mercure de France, 1896), p. 164.

<sup>32</sup>Bettina Knapp, Maurice Maeterlinck (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1975), p. 40.

such intensity.<sup>33</sup> L'intruse appealed to the symbolist group because it was

based on a series of vague or strange encounters, representing a man's confrontation with occult forces over which he has no control. Maeterlinck, let us recall, had been deeply influenced by the symbolist poets Baudelaire, Mallarmé, Villier de Lille d'Adam.<sup>34</sup>

From the above examples of what Maeterlinck considered to be tragic happenings in daily life, and the strange confrontations with the occult about which Maeterlinck wrote, it is not surprising that Shakespeare influenced his play entitled La Princesse Maleine to such a degree.

A study by Jean-Marie Carré entitled "Maeterlinck et les littératures étrangères," summarizes the influence of Shakespeare on Maeterlinck's play.<sup>35</sup> Even the names are similar. The names Angus and Marcellus in Maeterlinck's play come from Macbeth and Hamlet. There is a visible parallel in the setting for the first scene of La Princesse Maleine and the first scene of Hamlet. In both cases soldiers appear at midnight in the garden of the castle, inquire about the time and communicate a feeling of anxiety. In Hamlet a ghost appears; in La Princesse Maleine a comet shoots across the skies. Undoubtedly, Maeterlinck remembered Horatio's words "...stars with trains of fire and dews of blood/disasters in the sun." There are other

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<sup>33</sup> Robichez, p. 121.

<sup>34</sup> Bettina Knapp, Maurice Maeterlinck, p. 41.

<sup>35</sup> Jean-Marie Carré, "Maeterlinck et les littératures étrangères," Revue de littérature comparée, juillet-septembre 1926, pp. 449-463.

analogous situations in La Princesse Maleine. The banquet scene in Act V of Maeterlinck's play. The guilty kings, victims of hallucinations, blurt out their guilt before the courtiers. Jean-Marie Carré writes the following:

On peut dire que la comète, la pluie d'étoile,  
le banquet, la tempête, les coups frappés à  
la porte, le chien noir, les fossés du château,  
le fou, tout cela vient plus ou moins de  
Shakespeare.<sup>36</sup>

The elements which constitute the play are Shakespearean, but Maeterlinck has treated them in an original manner. Carré has come to the conclusion that in Maeterlinck's theatre, there are affinities between men and the stars which bring forth omens. Carré takes for example the scene in Macbeth in which Banquo talks to Fleance at the beginning of Act II. Although Banquo is full of dark thoughts, he only asks Fleance the time of day. Contrarily in La Princesse Maleine, the soldiers of the watch only talk to interpret the omens announced by the disturbance in the sky: "Tout y est intériorisé par le symbole."<sup>37</sup>

The ordinariness and the economy of language were to become the trademark of the Maeterlinckian drama, and the symbolism in La Princesse Maleine presaged the dramatic symbolist atmosphere of Pelléas et Mélisande which was to follow. The symbolism in Maeterlinck's work created an atmosphere which was much more elaborated upon than the symbolism in the

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<sup>36</sup>Jean-Marie Carré, p. 454.

<sup>37</sup>Ibid., p. 455.

works of Shakespeare. Maeterlinck manages to communicate a disturbance in the state of things in an extremely simple manner. Prince Hjalmar, Maleine's lover, is waiting in the wood for his betrothed--the hated Uglyane. While waiting he is frightened by an unseen, unheard and unfelt force which causes him to utter:

Je n'ai jamais vu ce bois plus étrange que ce soir.  
Je ne distingue plus mes mains...  
Voilà que j'ai des mains de fossoyeur, à présent.<sup>38</sup>

Hjalmar who senses a strangeness permeating the woods, perceives death in the appearance of his hands. The omens which are mentioned incidentally by the Elizabethan dramatists are developed to an extreme by the Belgian. When Maleine is about to die at the hands of Queen Anne, the very heavens darken, and lightning darts across the skies. When Maleine dies, the window blows open, and a vase containing a lily falls off the window-sill and shatters, as death which has been lurking around the castle enters the room.

Maeterlinck was successful in creating an original drama, whose elements he found in the simple symbols and ordinary language of Shakespeare. The study of Maeterlinckian drama is a book in itself and does not belong to this dissertation on symbolist reactions to Shakespearean and Elizabethan drama, although it is very relevant to the topic.

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<sup>38</sup>Maeterlinck, cited by Jean-Marie Carré, p. 457.

## THE INFLUENCE OF SHAKESPEARE ON PAUL CLAUDEL

Next to Maurice Maeterlinck, Paul Claudel was the dramatist who was the most influenced by Shakespeare and the Elizabethan drama. Claudel also warranted an in depth study on the influences of Shakespeare on his drama by a modern scholar, Pierre Brunel.<sup>39</sup> Although Claudel was not directly involved in the production, translation and adaptation of the Elizabethan dramas which the symbolist group staged, he was heavily influenced by them. At the Lycée Louis-le Grand, Claudel had for mentor none other than Marcel Schwob who introduced him to the English drama of the Renaissance which was to influence his own creations in verse, as well as theme and setting.

Claudel's early drama Tête d'Or is described by an admirer of Claudel, Alain Fournier, in a letter dated 1906.

Claudel...est ici superbement, pour moi, superbement incompréhensible. On pense à Shakespeare. Il en a la brutalité, le naturalisme voulu, les immenses laïus, sans raison apparente, les images très précises, brutales toujours, belles souvent, qui arrivent encore sans raison apparente.<sup>40</sup>

Claudel himself agreed that Tête d'Or was Shakespearean in his critical writing entitled Mémoires Improvisées. He writes

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<sup>39</sup> Pierre Brunel, Claudel et Shakespeare (Paris: Armand Colin, 1971).

<sup>40</sup> Jacques Rivière et Alain-Fournier, Correspondance (Paris: Gallimard, 1926), p. vol. 1, p. 146.

about the play:

Quand on voit ma première version de Tête d'Or on retrouve partout l'influence de Shakespeare, de sa stylistique, de son répertoire d'images, son mouvement, enfin ses procédés de composition: tout cela est Shakespearien, on le retrouve dans ce drame de Tête d'Or.<sup>41</sup>

However, one must be objective in analyzing the influence of Shakespeare on Claudel, since the elements he considered to be Shakespearean were in reality Elizabethan in nature. The completion of Tête d'Or in 1890, followed closely upon the appearance of Félix Rabbe's translation of the works of Christopher Marlowe which appeared in the first half of 1890. However, there is evidence that the work of Rabbe was known to the symbolist literary circle two years prior to that. (Paul Ginisty wrote an article on Rabbe's work which appeared in June of 1887.)<sup>42</sup> The Rabbe study brought Shakespeare out of isolation and placed him among his contemporaries and predecessors, and at the same time served to revive the interest in the French scholars who had written on the Elizabethans prior to the 1880-1885 period. A widely influential and subtle critic of English literature, Emile Montégut had translated the whole of Shakespeare, and given his own interpretation of Hamlet; Alfred Mézières had written on the predecessors, contemporaries and successors of Shakespeare; Ernest Lafond had translated the works of

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<sup>41</sup>Paul Claudel, Mémoires Improvisés, ed. L. Fournier (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), p. 41.

<sup>42</sup>Paul Ginisty, "Causerie littéraire--Un prédécesseur de Shakespeare: le Théâtre de Marlowe traduit par M. F. Rabbe," Gil Blas, 21 Juin 1887, pp. 3-10.

Massinger, Georges Duval, Marlowe and Middleton. Last but not least to be mentioned are the Shakespeare translations by Victor Hugo. Thus Claudel via the influence of Schwob and the Shakespearean scholars, as well as the discussions which took place among the members of Mallarmé's circle, had become well versed in the Elizabethan drama.

Tamburlaine was especially appreciated by Claudel's contemporaries. Jules Lemaître in his Impressions de Théâtre had written of Marlowe's play:

Cela est naïf, frénétique et grandiose. Cela tient des mystères et du théâtre du Moyen-Age, et cela tient aussi, par endroits, des tragédies d'Eschyles. Les personnages ressemblent à des marionnettes gigantesques qui ne font chacune que deux ou trois gestes, simples, violents, toujours les mêmes. Et ces marionnettes ont des bouches d'airain qui épanchent, à flots écumeux, des cataractes de métaphores pédantesques et retentissantes.<sup>43</sup>

The above praise could have easily been mistaken for Maeterlinck's enthusiastic reception of Tête d'Or.<sup>44</sup> The analogies between Tête d'Or and Tamburlaine are striking. Tamburlaine, the future master of Asia starts out as a Scythian shepherd and Simon Agnel, even by the sound of his name evokes the pastor and the lamb. The humble beginning of both of the protagonists did not presage the conquering force they would turn out to be. The language of Tête d'Or and the language of Tamburlaine are closely related. For instance Tête d'Or cries

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<sup>43</sup> Jules Lemaître, Impressions de théâtre, cinquième série (Paris: Lecène, Oudin et Cie, 1891), p. 83.

<sup>44</sup> Paul Claudel, Cahiers Paul Claudel (Paris: Gallimard, 1959), vol. 1, p. 137.

out to his people in the following manner.

Ah! ah!  
 Vous êtes des daims et des chevreuils, et moi  
 je suis un lion, une chose  
 Féroce, terrible!  
 Votre cahir tremble comme une oreille cuite, et  
 moi,  
 Moi! de larges nerfs bandent mes membres pour  
 une fin inconcevable!<sup>45</sup>

while in Tamburlaine Techelles describes Tamburlaine to  
 Zenocrat in similar terms in Act I, scene ii, ll. 52-54:

As princely Lions when they rouse themselves  
 Stretching their paws and threatening heards  
 of beasts,  
 So in his Armour looketh Tamburlaine.<sup>46</sup>

There is another similarity between Tête d'Or and Tamburlaine  
 which occurs when the heroes take inventory of royal powers:

Allons! voici que pour la première fois le Roi  
 des hommes lève une tête ceinte d'or!  
 Oui, et l'éternité peut prendre une voix et se  
 lamenter, elle n'ébranlera point mon coeur royal.  
 Car que peut le chaos même de la nuit de la  
 création  
 Contre celui dont l'âme, au milieu des ténèbres,  
 dans l'oreille même du tourbillon, reste fixe  
 Et qui ne craint point la douleur et la mort?  
 ...  
 Fouillez mon coeur! et si vous y trouvez  
 Rien autre qu'un désir immortel, jetez-le au  
 fumier, faites-le manger par les cloportes!<sup>47</sup>

Similarly in Tamburlaine, Act I, scene ii, ll. 174-178, the  
 conquering hero declares the following:

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<sup>45</sup> Paul Claudel, Tête d'Or, Théâtre I (Paris:  
 Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1967), p. 102.

<sup>46</sup> Christopher Marlowe, Complete Works and Poems, ed.  
 E. D. Penty (Tottowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefen, 1976),  
 p. 13.

<sup>47</sup> Paul Claudel, Tête d'Or, p. 105.

I hold the Fates bound fast in yron chaines,  
 And with my hand turn Fortune wheel about,  
 And sooner shall the sun fall from his Spheare,  
 Than Tamburlaine be slaine or overcome,<sup>48</sup>

From the above examples it can ben seen that both Tête d'Or and Tamburlaine crave for immortality in their moment of greatest pride.

Claudel borrowed from the Elizabethans the theme, the language and the setting, but it must not be construed that this early drama is an imitation of Elizabethan drama. On the contrary, Claudel evolved a theatre all of his own, which contained elements of the Elizabethan drama that he considered essential. Tête d'Or--the drama of a conqueror--is neither a chronicle play nor a history, since Claudel does not fill his play with known facts, as Shakespeare does in Richard II for example. On the contrary, the play obeys the symbolist aesthetic of having une action which takes place outside of any known time.

The language of Tête d'Or has caused a critic to say that one could take Claudel's verse to be Shakespeare's word for word translation.<sup>49</sup> Claudel did study the Shakespearean verse and noticed that the one most frequently used was "le vers blanc...ou discours divisé en laisses d'un nombre approximatif de dix syllabes."<sup>50</sup> Claudel applies the word laisses not to the group of lines which form a thought, but to the

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<sup>48</sup>Christopher Marlowe, Complete Works and Poems, p. 16.

<sup>49</sup>Jacques Rivière et Alain-Fournier, Correspondance, p. 167.

<sup>50</sup>Paul Claudel, Positions et propositions (Paris Bibliothèque de la Pléiade, 1965), p. 46.

group of syllables that form a thought. Pierre Brunel describes Claudel's process thus:

Il l'applique au vers lui-même, qui devient  
par le jeu d'une image, un fil de syllabes,  
un fragment de phrase pris entre deux blancs  
et constituant une unité respiratoire 'l'haleine  
intelligible'<sup>50</sup>

Claudel looked for examples in Richard II. The Queen in that play, overhearing the gardener telling her sons of the king's downfall, is unable to contain her anger and bursts out in Act III, scene iv:

O, I am press'd to death through want of speaking!--  
...  
How dares they harsh rude tongue sound this un-  
pleasing news?  
What Eve what serpent, hath suggested thee  
To make a second fall of cursed man?<sup>51</sup>

According to Claudel the first verse of eleven syllables shows impatience; the alexandrin shows anger, the return to the ten syllable line corresponds to the naked sarcasm of the last two lines.<sup>52</sup> In Tête d'Or the messenger describes the king:

...Fixant devant lui ses yeux étin-  
celants, tel qu'une Andromède aux crins de cheval,  
plus fier que le Dieux du Vent quand devant les eaux  
Il s'agenouille, tendant ses mains aux chaînes,  
sur les rochers d'Occismor,  
Jusqu'à ce qu'il entrât jusqu'à l'enfourchure dans  
l'aumône!<sup>53</sup>

Claudel knew that all the great poets had used the iamb; the

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<sup>50</sup> Pierre Brunel, Claudel et Shakespeare, p. 60.

<sup>51</sup> William Shakespeare, Richard II, The Complete Works, p. 413.

<sup>52</sup> Claudel, Positions et propositions, p. 6.

<sup>53</sup> Claudel, Théâtre 1, p. 72.

Greek tragedians as well as Shakespeare, all had used a short and long syllable in succession, thus communicating in the simplest manner the pulsations of the heart beat.

Claudiel's iamb does not consist of two syllables but of a sequence of brief syllables punctuated by a long one:

J'entrē crū / dāns lă mōrt / ẽt āvēc / ũn dēsīr  
 Quĩ vīt<sup>54</sup>

In the above example, the succession of anapests is interrupted by an iamb which constitutes a verse in itself--the cry of an exhausted man.

Claudiel also made use of the hemistiche and the enjambement to simulate natural pauses in speech

Et toi aussi, mon père, voilà que je te vois,  
 rongeant ta barbe,  
 Fixer par terre tes yeux sanglants. Laisse-moi  
 partir je te prie!<sup>55</sup>

Claudiel noticed that in Shakespeare the punctuation in the middle of a line led to the frequent use of the enjambement which he himself was to use to frequently.

Notice the following three lines from Richard II:

What! is my Richard both in shape and mind  
 Transform'd and weaken'd! Hath Bolingbroke depos'd  
 Thine intellect? hath he been in they heart?<sup>56</sup>

Claudiel who never translated Shakespeare, has nonetheless given us a French version of Shakespearean language:

<sup>54</sup> Claudiel, Théâtre I, p. 72.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., p. 67.

<sup>56</sup> William Shakespeare, Richard II, The Complete Works, p. 417.

Ils le virent, posant eux-mêmes leurs pieds sur  
un sol engraisé du bétail obscur de leurs  
Pères et de leurs mères.<sup>57</sup>

Claudé goes further than Shakespeare when he dislocates a  
word to distribute the parts which compose it among two  
lines. For instance, In Tête d'Or

Si vous songez que vous êtes des hommes, et que  
vous v-  
-Ous voyez empêtrés de ces vêtements d'esclaves.  
oh! cri-  
-Ez de rage et ne le supportez pas plus  
longtemps.<sup>58</sup>

Claudé uses the split-dislocated word for effect. Cébès  
contemplating the inert body of his love utters a cry from  
the soul

Ca, cette chose presque froide,  
Sans yeux, sans rien, presque é-  
-Touffée, ça aime encore, ça veut  
Encore.<sup>59</sup>

According to Brunel, Claudé found support for his theory on  
verse in Shakespeare, and consequently used the verse in a  
free and novel manner, freeing it from the tyranny of num-  
bered beats and letting it flow according to breath and  
emotion.<sup>60</sup>

In the second version of Tête d'Or, Claudé introduced

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<sup>57</sup> Claudé, Théâtre, p. 74.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., p. 104

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 89.

<sup>60</sup> Brunel, Claudé et Shakespeare, p. 66.

an element common to the Elizabethan drama: the dumb show. In the stage directions he wrote the following:

Entre comme égaré, l'Empereur David, pieds nus et les vêtements en désordre, qui court ça et là à travers la salle dans une violente agitation.<sup>61</sup>

He introduced the pantomime in the play in order to reduce the level of realism or consistency in it, and to clarify by mime what would have otherwise been a lengthy scene. Muriel C. Bradbrook explains the use of the pantomime in Elizabethan drama:

When it was possible to contract an opening scene (such as the opening soliloquy of Faust) so that it represented a lengthy mental process in the mind of Faust himself, there was no reason why large passages of the narrative should not be dropped, why motivation should not be scamped or ignored.<sup>62</sup>

Claudé used the pantomime in addition to the classic technique of the récit of the messenger in the second part and Cassius in the third.

In Tête d'Or the style is purposefully declamatory, in an attempt to depict the excessive emotion in the characters. This was a tendency in Shakespearean drama, which Claudé carries into his later plays. In Le Partage de midi, the language of Mesa, the protagonist, reminds us of the words of Romeo:

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<sup>61</sup>Claudé, Théâtre I, p. 49.

<sup>62</sup>Muriel C. Bradbrook, Themes and Conventions in Elizabethan Tragedy (Cambridge: University Press, 1960), p. 36.

Tu es radieuse et splendide! Tu es belle comme  
le jeune Apollon!<sup>63</sup>

Compare them to Romeo's words in Act II, scene ii:

But soft! what light through yonder window breaks  
It is the east, and Juliet is the sun!<sup>64</sup>

The similarities in the metaphors are so striking that they cannot be accidental.

Claudel also experimented with form; he wrote the Drames des Coufontaines in what was his version of historical drama; but the most monumental of his works, Le Soulier de satin, includes elements from Shakespeare--although the play cannot be called Shakespearean or Elizabethan in type. The author peopled his play with fishermen, a negress, a doctor in Chinese theology, a Neapolitan proxénète, a Dutch renegade and all the creatures which were wont to cross the Atlantic, two to three centuries ago, accompanied by the blasts of the ship cannons. The story is that of an old conquistador, who is as ill-fated in love as he is in fortune, and who ends a captive in his daughter's hands. Claudel places Le Soulier de satin under the aegis of Lope de Vega and the great Anglo-Saxon dramatists in a poem which preceded the English translation of that play.<sup>65</sup> However, that drama contains farcical elements that cannot be found in the Spanish clas-

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<sup>63</sup>Claudel, Théâtre I, p. 1025.

<sup>64</sup>William Shakespeare, Romeo and Juliet, The Complete Works, p. 1019.

<sup>65</sup>Claudel, Théâtre II, p. 1471.

sical theatre; while the logical progression of the Spanish theatre is law in the seventeenth century, Claudel's spectator needs to concentrate on the developments to unify the action which takes place in lateral time, as in Gide's Les Faux Monnayeurs and in James Joyce's Ulysses.

If we are to look for Shakespearean types in Claudel, one finds in Le Soulier de satin the faithful Balthazar who reminds us of Romeo's servant. There is another Balthazar in Much Ado about Nothing, Don Pedro's servant, who is bid to sing a serenade destined for Hero, and who is emulated by Claudel when he has Don Balthazar at the end of the première journée of Le Soulier de satin sing to Dona Prouhèze:

Un chant qui monte à la bouche  
Est comme une goutte de miel  
Qui déborde du coeur.<sup>66</sup>

Claudel is full of Elizabethan elements and Elizabethan characters. From Tête d'Or to Don Camille, the Claudel adventurer evolves from the rash hero of Marlowe--Tamburlaine--to the villains found in Webster's plays. For Don Camille, Claudel capitalized on the Elizabethan's dislike of the Moor or the Jew, who is traditionally endowed with a violent (Othello) or sadistic (Aaron) disposition. Of course, there is a Christian element developed in Le Soulier de satin which is alien to the plays of the Elizabethans. Don Camille is redeemed, and Dona Prouhèze is assured of happiness in the

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<sup>66</sup>Claudel, Théâtre II, p. 720.

after-life through Don Camille's influence, since it is Don Camille who has persuaded Prouh ese to renounce Roderigo both in this world and the next, in order to achieve salvation. In a most amazing development, Roderigo becomes immortalized as a geographical-continent because he has been excluded from human happiness.<sup>67</sup> All of these unusual elements of Claudel's Le Soulier de satin develop from the opening scene which is pastoral, and very reminiscent of As You Like It:

...ce ruisseau intarissable qui fuit,  
 Se r epandant plus loin et encore plus loin,  
 ...avec trois ou quatre voix,  
   lui-m eme.<sup>68</sup>

Claudel's words seem to have been translated from Act II, scene i, of As You Like It:

...this our life exempt from public haunt,  
 Finds tongues in trees, books in the running brooks,  
 Sermons in stones, and good in every thing.<sup>69</sup>

Although the theatre of Claudel does contain many elements from Shakespeare and the Elizabethans, the Greeks and the Spanish, it is an original theatre all of its own and cannot completely fall into any of the above classifications.

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<sup>67</sup>Claudel, Th eatre II, p. 1470.

<sup>68</sup>Ibid., p. 762.

<sup>69</sup>William Shakespeare, "As You Like It," The Complete Works, p. 235.

## RAMIFICATIONS

The English plays translated and produced by the symbolists were staged in small theatres, and, therefore were witnessed by only a select few. Yet for the last seventy years French producers have turned to the Renaissance English drama. Jacques Robichez sums it up very concisely in his study on the symbolist theatre:

Si le Vieux-Colombier inaugure ses spectacles avec Une femme tuée par la douceur d'Heywood et remporte son premier grand succès avec Le Soir des Rois, si Dullin à l'Atelier monte Volpone, Richard III, Jules César, c'est sans doute parce que l'Oeuvre, ici encore, a montré la voie. Le mouvement avait commencé avant Lugné-Poe, mais il n'est pas étranger à son triomphe définitif. Shakespeare est devenu au terme d'une très longue résistance, un classique français.<sup>70</sup>

What Lugné-Poe and the symbolists who helped him, did was to draw attention to the oddities of the Elizabethan drama, which were unknown (or which the performances at the Odéon or at the Comédie-Française were unable to communicate). By staging Annabella, Lugné-Poe contributed to the disappearance of the spirit of Jean-François Ducis who translated the English dramatists while subjecting them to the rules of classical tragedy.

French interest in the Renaissance English drama was not limited to translation and staging. The periodical Les Cahiers du Sud devoted its June-July, 1933, issue to

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<sup>70</sup>Robichez, p. 481.

studies on the Elizabethan theatre. Articles worth mentioning in that issue are William Empson's "La Double intrigue et l'ironie dans le théâtre Elizabethain," Henri Fluchère's "Shakespeare en France," Henri Sauget's "La Musique Elizabethaine," and Gaston Baty's "La Scène Elizabethaine." The collection of essays in Les Cahiers du Sud which appeared in 1933 was in such demand that it was reprinted in a special issue of that review entitled Le Théâtre Elizabethain, and edited by José Corti in 1940. Continued interest in Shakespeare and the Elizabethans is the well deserved reward of the men who labored so relentlessly, and with so little recognition, to bring the English dramatists to life on the French stage.

Mallarmé and his friends had been looking for a new direction for their drama when they experimented with the English dramatists. Those Frenchmen found that violence and cruelty were a reality of life and therefore a reality of the stage. In the 1930's, Antonin Artaud used the maxim of violence and cruelty as a focal point in his "Manifesto of the Theatre of Cruelty" in which he announced his intention of staging

an adaptation of an Elizabethan tragedy, perhaps Arden of Feversham, along with a version of the Bluebeard story, "The Fall of Jerusalem," one of the tales of the Marquis de Sade, and also Büchner's Woyzeck, all of them productions calculated to make an audience shudder.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>71</sup>Maurice Jacques Valency, The End of the World (New York: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 336.

In his essay, "The Theatre and the Plague," Artaud cited Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore calling it the sort of play "that would free the unconscious and reveal its hidden conflicts."<sup>72</sup> Antonin Artaud found support for his doctrine on cruelty in the Poetics of Aristotle, especially in the passage in which Aristotle voice the following opinion.

Whenever, the tragic deed is done within the family, when murder or the like is done or meditated by brother on brother, by son on father, by mother on son, or son on the mother--those are the situations the poet should seek after.<sup>73</sup>

The above passage from Aristotle then sheds light on Artaud's choice to stage Shelley's Les Cenci on May 6, 1935, as the initial offering of The Theatre of Cruelty which was followed by Thyeste. In the study The End of the World, Maurice Valency comes to the conclusion that Artaud misunderstood the above passage from the Poetics.

In the plays that Aristotle appears to have in mind, the deed of horror is in every case motivated by a necessity that overrides the reluctance of the doer to injure a member of the family. Count Francesco, however, is motivated chiefly by his sadism, a primal urge, no doubt, but not one calculated to inspire suffering in him or pity in the spectator.<sup>74</sup>

In his selections, Artaud did show a preference for Renaissance English taste, and continued the tradition that started with Sophocles and went on to include Seneca,

<sup>72</sup>Maurice Jacques Valency, The End of the World, p. 337.

<sup>73</sup>Aristotle cited by Maurice Jacques Valency, Ibid., p. 329.

<sup>74</sup>Valency, Ibid.

Shakespeare and Webster: "All of whom had specialized in gruesome subjects without the benefit of Freud or Jung."<sup>75</sup>

Valency starts his concluding paragraph on the chapter on Artaud with the following words, that are ironic but very appropriate:

Thus, with Artaud, the stately ritual of the Symbolist drama of which Mallarmé had dreamed evolved into something that Mallarmé had neither thought of nor intended.<sup>76</sup>

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<sup>75</sup>Valency, The End of the World, p. 337.

<sup>76</sup>Ibid.

APPENDIX

## CHAPTER II

p. 41.

25. The list of readers for La Tempête is the following:

MM. Maurice Bouchor	Ferdinand Stephano Maître d'Equipage
Raoul Ponchon	Caliban Alonso
Coquelin Cadet	Le Prologue Trinculo
Amédée Pigéon	Gonzalo
Félix Rabbe	Prospero
Passor	Sébastien
Mlles Paule Verne	Ariel
Cecile Dorelle	Miranda

p. 42.

26. Paul Margueritte's statement implies that the only production of a Shakespeare play done by puppets was in England. This was a false impression shared by Anatole France in La Vie littéraire (Paris: Calmann-Levy, 1888, p. 145), and Pietro C. Ferrigni in La storia dei burattini (Firenze: R. Bemporad Figlio, 1902, pp. 290-291). Pietro Ferrigni is best known as Yorick. However, a detailed study by Charles Magnin entitled "Marionnettes depuis 1562 jusqu'à la fin de règne de Charles Ier," which appeared in L'Histoire des marionnettes en Europe depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours (Paris: Michel Levy, 1852, p. 217), points to the contrary. Magnin states that it is in The Dutch Courtesan printed in 1605 that Marston makes mention of the Julius Ceasar of the puppet theatre, and Shakespeare's tragedy has appeared on the stage at the earliest in 1607. Magnin writes:

Il est donc certain que le Julius Ceasar des puppet shows n'a pu être emprunté que d'une des pièces en assez grand nombre, composées sur

ce sujet avant Shakespeare, peut-être de celle qui fut représentée devant Elizabeth le 1er janvier 1563, et dont les curieux ont gardé le souvenir, comme du premier drame anglais dont le sujet ait été tiré de l'histoire romaine.

Chronologically, Magnin does not see it as likely this Julius Ceasar was by Shakespeare; also, whichever play it was, it must have been an abbreviated version since the same show played up to nine times in one day.

p. 45.

32 Boats. Heigh, my heart; cheerly, cheerly, my hearts:  
yare, yare: take in the top-sail: 'Tend to the  
master's whistle.--Blow till thy burst thy wind,  
if room enough!...

Boats. Down with the top-mast; yare; lower,  
lower; bring her to try with main-course. (a  
cry within) A plague upon this howling! They  
are louder than the weather, or our office.

p. 46.

33 Mira. If by your art, my dearest father you  
have  
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them:  
The sky, it seems would pour down stinking  
pitch,  
But that the sea, mounting to the welkin's  
cheek,  
Dashes the fire out. O, I have suffered  
With those that I saw suffer! a brave vessel,  
Who had no doubt some noble creatures in her,  
Dash'd all to pieces. O, the cry did knock  
Against my very heart! poor souls! they  
perish'd.  
Had I been any God of power, I would  
Have sunk the sea within the earth, or e'er  
It should the good ship so have swallowed, and  
The freighting souls within her.

Pros. Be collected;  
No more amazement; tell your piteous heart.

Mira. O! woe the day!

Pro. No harm.  
 I have done nothing but in care of thee,  
 Of thee, my dear one! thee, my daughter! who  
 Art ignorant of what thou art, nought knowing  
 Of whence I am; nor that I am more better  
 Than Prospero, master of a full poor cell,  
 And thy no greater father.

Mira. More to know  
 Did never meddle with my thoughts.

p. 47

34. Cal. All the infections that the sun sucks up  
 From bogs, fens, flats, on Prosper fall, and  
                   make him  
 By inch-meal a disease! His spirits hear me,  
 And yet I needs must curse. But they'll nor  
                   pinch,  
 Fright me with urchin-shows, pitch me i'the mire,  
 Nor lead me, like a firebrand, in the dark  
 Out of my way, unless he bid them; but  
 For every trifle they are set upon me:  
 Sometime like apes, that moe and chatter at me;  
 And after, bite me; then like hedge-hogs, which  
 Lie tumbling in my bare foot way, and mount  
 Their pricks at my foot-fall; sometimes am I  
 All wound with adders, who, with cloven tongues  
 Do hiss me into madness:--Lo! now! lo!  
                   enter Trinculo  
 Here comes a spirit of his; and to torment me,  
 For bringing wood in slowly: I'll fall flat;  
 Perchance he will not mind me.

p. 48.

35. Trin. Here's neither bush nor shrub, to bear off  
 any weather at all, and another storm brewing: I  
 hear it sing i' the wind; yond same black cloud,  
 yond huge one, looks like a foul bumbard that would  
 shed his liquor. If it should thunder, as it did  
 before, I know not where to hide my head; yond  
 same cloud cannot choose but fall by pailfuls.--  
 What have we here? a man or a fish? dead or alive?  
 A fish; he smells like a fish: a very ancient and  
 fish-like smell; a kind of, not of the newest,

35. Poor-John. A strange fish! Were I in England now  
 (as once I was), and had but this fish painted,  
 not a holiday fool there but would give a piece  
 of silver: there would this monster make a man;  
 anystrange beast there makes a man: when they  
 will not give a doit to relieve a lame beggar,  
 they will lay out ten to see a dead Indian. Legg'd  
 like a man! and his fins like arms! Warm, o' my  
 troth! this is no fish, but an islander, that  
 hath lately suffered by a tunder-bolt. (thunder)  
 Alas! the storm is come again; my best way is to  
 creep under his gaberdine; there is no other  
 shelter hereabout: Misery acquaints a man with  
 strange bedfellows. I will here shroud, till  
 the dregs of the storm be past.

p. 48.

36. The master, the swabber, the boatswain, and I  
 The gunner and his mate,  
 Lov'd Mall, Meg and Marian, and Margery  
 But none of us car'd for Kate:  
 For she had a tongue with a tang,  
 Would cry to a sailor, Go, hang;  
 She lov'd not the savour of tar nor of pitch;  
 Yet a tailor might schcratch her where'ev she did itch:  
 Then to sea, boys and let her go hang.

p. 49.

37. Ste. What's the matter: have we devils here: Do  
 you put tricks upon us with savages and men of Inde?  
 Ha! I have not 'scaped drowning, to be afeard now of  
 your four legs; for it hath been said, As proper a  
 man as ever went on four legs cannot make him give  
 ground: and it shall be said so again, while Stephano  
 breathes nostrils.

p. 49.

38. (Ariel Sings)

Full fathom five thy father lies;  
 Of his bones are coral made;  
 Those are pearls that were his eyes:  
 Nothing of him that doth fade,  
 But doth suffer a sea-change  
 Into something rich and strange.  
 Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell  
 Burden, ding-dong.  
 Hark! now I hear them,--ding, dong, bell.

p. 52.

45. This island's mine, by Sycorax my mother,  
Which thou tak'st from me. When thou camest  
first,  
Thou strok'dst me, and mad'st much of me;  
wouldst give me  
Water with berries in't; and teach me how  
To name the bigger light, and how the less,  
That burn by day and night: and then I lov'd  
thee,  
And shew'd thee all the qualities o' the isle,  
The fresh springs, brine pits, barren place, and  
fertile;  
Cursed be I that did so!--All the charms  
Of Sycorax, toads, beetles, bats, light on you!  
For I am all the subjects that you have,  
Which first was mine own king; and here you  
sty me  
In this hard rock, while you do keep from me  
The rest of the island.

## CHAPTER III

p. 88

62. But song might bid not heaven and earth be one  
Till Marlowe's voice gave warning of the sun.  
Thought quailed and fluttered as a frightened bird  
Till passion fledged the wing of Marlowe's word.  
Faith born of fear had doubt and hope be dumb  
Till Marlowe's pride bade light or darkness come  
Then first our speech was thunder: then our song  
Shot lightning through the clouds that brought us wrong.  
Blind fear, whose faith feeds hell with fire, became  
A moth self-shrivelled in its own blind flame.  
...  
And for his tomb, though there no point may stand  
The flower it shows was laid by Shakespeare's hand.

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