THE SHREW AT STRATFORD

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A Comparative Study of Three Productions of

The Taming of the Shrew

As Performed at the Festival Theatre, Stratford, Ontario

By

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THE SHREW AT STRATFORD: AN INTRODUCTION

"The theatre dies every night only to be reborn each day, for it exists whenever actors perform before an audience."[1] Dramatic performances, as this suggests, are unique and ephemeral; but so are whole productions once the performances have ceased and the actors have disbanded. A production continues to exist only in the memories of those who were present to witness it, and attempts to reconstruct it must, of necessity, depend on the partial glimpses afforded by the debris of scripts, programmes, pictures, reviews and personal reminiscences that are left behind.

In this essay, an attempt has been made to bring together evidence of this kind relating to three productions of the same play at the Festival Theatre, Stratford, Ontario, which range over a period of twenty years. This has been done in order to discover how far an identification of the problems which a play presents to a director -- and an evaluation of his success in dealing with them -- can illuminate that play itself, and contribute to its critical interpretation. The intrusion of scholastic concerns on the creative processes of the theatre, especially when they become prescriptive, is clearly open to attack. Nonetheless, even in academic circles an orthodoxy has recently emerged which insists that the plays of Shakespeare must be viewed primarily as works

of art which can only be fully realised in live performance. This is itself perhaps an overstatement, but certainly we are not justified in seeing the intention of theatrical performances as other than an essential aspect of their artistic existence.

A great deal of Shakespearean scholarship has attempted to discover the plays' original conditions of performance, on the assumption that certain elements in the texts can be explained by reference to the exigencies and opportunities represented by those conditions. A defence of my approach through the modern theatre requires a rather different basis. It must rest, I believe, on the assumption that in many vital respects, though not of course all, the process of transferring a Shakespearean play from script to stage involves considerations which remain constant. These vital respects are roughly those which go by the name of interpretation, those which determine how to convey on the stage the fact that certain lines are comic, or ironic, or intended deceitfully or self-deceitfully, or are more important than others, and so on. In addition, the modern director has problems which he shares with the literary critic (but conceivably not with the original director, assuming Shakespeare to have played an active part in the production of his plays) of deciding which parts of the play are to be treated in these terms. A Shakespearean text does not, after all, contain profuse offers of authorial advice such as we find in G. B. Shaw's

plays. Consequently it may be suggested that the modern director confronts tasks which are analogous in one respect to those of the literary critic, and in another to those of the people who were responsible for the original staging of the plays. It seems likely then that a study of his tactics will enable us to subject critical theories to the test of theatrical feasibility, and to extend to criticism the insights that emerge from the actors' and directors' needs to make the play convincing in performance. There is, however, a temptation in an exercise of this kind, to judge the performances on the basis of how far they measure up to a priori critical assumptions about the nature of the play. The danger in such a prescriptive approach is that we may fail to do justice to new insights that a director may reveal. There may be no genuine reciprocity between the critical idea and the effect of the stage performance.

Although a production is the work of several significant contributors besides the playwright and the director, I have tended to attribute the total effect of a production to a deliberate and personalised conception of the director, since in the modern theatre he is the one who is ultimately responsible for the artistic elements. The extent to which the individual director can be viewed as an interpretative artist, and the extent to which he can be assumed to have studied the text and familiarised himself with the critical attitudes towards it in order to deduce a governing concept for his practical decisions, varies greatly from one produc-

tion to another. Directors also differ markedly in the extent of their personal public statements about their work and ideas behind it. Michael Langham and Tyrone Guthrie, for example, have been prolific in this respect while Jean Gascon is notoriously elusive.

Available directorial statements have been consulted in the preparation of this paper and used where appropriate. In addition, I have been able to make use of the resources of the Stratford Festival Archives, which include the prompt-books of the three productions, costume sketches, photographs, miscellaneous publicity material and newspaper and periodical writings from Canada and abroad. (During the years since the inception of the Stratford Festival, it is interesting to note, Canadian newspaper reviews have shown a marked increase in volume and sophistication, reflecting the growing familiarity of the public with live classical theatre.) These sources have been supplemented by a videotape recording of the 1973 production, distant memories of that of 1962, and personal interviews with some of the actors and technicians. For the texts that were used, I have the evidence of the prompt-books, but for most other features of the productions I have been compelled to rely on the impressions of others. This has not proved to be as limiting as it may at first appear. We would, after all, be very grateful for a tiny fraction of such evidence relating to the performances at the Globe Playhouse.

II

THE SHREW'S CHALLENGES:
A Discussion of its Critical and Historical Background

A director who decides to stage Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew faces an interesting challenge because of the nature and magnitude of the problems that the play presents. The text is debatable, the stage history reveals a tradition of bastardisation, and critical opinions often throw more light on the social attitudes of their time than on the play itself. Yet in spite of these obvious difficulties, each of the three resident directors of the Festival Theatre at Stratford chose to produce this play -- Tyrone Guthrie in 1954, Michael Langham in 1962, and Jean Gascon in 1973. Each attempted to resolve the play's problems in very different ways. Before discussing their approaches in detail, however, we must briefly examine the textual problems, the major critical attitudes towards the play, and its stage history.

Investigations into the textual problems, date of composition, sources and authorship of The Taming of the Shrew have been numerous, but the situation remains confused, and little agreement has been reached on any of these issues. A principal cause of this confusion about the origins of the play is that it is the only one of the comedies normally attributed to Shakespeare's early period not mentioned by

Meres, in the Palladis Tamia, 1598, or found in the Stationer's Register.[2] The Taming of the Shrew, in the form in which we know it, first appeared in print in the Folio of 1623. It is noteworthy that the publishers, Blount and Jaggard, did not register this play along with the other previously unpublished plays that appeared in the Folio. A possible reason for this is that they assumed that the play published in the Folio was the same play that had been registered in 1594 as "A plesant Conceyted historie called the Taminge of a Shrowe." Such a hypothesis is strengthened by the fact that in 1623 the copyright of this latter play was held by J. Smethwick, who was a member of the syndicate responsible for publishing the First Folio. However, the texts of the two plays differ significantly in language and content.[3] It has still not been established whether the publishers of the Folio were unaware of this fact, or whether they did not regard these differences as important. It is possible that they did not make any sharp distinction between the two plays, on the assumption that one of the plays was simply an adaptation of the other. The many conflicting views of this subject have been accurately (if tersely) summarised by G. Bullough:

> The Shrew, first mentioned in Folio 1, 1623, used generally to be regarded as a revision of A Shrew made by Shakespeare with or without collaboration. Warburton and Farmers denied that he wrote The Shrew; Furnivall, E.K. Chambers and T.M. Parrott believed that he had a collaborator who did the Bianca plot. Dover Wilson argued that Shakespeare revised, not the play presented in the First Quarto, but another version since lost. ... P. Alexander ... suggested that ... the First Quarto was a 'bad Quarto' ...

> [and] ... A Shrew was a botched up version of The Shrew, [while G. Bullough claims that] ... A Shrew may be not so much the source-play as Shakespeare's first shot at the theme.[4]

Interesting as such speculations may be for the scholar, they need not greatly concern a director, whose business at this point is to produce a suitable playing text. Nevertheless, a comparison of the two plays is relevant to this discussion, since some directors have found it theatrically expedient to combine materials from both the plays.

The most obvious structural difference between The Taming of the Shrew and The Taming of a Shrew rests in the treatment of Christopher Sly and the Induction scenes.[5] In TTS, Sly disappears after Act I,i, but in TAS, he is present throughout the play and is finally left to deliver an Epilogue.[6] The incompleteness of the framing device in TTS is difficult to explain. For the director it poses a distinct problem, with the result that the text of TTS has sometimes been supplemented by material from the more complete framework that exists in TAS. The decision to do this may be based on the need for dramatic effectiveness and consistency, or on the thematic possibilities of making the main plot more obviously a play-within-a-play. Both kinds of approach will be discussed later at greater length.

There is a further reason why a comparison of the two plays is helpful. Whether one of the plays provided a source for the other or not, it is clear that they are both related to the same farcical fabliau tradition. The theme of

the achievement of mastery in marriage is one of the hoary commonplaces of vernacular literature.[7] But the author of TTS clearly managed to use the tradition in a new and sophisticated way, and his success may be measured partly by reference to the more crudely conventional treatment of the theme in TAS.

In this respect, it is possible to see the differences between the two plays in terms of a distinction between farce and 'true' comedy. Farce is obviously the narrower concept, and has been defined as "a sort of comedy based not on clever language or subtleties of character, but on broadly humorous situations... full of surprises, improbabilities, complications and speed, plot outdistancing characterisation."[8] Another attempt at definition describes farce as:

> A species of humourous drama, usually distinguished from comedy by its tendency to extract amusement from the ingenious manipulation of a series of intricate situations in which stereotyped human figures are involved rather than from the reactions of more complex credible characters to each other and to their situation. ... In general the term 'farce' ... is taken to signify a particularly broad sort of comedy involving a lot of physical knockabout.[9]

The characters and situations in TAS do not go beyond farce in this general sense. A shrew is to be tamed, and a man is found to tame her. He proceeds to do so through a variety of tricks and strategems. For an audience, the interest of the play is in the devices by which supremacy is won in the battle of the sexes, not in the character of the individuals who devise them or who are practised upon, or in the rightness of the taming

process. The practices of the generic tamer upon the generic shrew are both callous and outrageous; but the characterisation is so perfunctory compared to the elaboration of the plot that the audience has little cause to reflect on the psychological plausibility of the action.

Although superficially similar to TAS, The Shrew transcends the limits of farce and may be considered comic in a much wider sense. Shakespeare does of course use material similar to that of the traditional 'wife-taming' farces. But, in Bullough's words, he moves from this "world of appearances and situations to the inner world of character and ethical implications."[10] When, for example, he includes traditional plot features like Petruchio's denial of food and new clothes to Katherine, or his captiousness about the 'sun' and 'moon', Shakespeare gives Petruchio's actions a complex psychological motivation; they are not simply ways of demoralising Kate and breaking her spirit. In the farces, of which TAS is a fairly developed example, the primary aim is to entertain, and to allow the audience, as Eric Bentley has commented, a "disguised fulfilment of repressed wishes."[11] Shakespeare's TTS, on the other hand, is concerned with truth in human relationships, especially love relationships. This is particularly noticeable in the new dimensions which are added to the characters of Katherine and Petruchio.

In the earlier versions, Kate (or her equivalent) is merely a virago who must be tamed -- any method that the

tamer cares to use being permissible -- in order that the social hierarchy may be maintained. This is made clear in TAS in Kate's final speech. In submitting to Ferando (the 'Petruchio') and encouraging the other wives to submit to their husbands, she invokes the cosmic need for order, originally created by "theternall power" out of "A heape confusd a mixture all deforme." She points out that, unless firmly controlled, women will subvert that order -- as Eve did originally.[12] Kate's final speech in TTS, however, invokes rather different imperatives, the psychological needs of women and the reciprocal obligations imposed by love. This point will be discussed later; for the moment it is of importance to note that TAS operates within a rigid and restrictive ideological framework, which allows no scope for questioning the idea that women are naturally inferior creatures and therefore must submit to their husbands.

Indeed, from the beginning Shakespeare's Kate is a more complex creation than her counterpart in TAS. There is an element of ambiguity in Shakespeare's character from the start. While she is a woman "With wealth enough, and young and beauteous, / Brought up as best becomes a gentlewoman,"[13] she is nevertheless first presented to us as a shrew. She loudly voices her contempt for her suitors, and yet they are obviously inadequate and cannot understand her barbed wit. (I,i,57-60) Margaret Webster justly points out that "Kate leaps into the play seen only from the point

of view of people who fear and dislike her."[14] However, it is difficult for us to sympathise completely with her indiscriminate bitterness against all those who surround her, particularly her father and her sister. (II,i,1-36) Hortensio's comment, we feel, has some justification:

> Her only fault, and that is faults enough,
> Is that she is intolerable curst
> And shrewd and froward, so beyond all measure
> That, were my state far worser than it is,
> I would not wed her for a mine of gold. (I,ii,87-91)

These words are addressed as a warning to Petruchio who has "come to wive it wealthily in Padua" (I,ii,74) and who, for a rich dowry, is prepared to put up with any woman:

> Be she as foul as was Florentius' love,
> As old as Sibyl, and as curst and shrewd
> As Socrates' Xanthippe or a worse. (I,ii,68-70)

This is hardly an impressive attitude, and if Kate fails at first to gain our sympathy, so does Petruchio. Individually both characters, while vivid, are less than ideal. It is not until Katherine and Petruchio first confront one another (II,i) that they are seen in a favorable light. As their dialogue proceeds, we become aware that a mutual feeling of genuine interest and respect is implicitly emerging. Through the use of repartee, Kate emerges as one of Shakespeare's witty women -- a forerunner of Beatrice, Rosalind and Viola, while Petruchio's verbal agility makes us willing to believe him when he says:

> Now, Kate, I am a husband for your turn
> ...
> Thou must be married to no man but me.
> For I am he am born to tame you, Kate. (II,i,265,268-9)

The verbal dominance which Petruchio has established in this brief encounter is the first of many steps that he takes in order to "out-Kate" Kate. For he is a shrewd judge of character and has already perceived that "If she be curst, it is for policy." (II,i,285) She knows less of her own character at this point than does Petruchio, and seems resolved to accept the shrewish role as reality. (II,i,292)

From this point on, Petruchio's method is to hold a mirror up to Kate; by behaving even more outrageously than she does, he brings her to the realisation that if she wishes to be considered with the respect that she feels is her due she must be prepared to reciprocate and treat others with a similar respect. Eventually her attitude towards Petruchio moves from respect to love. As she learns, this involves a further step -- the willingness to abnegate the self to some extent in return for emotional fulfilment. Petruchio's treatment does not break Kate's spirit; rather, it adds to her stature. She is a more honest and complete woman at the end of the play than she was at the beginning.

If we accept this kind of reading of the play, the question of the sincerity of Kate's last speech must be considered. The tone and intent of this speech have been much debated by the critics. Miss Webster, for example, believes that Katherine is being completely ironic, having realised that "'to serve, love and obey' in all outward seeming is the surest road to victory."[15] This idea finds

support in the Renaissance commonplace expressed by Juan Vives when he wrote that "wyse sentence" which says that "A good woman by lowely obeysaunce ruleth hir husbande."[16] R.B. Heilman however convincingly rejects Miss Webster's argument:

> Forty-five lines of straight irony would be too much to be borne; it would be inconsistent with the straightforwardness of most of the play, and it would really turn Kate back into a hidden shrew whose new technique was sarcastic indirection, side-mouthing at the audience while her not very intelligent husband, bamboozled, cheered her on. It would be a poor triumph.[17]

Other critics have agreed with G.B. Shaw's contention that "the last scene is altogether disgusting to modern sensibility,"[18] but J.R. Brown disagrees:

> [The Shrew] is sometimes called a brutal and degrading play, but this could only be true if Katherina's submission had been abject, or if Petruchio, in triumph, had put his foot upon her hand; what happens, in fact, is that Petruchio and Katharina exchange kisses, and her speech is confident and joyful, the most sustained and spirited speech in the whole play.[19]

Although Katherine's words echo Renaissance commonplaces concerning order and decorum, Shakespeare stresses that she is not acting merely from a preconceived notion of conventional marital duty. Instead, she is invoking a rather different concept, that of the duty which springs from love, and which is freely given,(V,ii,154) courteously received (V,ii,147-151) and graciously reciprocated.(V,ii,158,160) Katherine's address to the other wives reveals that she has come to realise that Petruchio is not by nature an unreason-

able, autocratic master. She now understands his strategy and, more importantly, trusts, loves and respects him as her husband. If she is assuming the role of an ideal wife, she is doing so willingly, for personal rather than social reasons. J.R. Brown asserts:

> she is faithful to the role she has adopted and speaks the unquestioning generosity and obedience of her love with conviction, spirit, and due modesty. Katherina has been shown a role that, to her surprise and delight, answers to the truth of her own imagination; she can play it to the height of her powers. ... for her, appearance has become reality.[20]

As Brown has shown, Katherine's acceptance of this role is indicative of a new-found self-knowledge, which binds her to Petruchio in a union characterised by honesty.

The element of honesty is very important, for the last scene is also the culmination of the dominant theme of appearance and reality, which runs throughout the play. Kate, the seeming termagant, has proven to be an obedient wife, while the outwardly demure and sweetly pretty Bianca, in whom Lucentio first sees "Maid's mild behaviour and sobriety," (I,i,71) has revealed herself as a truly froward wife:

> Lucentio. The wisdom of your duty, fair Bianca,
> Hath cost one hundred crowns since suppertime.
> Bianca. The more fool you, for laying on my duty.
> (V,ii,127-29)

For the audience, this revelation of Bianca's character is the predictable outcome of the action in the subplot. This subplot is carefully managed by Shakespeare as a contrast to the major plot, in order to highlight the theme of out-

ward seeming and inner truth. In the major plot, as Evans points out:

> The principal persons have no illusions about each other. Shakespeare appears to have taken pains not only to have each of the mad pair recognise the other's character but to make it unmistakable to us that each does so.[21]

The Bianca plot, on the other hand, depends on subterfuge, disguise, and deceit: what seems to be, hardly ever is. This emphasis is manifested in the assuming of roles; Tranio becomes Lucentio, Lucentio pretends to be a classics master, Hortensio assumes the role of music teacher, the Pedant poses as Vincentio, and the revered Vincentio is thought to be a madman.

Bianca's character itself exemplifies these deceitful qualities in a more subtle manner. Her situation reflects the mercantile attitudes of Shakespeare's Paduan society towards human worth. This is revealed in Baptista's comment on his match-making activities: "Faith, gentlemen, now I play a merchant's part." (II,i, 318) Baptista is economically realistic about Katherine. He realises that she is not a very marketable commodity. She will not marry until "the special thing is well obtained, / That is, her love; for that is all in all." (II, i,128-29) The more sociable Bianca, however, is a better economic proposition. Moreover, she will willingly accomodate herself to his entrepreneural schemes: it is the man

> That can assure my daughter greatest dower,
> Shall have Bianca's love. (II,i,336-37)

The relation of monetary value to true worth, of outward show to inner beauty, is a common theme in Shakespeare. A similar concern with it is found, for example, in The Merchant of Venice. It is interesting to compare Bassanio's reasons for choosing the lead casket with the motives of Petruchio and Lucentio in their choice of wives:

> So may the outward shows be least themselves
> The world is still deceived with ornament.[22]

Bassanio, like Petruchio, initially seeks a wife in order to obtain her dowry, but soon realises the worthlessness of gold compared to the possibilities of love. Petruchio, like Bassanio, chooses "lead" instead of "gold", and finds that joy is the consequence. We believe him when he confidently says, with regard to his future life with Katherine:

> Marry, peace it bodes and love, and quiet life,
> ...
> And to be short, what not, that's sweet and happy!
> (V,ii,108-10)

Lucentio, on the other hand, initially dazzled by Bianca's beauty, plays the suitor as Petrarchan convention requires, and does not at first realise that "All that glisters is not gold."[23] Having fallen in love with an ideal Bianca, Lucentio has no knowledge of her essential personality until it is too late.

In this way, the main plot and the subplot are closely interdependent, both dramatically and thematically. As Dr. Johnson remarked:

> Of this play the plots are so well united that they can hardly be called two without injury

> to the art with which they are interwoven. The attention is entertained with all the variety of a double plot yet it is not distracted by unconnected incidents.[24]

It must be borne in mind that Shakespeare does not introduce these two, tightly-knit plots until after the Induction scenes, which have sometimes been considered thematically irrelevant and dramatically unsatisfactory. But insofar as the Induction unobtrusively presents us with the first instances of the conscious assuming of roles, and of the conflict between illusion and reality, it is intrinsic to the play as a whole.

If they are not seen in the context of the other two plots, all of the introductory events, such as the practical joke of presenting the page to Sly as his wife, seem merely farcical. However, after we have seen something of Bianca's behaviour, we cannot help but feel that it is reminiscent of the "honorable action" (Induction I,109) of the "pretend" wife, whose "soft low tongue and lowly courtesy" (Induction I,113) make plausible the empty words:

> What is't your honor will command,
> Wherein your lady and your humble wife
> May show her duty and make known her love? (Induction I,114-16)

Furthermore, Christopher Sly's metamorphosis into a nobleman seems gratuitous farce until we realise that his readiness to be fooled by the superficial magnificence which surrounds him foreshadows Lucentio's enthralment by Bianca's "sweet beauty." (I,i,166)

For the director, however, the problem with Sly is not only to establish why he and his retinue are there in the

first place, but to account for their disappearance before Act I,ii. Some directors have cut this Gordian knot by leaving him out altogether. Others, as has been mentioned, have interpolated speeches and the Epilogue from TAS, in an attempt at dramatic consistency. The justifications traditionally offered for altering Shakespeare's structure in this way are that the dramatist was simply careless, or that a part of the play is missing, or that, in the Elizabethan farce tradition, the actor who played Sly would have improvised his business -- making it unnecessary to write in the part. In objection to this last notion, it may be observed that the parts for Shakespeare's clowns are carefully scripted, and that the dramatist appears to endorse Hamlet's strictures on the subject:

> let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them, for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered.[25]

It is of course quite conceivable that Sly was intended to remain onstage throughout the performance, but J.R. Brown has offered a suggestive defence of the idea that Shakespeare did not feel it necessary to retain the Sly plot once the Shrew play was under way:

> There was a 'truth' in the old story of the taming of a shrew which Shakespeare wanted to express, so he used Christopher Sly to introduce this crude fiction. But once the 'truth' has been recognised Sly can be forgotten; the fiction needs no excuse when it speaks to our imagination.[26]

This cryptic explanation cannot solve all the problems of the text. Certainly it does not make the director's practical task in the theatre a great deal easier, even if it does suggest that those directors who import lines wholesale from the non-Shakespearean play have missed the subtle possibilities of Shakespeare's Induction. The stage director must consider intellectual approaches to the play within the context of their dramatic feasibility. It would be unduly purist to insist that the director should not be allowed a little juggling with an enigmatic text in order to make its implicit meanings clear. In such a case, and if kept within reasonable limits, the end surely justifies the means.

In the Epilogue from TAS, which some directors have included at the end of TTS, Christopher Sly determines to put what he has heard into practice by going home to tame his own shrewish wife. It could be argued that the inclusion of this incident distracts the audience's attention from the sophisticated nature of Shakespeare's handling of the Shrew story by unduly emphasising the crude, traditional aspects of "wife-taming." On the other hand, the interpolation can be justified as underlining the contrast between the crude tradition and the reality of the relationship between Katherine and Petruchio. Sly himself then becomes analogous to the unperceptive spectator of the performance; this allows the director to discredit, through irony, a response to the play that is inappropriately literal-minded.[27]

However, an examination of the stage history of TTS reveals that, until fairly recently, directors have not seriously attempted to uncover these kinds of subtleties, believing (it would appear) that Shakespeare's play as it stands could not be made to meet -- in performance -- the criteria of intellectual satisfaction, dramatic feasibility and theatrical realisation.[28] Indeed, The Shrew, in the form in which we know it, disappeared from the stage (according to extant records) after 1663[29] and survived for the next two hundred years only in bastardised versions. The appeal of these adaptations lay primarily in farcical antics and spectacular visual effects, rather than in qualities intrinsic to the original Shakespearean text.

Attempts to record the stage history of TTS in its adapted forms must start with two mentions of it in Pepys' diary for the year 1667. He notes that he saw "The Tameing of a [sic] Shrew", "which hath some very good pieces in it, but generally is but a mean play."[30] However, as G. Odell points out, what Pepys actually saw was probably an adaptation of The Shrew called Sauny the Scot: or The Taming of the Shrew, first published in 1698 and usually attributed to John Lacy.[31] This play, written in prose, contains phrases from Shakespeare, and has a plot similar to that of TTS. However the Induction and the Sly incidents are omitted, the names changed, and vulgar, farcical scenes are added. In tone, Sauny recalls TAS -- the central character, Sauny, Petruchio's servant who now controls the events of the play, is directly related by name

to Saunder, the character in TAS who is equivalent to Shakespeare's Grumio. Although the use of Scottish dialect was presumably intended to provide additional humour, it caused Pepys to write that "the best part, Sawny, done by Lacy, hath not half its life, by reason of the words, I suppose, not being understood, at least by me."[32] Obviously the emphasis was primarily Lacy's and only secondarily Shakespeare's. Shakespeare's intention had been subordinated to that of the adapter, and this practice remained common.

In 1716 Christopher Bullock, theatre manager of Lincoln's Inn Fields, introduced a "Shakespearean farce", The Cobler of Preston. Odell states that "This play ... is merely an amplification of the Christopher Sly episodes in The Taming of the Shrew," and that, while some of Shakespeare's language has been retained, various songs and incidents are added, and character names are changed; Sly himself disappears to be replaced by Toby Guzzle.[33] C. Johnson's version of The Cobler of Preston, presented at the Drury Lane Theatre in the same year, demonstrates even more explicitly how a determined author could eviscerate Shakespeare:

> Johnson's adaptation was not so good [as Bullock's] because it was far less simple; he mixed politics far too copiously in the draught of fun, and railed too hard against the Jacobites and the Pretender.[34]

If Shakespeare's play could be adapted for political ends, it could also be adjusted to suit the social conventions of the time. In 1735, A Cure for a Scold, "a 'Ballad Farce'

of two acts (founded upon Shakespear's Taming of a [sic] Shrew) by J. Worsdale, Portrait Painter,"[35] was presented in a form that reflected the society of the eighteenth-century much more than that of Shakespeare's time. The names, for example, were allegorised: Baptista became Sir William Worthy, Bianca was re-named Flora, Petruchio became Manly, and Lucentio, Gainlove. The disguises of the sub-plot were discarded, and the inevitable intriguing chambermaid was made responsible for managing the predictable elopement of Gainworthy and Flora. Although Worsdale claimed that this play was based on Shakespeare, it is more obviously founded on Lacy's Sauny the Scot, although much of Shakespeare's diction was preserved. According to Odell, "the play as a whole, and in its own rough style, is not a bad farce. It was played again in 1750, but in 1756 Garrick's Catharine and Petruchio drove it forever from the repertoire."[36]

Garrick's play, which has been called "an excellent farce ... compact and actable,"[37] managed to hold the stage for over one hundred years. But even this adaptation bore little resemblance in structure to TTS itself. Garrick excluded both the introductory Christopher Sly material and the Bianca wooing scenes, completely eliminating the subplots, while the farcical aspects of Petruchio's "breaking" of Catherine were emphasised and elaborated.

In 1843, the Theatrical Monopoly which had controlled the production of "legitimate" drama was abolished. All houses

were now allowed to perform Shakespeare, and fresh interest in Shakespearean texts was aroused. However, because of the continued popularity of Garrick's play, TTS was still mainly known in the form of Catherine and Petruchio, and continued to be regarded and played as a farcical "afterpiece."[38] Then, in 1844, Benjamin Webster announced that he would present The Taming of the Shrew "from the original text" and "as acted divers times at the Globe and Blackfriars Playhouses."[39] While Webster's version did not succeed in ousting Garrick's adaptation, it did introduce the play-going public to a more authentic production of a Shakespearean play than any they had previously encountered. This Shrew was a revolutionary production; and Odell writes:

> 'Amazing' is the only adjective suitable to express my surprise at the discovery of this incident, so far in advance of our present [1920] efforts towards such a method of presenting Shakespeare on the stage.[40]

Not only did Webster use the original, complete text, he also attempted to stage the play in a manner he felt to be typical of Shakespeare's era, "and with something approximating the stage conventions of the Elizabethan time"[41] -- that is, sans scenery, sans spectacle.

Contemporary reaction to this production was positive, as an article in The Times reveals:

> It was a suggestion ... that the plays of Shakespeare should be acted on the sort of stage that existed in the time of Elizabeth and James I, ... to judge of the effect of a play unaided by scenery. The "Induction" in which Christopher Sly is discovered by a sporting lord, drunk, is played in the ordinary manner before

> a scene representing an inn; but when he is removed into the hall, there is no further change, but the play of The Taming of the Shrew is acted in the hall, two screens and a pair of curtains being the whole dramatic apparatus. By the mere substitution of one curtain for another, change of scene was indicated ... the place represented being denoted by a printed placard fastened to the curtain. This arrangement, far from being flat and ineffective, tended to give closeness to the action, and by constantly allowing a great deal of stage room, afforded a sort of freedom to all the parties engaged. The audience did not in the least seem to feel the abscence of scenery, and though the play lasted three hours and a half, the attention of the house never failed, and a play could hardly go off with more spirit.[42]

Despite this, it appears that Webster's ideas were too far ahead of his time. Although they kindled public interest in new methods of presenting Shakespeare, they were regarded primarily as eccentric.

In 1856, at Sadler's Wells, Phelps repeated the experiment of playing the entire five acts of The Shrew as Shakespeare had written them. Once again the resulting production was well received; but even this second success was not enough to re-establish the play in its original form, and Phelps returned to presenting Catherine and Petruchio, which continued to hold its own for another generation.[43]

The turning point came with an American production of The Shrew, conceived by Augustin Daly and starring John Drew and Ada Rehan, which was enthusiastically received in London in 1888. While Daly depended on the text to define the characters and to impart a thematic unity to the play as

a whole, he felt justified "because of the exigencies of heavy scenery, in running together scenes that Shakespeare separated in point of time and location, or in transposing scenes far out of their natural sequences."[44] Still, it appears that he was faithful to the tone of the play, and did not attempt to trivialise it by extracting the farcical elements and ignoring the comic spirit. Daly's production, following the pioneering attempts of Webster and Phelps, finally established that Shakespeare's text was not unplayable, but was dramatically feasible. The Taming of the Shrew was once again recognised as a play in its own right.

This did not guarantee that The Shrew would, in future, be handled only by directors sensitive enough to realise the play's subtleties. But it virtually ended, for this play at least, what Odell calls the "battle that had been waged continuously for nearly two centuries, a battle for the staging of Shakespeare as written by the poet himself, and not as 'improved' by every petty artisan of the theatre who might assume himself to be greater than the greatest."[45] In the present century, directors have attempted to work within the basic framework of Shakespeare's text -- usually modifying it only slightly, according to their interpretations of Shakespeare's intent. All the same, modern productions have varied widely in intellectual tone and theatrical effectiveness. We have witnessed productions of The Shrew which have failed to shake off the trivial,

farcical heritage; productions which have been primarily conceived as technical showpieces for the virtuoso director and designer; and productions which have honestly attempted to elicit both the comedy and the psychological realism inherent in Shakespeare's play.

Where in this spectrum do the three Stratford presentations of The Taming of the Shrew lie? This question can only be answered by examining the Guthrie, Gascon and Langham productions in detail. "Come, go along, and see the truth hereof." (IV,v,75)

III

"Frame your Mind to Mirth and Merriment": GUTHRIE'S PRODUCTION, 1954

The Stratford Festival Theatre was begun in 1953 as an experiment designed to revitalise Shakespearean productions by giving them a new relevance in a revolutionary setting. The man primarily responsible for the artistic direction of this new venture was Dr. Tyrone Guthrie. His individualistic approach to drama was well-known, his treatment of Shakespeare in particular having earned him the title of "Ambassador Extraordinary to the Folio."[46] Guthrie appears to have epitomised the basic philosophy which underlay his stage productions when he wrote that "it seems to me vastly important that the idea of Art should be closely associated with that of Pleasure."[47] With this as his credo, Guthrie had for some time fought against the current methods of producing Shakespeare. He considered that these methods paid undue homage to "the magic name of Shakespeare,"[48] and resulted in a fossilised style which of necessity excluded that vitality which Guthrie considered most essential to Shakespearean production. He believed that the infusion of this quality would, by superseding a slavishly pedantic attitude towards the text, help to restore some of that accessibility to contemporary audiences

that the plays had originally enjoyed.[49]

However, Guthrie was aware that his intentions could not properly be realised within the existing theatrical framework, which was dependent upon the proscenium stage with its 'picture-frame' and its scenic attempts to provide a convincing illusion of reality:

> There could be no radical improvement in Shakespearean production until we could achieve two things: first, to set the actors against a background with no concessions whatever to pictorial realism, the sort of background which the Elizabethan stage provided and which the picture-frame stage, designed precisely to create a picture, and traditionally associated with 'illusion', cannot achieve; second, to arrange the actors in choreographic patterns in the sort of relation both to one another and to the audience which the Elizabethan stage demanded and the picture-frame stage forbids; the manner, in fact, envisaged by Shakespeare when he wrote his plays.[50]

Consequently, when Tom Patterson invited Guthrie to assume artistic responsibility for a new Shakespearean Festival, he eagerly welcomed this as an opportunity to put his theories into practice. In collaboration with Tanya Moseiwitsch, he designed a unique stage for this purpose, which was a free adaptation rather than a literal copy of the Elizabethan playing space:

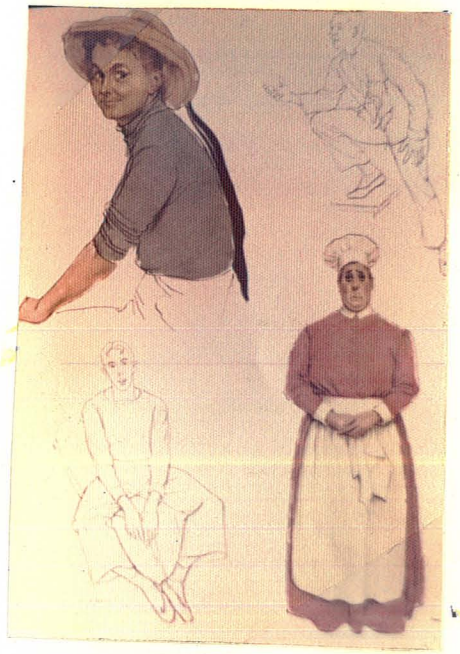
> We were agreed that, while conforming to the conventions of the Elizabethan theatre in practicalities, it should not present a pseudo-Elizabethan appearance. We were determined to eschew Ye Olde.[51]

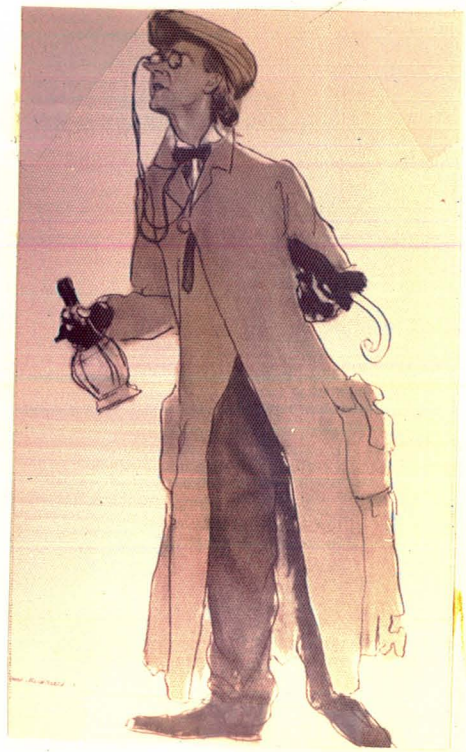
As a result of Guthrie's ideas about staging Shakespeare, the Stratford stage[52] was planned in such a way that no

Barbara Chilcott
as Katherine

William Needles
as Petruchio

The Central Characters -- 1954





Above: Douglas Rain
as Biondello
B. Swerdfager
as Curtis
Donald Harron
as Tranio
H. Winston
as the Cook
Center: Douglas Cambell
as Baptista
Peter Mews
as Haberdasher
Bottom: Robert Christie
as the Pedant

The Minor Characters -- 1954: A Medley of Styles

illusionary scenery such as painted flats and permanent stage settings was possible. Yet, as Guthrie himself wrote, "with its galleries, its pillars, its various levels and entrances, the necessary facilities [were] provided for grouping the actors and arranging the scenes in a logical and expressive way."[53] Thus, the Festival stage removed those restrictions which (as has already been noted) Guthrie claimed had stood in the way of full concentration on the actual interpretation and presentation of Shakespearean texts.

Guthrie's treatment of dramatic texts was characterised by his belief that "the script of a play, even a great play, a masterpiece, is still only a part of the raw material of a performance. ... it is the basis. But the script alone has no theatrical existence. It awaits interpretation."[54] With this as his justification, Guthrie did not hesitate to provide interpretations that were unconventional and often highly controversial. One critic has conjectured that this was not because Guthrie "undervalued Shakespeare" but rather because he mistrusted the capacity of the verse alone to achieve the effect he desired:

> ...fearing maybe that the audience would share his doubts, he began to create business so that the eye could take over from the ear.[55]

Guthrie's 1954 production of The Taming of the Shrew in many ways justifies this view. We should, however, bear in mind that it was a piece of theatrical propaganda as well as

an interpretation of the play. At this time, professional performances of Shakespeare were still a novelty in Canada. Guthrie was aware that much of the theatre-going public, being unfamiliar with Shakespeare on the stage, did not expect that the experience would be primarily one of pleasure. Consequently, according to William Needles, the Petruchio of this production, Guthrie specifically chose The Shrew in order to prove to Canadian audiences that Shakespeare "could be fun." He decided to present "a very bizarre, very engaging, and very modern" rendering of the play.[56]

The reception of this production was mixed, but most reviews agreed with Herbert Whittaker's pronouncement:

> To those Shakespearean scholars who adulate the Bard and his work ... Tyrone Guthrie's production of The Taming of the Shrew will bring some twinges. For those of us who prize a good show above all, and think the Shrew a lesser work, Dr. Guthrie has presented another miracle of theatre.[57]

To claim that, for Guthrie, the text of the play had little importance compared to the overall theatrical effect is perhaps too harsh. He himself appeared to reject such a view when he wrote that dramatic critics often confuse their idea of the play with "a sort of stereotype, deriving from previously admired representations."[58] But the particular emphasis in his attitude towards the text is shown in his statement that "the important part of an author's intention is implicit, not explicit, in his text. ... any interpretation must be partial and subjective."[59] However, Robertson

Davies' query concerning the performance of The Shrew as to whether "Shakespeare's meaning was followed as dutifully as his text,"[60] reflected an uneasiness on the part of many critics who felt that the broad farce of the production -- praiseworthy as it was for its pace and ingenuity -- did not do justice to the thematic interest of the play. The New York Times, for example, alleged that Guthrie had "tossed most of the dialogue away in the frenzy of a hokum performance."[61] Other reviewers voiced the opinion that the play itself had either been distorted, or had slipped by almost unnoticed in the welter of "extracurricular gagging"[62] and that the basic virtues which had kept it alive and attractive for so long had been obscured. On the other hand, the history of the play (as we have seen) suggests that Guthrie's treatment was a fairly traditional exploitation of the qualities that had kept the play alive in previous centuries. As Robert Speaight has written, the adapters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries appear to have believed that "The Shrew is so tough a play that you can take pretty well any liberty that you like with it."[63] Guthrie had preserved the text intact,[64] but his production reflected something of the earlier spirit. At any rate, Guthrie was unconcerned by the kind of criticism of his production that has been quoted, and a defence of a sort may be found in his statement that:

> New work must have something interesting, not necessarily solemn, to say and must

> say it in theatrical terms, in terms which I could envisage on the stage. I was, and still am, a sucker for jokes and horseplay, and for great moments, however corny.[65]

Guthrie would no doubt have appreciated a view of his play which, like that of the reviewer for the Brantford Expositor, saw it as an apotheosis of the corny but great theatrical moment:

> It is a dazzling, side-splitting, rip-roaring, rootin' tootin' romp, compounded from a recipe that includes a pinch of Hellzapoppin, Annie Get Your Gun, Charlie Chaplin's Gold Rush, the Marx Brothers' A Night at the Opera, a smidgeon of ballet and of Mortimer Snerd -- all this and Shakespeare, too.[66]

What was it in Guthrie's production that occasioned such strong but varied responses? Robertson Davies described the performance as "a wild improvisation -- an extravaganza ... without consideration of time or place."[67] This was in part achieved by emphasising theatrically (but not thematically) the Christopher Sly framing device, thus allowing the actual Shrew story the licence of a play at two removes from the world of the audience. Whereas Shakespeare's Sly, unaccustomed to "pleasant comedy," (Induction II,129) falls asleep, soon wishing "would 'twere done," (I,i,251) Guthrie's does not fade from view, but remains a lively character throughout. He naively comments on the play's events both in words and actions, and also serves as the focal point for the players soliloquies and asides. We might indeed go so far as to claim that Guthrie managed to keep this Sly's attention

by giving him something more like the "Christmas gambold or a tumbling-trick" (Induction II,137) of his expectations rather than the "kind of history" (Induction II,140) he is promised. One casualty, however, of this strategy is the subtle interplay of appearance and reality that has previously been discussed. Nevertheless, turning the Shrew story into an entertainment put on by a group of strolling players for the benefit of a drunken tinker, did allow Guthrie to present a rumbustious farce punctuated by what appeared to be "spontaneous" improvisations. As an early Stratford press release noted, "the result is very much like that of a small repertory company on tour, diving into their baskets and putting on what they can find and what they individually feel will suit the character in their impromptu performance of the play."[68] The costumes and properties "improvised" by the company created the motley effect of a charade. This technique enabled Guthrie to alter the atmosphere of the play by removing the story from any fixed, historical period, invoking instead an eclectic variety of cultural parallels and nuances, ranging from Victorian and Edwardian times to those of 'modern' North America. Robertson Davies justly points out that there is nothing intrinsically wrong with up-dating the costumes of a Shakespearean play, if, by so doing, the audience's perception --either of a specific character, or even the social hierarchy -- is illuminated.[69] It should not, therefore, be disconcerting to see Hortensio

as a dandified "monster of refinement," in an Edwardian pink shirt with white collar and cuffs, Bianca wearing the liberated garments of a flapper of a slightly later era, or Baptista as "a French bourgeois papa ... smoking his hooked pipe, dressed in a blue smock and sheltered from the sun by an ancient panama,"[70] so long as the stature of Shakespeare's characters is enhanced -- not diminished -- by these trappings. None of the critics felt, for example, that the presentation of Tranio as an "unmistakable North American type ... shrewd, impudent, yet craven and tremulous hobbledehoy, with a laugh like a whooping crane and a mouthful of buck teeth" was ill-conceived. Neither was there anything but praise for the drunken Pedant who appeared to "come right out of Pogo."[72] As R. Davies commented:

> Of course the Pedant is always drunk in productions of The Shrew. But this pedant was gloriously, enchantedly drunk; in him drunkenness had produced a kind of seedy sainthood, an all-embracing generosity, a slopping over of the milk of human kindness.[73]

The fact that all the minor characters, zany as their costumes and business seemed, were satisfactory, was probably due to the fact that even for Shakespeare they existed primarily as recognisable, farcical stereotypes. The pedant harks back to the old Italian tradition of satirising misapplied learning, while Gremio, described by Shakespeare as a Pantaloon figure,[74] comically typifies the senile, self-deceived old lecher, who feels himself a suitable match for the young ingenue.

Lucentio can be seen to exemplify the typical Italianate lover. It has previously been stated that farce depends on situation and action and positively thrives on merely two-dimensional characters who do not possess the capacity for growth. Consequently, Guthrie's attempt to find equivalents to these literary stereotypes from the immediate cultural experience of his audience was quite acceptable -- so far as the minor characters were concerned. Unfortunately, the farcical stage business that these stereotypes indulged in tended to divert the interest of the spectator from the activities of the protagonists. As one reviewer noted, "the actors became much more concerned about a tottering pile of books or a disappearing fifth of liquor than they did about the problems of Kate and Petruchio."[75]

If Guthrie had confined himself to the secondary characters in his search for stereotypes, this imbalance between the dramatic center of the play and its periphery might not have been apparent. But he went beyond this; his treatment of the main characters as well represented essentially the same technique of stereotype-substitution, though of a more elaborate kind. As a result, the difference between the main characters and the minor ones was really one of degree not of quality. The stereotypes were elaborated, but paradoxically Shakespeare's characters were not thereby made more complex. William Needles amusingly recalls the kind of difficulties this led to with his portrayal of

Petruchio:

> It's a lot of fun to come in with a straw hat on and with a long piece of grass between your teeth, wearing boots and spurs and pretending to be a shy little guy from the Middle West. But, it's another thing to try to make that concept work in the speeches and soliloquies. So, after we had been rehearsing for a while, I went to Guthrie and said, "You know, Petruchio really is a braggadocio. He's not a shy little guy from the country at all." Guthrie just looked at me, and smiled, and said, "Well, my dear boy, all I can say is, when in doubt go faster." In other words, his idea of the play was going to hold, no matter what![76]

It was not such innovations as the cowboy costume in themselves that accounted for these difficulties. (For the 'western' tone Guthrie claimed the support of the Lord's lines to the Player who assumes the lead role:

> This fellow I remember,
> Since once he played a farmer's eldest son;
> 'Twas where you woo'd the gentlewoman so well.
> (Induction I,82-84))

Nor can it be said that Petruchio and Katherine were reduced to mere comic types; indeed they were amplified by subtleties of characterisation of a kind. The literal meaning of the lines was qualified by comic ironies -- as for example when Petruchio's boasts were undercut by his absurdly hesitant manner -- in an attempt to provide a psychological development of sorts. This was an honest endeavor by Guthrie to make the central couple, as one commentator expressed it, "understandable and logical":

> Bad-tempered Kate, it is clearly implied,
> is the neglected elder child, turned into

> a vixen by old Baptista's doting fondness for her younger sister. Petruchio, her tempestuous suitor, is shown as an arrant coward, and an indecisive knave, who makes his points by bluff. Even Kate's sudden descent into gentleness is made to follow a broadly hinted at amorous interlude.[78]

The problem with this interpretation, however, was that Guthrie's amplifications were carried out largely at the expense of the kinds of depths of character which could have added to the meaning of the text, and broadened its implications. In effect, the characterisations of Katherine and Petruchio, elaborate though they were, did little to make sense of Shakespeare's play. Nowhere was there evidence that these two protagonists recognised in each other, and responded to, a sense of personal worth. By presenting Petruchio as a basically nervous and diffident cowboy, his success with Kate largely dependent on her not calling his bluff, Guthrie failed to indicate to the audience the fact that Petruchio's attraction to Kate works a transformation in his character. He failed, in fact, to show that Shakespeare's Petruchio becomes more than a simple fortune-hunter; he becomes a "loving lord" whose task is to 'unmask' Kate, for her own benefit, and lead her to an awareness of her true capacity for life. Guthrie might have deliberately chosen to have his Kate pretend to be a virago in order to conceal an essential vulnerability, but by doing this, her shrewishness illuminated merely her own character (and this in a dubious way) rather than the nature of the society in which

she found herself. The rich exploration of debased and dishonest romantic conventions, which Shakespeare conducts through Katherine's abuse of Bianca and her suitors, was absent from the raillery of this particular Kate. In the context of the play as a whole, the truly interesting complexity of Shakespeare's Katherine is to be found in her capacity for an intelligence, honesty and sensibility which is superior to that of the secondary characters. These features were neglected in the emphasis on the insecurity and fear which Guthrie imputed to her. In this respect, she was portrayed as acting from essentially the same motives as Petruchio:

> Katharina and Petruchio, acting with a bravura that is ill-felt, edge uneasily and uncomfortably into marriage. Soon Petruchio's daring takes him on to greater heights of masterfulness, while Kate is soon reduced to bedraggled submission.[79]

As has been previously suggested, the thematic aspects of the play are only satisfactory if Katherine's final speech represents an acceptable resolution of the issues raised in the play as a whole. Of course, comic conventions imply limits to the kind of resolution that is attained. Comedy exists in an enchanted world which ultimately excludes tragic possibilities. But unlike farce, where it is sufficient for the situation alone to be resolved, comedy (in the sense in which the term is used here) demands that the resolution of the action reflect a restoration of order in a deeper

way. In The Taming of the Shrew, this is achieved at one level by the reassertion of the proper relationship of the sexes according to the Renaissance concept of the natural hierarchy. But Shakespeare is not content with the merely schematic solution that this suggests. The final state of the Katherine-Petruchio relationship is schematic in so far as it represents a natural order, but it also reflects an appraisal of the qualities necessary to human relationships in general. In addition, at a third level, it provides a convincing fulfilment of the needs of Kate and Petruchio as individuals. For the director, the last of these three levels -- that of characterisation -- is the crucial one, for it embodies the others and makes the whole thematic structure clear to the audience. But the director can only succeed in this, if he makes the development in the characters of the protagonists dramatically effective. Katherine, for example, must be seen to grow, allowing her to move from a position where she indiscriminately rejects other people, to one in which she can judge human nature, including her own, with sufficient acumen to accept a relationship with Petruchio that represents a "service which is perfect freedom."[80] Her 'submission' must be an act of voluntary acquiescience resulting from her development, not the result of trickery or mere circumstance.

In Guthrie's production, however, she was indeed deceived. Petruchio's triumph resulted from the fact that

he was successful in deceiving himself into believing in his own masquerade of masterfulness, whereas Katherine was eventually unable to sustain her pretence of shrewishness. And this Katherine was not only tamed, but ultimately degraded, as R. Davies pointed out:

> It is extremely unlikely that the Petruchio Shakespeare has drawn would allow anyone to put insults upon his wife except himself. Yet this Katharina was pulled by the leg, slapped on the seat, trodden on and spilled on by her husband's servants until the effect was one of cruelty.[81]

It appears, however, from the comments of the majority of critics, that the amount of attention that the audience could give to questions concerning the interpretations of the main figures was severly limited by the farcical antics that constantly up-staged them. Not unjustifiably, many commentators found this in itself a frustration of their normal expectations of the play. But the reviews also indicate that for many people these farcical elements failed to fulfil even their limited function of being funny. Whether the visual gags were in fact funny cannot now be established (if it ever could) by any formal analysis. Although it was generally agreed that this production had the appeal of bizarre originality and displayed cleverness, virtuosity, ingenuity, pace and vitality, many critics commented that despite all this, it was more frenzied than funny, containing in fact, as Brooks Atkinson expressed it, "everything except humor."[82]

What such reactions to the performance really signify, however, is that comedy involves more than simply "being funny." A commentator in the New York Times came close to perceiving this when he wrote that "Guthrie's current escapade with The Shrew has the form of humour without the content."[83] A somewhat similar point was made by Speaight, who complained that "the production lacked a certain dimension of humanity and depth of humour. There is heart as well as heartiness in The Taming of the Shrew, and it should be heard beating, albeit fitfully, beneath the rough and tumble of the harlequinade."[84] Speaight's insistence that the humour of The Shrew involves humanity and depth is surely just, but it stands in contrast to Guthrie's perception of the play as primarily farce. The laughter of farce is detachable from our more general response to life; it is occasioned by incidents and ends with their passing. Shakespearean comedy, on the other hand, even in an early work like The Shrew, involves not only farcical humour, but also humour which arises from and stimulates thought. Comedy of this latter kind demands to be actively incorporated in our sense of the totality of life's possibilities, and to coexist with our varied emotional responses.

Guthrie's emphasis on the farcical aspects of the play had the effect of erecting a barrier between the audience and the mature responses which the play can -- and should -- elicit. We might detect in this approach the influence of

Guthrie's previously mentioned insistence on the necessary connection between art and pleasure. Although there can be no quarrel with such a simple but obviously right aesthetic, we may conjecture that his neglect of the potential complexities of the play was, in some measure, due to an underestimation of the subtleties which are inherent in this relationship between art and pleasure. Guthrie's treatment of The Shrew at times suggested that he believed that pleasure could be equated with laughter. But making people laugh is not an objective that does full justice to the possibilities of the pleasure that can be derived from art, any more than laughter provides an adequate account of the nature of comedy.

IV

"A Christmas Gambold or a Tumbling-trick": GASCON'S PRODUCTION, 1973

Several reviewers of Jean Gascon's 1973 production[85] of The Taming of the Shrew were led to compare it to the Guthrie production discussed in the previous chapter. One critic wrote that "it is a production in the old Tyrone Guthrie tradition, full of dash and movement and surface energy." Clive Barnes dismissed it as a "Mickey-Mouse Shakespearean comedy ... [in] the Guthrie tradition that will accept anything for a laugh."[87] It is indeed significant that Gascon's preliminary research included a close scrutiny of Guthrie's 1954 prompt-book.[88] In many respects, both superficial and fundamental, there were similarities between the two shows. The same qualities of showmanship and visual excitement were fully exploited. Appreciative comments by critics included such familiar epithets as "sparkling", "polished", "light-hearted", "good-humoured" and "frothy"; it was "a romp" and "full of vitality." However, as a reading of Shakespeare, Gascon's creation encountered the same sort of adverse response as had Guthrie's. The judgement of a Polish critic (the play was taken on the company's European tour) was typical:

> There is no lack of beauty to the show, no shortage of staging ideas, but there is nothing in it of what The Taming of the Shrew

> has to offer besides fun-making. There is no deep study of character. In effect the spectator remains unconvinced of the very substance of the game -- the life-game -- conducted by the two protagonists, Katherine and Petruchio. In spite of appearances, this comedy is by no means light. ... Yet as we leave the theatre, we keep in mind only the colorfulness of the costumes ... We are left with the impression that there is still something missing to it all. Possibly -- just Shakespeare?[89]

The main motivation behind Guthrie's treatment of the play has been somewhat baldly ascribed in the preceding chapter to a desire to re-establish a close link in the popular mind between art and pleasure. This desire was no doubt heightened by the fact that Guthrie was initiating an entirely new project, and encountering audiences with rather fossilised expectations of 'serious' theatre. Gascon felt himself to be facing a similar problem, but as a result not of novelty but of age. Twenty years of success had endowed the Stratford theatre with a venerable rigidity. "We're highly aware of our image as the Establishment," Gascon has been quoted as saying; "we are always trying to find fresh ways of doing things."[90] It would appear, then, that these two directors had at least one purpose in common in turning to The Shrew: that of challenging what they saw as a too-sober attitude towards Shakespeare on the stage.

But in one of Gascon's rare pronouncements on his philosophy of theatre, he has rejected any simple attitude towards theatre as purely entertainment:

> What is wrong with that attitude is that it treats theatre as something 'non-essential'. ... Yet I believe very strongly that there is something very revitalising about it: that as long as civilisation exists we shall continue to find in the act of theatre something primitive, mysterious, and electrifying; that we shall continue to want our playwrights to hold the mirror up to society, and then to celebrate that vision in the unique, communal immediacy of a live theatre presentation.[91]

We should note, however, that Gascon's emphasis here is not on the intellectual or polemic aspects of theatre, but on its function as communal 'act', as a celebration or a happening, analogous in some respects to a religious ceremony.[92] It is not immediately apparent that these ideas, with their echoes of the more intense theorising of such people as Grotowski, have much to do with Gascon's Shrew. They do, however, provide some explanation of those elements in the production which represent theatricality for its own sake. The question we must ask is whether an approach of this kind effectively elicits the potential value of Shakespeare on the modern stage.

In this respect, an interesting comparison may be drawn between Gascon's practice and that of Peter Brook, an acknowledged admirer of Grotowski. Brook's widely praised A Midsummer Night's Dream (1970-71) was a piece of self-confessed theatricality, full of the froth and physical exuberance which Gascon has sought. But the boisterousness of Brook's production was severely functional in thematic terms. It exploited theatrical illusion and its effects as an extension and embodiment of the themes that the play explores. The medium had become the message;

form and content could not be dissociated.

But we cannot be so affirmative about Gascon's Shrew. If "immediacy", or the "mysterious and electrifying", can ever be self-sufficient virtues in the theatre, they surely cannot be in the plays of Shakespeare. These plays have achieved their dominance in the tradition of live theatre precisely because their virtues of dramatic excitement and craftsmanship are only part of their appeal. To these virtues are added qualities of interest which can be loosely described as intellectual and poetic. In other of his productions -- such as Pericles -- Gascon has demonstrated that he is aware of this fact. Yet, while there is no doubt that The Shrew is one of Shakespeare's less demanding plays in this respect, there is paradoxically a case for the claim that to chose it in order to display the capacity of Shakespearean drama to exhibit the "pure" theatrical virtues, as Gascon seems to have done, is disastrous. The plays with more evident intellectual weight will, after all, manage to convey much of their meaning without a great deal of directorial manipulation. But The Shrew must be helped along; lines, particularly those of the main characters, must be interpreted. The actors, guided by the director, must express the emotions of human beings with real and complex feeling. No amount of ancillary fireworks will disguise a deficiency in this crucial feature.

It is with such considerations in mind that the true value of Gascon's theatricality in The Taming of the Shrew must

Mimes: 1973

Pat Galloway
as Katherine
Alan Scarfe
as Petruchio

The Protagonists -- 1973

The Tyrants: 1973

Above: Richard Monette
as Lucentio
Barry MacGregor
as Tranio
Middle: William Needles
as Gremio
Bottom: Ed. Atienza
as Grumio
Nick Pennell
as Hortensio

Secondary Characters: 1973

Joel Kenyon as Curtis
Edward Atienza as Grumio

A Typical Setting: 1973
Notice should be paid to the hanging sign, the stylised fire, the presence of the mimes.

be assessed. As Dr. B.A.W. Jackson has pointed out, Shakespeare, in retelling the story of the taming of a shrew, was interested in "what could be done with the implications of the word 'taming' and the word 'shrew'. That is to say, he was interested in the character of Kate in her conflict with Petruchio, and in the psychological chemistry that transformed hostility into attraction and brought about the situation where it seemed to those around that she had been 'tamed'."[93] In order to realize this dramatically, the conflict between Katherine and Petruchio must be taken seriously and presented with psychological subtlety. We, as viewers, must not be left wondering why Katherine, after revealing a personality strong enough to refuse to play the games that society has demanded of her, willingly 'surrenders' to Petruchio, thereby accepting the role that society expects of a married woman. I do not feel that it is too prescriptive to insist that these actions of Kate's should be presented in such a way that they are consistent with her honesty, for it is through her honesty that she is contrasted with her sister. The devious Bianca achieves her desires by working within the role of coquette that society has assigned her, pleasing men with her acquiescent demeanor and then using them as she wills, in a fundamentally dishonest but conventionally respectable way. Furthermore, Petruchio must be seen to possess -- and Kate must be seen to recognise in him -- qualities of humanity and wisdom which make him worthy of her love and trust.

However, on watching Gascon's Shrew[94] one could not help

but be struck by the psychological inadequacies of the protagonists' relationship. This stemmed, it would seem, from a too superficial interpretation of the text. Without a feeling for the ambiguities that are latent there, the battle of the sexes becomes a raw and brutal struggle for supremacy instead of a series of tests of the worthiness of the potential mate. Gascon ignored the ambiguities; his Petruchio, played by Alan Scarfe, was a loud, blustering bully, harshly described by a Copenhagen critic as "... a fiasco from the word go -- a flabby, Prussian, bragging mastodon, self-satisfied and completely lacking in exuberance and charm."[95] There are times when the play dictates that Petruchio appear as a bragging boor, but this is by no means all he is. The point has been made by Dr. Jackson, in a comment on the Petruchio of this production:

> His horseplay is robust and frequently broadly funny, but you get the feeling that he is an incurable practical jokester indulging in his hobby ... I missed the suggestion, which I think should come through very strongly ... that the Petruchio we are seeing is not the only Petruchio, that horseplaying is not his single life-style.[96]

However, if this Petruchio was unsatisfactory, he was what Gascon's Kate deserved, both mentally and physically. Neither Pat Galloway nor Anni Lee Taylor, the actresses who played the part,[97] presented a convincing account of the causes of Kate's shrewishness. They portrayed the heroine as a shrill harpy who had little capacity for anything but haughty anger; they were bad-tempered rather than temperamental. For example, the

venemous but controlled wit of the protagonists' initial meeting was smothered in a raucous and primarily physical squall as the couple went at each other like bar-room brawlers. The external bluster of their interaction was not, as it should be, a perverse language of love. Indeed, no indication was given that love, as opposed to lust, was ever felt on either side. Kate's capitulation was not the result of any transformation by Petruchio's love, but rather of her physical defeat by his greater energy.

Because of this, the final scene, culminating in Katherine's "obedience" speech, became nothing more than an admission of defeat -- but with a special reservation. The speech was delivered in a smirking and ironic fashion, clearly indicating that Katherine, though forced to abandon the pitched battle, was determined to carry on a guerrilla warfare. Gascon, perhaps, had two reasons for this interpretation of her motives. In the first place, it appears that he was trying to avoid the outright sexism that his treatment of the two characters would inevitably have implied if he had given the final scene a straightforward endorsement; and secondly, he was making a desperate gesture towards some kind of believable emotional realism. It was an attempt to solve the tricky problem of making Kate's volte-face convincing. The necessity of doing this arose from the neglect of any subtle characterisation in the earlier parts of the play. As we had not been shown a gradual change, or any change at all, in Kate's character

and attitude towards Petruchio, it would indeed have been incredible that she should be not only defeated, but should actually glory in that defeat.

As I have already argued, an ironic reading of Kate's final speech, with all the implications such a manoeuvre holds for the relationship of the two central characters, can only diminish the interest of the play. The idea that unless the speech is treated in this fashion the play is 'sexist', is, as has been made obvious, contrary to my own idea of its meaning. Several critics have suggested, nevertheless, that The Taming of the Shrew is unacceptable to contemporary audiences because they are more familiar with modern feminist pronouncements than with Shakespeare's own cultural ambience.[98] Such an idea finds support in one woman's account of Gascon's Stratford audience; she describes the "hoots of derision which came from the aggressively liberated women," and the "embarrassed guffaws from their uncertain consorts."[99] This suggests that Gascon's answer to the problem of his audience's preconceptions was to pander to the unsubtle responses of both male chauvinists and liberated women. But the problem was really one of his own making, since, as has been argued, the play need not be presented as an anti-feminist statement requiring a last-minute concession to modern tastes. The woman critic, quoted above, has made this point well:

> Suddenly, Shakespeare's story of a hostile woman's acquiescence to grace is besieged

> by accusations of sexism. The accusations are senseless. Kate to begin with is not an "independent soul" but an angry and unhappy one. ... Her animosity and contrariness are directed not only toward men, but toward everyone. Moreover, Petruchio does not break her spirit. He shows her how to be happily married as an equal, sharing her intellectual superiority with an intellectually superior mate. ... The Taming of the Shrew is really about the possibility of an ideal marriage between two spirited and confident people.[100]

On such a question, however, perhaps the most authoritative opinion comes, we might say, straight from the horse's mouth, in the words of the most literate of outspoken modern feminists, Germaine Greer:

> The submission of a woman like Kate is genuine and exciting because she has something to lay down, her virgin pride and individuality: Bianca is the soul of duplicity, married without earnestness or good will. Kate's speech at the close of the play is the greatest defence of Christian monogamy ever written. It rests on the role of a husband as protector and friend, and is valid because Kate has a man who is capable of being both, for Petruchio is both gentle and strong (it is a vile distortion of the play to have him strike her ever). The message is probably twofold: only Kates make good wives and then only to Petruchios; for the rest, their cake is dough.[101]

However, if Gascon failed to provide the proper leavening agents which would have allowed his Katherine and Petruchio to rise in the way suggested by Ms. Greer, he tried to cover this basic flaw by substituting "icing" for "cake". His concern for the "mysterious" and "electrifying" elements of the all-important "live communal act", was evident -- not so much in the major plot and its characters -- but in the minor plot and peripheral characters.

Guthrie had turned to the secondary elements in The Shrew in order to provide 'unbounded' farcical entertainment; his comic inventiveness exploded in all directions, without restrictions of style, period or place in its references. Gascon's concentration on these same elements was different, in that it was controlled by a sense of a particular theatrical style. Like Guthrie, he wanted to achieve the effect of improvisation by stressing that the play is performed by a group of strolling players. But instead of using Christopher Sly and the Induction plot to create the play-within-a-play situation, he deleted that part of the text, and achieved his ends by using sets, costumes and an acting style clearly evoking the Commedia dell 'Arte tradition of improvisations, conducted by actors, within the framework of a well-known and somewhat unimportant plot. The removal of the low-life, provincial connotations of the Sly scenes allowed Gascon to maintain his distinctive, mime-like style more cons stently.

The audience was reminded of this Italianate tradition even before the play started, by the hangings of red velvet, covered by multi-coloured 'harlequin' patches, which were draped from the balcony above the stage. The contrived nature of the performance was established by having the "troupe" of actors, dressed in recognisable Commedia costumes, burst onstage -- performing various acrobatic tricks and carrying a large banner announcing the play. These opening theatrics were carried out while a Prologue (taken from The Shrew's

Induction scene),[102] which invited the audience to "frame [their] minds to mirth and merriment", was recited by one of the actors.

Perhaps Gascon's most inventive directorial decision was to have a chorus of eight mimists and musicians, in the costumes and masques of the Commedia clowns constantly present on stage. Acting as a rough equivalent to Sly and his retinue, these harlequins and columbines observed the action from under the balcony, bridged the scenes, and even commented upon them. For example, when the young lovers of the subplot were engaged in a 'romantic' conversation, the chorus sighed a collective sigh and set the mood with a delicate tintinnabulation from finger cymbals and a softly struck drum. Then, during the wedding scene, the passage of time before Petruchio's arrival was extremely cleverly symbolised by two chorus members (on the balcony) who became a 'human' clock, the remainder of the chorus depicting its metronomic sound. Petruchio's arrival was celebrated by the tumbling of bell-shaking jesters, the air alive with sounds suggesting wedding bells.

However, Gascon was not content merely to embellish Shakespeare's text with comments such as those cited above, or with signs reading "Petruchio's House", "On the Road to Padua", and so on. The storm, which exists in the text of The Shrew only in Grumio's monologue to Curtis, was actually staged by Gascon -- delightfully rendered by the chorus, in choral-speaking style. As the comic, two-man stage horse bore the

bedraggled Katherine, still in her wedding attire, en route to Petruchio's home, the "animal" stumbled and was berated by Petruchio and Grumio. At this point, the psychological storm was accented with noises indicating thunder and lightning. However, as Katherine interceded on behalf of the "horse", the storm noises subsided, indicating the transformation which was taking place in the high-spirited and self-willed shrew. To signal the peace which was to follow this meteorological and emotional storm, women chorus members unfolded a large paper scroll above the soggy travellers, depicting a rainbow.

While these particular sequences did infuse the production with a commendable vitality, Gascon tended to over-use the chorus. By having almost every entrance pointed up by the use of bells, rattles, triangles, or mime, the notion -- initially charming -- lost its subtlety and therefore its appeal.

The stylised framework produced comic details which were extremely effective when nothing more than superficiality was needed. But the formalism was not always helpful to the more important characters in the subplot. The decision to play Gremio as an elaborately costumed, white-faced, red-haired, doddering, tongue-flicking lecher -- thatis, as the classic Pantalone -- was successful because it did not unduly restrict the possibilities of the character depicted by Shakespeare. But the visual presentation of Bianca as a wooden marionette from a French puppet production of a Moliere farce, was

such a caricature that she became entrapped in the narrow frame of reference created by her appearance. It is worth quoting one critic who felt uneasy about the rigid caricatures which Gascon used to portray the secondary characters:

> It is as if Gascon tried too hard to make a good comedy into more of a comedy by searching for laughs through clownish make-up and disconcerting costumes instead of concentrating on those already in the story and amplifying them with the bits of human eccentricities Stratford actors excel in.[103]

While these broadly comic effects were visually exciting, the frantic pace of the performance did seem to reveal a striving for humour on Gascon's part that was to some extent desperate. One writer felt that Gascon's insistence on having virtually every line punctuated by action indicated that "Jean Gascon is a director who seems to hate or fear stillness."[104] Clive Barnes has similarly suggested that "M. Gascon should stop trying to sell Shakespeare and simply present him. He has the company to do it. He needs only the nerve to be simple."[105]

If Gascon is guilty of loading the Stratford stage with acting and mechanical devices that too frequently distract attention from the play instead of enhancing its action, he is, perhaps, allowing himself to be over-influenced by the stage itself. One definite impression that I get from watching almost anything on the Festival stage, is that one is watching, not only a play in performance, but also a directorial struggle for control. It has been mentioned that Guthrie planned the open-space stage so that elaborate scenery was no longer

possible. Instead, the setting and mood of the various plays performed were to be indicated visually by the movement of the actors, and by the costumes that they wore. Furthermore, in the words of Robertson Davies:

> [the] stage is designed to free the director and the actors from the tyranny of scenery, and to give scope to the imagination of the audience, encouraged by the poetry of Shakespeare.[106]

In no other plays do we find such rich evocations of atmosphere and scenery as in Shakespeare's verse -- the coming of darkness, the storm, the days that are "foul and fair", the robust sunshine, the dawn before battle. It may be that this capacity of the verse was generated by the exigencies of theatres where modern lighting effects were impossible, and that Shakespeare would have had real visual effects if he had been able to. But the fact remains that a concentration on that which is strictly visual in the theatre takes away much of the audience's dependence on the verbal scene-setting, and can distract the playgoer from the spoken effect which makes Shakespeare so satisfying a playwright.

However, in the twenty years since the inception of Guthrie's plan, the Festival theatre has come to be regarded as a wonder of the theatrical world, and those who direct in it have (it would appear) often felt obliged to respond by awing the audience with flamboyant spectacle. What this means, is that the unwillingness of many directors to put their faith completely in the power of Shakespeare's words

to balance the visual austerity of the large, bare stage has given rise to a tradition of sumptuous, and often overly elaborate costume design, and unnecessary stage business.

Gascon's Shrew was a case in point. The audience was encouraged to look rather than to listen. The carnival costumes, the colours, the superb movement, the lighting, and the ingenious props were ultimately more important than the dialogue or, in a sense, the acting. Of course these elements had their own kind of appeal, and a very strong one at that. But our main concern here is to search for the kind of dramatic presentation that really does justice to the essence of The Taming of the Shrew, rather than to its potential as a theatrical clotheshorse. We must conclude, therefore, that Gascon's production serves, at best, as an example of an approach that did not, and cannot, achieve that end.

V

"A Pleasant Comedy": LANGHAM'S PRODUCTION, 1962

When Michael Langham produced The Taming of the Shrew at Stratford in 1962, it became the first play to have been chosen twice for the Festival's programme. Langham signalled this event with director's notes which expressed the idea of a play's infinite capacity for subjective re-interpretation:

> No two people will interpret any significant work of art alike, since the whole process of interpretation is subjective. Moreover, Shakespeare's works are rich enough to permit diverse interpretations, most of them equally justifiable.[107]

Many of Langham's other pronouncements, however, belie this assumption of almost complete relativity. While appearing to identify, modestly, a merely personal approach on his part, he does in fact assume that a play presents certain absolutes by which the director must be led:

> Directors differ in their approach to a production ... Some will leap at an immediate broad impression and then gradually trim it and discipline it. Others will seek for the smallest hint of the essence of a work, and build on it. My approach is usually the latter.[108]

The important idea here, is that there is an "essence of a work" which the director must discover. Langham has stated, for example, that the director's touchstone as far as the

choice of costumes and design is concerned is whether "his designs preserve and enhance the essence of the work, and place the minimum barrier between the audience and the genius of Shakespeare."[109] In establishing this "essence", the director's initial concern, Langham feels, must be a thorough study of the text.[110] This includes the acquisition of an historical perspective, and an awareness of the literary context: "In searching for the essential style, or character, taste and essence of a Shakespearean play, we are best advised to examine carefully the form of its writing."[111]

A contrast is apparent here between Langham's assumptions and those of Guthrie and Gascon who knew the text primarily as a starting point , or framework. It is, of course, a difference in emphasis rather than an absolute distinction. Langham does not advocate the approach of strict historical reconstruction, or "museum theatre" (as he has called it). "We can't afford the attitudes of another age," he has written; the interpretation of Shakespeare should not be "an academic exercise, showing exactly what life was like in Shakespeare's day. We're concerned with the recognition of real human experience."[112] He sees the need for a delicate balance between fidelity to a textual essence and "relevant interpretation", and claims that the two demands are essentially complementary rather than in conflict:

> We cannot put the clock back. But we can,

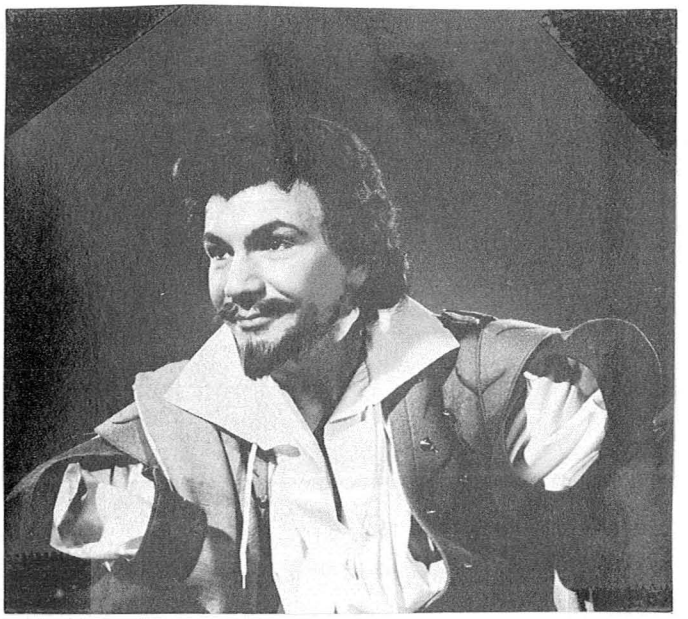
> in the theatre as in the other performing arts, struggle to retain our values and cling to a strength and a truth in our interpretation of the classics. ... if we are deeply aware of the significance to us of their timeless universality before their immediate contemporary implications, we can hope to maintain their true stature.[113]

While insisting on the primacy of the "universality" rather than the topicality or subjective appeal of the plays, Langham shares the concern of Guthrie and Gascon for the "education" of the audience:

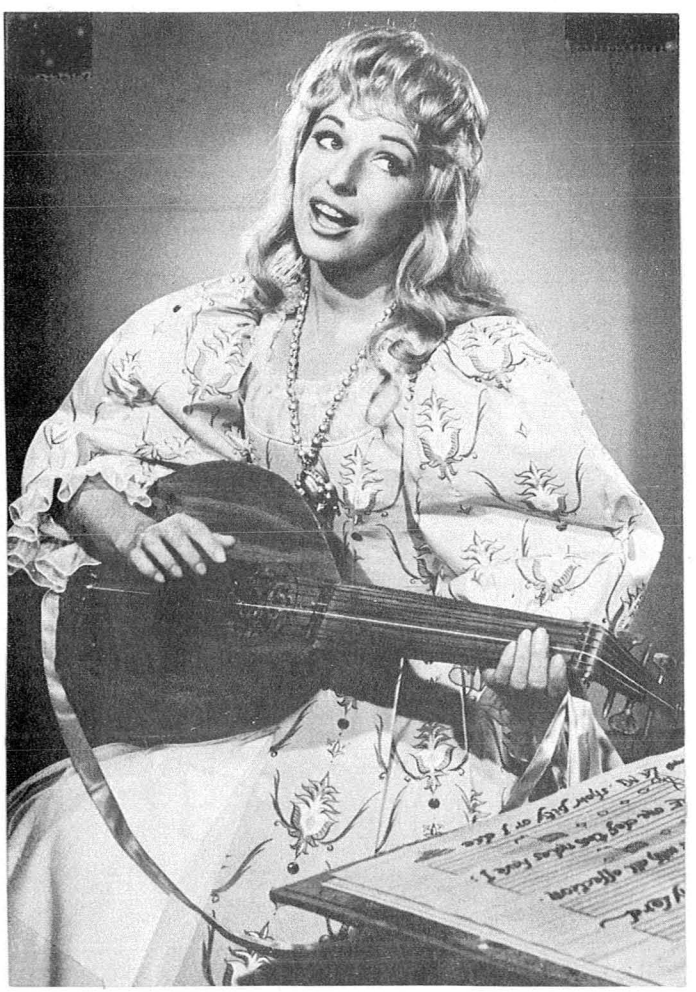
> We are asking the theatre-goer to relate what he sees in the theatre to life, to his own life, to contemporary thought around him. This is, I think, for many theatre-goers a revolutionary idea, that what he's seeing on the stage has anything to do with the way he's living.[114]

On Langham's part, this concern has fortunately avoided the brashness which often characterised the approaches of Guthrie and Gascon. It is an appeal to thoughtfulness rather than to iconoclasm and rejects any indulgence in "superficial relevance." Langham has been so articulate on this question that he is worth quoting at some length:

> To produce a classical play significantly in North American theatre today, it is fashionable to commit outright distortion, shocking distortion in fact -- in order to make the work relevant. What to? ... not the human values, the lasting culture, that give it its classic stature, but to one or two of the immediate concerns -- the instant cultures that preoccupy the now. ... I am advocating a theatre which makes us aware that we are not special, that we belong to the total human experience -- all pain, all happiness, all perpetual truths, savory or unsavory ... and that we might as well be acquisitive about the centuries of wisdom that we inherited if we are to hand experiences on to those who follow us.[115]



John Colicos
as Petruchio
Toby Robins
as Bianca
Hugh Webster
as Sly



From The Shrew: 1962

Tanya Moiseiwitsch's Costume Sketch for the Widow; 1962

Langham's attempts to sustain these high ideals in theatrical practice have been characterised mainly by a conviction that the text, if one is fully sensitive to it, will speak for itself. As Joan Ganong rather bluntly put it, "once he gets the play onstage, he lets the author tell the story without trying to prove that he, himself, could have done a better job."[116] Vincent Tovell has made the same kind of point:

> Langham is particularly adept at finding fresh surprises of real life in the classics without straining to prove his own originality. He does not apologise for them, he seems to trust them and trust you to like them. Nowadays when some directors, bored perhaps with too much Shakespeare, try to pump new life into the plays (which is sometimes to show off their own ideas), it is refreshing that Langham seems to release the vitality that is in them, and then step aside to let it surprise you.[117]

It would clearly be absurd to set up a polarity here between the productions of The Shrew so far considered and that of Langham, and to speak of distortion of the text on the one hand, and a 'true' or transparent reading on the other. No stage production can be simply a medium, like a clear glass window, in this latter sense. To play The Shrew as if the meaning on the page were self-evident would, in itself, be an "interpretation"; and, as I have argued, an unfortunately reductive one. Nevertheless, Langham does take a view of the relationship between the text and the theatrical inventiveness of the director and actors wich is significantly different from those of Guthrie and Gascon.

Reactions to Langham's production of The Shrew, when compared with those to the other two productions at Stratford, reflect this difference of emphasis. As we have seen, both Guthrie and Gascon were praised by reviewers primarily for the theatrical effects that they grafted on to the play, but were criticised for their failure to come to terms with its inherent serious intent. Langham's production, however, was greeted with such epithets as "balanced" and "articulate", while still being praised as "antic" and "inventive". John Pettigrew contrasted it with the Guthrie production, in terms which were very favourable to Langham:

> This second version was infinitely superior to the first. Sir Tyrone Guthrie presented a very funny, knockabout farce -- a kind of Shakespearean Kiss Me Kate; Mr. Langham, while losing none of the humour, presented a comedy, and in doing so gave us something rare and very valuable --pure joy. ... Fresh insight resulted in what was, I am convinced, the finest Shrew there ever has been or ever will be.[118]

Significantly, whereas many reviewers of the other two productions, while regretting the cavalier treatment of Shakespeare, were led to concede that The Shrew is an undistinguished play, Langham managed to convince many of his audience that the play is, in Pettigrew's words, "a work of genius that has much in common with other of Shakespeare's comedies."[119] Nicholas Monsarrat commented that he came away from Guthrie's production "almost believing that The Shrew might be a bad play after all -- until the 1962 version

showed us all otherwise."[120] Time noted that Langham had managed, through the use of "high comedy", successfully to present a play that Guthrie had considered to be "a nearly unplayable farce."[121] Herbert Whittaker made the same comparison, observing that Guthrie "obviously thought little of the play."[122] Rather than attempting to fit the play into a particular stylistic mould, Langham realised that The Shrew is a "medley of styles" and claimed that he wanted "to give the play a chance to say all of its true things."[123] Robertson Davies, again drawing the inevitable comparison with Guthrie, remarked that Langham offered the play "in a manner more congruous with its nature."[124] It appears that Langham's concern to maintain the play's natural "congruity" extended to considerations of costume. He was the only one of the three directors under discussion to retain Renaissance costumes. These were by all accounts rich and gorgeous, but the decision reflects Langham's unease about the use of modern dress in Shakespeare, which "produces a disturbing conflict between dress and speech ... [and] tends to encourage the introduction of modern trappings ... [which] are both fussy and distracting and easily lead to a belittling of the play's main themes."[125]

Among the more significant "true things" that Langham detected in the play is a broad structural and thematic concern with appearance and reality. The Christopher Sly framework was elaborated by the importation of material

from the non-Shakespearean The Taming of a Shrew. Sly and the Lord, sitting on opposite sides of the stage, commented on the performance, and Sly engaged in some delightful pantomime with the players as a result of his failure to realise that he was watching a play. There was also an epilogue, spoken by Sly, as he awoke from his "dream", and prepared to go home and tame his own wife -- deceived in this expectation as in everything else.[126]

It may seem strange that Langham, with his insistence on the "essence" of the text before him, should engage in such a daring and unorthodox textual manoeuvre. But it resulted from a conviction that, in this way, the true import of Shakespeare's text could be brought out.[127] The Sly framework was elaborated by Langham in such a way that it focused attention on the themes of artifice and illusion. The artifice used by the strolling players, for example, was consistently pointed up. They wheeled their cart onto the stage, as if into the hall of a great house, performed their play, and finally took a bow, both to the Lord and to the audience. As they re-loaded their cart, they dropped out of their assumed roles, and 'Petruchio' was seen to return, as to a wife, to the actress who had played Bianca, leaving 'Kate' once more in isolation. The effect of this was to heighten and make taut the framework of the play-within-the-play, and to draw Sly and his deception about reality further towards the center of dramatic and thematic

interest. Guthrie had brought Sly into dramatic prominence, but he had failed to realise his thematic possibilities. Guthrie appeared to use this technique primarily for what one might call a "protective" function; in other words, he conveyed that the play-within-the-play need not be taken quite as seriously, that it is not accountable to our normal sense of reality or morality, since it does not purport to be a direct creation of the author, but of one or more of his characters. But Langham was not content with such an easy escape from the problems that the shrew story presents. He contrived to make that story humanly valid by emphasising that it could only be so if understood in terms of the theme of illusion and pretence represented by the Sly framework. R.P. Creed, in a report on an interview with Langham, has attributed to him the following analysis of this theme as it operates in this part of the play's structure:

> The prologue presents a kind of real world which soon becomes audience to the inner play. Then the 'real world' of the tinker Sly 'begins to play act. But the play-within-the play, the story of the shrew, becomes gradually more profound.'[128]

As this suggests, the pyramidal structure of illusion enabled Langham to focus attention on the fact that the players in the shrew story itself were acting roles on more than one level. This production, as Walter Kerr has pointed out, emphasised that the players were even making distinctions between different parts of the 'audience' represented by

the outer frame of the play: "they are performing in jest for Christopher Sly, and in earnest for the noble Lord who is paying them."[129] In addition, they were performing for the real audience in the theatre, and this audience was aware that they were often not only actors, but actors who were portraying people who pretended to be what they were not. Bianca, for example, played by an obviously dark-haired actress, wore a blonde wig as a sign of her shallow conformity to the role of conventional heroine in the Petrarchan tradition. In contrast to this deceptively mild Bianca was a Katherine who was full of natural, if misdirected, energy. Petruchio was made to appear robust and spontaneous in contrast to the theatricality of the lecherous Gremio or the extravagant, conventionally-romantic Lucentio. The minor characters, reduced to a farcical, artificial level, threw into relief the naturalness and 'truth' of the two central figures. But rather than becoming the focus of the play and dominating the tone, the farce was used constructively to highlight the fact that the two main characters lived at an altogether different level.

Not that Katherine and Petruchio were without artifice and deception. Petruchio was seen to adopt, deliberately, a special manner in his dealings with Katherine, and she, in her turn, was shown to be deceived about her own nature. Like Guthrie's Kate, she had become shrewish as a defence

against the intolerable people who surrounded her; but unlike the earlier production, the Langham version revealed the process in which she emerges from her hard defensive shell. The audience was made aware from the very start that this relationship was not a simple one, and that to understand it and to follow its development required a subtle reading of a "sub-text". Katherine and Petruchio were not always what they seemed, nor did they always mean what they said. Disdain fought with love, and self-sufficiency struggled against the desire for dependence. The conflicts between Katherine and Petruchio that were for Gascon only external ones, were in this production also internal -- that is, taking place within the characters themselves. Langham has written that "the outward clashing of character with character is poor theatrical material when compared with the conflict that [can] be shown as taking place within the fermenting spirit of one man."[130] As Pettigrew commented, John Colicos, as Petruchio, managed to convey that "his atrocious manners were really only a cover for the genuine decency underneath ... Mr. Langham and his stars gave us, in short, not the conventional shrew and tamer, but characters much like Beatrice and Benedick."[131]

Here we have, it would seem, an account of Katherine and Petruchio which is, in the sense in which I have used the terms, comic rather than farcical. It allows for a full human engagement with, and sympathy for , the protagonists;

at the same time, it allows us, secure in our perceptions of the insulated nature of the world of comedy, to laugh with and at the intricate mating ritual. Furthermore, this relationship is the keystone of an overall thematic structure in which the possibilities of illusion, pretence and self-deceit are explored.

Interesting lines of critical inquiry are opened up by such a tight integration of framework, sub-plot and main plot. Might we not, for example, draw a parallel between Sly (whose drunkenness in this production was dwelt on throughout the performance) and Kate herself? Drink causes Sly's passions to subvert his reason, and thus exposes him to duplicity which he comes to accept as truth. He is deceived as much by himself as by others, and in the Langham version this self-deceit was sustained to the end of the play. For Sly's moral edification, perhaps, he is presented with a situation in which the natural order has been inverted as clearly as it has been within his own psyche -- the spectacle of a shrewish woman rejecting all overtures of marriage. She, like Sly, has allowed passion to overcome her reason, and as a result she also is both self-deceived (into thinking she really is a shrew) and consequently vulnerable to the impositions and tricks of a stranger (Petruchio). In both cases the stranger is, however, acting from possibly paternalistic motives. This is perhaps fanciful, and certainly could not be deduced directly from Langham's production;

yet it is a measure of the nature of that production that it should have stimulated in spectators (like Walter Kerr) the search for complex interrelations in the play.

For all its intellectual calibre, the production, nonetheless, had plenty of gusto and -- in its appropriate place -- plenty of farce. The strolling players, in the words of Robert Russel, gave the company "an opportunity to play with a flamboyant, exaggerated style, with much lifting of the eyebrows and striking of poses, and parading in wildly romantic costumes."[132] Though there was a general consensus that Langham had "through taste, style and restraint ... avoided turning the farce into a wild slapstick,"[133] the pace and exciting stage movement displayed great virtuosity. Walter Kerr commented that:

> Essentially, the unadorned stage is regarded as a vehicle for traffic: people, dogs and wheelbarrows course across it, stopping long enough to get their proper work done, but always going somewhere. This is the stage treated as a source of movement, and The Taming of the Shrew romps about on it with no inhibitions at all.[134]

While it is impossible for Pettigrew's opinion that Langham had staged "the finest Shrew there ever has been or ever will be" to be accepted as more than a personal judgement, it would certainly appear that this production maximised the possibilities of combining critical intelligence concerning The Taming of the Shrew with the technical and creative skills necessary for its production , in a way that Stratford audiences had never seen before, or since.

The quality of Langham's production is also ultimately responsible for whatever value a study of this kind may have. As was indicated in the introduction to this paper, the critics' concern with any production of the play can be theoretically justified. But not all productions will reward this concern equally. Those of Guthrie and Gascon, for example, have served primarily to illustrate the kinds of directorial choices which fail to exploit the full range of the play's interest. Consequently, in approaching those productions, I have made considerable use of ideas explored in critical writings concerning The Shrew. The directors' failure to deal effectively with the issues raised in those critical writings was largely responsible for the unsatisfactory nature of the two productions.

With Langham, on the other hand, it was possible to avoid being so prescriptive. His production in itself provided a significant contribution to existing commentary on the play, and especially to a consideration of those elements of it which I have been most concerned with -- the relationship of the two principal figures, and the dramatic and thematic possibilities of the play-within-a-play framework. A critical treatment of these aspects of the play should take into account live performance as well as textual analysis. A production of this calibre, as I hope has been shown, deserves attention from literary critics as well as theatre reviewers.

APPENDICES

1. A Description of the Stratford Festival Theatre Stage

The Stratford Festival stage was designed in 1953, by Tanya Moiseiwitsch, to conform with Tyrone Guthrie's idea that a Shakespearean playing area should incorporate "the functional but not the decorative features of an Elizabethan theatre."[136] The original stage, on which Guthrie presented his Shrew, was housed in a tent and was described as:

> projecting thirty-four feet, with a primary playing area eighteen by fourteen feet in width, with a trapdoor, and an inner playing area, fifteen feet wide. Outer staircases led to a balcony, with landings and doorways at their halfwasy point; and an inner stairway led down to the enclosed space between the nine columns on which the balcony rested for support.[137]

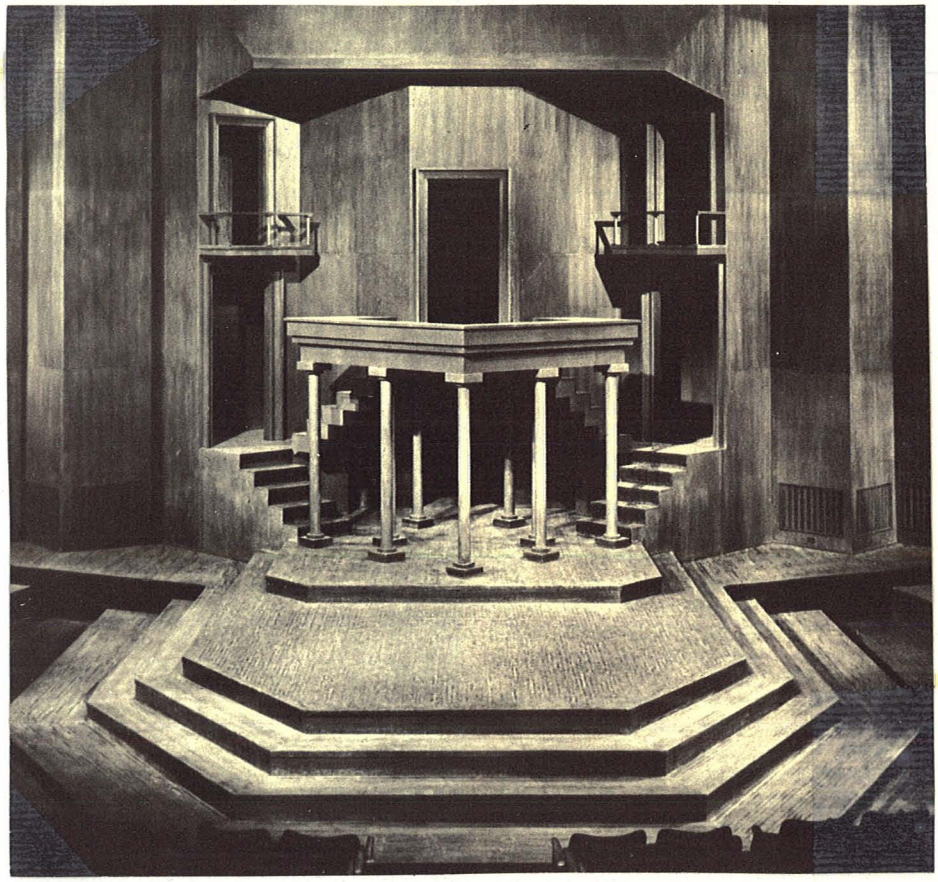
A permanent theatre building was erected in 1957, but the stage itself remained unchanged until 1962, when, at the urging of Michael Langham, Miss Moiseiwitsch made technical alterations to it, in order to eliminate problems that had become apparent through productions. The most major adjustments, noticeable to those who viewed Langham's Shrew, were that:

> the nine slender pillars were replaced by five larger ones, the balcony height was raised, and the floor beneath it slightly altered to make it into an independent area. The rear facade was dramatically changed. The original two entrances flanking the balcony were con-

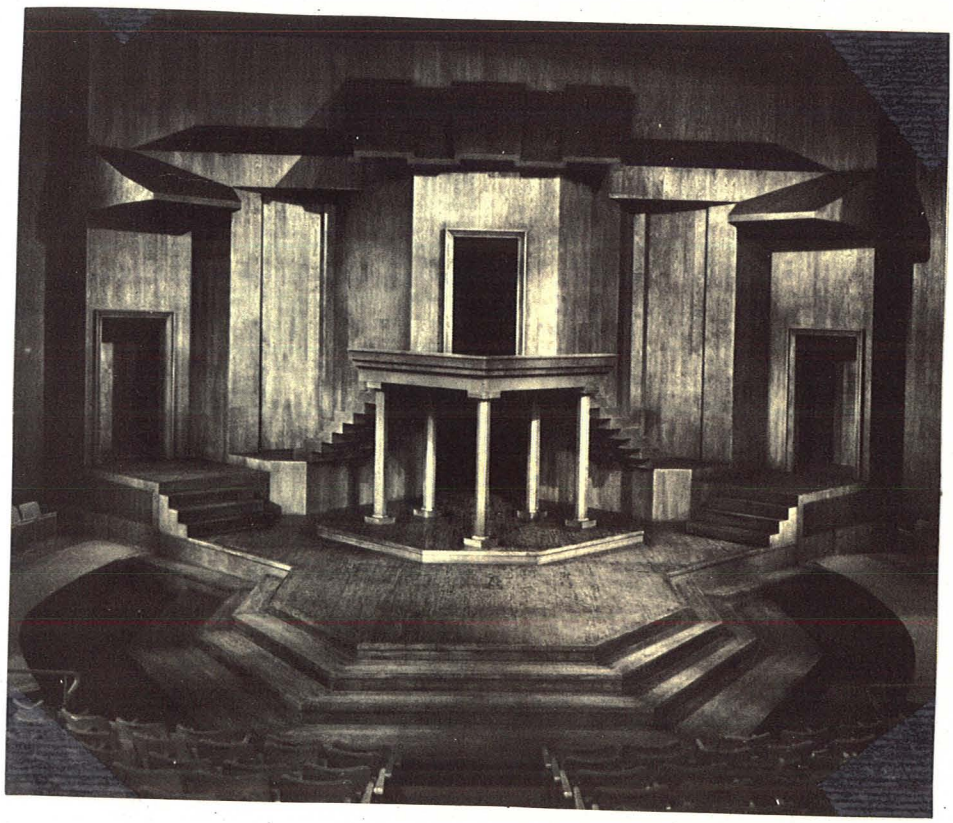
> cealed by hinged panels and new ones were built at the extreme corners of the stage area.[138]

While the general appearance of the stage is clear from the pictures, a more detailed account of this remarkable stage emphasises the importance of the Stratford Festival (and thus its productions) in the theatrical world as a whole. James Aikens, the Festival's archivist, provides such an account, and I feel that it is justifiable to quote him at length:

> The basic stage is a small 14 ft. by 18 ft., five-sided platform, surrounded by three stepped levels descending to an encircling 'gutter'. The balcony, an incomplete square with sides of 10 ft. is built on a diagonal with one corner set in the rear facade and the opposite one jutting prow-like over the stage. There are a total of nine possible entrances to the acting areas, not including the auditorium aisles which are often used: a central entrance beneath the balcony, which is almost turned into two by the dividing effect of the central pillar; an upper door onto the balcony; the two hinged panels which replaced the original side doorways; the two new side doorways; the trap door in the stage floor; and the two tunnels opening on to the stage from beneath the auditorium. These tunnels lead to the 'underworld' beneath the stage from which stairs ascend to the main floor and rear of the balcony. The number of combinations of entrances and exits is immense. The auditorium surrounds the stage in a 22o degree sweep -- in the original tent theatre the encirclement was even more complete -- and the rear facade blends imperceptively with the auditorium walls. The whole building, stage and auditorium, is thus made a single architectural space with a common focal point.
> .....
> An observer has noted that 'there is a relationship with the stage for which intimacy, the usual term, seems insufficient; there is in the



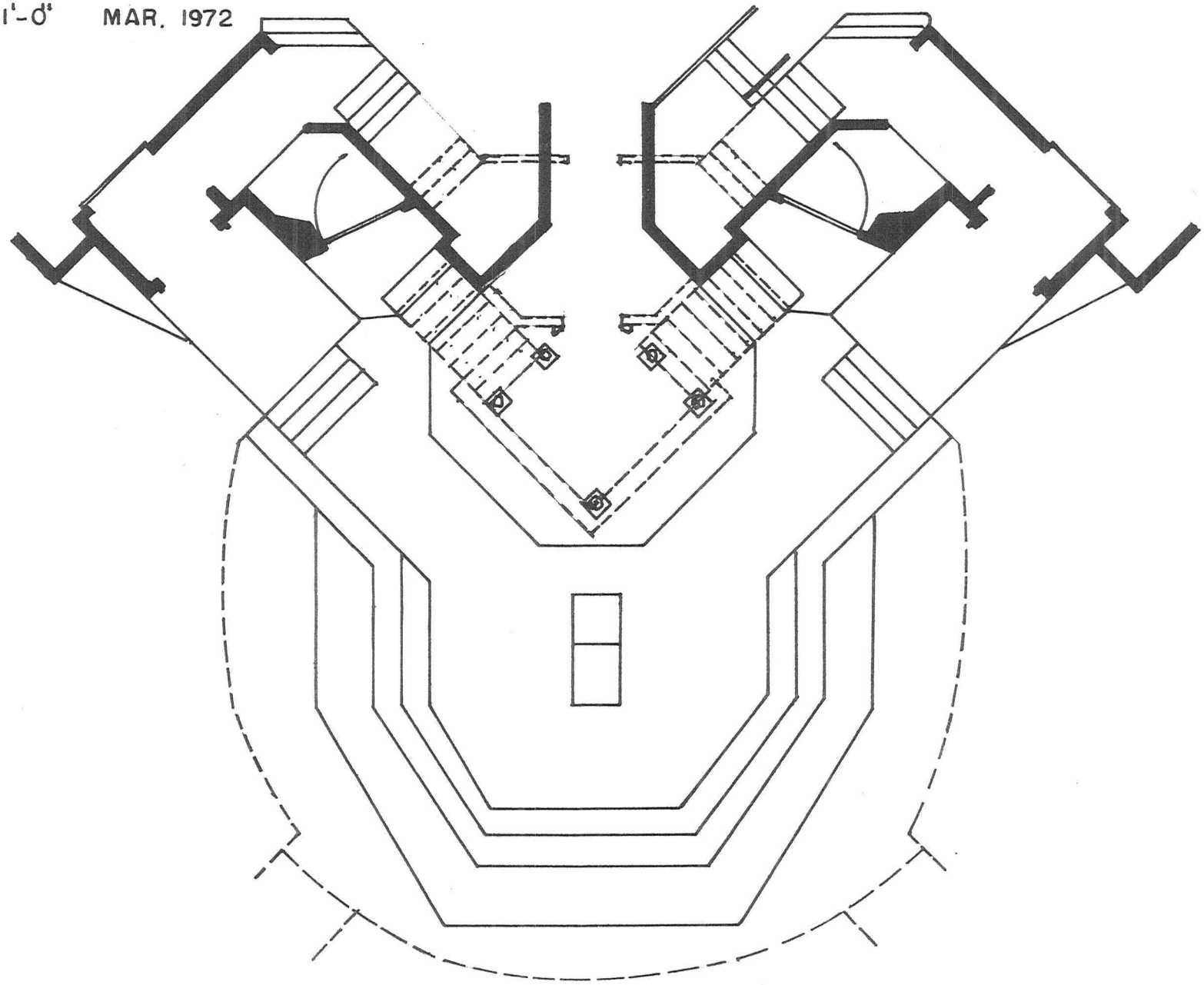
1957



The Festival Stage

1962

STRATFORD FESTIVAL THEATRE
MEASURED PLAN OF STAGE
SCALE $\frac{1}{8}$" TO 1'-0" MAR. 1972



relationship intensity and expectation, tautness rather than relaxation arising from the pronounced centripetal tendency of the design.' The actor and audience share the same architectural space, the same room. They are involved together in a communal event. The resultant feeling of participation in the performance contributes immeasurably to the emotional attachment which has grown up between the Festival and its public.[139]

2. Katherine's Closing Speech

A. From The Taming of a Shrew, Scene xviii

Ferando. Now lovely Kate before there husbands here,
I prethe tell unto these hedstrong women,
What dutie wives doo owe their husbands.
Kate. Then you that live thus by your pompered wills,
Now list to me and marke what I shall say,
Theternall power that with his only breath,
Shall cause this end and this beginning frame,
Not in time, nor before time, but with time, confusd,
For all the course of yeares, of ages, moneths,
Of seasons temperate, of dayes and houres,
Are tund and stopt, by measure of his hand,
The first world was, a forme, without a forme,
A heape confusd a mixture all deforme,
A gulfe of gulfes, a body bodiles,
Where all the elements were orderles,
Before the great commander of the world
The King of Kings the glorious God of heaven,
Who in six daies did frame his heavenly worke,
And made all things to stand in perfit course.
Then to his image he did make a man,
Olde Adam and from his side asleepe,
A rib was taken, of which the Lord did make
The woe of man so termd by Adam then,
Woman for that, by her came sinne to us,
And for her sin was Adam doomd to die,
As Sara to her husband, so should we,
Obey them, love them, keepe and nourish them,
If they by any meanes doo want our helpes,
Laying our handes under theire feete to tread,
If that by that we, might procure there ease,
And for a president Ile first begin,
And lay my hand under my husbands feete.

(She laies her hand under her husbands feete)

B. From Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew, Act V,ii

Petruchio. Katherine, I charge thee, ll these headstrong
women
What duty they do owe their lords and husbands.
Widow. Come, come, you're mocking; we will have no telling.
Petruchio. Come on, I say, and first begin with her.
Widow. She shall not.
Petruchio. I say, she shall -- and first begin with her.
Katherine. Fie, fie! unknit that threatening unkind brow,
And dart not scornful glances from those eyes,
To wound thy lord, thy king, thy govenor:
It blots thy beauty as frosts do bite the meads,
Confounds thy fame as whirlwinds shake fair buds,
And in no sense is meet or amiable.
A woman moved is like a fountain troubled,
Muddy, ill-seeming, thick, bereft of beauty,
And while it is so, none so dry or thirsty
Will deign to sip or touch one drop of it.
Thy husband is thy lord, thy life, thy keeper,
Thy head, thy sovereign; one that cares for thee,
And for thy maintenance commits his body
To painful labour, both by sea and land;
To watch the night in storms, the day in cold,
Whilst thou liest warm at home, secure, and safe,
And craves no other tribute at thy hands,
But love, fair looks, and true obedience;
Too little payment for so great a debt.
Such duty as the subject owes the prince,
Even such a woman oweth to her husband:
And when she is froward, peevish, sullen, sour,
And not obedient to his honest will,
What is she but a foul contending rebel,
And graceless traitor to her loving lord?
I am ashamed that women are so simple
To offer war where they should kneel for peace;
To seek for rule, supremacy and sway,
When they are bound to serve, love and obey.
Why are our bodies soft, and weak, and smooth,
Unapt to toil and trouble in the world,
But that our soft conditions and our hearts
Should well agree with our external parts?
Come, come, you froward and unable worms!
My mind hath been as big as one of yours,
To bandy word for word, and frown for frown;
But now I see our lances are but straws,
Our strenth as weak, our weakness past compare,
That seeming to be most which we indeed least are.
Then vail your stomachs, for it is no boot,
And place your hands below your husband's foot:
In token of which duty, if he please,

My hand is ready, may it do him ease.
Petruchio. Why, there's a wench! Come on, and kiss me Kate.

3. Textual Interpolations and Explications

A. The Taming of the Shrew, 1954

The following speeches were composed by Guthrie, himself, and were inserted in the text at the points indicated, following:

a. Act I,i

Gremio. You may go to the Devil's dam. (TTS, line 105)
Sly. Hold thy peace, fool, she'll hear thee.
Gremio. Your gifts are so good, here's none wll hold you.
Sly. Fly, fly! Jesu protect thee from the wrath to come.

b. Act I,ii

Grumio. ... Help, my master is mad. (TTS, 1.18)
Sly.(to Petruchio) Leave the lad be! (beats Petruchio) If thou will needs beat a body, beat a body thine own size.
Petruchio. Beat, say you? Take that and that.
Sly. Help! Murder! I am ruined!
Lord. (pulling off Sly) 'Tis but a play, my gracious lord, a toy, a makebelieve.
1 Servant. (pulling off Petruchio) Forbear, sir! He that thou buffetest is a mighty lord.
2 Servant. (to Sly) 'Tis but a jest, my lord, they counterfeit.
Page. Help! My lord is ruined. Hey. Ho.
Hortensio. How now? What's the matter?
Sly. Murder's the matter, that's what. Plain bloody butchers' work.
2 Servant. Peace, good my lord!
Sly. Nay I will speak.
Lord. Be still my lord.
Page. Drink, dear my lord, a cup of wine will make thee calm again.
Sly. (settling down, but grumbling) Wine? Be still? I tell you the man would ha' murdered his boy there.
Lord. Nay, Sir, you do not mark the play.

c. Act II, i

Bianca. ... That I disdain. (TTS, 1.3)
Sly. (who has followed the exit of Biondello and company,

now turns and sees the girls) For shame, Shrew? Beat thy sister, Shrew? (Kate menaces him and he flies to the Lord) See how the poor girl weeps. I pity her so for thee. Thourt a foul shrew and I hate thee, so I do. (Katherine looks at him. He hides.)

d. Act II,i

Katherine. (striking Bianca) (TTS, 1.22)
Sly. Help, ho! Murder! Yon shrew will mischief the little one.

e. Act II,i

Baptista. Take you the lute and you the set of books. (TTS, 1.106
Sly. (to servant) Boy, go help the old gentleman. Canst not see he sweats?

f. Act III,ii

Baptista. I'll after him, and see the event of this. (TTS, 1.125)
Lucentio. Tranio, a word.
Tranio. What is it, master mine?
Lucentio. Now that the bridegroom's come, Kate shall be wed. This moment they are all going to the church.
Tranio. 'tis so indeed.
Lucentio. Then shall not sweet Bianca be wed tomorrow to Lucentio? For thou knowest, Tranio, I have Bianca's love.

Note: Guthrie omitted the final speeches of the play, that is:

Hortensio. Now go thy ways, thou hast tamed a curst shrow.
Lucentio. 'Tis a wonder, by your leave, she will be tamed so.

ending it instead with:

Petruchio. And, being a winner, God give you good night!

B. The Taming of the Shrew, 1962

Unlike Guthrie, Michael Langham did not 'create' any of the material that was added to his TTS. Instead, he relied on speeches which were to be found in The Taming of a Shrew, and inserted them following:

a. Act I,ii

Hortensio. Petruchio, I shall be your ben venuto. (TTS, 1.280)
Sly. Friend, will the fool come again?

Lord. He'll come again, my lord, anon.
Sly. Give's some more drink here, souns where's the tapster? Here, friend, eat some of these things.
Lord. So I do my Lord.
Sly. Here, madam wife, I drink to thee.
Lord. My lord, here comes the players again.
Sly. O brave, she's a fine gentlewoman.
(enter Bianca, putting on ring, Kate enters.)

b. Act III,ii

Petruchio. And seal the title with a lovely kiss. (TTS, 1.121)
Sly. Friend, must they be married now?
Lord. Ay, my lord.

c. Act V,i

Vincentio. Carry me to the gaol?
Sly. I say we'll have no sending to prison.
Lord. It is but a play, my lord, they're in jest.
Sly. I tell thee Friend, we'll have no sending to prison, that's flat. Why, Friend, am I not a Lord? Then I say he shall not go to prison.
Lord. No more he shall not, my Lord.
Sly. Friend tha's well; then giv's some more drink, and let them play again.
(Sly drinks and then falls asleep)

d. Act V,i

Petruchio. ... Better once than never, for never too late. (TTS, 1.147)
(Exeunt Omnes. Sly sleeps)
Lord. Come hither, sirs! My Lords,
Asleep again! Go take him easily up,
And put him in his own apparel again,
And lay him in the place where we did find him,
Just underneath the alehouse side below:
But see you wake him not in any case.
Groom. It shall be done, my lord:
come, help to bear him hence.

e. Act V,ii

Hostess' husband. And now the darksome night is past
And dawning day appears in crystal sky.
I must home to my mistress
She will sure be mad. But soft who's this?
What? Sly? hath he lain here all night!
I'll wake him. I think he's starved by this
But that his belly was so stuff'd with ale.
What ho! Sly! Awake for shame.
Sly. Friend, give's some more wine: whats all the

Players gone? Am not I a Lord?
Husband. A lord with a murrain: come art thou drunk still?
Sly. Oh Lord, sirrah, I have had the bravest dream tonight
That ever man could have.
Husband. Ay marry, but you had best get you home,
For your wife will curse you for dreaming here so late.
Sly. Will she? I know now how to tame a shrew,
I dreamt upon it all this night till now,
And thou hast wakt me out of the best dream
That ever I had in my life, but I'll to my
Wife presently and tame her too
And if she anger me.
(Exeunt Omnes)

Note: The above speech contains Langham's insertion, "I must home to my mistress / She will sure be mad", which was inserted in place of TAS's "Now must I hast abroad."

C. The Taming of the Shrew, 1973

For his production, Gascon did not add any material to Shakespeare's TTS. However, he did omit the Induction, and therefore all the Sly material. In its place, he inserted the following "Prologue" which is, with the exception of a few word changes, parallel to the Servant's speech to Sly, Induction, ii, 128-135.

Presenter. Your honour's players,
Are come to play a pleasant comedy;
For so your doctors hold it very true
That too much sadness can congeal your blood,
And melancholy is the nurse of frenzy,
Therefore they thought it good we hold a play
And frame our minds to mirth and merriment,
Which bars a thousands harms and lengthens life.

Note: Gascon, like Guthrie, chose to omit Act V,ii,188-89 and ended his production of TTS with the line, "God give you good night."

FOOTNOTES

[1]O.G. Brockett, The Theatre: An Introduction (Toronto, 1964), p.26.

[2]G. Bullough, Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare (London, 1957), I,57.

[3]See G. Bullough's detailed study, Narrative and ..., I, 57-108.

[4]G. Bullough, op. cit., I, 57.

[5]From this point on, the abbreviations "TTS" and "TAS" will be used to refer to The Taming of the Shrew and The Taming of a Shrew respectively.

[6]For the complete TAS Epilogue, refer to Appendix 3.

[7]G. Bullough, op. cit., I, 61-64.

[8]Barnet, Sylvan, Morton Berman, and William Burto, A Dictionary of Literary, Dramatic and Cinematic Terms (Boston, 1971), p.22.

[9]John Russel Taylor, Penguin Dictionary of the Theatre (Middlesex, 1966), p.97.

[10]G. Bullough, op. cit., I, 68.

[11]E. Bentley, cited in A Dictionary of Literary ..., p.22.

[12]G. Bullough, op. cit., I, 107 referring to TAS, scene xviii, 17-43. See Appendix 2 to compare this speech with that of Shakespeare's Katherine.

[13]A. Quiller-Couch, and J. Dover Wilson, eds., The New Cambridge Edition of The Taming of the Shrew (Cambridge, 1968), Act I,ii,85-86. All future references to the text of TTS are taken from this edition and line references are given within the body of the text.

[14]M. Webster, "A Director's Comments on Staging 'The Taming of the Shrew'", in The Laurel Edition of The Taming of The Shrew, ed. F. Fergusson (New York, 1958), p.21.

[15]M. Webster, op. cit., p.23.

[16]Juan Vives, "A Very Fruteful and Pleasant Boke Callyd the Instruction of a Christen Woman", trans. R. Hyde (1529), quoted by R. Hosley in "Sources and Analogues of The Taming of the Shrew", Huntington Library Quarterly, XXVll (1963-64), p.303.

[17]R.B. Heilman, "Introduction" in The Signet Classic Shakespeare's 'The Taming of the Shrew' (Toronto, 1966), p.xl.

[18]Quoted by R. B. Heilman, op. cit., p.xxx.

[19]J.R. Brown, Shakespeare and his Comedies (London, 1957), p.61.

[20]J.R. Brown, op. cit., p.98.

[21]B. Evans, Shakespeare's Comedies (London, 1967), p.25.

[22]Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, III,ii,72-73.

[23]Ibid., II,vii,65.

[24]S. Johnson, Johnson on Shakespeare, ed. Walter Raleigh (London,1925), p. 96.

[25]Shakespeare, Hamlet, III,ii,37-42.

[26]J.R. Brown, op. cit., p.98.

[27]A somewhat similar technique is used by Chaucer in a situation that provides an interesting parallel. When the Clerk completes his tale of the sufferings of Griselda at the hands of her husband, he reminds his hearers that:

> This storie is seyd, nat for that wyves sholde
> Folwen Grisilde as in humylitee,
> For it were inportable, though they wolde. (IV, 1142-44)

Chaucer himself in his envoy, repeats the warning:

> No wedded man so hardy be t'assaille
> His wyves pacience in trust to fynde
> Grisildis, for in certein he shal faille. (1180-82)

The point, of course, is that the tale is an allegory, urging us that "Every wight, in his degree, / Sholde be constant in adversitee"; yet the Host immediately responds to the story at a literal level which is obviously incorrect:

> By Goddes bones,
> Me were levere than a barel ale
> My wyf at hoom had herd this legende ones! (1212,b-d)

[28]Although "director" is a modern term as far as the theatre is concerned, it is used here to designate whoever was responsible for the artistic direction, whatever his title may have been.

[29]See "The Dramatic Records of Sir Henry Herbert" (p.53) cited in the New Cambridge University Edition of 'The Taming of the Shrew', p.181.

[30]S. Pepys, Diary and Correspondence of Samuel Pepys, Esq., F.R.S. (New York, 1887), VII, 91.

[31]G. Odell, Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving (New York, 1920), I, 22.

[32]S. Pepys, op. cit., VII, 91.

[33]G, Odell, op. cit., I, 229.

[34]Ibid., I, 230.

[35]Ibid., I, 254.

[36]Ibid., I, 255.

[37]Ibid., I, 362. Also see Catharine and Petruchio. A Comedy Alter'd from Shakespear's 'Taming of the Shrew' (London: 1756).

[38]A.C. Sprague, Shakespeare and the Actors -- The Stage Business in His Plays (1660-1905) (Cambridge, Mass., 1945), p.55.

[39]G. Odell, op. cit., II, 267.

[40]Ibid., II, 244.

[41]Ibid., II, 244.

[42]Taken from The Times, March 18, 1884; cited by G. Odell, op. cit., II, 313.

[43]G. Odell, op. cit., II, 267-268.

[44]Ibid., II, 405.

[45]Ibid., II, 266.

[46]J.C. Trewin, Shakespeare on the English Stage, 1900-1964 (London, 1964), p.228.

[47]T. Guthrie, "A Long View of the Stratford Stage" in Twice Have the Trumpets Sounded (Toronto, 1954), p.149.

[48]J. Trewin, op. cit., p.158.

[49]T. Guthrie, "The Picture Frame" in A Life in the Theatre (Toronto, 1959), pp. 195-214.

[50]T. Guthrie, A Life ..., p.207.

[51]Ibid., p.319.

[52]For a detailed description of this stage, refer to Apendix 1.

[53]Guthrie, A Life ..., p.336.

[54]Ibid., p.17.

[55]J. Trewin, op. cit., p.158.

[56]Taken from a private conversation between Mr. Needles and the writer. Taped in Stratford, August 5, 1974.

[57]Herbert Whittaker, Globe and Mail (Toronto) July 1, 1954.

[58]T. Guthrie, A Life ..., p.19.

[59]Ibid., p.19.

[60]Robertson Davies, "The Taming of the Shrew" in Twice Have the Trumpets Sounded, p.38.

[61]Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, July 1, 1954.

[62]-----, Los Angeles Times, July 4, 1954.

[63]Robert Speaight, Shakespeare on the Stage (London; 1974), p.178.

[64]See Appendix 3.A. for minor interpolations which deal with the characterisation of Sly.

[65]T. Guthrie, A Life ..., p.69.

[66]-----, Brantford Expositor, June 30, 1954.

[67]R. Davies, Twice Have ..., p.35.

[68]-----, Montreal Star, March 31, 1954.

[69]R. Davies, Twice Have ..., pp. 32-35.

[70]Ibid., p.35, p.56.

[71]R. Davies, p.50.

[72]H. Whittaker, Globe and Mail, (Toronto), July 1, 1954.

[73]R. Davies, Twice Have ..., p.54.

[74]Stage directions in TTS, Act I,i, following line 47.

[75]-----, Herald Tribune, (New York), July 5, 1954.

[76]From the private tape op. cit..

[77]R. Davies, Twice Have ..., p.34.

[78]Walter O'Hearn, Montreal Star, June 30, 1954.

[79]H. Whittaker, Globe and Mail, (Toronto), July 1, 1954.

[80]From "The Second Collect for Peace -- The Order for Morning Prayer", in The Book of Common Prayer.

[81]R. Davies, Twice Have ..., p.41.

[82]Brooks Atkinson, New York Times, July 4, 1954.

[83]-----, New York Times, July 1, 1954.

[84]R. Speaight, op. cit., p.236.

[85]For the purposes of this paper, I have deliberately chosen not to present the productions in chronological order. Also it is necessary to note that as this TTS was originally designed for the 1973 Tour, Gascon had to bear in mind that his direction had to be able to satisfy both proscenium and apron stages. However, it is my belief that as this fact did not alter the tone, nor the interpretation of The Shrew, the two resulting presentations need not be discussed seperately.

[86]-----, Time Magazine, June 18, 1973.

[87]Clive Barnes, New York Times, June 6, 1973.

[88]J. Aiken, the Festival Archivist, has mentioned that Gascon used the Archive copy of Guthrie's prompt-book and deliberately ignored Langham's.

[89]-----, Zycie Literackie , (Warsaw, Poland), February 25, 1973.

[90]-----, Time Magazine, June 18, 1973

[91]From Gascon's speech delivered on the occasion of his acceptance of The Royal Bank Award, Stratford, May 24, 1974.

[92]"Jean Gascon has been quoted as saying the theatre is his church. His dedication to it has been complete." From the Gascon Biography, Stratford Publicity File, printed 1971.

[93]Dr. B.W. Jackson, The Hamilton Spectator, June 9, 1973.

[94]As I have seen the videotaped recording of this production, property of the Stratford Festival Archives, most observations concerning this production are personal.

[95]H. Lundgren, Information, (Copenhagen), January 29, 1973.

[96]Dr. B.W. Jackson, Hamilton Spectator, June 9, 1973.

[97]Miss Galloway played Kate on the European tour. However, when the production was revived for the summer season at the Festival Theatre, Miss Taylor assumed the role temporarily as Miss Galloway had sprained her ankle.

[98]Note for example: "The Ms. Alliance has all but ruined the play's acceptability." Montreal Gazette, January 15, 1973.

[99]-----, Women's Wear Daily, (New York), June 26, 1973.

[100]Ibid.

[101]Germaine Greer, The Female Eunuch (London, 1970), p.209.

[102]For complete changes, refer to Appendix 3.

[103]-----, Stratford Beacon-Herald, June 5, 1973.

[104]-----, Detroit News, June 5, 1973.

[105]Clive Barnes, New York Times, June 6, 1973.

[106]J.C. Trewin, Shakespeare on the English Stage ..., p.240 n.

[107]M. Langham, "Director's Notes", The Stratford Festival Souvenir Programme, 1962.

[108]M. Langham, "Staging Shakespeare's Works", Stratford Papers on Shakespeare, 1961 (Toronto, 1962), p.24.

[109]Ibid., p.37.

[110]Ibid., p.25.

[111]Ibid., p.26.

[112]M. Langham, quoted in "An Interview with Stratford's Michael Lnagham", Performing Arts in Canada, 4 (1966), p.8.

[113]M. Langham, "Staging Shakespeare ...", p.30.

[114]M. Langham, "An Interview with ...", p.8.

[115]M. Langham, quoted in Stratford Beacon-Herald, June 6, 1970.

[116]J. Ganong, Backstage at Stratford (Toronto, 1962), p.102.

[117]V. Tovell, "The Stratford Festival", Tamarack Review, 25 (Autumn, 1962), p.52.

[118]J. Pettigrew, "Stratford's Tenth Season: A Director's Year", Queen's Quarterly, LXIX (1962-63), p.452.

[119]Ibid., p.452.

[120]N. Monsarrat, To Stratford With Love (Toronto,1963), p.114.

[121]-----, Time Magazine, June 29, 1962.

[122]H. Whittaker, Globe and Mail, (Toronto), July 4, 1962.

[123]R.P. Creed, Journal, (Providence, Rhode Island), July 1, 1962.

[124]R. Davies, Peterborough Examiner, June 23, 1962.

[125]M. Langham, "Staging Shakespeare's Works", p.36.

[126]Refer to Appendix 3, for details.

[127]This procedure has been defended, in general terms, in Chapter II.

[128]R.P. Creed, Journal, (Providence, Rhode Island), July 1, 1962.

[129]Walter Kerr, Calgary Herald, July 4, 1962. (Syndicated article)

[130]M. Langham, "Staging Shakespeare's ...", p.19.

[131]J. Pettigrew, "Stratford's Tenth ...", p.453.

[132]Robert Russel, "Theatre: The Taming of the Shrew", Canadian Art (July-August, 1962) p.311.

[133]-----, Toronto Daily Star, June 23, 1962.

[134]Walter Kerr, Calgary Herald, June 30, 1962. (Syndicated article)

[135]J. Pettigrew, "Straford's Tenth ...", p.452.

[136]James Aikens, "This Unworthy Scaffold": The Story of the Festival Stage. A brochure published by the Publicity Department, Stratford Festival Theatre.

[137]R. Speaight, Shakespeare on the Stage, p.235.

[138]J. Aikens, op. cit..

[139]Ibid.

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