Real Shakespeare?
Development of a visual style in the BBC TV Shakespeare series (1978-1985)

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REAL SHAKESPEARE? DEVELOPMENT OF A VISUAL STYLE IN THE BBC TV SHAKESPEARE SERIES (1978-85).

ABSTRACT.

This thesis views the BBC TV Shakespeare series (1978-85) as an exploration of visual styles in an attempt to find a suitable form to transfer Shakespeare to the mass medium of television. The approach is a close reading of several productions covering three periods of producership. The analyses focus on the role of realism, the manipulation of Shakespearean rhetoric and the effects of camera work and *mise-en-scène* in developing the meaning of the respective texts.

The first chapter is a study of two productions from the first producer Cedric Messina: *Romeo and Juliet* (1978) and *The Tempest* (1980). They are examined bearing in mind their lack of critical acclaim. Despite this important point both productions are viewed as serious objects of study. Their shared visual style is regarded as a catalyst for the development of more sophisticated approaches. Certain redeeming aspects are highlighted, although the general style of these early examples from the series is shown to be over-burdened by a predilection for realistic representation.

In contrast, the argument in the next chapter describes a progression in the series' treatment of realism. The chapter explores closely paralleled productions from the director Elijah Moshinsky: *All's Well That Ends Well* (1981), *Coriolanus* (1984) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1981). It is shown how Moshinsky manipulates the pictorial possibilities of the small screen to create a more flexible sense of realism than the earlier productions. Moshinsky's camera work and *mise-en-scène* are used to render associative images which resonate with Shakespeare's language.

The following chapter provides a comparative study of two *Macbeths*: the ITV/Trevor Nunn version (1979) and the BBC's *Macbeth* (1983) directed by Jack Gold. While acknowledging its success as a theatre production, the televisual style of the Nunn *Macbeth* is argued to have a different impact. Discussion focuses on close proximity of its protagonists to the viewer as its particular form of realism. In comparison, Gold's more varied approach is treated as a reflection of an overall competence in bringing Shakespeare to television as the BBC series matures. The chapter details Gold's 'expressionist' visual style and his control of space via camera work to impress on the audience the sense of a wider canvas in *Macbeth.*

The final chapter presents a close analysis of Jane Howell's history cycle: the three parts of *Henry VI* and *King Richard III* (1983). The argument foregrounds Howell's stylisation as a response to television realism, and it distinguishes her style as the antithesis of the Messina productions. Her use of suggestive techniques (via camera work and *mise-en-scène*) and the reality of the actors' faces are combined to provoke the imagination of her audience in bringing meaning to the text of the tetralogy.

In conclusion, the aim has been to demonstrate the value of the BBC series as an intervention in the adaptation of these complex texts. From close studies of a wide range of productions I have shown how sophisticated artists can use and illuminate the Shakespeare text in the context of television's expected realism, presenting a case for Shakespeare working on television within its innately domestic and didactic parameters.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis is about Shakespeare on television. More specifically, it is a close study of a selection of productions from the BBC TV Shakespeare series (1978-85). My aim is to show, by close analysis of language, camera work and *mise-en-scène* in the examples I have chosen, that the BBC TV Shakespeare series has opened up a range of possibilities for visualising Shakespeare's language.

Rationale for the choice of plays.

The BBC television project amounted to thirty-seven plays and, therefore, my rationale is to focus on those plays which are representative of each genre within the Shakespeare canon. I have chosen 'Tragedies': *Romeo and Juliet, Macbeth* and *Coriolanus.* And derived from that choice we may include the sub-categorisation of: early tragedy, mature tragedy and tragic history (as well as 'Roman'). Moreover, I have fixed on a range of 'Comedies': *The Tempest, All's Well That Ends Well* and *Midsummer Night's Dream. The Tempest* is a 'late comedy'; *All's Well* is also referred to as a 'problem comedy' and *Midsummer's Night Dream* is often designated as a 'romantic comedy'. Finally, I have opted for a tetralogy with an historical theme: *Henry VI Parts 1, 2 and 3* and *Richard III.* The three plays of *Henry VI* are generally regarded as immature examples of Shakespeare's histories. They contrast, therefore, with *Richard III* which is deemed a more mature history play with a more complex verse structure.

Further, I look at plays from each period of Shakespeare's writing career in the thesis, according to Alexander's 'Approximate Order of Composition of Shakespeare's Works'.[1] The history tetralogy is from 'Period I'; *Romeo and Juliet* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* are from 'Period II'; *All's Well, Coriolanus* and *Macbeth* are from 'Period III' and *The Tempest* is from 'Period IV'.

And in terms of the style of the plays as produced under the BBC TV Shakespeare series, there is a certain amount of crossover relative to the probable dates of composition (given in parentheses). *Romeo and Juliet* (c.1595) and *The Tempest* (c.1613) are representative of the early presentations from the BBC Shakespeare's first two seasons under the producership of Cedric Messina. The BBC productions of *All's Well* (c.1603), *Coriolanus* (c.1608), *Midsummer Night's Dream* (c.1596) and *Henry VI Parts 1 and 2* (c.1592) correspond to programmes under the second producer, Jonathan Miller who 'changed the design codes' of the series.[2] The remaining productions are from the third and final period of the series, produced by Shaun Sutton: *Macbeth* (c.1605), *Henry VI - Part 3* (c.1592) and *Richard III* (c.1592).

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[1] The 'Alexander text' is the one used by the BBC TV Shakespeare series and all line references in this thesis are from this text. 'Introduction', *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare*, ed. Peter Alexander (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1951), pp. ix - xxiv.

A contextual analysis of the BBC as an institution during the time of the Shakespeare series.

The BBC had been transmitting Shakespeare plays since '5th February, 1937, at 3.55pm, with an 11-minute scene from *As You like It* (Rothwell, p.91). And once full power was restored after the Second World War, Rothwell comments further that ' the BBC energetically continued to transmit uncommodified Shakespeare, protected from commercialism by the state subsidy but equally protected from any far-out directors. Veteran producer/directors...for three decades from 1947 faithfully served the Shakespeare industry with over sixty performances of individual plays in whole or part, and a complete run of the English and Roman history plays as mini-series' (Rothwell, pp.94-5).[3]

It seemed a natural progression that the BBC should attempt the BBC TV Shakespeare series, thirty-seven plays at an average of six plays a year for six years. In a personal interview Shaun Sutton, the series' third producer and the BBC's Head of Drama when the series started, remarked to me that the BBC had the resources and had done a lot of Shakespeare plays over the years, so why not the canon?[4] Undoubtedly, Sutton's point is a logical one. However, the BBC's resources did not amount to possessing the required capital. The BBC had enough public funds to finance approximately two-thirds[5] of the projected budget needed for the complete cycle of plays. In order to obtain the rest the BBC had to rely on outside assistance.

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[2] Kenneth Rothwell, *A History of Shakespeare on Screen: A Century of Film and Television*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: CUP, 2004), p.109.

[3] The BBC has afforded priority to certain Shakespeare dramas, having presented several versions of the same play over time compared to one or no productions of others. Whether in the form of extracts, full television presentation or the transmission of stage productions, for instance, between 1937 and 1975 - 1975 being the first year Shakespeare was produced under the banner of the BBC TV Shakespeare series - *Twelfth Night* and *Macbeth* received no less than seven broadcasts each. Whereas, *Love's Labour's Lost* was broadcast only twice; and on one of the two occasions, it was the filming of the stage version in June 1965 at the Theatre Royal, Bristol. Similarly, a theatre adaptation was the only viewing a television audience received of *All's Well That Ends Well*. Unfortunately, *Two Gentlemen of Verona, Timon of Athens, Titus Andronicus, Henry VIII* and *Pericles* were not aired at all, (Willis, Appendix 2, pp.322-30).

[4] Interview with the author dated 8th April, 1992.

Arranging external sponsorship is a well-featured aspect of the BBC TV Shakespeare series. And the fact that financial patronage came from the United States is of no surprise. It was not a totally new phenomenon. Private companies in America had underwritten televised Shakespeare before. Kansas City's Hallmark greeting card company stands out as a prime example between 1953 and 1970. Freedman notes in her screen history of *Richard III* that 'Hallmark's *Hall of Fame* commercial interests kept great Shakespeare productions alive. Of all the Shakespeare productions, Hallmark did send the very best'.[6] In 1970 Hallmark supported a British *Hamlet*, directed by Peter Wood, and shown by NBC the American television network (Rothwell, p.99). More pertinent to the BBC TV Shakespeare series though is a BBC TV *Macbeth* (1970) which was broadcast on BBC1, directed by John Gorrie[7] and produced by Cedric Messina. Significantly, Messina was the progenitive spirit behind the BBC Shakespeare and its first producer. And for the production of the British *Macbeth* (1970), Messina attracted US funding (Rothwell, p.105).

The beginning of the BBC TV Shakespeare series and 'house' style.

Certainly, if it were Messina who directly secured American investment for the BBC TV Shakespeare series remains a discussion point. He was evidently a persuasive character and without him it seems unlikely that the series would have begun. Willis notes that Messina received clear opposition from the Drama group within the BBC, but 'rather than be denied, he forwarded the proposal over their heads, to the administration at the BBC - the Director of Programmes and the Director-General - seeking their good wishes'. Moreover, according to Willis, Messina was 'a wheeler-dealer...[with] the credentials and the organisational drive to spend several years pushing for the project, gaining commitments, pursuing financial backers, and arranging funding'.[8] Nonetheless, the probable scenario is simple good fortune, family connections as well as a tenacious BBC producer. Alan Shallcross, Messina's script editor for the series, was the cousin of an employee of Morgan Guarantee Trust Company, Denham Challender. As a consequence, Shallcross became directly aware that the American organisation 'was interested in supporting a public arts project'. And according to Halio the timing was 'propitious...insofar as the BBC was then producing annually over a hundred television plays'.[9] Thus, the BBC was able to find a co-sponsor with Time/Life Television (another American organisation and one with which the BBC already had financial ties)[10] to enable the realisation of an historical television project.

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[5] Ace G. Pilkington, *Screening Shakespeare from 'Richard II' to 'Henry V'* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1991), p.22.

[6] Barbara Freedman, 'Critical junctures in Shakespeare screen history: the case of *Richard III*', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare On Film*, ed. Russell Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.55.

[7] John Gorrie directed *The Tempest* as part of the first season's offerings in the BBC TV Shakespeare series, and it is discussed in my first chapter.

[8] Susan Willis, *The BBC Shakespeare Plays - Making the Televised Canon* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp.4-5.

Although a determining factor, monetary considerations were not the sole influence in the background of a presentation of a large portfolio of Shakespeare plays. Willis' indicative remark that Messina effectively stumbled when forwarding the idea to the BBC Drama group makes it plain that there was subsequent tension within the BBC during his tenure as producer of the series. The BBC's own publication praises the launching of the Shakespeare series, but implies the need for diplomatic management of the Drama Group ('Plays Department'): 'Special care and some ingenuity have...had to be exercised, in order to prevent the effort and use of resources involved from drowning the rest of the work of Plays Department'.[11]

Internal departmental sensibilities were only part of the challenge of conflicting interests which the BBC was faced with due to the series. The series itself had to appeal to an international television audience. Each year as the series progressed, as reported in the BBC handbooks, the programmes were being sold to more and more countries worldwide.[12] Further, the BBC had to consider the videocassette after-market.[13] According to Pilkington, large influence came from Time-Life who viewed videocassette sales as extremely important to the existence of the BBC Shakespeare. It could be well perceived, therefore, that Time-Life stipulated in contractual terms the style of the productions; a point supported by John Wilders, the series' literary advisor: "Time-Life themselves insisted that the productions must not be too ... experimental. They wouldn't have twentieth-century versions of the plays".[14] Yet, the issue remains a point of contention. Sutton remarked to me that the BBC dictated the style of its Shakespeare plays and not Time-Life. And Sutton's comment indirectly corresponds to Messina's attitude which was a wish not to impose a restrictive 'house style' (Pilkington, p.25). Indeed, contradictions abounded within the BBC. As Pilkington and others argue, including myself in this thesis, the first two years of the series had a distinctly 'conservative' approach, perhaps, due to several directors being 'excluded ... from any participation in the project by the very house style Messina said he wanted to avoid' (Pilkington, p.26).

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[9] Jay L. Halio, *Shakespeare in Performance - 'A Midsummer Night's Dream'* (2nd edition, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), p.106.

[10] *BBC Handbook 1982 - Incorporating the Annual Report and Accounts 1980-1* (London: BBC 1982), p.76.

[11] 'Television'. *BBC Handbook 1980 - Incorporating the Annual Report and Accounts 1978-79* (London: BBC 1980), pp.7-8.

Certainly the second producer, Jonathan Miller, found that the series alienated some directors outside the BBC: "some of the best directors I might have got refused to work".[15] And Miller himself was baffled by the sense of a prescriptive, "traditional" 'house style' approach to the plays: "whatever that meant", Miller comments (Pasternak-Slater, p.9). However, what is clear is the BBC experienced pressure from the different interested parties involved in the Shakespeare series: those providing financial support and those responsible for delivering each performance. As part of the compromise the BBC had to perform its role as a public body, dependent on licence fees, delighting the masses 'appeal[ing] to the immediate television audience, which expected entertainment' (Pilkington, pp.23-4).[16] And at the same time, the BBC had to consider its sponsors and effectively behave like a commercial television channel. The result was what Russell Miller, a critic, described simply as a 'scholarly version'.[17] In other words, the BBC created a saleable product for educational institutions and whomever else would be interested in using a video version of a near complete Shakespeare text for close observation.[18] Michèle Willems reports that the 'tapes of the first series were sold, mainly to institutions, at the high price of £300-£400 for each play, and were distributed for broadcast in forty-two countries ... By 1987 a dozen titles were retailed in Great Britain at £99 each, and later the more popular were distributed at regular video prices, eventually reaching the £5 level by the mid-1990s'.[19] In a final remark in 1992, Sutton emphasised to me that the BBC had "made a lot of money" from the series.

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[12] At the beginning of transmission the entire Shakespeare series had been sold to 'Australia, Canada, Eire and Japan' among others (BBC 1980, p.71).

Up to the end of the financial year 1981, it is reported that there were new buyers which included 'China, Iraq, Thailand and Turkey', and a total of thirty countries committed to purchasing the series (BBC 1982, p.75).

By the financial year-end 1982 the total number of sales commitments increased to 38. *BBC Annual Report and Handbook 1983* (London: BBC, 1983), p.76.

The last reference to sales is noted under the subtitle 'BBC Enterprises Ltd.' in the Handbook of 1986: '[the series has been] sold to more than 40 countries around the world from China to Peru'. *BBC Annual Report and Handbook 1986* (London: BBC, 1986), p.90.

[13] For example, after the first issue of videocassettes of the Shakespeare series the 'Film and Video Library Sales' reported an increase in turnover of 100 per cent (*BBC Handbook 1981*, p.75). This statistic does not refer directly to sales of the BBC Shakespeare, but it is doubtless that the dramatic rise is partly due to its release.

In successive years during the production of the Shakespeare series the BBC reported a yearly increase of turnover in respect of their commercial arm, BBC Enterprises Ltd.. By the financial year-end 1985, turnover soared to £35.3 million (*BBC Handbook 1986*, p.90) compared to £16 million at the financial year-end 1981 (*BBC Handbook 1982*, p.75). Although such a huge difference in turnover at BBC Enterprises Ltd. may well not be directly due to the sales of the Shakespeare series alone, the rise remains indicative of the substantial profit, confirmed to me by Shaun Sutton on 8th April 1992, the BBC made from the series.

[14] Quoted from an interview with John Wilders (Pilkington, p.22).

[15] A point which is raised in my chapter discussing *Macbeth*. Jonathan Miller in an interview with Anne Pasternak-Slater, *Quarto*, 10 (September, 1980), pp.9-12.

The economic situation and the power of the unions.

From an historical perspective it is not, perhaps, surprising that in the late 1970s the BBC could not finance the Shakespeare series alone. It had to search abroad for private funding and move into a relatively new market (for the BBC), of videocassettes. At the end of the 1970s the British economy was in deep recession, suffering from high levels of inflation and unemployment, comparable to contemporary indicators.[20] In a recent study of unemployment in Britain, Christopher Pissarides refers to the unemployment rate in 1986 as 'nearly twelve per cent'[21] which is a significant figure relative to today's statistic of 4.9%.[22] Pissarides observes further that 'Trade Union power reached its peak in Britain in the late 1970s ... [and] when productivity slowed down ... wage demands did not follow suit and inflation became a constraint to maintaining high employment' (Pissarides, pp.3-4). There are comments in the BBC Handbook at the time which reflect the difficulties from having to deal with unions while trying to deliver a public service: 'the frustration caused by continued pay restraint lay at the root of a number of disputes last year which might otherwise have been avoided'. The handbook mentions also the increasing number of experienced technicians and engineers leaving the BBC, thwarting the innovatory aspects of television development (*BBC Handbook 1980*, pp.60-66).[23] It is apparent, therefore, that the BBC Shakespeare would have needed to keep to a limited budget, bearing in mind the dire economic climate in which it was being produced. And having managed to secure private finance, it is most likely that it would be particularly keen to avoid upsetting its American partners. Thus, from an economical point of view the BBC would want to ensure its sponsors received what they expected in terms of the television Shakespeare.

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[16] Based on comments from Messina and Sutton.

[17] Russell Miller quoted by Pilkington (Pilkington, p.25). A 'scholarly version' suggests a television adaptation which delivers relatively little that is unexpected.

[18] The criticism of a 'scholarly' adaptation which one might well read as 'safe' or 'conservative' should not be regarded as an unusual response aimed at a BBC Shakespeare. Rothwell notes the BBC was evidently used to producing Shakespeare plays on an almost routine basis after the Second World War, delivering productions untainted by 'any far-out directors' (Rothwell, p.95). The inference of Rothwell's remark is that it is unlikely, therefore, that the BBC (despite the commercial investment) was going to start delivering experimental Shakespeare and go against expectations.

[19] Michèle Willems, 'Video and its paradoxes', in ***Shakespeare on Film***, ed. Russell Jackson (Cambridge: CUP, 2000), pp.35-6.

[20] 'The two oil-price shocks of the 1970s generated a noxious mix of rampant inflation and recession. Each time, rising fuel bills not only led to an inflationary price-wage spiral bit also imposed what was in effect a big tax on oil-users, sending the economy into a tailspin ... the oil price first quadrupled in 1973-4 and then trebled between 1978 and 1980 ... [but] despite the oil increases [in 2004], consumer prices rose by just 1.1% in the year to September'. 'Oil and the Economy - how big a threat?'. In *The Economist* print edition at http://www.economist.com/research/backgrounders/displaystory.cfm?story_id=3353255 (accessed December 2005).

However, the BBC's relationship with the Americans proved troublesome for another reason besides the question of the style of the productions. In particular, as a public body, the BBC was not immune at the end of the 1970s from strong union pressure. British Equity, the union representing actors, rejected closer cooperation with the United States. Equity supported the idea that 'only British actors could be used in the series' (Willis, p.14). This attitude of Equity's provoked furore. Willis makes reference to one contentious case which is that of the casting of Othello in Jonathan Miller's *Othello.* The BBC wanted the American black actor James Earl Jones 'for his ability and eminence', but Equity 'refused to budge' on the point (Willis, p.14). Miller's decision later in the series as producer and director, however, somewhat subverted the argument by his playing Anthony Hopkins in the role, a white actor. Miller's argument was that 'the issue of colour' was 'an incidental feature of a play that sets envy against jealousy'. Miller does remark though that he 'got into terrible trouble for asking a white actor to play the one part which is now judged to be the crowning privilege of a black performer'.[24] Yet, besides Miller's polemic it is difficult to imagine at the time who he would have been able to find (considering television's relatively short production schedule also) in terms of a strong, classical black actor who was British and of the right age: late 40s to mid-50s. Nonetheless, the inflexible attitude of British Equity caused indignation from the sponsors and 'sent prominent American-theatre people like New York City's Shakespeare impresario, Joseph Papp, into a rage (Rothwell, p.107). Furthermore, an early idea within the BBC for there to be an ensemble of actors to do all the plays in the Shakespeare series was also refuted by Equity based on the counter argument that 'as many of its members be involved in the project as possible' (Willis, p.14).

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[21] Christopher A. Pissarides, 'Unemployment in Britain: A European Success Story' (Centre of Economic Performance, London School of Economics, 2003). Accessed online at http://www.personal.lse.ac.uk/pissarid/papers/UK_unemployment.pdf (December, 2005).

[22] 'Economic and financial indicators', p.92. *The Economist*, January 7th, 2006. In 1986 twelve per cent unemployment reflects a depressed economic situation in Britain. In 1978 (the start of the BBC Shakespeare) the unemployment rate was not much less at approximately ten per cent. Information available online at http://www.bloomsberg.com/apps/news?pid=10000102&sid=a3kQsuFz8SWw&refer=uk. Accessed 12th December, 2005.

[23] Karen Lury reminds us that 'the move from black and white to colour in the UK was designed to coincide with a shift in the electronic frequency used to transmit the television signal (from VHF to UHF), so as to allow for more channels, it was some time before the transformation to colour could be completed. By 1972, only 17 per cent of households had colour television sets and it was not until the early 1980s that the last of the VHF transmitters was turned off, indicating that the take-up of colour television had at last been established'. Karen Lury, ***Interpreting Television*** (London: Hodder Arnold, 2005), p.36.In relation to the BBC Shakespeare, therefore, the switch to colour television was not completed until towards the end of the series. The reason for the technological shift not having been carried out earlier may be down to economic limitations reported in the handbook from 1981: 'The number of posts in the BBC had to be reduced and certain improvements in working conditions postponed ... There was less room for innovation than before' (BBC 1981), p.3.

Indeed, the powerful displays of trade unionism that Pissarides refers to as part of industrial relations in Britain at the time (as quoted above), and the resulting disputes, remain in the BBC background. In a letter to the author,[25] Sutton makes reference to the very last production of the series, *Titus Andronicus*, over which he presided as the third and final producer. He summarises the difficulties which culminated in a 're-instated production ... almost a year later': 'the last of the Shakespeare series ... ran into dire trouble ... a couple of days before we were due to go into the studio to record, there was [a] BBC strike and we had to call the whole production off'.

A selection of criticism of television Shakespeare.

By taking the specified plays above which span the entire series I am able to detail a process of change as reflected by the comment that 'each year the insoluble problems of putting Shakespeare on the small screen seemed more soluble' (Rothwell, p.113). However, whereas Rothwell delivers a short critique of a large group of the BBC adaptations in his chapter dedicated to 'Electronic Shakespeare: from television to the web', I provide a closer reading of the above mentioned productions. In comparison with my argument, Rothwell similarly concludes that 'the earlier plays ... mostly fell into the trap of assuming that television needed to be realistic' (Rothwell,p.108). Yet, this thesis is more interested in how the realism Rothwell makes brief reference to manifests itself in the early productions of the BBC Shakespeare as well as in the later presentations. Moreover, the thesis explores the relationship between realism and verse-speaking and the influences of realism in respect of the *mise-en-scène* and the camera work.

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[24] Jonathan Miller, *Subsequent Performances* (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), p.159.

[25] Letter dated 5 March, 1992.

I take a similar approach to Boose's analysis of the BBC *Othello* (a production not addressed in this thesis).[26] Boose focuses on the *mise-en-scène* and the costuming. Her discussion of *Othello* is relevant enough for me to mention in this 'Introduction' as it was produced and directed by Jonathan Miller, a producer who worked with Elijah Moshinsky and Jane Howell - directors whose work I examine. And Miller is more specifically comparable to Moshinsky in the sense that, as Boose notes with regard to *Othello*, Miller is interested in cultural quotations such as Dutch artists like Vermeer (Boose, p.187). For adapting images of seventeenth-century Dutch Protestantism is an important element to the 'chiaroscuro' effect I discuss in Moshinsky's BBC presentations. Boose, for instance, refers to the monochromatic appearance of Cyprus in *Othello* with its chess-board-like flooring serving as a synecdochic image 'for a Calvinist ambience ... unambiguous binary opposition and ... desires understood through checkmate and competition' (Boose, p.192). In similar terms, I describe the atmosphere of Moshinsky's *All's Well*. For example, I remark that the cold marble texture of the black-and-white flooring of the Rossillion house adds a feeling of remoteness to the 'unambiguous binary opposition', which in *All's Well* emphasises the antithetical age gap between groups of characters. And certainly, Boose's notions of 'checkmate and competition' are relevant to *All's Well*, reflecting how Helena outmanoeuvres Bertram to win him as her husband. Nonetheless, in my treatment of Moshinsky's work on the BBC Shakespeare, I detail the particular visual style of Moshinsky which is not imitative of Miller; and my analysis does not fail to mirror the comment that Moshinsky proves 'a television *auteur* equal in talent to Jane Howell and Jonathan Miller' (Rothwell, p.109).

Besides Boose's account, there is little textual analysis of specific productions from the BBC Shakespeare amongst current television and film theory. In *Real*

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[26] Lynda E. Boose, 'Grossly Gaping Viewers And Jonathan Miller's *Othello*', ***Shakespeare The Movie - popularizing the plays on, film, tv, and video***, eds. L.E. Boose and R. Burt (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), pp.186-197.

Shakespeare: Alternative Cinema and Theory, there are no allusions to television Shakespeare. However, in its 'Introduction'[27] the authors note how the Vitagraph company in the United States, at the beginning of the twentieth-century, adopted Shakespeare 'to raise the cultural and aesthetic stakes of the cinema' (Starks and Lehmann, p.11). Indeed, a similar use of Shakespeare plays by television could be argued as a way of raising the cultural profile of television.[28] But Starks and Lehmann clarify that their collection of essays is concerned with theory in respect of 'non mainstream films and the oppositional messages they convey' (Starks and Lehmann, p.14). And if we were to transfer their line of argument to the BBC Shakespeare, there would be certainly scant interest in the early productions because of their lack of 'oppositional messages'.

Criticism and the lack of it: the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest.*

Should we refer to Levenson's commentary,[29] there is no reference at all to the BBC *Romeo and Juliet* (1978) despite it being the first production of the entire BBC Shakespeare series. However, Levenson comments at length on the Zeffirelli cinema adaptation (1968) which reflects its influence as Shakespeare on film. Likewise, when discussing the the characterisation and verse-speaking of Mercutio in the BBC *Romeo and Juliet* I shall make a comparison with the cinematic approach to Mercutio in Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet.* For there is an undeniable parallel in the realistic angle taken by Rakoff, the BBC director, and Zeffirelli's. Levenson makes much of Zeffirelli's 'realistic style' (Levenson, p.83) but points out that it is not always ideal: 'realism at times [makes] the events absurd' (Levenson, p.120). And it is particularly true when 'realism' is employed to make the characters 'sound more like ordinary people' (Levenson, p.115). In support of this point Levenson offers specific analysis of the changes Zeffirelli makes to the speeches of Mercutio: 'Repetition and added words suggest that Mercutio's phrases - no longer a trim rhetorical catalogue - happen extempore' (Levenson, p.113). Similarly, by examining the language and verse-speaking of the BBC Mercutio I will demonstrate how problematic the added pauses and utterances are as part of Rakoff's attempt at realism.

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[27] 'Introduction: Images of the "Reel": Shakespeare and the Art of Cinema', *Reel Shakespeare: Alternative Cinema and Theory*, eds. L.S.Starks and C.Lehmann, (Madison, New Jersey: Fairleigh Dickin University Press, 2003), pp.9-21.

[28] Rothwell notes that Shakespeare made an appearance on BBC television as early as 1937 with a transmission of *As You Like It* (Rothwell, p.91).

[29] Jill L. Levenson, *Shakespeare In Performance - 'Romeo and Juliet'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987).

The effect no doubt leads Rothwell to describe Rakoff's *Romeo and Juliet* as 'a shadowy replica of the dazzling Zeffirelli film' (Rothwell, p.107). Such a wholly negative reaction (which is certainly not an isolated one) would, perhaps, explain the absence of any reference to the BBC production by Levenson. Pilkington remarks that the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet* 'is by popular consent (or perhaps, more appropriately, dissent) the worst film in the entire series' (Pilkington, p.27). Equally, Hapgood's survey of film and television Shakespeare contains a damning conclusion that despite the successes of the BBC series there were a 'few out-and-out failures (*Romeo and Juliet* being the worst)'.[30] However, in place of a general judgement I offer an analysis of the BBC *Romeo and Juliet* in order to clearly define the visual style at the start of the series. My examination serves as a necessary point of contrast with the other approaches I shall analyse, which evolved in the subsequent and more acclaimed BBC Shakespeare productions.

Alongside *Romeo and Juliet* (which belongs to the first season of plays) I focus on *The Tempest* (1980), coming as it does in the second season of plays, transmitted towards the end of the first period of producership under Cedric Messina. In comparison with the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet*, the BBC *Tempest* attracts very little comment at all in contemporary criticism. There is, perhaps, good reason for this. Rothwell dismisses it as 'plastic' looking and 'inert' (Rothwell, p.108). In other words, it is a production that is stifled by its conservative treatment of the text and, therefore, offers no experimentation or any 'oppositional messages'.[31] Around the time of its original transmission it was undermined by a lack of 'conviction and intensity'[32] and the *Times* critic informed the public that 'there was nothing to stir the blood either to hot flashes of anger or to the electric joy of a new experience ... This was yet another stiff production'.[33]

Evidently, the BBC *Tempest* does not have the vigour and 'anger' of Derek Jarman's cinema version released in 1979 - not long before the 1980 BBC *Tempest*. However, Jarman's film is not too distinct from the BBC *Tempest* with regard to how it was made. Jarman's *Tempest* cost approximately £150,000 (a low-budget cinema production) and was filmed in just seven weeks (Rothwell, p.195).[34] Despite obvious limitations Jarman's film is praised for its 'rich visual style'.[35] In contrast to the BBC *Tempest* there is little sense of constraint in the characterisation, for instance. Prospero is an openly aggressive figure who struggles with his situation. He is seen in torment from nightmarish visions of a destructive storm which is the film's establishing shot. Jarman's Prospero ironically appears to have little control. His 'cell' is chaotic and he vehemently mistreats Ferdinand. Prospero is as 'a magician out of a horror-flick and Ariel very possibly one of the living dead [Prospero] once released' (Hapgood, p.283). With Caliban Jarman follows modernist critics in visualising him as 'beautiful' (Rothwell, p.196) before Prospero gives him language. After which Caliban becomes 'a giggling obnoxious satyr' (Rothwell, p.197). The BBC's Caliban is 'made subhuman' but only as 'a simple, undemanding reading of the play' (Cartmell, pp.79-80). Also, the behaviour of Jarman's Miranda is notably unrestrained. Rothwell refers to her as 'a voluptuous tart' (Rothwell, p.197). Jarman clips and reorders a certain amount of the text but he stays faithful to the general storyline and 'brings key phrases and scenes to the greater attention of a modern audience' (McKernan, p.20). Prospero's island is perceived very much as a place on the edge unlike the perception of the BBC's *Tempest*, which Rothwell describes as a 'dead' island (Rothwell, p.108).

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[30] Robert Hapgood, 'Shakespeare on film and television' in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare Studies*, ed. Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), p.275.

[31] Cartmell's conclusion is that the BBC provides a "a standard 'safe' reading" of the text. Deborah Cartmell, *Interpreting Shakespeare On Screen* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 2000), p.79.

[32] Dominick Grundy, 'The Shakespeare Plays on TV', *Shakespeare on Film Newsletter*, 5:2 (May 1981).

[33] Stanley Reynolds, '*The Tempest*', *Times*, 28th February 1980.

Acting Styles: Language and Rhetoric - *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest.*

In this thesis I do not deny the critical drawbacks of the early productions from the series which I examine: *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest*. Rothwell's remark, as quoted above, that such productions mistakenly assume that 'television needed to be realistic' (Rothwell, p.108) is a poignant one. In referring to the series' *Romeo and Juliet* Clive James underlines the flimsy sense of realism, far from cinema realism, which also reflects the sparse financial means not untypical of television production: 'Verona seemed to have been built on a very level ground, like the floor of a television studio. The fact that this artificiality was half accepted and half denied told you that you were not in

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[34] It is well documented that the BBC Shakespeare series was produced with a relatively low budget and that each production had a shooting schedule of only one week. Pilkington quotes the total budget as £7 million and a shooting schedule of six days (Pilkington, pp.27-8).

[35] Luke McKernan, 'The Real Thing at Last' in *Walking Shadows - Shakespeare in the National Film and Television Archive*, eds. Luke McKernan and Olwen Terris (London: British Film Institute, 1994), p.20.

Verona at all, but in that semi-abstract, semi-concrete, wholly uninteresting city which is known to students as Messina'.[36] James' comment is undoubtedly ironic, but it reflects a genuine difficulty in how the early BBC Television Shakespeare plays deal with what they perceive as television's demand for realism combined with a faithful delivery of a Shakespeare text.

However, it is my argument that the mistakes of the early productions were catalysts for an expansion of television's ability to deal with Shakespeare and produce adventurous and distinctive styles. Moreover, I endeavour to describe the redeeming qualities of the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest*, although they are difficult to pinpoint. Indeed, contemporary discussion chooses to regard these individual BBC productions as unworthy of a close reading. In my opening chapter, therefore, I set out to do precisely that. I give a close analysis of how Shakespearean rhetoric is articulated. I single out the figure of Mercutio, who displays a rich variety of rhetorical form and imagery, and compare how cinema (in respect of Zeffirelli's version) and the BBC adaptation convey the 'Queen Mab' speech. Zeffirelli explores the potentially explosive energy of the character while the characterisation of Mercutio in the BBC production is a more restrained affair. In my examination of the additional pauses and utterances from the BBC Mercutio, I demonstrate the influence of an attempt at psychological realism, and explain the problematic consequences in terms of the characterisation and the prospective confusion for the television audience. Yet, in comparison to how Mercutio is portrayed, I refer also to other main characters: Romeo, Juliet, Nurse and Capulet and the more successful verse-speaking of the actors playing them.

This positive element redresses, if only to a small degree, the problems of a demand for doing things realistically by producer and director. I discuss how this becomes an overwhelming ambition, limiting the potential of the production. I show how spatial awareness, as portrayed through camera work and *mise-en-scène*, is compromised by the set. The obvious low-budget set is an attempt to convey a realistic Verona, when it is clearly the context for a stagey effect contained within a television studio.

The same 'stagey effect' could be said to limit the BBC's *Tempest* despite the inspirational references I mention the BBC used to elicit a 'realistic' setting. In this section of the chapter the focus is more specifically on the debilitating aspect of trying to do Shakespeare realistically. I point to the paradoxical nature of a production trying to create the sense of a 'real' island when the basis of Shakespeare's more impalpable language in *The Tempest* is that the island is a place of shifting identities, which despite being real within the world of the play are both illusory and delusory. And when tackling the fantasy elements in the play the BBC effort proves often half-hearted with reserved use of camera trickery (considering its audience would be familiar with increasingly more sophisticated effects elsewhere on television and at the cinema). Moreover, it shows a clear inability to represent the true violence underlying the text's 'storm' in any convincing way as an establishing shot.

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[36] Clive James, *The Crystal Bucket* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1981), p.153.

However, I do argue that there are signs that the sparse features of the *mise-en-scène*, representing the island, allow the audience space to concentrate on Shakespeare's language, undistracted by decorous attempts at promoting a realistic setting like Verona in the earlier *Romeo and Juliet.* Yet, the production of *The Tempest* does not take full advantage of this space to reveal the inner life of the principal character of Prospero, played by Michael Hordern. Whereas, Hordern, when playing Capulet, manipulates the internal tempo of the verse to portray an old man, as Prospero Hordern takes a far more measured approach to the verse, which lacks the refreshing spirit of Jarman's Prospero, for instance, as described above. I shall conclude the chapter, therefore, by stating that both of these early productions contain some redeeming features in spite of their general style, over-burdened as it is by a conservative and routine approach as well as a predilection for realistic representation above everything.

The development of the BBC visual style under Moshinsky.

In my next chapter I discuss productions directed by Elijah Moshinsky which represent a significant change in the series. They demonstrate a distinctive approach to how realism is conveyed in television Shakespeare without making realism an overriding concern and, consequently, a handicap to interpretation. In my discussion of *All's Well That Ends Well*, *Coriolanus* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*[37] I comment on how Moshinsky manipulates the small screen image with greater flexibility than in the earlier productions described in the first chapter. I indicate how his camera work and *mise-en-scène* are adapted to render associative images that resonate with the language of Shakespeare.

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[37] For the purposes of this thesis I shall not discuss Moshinsky's other adaptations for the series: *Cymbeline* (1982) and *Love's Labours Lost* (1984). His *Love's Labours Lost* is not discussed in view of the 'eighteenth-century aspect of that production' (Willis, p.140), different to the Renaissance/Jacobean associations in the productions chosen. Also, in Moshinsky's *Cymbeline* the alterations he makes are comparatively far more extensive than in any of his others: 'In *Cymbeline* he changes the text far more' (Willis, p.154). In addition, there is a detailed analysis of Moshinsky's *Cymbeline* in Neil Taylor's MA Thesis: 'Shakespeare on TV - a study of two productions in the BBC Shakespeare', University of Birmingham, 1983. And one should finally add that it is no doubt a mark of his success in the series, compared with Messina's directors particularly, that Moshinsky was used to direct five productions.

All's Well That Ends Well.

Styan refers to widespread acclaim Moshinsky received for his *All's Well*: 'In 1981 the television production by Elijah Moshinsky proved to be one of the most successful of the BBC's series, a spell-binding experience for millions of viewers'.[38] In his retrospective review, Styan offers a general evaluation of the production's style referring, for example, to the 'unusual perspectives' (Styan, p.7) produced by the camera. He notes the 'depth' of the images and the 'labyrinth of rooms and corridors' which I will detail more extensively. Moreover, he comments on the presence of firelight that lends 'a shadowy realism' (Styan, p.7) to a scene. It is a point with which I agree but elaborate on, linking it with the domestic atmosphere prevalent in Moshinsky's production.

In addition, I shall remark on Moshinsky's notion of 'chiaroscuro', expounding the notion of contrast to be applied to different aspects of the play. I show how it is conveyed via the set design and the age of actors as well as the lighting. Also, I discuss how typically in Moshinsky's approach the camera slowly zooms in on its subject in order to help the audience appreciate the sense of contrast within a scene, revealing a tragic element that this production suggests to underlie the play.

And indeed, no discussion of Moshinsky's idiosyncratic approach can neglect the pictorial references to seventeenth-century Dutch art noted by numerous critics. I pursue this subject, therefore, but take it a point further to employ a term, the 'painterly effect', which describes a preemptive televisual style found in Moshinsky's work. And notwithstanding the allusions to Renaissance art, I explore how Moshinsky brings a domestic and everyday-like quality to *All's Well* that appeals to a modern audience. In that context of quotidian 'relaxed sociality'[39] I examine the importance of the duologues between Helena and the Countess and Helena and the King. I analyse the language and action in both duologues to reveal the ambiguous, deceptive and, ultimately, surprising nature of Helena that is strongly conveyed in the production. With particular reference to her scene with the King I comment on how it reflects Moshinsky's ability to provoke the viewer into thinking about the emotional turmoil just below the apparently serene surface of the world of *All's Well.*

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[38] J.L.Styan, *Shakespeare in Performance - All's Well That Ends Well* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984), p.4.

[39] John Corner, *Critical Ideas In Television Studies* (London: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.26.

Coriolanus.

To create the world of *Coriolanus* I discuss how Moshinsky represents the city of Rome. I make the point that the attempt at representational realism favoured in the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet* is abandoned in favour of a basic and "primitive"[40] impression of a city. In building that impression Moshinsky gives Rome an everyday feel, as in his *All's Well*, with realistic outdoor sound effects. But there is, also, a claustrophobic atmosphere to his Rome that suggests tension and intensifies the action in the foreground.

In Crowl's brief commentary he mentions the sense of confinement: 'hedging in Coriolanus' desire to be self-created and unlimited'.[41] Crowl's comment relates to his view that Moshinsky focuses on the psychological and excises the politics. While I do not think that Moshinsky completely avoids the political issues within the play, I do agree that he is more interested in the personal relationships that affect Coriolanus. Consequently, I analyse the battle scenes to show how close images of a victorious Coriolanus and Coriolanus fighting Aufidius deliver a strong sense of intimacy; but also, that these closely contained images suggest notions which carry beyond the confines of the framed image.

The production's emphasis on close images reveal the inner frustrations of Coriolanus which are also expressed in the particular way he speaks (played by Alan Howard), to create the paradox of such a public figure who is yet so private. Moreover, I shall make clear how in close-up the images of the characters' body parts form our sense of realism in this production. Realism is focused on the people rather than the setting. The style is evidence of a more direct approach to the image to bring the audience closer to the text (which is similar to Jane Howell's work I shall refer to later). Yet, it does not mean Moshinsky no longer evokes likenesses between the television frame and the picture frame. For as I shall detail, there is an element of portraiture in the images of *Coriolanus*. But they become metonymic images which are very much a part of signifying the play's meaning through the characters rather than their surroundings. Indeed, I will explain that it is the realism of their bodies which is central to this television interpretation of *Coriolanus*.

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[40] Interview with Moshinsky. Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC Shakespeare - Coriolanus* (London: BBC, 1984), p.19.

[41] Samuel Crowl, 'The Roman Plays on Film and Television' in *Shakespeare and the Moving Image - the plays on film and television*, eds. A. Davies and S. Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.160.

A Midsummer Night's Dream.

In Halio's study of the BBC *Midsummer Night's Dream,* he indicates that Moshinsky's production is influenced by Peter Hall's 1968 film (although Hall's film was not available commercially).[42] Halio draws clear parallels, therefore, between the two versions and points to differences. For example, he notes that Moshinsky mimics Hall in cutting some of the courtiers' condescending remarks in Act V.i, and in using the idea of fairies as'lost' children. However, Moshinsky's Titania and Oberon, 'scarcely distinguishable from humans', are 'distant from Hall's forest sprites'. Moreover, Halio is of the opinion that Moshinsky is inspired by Peter Brook's 1968 theatre production when Moshinsky implies that two binary-opposite worlds of mortal-immortal and realistic-imaginary are 'in close proximity' (Halio, p.111).

While I do not deny the possible influences Halio's study brings to the fore, my discussion of the BBC *Dream* is concerned with how Moshinsky emphasises differences between the separate worlds of Athens and the fairy -wood. I examine the static impression we have of Athens compared with the image of the wood which is conveyed in an establishing shot of fairies jostling and playing in and around a pool. In addition, I discuss to what extent television Shakespeare must compromise in respect of realistic depiction. As an example, I look at how the sense of a magic wood is portrayed. In its portrayal I refer to the movement of the fairy characters to propel our belief towards a metaphysical reality. I observe how Moshinsky resorts to quick editing to produce a sense of preternatural movement. Indeed, the magical atmosphere is distinguished by the apparent erratic motion of some of the fairies, specially Puck, who appears suddenly and unexpectedly within the frame. Thus, I shall comment on Moshinsky's camera work, using differently angled shots to highlight the wood as a contrastingly unique environment compared with that of Athens.

I shall conclude the chapter by alluding to the three Moshinsky productions as evidence of a significant shift in emphasis within the series. They represent a more sophisticated interpretation of how realism can be brought to television Shakespeare without subjugating the words of the text. This does not mean that the vision of television is neglected for I will underline Moshinsky's work by referring to him as a 'creator of images'.

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[42] Peter Hall's ***Midsummer Night's Dream*** was 'a Royal Shakespeare Company production initially turned into a film for American television'. Graham Holderness, ***Visual Shakespeare - Essays in film and television*** (Hatfield: University of Hatfield Press, 2002), p.61.

Macbeth - two different visual styles for television.

In this chapter I analyse the BBC's *Macbeth* (1983), directed by Jack Gold. *Macbeth* stands out as a popular Shakespeare as well as being a major tragedy. However, it is a play notoriously difficult to stage which is a point I shall discuss. I will include, therefore, a comparative study of the ITV/Nunn *Macbeth* (1979) that was, in contradiction to the general trend, highly successful as a theatre production. Consequently, it was adapted for television within a few years of the BBC *Macbeth*. Moreover, Nunn's *Macbeth* was viewed as an inspirational production by Jack Gold who witnessed it at the theatre: "... amazing, the best *Macbeth* I've ever seen, and totally understandable".[43]

But no matter how well it was received at the theatre, the ITV/Nunn *Macbeth* had a different impact when seen as television. It is this issue that I address in my chapter and use as a point of comparison with Gold's BBC production; and indeed, it is Gold's *Macbeth* that is the primary focus, whose varied style reflects an overall competence in bringing Shakespeare to television as the series matures.

In Kliman's appraisal of the BBC production the critic is particularly struck by the 'brilliant portrait of [Macbeth which] ... can be more appealing to modern sensibilities'.[44] She notes the peculiar delivery of Williamson's (Macbeth's) verse-speaking which 'delineates a grandly diabolic Macbeth' (Kliman, p.106). Kliman's view is not so different from my own. Yet, I provide, whereas Kliman does not, a detailed analysis of the idiosyncrasies in Williamson's verse delivery and its specific effects on the meaning brought to the text.

What is more, the chapter explores the meaning of an 'expressionist' style[45] that exists in the BBC *Macbeth*. The BBC's suggestive approach creates a threatening world of cyclical violence.[46] But with such violence there is passion. And I shall discuss how Gold presents an impassioned relationship between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth adopting the term 'humanistic' (Fenwick, p.23). There will be an analysis of their verbal interaction from which I will compare a psychologically realistic treatment of the verse and a more stylised verse-speaking (as played by Nicol Williamson and Jane Lapotaire, respectively). Further, I describe how the relationship is framed by the varied camera shots and positionings. I talk about Gold's close shots to represent forms of intimacy; but also, I detail Gold's preference for "fluidity" (Willems, p.44) in his camera technique, providing depth and manoeuvrability within a scene. His manipulation of space impresses on the viewer the sense of a wider canvas in *Macbeth*. It promotes the notion of the infinite space of heath and skies in the background equalled by the enormity of passion the Macbeths display; but it is passion that eventually turns in on itself (as I shall argue) to produce destruction of horrific proportions.

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[43] Michèle Willems in interview with Jack Gold. Michèle Willems ed. *Shakespeare à la télèvision* (Rouen: l'Université de Rouen, 1987), p.42.
[44] Bernice W. Kliman, *Shakespeare in Performance - 'Macbeth'*, 2nd edition (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), p.108.
[45] Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', in *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Macbeth* (London: BBC, 1983), p.21

In describing the ITV/Nunn *Macbeth*, I draw particular attention to the discomforting visual style of the persistent proximity of its images to the audience. The technique produces what I term as a 'two-way mirror' effect, ambivalent in nature, drawing us towards the character while at the same time provoking a feeling of repulsion from the exaggerated facial image before us.[47] This apparent use of the television screen as a 'mirror' becomes an intrinsic part of the rapport the production tries to build with its audience, whether it be in relation to Macbeth or Lady Macbeth. Being so close to its protagonists gives the production its sense of realism, but I explain that this style is also a chief weakness in its guise as television.

In contrast, I stress that the variation in the approach of the BBC production is more televisual. In conclusion, I shall remark that Gold's methods represent a maturing confidence in the series. He combines styles to create a television-friendly Shakespeare, bearing in mind the difficulty of adapting such a popular Shakespeare, with its 'grand' tragic figure, in any medium and particularly the one it was written for.

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[46] The chapter will include a description of the final scenes of *Macbeth* in which Macbeth is defeated. Gold strongly implies at the end that Malcolm's reign will be threatened by Fleance. The implication of perpetuating violence and usurpation has its parallel in a previous film version: Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* (1971). The final image is of Donalbain (Malcolm's brother) limping towards the witches' lair.

[47] In his interview with Willems, Gold offers a significant reaction to the ITV/Nunn production: "I watched it for about an hour, that's all I could take ... The style was so devouring, the black and the white and the lighting, and the intensity were so strong that you could only take it for about an hour. He played everything so close, so tight that there was no variation ..." (Willems, p.49).

Jane Howell's History Cycle.

In the final chapter I will present a close analysis of Jane Howell's history cycle (1983): the three parts of *Henry VI* and *King Richard III.* I respond to the critical acclaim that the cycle 'stands out with remarkable boldness and clarity'[48] within the series; and view Howell's televisual tetralogy as the antithesis of the early productions discussed in the opening chapter.

In later criticism, Richmond gives a commentary on Howell's *King Richard III* which omits reference to any of the *Henry VI* broadcasts that precede it.[49] But Hapgood advocates the importance of viewing the plays with their unifying historical theme: 'their episodic structure with a grand historical sweep is especially suited to television ... The plays thrive on consecutive performance...' (Hapgood, p.278). More recently, Forsyth remarks on the quality of Howell's work as an 'admirable' sequence rather than as individual productions.[50] And indeed, I am interested in the significance of her *Richard III* in relation to her three parts of *Henry VI.* Richmond comments that in Howell's *Richard III* the character of Richard is simplified (Richmond, p.99), though Jorgens regards Ron Cook's Richard as one of the main virtues in Howell's production.[51] I take the view that following the character through *Henry VI - Parts 2* and *3* brings a complexity to Richard's comportment in *Richard III*, which is more difficult to appreciate should we experience *Richard III* in isolation.[52] Yet, I do agree that in

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[48] Graham Holderness, 'Radical potentiality and institutional closure: Shakespeare in film and television', in *Political Shakespeare - new essays in cultural materialism*, eds. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), p.181.

In Holderness' conclusive reference to the BBC Shakespeare in this essay, he reproaches series for being far too restrained: '...there can be little doubt that overall a conservative "drag" [to the series] is applied by a combination of factors: the constraints of commercial underwriting; the consequent concern of the BBC to build high-quality prestige into the series; the conservative cultural views of the original producer, [that is, Messina]...', (pp.194-6). For Holderness, the exception to the conservatism he criticises in the series is Jane Howell's tetralogy.

[49] Hugh M. Richmond, *Shakespeare in Performance - 'King Richard III'* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1989), pp.89-103.

[50] Neil Forsyth, 'Shakespeare the illusionist: filming the supernatural', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film*, ed. R. Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), pp.290-1. Forsyth's reference to Howell's tetralogy is a broad comment rather than part of any extensive analysis, for his key interest pertains to filmic 'devices for presenting the supernatural' (p.291).

[51] Jack J. Jorgens, 'Shakespeare on Film and Television', in *William Shakespeare: His World, His Work, His Influence - Volume III - His Influence* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), p.702.

[52] Major films of *Richard III* have had to include lines form *Henry VI - Part 3* to help the audience make sense of the parts of the text used for *Richard III.* It is noted that in Lawrence Olivier's *Richard III* (1955), Olivier included lines from *Henry VI - Part 3* Act III.ii (Rothwell, p.60). In another cinematic adaptation, some years after the BBC Shakespeare series, directed by Richard Loncraine and Ian McKellen who plays Richard (1996), there is similarly an appropriation of lines from *Henry VI - Part 3* Act III.ii. McKellen uses 'bridging materials from *Henry VI - Part 3* to sort out the power struggle among the unpleasant descendants of King Edward III (1312-77)' (Rothwell, p.221).

Howell's *Richard III* Richard is somewhat underplayed, though I will propose that it is purposely so. In playing the character that way Howell is 'able to enhance the value and meaningfulness of the play's other roles' (Richmond, p.100) as well as the role of Richard.

I shall begin the chapter by discussing the permanent set Howell utilizes for the cycle and her rejection of a realism that goes against the initial edict of the BBC's Shakespeare series. Moreover, I will refer to the contemporaneous parallels Howell sees in the tetralogy. One parallel is the set she relies on throughout the cycle.

Henry VI - Part 1.

The set's resemblance to a child's adventure playground is appropriated for *Henry VI - Part 1.* The sense of child-play is manipulated through action and language to create a more serious point from the text, indicating to the audience the early manifestations of the Wars of the Roses. The puerile element is also evident in the characterisation of Joan La Pucelle and in the battle scenes between the English and the French. I analyse the way in which Howell works against our expectations, producing a Joan whose mystic qualities are encapsulated in an ambivalent guise, and also, through trivialising the battles. And despite the general effectiveness of Howell's approach, I refer to the initial problems with the cycle in respect of unconvincing images caught between theatrical effect and television's overarching demand for realistic portrayal. I note, however, that at the end of *Part 1* the fighting becomes markedly more realistic in order to ready the audience for the darker tone and the bitterness of hostility to follow.

Henry VI - Part 2.

My argument develops to reveal the significance of close camera work to convey the profundity of social collapse within the world of *Henry VI - Part 2.* I detail the parting scene of Queen Margaret and Suffolk, and how the close shots are used to portray degeneration and violence with particular reference to Gloucester's death, the Cade rebellion and Margaret's reception of the head of Suffolk. Furthermore, I discuss the use of strong actors in direct address to present a form of close-to realism through the manipulation of facial expression. In consequence, I compare and contrast two concepts of Howell's set, referring to them as the 'framed set' and the 'known set'.[53]

Howell's reliance on direct address and close camera work creates a particular style which, as I shall describe, paradoxically appeals to the viewer via a kind of 'alienation'.

Henry VI - Part 3.

I discuss the seamless transition of ideas inherited from *Part 2* which Howell finds in *Part 3*; and that the notion of revenge is a principal one. I show that at the same time, however, Howell delivers a sense of perpetual transformation in *Henry VI - Part 3*. I point out one of the main changes is a switch of focus of Machiavellian machinations from Richard of York (who dies in *Part 3)* to Richard of Gloucester, one of his sons. And I comment on our familiarity with Richard of Gloucester through Howell's 'framed set', well before *Richard III*. In *Henry VI -Part 3* Howell acquaints her audience in close-up with Gloucester's more complex embodiment of the nihilistic trend of the tetralogy. The approach creates a strong element of realism, sensitising us to emotional shifts in Gloucester. And I relate a similar visual style when detailing the scene in which Margaret tortures Gloucester's father, York. The intimate visual angle gives a realistic edge to Margaret's inhumane treatment of York. Nonetheless, I highlight the point that the realism of the inhumane act in *Part 3* is often suggested by Howell via the reactions victim and perpetrator.

And in the culminating act of violence in *Part 3*, epitomized in the Battle of Tewkesbury, I include reference to Howell's incorporation of film technique as part of a televisual style that rarely ignores theatrical convention.

King Richard III.

I argue that Howell gives *Richard III* a rare quality of 'pure' television Shakespeare in the sense that her adaptation resonates with the earlier plays in this history cycle. It is a contrasting feature of Howell's *Richard III* when compared with Olivier's *Richard III* (1955) and mainstream cinema versions since the BBC series: Loncraine and McKellen's 1996 *Richard III* (developed from an earlier Richard Eyre theatre production) and even Al Pacino's *Looking for Richard* (1996), all of which deliver the play as a single entity. I expound, therefore, on Howell's view of Richard as a product of the Wars of the Roses. Howell is able to present Richard as a metaphor for the violent saga as its ultimate, misshapen creation.

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[53] The 'framed set' and the 'known set' are terms used by Neil Taylor in his MA Thesis, *Shakespeare on TV - a study of two productions in the BBC TV Shakespeare* (Birmingham University, 1983), p.17. In my thesis I shall develop the terms, applying them to the chapter discussing Howell's cycle.

I shall convey how tension is emphasised in Howell's vision of *Richard III* through Richard's lack of an outlet for his violent disposition (nurtured, as witnessed, in *Henry VI - Parts 2* and *3*). The audience's anticipation of how Richard's frustration will be manifested is influenced by Howell's casting of a noticeably small actor as Richard, Ron Cook. I show that the relatively petite stature of Richard is utilized ironically to increase the sense of Richard's menace, his prowess as a politician as well as a soldier, and in the scene with Lady Ann (I.ii) Richard's sexual potency.

Moreover, Ron Cook's stature complements Richard's discreet political machinations which happen within the covert environs of Howell's, by now, much darkened set. Indeed, I comment on the set's symbolic value in *Richard III*, as I do throughout the chapter in relation to each play. The set steadily brings a shadowy ambience to the cycle, and as it darkens, Howell increasingly demands imagination of her audience to introduce meaning to the text of the tetralogy.

In conclusion of the chapter, I shall remark that the reality of the actors' faces is essential to Howell's stylised presentation and her message to a modern audience. I will also note that her sequence of plays avoids the inherent weaknesses (learnt from the earlier plays of the series) in the attempt to recreate an image for the sake of realism. Instead, Howell familiarises her viewer with stylised performance initially, before disrupting the rhythm with contrastive elements which convey a realism that is both suggestive but at times direct and terribly brutal.

2. ACTING STYLES: LANGUAGE AND RHETORIC - *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest.*

> ' O how shall I describe that exquisite ebullience and overflow of youthful life,
> wafted on over the laughing wavelets of pleasure and prosperity...'
> **S.T. Coleridge**[1]

In this chapter I offer a close reading of the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet*[2] and *The Tempest.*[3] As early productions of the BBC Shakespeare series, *Romeo and Juliet* (the series' opening transmission) and *The Tempest* (belonging to the second and final season of Cedric Messina's producership), I will show in detail how they are overwhelmed by a demand for realism which results in restrictive and stale television Shakespeare. And despite certain redeeming features, I will comment on these productions serving as catalysts for a development of visual style to appropriate Shakespeare more effectively within a television setting.

Television's difficulties with Shakespeare's language - Mercutio's 'Queen Mab' speech.

The BBC Television Shakespeare's production of *Romeo and Juliet* was first broadcast on 3 December 1978, to signal the beginning of the prestige project to render thirty-seven Shakespeare plays televisual: 'six plays for six years, with one odd man out. It has been called the greatest project the BBC has ever undertaken'.[4] Under certain pressure (we may assume) as the first presentation, *Romeo and Juliet* was produced using the Peter Alexander text of Shakespeare save for a few cuts deemed vital for smooth television presentation. This televisual *Romeo and Juliet* , influenced by both cinema[5] and stage tradition, nonetheless attempts to find a way of combining the demands from the literary text with those of television. Television's predominant demand for realism stands out as a complex issue which has to be dealt with, particularly when one bears in mind that television's director of *Romeo and Juliet* , Alvin Rakoff, regards television as 'the most real medium in the world'.[6] But the push for realistic portrayal is complicated by the fact that Shakespeare's text has its own system of artifice. Thus, television must tackle the problem of articulating Shakespearean rhetoric, for instance, while managing a convincing televisual performance. In *Romeo and Juliet* , if we single out Mercutio as a character who continuously displays bravado (which ultimately leads him to an early demise) and a rich variety of rhetorical form and imagery in his language, he is a formidable figure to interpret. To begin, therefore, we will focus on the problems raised by parts of the Shakespeare text concerned with Mercutio, and then compare how cinema deals with them before examining the BBC Television approach.

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[1] Coleridge describes the Mercutio's opening speech in Act I.iv. T. Middleton-Raysor, *Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism, Volume 1* (London: Constable & Co. Ltd., 1930), p. 8.

[2] *Romeo and Juliet* was broadcast on BBC2 at 8.10-9.20pm (9.20-9.25 *Interval*) and the concluding part: 9.25-11.05pm on Sunday, 3 December 1978.

[3] *The Tempest* was broadcast on BBC2 at 8.30-10.35pm on Wednesday, 27th February 1980.

[4] Cedric Messina, 'Preface', *BBC TV Shakespeare - Romeo and Juliet* (London: BBC, 1978), p.20.

Mercutio's opulent, wordy ventures are epitomised by his 'Queen Mab' speech (Mercutio's longest) which S.T. Coleridge alluded to at one point in his lectures on Shakespeare as language '...possessing such a facility that one would say, almost, that it was impossible for it to be thought ...'.[7] Coleridge's point of view may appear extreme, but its implications for rendering Mercutio's language in a realistic form are portentous for a televisual Shakespeare. However, the text's Mercutio produces a vivid 'Queen Mab', 'a fairy [delivering] the fancies of sleeping men of their dreams': 'the fairies midwife', [8] flipping intimately among her victims, from lovers to courtiers, from lawyers to soldiers and so forth. The overall impression of a prodigious energy of movement reflects too the precocity of Mercutio's mental reflexes, as 'Queen Mab' :

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[5] In the absence of any major television production of *Romeo and Juliet* prior to this production at the start of the BBC TV Shakespeare series, I shall make reference to the popular cinema version directed by Franco Zeffirelli in 1968.

However, one should not ignore two cinema adaptations that precede Zeffirelli's: George Cukor's *Romeo and Juliet* (1936) and Renato Castellani's *Romeo and Juliet* (1954).

Of Cukor's film, Tatspaugh notes that it has 'fallen into great disrepute'. Its actors in the leading roles, Leslie Howard (b.1893) and Norma Sheaver (b.1902), are now deemed far too old to play Romeo and Juliet. But she argues that Cukor 'worked within the Hollywood system' and despite, for example, its outdated techniques 'the influence of his translation of the play from stage to screen may be seen in the filmed versions of *Romeo and Juliet*' of Castellani, Zeffirelli and even Baz Luhrmann (1996). Patricia Tatspaugh, 'The tragedies of love on film', in ***The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film***, ed. R. Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.136.

Castellani's *Romeo and Juliet* is an Italian film in English with Laurence Harvey and Susan Shentall in the title roles. Jorgens comments that the backdrop (the film uses real settings like Zeffirelli fourteen years later) proves more interesting than the acting, and the pace is far too slow. Jack J. Jorgens, 'Shakespeare on Film and Television', in ***William Shakespeare: His World, His Work, His Influence - Volume III - His Influence*** (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), p.691.

Pilkington acquiesces with regard to the appeal of the settings: 'making [the actors] seem as static figures in the Renaissance paintings from which the film drew its visual inspiration'. Ace G. Pilkington, 'Zeffirelli's Shakespeare', in ***Shakespeare and the Moving Image***, eds. A. Davies and S. Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.172.

[6] Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', ***The BBC TV Shakespeare - Romeo and Juliet*** (London: BBC, 1978), p.20.

[7] ***Coleridge on Shakespeare - The Text Of The Lectures Of 1811-1812***, ed. R.A. Foakes, (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1989). The transcript of lecture 6, p.68.

> ... driveth o'er a soldier's neck
> And then dreams he of cutting foreign throats,
> Of breaches, ambuscados, Spanish blades,
> Of healths five fathom deep; and then anon
> Drums in his ear, at which he starts and wakes,
> And being thus frighted swears a prayer or two
> And sleeps again...
> (Act I.iv.82-88).[9]

This is by no means a gentle or smooth motion as 'Mab' 'driveth' across a most sensitive area of the victim's body, producing vicious and frenzied reveries of 'cutting...throats', 'breaches' and ambushes all juxtaposed. Indeed, the archaic form of 'driveth' with its extra syllable of '-eth' lends itself to the idea of an emphatic manoeuvre, to intimate a perverse trait in 'Mab's' actions. For she 'drums' the soldier awake, thus breaking his natural sleep, and compels him to 'swear a prayer', which is a form of spurious religious atonement. Yet her brutal machinations are in turn a product of the perversity of language in which Mercutio himself becomes so involved that *he* is eventually the victim.

Mercutio seems unable to prevent himself from conjuring a nightmare, when he reiterates a conception of 'Mab' with 'This is': 'This is that very Mab...' (88), 'This is the hag,...' (92), 'This is she -- ' (94). All his utterances of 'This is' are closely sequenced, raising an oppressive incubus that effects 'misfortune' (91), and forces the sexually innocent 'maids' towards sexual experience: '[pressing] them and [learning] them to... bear' (93) and the obsessive prolonging of images of 'Mab's' tyrannous behaviour suggest that Mercutio the speaker has become entangled in what he speaks of. Finally, it shows that Mercutio has become overpowered by what he says and Romeo recognises this and interjects to beg, 'Peace, peace, Mercutio, peace,' (95) introducing a much-needed calming influence. Romeo brings Mercutio back to a level of reality so that he may realise his distraction and be appreciative of his present company, being witnessed by his peers and an entourage of Masquers and Torchbearers, all of whom are in light puckish humour for their prospective gate-crashing of the Capulets' masque-ball.

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[8] *The Plays of William Shakespeare...To Which Are Added notes by Samuel Johnson and George Steevens*, eds. Samuel Johnson and George Steevens (a third edition, revised and augmented, 1793), (London: Routledge/Thoemmes Press, 1995).

[9] *The Complete Works Of William Shakespeare*, ed. Peter Alexander (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1951), p.909. All future line references shall be from this text.

Indeed, we may view Mercutio's 'Queen Mab' speech as an example of his youthful need to boast to his fellows (which he shows constantly). And his talk reveals such stamina for language that it lays bare a youth's perennial curiosity. For what we perceive from Mercutio's profusion of ideas is a searching of reality as he evokes 'Mab' and her accessories of 'chariot' and 'waggoner' (64-67), moving on to a perception of 'Mab's' victims and then on to the dreams of her victims such as the 'soldier's'. In effect, Mercutio presents receding planes of reality within himself, as we have seen, the sufferer of his own creations and consequently, sole occupant of the most withdrawn level of reality of his own wanderings. Thus, we understand that in attempting to impress his peers the result is a distancing through language. It is, therefore, of no surprise when Romeo calls Mercutio to account with 'Thou talks't of nothing' (95). Apart from the possible bawdy quibble,[10] the sentiment of Romeo's 'nothing' strongly suggests the empty echoes that Mercutio betrays in his character through his over-abundance of language. Mercutio, in his retort to Romeo, immediately admits to his 'talk of dreams' and 'his idle brain' (96-97), acknowledging the temporary and the insubstantial essence of his conceptions. Yet it is too late, because Mercutio's rhetoric exposes a kind of unruliness that signifies a fractured relationship within the present company - representative of Verona's youth.

The group is in high spirits and yet he emphatically silences it, save for Romeo's brief interpolation. Certainly, Mercutio impresses his companions too but, as noted above, the impression is ultimately negative for the ideas contained in the language become gradually more self-obsessed. Mercutio withdraws from his companions into a state of self-absorption which fractures the communal bond of fellowship. Mercutio 'driveth' towards a state of solipsism ready to implode with the compulsive chant-like 'This is'. The implosion is halted by Romeo's 'Peace, peace, Mercutio'. But Mercutio is, to say the very least, psychologically removed from his company. His language is possessed by a quintessence of faithless mutability: '...[fantasies] as thin of substance as the air/ And more inconstant than the wind...' (99-100); a 'wind' that as easily turns 'to the dew-dropping south' (103) as to 'the frozen bosom of the north' (101). Hence, when Benvolio manages to re-establish the idea of the company of friends with 'us', what he utters shows him to be somewhat baffled: 'This wind you talk of blows us from ourselves: / Supper is done and we shall come too late.' (104-105). Benvolio's lack of sure and confident reference to the 'wind' of Mercutio ('This wind you talk of') represents the distance of understanding between the company and Mercutio, the company having been restricted to the outer limits of Mercutio's conscious play of ideas. And Benvolio's only means of breaching those limits is to regain the consciousness of the group's purpose: to 'Supper' or it will be 'too late'. It is a directive to which the group responds noisily, exiting at Benvolio's 'Strike, drum' (114); and even though we have Romeo's deep foreboding of 'fearful date' (108), Romeo is yet able to encourage them all to advance with 'On, lusty gentlemen' (113) while Mercutio rests suspiciously tongue-tied.

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[10] The footnote to l.96 in the Arden edition refers to a bawdy sense of vagina. *The Arden Shakespeare - Romeo and Juliet*, ed. B. Gibbon (London: Methuen, 1980), p.112.

As I have suggested, there are intricacies of character revealed by Mercutio's often bombastic attitude which make him somewhat of a mystery to the characters around him, though Romeo exhibits some understanding. Nevertheless, Mercutio holds puzzling qualities for the reader too. His portrayal of a 'Queen Mab', for instance, illustrates how he becomes bound up in the spirit of his verbal constructions. This leads to perceptions of 'Queen Mab' that metamorphose into provocations of suffering such as the 'hag', and which turn in on the speaker to uncover his own suffering. And though acting tradition tends to emphasise Mercutio's control over his 'copious verbal improvisations'[11] other interpretations locate Mercutio's suffering and its resulting separation. On this specific point we may refer to Franco Zeffirelli's cinema production of *Romeo and Juliet*, which suggests some interesting points about characterisation in the Shakespeare text.

The Zeffirelli *Romeo and Juliet* - a cinematic approach to Mercutio.

The Zeffirelli production shows Mercutio in a state of changing roles. He is introduced on screen as part of a large group that excitedly makes progress through a piazza toward the Capulets' feast, led by torches until Mercutio moves significantly to the fore of the group. The party of young men then witness Mercutio's display of neurotic energy which is signified verbally by the restatement of the text's elliptic end 'This is she-', which Donaldson remarks as behaviour identifying 'with the (devalued) women his discourse and antics invoke' (Donaldson, p.158). So that for Donaldson, Mercutio is identifiable as Queen Mab herself. But I would add that Mercutio's manic exhibitionism of 'Mab' emanates from possible insecurities within himself about whatever lies outside 'the male pack' (Donaldson, p.158). For any direct contact in which we view Mercutio with women is transformed into irony[12] or at worse, well-nigh physical aggression. The Mercutio of Zeffirelli's picture, for instance, pushes the Nurse onto some steps outside the church in the piazza and abuses her with sexual gestures when she has merely come to seek Romeo to hear his intentions towards Juliet.[13] One must not forget the mature years of the Nurse, and yet, young Mercutio contradicts her 'good morrow' (II.iv.105) with a sexually provocative and potentially insulting 'prick of noon' (109). Zeffirelli's Mercutio accompanies these statements with ramming his proverbial two fingers under his handkerchief in the direction of the Nurse - a gesture which is at once disdainful and almost malevolent. It is an action distinctly welcomed with mock-laughter by other male friends surrounding Mercutio. The Zeffirelli Mercutio asserts, therefore, a sort of male-bonding through phallic gesture.

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[11] Donaldson refers to Mercutio's lack of control in the 'Queen Mab' speech of Zeffirelli's film. P.S. Donaldson, *Shakespeare Films/ Shakespeare Directors* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1990), p.158.

It is an establishing of maleness which defines itself by opposition to the female figure in the role of the Nurse. She is weak with respect to her age and her physical isolation, as we view the Nurse via a pan-image entering a deserted town-square affronted by a male group. Indeed, she is at their mercy as Mercutio commences to jostle and to intimidate her, revealing her underclothes and finally forcing her to fall onto the steps.[14] This action of violation is produced by a rapid sequence of close range shots emphasising the uncomfortable menace of Mercutio's comportment. At the same time, the cinema spectator is brought into the fray with close-up, dislocating any position of comfort felt by the spectator's perception of the characters through previous medium and long shot images.[15] So the spectator clearly perceives an unrestrained and anarchical Mercutio, as suggested by the montage of close up images, respecting neither order nor any sense of self-control. Mercutio is transformed into a figure that appears not to recognise limits of conduct. Such action is, therefore, consistent with a 'Mab' figure that goes beyond him - the action of 'going beyond' being a most significant aspect to Mercutio. At this point, we may refer back to Coleridge's term of 'overflow[ing]'[16] youth to describe Mercutio. It is indicative of a Mercutio who transcends acceptable limits, thereby creating unease; and for the film, it is a feature of its theme of youth. Coleridge mentions too the 'impossibility' of Mercutio's facility of expression,[17] suggesting an absurdity in Mercutio's way of relating to others. So one might say that Mercutio exercises little restraint over 'Queen Mab' as she moves beyond his reach as the language begins to overtake him. Referring back to Donaldson's idea, therefore, I would say that Mercutio is only identifiable with 'Queen Mab' to the degree of her excessive violent behaviour. What she commits is a paradigm to the violent exploitation of the Nurse by Mercutio that we see later, and the conspicuously untamed and severed relationships throughout the play. There is the irrational desire of Mercutio to pick a fight with Tybalt (which begins the tragic downfall of the play's youth), and the unexplained, motiveless hatred and eager need of Tybalt to clash with the principal youth figure of the Montagues, Romeo (who Tybalt's uncle Capulet ironically remarks to Tybalt is '...a virtuous and well-govern'd youth...'[I.v.66]). And generally we witness the unnatural 'continuance' (Prologue.10) of feuding between Montague and Capulet which is the malign result of a mere 'grudge' (Prologue.3), according to the Chorus.

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[12] A comparison may be drawn here with the visually comic behaviour of the BBC's Mercutio at the Capulet's feast, which lies outside the Shakespeare text.

[13] Donaldson comments that Zeffirelli, 'concentrates much of his critique of misogyny in the figure of Mercutio' (Donaldson, p.157).

[14] Donaldson gives a full account of Mercutio's bullying of the Nurse, (Donaldson, p.157).

[15] The language used to describe camera shots, angles and movement in the thesis is based on Daniel Chandler, 'The Grammar of Television and Film' at http://www.aber.ac.uk/media/Documents/short/gramtv.html. Accessed January 2006.

The theme of severance and separation permeates the action of *Romeo and Juliet*. In Zeffirelli's version, during the evocation of the incubus of 'Mab', Mercutio leads the party of young men while leaping onto walls and bounding onwards, creating a physical distance between himself and them. Distance and separation are finally encapsulated in a distant shot of Mercutio from the perspective of the group he has broken from. This is visually presented as Mercutio repeats 'This is', juxtaposed with a shot of Romeo moving away from the group and hurrying towards Mercutio to be seen then in a close head-and-shoulder shot with Mercutio. And the forehead of Romeo touches Mercutio's while Romeo holds Mercutio's head in his hands, to utter a warm and empathetic 'thou talk'st of nothing'. Yet in accordance with a pervasive insensitivity to be found in the attitudes of characters towards other characters, this cinematic image of Romeo and Mercutio together is momentary. The camera tracks back to open up a greater sense of spatial relationship. For the subsequent action is of their moving apart to reveal a physical gap between each other. It becomes a visual representation of their emotional distance and a separation soon to be made definitive by Romeo's love for Juliet. But even before Romeo and Juliet meet, Romeo's severance from Mercutio is physically enacted by their companions in Zeffirelli's film. After their moment of intimacy the rest of the 'pack' (Donaldson, p.158), led by Benvolio, lead Mercutio away from Romeo while Mercutio maintains his gaze on Romeo as if to acknowledge a form of estrangement between them. Romeo remains for an instant, alone in the frame to utter his feeling of foreboding 'hanging in the stars' (I.iv.107) as we see him look up at the night-sky. This impresses as the climax to a sequence of emotiveness that Zeffirelli builds onto the Shakespeare text to create a curious mix of dynamic youth, utterly sensitive yet unfeeling, strongly bonded yet disharmonious.

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[16] Refer above, footnote 1.
[17] Refer above, footnote 7.

Zeffirelli's Mercutio is, undoubtedly, the pivotal point of that vigorous energy of youth which reaches its zenith at the end of the 'Queen Mab' speech with the head-spinning 'This is'. S. T. Coleridge's idea of over-abundant energy is evident both in verbal and visual terms for Zeffirelli. This potentially huge capacity for activity makes Mercutio a challenge for the actor. But in comparison to Zeffirelli's production of 1968 the BBC Television production of *Romeo and Juliet* of 1978 shows a Mercutio who relates to his circle of friends in a more restrained manner.

The BBC production restricts the playing space which Mercutio manipulates to relate to those around him. The set and the uses of the camera define a more limited space of movement for each scene than the cinema version. Zeffirelli's film is 'on location' in an Italian hill town; whereas, the making of the BBC *Romeo and Juliet* is bound by the television-studio. The action of Act I.iv, for instance, is based on editing between two and three cameras,[18] though the 'Queen Mab' speech involves one camera in a long-take of approximately three minutes. In this respect the camera work is significantly televisual, breaking with the often-used cinematographic short-takes which allow delivery of a few lines at a time, as in the Zeffirelli production. However, the effect of the televisual long-take is one of greater dependency on the Shakespeare text. So the BBC's 'Queen Mab' lines are conspicuous by their entirety, though one should not confuse 'entirety' here with

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[18] In a television studio during the 1970s and 80s a multi-camera set-up would typically involve the employment of three cameras. Peter Ward, *TV Technical Operations: An Introduction* (Oxford: Focal Press, 2000), p.24.

‘unbroken’ which is a point I shall refer to later. But the idea of a complete text is, indeed, one of the principles which underpins the BBC's idea of an entire cycle of Shakespeare plays. Consequently, the BBC Mercutio is at pains to convey the images contained in the language while operating under pressures of televisual communication.

Acting space and characterisation in the BBC version

Let us consider television Shakespeare production and how character is affected by the control of the perceived playing space on television. Once the overall acting space is familiar to the viewer there is a tacit understanding of a certain spatial continuity beyond the frame of each television image viewed. Hence, when we find ourselves in the midst of Act I.iv, there is already familiarity with the setting; a set representing clean, tidy streets and Renaissance colonnades, all conveyed in a monotonal beige which promotes a sanitised perception of Romeo’s and Juliet’s Verona. Moreover, the set's various streets, passageways and colonnades together with the varied camera shots generate a jigsaw impression of Verona. And a Verona composed of detailed sections contained by a small-screen image makes for a constrained playing space. So when the group of young Veronese listens to the antics of Mercutio's 'Queen Mab', the viewer recognises an enclosed space which defines Mercutio's movements.

Mercutio moves about between two apparently random groups though unified as one group by maintaining position in one recognisable space and ‘kept together’ within one relatively long-standing image. Yet, it is important how the characters maintain the sense of unity of space. They remain static and respond to the action only where appropriate and even then in subdued manner. One group is relatively stationary to the left of the television frame with Benvolio in the middle resting idly on some steps, as though the production wishes to emphasise his boredom at a lack of wit to understand Mercutio. The second group is to the right of frame dominated by Romeo standing a little distant from the group. Romeo's position suggests isolation and yet it is a position closest to Mercutio in order, perhaps, to stress an emotional bond. For when Mercutio utters the phrase referring to lovers: ‘...they dream of love’ (71), he strokes Romeo’s cheek in gentle mockery. Romeo, himself, leans against a column of a colonnade often smiling at Mercutio, as if the production is attempting a note of dramatic irony with the contrast of playfulness and naiveté now and the sombre ‘hanging stars’ and fateful meeting of

Romeo and Juliet later. However, the positions of the two groups contain Mercutio and curb the autonomy of his movements. The situation, effectively, controls a rebellious energy one might otherwise view in Mercutio's character to produce an ambience which is ultimately downbeat. The scene is characterised rather as a languid spectacle in which the spectators maintain their positions in passive poses in the expectation of being entertained. For the spectators do express amusement, and their laughing together consolidates an 'integrated group' identity. Mercutio often veers towards Romeo to speak to him close to, and he puckishly swings round the colonnade's columns which adds a hint of amusement to the overall effect. Thus, the set's architecture is used to encourage the light playfulness (if somewhat toned down) of Mercutio's behaviour as well as to contain it. Furthermore, the architecture's conspicuous limits also sustain the sense that a close-knit group is sharing the scene. Notwithstanding this, the architecture is a constant visual reminder of the greater community which lies outside such close groupings and to which they are ultimately subject.

But to return to the 'Queen Mab ' speech as a segment of television, the one camera at work affords a fluidity to the action. Instead of the actor having to conform to an established two- or three-camera, multi-editing set-up (which is the most frequent method of presenting a sequence in this television adaptation), the single camera responds to the movements of the character. The camera follows Mercutio's movements close enough to effectively position the viewer amidst the on-lookers. Notionally, the viewer becomes an extension to the group which results in an immediacy that enlivens Mercutio's gesturing for the viewer, and the medium close-up images produce a sense of a strong friendship between Mercutio and Romeo.

Indeed, the single camera movement accords with real time, emphasising the sense of immediacy by producing a set of images that carry the suggestion of a 'live' experience. The fact that by its very nature the television segment, which in this instance lasts for about three minutes, is self-contained, it generates what John Ellis refers to as 'an overall impression, that the broadcast TV image is providing an intimacy leading to a sense of co-presence between the events viewed and the viewer'.[19] Thus, in respect of the relationship between Mercutio and Romeo, there is an intimacy which the viewer can experience partly created by the 'domestic nature of the characteristic use of broadcast TV' (Ellis, p.137). Yet the problem we encounter here is that the verbal text, as part of broadcast TV sound (television's signifier of continuity) is also the Shakespeare text which carries its own expectations and familiarities, of which part of a mass television audience will be aware. This BBC *Romeo and Juliet*, and one particularly claiming to be a 'permanent' or definitive version,[20] is under in-house restrictions to typify the familiar for its audience without simply regurgitating its very own characteristic use of the domestic ingested from home-grown family dramas and soap operas. For *Romeo and Juliet* , in televisual terms, is a family drama focusing on the Montague and the Capulet households; and the production is to be viewed typically in a domestic environment - the viewer's private living-space. The contradiction, therefore, is that television is under a tacit obligation to present its audience with what it is acquainted with, and to produce a sense of the familiar even though Shakespeare is alienated by history and language.

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[19] J. Ellis, *Visible Fictions: Cinema, Television, Video* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, revised edition, 1992), pp. 136-7.

We see in the BBC's 'Queen Mab' speech that an attempt to illustrate metaphors in order to stress a cosy familiarity with the language merely points to bad acting. For instance, we can refer to Mercutio's tendency to illustrate phrases with a physical gesture. 'Athwart men's noses...' (I.iv.58) is signalled by Mercutio mimicking the movement with his hand crossing over his own nose; and 'Prick'd from the lazy finger of a maid' (66) is imitated by Mercutio sucking his finger as if it had been pin-pricked. Indeed, the physical gestures pervade the speech. Mercutio simulates 'curtsies straight' (72), 'kisses' (74), 'blisters' affecting the tongue (75), sniffing at 'smelling out a suit' (78) and the sign of the cross at 'swears a prayer' (87). He finishes his mimicry, concentrating on the bawdy sense of 'maids... on their backs, / That presses them and learns them first to bear,' (93), thrusting his thighs to and fro in a manner of sexual practice which may for a modern audience, experiencing the spectacle at home in privacy, carry intrusive chauvinistic undertones. Moreover, he finishes with a misogynous caricature of a pregnant woman: 'Making them women of good carriage' (l. 94), conveyed in a bitter tone.

Indeed, all of Mercutio's gesturing, apart from the group shot for the bawdy and well-nigh perverse humour at the end, is conveyed by a head-and-shoulder (or medium close-up) shot. This brings the audience closer to the speech. However, this series of television close-ups loses the finer and more detailed contextual image that you are likely to find in cinema; and thus, the looking experience is less demanding than the cinema-auditorium form of looking. Cinema is preoccupied with the visual text offering what

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[20] Cedric Messina, 'Preface', *BBC TV Shakespeare - Romeo and Juliet* (London: BBC, 1978), p.8.

John Corner describes as '...much more potential information for the viewing eye...';[21] whereas, television is epitomised by the casual look-in, due to the domestic environment in which it is viewed. So we find in Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* that Shakespeare's 'Queen Mab' speech is heavily cut to focus on the *mise en scène*, dominated by a real Italian hill town. The vision of television is received with a form of looking that does not usually require an assertive effort from the viewer. The viewer is used to the great variety of television output which uses spoken address to create 'a relaxed sociality' (Corner, p.26). Hence, we might define the viewer of television Shakespeare as one willing to afford the image only a casual and inconstant regard. And should we accept this idea of the viewer, sound would be particularly significant as a way to ensure his/her attention. However, the BBC Mercutio does not exploit direct address, for instance, with his domestic television audience and, therefore, the impact of a popular speech, such as the 'Queen Mab' speech, is distilled. Indeed, direct address is put to effective use in subsequent BBC productions, as I shall illustrate in later chapters. But in the series' *Romeo and Juliet* it is only the Chorus who adopts direct address to become, in effect, Shakespeare's 'television link-man' who comments, summarises and structures events for audience comprehension.[22] Undoubtedly, to speak directly to one's audience is a form of communication television has borrowed from theatre. Similarly, a television production of a Shakespeare play that has a long theatre-history is likely to imitate a certain number of its traditions.

According to Joseph Porter,[23] for example, traditional performance of Mercutio avoids homoerotic overtones in his relationship with Romeo. Likewise, in the BBC's 'straight' portrayal of Mercutio and Romeo as friends, any potential contrasts with heterosexual norms are avoided, although a suggestion of intimacy is presented to the viewer by the use of the head-and-shoulder shot. This shot produces a televisual image to be likened to the intimate Zeffirelli film shot of Romeo as he utters 'Thou talks't of nothing' with Mercutio's head gently clasped between his hands. The BBC constructs a physical closeness, but there is a distinct absence of compassionate touching or 'erotic charge' (Donaldson, p.159) between Mercutio and Romeo.Their physical closeness is, instead, constructed around the principal idea that Mercutio is attempting to distract Romeo from his solemn mood which prevents Romeo from going any further towards the Capulet feast: '... we mean well in going to this masque, / But 'tis no wit to go' (48). A column of the colonnade is Romeo's sticking-post where he rests in an obstinate frame of mind, and Mercutio is seen to rotate generally round Romeo to raise his spirits. The behaviour of Zeffirelli's Mercutio is contrary in many aspects to the BBC's Mercutio. The Zeffirelli Mercutio is far less in control - 'confused and troubled' (Donaldson, p.159) - being finally comforted by Romeo. And at the end of the BBC Mercutio's comparatively mannered 'Mab' speech he is briefly reprehended by Romeo with 'Peace, peace...', which is given an ambivalent air by the introduction of a second camera creating a sense of distance that contrasts with the previous images that conveyed a sense of closeness. Yet these different ways of seeing Mercutio and Romeo together as, close to and not close to, keep the balance of heterosexual norms; and they produce a consistent impression of a 'straight' buddy relationship. But it is not to say that a BBC Mercutio who confidently moves around influencing others remains untroubled. An often unstable Mercutio is the impression we have from the BBC production too, which draws a similarity with Zeffirelli's Mercutio.

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[21] J. Corner, 'Image', *Critical Ideas In Television Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), p. 26.

[22] The importance of 'linking' is emphasised in this production by using a star-actor, Sir John Gielgud, in the role of Chorus - a figure traditionally perceived in theatre as a small part. The treatment by television of this role, therefore, stands out because it contrasts with expectations, and gives the production instant credibility.

There is a parallel practice here in the Italian 1954 *Romeo and Juliet*, directed by Renato Castellani, which links the performance with the text's original medium. Castellani's Chorus was also John Gielgud who was associated with the role of Romeo in the 1930s (New Theatre, London, 1935). Tatspaugh, p.136.

[23] J. A. Porter, *Shakespeare's Mercutio: His History and Drama* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1988), pp. 190-193.

Verse-speaking and psychological 'realism'.

That there should be any comparison in television's treatment of *Romeo and Juliet* with its precursor in film is of no surprise. Kenneth Rothwell and Annabelle Melzer, in their historical reference to film and video productions of Shakespeare, mention Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* as a 'classic', creating the problem of being a referral point for all future productions.[24] The film is referred to by both the BBC TV producer and director of *Romeo and Juliet* indirectly and directly. And doubtless, when the producer, Cedric Messina, acknowledges the 'immense drive'[25] of *Romeo and Juliet* it is also with the energy of Zeffirelli's effort in mind, suggesting parallels of intent in the BBC TV production. For example, much attention to detail was given to staging 'a proper ballroom, a balcony, the garden, the piazza' (Fenwick, p.20). In slight contrast, *Romeo and Juliet*'s director Alvin Rakoff comments, perhaps naïvely, on 'erasing' the Zeffirelli production 'from [his] mind' (Fenwick, p.21) to give rise to the possibility of a BBC TV *Romeo and Juliet* that moves consciously away from the Zeffirelli film. This provokes an attitude which can create more problems than it solves. For it can lead to a more conservative interpretation, particularly when the premise of the series is 'straight'.[26] 'Straight' might well be interpreted as a production which limits itself against the possible exploration of the problems of character, for instance, that have been raised by previous productions. If one maintains a traditional or standard view of a character, there is the danger of over-simplification - something which the BBC TV *Romeo and Juliet* comes close to when the director wants Mercutio to be seen as a mere 'funny character'. When he fights with Tybalt (which Rakoff compares to a 'goody versus baddy' situation from the cowboy film genre), Rakoff says Mercutio should 'fight funny'-[27] a scene of the *Romeo and Juliet* film that has not been entirely 'erased', perhaps? Moreover, the motivation behind the BBC's Mercutio for his 'Mab' speech appears to be his simple wish to make Romeo cheery. Yet, as Rakoff is aware, his intentions towards characterisation have to be fulfilled within the criteria of television production and, therefore, with heed to its expectations of realism: 'the most real medium in the world' (Fenwick, p.20). But surely, it is a statement to be shared with Zeffirelli's *Romeo and Juliet* which has realism at its heart; and for the sake of its filmic form it minimises the Shakespeare text.

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[24] Kenneth Rothwell and Annabelle H. Melzer, *Shakespeare on Screen* (London: Mansell, 1990), p.261.
[25] Messina in an interview with Henry Fenwick talking about Shakespeare's narrative in *Romeo and Juliet*. Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', p. 19.

In spite of the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet* retaining most of the text, there are attempts to play down certain scenes for easier viewing. This involves conveying Shakespeare's language in a 'television-friendly' way. But one may ask, how valuable is the approach of making Shakespeare into small chunks for easier television consumption? Certainly, the casual television viewer 'looking in' ought to be considered and we can, therefore, refer above to the use of facial gestures by Mercutio. They are appropriate for the head-and-shoulder image because they place no extraordinary demands on the typical viewer. The viewing experience here simulates the conditions of quotidian eye-contact. Hence, the medium close-up shot is the most important way the viewer receives the famous 'Mab' speech. However, to spotlight language (to make the language 'television-friendly') within this or any speech can disrupt the rhythm. Doubtless, the BBC's priority is to win empathy from its audience for the 'Mab' speech to create a consensus so precious to its production values. And the BBC believes it can achieve this by compromising with the text's verse in favour of purer television, and certainly not the 'purer...Shakespeare',[28] alluded to by Wells after the series was near to completion.

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[26] The BBC TV Managing Director at the time, Alistair Milne, quoted from the series' opening press conference. *The Birmingham Post*, 2nd November 1978, p.2.

[27] Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', in an interview with Alvin Rakoff, p.25.

So Shakespeare's Mercutio is transformed by the BBC into a 'champion of plain-speaking' for the viewer.[29] But Mercutio's arbitrary pauses stifle the rhythm to give the impression of a rather affected Mercutio. The pauses, often judged by phrase, are embellished with a sharp 'huh!', uttered at the end of certain lines:

> O'er lawyers' fingers [PAUSE] who straight [PAUSE] dream on fees; [PAUSE AND 'HUH!']...
> (I.iv.73).

The somewhat contrived interjections of 'huh!' may be interpreted as the actor's attempt to articulate Mercutio's amusement at the conjured 'Mab' figure, and to persuade the television viewer of the speech's comic potential. And as Mercutio's portrayal of 'Mab' progresses, the 'huh!' becomes more evident, signalling mounting self-consciousness while the idiosyncratic pauses are less prominent, being made in accordance with syntax:

> Which, once untangled, [PAUSE] much misfortune bodes. ['HUH!']
> This is the hag, [PAUSE] when maids lie on their backs, [PAUSE]
> That presses them and learns them first [PAUSE] to bear, ['HUH!']
> Making them women of good carriage. ['HUH!']...
> (91-94).

Mercutio's prose is similarly perverted to a point that any difference between prose and verse is almost lost. His bitterness, as he hardens the words with a rasp that interferes with the tempo, produces the same staccato effect in the prose as in the verse. In the passage where he describes Tybalt as, 'Prince of Cats', Mercutio introduces frequent syntactical pauses as in his verse delivery:

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[28] S.Wells, 'The History of the Whole Contention', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 4th February 1983, p. 105.

[29] Germaine Greer describes Mercutio in the television series, *Shakespeare in Perspective*, which formed a prelude to the BBC TV Shakespeare production of *Romeo and Juliet*.

> More than Prince of Cats. (PAUSE) O, he's the courageous captain of compliments: ('HUH!' and PAUSE) ... the very butcher, (PAUSE) of a silk button (PAUSE) - a duellist, (PAUSE) a duellist, (PAUSE)...
> (Act II.iv.19-24).

Mercutio's pauses throw significance on certain phrases, playing with the idea of blurting wit as in the very phrase 'Prince of Cats' followed by a pause - for Mercutio still has his audience to amuse in Benvolio. Again the 'huh!' soon afterwards points up Mercutio's self-amusement and, in addition, his antagonism towards Tybalt. The subsequent pause is extra long and the voice more grating so that the tone is ultimately caustic.

At this point in the play Mercutio's harsh voice shows his resentment of Tybalt. But, later, dying from a wound inflicted by Tybalt, Mercutio violently pushes Romeo away while his friend tries to help him up. Mercutio then accuses Romeo, pointing at him and crying out, 'A plague o'both your houses!' (III.i.103). An edited two-camera shot is employed here to emphasise that an emotional distance exists between Mercutio and Romeo. Immediately, there follows an apparently gratuitous close-up image of Mercutio all bloody-mouthed. And as earlier, the close image is intended to convey an 'intimacy' of strong inner-feeling. The image implies a Mercutio releasing inner rage with his fiercely vitriolic 'Your houses!' (III.i.105) spat out venomously with his life's blood. The two-camera shot is then repeated to provide a cross-shoulder image of Romeo helplessly looking on as Benvolio drags Mercutio away into the background, leaving Romeo physically as well as emotionally isolated from his once great friend. The former closeness observed during the 'Mab' speech is alluded to with the various close-up images which follow. Then, a second camera comes into play to restore an ambivalent sense to the Mercutio-Romeo relationship.

The portrayal of opposing feelings in the mind of a character is important to this 'psychologically realistic' production. It helps to explain the lack of stability Mercutio shows in his verse and prose. Indeed, Mercutio's death-scene throws some light on his previous behaviour. It suggests that the anxiety and bitterness conveyed in both verse and prose indicate an intensely sensitive-natured Mercutio. He is, consequently, vulnerable to the hatred between the Montagues and Capulets. Mercutio's utterance of such fierce scorn against Montague and Capulet alike echoes the anger felt by the rest of Verona's community towards the 'two households... alike in dignity' (Prologue.1), something of which is exposed at the beginning during the scene of the street-fight.

Verona's lower strata and its ruling order are socially divided but unified in outrage against their society's highest and most respected bourgeois element. The Chorus' initial word of 'dignity' to characterise Montague and Capulet acquires deep irony and perverted meaning. The families' social standing falls further, as a result of their street brawl in the very first scene, reaching a level of bathos when the common people or 'Citizens' endeavour to 'beat them down!' (I.i 71). The strong popular reaction is matched by the ensuing public sentence announced by the ruling Prince, before everyone: '...old Capulet, and Montague,... If ever you disturb our streets again/ Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace...' (I.i.88-95). This threatened sentence of death emanates from all of Verona's grievances against Montague and Capulet. Yet the twist of irony is that the Prince's own 'blood' (III.i.186) spills first in the death of his kinsman, Mercutio; and so, the Prince's angry decree turns in on himself to bereave himself of kin, turning the Prince from anger to bitter grief: 'I have an interest in your hate's proceeding, / My blood for your rude brawls doth lie a-bleeding; / But I'll amerce you with so strong a fine/ That you shall all repent the loss of mine...' (III.i.185-188). At the inquiry into the deaths of Mercutio and Tybalt, the Prince's sorrow is expressed in terms of his 'interest' and 'loss', and it is balanced against the anger of his indictment: 'you shall all repent'. The emotional dynamic here reflects the whole play, which sees anger expressed in physical and verbal abuse between Montague and Capulet only to end with grief at the loss of each family's only child. The children's worth is typified by Capulet's reference to Juliet as 'all [his] hopes' (I.ii.14), which he confides to his prospective son-in-law Paris - a phrase that contains a note of resounding pathos by the play's end.

The idea of perverse action is exploited by the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet.* Amid the anger and chaos of the opening fracas, the camera shot cuts away quickly to a woman in the crowd of on-lookers who tries to escape the violence and falls with her baby in her arms.[30] This is followed at once, as the camera zooms in, by a medium close-up of her infant who is bloody-nosed and crying. These actions, though not in Shakespeare's text, emphasise how much the community is affected by two important families who are essentially 'at war' with each other. The mother and child incident is significant enough to produce a lull in the street brawl. The community looks on, as we see from a rapid sequence of reaction shots, evoking an incongruous mood that makes us aware of the degenerate nature of the scene. For the innocent, as typified by the mother and infant, are reduced to victims and as a consequence the 'Citizens' are provoked into anarchy: 'Down with the Capulets! Down with the Montagues!' (I.i.70). The scene's furore with its unpleasant consequences is an example of the play's perverse cycle of anger causing grief, grief changing to anger.

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[30] This image of a mother with her baby in her arms is, no doubt, borrowed from the same scene in the Zeffirelli film.

The progression is strongly evident in Romeo's reaction to Mercutio's death. We watch Romeo with quivering lips utter 'This day's black fate on mo days doth depend; / This but begins the woe...' (III.i.116-117). Romeo adopts a still pose which is framed by a medium close-up shot that conveys his sorrow and shock at Benvolio's fatal news. Yet Romeo's despondency is then overcome by a sudden fury as he roars '... others must end [!]' (III.i.117). The camera maintains position while Romeo moves and gains more space to vent his anger displayed in bigger, more forceful body movements. He strides wildly across this larger space and flails Mercutio's dagger against a wall. Then, he turns around to face directly an oncoming Tybalt as Benvolio exclaims 'Here comes the furious Tybalt back again.' (III.i.118). The scene produces the potential for a televisually exciting confrontation: 'a bloody great brawl' (Fenwick, p.25) as Rakoff puts it. All along, the camera pans Romeo's movements not only to allow him the liberty that gives the incident fluidity but also to provide his uncontrolled reactions with a touch of psychological realism. And at the same time, the camera shot retains the members of the community in deep focus so their reaction to events is constantly apparent. These figures continually cluster at the periphery of the main action (and are seen often having to avoid it, as in this sequence, and during the initial street battle mentioned above from the play's opening scene). Yet the reaction of the community heightens the realism and underlines the rôle of the community.

In providing that stronger sense of a community, television's sound effects convey the notion of a disturbance in the community when Romeo, empowered by a wrathful vengeance, chases Tybalt. We hear cries and shouts of shock from the witnesses, foreshadowing the fates of Tybalt and Romeo. For the verbal reaction from the representative figures of the Veronese community is maintained at a clearly audible single-volume while images of the pursuer and the pursued are interchanged using rapid editing. This multi-camera speed-editing displays the reckless and desperate momentum of the chase.

The rapid camera work suggests Romeo is hunting down a Tybalt in flight and that Romeo is heedless of anyone else. Each figure quickly moves in and out of a series of momentary television images. While the images foreground the homogeneous architecture of Verona, they nevertheless effectively indicate that its streets are heterogeneous in geography. The editing reproduces the same images of Verona's streets to suggest a threatening labyrinth and an overall sense of a rather sordid affair. It is an effect which keeps to the director Rakoff's instructions for a raw confrontation: 'Romeo kicks Tybalt in the balls, puts the sword in, and continues plunging with the knife - it's not even a clean rapier wound, it's a dagger, plunged in again and again.'.[31] Leaving aside the fact that Romeo does not put 'the sword in' at all, his repeated 'plunging' of the 'dagger' and Tybalt's bodily contortions on receiving the wounds are both portrayed in a heavily stylized manner. The exaggerated stylization of Tybalt's death accompanied by the television sound of sombre chamber-music together imply Romeo's tragic status; and indeed, sonically and visually the whole sequence expresses with dramatic irony the general and lamentable fate of the town's most prominent youth.

Moreover, Verona's starched architecture becomes more apparent in the open piazza where Romeo and Tybalt fight, providing a sharply formal and untainted background image for Romeo's prolonged act of thrusting the dagger into Tybalt. The contrast of visual images emphasises that a base act has sullied Verona's youth. More poignantly, a sanitised Verona suggests the incongruous presence of a Romeo, whose hands have been seen to turn 'filthy' within its walls. This discordance strengthens the idea of Romeo's ostracism (leading, as we later learn, to a sort of 'damnation' through exile) - a notion echoed by Romeo's realisation of what he has become: 'O, I am fortune's fool [!]' (III.i.132) which is vociferated with a bellowing shriek. The sound reminds us, at this point, of the pattern of emotion underlying the production as we witness here Romeo's earlier anger turning to present grief at his own misfortune. He manifests his feelings via grand gestures. Romeo ponders to look at his bloody hands and then raises his head, as if to the heavens, to cry out his fears and to demonstrate his feeling of desolation. His isolation and alienation are implied visually by a swift cut to a medium close-up shot. At this point, within the sequence of images, the clearly defined architecture of Verona is suddenly lost to the viewer to stress Romeo's alienation from Verona. This rapid cut from an image dominated by the clean lines and colour of Verona's architecture, accords with the spirit of vehement destruction now ruling the action generally.

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[31] M. Charney, 'TV And Film': 'Shakespearean Anglophilia: The BBC-TV Series And American Audiences', *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 31 (Summer, 1980, pp. 287-292), p. 289.

It is a short spate of violence which creates a whirlwind of change. The mercurial spirit rises so high in Mercutio that it inexplicably thrusts him into combat with Tybalt. This volatility reflects a spirit of machismo that dominates Verona's young males. It is echoed, ironically, by the raging presence of Old Capulet and Old Montague on the margins of the opening scene's quarrel to suggest a change of generation is no change at all. For the spirit of recklessness is reflected never more vigorously in Verona's youth than in the behaviour of Mercutio, and in the way Mercutio's impulsive bursts of energetic speech blurt out in short phrases following one after the other. Such an excessive and fraught delivery of language gives the character psychological force, exposing him as sensitive and full of bitter contempt for a family conflict that ultimately kills him.

Similarly, there is psychological credibility to the BBC`s Nurse, played by Celia Johnson. There are suggestions of her garrulous age[32] from the unremitting energy she shows for speaking which is akin to Mercutio`s. Unlike Anthony Andrews' Mercutio, Johnson manipulates the verse with a tendency to vary the tempo of delivery, producing fewer pauses. Furthermore, she plays occasionally with the line-endings for the sake of character:

> 'Yea', quoth my husband, 'fall`st upon thy face?'
> (I.iii.56)

The BBC`s Nurse adds loudness to the end of the line on 'face', breaking the line-ending for the sake of realism. But the pause which follows is brief enough not to interfere with the basic prosody. Also, this Nurse likes occasionally to speed up the tempo:

> I warrant, and I should live a thousand years
> I never should forget it... (47-8).

And:

> ... Thou wilt fall backward when thou comest of age,

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[32] Coleridge's commentary on th Nurse expressing 'the garrulity of age'. T. Middleton-Raysor, p.7.

Wilt thou not, Jule?... (57-8).

In both examples there is a pronounced enjambement which unsettles the verse units but does not lose their general effect. The Nurse does this for deliberate psychological realism: the prioritisation of character above verse, but without losing complete control of the verse. And the outcome is that she becomes representative of one fond of reminiscing and one happy to rattle on in a childlike fashion, humbly arrogant in her ignorance of any reproach to stop: 'Yes, madam, yet I cannot choose but laugh' (l. 51). Indeed, it is pointed out by Coleridge in his description of the Nurse`s character as the reflection of an uncultivated mind, remembering the past 'by a coincidence of images of circumstances which happened at the same time' (Foakes, p.80).The varying of tempo employed by the BBC`s Nurse accentuates the idea of a mind that proceeds in an ungainly and artless manner. Thus, as a television viewer we are prepared to recognise the Nurse`s shallowness and her generalisation of affection for Romeo and Paris as its realistic consequence:

I think it best you married with the County.
O, he`s a lovely gentleman.
Romeo`s a dishclout to him...
(III.v.218-20)

The Nurse`s tone, in reply to Juliet`s desperate request for rescue from a potential bigamous alliance, appears almost flippant with the crass generality of 'lovely' followed by the insensitive 'dishclout', vilifying Juliet`s barely day-old marriage to Romeo. This example of the Nurse`s acutely ignorant behaviour is a heart-rending blow to Juliet. And the Nurse`s attitude to Juliet`s predicament serves as a platform from which the play`s underlying theme of turbulent emotion is perpetuated. Asked by Juliet if she means what she has said, the Nurse stubbornly affirms 'And from my soul too, else beshrew them both' (228). Juliet`s response of 'Amen' symbolises the profundity of their separation, which is almost 'violent' in its spontaneity and clear assertion. Ignorant of Juliet`s first marriage, Capulet assumes (like the Nurse), that a marriage between Juliet and Paris represents the love and care he feels for Juliet as his daughter. But rather than ignorant, he is simply unaware of the extreme position morally and emotionally that he puts Juliet in, which ironically leads to a violent conclusion. But his stubborn insistence - a trait, perhaps, shared with the Nurse - on Juliet marrying Paris gains him *de facto* nothing but total severance from his daughter. The BBC`s Capulet, Michael Hordern, invests the figure with the signs of 'ageing', such as, an idiosyncratic stutter (I have included any additional utterances by the actor in parentheses):

> Prepare her, wife, against this wedding day. (PAUSE)
> Farewell, my lord - (PAUSE) Light to my chamber, ho! (PAUSE)
> Afore me, (PAUSE) It is so (SO - PAUSE) very (VERY) late that we
> May call it early (SHORT BURST OF LAUGHTER - PAUSE)
> by and by. Good night. (PAUSE)
> (III.iv, 32-6).

Hordern interferes with the tempo of the verse for the sake of character. In consequence, there are continual pauses, often judged within the line, but the pauses are sufficiently short not to upset the overall effect and make Capulet sound artificial. Indeed, the impression we gain is of a Capulet distracted by his old age, but not too much so that he cannot manage his daughter`s wedding. His stuttering at 'so' and 'very' portrays a dithering old man and yet retains an air of youthful excitement made clear by a short interruption of laughter after 'early'. The enlivening feeling of Capulet`s anticipation is, indeed, foregrounded by the manipulation of the cadence raising the intonation on 'Farewell' to convey a happy departure to his prospective son-in-law. Playing with the cadence in a line of verse is frequently adopted by Hordern to maintain a sense of proximity to conversational speech - important in a scene that has a realistic context. For example, in Act I.ii he wanders from stall to stall with Paris among what the producer and director would doubtless regard as a 'real market-place' (Fenwick, p.20).[33] One might view this as intrusive realism - elaborate action that distracts from the language. Yet, Capulet manages to retain the sense of Shakespeare`s verse without elaborative additions of duration and utterance within the line.

It is certain that an interpretation by any actor will interfere with Shakespeare`s verse. The question here is whether or not a very interfering 'psychologically influenced' interpretation impedes enough to overwhelm the verse to a point at which it can no longer be recognised for what it is. We may consider that the interpretations of Romeo (Patrick Ryecart), and of Juliet (Rebecca Saire) respectively, keep us aware of a sense of their verse-speaking while in character. They play little with the line-unit. Admittedly, for example, when he expresses a sense of foreboding about going to the Capulet festivities directly after Mercutio`s 'Queen Mab' speech, Romeo introduces a middle pause into the line:

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[33] Also, refer to A. Rakoff`s general comment in the 'Introduction', p.3.

> I fear too early; (PAUSE) for my mind misgives
> Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
> Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
> With this night`s revels (PAUSE) and expire the term
> Of a despised life (PAUSE) clos`d in my breast,
> By some vile forfeit of untimely death.
> But He that hath the steerage of my course
> Direct my sail! (PAUSE) On, lusty gentlemen.
> (I.iv.106-113).

However, the middle pauses (as indicated in parentheses) which often accord with the text`s punctuation are infrequent enough not to make the verse-speaking sound forced and contrived - a contrast to Mercutio`s 'Mab' speech.

Certainly, Mercutio`s speeches as described above, lose their sense of verse-speaking by being forced to become psychologically convincing for television. They are obliged to sound too near to real speech which is what they are not. And despite the effects for the sake of characterisation the result is Mercutio`s verse sounds forced, echoing with bombast that falls short of sounding acceptable for easy television consumption. It remains an unconvincing style of approach which reflects this BBC production. The BBC *Romeo and Juliet* ends its tragic demise of two young lovers with images which show the Veronese community rushing to the the Capulet monument before the Capulets themselves know there is anything amiss. Here, as when the play began, the community is disturbed by their two most renowned families. But any strong sense of community, at a time when its identity as such should be emphasised, is thwarted. For during the BBC`s 'staging' of the denouement there are many cuts and rearranging of text which, perhaps, does not match the idea of 'a definitive version' (Fenwick, p.21). Friar Lawrence`s witness summary, which symbolically unifies the community gathered outside the Capulet monument in hearing about their Romeo and Juliet, is concluded prematurely by the production at 'Romeo, there dead, was husband to that Juliet, ...' (V.iii.230). The omission causes a flimsy sense of a Veronese community, effectively undercutting its role throughout the play. Equally, the television audience is not given the opportunity at Friar Lawrence`s speech to respond to the events the play has unfolded and to relate them to their own worlds. Thus, the production falls short of delivering both the immediate impact of 'good television drama' and the dramatic effect of the language of 'pure Shakespeare'.[34]

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[34] Michèle Willems, 'Verbal-Visual, Verbal-Pictorial or Textual-Televisual? Reflections on the BBC Shakespeare series', *Shakespeare Survey*, 39 (1986), p. 95.

The Tempest - TV realism and an unreal world.

The Tempest, an example of Shakespeare`s more impalpable language, comes to television at the the end of the first series of the BBC TV Shakespeare plays during 1980, the final year of Cedric Messina`s producership.[35] The BBC`s *Tempest* shares with *Romeo and Juliet*, therefore, the intention to represent reality - the director (John Gorrie) carrying out his mandate: 'I chose to set it in a real island. The rocks aren`t weird, fantastic shapes that never were on sea or land or possibly on the moon. It`s a possible real place...in which magic things (happen)...'.[36] The fact that the BBC`s *Tempest* uses the referential material of Carpaccio paintings for costumes (Fenwick, p.17) Doré illustrations for *Divine Comedy* for the set (Fenwick, p.18) and the 'Gaping Gill in the Mendips' (Fenwick, p.19) for the inspiration behind the creation of Prospero`s cell informs us of the process of fabrication to elicit the 'real'. But there are inconsistencies in the production`s approach. Geoffrey Cauley, the BBC`s choreographer on *The Tempest*, dismisses any importance attached to 'authenticity' within the play`s theatrical framework.[37] John Gorrie's discursive comment, mentioned above, reminds us of the significance of the 'magic', that is, the insubstantial essence that gives life to Shakespeare`s *Tempest*:

> ...And, like the baseless fabric of this vision,
> The cloud-capp`d towers, the gorgeous palaces
> The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
> Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
> And, like this insubstantial pageant faded,
> Leave not a rack behind...
> (IV.i.151-6).

The transitory 'baseless fabric' and 'insubstantial pageant' are the foundations to the perceived world: 'the great globe itself'. And that world itself is characterised with an ethereal quality of being mere 'vision' and, therefore, certain to 'dissolve'. Yet despite this unreal airy quality or, perhaps, because of it, the 'globe' resonates with the animation of aspiring 'cloud-capp`d towers' and luxurious 'palaces'. It is a vision within a vision, multiplying perceptions contained within one: the 'globe' and, thus, substantial by its very insubstantiality. It is a sustained illusion which gives to the play a dream-like quality that underlines the reality of its world as 'life rounded with a sleep' (157-8); and at once, it undermines that reality as 'stuff/As dreams are made on' (157). Hence, it is the 'fabric vision' which is and is not the 'Island' of *The Tempest.* A 'bare island' (Epilogue.8) which is, nonetheless, 'full of noises,/Sounds and sweet airs...' (III.ii.130-1), playing with the senses of Caliban in a way that typifies the unravelling layers of perception beneath its apparent bareness. So the island which appears at first sight to Gonzalo as'lush and lusty' (II.i.50) is viewed as mere 'tawny' (51) by the different sensibilities of Antonio and Sebastian. Provoking conflictual perceptions, the island represents a continually changing vision of reality. Thus, it would seem foolhardy to insist on portraying the 'real' within the context of a play which conveys an unsettling idea of what its reality is, perverting a sense of its reality into a series of contradicting realities.

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[35] Since 1980 in the media of television and cinema, the only major release of *The Tempest* in the UK has been Peter Greenaway's *Prospero's Books* (1991). We may note at this point that in Greenaway's film the rich visual imagery emphasises textuality (as reflected by the film's title). And similar to the BBC version, Greenaway essentially remains faithful to the text. John Gielgud (an obvious link, perhaps, to the theatrical origin of the play as well as the play's own theatricality) is seen as Prospero reading out the lines from various books in the film and, at other times, he is heard in voice-over, speaking the lines of all the characters - a sign of Prospero's omnipotence in Greenaway's translation.

[36] H.Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - The Tempest* (London: BBC, 1980), in an interview with the director, John Gorrie, p. 17.

[37] Cauley, perhaps, rather personally but, nonetheless, in general contrast to the edict of attempting to represent reality comments '...I think authenticity is a load of rubbish in a theatrical sense'. In interview with Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', p.22.

Indeed, the BBC producer`s and his director`s sheer weight of emphasis on 'the real' detracts from the essence of *The Tempest.* The essential action of *The Tempest* takes place on an 'Island' as it is initially referred to in the rubric of Act I.i. It is later described as one that seems 'to be desert' (II.i.33), suggesting a lifeless quality. And Prospero, as ruler of the island, rarely makes reference to it as such but instead frequently asserts his home and identity by his 'cell' on the island which 'islands' him within the isle. It is, therefore, an island and not an island. It is rather a location of shifting identities which are, at once, real within the world of the play but also illusory and delusory. Prospero`s status is such that he is contained by a 'poor cell' (V.i.301) and, yet, he is master of his abode. Thus, Prospero is in control of his island and he is not. By the use of his 'Art' Prospero has omnipotence, but he is unable to prevent Ariel`s dissension and desire for emancipation:

> Is there more toil? Since thou dost give me pains,
> Let me remember thee what thou hast promis'd,
> Which is not yet perform`d me."
> (I.ii.242-44).

And Prospero is unable also to stop Caliban, who he likewise enslaved, from finding new masters in Stephano and Trinculo and to control the growing rebellion instigated by Caliban:

Prospero (Aside): I had forgot that foul conspiracy
Of the beast Caliban and his confederates
Against my life... (IV.i.139-41).

There is a perpetual see-saw-like rhythm of 'is' and 'is not' within the play`s 'fabric'. The world of the play moves beyond the borders of the island so that the island`s shores become notionally faint and insignificant. Thus, the 'magic Art' held within the island is allowed to be limitless in its machinations:

Ariel: ...I come
To answer thy best pleasure; be't to fly,
To swim, to dive into the fire, to ride
On the curl`d clouds... (I.ii.189-92).

The nature of Ariel`s movements when he is out at sea effecting a storm and resultant ship-wreck, which we later learn has not really destroyed anything or hurt anyone, indicates that the 'magic' has no horizons: 'be't to fly'; has boundless energy: 'to fly...To swim, to dive...to ride'; and stretches into a world further out than 'the real': 'to dive into the fire, to ride/On the curl`d clouds'. In describing his exploits to Prospero, Ariel reveals an illusory world in which Ariel is invisible as the assailant:

I boarded the King`s ship; now on the beak,
Now in the waist, the deck, in every cabin,
I flam`d amazement. Sometime I`d divide,
And burn in many places;...
(I.ii.196-99).

The continual breaks in the verse-line impress the speed and vitality of Ariel`s dashing to and fro, implying his sprightly and metamorphic nature able to appear as fire: 'I flam`d amazement', while striking the sailors with terror; and sub-dividing at will to be in several places at one time: 'Sometime I`d divide,/ And burn in many places'. The reality of the horror experienced by those on board the ship, provoked by Ariel, is in sharp contrast to the eventual harmless treatment they receive at the hands of the 'magic Art'. The 'magic' is, therefore, cruel and, yet, at the same time is not cruel. And it can change from mere illusion to delusion, inverting the notional 'is and is not' to what is not, is:

Ariel's Song: Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made;
Those are pearls that were his eyes;
Nothing of him that doth fade
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:..
(I.ii.396-402).

Ariel, invisible to all but Prospero, inverts Ferdinand`s world by singing of his father`s 'death', as a result of the sea-storm, with well-nigh gratuitous and paradoxically refined detail: 'Of his bones are coral made/ Those are pearls that were his eyes'. Ariel`s deceit changes a non-truth: the quietus of Alonso, the King of Naples, on the seabed, into a truth believed by Ferdinand:

The ditty does remember my drown`d father.
This is no mortal business, nor no sound
That the earth owes:.. (405-7).

Ferdinand`s perception of what is and what is not, is confused by Ariel`s hidden guise and his words. For Ferdinand the incident and 'sound' are not recognisable - not 'mortal' or of 'the earth'. And ironically, Ariel, though not 'mortal' by nature remains under the power of Prospero, the real Duke of Milan. This apparent cruelty imposed on Ferdinand together with his subsequent physical subjugation to Prospero`s 'Art' is part of Prospero`s overall 'project' to regain his dukedom: (Aside) 'It goes on, I see,/ As my soul prompts it'(I.ii.419-20), and to secure the dukedom with a concord of marriage between Milan and Naples as represented by Miranda and Ferdinand. Their betrothal to one another is a symbol of the enormity of power wielded by Prospero`s 'magic Art' on the island. It stands as the isle`s primary reality: employing guile to create harmony, to confuse to promote clarity and to set 'the wild waters in (a) roar' (I.ii.2) in order to assuage. Collectively, they represent the unbounded aspects of the 'magic' which underpins *The Tempest*. The play unfolds a world founded on a 'magic Art', which is the fabric of its reality. Moreover, it is a fabricated world built around Prospero`s 'magic' in which the BBC notion of 'the real' seems somewhat incongruous.

However, there are aspects to the BBC TV production of *The Tempest* which suggest that the world of the play is not bound by the limits of 'the real'. There are plain examples of television-trickery in respect of literal disappearances on-screen of Ariel, to effect a somewhat bland idea of his flying through the air. Sometimes we have a 'ghost-like' superimposed image of Ariel, such as in Act I.ii, where the text describes Ariel as 'invisible' as he haunts Ferdinand, and obligingly in this way television represents Ariel`s ethereal qualities - repeated later in Act III.ii, when Ariel thwarts the talk of treason from Stephano, Trinculo and Caliban. In addition to this effect in one of Shakespeare`s more ambitious scenes, perhaps, for reliance on visual spectacle in *The Tempest*, the BBC uses camera-trickery to reveal Ariel 'like a Harpy' in Act III.iii to present a sudden and frighteningly dramatic image to the nobles. Ariel then vanishes with a clap of thunder as the apposite sound-effect - a moment, like the appearance of the 'Harpy', which should impress the audience. Yet a part of the BBC concern seems to be the extent of the use of television-effects. For instance, it would appear that this BBC production`s camera work is limited in order to bring a believable fantasy-world to its *Tempest*. When it attempts to do so, as for the scene in which Ariel is the 'Harpy', the effect is tiresomely predictable to a viewer used to increasingly sophisticated effects both on television and at the cinema and, from this point of view, this BBC effort serves as unrewarding viewing. The problem with the BBC`s *Tempest* is not merely the reserved use of television-trickery, although some sign of experimentation may have produced a more interesting outcome. Yet, an empirical approach, particularly at such an early point in the BBC TV Shakespeare would not have accorded with the edict of 'straight'.

Nevertheless, a more distinct representation of a *Tempest*-fantasy-world could have been a contribution made by television Shakespeare. This is true if one accepts the argument that Shakespeare lacks the kind of fantasy that 'defamiliarises the familiar', such as one almost finds in *A Midsummer Night`s Dream*, when Bottom is given an ass` head.[38] One could assert that in *The Tempest* that 'divers Spirits, in the shape of dogs and hounds' hunting the gang of Caliban, Stephano and Trinculo is at the entrance to the world of the 'defamiliar'. And in this world of *The Tempest*, where the reality is the 'magic', there is an opportunity for television to convey the topsy-turvy nature of that world and, thus, to endow Shakespeare with what he apparently falls short of. For instance, the foundations are laid at the beginning to create tension in the audience. Is the ship`s crew alive or did they drown in the sea-storm? We only have Prospero`s word that they remain unharmed at the point when we are introduced to him and, therefore, unfamiliar with his character`s potential: '...No harm/ I have done nothing but in care of thee...' (I.ii.15-6), pacifying his daughter, Miranda. The audience may be dubious, therefore, of Prospero`s full meaning behind the assertion 'nothing but in care of thee'.

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[38] G. Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare* (London: Hogarth Press, 1990), p. 402.

The question of the crew`s fate is not, in fact, clearly answered until the final scene. It creates a similar tension to that of the violent threats to authority which permeate the action of the play. We do not really know the outcome until the end. And television has at its disposal the means to give emphasis to the hanging suspense. In the BBC`s storm-scene there is a distinct absence of vitality, where the horror and extreme danger of the situation are not consistently apparent. It is a scene that may be approached by television with its employment of production techniques to reflect the vitriol of the nobles whose behaviour, we see later, carries a physically violent edge. Television could represent a more hostile environment than the one conveyed by the BBC production. It might juxtapose distant shots of the seemingly helpless vessel amidst the fury of the storm with shots of the deck being engulfed by violent waves. The point here would be to express a tangible danger as the precursor to the terror spread by the machinations of Ariel: 'I flam`d amazement...' (Act I.ii.198). In turn, one would expect a series of rapidly edited shots of different parts of the ship to imply the energy and ferocity of Ariel`s motions on and through the ship, and to suggest their simultaneous nature: '...Sometime I`d divide,/ And burn in many places,...' (198-9). There could also be a synecdochic image of a sailor`s panic-stricken face to represent the crew`s awful sense of imminent death - a close-up shot juxtaposed with a comparatively rapid montage of images of the ship. This scene would effectively introduce the television audience to the very real sense of the unusual and somewhat outlandish nature of *The Tempest`s* world, visually. And this visual text would serve to support the tension created by the language of the Shakespeare text.

The BBC production does not fail, however, the 'magic' world of *The Tempest* and its contradictory notions entirely. Its world is portrayed as an island and, therefore, one presupposes that its land-mass is limited, contained by the sea. However, the setting has a backdrop of a limitless horizon to suggest the boundlessness of this peculiar world. A place from which the 'magic' has a far-off influence:

Prospero: I`ll deliver all;
And promise you calm seas, auspicious gales,
And sail so expeditious that shall catch
Your royal fleet far off...
(V.i.314-16).

In his final speech before the 'Epilogue', Prospero promises a peaceful voyage during which, by his 'Art', the notion of time is commanded in order for the King of Naples with Prospero and the other nobles to 'catch' up with the rest of the 'royal fleet'.

Moreover, the set of the BBC production is generally uncluttered: sand, rock and an olive orchard. The sand and rock are realistic representations, though the orchard used was a real apple orchard transplanted to the television studio (Fenwick, p.19). The orchard is the principle setting for only two scenes: Act II.i and Act III.ii. It suggests a fertile island, despite the BBC using a 'dead' apple orchard, (Fenwick, p.19). The television image of the two scenes appears crowded, creating a claustrophobic atmosphere that diverts the audience's attention away from the language. However, the orchard setting's 'closed-in' look effectively portrays the imprisonment of the nobles in Act II.i. They are perceived as captured and contained by Prospero's 'Art'. By the same token, in Act III.ii the rebellion of Caliban with Stephano and Trinculo may be perceived as self-delusory, observed as they are from within the orchard by Prospero's messenger, Ariel. But less detail is more. The 'bare island' (l. 8) referred to in the 'Epilogue' by Prospero is better represented in the BBC production by the comparatively stark detail of sand and rock. These are relatively isolated representations of reality which form part of a *mise-en-scène* that allows 'space' for Shakespeare's language. In turn, it allows for an interpretation of the character of Prospero where the actor can '[remove] large-scale hectoring rhetoric'.[39] Or as the BBC's Prospero, Michael Hordern, puts it: 'you can be seen to be thinking' (Fenwick, p.26). This attribute of television drama, whereby an actor does not have to project his/her voice to reach a far-off audience, provides the actor with the liberty to explore the verse and convey a strong psychologically realistic impression. The audience can, therefore, become familiar with the interior life of the character rather than the exterior detail of the set. However, for this to happen the actor has to take certain risks with the verse, as Hordern does when he portrays a stuttering, old Capulet in *Romeo and Juliet*. In comparison with his Capulet, Hordern's Prospero manipulates the internal line tempo much less. For instance, during *The Tempest's* 'Epilogue' Hordern, in keeping the poetic delivery, conveys the magicianly dignity of Prospero. He does alter tempo - all actors do, and he cannot avoid putting an actor's (not a poet's) duration on the main syllable of 'relieved' and 'Mercy', and a heightened intonation on the main syllable of 'pierces':

> ...And my ending in despair
> Unless I be re | lieved by prayer,
> Which pier | ces so, that it assaults
> Mer | cy itself, ... (15-18).

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[39] Tim Hallinan, 'Jonathan Miller on the Shakespeare Plays', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 31 (1980, pp. 134-45), p. 134.

Similarly, when he is angry at forgetting the 'conspiracy/ Of the beast Caliban and his confederates' (IV.i.139-40), the tempo of his speech changes, breaking the evenness of delivery. But one might well conclude that these examples betray a generally straightforward and measured approach to the verse which lacks the energetic force good television drama needs.

Conclusion.

These productions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest* from the BBC Shakespeare series, as I have described above, reflect a related matrix of ideas of how to do Shakespeare on television within the scope of the mammoth TV project. Despite being two contrasting Shakespeare texts, written at opposite ends of Shakespeare's career; one of which invokes a realistic world while the other deliberately does not, they are both constrained by a similarly, unadventurous and outmoded form of television 'classic' drama, in comparison with the varied styles examined in the following chapters. The adaptation of *Romeo and Juliet* is so preciously concerned with the detailed architecture of its set representing an Italian renaissance town that it pushes the text aside,[40] in favour of its prominent stagey effects. In this attempt to squeeze Shakespeare's Verona into an image that reflects the producer's concept of how 'real' Shakespeare should appear, the language of Shakespeare is equally affected. In *The Tempest* a conservative approach to the verse is evident. *The Tempest*, though not submerged by the heavy weight of reliance on the literal depiction of a crowded environment, still only manages to deliver a half-hearted attempt at a full Shakespeare text. I have shown that both productions come together as representative of Messina's desire for what emerges as a confined and restricted version of realism. Both have redeeming features, which I have attempted to highlight in the chapter, that argue to some extent against the negative criticism the productions attracted.[41] But ultimately, they do remind us of Brooks' notion of 'Deadly Theatre': 'nowhere does Deadly Theatre install itself so securely, so confidently and so slyly as in the works of William Shakespeare'.[42]

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[40] On this point there is, perhaps, the distracting influence also from the cinema versions of *Romeo and Juliet* by Castellani (1954) and Zeffirelli respectively, which are referred to elsewhere in this chapter.

[41] Refer above to the 'Introduction', pp.10-12.

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[42] Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (London: Pelican, 1972), p.12. Peter Brook refers to theatre producing an idea of what theatre should be and the kind of theatre that has died but does not realise it. By relating Brook's term of 'Deadly Theatre' to the BBC TV's vision of televised Shakespeare, I am suggesting that especially in terms of the BBC's initial approach, it may well be criticised as regressive. Brook's vision of 'Deadly Theatre' accords with BBC TV's initial emphasis on traditional versions of Shakespeare: '...Deadly Theatre approaches the classics from the viewpoint that somewhere, someone has found out and defined how the play should be done. This is the running problem of what we loosely call style...The moment we try to pinpoint this style we are lost', (p.17). Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (London: Pelican, 1972), pp. 11-46.

3. The Development of the BBC Visual Style: *All's Well That Ends Well; Coriolanus; Midsummer Night's Dream.*

In this chapter I shall discuss the BBC productions: *All's Well That Ends Well* (1981), *Coriolanus* (1984) and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1981),[1] directed by Elijah Moshinsky. I shall demonstrate how these productions signify a distinct change of attitude to the portrayal of realism in the series, compared with the productions detailed in the first chapter. Moshinsky's interpretations are not thwarted by a dependency on realistic representation; and I examine how Moshinsky combines camera work and *mise-en-scène* to create greater flexibility with the small screen, delivering associative images that resonate with the language of Shakespeare.

Specifically, in relation to his *All's Well* I will comment on an exploration of contrasts and the significance of interior settings. In respect of his *Coriolanus* I shall focus on Moshinsky's use of close shots to reveal character as well as the suggestive quality of his camera work and imagery. In relation to *Midsummer Night's Dream* it is the manipulation of the television image which creates a new and flexible version of 'realism'.

Contrasts and 'chiaroscuro' in *All's Well.*

In the process of rejuvenating the BBC Shakespeare series, as the series' second producer, Dr. Jonathan Miller tried to introduce directors he referred to as 'outsiders',[2] such as, Peter Brook and Trevor Nunn. He failed in his attempts to attract Brook and Nunn to the television project. However, a non-BBC person Miller successfully attracted to the project was Elijah Moshinsky. In the BBC's own production notes Henry Fenwick refers to Moshinsky as a 'neophyte', but someone who 'seems totally assured'.[3] The BBC-man responsible for lighting, John Summers (who continued to work with Moshinsky throughout the series) makes specific reference to Moshinsky's 'background in theatre and particularly opera', which helps give the production of *All's Well* - Moshinsky's first in the series - a certain 'atmosphere' (Fenwick, p. 27). They are not disparaging comments but separate Moshinsky as a director with a distinct approach compared with, for example, the previous season's choice of directors from television people under the general stewardship of Cedric Messina. Susan Willis comments that Moshinsky 'not only shared many of Miller's interests and ideas, but he also saw additional possibilities in scenic effects and treatment of text, extending them to make them his own, not derivative of Miller...'.[4]

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[1] *All's Well* was broadcast on BBC2 at 7.15-8.30pm (with an interval for *News* at 8.30-8.35pm) concluding 8.35-9.50pm, Sunday 4th January 1981.

Coriolanus was broadcast on BBC2 at 8.40-10.10pm (*Interval*: 10.10-10.15pm) concluding 10.15-11.05pm on Saturday 21st April 1984.

A Midsummer Night's Dream was broadcast on BBC2 at 7.15-8.10pm (*Interval*: 8.10-8.15pm) concluding 8.15-9.15pm, Sunday 13 December 1981. Ironically, the programme was transmitted closer to mid-winter.

[2] Stanley Wells, 'Television Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 33 (Autumn, 1982), p.269.

[3] Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *All's Well That Ends Well* (London: BBC, 1981), p. 17.

In the text of *All's Well* Moshinsky saw what he referred to as 'a chiaroscuro' (Fenwick, p. 17).[5] In consequence, the visual text of the BBC production is dominated by subdued and contrasting colours. There are many examples of black Renaissance-like costumes juxtaposed with off-white, as described by the costume designer Colin Lavers: '...black and charcoal grey and mid-grey ... and you can get away with full black costumes with a nice radiance coming from the ruffs. And the ruffs are never dead white because we use straw stiffener' (Fenwick, p.23). The approach of creating stark differences is reminiscent of the ITV/Nunn *Macbeth* I shall discuss in my next chapter. Moshinsky though, favours contrasts of light and dark not only with regard to costumes, but also in relation to the set design, the lighting and the age of the actors. For certain, there are parallels between the ITV *Macbeth* and Moshinsky's treatment of *All's Well*; but Moshinsky has a notably dissimilar attitude to how the audience perceives the television image.

First however, we should isolate a small but important point quoted from the costume designer of *All's Well*, which distinguishes Moshinsky's *All's Well* from the ITV *Macbeth*: 'the ruffs are never dead white'. There may well have been technical reasons why the 'ruffs' were not of brilliant white, which would have foregrounded a notion of presenting startling contrasts. But instead, there is the presence of a rather less conspicuous hue of white in *All's Well* that points to a generally considered and moderated sense of how contrasts should appear on television. Although the notion of creating contrasts permeates the BBC's *All's Well*, it remains a style less severe in its approach than we find in ITV's *Macbeth*. Perhaps the difference can be justified by reference to the quite separate worlds depicted in the respective texts. One calls to mind the blatantly unforgiving and tyrannical context of *Macbeth*, overtly disparate from the apparent gentle domesticity in *All's Well*. Yet there is an inner conflict which manifests itself in the form of perverted behaviour in *All's Well*. The conduct we witness in characters like Helena and Bertram is 'violent' in terms of obsessiveness and insensitivity. Such 'violence', however, is somewhat subdued by the effect of courtly manners, so that the 'violence' idles below the surface. The nature of violence is, therefore, more subtle in *All's Well* and less on show than with the many instances of open bloodshed in *Macbeth*. The visual presentation of the BBC's *All's Well* reflects rather the intricacies of emotional struggle and 'trickery' in the Shakespeare text by elaborating on the perception of contrast beyond merely the 'monochromatic' look.

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[4] Susan Willis, *The BBC Shakespeare Plays - Making the Televised Canon* (Chapel Hill: the University of North Carolina Press, 1991), p. 135.

[5] In a sense, Moshinsky is 'free' to interpret *All's Well* without the burden of previous attempts to do so. For *All's Well* had not been adapted specifically for television as a complete production before. On 3rd June 1968, BBC2 screened a two-hour length production directed by Claude Whatham. But this television presentation was of a Royal Shakespeare Company production, originally adapted and directed for the stage by John Barton: 'An adequate recording of an imaginative and acclaimed stage production, introducing such obvious points of direction as having close-ups for the soliloquies [as is often the case in Moshinsky's version], but not distinguishing itself particularly in any other way'. L. McKernan and O. Terris, *'All's Well'*, in *Walking Shadows*, eds. L.McKernan and O.Terris (London:British Film Institute, 1994), p.31.

The first scene of the BBC's *All's Well* opens with a long shot of a domestic interior which represents Rossillion before the camera dollies gradually towards a medium shot, so the audience can focus on certain characters and their dialogue. The camera shots, as described, form admittedly the initial pattern of movement from the opening couple of minutes, but they are representative of an overall process. Moshinsky felt that it was important to commence a scene using long shots to place characters in context and to emphasise atmosphere (Fenwick, p.25). The camera work is somewhat straightforward and predictable, but the effect of the progressive camera movement, from establishing shot to the focusing of character(s) within the established setting, promotes the sense of a gentle rhythm. The camera dollies in slowly from a long shot to a medium shot allowing its audience residual time to absorb the various elements of the image or *mise-en-scène*. The camera work creates the impression of fluidity with the one take. It is unlike the cinematic single-frame that would typically follow up a background shot by then cutting to another shot of the characters engaged in conversation in the foreground, for example. Indeed, the use of the camera in *All's Well* exposes the potential of television Shakespeare, moving the audience's attention from one aspect to another of the fixed image with apparent seamlessness that is both measured and purposeful. And within the unhurried transition, we begin to appreciate the exposition of contrast in Moshinsky's *All's Well*.

One can observe, in the opening scene, the alternate black-and-white arrangement in the effect of marble flooring (part of the *mise-en-scène* for the king's court, though not the same pattern). The generally sombre colours of the characters' clothes but in particular, the black costumes of the Countess and Lafeu, together with the dark but simple furnishings contrast with the light pouring through the window (to the left of the television image). The juxtaposition of light and dark is highlighted by the static pose of the mature figures of the Countess and Lafeu while they speak to each other. And contrary to their apparent lack of mobility it is clear that the younger generation, as represented by Bertram and Helena, are active as they move around the significantly older characters. Here, we could differentiate the actions of the two sets of characters by the straightforward terms: one 'doing' and the other 'saying'. The behaviour of the young and old essentially, therefore, suggests isolation from the other and that implicit difference is accentuated by the appearance of an unrealistic age-gap. With some careful viewing, the television audience would realise that the actor playing Bertram, Ian Charleson, could realistically be the grandson of the Countess, played by Celia Johnson, a much older actress.[6] The evident age-difference factor supports the comment of John Summers which is that Moshinsky's instinct is for 'atmosphere above strict realism' (Fenwick, p. 27).

The 'atmosphere' thus engendered from the initial range of contrastive images is one of coldness - epitomised by the polished marble flooring and the muted colours - and a remoteness. The sense of detachment underlines a belief in this production that there is a tragic element in *All's Well* which emanates from a void in the communication between one generation and another. In his first conversation with Lafeu, Bertram, despite his imminent departure to be 'in ward' (I.i.5) with the king at Court, appears unaware of the nature of the king's suffering:

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[6] Dame Celia Johnson, (1908-1982), was most famous for her screen career spanning the 40s, 50s and 60s. She was renowned for her role as Laura alongside Trevor Howard's Dr. Alec Harvey in David Lean's *Brief Encounter* (1945). Johnson also appeared in many other films - *This Happy Breed* (1944), *The Holly and the Ivy* (1952), *I Believe in You* (1952) and *The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie* (1969), being the most successful amongst them. However, the majority of her time as an actress was spent in the theatre. Notably, Johnson walked out of rehearsals at the Royal Court in the early 70s, because of too many 'improvisation games'. Her contribution to the BBC TV Shakespeare series was as the Nurse in *Romeo and Juliet*. Johnson's Nurse was widely regarded as the only redeeming feature of the entire production. She also gave a very respectable performance as Countess Rossillion in the BBC's *All's Well* at the age of 72, just two years before her death.

Ian Charleson, (1950-1990), left LAMDA, (London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art), one year before graduation at the beginning of the 1970s. He was acknowledged by Elijah Moshinsky, when directing the BBC *All's Well*, to be from a different style of acting compared with Celia Johnson. Moshinsky regarded Charleson's acting as 'ultra-naturalistic', (Fenwick, p.18). Charleson was a cinema as well as a stage actor like Johnson, and his first film role was as one of the amoral twins in Derek Jarman's *Jubilee*. He received perhaps, most attention for his role as Eric Liddell in *Chariots of Fire* (1981), directed by Hugh Hudson. Charleson appeared also in *Gandhi* (1982); *Greystoke: The Legend of Tarzan* (1987) and *Opera* (1987). Over the course of the BBC TV Shakespeare series, Charleson played roles in *Hamlet* (1980) and *Antony and Cleopatra* (1981). He played the part of Bertram in Moshinsky's *All's Well* when he was 30 years old.

> Ber. What is it, my good lord, the King languishes of?
> Laf. A fistula, my lord.
> Ber. I heard not of it before.
> Laf. I would it were not notorious... (I.i.29-32).

The Arden edition of the play refers to Bertram's first exchange of words with Lafeu as 'a humble question'; and it notes that Lafeu responds "somewhat patronizingly, as if to imply 'you may not have heard of it yet, boy, but you will when you grow up', and then returns abruptly to his conversation with the Countess".[7] Bertram is certainly aware, by the use of the word 'languishes', that the king is ill, but for the Arden commentary to regard his enquiry as 'humble' is somewhat over-generous towards the character of Bertram. Bertram may wish to present an unassuming air in relation to a question about the King of France, (characterised in the BBC production to be of the same generation as Lafeu); but there is a striking incuriosity in the distinctly naive content of such a question. Under such circumstances one might imagine that in falling under the direct guardianship of the king, Bertram would expose a greater sensitivity towards his protector who 'hath abandon'd his physicians' (Lafeu, I.i.12), of which the implication is death.

Indeed, our first impression of Bertram is of a certain vacuousness for he is attracted by the ostentation of Parolles. In contrast, Lafeu rebukes Parolles as soon as they are alone together:

> ...Yet the scarfs and the bannerets about
> thee did manifoldly dissuade me from believing thee
> a vessel of too great a burthen. I have now found thee.
> (II.iii.201-3)

Lafeu ridicules Parolles for his excessive use of 'scarfs and bannerets'. The word 'manifoldly' is apt for such a figure as Parolles. We may view it merely as a pun on 'many folds' in relation to Parolles' sartorial presentation. Yet 'manifoldly' also signifies the varied form and chameleon-like aspect of Parolles, who is able to deceive the decidedly thoughtless Bertram but not Lafeu. Lafeu, behind the curtain of many folds - the 'scarfs and bannerets' ['the mark of a military man' (Arden, p. 61)] - has not been deceived but has discovered Parolles' true identity: 'I have now found thee'. Lafeu's pronouncement would indicate that Parolles is not the soldier he appears. The judgement is earlier echoed by the BBC's introduction of Parolles whom we see via the reflection in a mirror. Indeed, in the Arden 'Introduction' G.K.Hunter refers to Parolles' character as 'appearance without reality' (Arden, p. xlviii). Should one regard television by the truism that it is 'a mirror on the world', the image of Parolles by way of a second mirror suggests a character who lacks solidity and substance.

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[7] *The Arden Shakespeare - All's Well That Ends Well*, ed. G.K. Hunter (London: Routledge, 1994), p. 5.

Bertram and Parolles.

The sense of what and who Parolles is, is lost in his reflected images which represent receding planes of reality. Parolles is for us as a glass display - a flamboyant but fragile spectacle. The frame of the mirror itself, through which we initially perceive Parolles' presence is, indeed, floridly decorated. Parolles' first action, which we witness through the mirror, is to groom his rather elaborate moustache; undoubtedly, it is an activity that mirrors the self-love of the character. The term 'self-love', to mean love that is exclusive to itself, strongly suggests isolation. It is the isolation of a boxed-in emotion, restrictive and constricted to concern only for the self. Therefore, it is appropriate for the image of Parolles to be seen, from the very beginning, captured within the box-like frame of a mirror. In such a form, the image of Parolles takes on a fragile aspect signified by our distanced view of him - within the borders of a mirror that is contained within a frame within the parameters of a camera image transferred to and displayed by the framed television screen. Each plane of viewing experience pushes our perception of Parolles further away from a sense of reality. Thus, our reality of him becomes one of insubstantiality. Parolles is turned into a flimsy and indeterminate presence despite the sartorial show that we view. For it is the case that by the end of the play, Parolles has been revealed a coward and, consequently, is reduced to begging and a certain degree of self-pity: '...I am a man whom Fortune hath cruelly scratched.' (V.ii.26). It is of import, therefore, that Bertram is attracted to the superficiality and frippery of Parolles.

It is a mark of the tragic element in *All's Well* that Bertram is taken in by Parolles. Bertram's response to him is so distanced from the one expressed by Lafeu that, indeed, their views are polarised: 'I do assure you, my lord, he is very great in knowledge, and accordingly valiant.' (Bertram, II.v.7). Some moments later, Lafeu strongly advises Bertram:

> ...believe this of me: there can be no kernel in this

> light nut; the soul of this man is in his clothes. Trust
> him not in the matter of heavy consequence;...
> (II.v.42-5).

Lafeu clearly castigates Parolles in front of Bertram as empty of character and, thus, merely a shell: ‘no kernel in this nut; ...[his] soul...is in his clothes’. The cankerous image of a ‘nut’ without its fruit signals the corrupt nature of Parolles and, indeed, his ability to deceive: ‘Trust him not...’. Interestingly, Bertram does not respond at all to Lafeu’s advice. A missing reaction implies the weakness in Bertram’s own character, as he continues to converse with Parolles. Only later in Act III, when the First and Second Lords speak to Bertram of Parolles in the *Florentine camp*, does Bertram feel provoked to self-doubt: ‘Do you think I am so far deceived in [Parolles]?’ (III.vi.6). The question belies Bertram’s naivete, so when he describes Parolles to Lafeu as ‘very great in knowledge and accordingly valiant’ Bertram effectively lies about his knowledge of Parolles. Almost childlike in his attitude, Bertram’s understanding of Parolles is built on impressions. Bertram lacks curiosity enough to be unaware of Parolles’ true identity; for surely, having knowledge to begin with is a prerequisite towards recognising someone ‘very great in knowledge’.

However, Bertram’s question to the First and Second Lords denotes a change in Bertram’s attitude. It is the beginning of a realisation that strikes a note of maturity in the character. Significantly, the Lords are catalysts to the transition in Bertram, and they are shown in the BBC production to be Bertram’s peers, of similar age to him. It would appear, therefore, that Bertram ignored the earlier words of sagacity from a much older generation, represented by Lafeu. Subsequently, however, Bertram seems to have been prepared to listen to representatives of his own age group. It is simply further evidence of an empty rapport between generations and of contrasting attitudes and perceptions emphasised by the BBC production.

To return to the opening scene that depicts Rossillion, the audience can perceive different elements contained by the image. Action is identifiable within the image at two levels. The more sedate activity is in evidence at the fore of the image involving the older generation - Lafeu and the Countess. As already noted, the younger generation in the guise of Bertram and Helena, at times during the scene share visual space with their elders. However, as if to prove the agility of their comparative youth, we also see Bertram and Helena in the background of the image preparing luggage for Bertram’s imminent departure for the court. Indeed, it appears that servant figures also contribute to the composition of the contrasting bustle in what we sense as a connecting room. This background scene conveys a credible feeling of quotidian behaviour that has direct relevance to the verbal text of the play. Certainly, the movement we witness underlines the significance of Bertram's departure which Lafeu and the Countess discuss. In turn, the television audience is allowed to look through a doorway that gives the television image a peculiar depth.

Interiors and depth of image.

That the image was afforded an extra dimension was the BBC's intention, according to the set designer, David Myerscough-Jones. The doorways as well as allowing 'depth of focus shots down corridors' were 'motif[s] throughout the play' (Fenwick, p.25). Camera shots which reveal significant detail in the background as well as at the fore of the image pervade our impression of the king's court and Florence in addition to Rossillion. And it was commonly acknowledged that the basic notion of presenting a 'depth of focus' to the image was inspired by such Renaissance Dutch masters as, Rembrandt, Frans Hals and Vermeer. In consequence, every set presented in this BBC production represents an interior (Fenwick, p.24).

Presenting indoor scenes as a focus accords with Michèle Willems' view of television as an intimate medium - [8] serving scenes of quiet diction. This is a relevant observation particularly when we view Helena's confession of love for Bertram to the Countess (I.iii), and Helena healing the king (II.i). However, Willems rather favours a more 'stylised' approach over what she refers to, and what the BBC's *All's Well* would fall under according to her critical terms, as predominantly 'pictorial' in style (Willems, p.99). Willems prefers that the viewer receives elliptical or symbolic shots. She is concerned that the 'pictorial' approach leads to the image competing with the text. Moreover, within the rich imagery that filming in depth for television can produce, the effect can be confusing in Willems' argument, creating too many heads in the shot, for example.

Willems' point is debatable in my view. Crowding an image with a lot of characters is a potential difficulty, but Moshinsky proves that over-burdening the television viewer is avoidable while maintaining a rich complexity to the image. For instance, in the opening scene of Moshinsky's *All's Well*, we see a good deal of activity with figures that appear from two doorways and moving about in the background, as described above. The image might serve to confuse the television viewer by showing up to seven characters at the same time. Notwithstanding this, the same background image is continuously in view which helps the audience to feel comfortable with it through familiarity. This background image is always to the right of the shot once the shot is established; and it makes up approximately a third of the entire television image. In so doing, the frame of the nearest doorway, due to its symmetry with the television frame, creates a 'split-screen' effect which provides a convenient break for the viewer to switch attention between the different aspects of the whole image, despite the small-screen size. The impression of a split-screen produces a clear visual signal for the audience to perceive spatial variance within the image. In turn, the audience can appreciate diverse movement being played out along the contrastive spatial planes set up by the camera shot. The result gained appears uncomplicated, as it sets up a temporal simultaneity between different parts of the household. We are able to witness the cause of the activity in the foreground (talk of Bertram's move to court) and the effect in the background at the same time. The presentation of a straightforward connection between cause and effect provides a realistic sense to the image for the audience. The simplicity of that realistic link of cause and effect assists the viewer in distinguishing the motivation behind the movement of each figure in the image. Thus, the viewer is able to avoid the potential distraction and sensation of an excessive number of characters in the one image when it is clear the characters have a purpose.

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[8] Michèle Willems, 'Verbal-Visual, Verbal-Pictorial or Textual-Televisual?'. Reflections on the BBC Shakespeare series, *Shakespeare Survey*, 39 (1986), pp. 91-102.

When we first view the king in Act I.ii, it is an image of the King of France receiving an audience at his bedside. There are five heads in the shot as well as the king's. Certainly, the image is open to the criticism of there being too many redundant heads in one shot as four of them do not speak. The image, therefore, could distract a television audience from the text with what Willems calls 'visual abundance' (Willems, p. 99). However, one should consider that by presenting so many figures at the king's side, attentive to the king's words, the production accentuates the king's profile and the dangerous nature of his illness as key to the plot. As the image initially fades into view we discern a very dimly-lit scene that immediately affords it an atmosphere of *gravitas*. The dark costumes of the king's attendees blend with the surrounding blackness, so that only their heads are instantly distinguishable from out of their contrastive white ruffs. Individually, they are indistinguishable as they share the same sartorial guise. But the king, whom they observe, is differentiated by his prostrate position and more significantly, by his semi-naked appearance. In terms of 'chiaroscuro', the majority of the light falls upon the exposed upper-torso and the head of the king, naturally drawing our attention towards him. Thus, the audience is more likely to regard the observant figures as secondary within the image. The visual notion reflects the ancillary role they represent in the world of the text; and in that specific function, the audience can accept them as part of the overall image without much confusion.

Moreover, there is a static quality to the image that introduces Act I.ii. It is an aspect of the BBC production quite often employed, and it presents the viewer with what Willems describes as a 'silent shot' (Willems, p.102). The figures in the image are motionless for noticeable moments which affords the audience some relief by contrast. The stillness captures the dramatic intensity of the sick king which the wandering eye of the television viewer, used to the constant animation of the small screen,[9] might miss. One might argue, also, that the static appearance of the scene accords with the general passive nature of television-viewing in the domestic context. In particular, this image of a very private interior space - the bedroom (the Alexander text, used by the BBC, merely notes *The King's palace*) is appropriate for a distinctly intimate medium.

Admittedly, altering the location of the scene to the king's sick-bed introduces a visual that creates its own complexities beyond that of the Shakespeare text, as Willems would argue. In turn once again, this could well distract the viewer. Nonetheless, my reply would question if the distraction is such a bad thing. The 'complexities' of the image representing Act I.ii of *All's Well* include what Kenneth Rothwell comments as 'the cloning of seventeenth-century Dutch art'.[10] With the use of the word 'cloning' Rothwell identifies the grouping of those peering at the King of France as 'borrowed' from Rembrandt's 'The Anatomy Lesson'. This conscious reference to Dutch painting rather provides a pleasing aesthetic to the television picture, creating the experience of something highly watchable. So much so, that it is not imperative the viewer is aware of the allusion to Rembrandt. Without the knowledge the viewer is able to appreciate, still, the visual energy produced out of the combination and subtle differentiation of light and dark. Unequivocally, the impression from the image supports the idea of contrasts that are evident, according to this production, throughout the text.

The 'painterly effect' and the domestic environment.

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[9] 'The pleasure of watching movement and action, is an important part of television, both in factual and fictional programmes', John Corner, *Critical Ideas In Television Studies* (Oxford: OUP, 1999), p. 27.

[10] Kenneth Rothwell, 'The Shakespeare Plays: *Hamlet* and the Five Plays of Season Three', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 32 (Autumn, 1981), pp. 395-401.

It is worthy of comment that the so-called 'cloning' of paintings in the BBC's *All's Well* anticipates a future tendency in televisual style. A well-respected commentator in Television Studies, John Caldwell, refers to new trends in respect of the television image being dominated by the 'picture effect'[11] fifteen years after the BBC's *All's Well* was produced. The phrase denotes the reflexivity or the manipulative ability of the television image - 'the television image itself consuming television images' (Caldwell, p. 147). Caldwell comments on the move away from a 'naturalist' presentation of the image. For example, in television advertising a typical 'naturalist' image of a car would be the car being driven along a road. Yet, due to the 'picture effect' the advertisement would exploit the car's image to afford it anthropomorphic attributes.[12] Certainly, it is a basic example, but television advertising is a notable exponent of the 'picture effect'. Moshinsky's *All's Well* does not attempt anthropomorphism in its imagery, but one could apply the same critical term, the 'picture effect', in relation to the BBC production. Rather than 'the television image...consuming television images', we can refer to the television image consuming (with conscious reference) the painterly image. In essence, therefore, the presentation of *All's Well*, produced in 1980 and transmitted in 1981, shows a preemptive style of television production that should be considered as a harbinger of Caldwell's 'picture effect' that we shall refer to as the 'painterly effect'. It is a television image that is intended to convey characteristics of a known painting or paintings.

It should be noted that the BBC's *All's Well* does not include a wide array of images for which one would employ the term, 'painterly effect', to signify qualities akin to a specific Dutch masters painting. Consequently, the image from the beginning of Act I.ii stands out. In accordance with the pattern of camera work in this TV *All's Well*, we view the scene's opening image in long-shot before progressively dollying in to medium and sometimes medium close-up shots. The result is that the audience is not startled from having to deal with the forcefulness of a series of facial close-ups and big close-ups. Instead, the audience has time to appreciate a greater range of detail. Despite the edgy atmosphere of a potential fallen monarch the image implies, there is a certain casualness innate to the passivity contained in this television picture. The television picture I describe is a visual allusion to what is critical in television viewing. Literally, the image in question is an illusion, but the significance for television rests with its realistic overtones. We have already mentioned how the BBC's *All's Well* is a series of interiors and in Act I.ii the king's bedroom is depicted. Therein lies one of the most conspicuous features of Moshinsky's composition. It is the endeavour of television to mimic home space. In Moshinsky's *All's Well* the television studio and the domestic setting of the viewer manage to come together, in spite of historical and aesthetic differences, to create a world of what John Corner would distinguish as 'temporary co-presence' (Corner, p.26).

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[11] J.T. Caldwell, *Televisuality* (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1995), p. 147.

[12] Compare the 2004 GM Vauxhall Corsa television advertising campaign, in which each car in a group of Vauxhall Corsas is given individual, human characteristics to win a race.

The transient co-operation between the viewer and what is viewed, the image and the receiver of that image is vital to successful television. The willingness to engage with television is brought about by producing something with which the viewer feels at ease. For certain, the underlying concept governing any television channel is to prevent its audience from switching to another channel or from switching off. Thus, it produces and shows a variety of programmes whose contents are formulated to provide comfortable viewing. 'Comfortable' viewing does not imply that a programme's set of images should not represent something to challenge or even trouble the viewer. However, images which typify the inside of homes currently pervade both factual and fictional programming. British television 'soap-operas' illustrate the point as do, in 2004, the range of property and DIY broadcasts that feature amongst virtually all of Britain's terrestrial television fare.[13] Undoubtedly, the domestic setting connects with the viewer, who watches most probably in their own home, directly and quickly. This helps to ensure immediate attention and due to the recognition of a shared context, lends a friendly casualness to the atmosphere. It is, therefore, no surprise that the domestic setting features so prominently in Moshinsky's *All's Well.* Indeed, Moshinsky offers us, somewhat ironically, images of comfortable domesticity. We have only to hark back to the play's first scene in which, notwithstanding the preparations for departure, there remains a smooth, uninterrupted pace and a calm atmosphere. There is a 'relaxed sociality' (Corner, p.26) where unhurried conversation takes place between characters, some of whom move seamlessly, namely Bertram and Helena, between the different spatial perspectives within the image of a home - Rossillion. The sense of casualness conveyed here reflects an everyday kind of rhythm that the audience easily appreciates. That 'everydayness' is important to how the audience reacts for television responds well to 'familiarity' and 'ordinary' life (Corner, p.31).

The everyday appeal of the image.

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[13] The TV listings for 9th November 2004, arbitrarily chosen, include Channel 4 to broadcast three property-related programmes: *A Place in the Sun*; *Selling Houses* and *Time to Get Your House In Order!*. And BBC TV continues to transmit at 'prime time', that is, at 8.30pm, its long-running DIY show *Changing Rooms*.

We find ordinariness in different guises throughout the BBC's *All's Well*. At the level of costumes used there is a dull ordinariness to colour and style, as noted above in respect of the first two scenes. In the presentation of Act III.v for which the notes on location and action are as follows: '*Without the walls of Florence...Enter an old* Widow of Florence, *her daughter* Diana, Violenta, *and* Mariana, *with other* Citizens',[14] we see the Widow, Diana and Mariana inside their home without the obvious presence of other Citizens. The dominant hue is a warmer brown colour in contrast to Rossillion and the king's palace in Paris. The women's sartorial style is stressed in greens and browns, and though rather dark, complement the set; and when each character speaks she remains employed in a quotidian activity - stitching cloth and the preparation of food. The characters speak whilst engaged in their regular chores which would be familiar to the average viewer. The television image provides the viewer with what is another example of 'the pleasure of watching movement and action' (Corner, p.27). Yet 'movement and action' are subdued somewhat by the homely image. The speech and motions of the characters take place round a large table. Thus, the table becomes an important element of the *mise-en-scène* or set, to the extent that the table represents a focal point within the image. The table is a metonymic signifier for the home-setting in spite of its commonplace aspects or, perhaps, due to them. Similarly, a table is central to our attention in the gentle, verbal combat of love-making between Bertram and Diana in Act IV.ii. Over the table, they jostle verbally as Bertram strives to win the love, but in essence the maidenhood, of Diana. Yet Bertram has met an opponent who is not so easy to win over: Bertram, '...I prithee do not strive against my vows' (IV.ii.14) indicates Bertram's frustrations. The table in the scene denotes the battleground for the love-contest in which, ultimately, Bertram is defeated by a deceit orchestrated in the background by his wife, Helena: Diana, '...I think't no sin/To cozen him that would unjustly win.' (IV.ii, ll.75-6). Diana asserts the view that it is Bertram who is the deceiver, acting 'unjustly' against his marital vows and, therefore, it is 'no sin' for her to cheat or 'cozen' him.

In the television image that portrays Act IV.ii, the apparent single source of light comes from an open fire in the background of the image. The presence of the fire enhances the notion of homeliness and imbues the atmosphere with a definite coziness. As part of the image's foreground there is the familiar sight of victuals on the table though they are untouched, including a full glass of red wine. Food and drink are visual metaphors for the 'heaven on earth' of which Bertram speaks on believing he has 'won'

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[14] *The Complete Works*, ed. Peter Alexander (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1951), p. 333.

(1.66) Diana. Ironically, Bertram's vision is what the Arden edition refers to as a 'false heaven' (Arden, p.104) or, indeed, a haven of hedonism. Appropriately, the red wine conveying sensual pleasure, does not pass Bertram's lips in the same sense that he does not in the end defile Diana's maidenhood. Effectively, Bertram does not feed upon her virginity which remains at a distance in the same way that we perceive the victuals on the table. The wine, coffee-pot and cheese are present throughout the scene, highlighted by the ostensible glow from the fire. And the presence of a fire in this television scene resounds with a contrary note. As well as suggesting homely comfort, the image of the fiery background is connotative of the ardour that motivates Bertram's wooing of Diana. The picture of a blazing fire may be interpreted, also, in a rather clichéd fashion as a visual metaphor of hell-fire. For Bertram's attempts in the scene are those which would result in, strictly speaking, adultery and '...the flow'ry way that leads to the broad gate and the great fire' (Clown, IV.v.48-9).

The underlying notion of sin in Act IV.ii effectually perverts the sense of warmth in the image and the calm pace of the television scene. Certainly, the BBC production does not attempt to subvert the pervasive mood of television's 'seamless equivalence with social life'[15] or 'the relaxed and the casual' (Corner, p.32). Rather Moshinsky shapes the text to the demands of television. The emphatically serene and 'seamless' rhythm (which television seems to require, according to its critics) is used for contrastive purposes to expose what Moshinsky alludes to as a sense of sexuality in *All's Well* that is 'not of the healthy kind' (Fenwick, p.18). Should we make reference to Act II.i and the passive quality of the image of the king in his sickbed, there is a submissive element which is the king ready to submit quietly to death. However, the tranquillity of his deathbed is 'disturbed' by the seemingly harmless Helena. Her professed reason for her presence is to 'cure' (157) the king. Helena's appearance in the BBC scene supports the idea of the character's inoffensive aspect, her humility in entreating the king and her low social status. For she remains standing at a respectable distance from the king, and her attire is an ordinary and unadorned dark grey dress. In comparison, the king's bed-cover is of a warmer, royal blue colour with a satin texture. The contrast is immediately obvious to the viewer and stresses the social gulf between the two characters. But it is this strong degree of contrast matched with an incongruously unstrained atmosphere in the scene which actually make it all the more disturbing.

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[15] Stephen Heath, 'Representing Television', in *Logics of Television: Essays in Cultural Criticism*, ed. P. Mellencamp (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1990), pp. 267-302.

Helena with the Countess and the King - Moshinsky's handling of duologues.

We are already acquainted with the idea of the virginal Helena being in love with Bertram, after declaring as much in the previous scene Act I.iii to the Countess:

> Then I confess,
> Here on my knee, before high heaven and you,
> That before you, and next to high heaven,
> I love your son.
> My friends are poor, but honest; so's my love...
> (I.iii.183-5).

Yet Helena's affirmation is somewhat convoluted, reiterating 'high heaven' and 'you' (the Countess) before the actual declaration of 'I love your son'. Even her proclamation of 'love' does not include Bertram's name directly, but 'your son'. Helena's use of the word 'confess' and her gesture of self-subjugation 'on [her] knee' indicate that she treats her clandestine affections for Bertram as a sin and the Countess as her confessor. Then as soon as she has made her admittance, Helena almost flinches with a defensive utterance in respect of her social unworthiness: 'My friends were poor', before pointing up her moral worthiness via the purity of her love: 'honest; so's my love'. Despite the humility in her motions and words, there is an underlying steeliness to Helena's assertion of emotion. Self-effacing yet with the possibility of being forthright indicate a contrariness in Helena's character, which the BBC adaptation explores.

Helena is indirect but can also be direct. The Countess is direct in her questions which Helena tries to fudge:

> Count. ...Speak, is't so?
> If it be so, you have wound a goodly clew;
> If it be not, forswear't; howe'er I charge thee,
> As heaven shall work in me for thine avail,
> To tell me truly.
>
> Hel. Good madam, pardon me.
>
> Count. Do you love my son?
>
> Hel. Your pardon, noble mistress.
>
> Count. Love you my son?

Hel. Do you not love him, madam?

Count. Go not about; my love hath in't a bond
Whereof the world takes note. Come, come, disclose
The state of your affection, ... (I.iii.172-181).

Regardless of the Countess' undeviating grilling: 'Speak, is't so?...tell me truly...Do you love my son?...Love you my son?...Go not about...Come, come, disclose', Helena tenaciously ducks from a straight reply, requesting the Countess' 'pardon' not to answer on more than one occasion. The Countess 'charge[s]' her but to no avail. Eventually, the Countess' frustration shows by the use of the imperative 'Go not about' and 'Come, come, disclose' before Helena relents. The BBC's version of their conversation uses a conventional over-the-shoulder multi-camera set-up. The viewer sees, therefore, each character as they speak interjected with reaction shots. However, it is evident that Helena, under such scrutiny at this point, is more often viewed in the foreground, but with her back to the audience as though she shields some truth. Indeed, the scene takes place at what appears to be night-time with the single source of light emanating from the left, beyond the television frame. We are led to believe the light-source is a fire due to the perceptible and realistic noise of crackling.

As elsewhere in this production, the sense of an open fire superficially brings warmth to the atmosphere of the scene but it is, also, as in the scene between Bertram and Diana, deceptive. As the only light it produces a lot of shadow. Much of the image is bathed in darkness which promotes a mood of inscrutability that reflects Helena's veiled responses to the Countess. Surprisingly, the Countess, who is generally supportive of Helena's love for Bertram, remarks on Helena's inventive capacity to avoid detection of her true feelings: 'you have wound a goodly clew'. Should we acknowledge here the Arden edition's note that the Countess' phrase is proverbial and used "in derision when a business hath sped ill" (Arden, p.30), we infer from it that the Countess is a touch critical of Helena, referring to the ambiguity of her behaviour. In the corresponding television scene when Helena reveals her emotions on her knees, both Helena and the Countess are portrayed in a two-shot medium close-up. They are together in the image though their different postures imply distance. The Countess sits and we view her face on. Helena kneels in the foreground and our perception mirrors that of the Countess which is Helena in profile. It may well be that Helena does not look straight at the Countess out of respect, and because she is simply self-conscious and apprehensive. However, to offer her mere profile to the Countess may be interpreted as indicative of Helena's indirectness and circumlocutory manner. Subsequently, though, Helena does indulge in direct statement: 'I know I love in vain, strive against hope;' (192). It is an utterance that resounds with, by now, familiar self-deprecation. The television image changes at this precise moment to present a close-up of Helena (a camera shot not so frequently used in this production) denoting a key element in the speech. It signals to the audience that special attention should be given to this juncture in the unravelling of the drama, while the camera is "static" (Fenwick, p.25). So when Helena returns to the more oblique fashion of alluding to her love, the medium close-up shot with Helena in profile is re-established in the television scene.

With some verbosity Helena seeks acceptance. She appeals to the Countess' memory of her own youthful love to convince the Countess, once again, of her innocence and deserving:

Hel. ...but if yourself,
Whose aged honour cites a virtuous youth,
Did ever in so true a flame of liking
Wish chastely and love dearly... (I.iii.200-3).

There is a certain shrewdness in Helena's approach. One has to bear in mind that she is dependent on the Countess, but there is the strong sense Helena ingratiates herself with the Countess. She specifies the Countess' 'aged honour' and 'virtuous youth'. Then Helena impresses her own suffering by appealing to the Countess' discernment of an ideal: 'Wish chastely and love dearly'. It is the ideal, and like all ideals hard to maintain, of remaining innocent while experiencing the force of love. And the BBC's Helena, Angela Down, emphasises the duration on 'love' when she utters the phrase 'love dearly'. Ostensibly, the manner of her verse-speaking conveys the notion of Helena's virginal love for Bertram, yet it hints also at a fervid longing that pulsates just below the surface of Helena's character. The Countess' response, in contrast, lacks the self-absorbed wordiness of Helena and is a practical question and interestingly on this point, Helena gives a direct answer:

Count. Had you not lately an intent - speak truly-
To go to Paris?
Hel. Madam, I had.
Count. Wherefore? tell true.
Hel. I will tell truth, by grace itself I swear. (207-210).

In the television scene the Countess moves down to Helena's level to sit next to her so they can speak facing each other and, in this position, they are both in profile from the viewer's perspective. The image of closer proximity and being face-to-face stresses a unity between them, signalling the supportive role that the Countess takes on in relation to Helena and Helena's revealed feelings for Bertram. Within a medium close-up shot, well-nigh squeezed within the parameters of the television frame, it is as though they are tight together in complicity. Indeed, the Countess' purpose for asking about Helena's 'intent...To go to Paris' is innocent, although we may question Helena's behaviour. Thus far, Helena has shown a proclivity towards unclear responses to the Countess' enquiries, but now she offers a direct reply: 'Madam, I had'. The Countess reiterates the notion of truth at this juncture in their discussion: 'speak truly...tell true', as if concerned Helena will eschew another answer. But Helena is surprisingly candid and straightforward with the Countess to the point that she reveals a secret 'cure' for the king:

> There is a remedy, approv'd, set down.
> To cure the desperate languishings whereof
> The king is render'd lost' (I.iii.219-21).

As another instance of a sudden change in Helena's approach, it is a boldly frank claim relative to Helena's position which is, as the Countess poignantly refers to: 'A poor unlearned virgin' (231). Yet, Helena had previously declared she would 'tell truth' (207). One may suspiciously regard her declaration of truth as somewhat over-assertive by the ensuing phrase 'by grace itself I swear'. However, her claims for the 'remedy' are vindicated later via the image of a lively, dancing king: Lafeu, 'Why, he's able to lead her a coranto', (II.iii.41). Nevertheless, Helena does effectively manipulate the 'truth' that she presents to the Countess:

> My lord your son made me think of this,
> Else Paris, and the medicine, and the King,
> Had from the conversation of my thoughts
> Haply been absent then.' (223-25).

We understand simply from Helena's explanation that going to 'Paris' with the 'medicine' for 'the King' is her primary motivation provoked by the presence of Bertram at court: 'My lord your son made me to think of this'. The simplicity of reasoning Helena puts forward to the Countess is appropriate as an 'unlearned' maid, but it is contrary to what takes place.

One might well be deceived in assuming Helena's zeal to convince the king to try her 'remedy' in Act II.i is down to only a desire for his recovery: 'What I can do can do no hurt to try' (II.i.133). Indeed, in the BBC production, after remaining at a suitable and respectful distance from the king, Helena initiates a movement forward to be closer to the king's bed. The camera shot instantly cross-cuts to provide us with a medium close-up image of Helena. The apparent urgency in Helena is matched by the actor's raised pitch which, in effect, overtly calls out to the viewer. We are asked to focus on and determine Helena's comportment, which has disturbed the relaxed sense of distance between her and the king. A tacitly understood social space has been breached by the king's subject, the apparently guileless Helena, without the king's prompting. The initial move by Helena is the first change to upset the, otherwise, gentle atmosphere of the scene and our understanding of the plain and unassuming 'poor...virgin'. Some moments later, after persuading the king to accept her aid, Helena unsolicited, requests a form of reciprocation: 'But if I help, what do you promise me?' (189). The audacious nature of her question takes the audience by surprise without a previous hint that Helena would make such a demand. From one viewpoint Helena may well be acting impulsively. However, Helena's lack of clarity earlier and her convolutions of the truth in front of the Countess suggest she is capable of a certain amount of scheming. We may conclude that there is certainly the artful about her.

After her first motion towards the king's bed, it is not long before Helena moves ever closer as she well-nigh pleads for his acquiescence to try her 'remedy': 'Dear sir, to my endeavours give consent' (152). The television image suggests behaviour from Helena of an obsessive nature, denoted by the eagerness with which she rushes to the king's bedside. For the BBC Helena then actually leans over and implores the king that she is no 'impostor' (154). There is an incongruity to her actions that disturbs the television viewer. Without precedent, she appears pushy with a suggestion of flightiness. In this scene, the television interpretation portrays a certain topsy-turviness, focusing on inappropriate behaviour from Helena who acts quite differently to that of a 'poor unlearned virgin' before a king. A discerning television audience may still wonder if such forwardness, witnessed before she asks for 'payment' as mentioned above, is instigated by altruistic considerations.

When Helena reaches the king's bedside, there is a medium long shot image of the two figures which contrasts with the separate camera images (from a multi-camera set-up) by which we initially see them. The medium long shot delivers a sense of Moshinsky's notion of 'chiaroscuro'. As Helena stretches over to the king a sole source of light envelopes them, distinct from the darkness around the bed, and it effectively brings the two characters together. The impression is an intensity of vision captured within the image which exposes some disturbing aspects. The effect makes explicit to the viewer that we are witness to an intimate space - it is emphatically the bed within the king's bedroom and Helena is present. Moreover, the distinction of age and youth is laid bare, similar to that between Bertram and the Countess noted earlier.[16]

Consequently, as commented on from other scenes in the production, there is an underlying tragic theme of a 'generation gap'. Helena's youthfulness is demonstrated by her swift motions in contrast to the immobility of old age personified by the king confined to his bed. The bed-image of an aged character particularly highlights how close old age is to death, in antithesis to the liveliness of Helena's comparatively young age. Certainly, the television image stresses the vulnerability of the king and, by implication, the decline of his manliness and indeed his kingly prowess. Thus, after leaning over the bed, the BBC Helena touches the king's hand and gently caresses his forehead to sooth an ailing old man. Her actions are matched by her words of mollifying rejuvenation:

> ...the thievish minutes how they pass,
> What is infirm from your sound parts shall fly,
> Health shall live free, and sickness freely die.'
> (II.i.165-7).

The key note of surety, expressed by the repeated 'shall', is the tone of comfort Helena brings to the king. 'Health' that 'live[s] free' and 'sickness' that 'freely die[s]' are echoes of a miracle that form the fairy-tale element of *All's Well*; and Helena is the transporter of such a gift. Indeed, the television version delivers the speech as an incantation. It is accompanied by a light melody with which the viewer would be familiar and regard as the production's signature tune. The music would serve to call the errant viewer's gaze back to the screen combined with a medium close-up image of the two characters. As a result, there is a restful atmosphere. The king appears spell-bound and ready to respond to Helena's 'magic'. Yet the medium close-up shot of the two of them in close proximity also renders a moment of discomfort for the viewer. The intimacy of touching at the bedside that the medium close-up image portrays creates a certain sexual tension. The suspense is accentuated when the king's reaction to Helena's comforting touch and words is to reciprocate with a touch to her face and lips. By touching her lips, the king makes a gesture that reverberates with an immediate sexual overtone. And regardless of his immobility, the king's body language begins to reassert his control. When Helena soon after solicits a reward, the king played by Donald Sinden, effects a casual smile and in a royally sensual tone asserts: 'Make thy demand' (190). As soon as she has stated her desire from the king, he wastes no further time in showing his kingly generosity and, effectively, his recovery. The king takes her face in his hands - a form of control - and kisses Helena fervently on the lips. The old king re-establishes his authority over youth which is a notion that has similar resonance to Lafeu's sagacity over Bertram. The BBC's King of France certainly expresses his rejuvenation, and television gives Helena's 'remedy' an ironic double sense.

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[16] The difference in age between Donald Sinden and Angela Down does not match exactly that of Celia Johnson and Ian Charleson, though Sinden (1923-) is over twenty years older than Angela Down (1946-). More significantly, Sinden was regarded as a "veteran" by Moshinsky, (Fenwick, p. 17), alongside Celia Johnson and Michael Hordern (1911-1995). Angela Down was contrastingly viewed by Moshinsky as "from a very different tradition of acting [articulating] a...behaviourist manner", (Fenwick, p. 17).

Donald Sinden, who plays the King of France, has been a star of stage, television and radio for seven decades. He began his career as a Shakespearean actor when he joined the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre company in 1941. In the 1960s and 1970s he was a member of the Royal Shakespeare Company. Sinden also enjoyed a prolific film career most notably in the 1950s when he starred in *The Cruel Sea, Doctor in the House* and *Doctor at Large*. His television credits range from Shakespeare to the sitcom *Never the Twain* and the recent BBC crime drama *Judge John Deed.* He was knighted in 1997. In the BBC's *All's Well*, Donald Sinden is 57 years old.

The BBC production brings a certain taboo value to the scene, for Helena responds to the king's kiss. The two generations, represented by the king and Helena, literally come together before our very eyes. However, by doing so, the perverse and obsessive world of *All's Well* is underlined. Out of an atmosphere of serenity (which is partly necessitated by the demands of television) the viewer is unquietened by the turmoil of emotion in *All's Well* that inextricably and disturbingly brims over.

Coriolanus - establishing the city.

The development of contrasts we find in *All's Well* is, however, not a priority for

Elijah Moshinsky in the BBC's *Coriolanus.*[17] This does not mean his adaptation of *Coriolanus* is void of contrastive elements. Moshinsky continues to use John Summers in charge of lighting: 'John Summers' lighting [is] sharply contrasted between dark and bright'.[18] We have a vision of the patricians, moreover, who are simply attired in a Jacobean style -[19] dark but without any elaborate ruffs we witness in *All's Well.* At times, the toned down sartorial display gives the patrician figures a silhouetted form against the bright sandstone background that forms our impression of the ancient city of Rome in *Coriolanus.* This image of Rome does not include the prettified detail of the first Italian city rendered by the BBC series - Verona in *Romeo and Juliet.* It is almost the opposite. Indeed, six years on in the BBC series and any pretence towards representational realism has been abandoned in favour of something decidedly more basic, but a mode of expression that reaches for the essence of the text. According to the production notes, Moshinsky's aim in respect of the setting is "to provide a rather primitive background texture [without] any soft backgrounds - everything was to be [styled] or flat" (Fenwick, p.19). There is no artificial vision of an uncorrupted place which is heftily manicured; but, rather, an attempt to manifest a 'faded' and 'decayed' (Fenwick, p.19) image of Rome. Thus, we are are not presented with a culturally given image of Ancient Rome with its Corinthian columns; but instead, we see occasionally images of classical columns which are much plainer without ornate decoration. Should the viewer witness an architectural embellishment it would inevitably have "a crack through it" (Fenwick, p.19). The walls of the Senate Chamber - a place the viewer sees often - are emblazoned with engravings of classical forms, but they appear to have grown faint with time. The walls of the city, which are a backdrop to the street scenes, appear broken in places and always retain a conspicuously rough texture.

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[17] It is important to comment that there is only one precursor in television terms to this *Coriolanus* but there is no previous cinema release. Today however, Moshinsky's *Coriolanus* remains the main source for anyone who wishes to view a made-for-television version of the play on video recording.

In 1963, the concept of unifying Shakespeare's plays was done in order to portray Ancient Roman society, namely through *Coriolanus, Julius Caesar* and *Anthony and Cleopatra,* under the unique heading of, *The Spread of the Eagle.* It was essentially a repeated formula from the 1960 *An Age of Kings* which received a positive response at the time. Yet, according to Rothwell, *The Spread of the Eagle* was comparatively less successful. That there is a lack of continuity in respect of the characters (save for Anthony) was thought to work against it (Rothwell, p.96).

The Spread of the Eagle was broadcast between May and June 1963. The first three parts presented a version of *Coriolanus,* the second three *Julius Caesar* and the final three *Anthony and Cleopatra* . Each instalment unfolded part of a television storyline, which was presented with a subheading. This was indicative of the production fixing an interpretation for a presumed easier appreciation by the audience. The first episode of *Coriolanus* was awarded the caption of 'The Hero' as though the part of the Shakespeare text the instalment refers to singularly emphasises this notion of Coriolanus. And the fact the BBC follows *Coriolanus* with *Julius Caesar* and then *Anthony and Cleopatra* leaves it open to the accusation of attempting to arrive at some sort of chronology. In view of the order of the episodes, I am of the opinion that a television audience who is new to Shakespeare or unclear about antiquity could be forgiven for inferring from the programming that the Roman plays represent a realistic chronological history, or suspect Shakespeare wrote the plays in that given sequence. Moreover, a cycle which excludes *Titus Andronicus* undermines the play as one of the Roman plays to implicate the BBC in supervising the Shakespeare canon for the viewer.

[18] Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Coriolanus* (London: BBC, 1984), p.19.

[19] More specifically, "a pastiche of Elizabethan/Jacobean", according to the costume designer, Michael Burdle, (Fenwick, p.19).

Frequently, in the street scenes with the Citizens there are realistic background noises. The sound effect of dogs barking is reminiscent of *All's Well*, providing the atmosphere of certain scenes with a quotidian feel. Outdoor sound effects also suggest the presence of flies to signify a stifling heat; and there is the repeated tapping sound that gives the impression of masonry work continually in progress. Indeed, the effects are in evidence enough to warrant comment here. The notion of flies hints at the inherent corruption at the heart of the Rome of *Coriolanus*. The clear sense of a crafts person at work, particularly when the Citizens are present, helps distinguish them from the patricians. It underlines the idea that the foundation of Roman society is built by and around its people, reminding us of a view the patrician Caius Martius Coriolanus tragically rejects. However, the television audience is never sure if the stone-work they hear carrying on is a sign that the city is expanding, or if the Rome of *Coriolanus* is constantly in need of reparations. The latter is the most significant, for it implies a state under a perpetual threat of collapse; and it complements the idea of a rotting state indicated by the pervasive presence of flies. Together, these particular background sounds create an ominous sensation that is directly relevant to the play. We see a Rome in *Coriolanus* whose politics are in chaos, exemplified in the struggle between patricians and tribunes (as representatives of the people); and a society which is continually at war with its neighbouring state.

Similar to his *All's Well*, one of Moshinsky's main preoccupations in *Coriolanus* is to bring a distinctive atmosphere to the production; and even the minor details, such as, naturalistic sound effects have a reverberative quality to them. Comparably, we are drawn to the tiny blemishes and damage in the architectural aspects of the set. The fading pictures and the fissures combine to create our perception of Rome as a jigsaw that struggles to remain in tact. Indeed, we focus on the imperfections because there are no other distracting details. The background of the images, unlike *All's Well*, is as Moshinsky indicates, relatively "primitive". This translates as basic and uncomplicated.

Consequently, the television image provides hints of a Rome that might have been, but there is no attempt to recreate a realistic representation of an ancient urban landscape. The background of the image is, therefore, not so intrusive as to create a second level of realism that vies with what happens in the foreground. The 'primitive' vision that Moshinsky adopts is interesting because *Coriolanus* is based primarily on historical sources that relate to a parochial Rome before the time of Imperial Rome - a far less sophisticated Rome.[20] Thus, throughout the BBC *Coriolanus* there is no image of an expansive Rome but, contrastingly, an enclosed Rome. This gives the impression that it is a Rome unsure of itself, inward-looking and at sometime ready to implode. For should the television scene not take place in a room without any apparent windows, then we are witness to an outside space where there is no sky in evidence. The claustrophobic atmosphere that results creates a certain tension and intensifies the action that takes place in these 'enclosures'.

An oppressive atmosphere is key to the BBC *Coriolanus*. Indeed, the text opens with the rising of the mob who are eventually subdued by the patricians. In the television adaptation the fervour on the streets is matched and accentuated by the sense of overwhelmingly hot weather that is conveyed in several scenes. As well as the sound of the flies, some characters throw water over themselves, whilst others appear to perspire profusely under an intensity of light. Indeed, the viewer can not mistake the clammy environment and the associated feeling of agitation on the faces of the characters, for the production is rather fond of close-ups. This is not to say that the viewer is forced into a two-and-a-half-hour close-focus broadcasting experience. The BBC certainly varies its shots in *Coriolanus*. There are high angle shots, group images and establishing shots to to initiate a scene. Undoubtedly, it typifies Moshinsky's approach that there is no complex camera work. However, the frequency of medium close-up and close-up shots is significant. In this regard, a very different attitude is manifested in the BBC's *Coriolanus* compared with its *All's Well*.

'Pictorialism' and the body - Coriolanus and Aufidius.

It is apparent that a painterly approach is not central to the visual interpretation of *Coriolanus*. Moshinsky comments: "All the other plays were slightly aestheticised, but with *Coriolanus* I'm not interested in pictorialism" (Fenwick, p.18). Nonetheless, there is an impression that Moshinsky can not but help himself in taking up the role as 'creator of images' for some critics have referred to a picture-like approach in *Coriolanus.* Susan Willis mentions 'an increased element of pose in the action, as if he really were painting pictures on television' (Willis, p.141); and Katherine Duncan-Jones talks about specific scenes being 'pictorially redolent'.[21]

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[20] Shakespeare's main source, according to *The Arden Shakespeare - Coriolanus*, ed. Philip Brockbank (London: Thomas Learning, reprinted 2001), p.29, is 'The Life of Caius Martius Coriolanus', in *The Lives of the Noble Grecians and Romanes*, translated 'out of Greek into French by James Amyot', and 'out of French into Englishe by Thomas North'.

In the battle scene before Corioli (Act I.iv) when the audience is unaware of the consequent action of Martius on horseback against the Volsces, there is a medium close-up image of Titus Lartius, one of the Roman Generals. The shot reveals the character's emotion directly through facial expression. The audience is privy to the character's open-eyed wonder and our proximity to it sparks our immediate curiosity. Via the swift change of image that multi-camera editing can afford a scene, there is a sense that we are thrust into a perspective that accords with what the character Lartius sees. The instantaneity of the switch provides us with a sense of real-time, and an immediate empathy with the amazement of the character: 'O, 'tis Martius!' (I.iv.65). Certainly, there is the feeling that we are suddenly the 'eyes' of Titus Lartius. Cast in that role, the viewer is effectively swamped in darkness with narrow and subdued light (appearing from the left of the television screen) that struggles to appear through chinks in large doors which rest ajar. The origin of the light signifies Corioli behind the doors. The image typifies the collaborative effort of Moshinsky and Summers, clearly displaying a televisual form of 'chiaroscuro'. The contrastive effect puts us in a state of suspense, highlighting a figure who we are led to believe is Caius Martius, emerging from the light from behind the doors. The atmosphere of awe may well be heightened by the presence of stage 'mist' which obscures the view somewhat; but it is certainly emphasised by the sound effect of an oratorial voice as if glorifying the appearance of Martius. Our interest is further provoked by an extreme long shot, making it difficult for us to distinguish the figure of Martius at first. The presence of stage mist, to symbolise the aftermath of a fierce battle, is understandable; but as a means of introducing a kind of super-hero (which is what Martius has truly become by beating an enemy single-handedly without receiving any debilitating wounds) it is rather clichéd. It is admittedly, a small detail in an otherwise efficient production.

Nevertheless, I have mentioned above that the minutiae of this BBC version carry some weight. The mist does appear literally as a stage device which rather jars with a medium that thrives somewhat on a sense of realism. In preference, the long shot image of Martius returning from his victory is a more realistic way of stretching our imagination to guess who exactly we have before us. On this point, we ought to stress that the television viewer may not be familiar with the text; and/or it could be their first experience of Shakespeare drama. They do not know for certain, therefore, that the distanced figure is Caius Martius. Then, as the supposed 'eyes' of a character looking on the viewer is gradually drawn in to satisfy their inquisitiveness. The relatively unhurried progress of a camera shot which dollies in to present a big close-up of Martius suggests a certain reverence. We are directed by the camera to his upper-torso and then his face. He is loosely clad in a white shirt that is open to reveal his chest. There is a stark contrast within that image of large areas of the shirt covered in blood. Thus, as the audience watches from the comfort of their own sitting-rooms, they are suddenly struck at close quarters by the uncomfortably realistic image from the 'outside world' - beyond the safe comfort of the sitting-room. The image, which remains on screen for some seconds, conveys the violent brutality of the world of *Coriolanus*; and in turn, the savagery beneath the veneer of the patrician or nobleman in Martius.

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[21] K. Duncan-Jones, 'Posturing to the Populace', *Times Literary Supplement*, 4th May 1984.

In *Coriolanus*, as we shall find in Jane Howell's BBC Shakespeare productions, there are poignant images which affect the viewer's sense of the real world. The viewer's understanding of the 'real' is, no doubt, partly accessed through news and current affairs programmes about the world's conflicts. And at this juncture in the BBC's *Coriolanus*, we have a visual metaphor for the general horror of conflict, but the contradictions of violence too. The image presented of Martius though bloody, is not simply a negative one. It offers a perspective of the admiring soldiers in the scene looking on their hero. At the same time, however, the big close-up creates a few discomforting moments for the viewer.

The viewers are caught between vying perspectives. We may regard one as objective realism, such as, the picture of a blood-spattered Martius. Yet, there is also a subjective realism in the form of 'voyeurism'. The 'voyeurism' is the fascination conveyed in the image of the body parts, barely covered by a shirt, which the camera caresses almost in terms of its proximity to them and deliberate movement over them. In their blood-stained state, the parts of Martius become the visual signifier of the slaughter he has just committed on the Volsces and the pain that that action implies. The big close-up framing of Martius' head and upper-body - worked hard by his fighting exploits - displays an overt admiration that has strong homoerotic overtones. It pre-empts the images of the fight between Martius and Aufidius, representing Act I.viii. Both expose naked and muscular torsos. Such a display indicates their battle has become personal. For in previous shots of Martius fighting the Volsces he wears the white shirt, except when he confronts Aufidius. Indeed, their fighting is captured in several medium close-up shots, showing how the two of them discard their weapons eventually to attack each other in hand-to-hand combat. In the final image of the scene, the two men are captured well-nigh in a physical embrace within a momentary freeze-frame with their faces so close together that there is an intimacy on view. The stillness of this 'intimacy' holds an aesthetic quality. The style of the image effectively cuts off the two opponents from the rest of the battle. The framing of their heads and shoulders notionally dissects them, eerily echoing the harsh reality of hacked limbs in bloody conflict and, indeed, in the violence happening about them. Thus, the restrictive space of the televisual medium close-up articulates, by suggestion, a space beyond the television frame. The image of Martius and Aufidius in a struggling and intimate clasp also anticipates the end of the play.

The Alexander text indicates in Act V.vi that the action is in *A public place.*[22] However, a medium close-up shot is used of Aufidius killing Coriolanus in the appearance of an embrace . The homoerotic undertones convey, at once, a strong sense of personal attachment but also personal conflict that ignores any interjection by the *Conspirators*, [23] mentioned in the Alexander text on which the production is based. For Coriolanus actually speaks the words initially 'Kill, kill, kill...' (131), in this BBC version, which suggests a kind of suicide. This would indicate that Coriolanus has a certain control over his own death. It is an acceptable interpretative idea, though by introducing it, Moshinsky seems to diminish the role of the community of Corioli and its reaction to Coriolanus. Instead, the focus remains with the character of Coriolanus. A similar point of view is echoed by Roger Warren on the production as a whole: '[It is] an intimate personal, almost private approach to Coriolanus' tragedy, playing down the large-scale political issues and focusing attention upon Coriolanus' personal relationships with his family, friends and enemies'.[24] In my view, the production rather points up the self-obsessive aspect of the protagonist and his concern for how he presents himself . Unsurprisingly, therefore, at his demise Coriolanus attempts to guide his own sword held by himself and Aufidius in a symbiotic motion. The action is mirrored by the use of language as Aufidius repeats and then takes over Coriolanus' words 'Kill, kill, kill..!'. Significantly, because the images are of the upper parts of their bodies, including facial close-ups, we do not literally see the mortal wound being made. The viewer is, consequently, never certain to what extent it is murder or suicide.

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[22] The Alexander Text, *The Complete Works Of Shakespeare* (London and Glasgow: Collins, 1951), specifies the location as: *Corioli. A public place.*, p.867. However, it should be noted that this is not mentioned in the First Folio.

[23] According to the Alexander text, the *Conspirators* shout, 'Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him!' (V.vi.131), p.869.

[24] Roger Warren, 'Shakespeare in England', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 35 (Autumn, 1984), p.336.

In the case of the image Moshinsky provides of the victorious Martius returning from single-handed combat at Corioli in Act I.iv the self-conscious posture is clearly evident. The slow-paced camera movement is matched by the ponderous action of the character. Martius leans against a pillar and in a calm and aloof manner progressively looks up at the spoils of his labours reflected on his sword he holds aloft in his right hand. For some moments there is a cut to a close-up in which we are presented with a still image of the character in profile as he smiles to himself or, perhaps, indirectly at us. For the point here is that the figure of Martius is so closely observable and, thus, so exposed (as in the images with Aufidius mentioned above) that the viewer becomes immersed in what we will refer to as television's 'intimate realism'. It is conveyed by the close-up; and the trouble here with our view of Coriolanus through 'intimate realism' is that it renders a solipsistic impression of the character. He is cut off and distanced from the others. It is no simple novelty to watch him on horseback as we do in Act I.i addressing the Citizens, and in I.iv before Martius enters the town of Corioli. Appearing on horseback sets him at a superior level and angle to others, bearing in mind that no other character is viewed in this way, and it maintains a particular self-presentation. Accentuating his height, Martius is able to look down in relation to the others. Effectively, the image is an exaggeration of the self. There is, certainly, parallel behaviour in the way Martius speaks.

When Martius talks it is apparent he is removed from those around him. Duncan-Jones notes Martius' delivery, played by Alan Howard, and the reception of those listening: "In II.iii, his sneering plea for citizens' 'voices' has just the right lofty, annoying quality, and the confused reaction of the people...- ''tis his kind of speech; he did not mock us', [II.iii.156] - matches the viewers' difficulty in knowing what to make of him" (Duncan-Jones, *TLS*). The television viewer regards him quizzically for he appears uncomfortable displaying the *gown of humility*, and speaks in a tightly-controlled and agitated fashion. Coriolanus shuffles awkwardly among the Three Citizens in a seeming effort to maintain a distance. He asks, as though with clenched teeth, impatiently: 'Well then, I pray, your price o' th' consulship?' (72). When the response from the First Citizen is a slightly mocking 'The price is to ask it kindly' (73), Coriolanus' feeling of incongruity is exposed via his language as he suddenly spits out in exclamation 'Kindly!'. Then quickly he modifies his volume to its previous level of exaggerated calm, proceeding with '...sir, I pray let me ha't...' (74). Howard's manner in playing Coriolanus, nevertheless, does not give the viewer the notion that Coriolanus speaks to the Citizens even when he speaks to them. Rather, when Coriolanus says 'I pray let me ha't', Howard articulates an ugly and sharp monotonal utterance communicated through a patronisingly enforced half-smile. The result expresses an attitude dangerously verging on speaking *at* and not *to* the First Citizen, which is more innate to Coriolanus. Some moments later, indeed, Coriolanus addresses a crowd of citizens:

> You should account me the more virtuous, that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them; 'tis a condition they account gentle; and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod... (Act II.iii.91-96).

In this speech, Coriolanus exposes himself for what he is not - a capable politician, able to talk *to* the mob and, therefore, manipulate them. For he is far too honest as a politician in revealing his strategy: 'I will, sir, flatter my sworn brother, the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them'. Fittingly, Howard's approach allows Coriolanus to distance himself as his delivery is carried through in a declamatory style, effectively speaking *at* the people gathered round. Howard makes no attempt to enact a 'naturalistic' form of address that has any approximate relation to the rhythm of everyday speech. On the contrary, Howard does not decorate the speech with any half-stresses, for instance, but uses only a few pauses and, consequently, Coriolanus sounds very energetic and direct. It is a speech which typifies Coriolanus' disposition. He is primarily a soldier, a man of action, who thus inevitably rides a horse - a thing of agility and power. It is not political power but raw and physical power that Coriolanus acknowledges and understands. In this realm his pride and constancy are virtues, which make him awkward in the garb of a politician before a crowd.

Coriolanus exudes what John Wilders (the series' literary consultant) refers to as '*virtus*' : 'sense of his own...worth, his fearlessness, his military prowess...his constancy'.[25] What is at question, though, is the state of *humanitas* in Coriolanus - his human attributes. He is so much the 'virtues' (Wilders, p.14) Wilders mentions that he is more human than human. It makes him vulnerable because nobody attains the heights of Coriolanus; and thus he is alone. It is not mere flattery or manipulation when his mother, Volumnia, says to him:

> Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,
> To imitate the graces of the gods,
> To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' th' air,
> And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt
> That should but rive an oak...
> (V.iii.149-153).

Her words raise his profile beyond the realm of humanness to status of demigod: 'imitate the graces of the gods'. The image of Coriolanus ascends to the open skies 'the wide cheeks o' th' air' to demonstrate non-human acts of might: 'to charge thy sulphur with a bolt/ That should but rive an oak'. Albeit Volumnia's rhetoric, there is justification for the allusion. By this point, we have witnessed Coriolanus' personal war at Corioli and in Act V.iii we sense the fear his imminent arrival in Rome provokes. Hence, we have his mother's presence to appeal to Coriolanus to stop the mobilisation of the Volsces with him at their head against Rome before he has 'forg'd himself in the name i' the fire/ Of burning Rome' (V.i.14).

Ultimately, he does not consume Rome with 'fire', but Coriolanus is redoubtedly a man of 'fire'. Generally, Howard plays him with a quick and irascible temperament. When before the crowd, though, to request the consulship (Act II.iii) he produces dry responses which lack intonation. The insipid strain in his voice reflects the idea that Coriolanus finds the public display of *humility* distasteful. For Coriolanus is no humble figure. He is very public and loud. When he enters the *Forum*[26] in a 'gown' (40) with Menenius, Menenius has trouble quietening Coriolanus:

> Cor. What must I say?
> 'I pray, sir'- Plague upon't! I cannot bring
> My tongue to such a pace. 'Look, sir, my wounds
> I got them in my country's service, when
> Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran
> From th'noise of your own drums.'

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[25] John Wilders, 'Introduction to *Coriolanus*', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Coriolanus* (London: BBC,1984), p.14.

[26] Mentioned in the Alexander text but not in the First Folio.

Men. O me, the gods!
You must not speak of that. You must desire them
To think upon you.
(II.iii.48-54)

Coriolanus shows his discomfort in the situation imposed upon him, vociferously: 'Plague upon't!'. He is intent on showing disregard for the opinion of others: " 'Look, sir.../ Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran/ From th' noise of our own drums' ". Unsurprisingly, Menenius is astounded and afraid: 'O me, the gods!/ You must not speak of that' because Menenius is able to play the actor and to beguile as the politician. Coriolanus can but speak honestly and in accordance with his bellicose nature. The fear, to someone so unafraid and self-assured, shown by his soldiers in battle, and which we see in televisual close-up, is an oppressive sight to him. In immediate terms, Coriolanus is oppressed by posturing in the *gown* and posing for the crowd. He is uncertain and insecure in a guise and, consequently, appeals to Menenius: 'What must I say?'. It is not exactly that he wishes to ignore others' views. Rather, Coriolanus is incapable of empathy which contributes towards making him an outsider. Paradoxically, for such a public figure, this makes him a very 'private' person from the view that his social persona is restricted.

Coriolanus in close-up.

The BBC points up the private aspects of Coriolanus using close-up. The different close-up shots used give a restrictive sense of space, which is an inescapable criticism of the close-up, though it heightens the tension at the same time. The image of Coriolanus presented within a close-up camera shot, as it often is, lends itself to the notion of his being captured and unable to escape. Conceptually, he is caught within the television frame, restricted entirely from aspiring towards 'the wide cheeks o' th' air' (V.iii.151). Restrained, therefore, he is thwarted in the same way as his sense of self does not fit in with the ideas of Roman politics in *Coriolanus*. Coriolanus' frustration has to manifest itself in the end - from the sufferance he expresses in the *gown of humility*: 'Better it is to die, better to starve, / Than crave the hire which first we do deserve' (II.iii.110-11), (conveyed through voice-over), to the vitriol he expresses openly in public at his exile:

> You common cry of curs! whose breath I hate
> As reek o' th' rotten fens, whose loves I prize
> As dead carcasses of unburied men
> That do corrupt my air: I banish you!
> And here remain with your uncertainty!
> (III.iii.122-26).

The pent up energy and oppressiveness he has endured at the hands of his fellow Romans is finally released in a vituperative testament of hatred, referring to them as 'curs!' or a lower form of dog.[27] The comparison Coriolanus uses as his 'loves' for them is appropriate to his soldierly image which is a battlefield of 'dead carcasses of unburied men', exploiting the sense of foul odour to convey the profundity of his loathing. A climax in the speech, however, which encapsulates the relationship of Coriolanus to those around him is 'I banish you!', berating Rome for its 'uncertainty!'. The word 'uncertainty' is significant because it is the complete antithesis of Coriolanus. He is the figure of uncomplicated surety and clarity and, therefore, Coriolanus is uniquely aware that 'There is a world elsewhere' (III.iii.137) beyond what his Roman contemporaries can perceive. From this viewpoint Coriolanus is, as Eagleton observes, a 'proleptic'[28] figure. Coriolanus' expansiveness, in terms of his perception and his behaviour represents an Imperialist Rome that does not yet exist - one of supreme self-confidence in its *raison d'être*. Certainly, images that transport the self-surety of Coriolanus to the viewer abound in the BBC production. We hark back again to the image of Martius immediately after his defeat of Corioli (Act I.iv), so confident in his own abilities. In the big close-up images that display Martius' bloodied body there is no sense of discomfort at all from him, as there is from him in the *gown of humility*. Instead, a certain pose is rendered that has the static quality of pictorial elegance.

Volumnia and Virgilia. Intimacy and contrast.

In respect of the production's pictorial attributes, Duncan-Jones refers in particular to an image of Volumnia and Virgilia from Act I.iii: '[a] strength [of the production] lies in peaceful, pictorially composed interiors, such as the charming sequence in which Virgilia works at her tapestry frame and Volumnia, in profile, stitches a white cloth' (Duncan-Jones, *TLS*). The image is redolent of those in Moshinsky's *All's Well*. There is depth to the shot as we can see into another room beyond the doorway in the background of the image. Volumnia and Virgilia are, indeed, engaged in quotidian household tasks at a large table. The women are soberly attired in dark dresses which contrast with the white walls behind them. The contrast is, undoubtedly, stark; and as the camera dollies in to present a medium close-up shot after establishing the scene via long shot, their faces become more apparent. It is helped by each wearing their hair austerely pushed back revealing more of their face. And despite the light background, their pale faces appear more so because of their sombre-coloured clothes. Thus, in respect of a medium close-up shot of the two women, we experience the effect of what we may term 'talking heads'. By 'talking heads' we mean that there are no other distractions in the image for the viewers, so the television audience focuses on facial movements, reactions and the words spoken. From this perspective we gain an intimate vision of the characters. They are, as already commented with regard to Coriolanus above, in a sense 'captured' within the television frame to be exposed for our observation. It is a prime example of Moshinsky playing to what Jones remarks as the 'visually insistent medium of television'.[29] Moshinsky recreates the scene of the text within the televisual parameters. In doing so, Moshinsky moves towards Jane Howell territory. In *Coriolanus*, Moshinsky shows a predilection for parts of the body, as noted from Martius' victory at Corioli, his intimate battles with Aufidius and, here, in the realisation of Martius' household (Act I.iii). In these images the 'real' is conveyed through the characters and their body parts. It is the people who are 'real' rather than the setting. On this point, there lies similarity of vision between Moshinsky and Howell; and I shall expound the notion in my final chapter.

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[27] Compare *Macbeth*. Macbeth chastises the Murderers, Act III.i, ll. 91-94.

[28] Terry Eagleton, *Rereading Literature - William Shakespeare* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986), p.75.

Thus, when Moshinsky indicates he is not inclined towards "pictorialism"[30], he is referring to a majority of images in *Coriolanus* where the setting is suggestive or rudimentary. As in the image of the interior of Martius' house, the background is purely functional in order to raise the profile of the characters in the foreground. Moshinsky's view of 'pictorialism', which he equates with 'slightly aestheticised', is a retrospective comment on images from his other productions in the series - *All's Well* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* are prime examples. Both television versions exhibit instances where the image is arranged (the *mise-en-scène*) in a way that implies a relationship between the television screen and the framed picture. Hence, as mentioned above, critics have compared some of Moshinsky's images directly with those of Dutch masters.

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[29] Gordon P. Jones, 'Nahum Tate Is Alive and Well - Elijah Moshinsky's BBC Shakespeare Productions', *Shakespeare On Television*, eds. JC Bulman and HR Coursen (Hanover NH: University Press of New England, 1988), p.198.

[30] Quoted earlier in the chapter: "All the other plays were slightly aestheticised, but with *Coriolanus* I'm not interested in pictorialism" - Moshinsky in an interview with Fenwick, 'The Production', *Coriolanus*, p.18.

However, one should acknowledge Duncan-Jones' observation of the domestic scene in *Coriolanus* (Act I.iii) as 'pictorially composed'. She mentions, also, many 'scenes in the Roman senate, with rugged-featured, black-suited figures marshalled along the length of a great wooden table, recall Van Dyck or even Holbein[31] pictorially...' (Duncan-Jones, *TLS*). In view of these comparisons, it is worth remarking that Moshinsky's comment on 'pictorialism' in *Coriolanus* may well be the result of simple modesty. The BBC's *Coriolanus* is a production in which Moshinsky cannot help but emphasise the visual aspects of the medium, evoking likenesses between the television frame and the picture frame. The overriding aim in *Coriolanus*, nonetheless, is to present a less complicated and more direct image. Rather than a preoccupation with 'the cloning of seventeenth-century Dutch art' (Rothwell, p.399), or communicating to a modern audience via another historically distant medium, the emphasis is on "debate" (Fenwick, p.18). By this singular word, one would understand that Moshinsky wants to draw the television audience's attention as quickly as he can to the words of the text. It is a reason why there is recurrent usage made of the medium close-up or, sometimes, close-up shot. When we see Volumnia and Virgilia (Act I.iii) in close-up shots the thrust of any 'aesthetic' appeal visually (as with the shots of Coriolanus and Aufidius described above) is the portrait-like image it conveys. Duncan-Jones, in my view, overlooks this element in the image she admires. The 'portrait' is either of a character in profile or looking at an angle to camera; but the character never looks directly at camera.

In Act V.iii, when Coriolanus' family come to him to supplicate a peace for Rome, there are a mere ten medium and medium long shot images in total compared with twenty-nine various types of close shots: medium close-up shots as well as close-up shots. In particular, the close-ups are of either Coriolanus or Volumnia or both of them in the same image. When Volumnia tries to dissuade Coriolanus from war by referring to his sense of family-honour: '...thou shalt thereby reap...such a name/ Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses' (V.iii, ll.143-4), the camera zooms in from a medium close-up to a close-up shot of Volumnia. The transition takes place in order to signal to the viewer the more provocative language within a relatively long speech. At the same time, a notion of portraiture in the image is in evidence. In a static few moments Volumnia's head is viewed at a slight angle apparently looking at Coriolanus to the left, beyond the borders of the television screen. Such an aspect, thus, articulates a wider sense of space. Some seconds later, mid-way through Volumnia's speech, Coriolanus is posed a question: 'Why dost not speak?' (153) and there is a cutaway to a reaction shot of Coriolanus. He is caught in a close-up profile. 'Caught' is the apposite word for he his challenged at this point by his mother. The close-up image of him suddenly takes on an atmosphere of tension. Coriolanus is unable to verbalise a reaction. His countenance remains stubbornly aloof, and Coriolanus' static profile puts us in a mood of uncertainty with regard to his response. For Coriolanus in a profile shot means we do not view him clearly as we can only observe one side of his face. Thereby, we are cut off partly from him as though we may only witness from a distance a very private moment between mother and son. And, indeed, by the end of her speech Coriolanus does appease his mother when he takes her by the hand.

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[31] Duncan-Jones alludes to Hans Holbein, (1497-1543) - a renaissance painter born in Augsburg, part of today's Germany. In his case, Duncan-Jones may well have the idea of portraiture in mind.

We view his gesture in a cut to a big close-up shot of intimacy and contrast. Comparable to the effect described from Act I.iii, their hands are vividly discernible against their black clothes; and the whiteness of their hands is accentuated. The difference in age is, thus, conspicuous to the viewer as the comparatively young hand moves slowly and gently to caress the old hand. It is an emotive metonymic image of reconciliation. It is an image that restores a kind of harmony between different generations. However, as we find in *All's Well* there remains an ironic twist to the relationship. In harmony there lies destruction. By a strange paradox, young gives way to old. Unwittingly, it would seem, the mother destroys the son and between the two of them the son is the only one who can see it: 'Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd/ If not most mortal to him' (V.iii.188-9). We understand, therefore, that the close visual of the hands though conveying personal intimacy also has wider implications. It is indicative of the BBC's use of the close-up shot throughout *Coriolanus*, suggesting a broader sense of space as well as enclosed space.

It is certainly not surprising that Moshinsky creates a deliberate focus on the hands. They are a particular body part associated with action. This is significant for such dynamic characters as Volumnia and Coriolanus. The notion of physicality linked with hands, particularly towards the end of the production, confirms the viewer's impression of realism that emanates from the characters and not from their surroundings. Their bodies are the centre of our attention to meaning in *Coriolanus*. Even the perception of flies, mentioned earlier, is connected with the body. Hearing the flies signifies personal body space; and the notion of the very presence of flies implies a wider and more public space beyond the personal body and, indeed, the television screen.

Midsummer Night's Dream - different worlds.

In the BBC *Midsummer Night's Dream*[32] the communication of space is important in order to differentiate between 'Athens' and the 'wood' outside the city. Interestingly, Moshinsky's 'wood' is a studio-set.

Shaun Sutton, Head of BBC Television Drama at the time, in 1981, and the BBC Shakespeare series' third producer, comments on another similar environment - the 'Forest of Arden' in *As You Like It*.[33] The BBC *As You Like It*, transmitted in 1978, was only the third production of the series and reflects some of the woes associated with that early period. Throughout the entire series, *As You Like It* was one of two plays

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[32] As a popular Shakespeare, Moshinsky's version certainly has its forerunners in television as well as in cinema.

On 24th June 1964 Rediffusion Network Television's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was transmitted on ITV: 'Long held to be one of the most successful versions and highly popular in its day (largely on account of comedian Benny Hill's performance as Bottom)' (McKernan and Terris, p.114), directed by Joan Kemp-Welch. Criticism chiefly focused on the rewarding performances of Anna Massey (Titania), Jill Bennett (Helena) and Maureen Beck (Hermia), as well as Benny Hill.

However, Rothwell remarks that 'Mendelssohn's sprightly incidental music on the soundtrack [risks] the condescension of those who prefer to dwell on the play's darker elements'. Kenneth Rothwell, *A History of Shakespeare on Screen*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.104. And indeed, in contrast, 'the darker elements' are not ignored in Moshinsky's adaptation in respect of the interaction of the fairies, which I will refer to later in the chapter.

In terms of film, I have already mentioned Peter Hall's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1968) in the 'Introduction'. yet, one should also not neglect reference to Max Reinhardt and William Dieterle's *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1935). It is one of 'Hollywood's two major Shakespeare productions of the 1930s' alongside Cukor's *Romeo and Juliet* (1936) noted in my previous chapter. Douglas Lanier, *Shakespeare and Modern Popular Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), pp.63-4. Unlike Moshinsky's *Dream* the Hollywood adaptation does centre on the language. Similar to the Kemp-Welch ITV version (and likely a feature the ITV broadcast borrowed from the 1935 production), the Reinhardt/Dieterle *Dream* gives the play a lighter ambience via the music of Mendelssohn. But in contrast to Moshinsky, the Hollywood version relies on 'elaborate dance sequences, full of special effects' (Lanier, p.64). Holderness summarises Hollywood's approach in the film: to appeal to a 'mass audience of the 1930s which enjoyed musicals, romantic comedy and farce'. Graham Holderness, 'Shakespeare and Cinema (1985, 1991)' in *Visual Shakespeare - Essays in film and television*, G. Holderness (Hatfield: University of Hatfield Press, 2002), p.61.

Finally, it is worthy of mention that a UK/Spain film production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1984) directed by Celestino Coronado, released a few years after the BBC version, uses a lot of songs together with dance/ballet sequences.

[33] *As You Like It* was produced on location at Glamis Castle, Angus, Scotland between 30 May and 16 June, 1978. It was first broadcast on 17 December, 1978. Not much of the castle was used by the BBC, though little of the castle remains anyway; and so, the focal point of the production was its garden and surrounding forest. Cedric Messina, the producer, comments, '...it seemed to me to be the most wonderful sort of forest...Ninety-five per cent of [*As You Like It*] takes place in the forest, there's not much of the castle, and Glamis is a very petty, fairy-tale castle anyway, with a beautiful Italian garden...', [Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - As You Like It* (London: BBC Publications, 1978), p.20].

'produced on location', (*Henry VIII* is the other);[34] and this issue is the basis of Sutton's criticism. Sutton views it as an '[un]necessary project...[*As You Like It*] seemed to me to sprawl undramatically over a series of long-shot set-ups...[and] seemed, absurdly, to become a play about a wood'.[35] Although not all commentators agree, some influential Shakespeare journals in the United States echo Sutton's sentiments. Jorgens condemns the 'outside broadcast': 'Seldom have natural settings been used to less effect';[36] and Kimbrough reflects on the problems a real setting creates: '...the location shooting limits severely and forces disquieting contradictions between what the characters say and what we see'.[37] It is, therefore, perhaps little surprise that in the series' second period of producership, three years later, that Moshinsky chooses to evoke a 'magical' wood within the compromised space of a television studio.[38]

Significantly, a studio-bound setting implies limitations. This very real characteristic would seem to conflict with the wood of *Midsummer Night's Dream*, which is not synonymous with a sense of control. The wood encapsulates a world of fairies. It is the location of lovers' entanglements and contains a mortal walking round with an ass' head. The wood has a well-nigh anarchic atmosphere, although one should add that Shakespeare never went to the extremes of 'turning the world upsidedown'.[39] Televisually, the difficulty is to convey a different perception of reality where there is freedom of movement and imagination within a restricted environment that is the studio. Thus, there is an element of contradiction to reckon with.

However, as we have seen, Moshinsky is a director who appears to embrace contrariness. For him, in *Midsummer Night's Dream*, the apparent problem is overcome by actually emphasising differences. In creating the *Dream*'s Athens, Moshinsky provides us with an televisual atmosphere distinct in various ways from the play's wood. The opening (when Egeus brings the case of Hermia his daughter, and her disobedience for loving Lysander to the attention of the Duke Theseus) is translated into a relatively motionless television scene. The focal point (not untypical of Moshinsky) is a long table around which sits everyone involved in the television scene: Hermia, Lysander, Demetrius and Theseus; all except Egeus.[40] Egeus, presented as an old man, strolls slowly to and fro behind Lysander and Demetrius who are sat facing the camera and effectively us - Hermia and Theseus are seated at the opposite ends of the table.[41] A multi-camera set-up is used in a conventional way, without any unusual angle-shots, in order to present the dispute. At first, we are presented with an extreme long shot to establish the context and to provide us with an image of the grouped figures involved. The image is then cut to a medium shot of the two young men at the centre of Egeus' allegation with Egeus remaining immediately behind them, and equally significant, in focus as the plaintiff. Thereafter, a second and third camera are used to present Theseus and Hermia, most often in medium close-up, at the two ends of the table. The medium close-up is most frequently adopted during the scene, directed on the speaker and for reaction shots. The repeated close images in the given context increase a sense of a restricted space; and, particularly in relation to Hermia, the close visual signifies the estrangement between her and her father. Indeed, the 'given context' is a library in which the figures are literally surrounded by books which enhances one's impression of a confined atmosphere. Just as the camera system is somewhat predictable and regulative the image of a library resounds, also, with conformity, but that of the written law. It prepares us for the unyielding and unwavering last words of Theseus to Hermia: '...fit your fancies to your father's will,/ Or else the law of Athens yields you up-' (I.i.118-9). The steadying measure of the statutes of Athens, 'the law of Athens', constantly in the background of the argument in this scene, is echoed throughout the TV scene with the sound of a clock's continuous tick-tock rhythm. Time,

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[34] *Henry VIII* was produced on location at Leeds Castle, Maidstone, Kent; Penshurst Place, Penshurst, Kent; and Hever Castle, Edenbridge, Kent, between 27 November, 1978 and 7 January, 1979. It was first broadcast on 25 February, 1979. In comparison with *As You Like It*, the verse is less rhetorical allowing a more naturalistic interpretation by the actor. The BBC TV production uses interiors, such as real, Tudor rooms as well as filming outside the castles. The rooms provide a fixed, theatrical space from which an audience does not perceive any sort of incoherence associated with a real wood or forest as a theatrical space.

[35] Shaun Sutton, in a letter to the author, dated, 5th March, 1992.

[36] Jack Jorgens, 'The BBC-TV Series', ***Shakespeare Quarterly***, 30 (1979), p.412.

[37] R. Alan Kimbrough, 'The Shakespeare Plays: The First Season', ***Shakespeare on Film Newsletter***, 3:2 (April, 1979), p.5.

[38] Despite the production taking up 'TC1, [BBC] Television Centre's largest studio'. Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', ***The BBC TV Shakespeare - Midsummer Night's Dream*** (London: BBC, 1981), p.18.

[39] The atmosphere of disorder which presides is symbolised by Bottom wandering through the wood and among the fairies with an ass' head. According to Gary Taylor, it is a close example to what may be regarded as Shakespearean fantasy - the kind that 'defamiliarises the familiar'; but he suggests that Bottom with an ass' head does not add up to Shakespeare re-inventing the world by creating any fantastical universe that we might find in today's science-fiction, for instance. Gary Taylor, ***Reinventing Shakespeare*** (London: Hogarth Press, 1990), p.402.

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[40] Moshinsky adapts the text here which, according to the First Folio, has Hippolyta *with others* on stage at the same time.

[41] Similar to *All's Well*, Moshinsky makes visible to the audience a clear sense of a generation gap between Egeus and Hermia, and Egeus and Theseus compared with the three young lovers involved in this part of the scene. Geoffrey Lumsden playing Egeus and Nigel Davenport playing Theseus are distinctively white and grey-haired, and appear to be of approximately sixty years of age. The fact that Theseus sits directly opposite to Hermia suggests a gap in understanding between their two very different viewpoints. Also, by not mimicking the actions of the younger characters, in being stood up rather than sat down, it shows Egeus to be set apart in attitude as well as physical posture. Moreover, Moshinsky 'cast actors of very different schools together, the clash in their styles exemplifying the clash in the generational attitudes', (Fenwick, p.24). The idea of a generation 'clash' makes the lovers all the better as candidates to enter the anarchic world of a fairy-inhabited wood.

A Midsummer Night, as central to the *Dream*, will be the judgement of the young lovers. Time will decide on the effect of Theseus' hard-hitting words: 'fit your fancies to your father's will'; and in a short time, Hermia and Lysander are resolved to escape 'the sharp Athenian law' (Lysander, 162).

Indeed, in the background of the television image of the library (behind Egeus), there is a doorway. It seems Moshinsky can not resist producing an image without some depth to it; but more significant, there is a globe that is continually in view. The globe symbolises the temptation of the outside world, beyond the confines of Athens, awaiting their exploration with different laws.[42] The other 'world' is encompassed within the wood that lies without the city boundaries and is, therefore, not determined by its rules and so free from its constraints. There, the young lovers including Demetrius and Helena, are literally at liberty to roam and discover a route to where they wish to venture further - a 'remote seven leagues' (159) from Athens, according to Lysander, for him and Hermia to marry.

But ironically, they all return to Athens to be married. In the final scene, as newly weds, the television scene puts them unsurprisingly at a long table to enjoy the festivities. The implication of this image is a rejection of the apparent freedom of the wood; preferring perversely, or not, a 'freedom' of formality. It is a distinct change in our perception of the lovers. They are now more removed from us for Moshinsky, importantly, edits the interjections of the young husbands during the 'mechanicals'' play.[43] In consequence, a contrary understanding of 'freedom' is demonstrated to the television audience. The 'freedom' of the young lovers that existed in the wood does not carry over to the very different context of Athens. At the end, we gain a view that the once, young lovers and now silenced spouses, have been subsumed by and into the regulated world of Athens.

When the *mise-en-scène* of Athens is juxtaposed with the *mise-en-scène* of the wood, the lack of a focal object in the wood which involves a stationary pose, such as a table, is conspicuous to the viewer. Moshinsky commonly uses a table to gather characters in blocks to convey interior images and, particularly, to render a domestic familiarity a television audience is at ease with (as discussed above). So when we are introduced to the 'mechanicals' (Act I.ii), the BBC production transfers us to a commonplace scene of a pub environment. Amidst the familiar conviviality of such a setting, the audience is allowed to concentrate on the various new characters gathered in a relatively static arrangement, sat along a table. The medium and medium close-up shots which frame these characters at the table is then juxtaposed with an extreme long shot image of fairies jostling in a pool, in the wood. The comparative effect produced on the audience is one of slight bewilderment. The reaction represents, importantly, our initial response to the atmosphere of the wood, which is out of synch with what we have experienced prior to this point in the play. Our sense of the wood is that it lies, therefore, outside the familiar and the ordinary.

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[42] As such, it may well be an intentioned precursory reference to Puck's ability to skirt the globe: "I'll put a girdle round about the earth/ In forty minutes' (II.i.175).

[43] The 'mechanicals' are characters named, Peter Quince, *a carpenter;* Nick Bottom, *a weaver*; Francis Flute, *a bellows-mender*; Tom Snout, *a tinker*; Snug, *a joiner*; and Robin Starveling, *a tailor.* All represent the craftsmen of Athens - a socio-economic group that contrasts with those associated with the Duke, Theseus.

Certainly, Moshinsky has to provide the audience with a magical or fantasy atmosphere in which we can believe, as television viewers, fairies live. It is appropriate, therefore, to have quasi-realistic elements that help form an impression of the wood. There are, indeed, two pools which are a visual focus and a 'realistic element' (Fenwick, p.19). However, from the viewpoint of the designer, Myerscough-Jones "the background of the landscapes is very much painted" and "the trees are particularly Rubenesque" in terms of their initial concept, indicating they are not real trees.[44] Some real foliage is used, undoubtedly, but "subdued" in colour (Fenwick, p.19) which, as we have noted above, typifies a Moshinsky production. And we ought to bear in mind that the action in the wood mainly takes place at night which lends itself to a monochromatic look. Myerscough-Jones adds: "and the cyclorama" of a moon-lit sky is "impressionistic" (Fenwick, p.19).

It is unquestionably, important in a Shakespeare play that portrays a wood to compromise with television's overriding demand for realism. Setting it in a real wood or forest, as witnessed in the BBC's *As You Like It*, is an unacceptable compromise and not the same as presenting a realistic depiction of a wood. 'Realistic' requires invention that succumbs to a form of semblance to the real. There is an implied and tacit acceptance in the realistic image, between the producer of the image and the television audience, of the subject of the image approaching the real. A recognisable difficulty is the actors, despite playing fairies or non-mortals, are yet without doubt real with real faces which are exposed in close-up images. What they touch, being real people, ought to contain a realistic quality of physicality perceptible to the television audience. Thus, when a fairy touches a 'tree' in the foreground of an image, in its compromised form, the 'tree' yet should be near to the appearance of a real tree for the audience to accept it as such - the televisual context demands this dimensional force of a real tree. And as a consequence, the audience has to be reminded the actors playing the fairies are 'invisible' to the mortals. Shakespeare clearly does this via Oberon: 'But who comes here? I am invisible; /And I will overhear their conference' (II.i.186-7), when Demetrius pursued by Helena comes within his view. More significantly for the television viewer, however, Moshinsky brings it to our attention by having Oberon address the point of invisibility directly at camera.[45] Apart from direct address, though, the problem of how the production communicates a sense of the fairy-world remains to be addressed. Myerscough-Jones suggests with the words "very much painted", "Rubenesque" and "impressionistic", that there is an abstract quality to the wood. If we take 'abstract' to imply a certain intangibility, such a notion accords with a context in which one can imagine the presence of non-mortal creatures. Nevertheless, it does not seem quite sufficient. Moshinsky, therefore, uses movement to propel our belief towards a metaphysical reality.

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[44] David Myerscough-Jones in an interview with Henry Fenwick. Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', p.19. It is unclear what 'Rubenesque' means in terms of the television image of the wood. Typically used in reference to how the Flemish painter, Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), depicted women (which he frequently did), 'Rubenesque' would suggest voluptuous or fleshy.

In Rubens' painting of the mythical Bacchus, the Greek wine-god, to the left in the picture there is a tree depicted with large branches which have humanised form close to arms. The tree's trunk, as well as significantly bent, has lumpy and rutted bark which is overwhelmed with vine and foliage. The 'trees' in *Midsummer Night's Dream* certainly show a resemblance to this form and texture.

In his commentary on Moshinsky's *Cymbeline*, Taylor notes that, 'Moshinsky keeps actors and camera fairly still and provides movement through montage'.[46] Similar can be spoken of in *Midsummer Night's Dream* with respect to montage, for the production adopts quick editing between frames to provide the impression of spirited movement. In the opening scene of Act II there is a rapid sequence of shots. There is a close-up of Titania and the camera dollies out to provide a medium shot of her with her entourage of fairies before a cut to an extreme long shot image of the fairies in the wood. Moreover, the images of this group of fairies are juxtaposed with cuts to medium close-up images of Puck. The effect is comparable to what Corner refers to as 'a system of movements and returns' (Corner, p.26), typifying a televisual style. The long, medium and close-up shots in quick succession contrast with the rather ponderous pace of camera shots presenting Athens. And when we do see Puck in close view, between the long and medium shots, we suffer from a certain disorientation. There is no exact sense of spatial relationships. We are not sure of his relative size, his precise location nor the distance between him and Titania's followers. The audience is left unsure. This unpredictability is, again, our first introduction to the wood and the world of the fairies which immediately gives it an idiosyncratic quality, quite separate from the world of Athens.

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[45] Susan Willis is clearly incorrect in her observation when she says of Moshinsky that he is, 'not a great believer in direct address to camera, a device he does not use before *Love's Labours Lost*', (pp.146-7). *Love's Labours Lost* was broadcast in 1985, four years after *Midsummer Night's Dream*. I would accept the point that Moshinsky is not a frequent user of 'direct address to camera'. In *Midsummer Night's Dream* this common television 'device' is only used by the fairies, and is repeated when Puck addresses the final speech to camera.

[46] Neil Taylor, 'Shakespeare on TV - a study of two productions in The BBC TV Shakespeare' (University of Birmingham: MA Thesis - submitted September, 1983), p.29.

Contrary to Taylor's comment about the BBC's *Cymbeline,* in which the 'actors [are] fairly still', (although the comment is apposite for the general approach to Athens in *Midsummer Night's Dream*) the wood's magical atmosphere is distinguished by the erratic motion of some of its characters. At the beginning of Act II.i, for instance, Puck dives into the pond and constantly tussles with some of Titania's fairies already present. Indeed, his temperament is somewhat aggressive matched by the brisk tempo of the verse-speaking. The speed at which he speaks is a prominent feature due to the comparatively moderated tempo of the Athens scenes previous to it. In addition, Puck's verse overlaps from one frame to the next, giving it a slight anarchic feel. We see Puck in one frame and, then, while we watch Titania and her followers in the next frame we continue to listen to Puck.[47] As Puck informs us of the dispute between Oberon 'the King' (II.i.18) and Titania 'the Queen' (19), we watch Titania carrying a child as illustrative of Puck's description: 'she as her attendant hath/ A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king' (21-2). Played by Phil Daniels, Puck's jerky manner and anxious delivery of verse reflects the 'passing fell and wrath' (1.20) - the fierce anger of his master - Oberon. Daniels' behaviour and verse-delivery also, however, create the sense of a knavish Puck who is unfeeling, unsentimental, noticeably edgy and aggressive but overtly energetic too. We notice, for example, how easily his irascibility is provoked when another Fairy appears suddenly from right-of-frame and instantly jumps on Puck's back. An element of playfulness in the fairies may well be the implication of this impetuous act, but Puck is seen to react pugnaciously, roughly throwing the Fairy off. Puck's action is decidedly more startling to us as the Fairy is clearly played by a child.

In order to create this reality of a society of fairies and a feeling of magic, Moshinsky manipulates the television frame so the fairy figures appear from unexpected angles, as one finds with Puck. Once Titania has, according to stage directions, *Exeunt*[48] (Act II.i) there is a medium close-up image of Oberon who is on horseback. When he introduces Puck: 'My gentle Puck, come hither' (148), Oberon leans down and pulls Puck up by the hair. The less-than-delicate treatment hints at the artfulness of Oberon's servant. But, from the audience's viewpoint, we are not prepared for Puck's appearance from the bottom of the television frame. The fact that it happens creates disorientation for the viewer. The close-up shot used here not only cuts off the subject of the image from the surrounding environment as presented in the previous juxtaposed images (as commented above in respect of *Coriolanus*); but it cuts off the viewer, also, from a clear perspective on spatial relationships. We are simply taken aback to discover Puck is close to Oberon; but the camera shots involved strongly imply a freedom of movement in this world of fairies. What is more, as soon as Oberon is presented in this close visual and says, 'Well, go thy way' (146), directed at Titania, Titania is immediately cut off from the action, suggesting an instance of magic. However, we are also left with the notion that the close-up is used as the television equivalent of the stage direction: *Exeunt.*

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[47] A form of 'sound bridge' Willis discusses, (Willis, p.147).

[48] As mentioned in the First Folio.

Before Titania's 'magical' exit, though, there is an example of how Moshinsky adapts the camera to convey a sense of liberated movement in the wood, using angled shots entirely absent from the images he offers of Athens. Throughout this first encounter of Titania and Oberon our image of Titania is, at times, from a low angle shot. It is a point-of-view shot which gives the viewer a feeling of witnessing the proceedings from the level of Titania's followers, the majority of whom are children. Then at other apparently random moments, we observe Titania via a high shot angle which presents a point-of-view close to that of Oberon's. Varied high and low angled shots help the television audience to digest the relatively long speech from Titania (Act II.i.81-117). They save the viewer, used to 'a system of movements and returns', from what is in television terms an unnaturally long take of one image. For one should consider that the television viewer may be more familiar with television convention than with Shakespearean rhetoric.

To see Oberon on a real horse for the television viewer is thoroughly acceptable from a realistic medium and, therefore, does not carry the same novelty aspect as it might on stage at a theatre, for instance. It is not the only BBC production in which Moshinsky introduces a character on horseback.[49] However, the initial image of Oberon appearing on horseback has different implications than those we find in *Coriolanus*. Similar to *Coriolanus*, the image signifies distance, separating Oberon as fairy royalty. It signifies also, though, that the fairies represented by Oberon occupy a distinct level of reality to the mortals. Primarily, the mortals: Lysander, Hermia, Helena and Demetrius, are unable to orientate themselves through the wood and, indeed, through their love mesh. Admittedly, the lovers' entanglements are exacerbated by Puck's actions but ultimately and, ironically, it is Oberon who resolves the very human mess between Helena and Demetrius, and between Demetrius and Hermia.

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[49] In Moshinsky's Coriolanus, we see Coriolanus on horseback in Act I.i and I.iv .

It is right to mention that the 'magic' of Oberon and Titania's fairy kingdom is not merely conveyed to us in this BBC presentation by a constancy of varied angles and rapid editing techniques. The camera often lingers on the figure of Titania, particularly when she is at rest on her 'fairy-bed' which is, in fact, a real bed. The television scene produces Moshinsky's usual televisual references to renaissance paintings. Amy Roberts, the costume designer for *Midsummer Night's Dream*, remarks "Titania was a painting - *Danae in the Pool* " (Fenwick, p.22) by Rembrandt. Notwithstanding this point, the references are not as emphatic as we find in his *All's Well*, although, in this respect Moshinsky stands out as a what I have dubbed 'the creator of images'.

Conclusion.

I have detailed in three Moshinsky productions his manipulation of camera shots and angles as well as *mise-en-scène* to bring a pictorial form of realism to the television image, whose suggestive qualities resonate beyond the television frame. The results denote an approach to the series' initial edict of doing Shakespeare realistically that is distinct from the opening period. Moshinsky's approach introduces a deceptive everyday atmosphere to each production, which affects characterisation and implies underlying meanings to challenge the television audience.

I have shown in this chapter that Moshinsky continually demonstrates a thoughtfulness towards television Shakespeare, creating distinct images for each production discussed: *All's Well*, *Coriolanus* and *Midsummer Night's Dream.* By itself, the pictorial value he brings to the television image appeals to the visual imagination of the audience. However, I have argued that the atmosphere of the pictorial image which is often based on an interior scene is highly significant. The depictions he offers appear naturalistic with a distinct foreground and background, but they have a suggestive quality that creates potential meaning within the Shakespeare text. And that 'suggestive quality' is often fashioned from Moshinsky's television version of "chiaroscuro" (Fenwick, p.17). The consequent image is one that displays contrasting light of dark and bright which is particularly evident in *All's Well.* But I have also demonstrated that the notion of contrast originally denoted by 'chiaroscuro' is used extensively by Moshinsky. His sense of contrast extends to using actors clearly distinguishable by their experience and age. Furthermore, he manipulates the implicit calm of a domestic environment (so prevalent in television) to reveal the underlying tragic elements in a text such as *All's Well.* Indeed, I have argued that in Moshinsky's *Coriolanus* the association of interiors and intimacy has important implications for understanding the Shakespeare text. In his *Coriolanus* the frequent presentation of close images engages the audience at an intimate level with the protagonist, and is exploited as a form of 'interior' which contains the character of Coriolanus. That sense of restraint has implications in respect of the character. It suggests his uniqueness and paradoxically his isolation. And it is through suggestion that Moshinsky creates realistic notions. As I have discussed in relation to *Midsummer Night's Dream*, Moshinsky employs the camera in contrasting ways to imply distinct realities for Athens and the fairy-wood. For Athens there are no unpredictable camera angles and a comparatively slow transition from long shots through to medium close-up images, for instance. In comparison, Moshinsky suggests a separate reality for the fairy-kingdom via quick montage and the juxtaposition of different angled shots which serve to purposely confuse the audience. Moreover, faces appear from unexpected directions in respect of the TV frame, indicating spatial continuity. And this impression of a reality beyond the limited boundaries of the TV frame shows a certain awareness in Moshinsky of the small-screen visual medium, despite being referred to as a 'neophyte' (Fenwick, p.17) when introduced to the series. Certainly, he gives to the television image depth and atmosphere but does what Corner says is difficult for television to achieve: 'generate associative resonance beyond literal depiction' (Corner, p.32).

4. *Macbeth* - Two Visual Styles for Television.

I will look at two different television approaches to *Macbeth*: the ITV/Nunn production (1979) and Jack Gold's BBC version for their Shakespeare series (1983).[1] The Nunn *Macbeth* - a television adaptation of a highly successful Royal Shakespeare Company theatre production - will be analysed in terms of its impact as television, regarding verse-speaking, characterisation, camera work and *mise-en-scène*. It will be compared, in similar terms, to the BBC version which shall be the main focus of the chapter. The varied style of Gold's *Macbeth* that I shall examine reflects a more mature appreciation of Shakespeare on television within the series.

From theatre to TV - the Nunn *Macbeth*.

Of Shakespeare`s most popular tragedies, *Macbeth* stands out as one which has a patchy theatre history. The play`s rich poetry seems to defy satisfactory realization on the stage. In their brief commentary on 'The Scottish play`s' trials on stage, Kenneth McLeish and Stephen Unwin remark that, 'Superstition apart, the piece tends to resist theatrical success.'[2] It is a feature of *Macbeth* commonly noted and one shared in the United States: '*Macbeth* is notoriously difficult to stage. Despite its popularity with readers as one of the great tragedies, its consistent failure in the theatre has made it a shibboleth -...'.[3] Thus one may suggest that television is the medium to expand the potential of a text which is problematic in the theatre.[4]

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[1] The BBC Shakespeare adaptation of *Macbeth* was broadcast on BBC2 at 8.40-11.10pm (without a break), on Saturday 5th November 1983. Transmitted on Guy Fawkes' Night, the BBC no doubt links the date with the play's overtones regarding the 'Gunpowder Plot' of 1605 for its audience.

The Nunn *Macbeth* (duration: two hours) was broadcast on ITV on Thursday 4th January 1979. Certainly, there was no coincidence with regard to the date of transmission and the 'Gunpowder Plot', but the broadcast dates approximately one month after the start of the BBC TV Shakespeare series. The ITV *Macbeth* may well be perceived, therefore, as a riposte to the generally ineffectual beginning of the BBC Shakespeare productions.

[2] K. McLeish and S. Unwin, *A Pocket Guide To Shakespeare`s Plays* (London: Faber and Faber, 1998), p.114.

[3] Michael Mullin, 'Stage and Screen: The Trevor Nunn *Macbeth*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 38, (Shakespeare Association of America, Autumn 1987), p.350.

As the popularising medium of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, television can be seen as an appropriate 'home' for *Macbeth*. With its ability to reach a mass audience easily, television appears to have massive potential: 'In fact, before the close of the Shakespeare series the press reported its potential audience as exceeding 150 million viewers...' [5]. This estimation would include the international after-sales of videos to institutes of education and so forth. In fact, the number of British homes that benefited from this 'democratisation' or dissemination of Shakespeare`s plays during the series was far more numerous than any theatre-audience. From a single broadcast of a lesser-known Shakespeare piece, as *Cymbeline*, the audience figure was 400,000. Moreover, the first part of the *Henry VI* cycle, which has a relatively brief theatre-history, attracted a viewing-figure of 800,000. [6] The potential for television should not be underestimated. In 1979, Thames Television produced a *Macbeth* which was successful in terms of critical reception as well as audience ratings. From the diverse spectrum of the British press, Peter Fiddich of *The Guardian*, in an upbeat review remarked that its origin as a stage production, 'showed from the first word to the last'; [7] while Herbert Kretzmet for the *Daily Mail*, regarded it as a 'miraculous production which showed that *Macbeth* might have been written for television'. [8] The exalted views became transatlantic: 'Nunn`s production demonstrated how much could be achieved with how very little...how Shakespeare could work well if the actors themselves were the set'[9] . And a few years later in 1983, as part of the BBC Television Shakespeare project, the public was offered a *Macbeth* which also received favourable comment. The *Times Literary Supplement* mentioned, 'the play receives intelligently traditional treatment'.[10] And in the United

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[4] I do not discount neither the influence of cinema on the interpretation of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* nor cinema's influence on television. However, a close reading of specific film versions of the play goes beyond the remit of this particular thesis.

With regard to cinema adaptations of *Macbeth* there are certain notable examples which precede the BBC production analysed in this chapter: Orson Welles' *Macbeth* (1948); Akira Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* (1957) and Roman Polanski's *Macbeth* (1971). Since the BBC *Macbeth* (1983) there has not been any international cinema version of the play.

Despite the thesis' focus on television Shakespeare, I shall make brief reference where deemed appropriate to each of the cinema productions mentioned above.

[5] S. Willis, ***The BBC Shakespeare Plays - Making The Televised Canon***, (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press,1991), p. 316.

[6] Neil Taylor, 'Two Types Of Television Shakespeare', ***Shakespeare Survey***,39 (CUP, 1986), p. 104.

[7] P. Fiddick, 'Television - ***Macbeth***', ***The Guardian***, 5th January 1979.

[8] H. Kretzmet, 'The Mail TV Critic', ***Daily Mail***, 5th January 1979.

[9] B. Nightingale, 'TV or Not TV', ***New York Times***, 24th February, 1980.

[10] P. Kemp, 'Schizoid Schemers', ***Times Literary Supplement***, 18th November, 1983.

States, the *Washington Post* regarded it as, 'One of the strongest offerings in the series to date...'.[11] However, there were certain reservations with regard to the main roles. The *Times* remarked rather ambiguously, 'The closer the camera came to the Macbeths the more murky and formless they became'.[12] Nonetheless, there was clearer criticism elsewhere: 'Williamson...may have conveyed Macbeth's anguish effectively, but murdered most of the poetry...[the production] sacrificed certain imaginative and poetical aspects of the play...essential [to] its appeal'[13]. The BBC production certainly provoked a more varied response than the Thames production. This could suggest an interpretation less clear in its approach, or perhaps one trying to achieve many things with a result that is less monochromatic than the Nunn version.

It is true that the Nunn production, under the supervision of Philip Casson, was basically tuning a previously successful Royal Shakespeare Company`s *Macbeth*, under the direction of Trevor Nunn and first staged in 1976, to the resources and the parameters of television. Part of the the reason for choosing this particular *Macbeth* was due to its immense popularity in the theatre: 'One of the few widely admired productions of the century was Trevor Nunn`s RSC account...starring Ian McKellen and Judi Dench' (McLeish and Unwin, p.119). It meant that all the hard work of the preparation leading up to actual performance had been achieved already. From this point of fact, the television production process made very good television, because costs were accomplished at a minimum: 'The staging was as stark and simple as the bare walls. Just £250 was allotted to the show'.[14] The other major factor in its favour was that this interpretation came to television as a tested formula. Conceptually, it treats *Macbeth* as a ritual procession of figures entering a prescribed circle to perform their roles - including a cross-over of roles for some of the actors. Nunn thought it would be received by the audience as an unambiguous presentation, 'that it was a performance, a celebration or enactment of something, and it was happening in a defined space. It certainly wasn`t happening on a blasted heath or in Inverness. There was only one location, and that location was being transformed into different places by people who were enacting the story'[15]. Evidently, it was a production that drew the audience`s attention to its artifice to make it acceptable. It is something that could become televisual as a re-enactment of the 'enactment of something'. It is an approach with a recognisable routine, which smacks of the episodic conventions that are the bread-and-butter of television: soap-operas and serials, for example. Nonetheless, Nunn`s interpretation of *Macbeth* was, perhaps, particularly effective because it was originally designed for presentation to a small audience.

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[11] D. Richards, 'Torrid *Macbeth*', *Washington Post,* 17th October, 1983, p.B12.

[12] P. Ackroyd, 'Fictional terms', *Times*, London, 7th November, 1983.

[13] G.M.Pearce, '*Macbeth*, BBC Shakespeare', *Cahiers Elisabéthains*, 25 (April, 1984), p.113.

[14] Marvin Rosenberg, 'Trevor Nunn`s *Macbeth*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 28 (1977), p.195. A sum of money which should not be taken on face value, but rather as a general indication of a low-budget production.

We may draw certain comparisons here with Welles' *Macbeth* (1948). Financed by Republic films the shooting schedules and budget were 'modest compared to the equivalent product from MGM or Paramount'. And one of the cost-cutting measures Welles decided on was to present it 'first as a stage production'. Michael Anderegg, *Orson Welles: Shakespeare and Popular Culture* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1999), pp.79-80.

On 4th August, 1976, Nunn's *Macbeth* opened at the RSC`s 'Other Place', a 'small studio theatre where...the audience of about 200 surrounded the bare stage on three sides, sitting only three-deep on ground level seats and two-deep on the balcony. Rough timbers and a makeshift ambience removed any sense of reverence or pretension', (Mullin, p.352). Clearly, it was a theatre set that would draw the audience into the performance by sheer physical proximity. In addition, there would be an emotional empathy. As the actors sat in a circle around the enactment that was the performance inside the circle, they would be observers and thus, members of the audience. Essentially, a striking intimacy could be created from the mutuality of roles and from the breakdown of 'pretension' in the theatricality of the presentation. It is an adaptation that could be served equally by television. Without the pretension of elaborate visual effects, via close-up camera work the visual effects are the faces and their movements. This way the television presentation can render a certain intimacy with its audience that has the potential to match the intimacy of the precursory small-theatre experience. Similarly, the constant starkness of the characters` faces continually peering into the television audience`s private world is effective, particularly with the frequency of Macbeth`s direct address to camera. It raises an ambivalent notion with respect to the televisual experience. It is one of comfort and discomfort. But the uncomfortable aspect is partly due to the audience`s closeness to a powerful figure and prolific murderer. It is an issue similar to that already raised in reference to the triumphant television adaptation of the *Henry VI* cycle. This is a series that draws the audience towards the essence of the plays by making the theatrical artifice clear; and then at certain junctures, it reminds the audience of the brutality and the very real ideas addressed by the drama. Likewise, in the Thames production of *Macbeth* the discomforting sense of 'Vaulting ambition', is presented in brutal clarity. Visually, for instance, the ITV production presents a stark contrast of dark and light, of black and white. So when Macbeth's ambition is realised and his bloodied hands from Duncan's murder are seen on our screens in close-up, the redness in the image is particularly striking. In comparison, the same point in the BBC's *Macbeth* is an equally bloody moment of realism, though there is a different approach to using colour in the BBC's visual style.

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[15] Trevor Nunn in an interview, quoted in Michael Mullin's article. M. Mullin, 'The Trevor Nunn *Macbeth*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 38 (Autumn, 1987), p.351.

Jack Gold's *Macbeth* and the BBC's 'House Style'.

The *Macbeth* (1983) production, directed by Jack Gold and produced by Shaun Sutton, is from the third and last period of producership within the BBC TV Shakespeare series. It contrasts heavily with the BBC productions of *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest*, analysed in my first chapter. Gold's *Macbeth*, rather, belongs to a group of plays which includes some of Moshinsky's and Howell's adaptations (referred to elsewhere in this thesis) and which is not constrained so much as the first set of plays in the series by the official directive that they should be 'straight'. Thus, the style of this BBC *Macbeth* shows it is not an adaptation that is afraid to experiment, by veering towards stylisation to expose, for example, the artifice that is Shakespeare's language. Moreover, though Gold's *Macbeth* is not prepossessed by ideas of realism which force attempts to interpret verse in psychologically convincing ways, there is conviction in adopting psychologically realistic verse-speaking which underlines a general confidence in its overall presentation.

It is worthy of note that *Macbeth* had, before the BBC TV Shakespeare, effectively found a 'home' as a staple of BBC TV Shakespeare. Since 1937 and up to 1978 (the start of the BBC TV Shakespeare) *Macbeth* was adapted eight times for BBC Television with repeats following many of the productions. A BBC production of *Macbeth* that remains closer in time to Gold's *Macbeth* was transmitted on 20th September 1970 on BBC1. It was, similar to Gold's version, studio-bound. Interestingly, it was directed by John Gorrie (director of the BBC Shakespeare's *The Tempest*) and produced by Cedric Messina. In a commentary by McKernan and Terris, however, it is dismissed as a 'dry-run for Gorrie and Messina's work for the BBC Television Shakespeare series, hoping to lure a primetime audience with Eric Porter [Macbeth], star of the recently huge popular *Forsyte Saga*. Jane Suzman [Lady Macbeth] consistently holds one's attention, the rest are just passing through'.[16] Yet, the 1970 production remains just one example of the fact that *Macbeth* received more attention than the other three major tragedies: *Othello, Hamlet* and *King Lear*, which managed together an average of three broadcasts over the same period.[17] The producer of the 1983 *Macbeth* and the third and final producer of the BBC TV Shakespeare, Shaun Sutton, was undeniably experienced in BBC drama. He had been involved in theatre before joining the BBC in 1952; and as a BBC man, he helped to formulate early television drama: writing and directing the highly influential *Z Cars* (BBC1, 2 January 1962 - 20 September 1978) and overseeing as Head of Serials, the TV classic *The Forsyte Saga* (BBC2, 7 January - 1 July 1967). Sutton no doubt witnessed, if not directly, the making of numerous Shakespeare including five *Macbeths*; and he was Head of Drama during the other two producerships of the *BBC TV Shakespeare*. Such a wealth of practice in the shaping of television drama brought a familiar touch to an uninterrupted *Macbeth* made to the precepts of the Shakespeare series. However, familiarity gave rise to a certain self-satisfaction. Even in Susan Willis` history of the programme, *The BBC Shakespeare Plays - Making The Televised Canon*, her often upbeat, uncritical tones baulk at an element of arrogant presumptuousness within the BBC: Sutton`s 'hale-and-hearty attitude is in some ways like Messina`s ... that after all these years the BBC knows how to televise drama and need not think about it' (Willis, p.32). And this familiarity with television`s way of presenting things was somewhat overstated by Sutton himself when remarking that Jonathan Miller (who as the second producer had resurrected the series after Messina) lacked a certain training: 'he`d done none of the routine series'.[18]

It is true Miller possibly had problems with the BBC house style, dictated to some degree by the American sponsors: 'the original contract with the American co-producers - it had to be so-called traditional in the costume of the period (whatever that meant)'.[19] The outstanding obligation in the statement goes some way to represent the tensions evident throughout the series, although interference was a notion contradicted by Sutton in interview, who was not aware of any 'direct pressures from American sponsorship'.[20] In response to whatever pressures Miller perceived, he still tried to attract 'outsiders' such as Peter Brook and Trevor Nunn to the project: 'some of the best directors I might have got refused to work'. Miller was turned down because of the restricted conditions of directing (Pasternak-Slater, p.10). Nevertheless, Miller's tenacious pursuit of the series, frequently director as well as producer, gained renewed enthusiasm for the BBC project. One of the high-profile Shakespeare academics, co-editor of the Oxford Shakespeare and frequent commentator on the series, Stanley Wells, remarked, 'In looking for examples of interesting direction I find that I have unintentionally taken all of them from productions directed by Dr. Miller himself, which I hope is a tribute to the unfailing intelligence of his work'.[21]

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[16] Luke McKernan and Olwen Terris, *'Macbeth'*, in *Walking Shadows - Shakespeare in the National Film and Television Archive*, eds. L. McKernan and O. Terris (London: British Film Institute, 1994), p.97.

[17] Willis, Appendix 2, pp.322-30.

[18] M. Z. Maher, 'Shaun Sutton At The End Of The Series: The Shakespeare Plays', *Literature/Film Quarterly* 14 (1986), no. 4, p.190.

[19] Jonathan Miller in an interview with Anne Pasternak-Slater, *Quarto*, 10 (September, 1980), pp. 9-12.

[20] Shaun Sutton in an interview with the author, 8th April, 1992.

But controversy often joined the applause for Miller's work on the series. *Othello* he insisted, going very much against the then current idea of 'political correctness', does not have race as a central theme. He was not reluctant, therefore, to use a white actor in the central role: 'Anthony Hopkins would not have been everyone's idea of Othello, being slight and pale...Overall, it was not one of the most successful of the plays so far produced by...Miller, although often very beautiful and with some striking individual performances'.[22] Indeed, Miller gave the series a 'quality feel', which Sutton acknowledged.[23] For it was Miller who introduced directors, such as, Elijah Moshinsky (discussed in my previous chapter), and Jane Howell (some of whose work will be analysed in my next chapter). They were directors who re-introduced some critical debate to the BBC TV Shakespeare series as a whole. And as the final producer, Sutton's overall tone gave a sense of routine to the presentations: an attitude of 'all in a day's work', (Willis, p.316); although as the producer of Gold's *Macbeth*, there is little about it which could be deemed 'routine' or ordinary.

The upshot of the BBC *Macbeth*, produced by Sutton, was that in line with the BBC way of doing things, there appeared a tacit obligation to do 'history' via costume-drama. However, the exploitation of this aspect of BBC drama was somewhat low-key insofar as the *Macbeth* is concerned. This was perhaps, due to Miller's previous broad interpretation of the edict, 'traditional in the costume of the period'. Yet a kind of referential realism did exist in the BBC *Macbeth*, though less obviously perhaps, than in earlier productions in the series. The costumes of the Scottish soldiers were pre-Norman, and 'the English shapes a little more sophisticated, a more Norman quality, rather more 1066...'.[24] But here one bears in mind that the sartorial aspect did not denote simply one point in history. They bore hints of other cultures too: '... a little bit of Viking and a little bit of Celtic ...'.[25] Moreover, the set's rocks and stonework for Dunsinane gained their textures and shapes from the 'humanised' features of the architecture in the paintings of the contemporary Spanish avant-garde artist, Antonio Tapie.[26] Thus, beyond the BBC TV Shakespeare's predictable and routine referential detail there is more than a touch of stylisation in its *Macbeth.*

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[21] S. Wells, 'Television Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 33 (Autumn, 1982), p.274.

[22] GM Pearce, '*Othello*, BBC Shakespeare', *Cahiers Elisabéthains*, 21 (April, 1982), p.57.

[23] The idea of 'quality' television, as acknowledged by Sutton, relates here to a level of production that lay outside the routine kind of television Sutton was used to. Interview with the author, 8th April, 1992.

The stylisation of the production is conveyed through its use of visual suggestion. The costumes, though they are denotative, are stark in their greyness. They present little in terms of decorative splendour and evoke the shadowy and threatening world of the play. Behind the characters the sky is apparent in an array of colours as the drama unfolds; and this feature of colour is in contrast to the ITV/RSC production. The set designer, Gerry Scott, made the point clear in an interview: 'We... put all the colouring into the skies... The colour of the skies was actually representative of each mood so there was an expressionist feel to it...so you make it clear that it's not meant to be real', (Fenwick, pp.20-1). For instance, there is a dark grey, omnipresent sky in the background image of the interior scene, Act I.v, in which Lady Macbeth invokes, 'thick Night' (47) to suggest the dark nature of the deed she and her husband shall commit as well as the impending fate of King Duncan: 'So clear in his great office that his virtues/Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd, ...', (Act I.vii.18-19). The words 'Clear' and 'angels' give rise to contrastingly bright images. Yet the connotative feel to the television image is not just rendered by the presence of a tainted sky. In certain scenes the general set is immersed in a specific hue. In Act I.ii, which describes the valour of Macbeth and Banquo in battle from the mouth of a wounded Sergeant, the image is swathed in red as apposite for the bloodied soldier and his matching bloody account. And once Malcolm and Macduff together with the English army have reached Birnam Wood, the television image is tinctured with green. Only at Malcolm's behest when he and his followers are before Dunsinane, 'Now, near enough: your leavy screens throw down,/And show like those you are ...' (Act V.vi.1-2), is the particular lighting let up to reveal a brighter natural lighting suggestive of daylight to represent the oncoming of the rightful King and thus, the demise of the usurper, Macbeth.

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[24] H. Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Macbeth* (London: BBC, 1983), p. 22.
[25] Michael Burdle, the costume designer, in an interview with H. Fenwick, *ibid.*.
[26] Gerry Scott, the set designer, Fenwick, 'The Production', p. 21. In contrast to the ITV/Nunn production, the BBC uses a set, though not elaborate in any respect, to portray Dunsinane. Here there is a parallel with Welles' *Macbeth* which also uses a single set for Dunsinane. Welles provides a 'highly stylised and severely stripped down *mise-en-scène* ... The castle looks like a pulverised rock-face' (Anderegg, pp.83-4).

The suggestive approach in this BBC *Macbeth* marks a move away from the more straight-lined referential realism conveyed by a detailed sixteenth-century Italian *piazza*, for instance, from the series' opening play, *Romeo and Juliet*. The main set for *Romeo and Juliet*, which is dominated by a decorated fountain, is over-indulged for it bears no dramatic signification in relation to the text . The set is dearly manicured to create a richly polished televisual image, but it endangers the words of the play being 'swallowed up in visual abundance'.[27] The words are, perhaps, not so much 'swallowed up' but rather their meaning is reduced. The BBC *Romeo and Juliet* has the picture vying with the words within the literally restricted space that is the television screen. The result is a conflict of expression in which the image merely echoes what the Shakespeare text says. In other words, little room is left for the exploration of meaning within the text. Whereas, the *Macbeth* is not so precious about delivering an opulent setting. Instead, we are confronted with vast skies, often hanging menacingly above an image suggestive of rugged heath: a generalised space in which the words can be played effectively in order to create the atmosphere of the Shakespeare text. This is complemented by the symbolic features of Dunsinane castle - its brooding sombreness inferred from its stern angularity in the appearance of dark, hardened granite-like slabs. Dunsinane is a towering structure: '...Dunsinane is a chunky assemblage of grim walls, forbidding corridors and few loopholes...Massive and murky, the settings are solidly in keeping with the play,...'.[28] A sense of initial foreboding is conjured by the image of Dunsinane's huge portcullis about to imprison Duncan in Act I.vi, as the King of Scotland stands before it, ironically, in admiration: 'This castle hath a pleasant seat; the air/ Nimbly and sweetly recommends itself/ Unto our gentle senses' (1-3). Duncan's perceptions captured in his remarks, 'Nimbly', 'sweetly' and 'gentle', are indicative of a certain vulnerability: a trusting nature. And that vulnerability suggests a weakness which is about to become exploited. Indeed, the final shot of the scene places us in the position of on-looker outside, looking in to witness Duncan's entrance; and the portcullis descends slowly, in an agonising long take that strongly conveys a sense of Duncan's downfall. Moreover, the scene is set against a darkening, tangerine sky to suggest at once, daylight on the wane and Duncan's kingship drawing to a fateful close. And Duncan`s entrance into Dunsinane is a poignant moment as he turns his back on the generative scene without the castle-walls: 'the temple-haunting martlet...and [its] procreant cradle...' (4 -8) to face the degenerative purposefulness of his hosts within.

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[27] Michèle Willems, 'Verbal-Visual, Verbal-Pictorial or Textual-Televisual? Reflections on the BBC Shakespeare series', *Shakespeare Survey*, 39 (CUP, 1986), p. 99.

[28] Peter Kemp, 'Schizoid Schemers', *Times Literary Supplement*, 18 November, 1983.

The scene makes for effective television, because it meets the expectations of the medium. Television needs, in its 'undemocratic' way with its bias towards realism, a situation to be convincing. And the scene of 'Duncan`s arrival at Dunsinane' convinces us by the image`s ability to create a definite sense of intrigue. The expressive quality of the visual elements involved prepares and aids the viewer in understanding the contrastive notion in the text and its associated irony - the delicacy and the clarity of the senses and the air without implied by 'I have observed / the air is delicate' (I.vi.9-10, spoken by Banquo), and the air of impending doom within the murkiness of the castle walls that begs Duncan on. The tension evoked here, as well as in other scenes, is due in part to the combination of visual suggestiveness with the production`s musical overlay.

The production uses music with relative frequency as part of the TV soundtrack. The tendency is for the music to introduce a situation or scene and to signal the end of a scene, often as a link into the next scene. Duncan`s arrival before Dunsinane is stressed by a heavy, trumpeted fanfare; and as the portcullis closes, the fanfare is repeated but finished incongruously on a high note. The discordant effect promotes the sense of alarm for the audience that is anticipated by the text. Equally, the music has an 'expressionist' quality in the scenes which follow to prepare us for the murder of Duncan. The next image is of a banquet and is linked to the previous shot of the closing portcullis by the same gradation of dramatic music, that finishes with a jarring sound. This banqueting scene is initially presented in medium close-up, and the camera pans the long table from one end to the other. Thus, the television audience is able to recognise certain faces which have become familiar from previous scenes. The shot is sustained at the head of the table with Duncan, and Lady Macbeth to his right seated next to Banquo. Significantly, at this point, Duncan motions towards the empty chair on his left while appearing to speak to his hostess. A servant then, pours the King more drink and Lady Macbeth looks about anxiously, seeming to search for her missing husband. The soundtrack carries the naturalistic sounds of people together banqueting, yet as the image moves towards the head of the table the musical overlay becomes louder and is heard above all the other sounds. It reaches a sustained crescendo at a juncture of change in image: the medium close-up fades out and an extreme long shot of the table fades in. Then, the single camera pans slowly to the right to reveal Macbeth alone in the next apparent chamber. And as he is introduced by a medium close-up shot, the music fades into a silence disrupted by Macbeth`s verbal meanders which are highlighted by Nicol Williamson's flexible verse-speaking. He remains in front of the viewer in an intimate, medium close-up image before the camera zooms in slightly to present a tighter close-up. The camera movement, thus, sets the scene for his vacillations of thought that are externalised in his subsequent speech.

The whole sequence of the banqueting together with the sound overlay represents the BBC`s opening to the text`s Act I.vii. It appears as a 'dumb show' which contextualises Macbeth`s procrastinations that follow. Indeed, the suggestive nature of the 'dumb show' gives Macbeth`s soliloquy a realistic context and background. At a direct level, we see Macbeth`s presence in the adjoining room as the cause of Duncan`s apparent concern at the empty chair. Doubtless, Macbeth is aware of this - for later 'How now! what news?' (I.vii.28) and 'Hath he asked for me?' (30) are his initial questions at Lady Macbeth`s entrance - and his being aware adds to the atmosphere of tension in his soliloquy. Indeed, linking Duncan and Macbeth within a long take and with an edgy music score, the production provides the audience with an opportunity to appreciate the tense nature of Macbeth`s thoughts as present host and prospective murderer of his guest:

> If it were done, when `tis done, then `twere well
> It were done quickly.../...
> ...He`s here in double trust:
> First, as I am his kinsman and his subject,
> Strong both against the deed; then, as his host,
> Who should against his murtherer shut the door,
> Not bear the knife myself... (Act I.vii.1-16).

The silence, made stronger by the absence of music, creates an atmosphere of anxiety in the vying thoughts Macbeth struggles with. The tantalising 'If' of murdering Duncan without consequences - 'If it were done, when `tis done, then `twere well/ It were done quickly', is balanced against the responsibility Macbeth recognises as the care he owes Duncan who is present 'in double trust'. Indeed, the heaviness of Macbeth`s feelings and the clandestine tone of the speech are visibly manifested by Nicol Williamson`s pulling his fist against his chest in a taut motion, captured in an intimate close-up shot. Ironically, Macbeth`s inner conflicts ultimately lead here to the premonitory thought of his over-reaching himself - an empty 'ambition' that falls over itself:

...- I have no spur
To prick the sides of my intent, but only
Vaulting ambition, which o`erleaps itself
And falls on th`other- (25-28).

The dramatic irony of the speech is that Macbeth has already broken the harmony of the king`s feast by his very absence. This may well be viewed as a precursory act to the act of treason and one, perversely, repeated by him when he is king: 'You have displac`d the mirth, broke the good meeting, / With most admir`d disorder.' (Act III.iv.108-9). The feast, regarded as the symbol of union and accord, is destroyed by Macbeth, as remarked by Lady Macbeth - 'broke the good meeting' - as the consequence of Macbeth`s vision of the 'ghost' of Banquo. The action implies the downfall, in turn, of Macbeth himself. And the idea of 'disorder' in the scene is emphasised by the production with discordant music at the point where Macbeth is stood transfixed by the 'ghost', while the others see nothing.

Music, as part of the television soundtrack, clearly affects many scenes. The music often suggests a threatening and inharmonious mood with an eerie sound-quality, building tension within and between scenes. Bold and dramatic music pervade the Macbeths in their very act of treason, linking Act II.i and II.ii, when Macbeth leaves the stage to assassinate Duncan and Lady Macbeth enters, stealthily awaiting the conclusion of their plans. And music-effects help to build an atmosphere of suspicion in Act II.iii, when the murdered Duncan is discovered. As Macduff re-enters after he has found Duncan`s body, the music starts up gradually, almost surreptitiously. It then effectively echoes the distress of Macduff`s shouting, to baulk suddenly at Lady Macbeth`s entrance - the production here draws our attention to the dissembling nature of her behaviour.

Indeed, music is brought into play in order to point up certain lines of text. At the end of Act III.i, after Macbeth has interviewed the Murderers, a prominent and steady drum-beat is audible, reflecting a sense of anticipation; and it resounds also with the resolute tyranny and unreflective mind of Macbeth as king: 'It is concluded: Banquo, thy soul`s flight, / If it find Heaven, must find it out to-night.' (141-2). The music creates an atmosphere of endangerment and treachery. And it is particularly effective in the scene of the mother and child, Lady Macduff and her son - the innocent, unwitting victims in Act IV.ii:

L. Macd. Now God help thee poor monkey! But how wilt thou do for for a father?
Son. If he were dead, you`ld weep for him: if you would not, it were a good sign that I should quickly have a new father.
L. Macd. Poor prattler, how thou talk`st! (58-63).

Their relatively innocent banter is contrasted with a musical overlay which includes a discernible, echoing drumbeat that starts slowly to develop into a progressively quicker beat. In turn, it becomes louder and more intrusive to a point that the chaotic sound produced mirrors the emotional violence and the viciousness with which the scene concludes.

As a part of the television soundtrack, a hollow and escalating drumbeat is heard frequently enough to act as a motif in the BBC production. As such, it signals the force and energy of destructiveness in *Macbeth*. For instance, the constant drumbeat sounds as Macbeth and Macduff fight to the end. And once Macbeth is slain and Malcolm re-establishes political order, the production finishes with a still of Fleance to the right of the frame, close by the body of Macbeth strewn on the steps that ascend to the throne. The figure of Fleance stares coldly. And as we are directed by the multi-camera editing, it appears he does so at Malcolm and his followers. The closing frame is then of Fleance in the foreground of a medium long shot with the dead Macbeth to the left of the image in the background. The resulting static image is progressively swathed in red lighting, in a final gesture of the production`s 'expressionist' style; and it is a gesture that strikes an ambiguous note. For the image harks back to the scene of the Captain`s bloody account and, undoubtedly, the bloodshed of Macbeth`s despotic reign. In particular, it reasserts the 'ghost' of Banquo in the figure of his son, Fleance. The image presents him as the 'horrible shadow' (III.iv.106) overlooking Macbeth`s corpse as a symbolic moment of victory. Yet the quiet and clinical stare at Malcolm suggests, at once, that he is Macbeth`s shadow. The overpowering red hue is a portent of the violent upheaval that will be provoked by Fleance, should we refer back to Macbeth`s description of the apparition presented by the witches` 'masters': 'Thou art too like the spirit of Banquo: down! / Thy crown does sear mine eye-balls...'(IV.i.112-3). The indication is that Banquo`s progeny will be crowned king. But indeed, for Fleance to achieve his destiny he must succeed Malcolm. This production suggests it will be through brutal usurpation, for the suggestive lighting in the last frame and a crescendo of percussion evoke a sense of continuous suspicion and conflict.

Gold's Macbeth and Lady Macbeth.

An atmosphere of wariness and fear is endemic in *Macbeth*, largely brought about by the actions of Macbeth. The nature of the character is that of a man willing to force himself, 'to do an unconscionable act' (Fenwick, p.23), according to Jack Gold, the BBC`s director. Gold addresses the play, therefore, on a 'humanistic scale' (Fenwick, p.23). So alongside the 'expressionist' style of the production, there is a 'humanistic' approach to the play. The relationship between the Macbeths, for instance, is viewed at a distinctly 'human' level with our attention brought to focus on a passionate rapport which involves a good deal of physical contact.

Our initial impression of Lady Macbeth and, subsequently, the Macbeths together is formed in Act I.v. In contrast with the open space of the 'rugged heath' of the previous scene, the production stays with the text`s directions to show Lady Macbeth contained by the imposing walls of Inverness castle and, effectively, the television frame as she moves continuously towards camera while reading her husband`s letter. The style of presentation in the scene gives strength to the idea that Lady Macbeth is as an enclosed feline, but whose only escape is internal via her imagination. This Lady Macbeth, played by Jane Lapotaire, is introduced as a visually slender and graceful figure, seen in a close-fitting dress which emphasises her sexuality - an important point to note when Lady Macbeth externalises her dark imagination:

> ... Come you Spirits
> That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
> ...Come to my woman`s breasts,
> And take my milk for gall, you murth'ring ministers,
> Wherever in your sightless substances
> You wait on nature`s mischief! Come thick night,... (37-47).

Her address to the 'Spirits' and 'murth`ring ministers' is erotically charged. She falls onto the marital bed, spreads open her body at 'unsex me here', to prostitute herself to the 'Spirits'. At 'Come to my woman`s breasts' Lady Macbeth then moves her hands ardently up her body in a catlike movement, to finally clutch her breasts. The sequence of movements effects an aura of incantation in the speech. And her passionate action becomes evermore spellbinding when she directs her gaze straight at camera at, '...Come, thick night', (l. 47). Here, Lapotaire plays with the duration of 'Come' in order to give it a sensually inviting tone. It is an intimate gesture and at once, intimidates the viewer as she holds out her arms directly to camera. For the actress proceeds to express Lady Macbeth`s ardour with a menacing tone, rasping the words:

> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of Hell,
> That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
> Nor Heaven peep through the blanket of the dark,
> To cry, 'Hold, hold!' (48-51).

It is a manner of delivery that suggests Lady Macbeth speaks her darkest thoughts, as she equates 'Hell' and 'thick Night' with the 'blanket of the dark' under which she envisages her sharp, 'keen knife' and its entrance - 'the wound'. The premonition in the poetry of what is later physically realised is clear: the veiled nature of Duncan`s murder, carried out in the darkness of night, under the 'blanket' of sleep, via the fatal 'wound' of a dagger. The intensity of Lady Macbeth`s state of mind is undoubtedly conveyed through the verse-speaking. The duration of each word becomes shorter as Lady Macbeth begins to gasp and pant as though out of control, to reach a point at which she embraces herself in an outburst of consummate self-pleasure at "'Hold, hold!' ". The portrayal is, indeed, of a Lady Macbeth who exudes a frenzied desire in such abundance and with such virulence that at " 'Hold, hold!' " she writhes with pleasure like a wild, uncaged feline.

The production depicts her as 'wild' in the sense that by the end of the speech Lady Macbeth is visually uncontrolled. She has become extreme. She has gone beyond the conscionable act of imagination, though it is Macbeth who will later plunge the knife. The act of treason, therefore, remains encaged in her imagination only. The intimation is that she is nevertheless, limited, unable to enact her desire directly; or indeed, in her feverish enthralment with, 'the sightless substances' Lady Macbeth`s own 'Vaulting ambition' has '[overleaped] itself'.[29] However, her will is sufficiently strong to persuade her husband to commit the murderous act. Lady Macbeth`s passion carries over in her interaction with Macbeth. Via multi-camera editing, we are aware of Macbeth`s entrance before Lady Macbeth is. She remains enraptured on the bed, and we note from the final shot of the multi-camera sequence (which is an over-the-shoulder shot from behind Macbeth) she is taken by surprise at Macbeth`s presence. In the action there is a hint of voyeurism which immediately gives a sexual edge to their meeting. Lady Macbeth`s impassioned spirit is transported in her excited greeting of, 'Great Glamis! Worthy Cawdor!' (52). And as Macbeth slowly approaches the bed at her words 'I feel now/ The future in the instant' (53-4) Lady Macbeth leaps from the bed to embrace him. They are viewed in medium close-up - an image of intimacy, clasping each other, kissing fervently.

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[29] Spoken by Macbeth, Act I.vii, l.27.

This 'humanistic' approach in the BBC production makes the Macbeths stand out as a formidable couple.

The sensitivity for each other that the Macbeths share is created around strong passionate emotion. This helps to make the audience receptive to the breakdown in their relationship once they are king and queen. For when Macbeth`s passion turns so far inward that it becomes solipsistic, Lady Macbeth is inevitably excluded. Macbeth`s passion then manifests itself as a violent over-eagerness for self-preservation: "...My strange and self-abuse / Is the initiate fear that wants hard use." (III.iv.142-3). This is spoken at the end of the banquet scene after Macbeth has effectively frightened away his guests in consequence of his own fear at 'seeing' Banquo`s Ghost. He intimates to Lady Macbeth of further terrible acts with, 'wants hard use', but interestingly there is silence from her: any passionate rapport is no longer evident. However, she is visibly upset. Her emotions have brought her to a state of inertia. Thus, she cannot resist Macbeth, despite the hint of a struggle, as he coldly pulls her sluggish body away to bed. From this point, any physical contact between them is absent, and indeed, this is their last moment together on stage.

Their relationship thus far in the play has been built on a 'natural' interaction, and this reciprocal relationship is reflected in the verse-speaking of the BBC actors. For example, in Act I.v at their embrace Macbeth speaks 'My dearest love...' slowly and quietly but with a characteristic fervency. Clearly, the BBC production attempts a kind of 'naturalistic' style of verse-speaking which would not be possible at most theatre venues. For if we refer back to Macbeth`s soliloquy at the beginning of Act I.vii and what follows, the loudness of the voice is varied to effect often a 'natural' mode of expression. After the viewer is visually made aware of Duncan remarking on the absence of Macbeth from the banqueting-table, as described earlier, the viewer is faced with Macbeth alone and apparently, in close spatial proximity to Duncan - separated by a mere wall. Thus, when he vacillates with treasonous thoughts, Macbeth is heard only in whispering tones: a natural tone to adopt under the given circumstances. This frames the soliloquy with a constant edginess while Macbeth is immersed in private thought, as signified by a tightly framed close-up shot. And when Lady Macbeth enters, the suggestion is, from Macbeth`s reaction, that she has disturbed him. For he turns round sharply with an alarmed look on his face - a reflection of the frightening content of his thoughts as well as being intruded on unexpectedly. Once Macbeth has stopped soliloquizing, the camera dollies out slightly and crabs right to provide space for the Macbeths to have a conversation within medium close-up range.

Their discussion is conveyed in hushed tones. They show the desire not to be unwittingly overheard which increases the sense of realism within the scene. As soon as Macbeth has revealed his apprehension: 'We will proceed no further in this business...', (l. 32), Lady Macbeth`s quietened sounds turn into hisses which reflect her frustration at the perception of mutability in her husband:

> Was the hope drunk
> Wherein you dress`d yourself? Hath it slept since,
> And wakes it now to look so green and pale
> At what it did so freely? From this time
> Such I account thy love... (35-9).

Not uncommon to passionate relationships there is evidence of a mercurial spirit which involves flashes of mood-change. Lady Macbeth`s assault on Macbeth`s sense of honour begins at a gentle tempo, but quickens suddenly at, 'At what it did so freely?'. The words remain hushed but are uttered louder than before. And the line is vented sharply, in order to give it the emotional significance of Lady Macbeth`s angry derision of Macbeth. For added realism at this point, Lady Macbeth turns round to check there are no witnesses. This action introduces a lengthy pause mid-line, although a syntactical pause is indicated by the text: 'Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard'. However, the pause the actress produces is not too long to upset the overall tempo of Lady Macbeth`s speech, and it is sufficient to allow the character to revert to the previous tempo without upsetting the sense of realism. Then, similar to the musical effects I referred to earlier, the pace of the delivery of Jane Lapotaire starts to build again at a gentle tempo until it reaches a screeching crescendo: "Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would', / Like the poor cat i` th` adage?" (43-4). At this point, all pretence to beguile has disappeared from Lady Macbeth`s voice. She raises the loudness and pitch of her words so much that Macbeth looks round in fear to check nobody has overheard them and then, he takes hold of her physically in order to placate her with the words, 'Prithee, peace' (45). In effect, Lady Macbeth has cried out in a natural response to sensing the prospect of a thwarted plan. She chides, therefore, that which Macbeth holds most dear: his sense of his own manly courage -'And, to be more than what you were, you would / Be so much more the man...' (50-1). Returning to a careful whispering tone, Lady Macbeth emphasises 'the man' with a drawn out hiss.

Camera, movement and subjectivity.

Indeed, both the intense nature of their relationship and the perilous nature of the scenario envisaged by the Macbeths are articulated by a wide-ranging use of voice. Should we examine the scene which leads to Macbeth entering Duncan`s chamber to commit the murder, we would find a good deal of evidence from Nicol Williamson`s manipulation of his voice to produce noticeably different effects.[30] In Act II.i, when Macbeth visualizes the instrument of murder: 'Is this a dagger, which I see before me' (33), Williamson looks directly at camera in a medium close-up shot. This puts the emphasis on a psychologically realistic interpretation of the scene. And once more, Macbeth`s hushed way of speaking helps the viewer to understand that Macbeth is revealing the wanderings of his mind. In this scene the camera takes on a role rather than mere witness to an event, of Macbeth`s guide towards the 'unconscionable act'. The camera zooms out slowly to a medium distance in relation to Macbeth as he turns to his own dagger. It is as though the camera represents the unscrupulous thought that encourages Macbeth to act after 'seeing' the weapon in his mind. Undoubtedly, the subtlety here is the unique use of a cinematic device for the camera has become what Macbeth refers to as that which, '...marshall`st me the way that I was going' (42). It has become the 'dagger' of the mind. For when Macbeth asserts,'- There`s no such thing / It is the bloody business which informs / Thus to mine eyes...' (47-9) he turns away from direct camera view. And as Macbeth continues, proceeding to evoke the outer-world beyond the sanctum of inner-thought, Williamson`s voice begins to change its tone to an almost guttural rasp:

> ... - Now o`er the one half-world
> Nature seems dead, and wicked dreams abuse
> The curtain`d sleep... (ll. 49-51)

The tone parallels that of Lady Macbeth`s when she speaks of 'thick Night', suggesting a complicity of minds. And the grating voice of Macbeth characterises the iniquitous stillness of night he describes as lifeless 'Nature' and 'wicked dreams', which disturb 'the curtain`d sleep'. The word 'curtain`d' is closely associated in meaning with Lady

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[30] Kurosawa's *Throne of Blood* is not directly relevant to this BBC *Macbeth*. Kurosawa's film is described by Rothwell as 'a transformation rather than an adaptation of *Macbeth*'. Kenneth Rothwell, *A History of Shakespeare on Screen*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.182. Nevertheless, we may note a comparison of 'unique behaviour traits' in Kurosawa's Washizu (Macbeth) and Gold's Macbeth. Nicol Williamson's verse-speaking is often marked by unique inflections and guttural rasps; whereas, Washizu (played by Toshiro Mifune) continually produces 'scornful, nearly hysterical laughter' (Rothwell, p.187).

Macbeth`s earlier 'blanket of the dark' (I.v.50), both of which conjure the idea of deception. Also, Macbeth`s rasping effects (similar to Lady Macbeth`s in Act I.v) have an incantatory force that stresses his need to summon the powers of deception for his own use:

> ...; and wither`d murder,
> Alarum`d by his sentinel, the wolf,
> Whose howl`s his watch, thus with his stealthy pace
> With Tarquin`s ravishing strides, towards his design
> Moves like a ghost... (II.i.52-6).

Murder is clearly personified in an ugly state as 'wither'd Murther', guided by the night`s haunting melody: 'the wolf, / whose howl`s his watch,'. Truly, the tone has changed. Macbeth is on the hunt towards his prey. He is become 'Murther', and therefore, at the phrase 'with his stealthy pace' Macbeth starts moving directly towards camera: the enactment of 'Tarquin`s ravishing strides'. And indeed, the 'stride' of Macbeth is careful but resolute. Williamson gives the single syllable of 'Moves' a pronounced duration which draws the viewer`s attention to the stealth-like quality Macbeth has taken on, building the suspense of the scene.

At the point when Macbeth 'exits' the scene in order to kill Duncan, Williamson produces a somewhat stylised note in his voice - (I have noted Williamson`s idiosyncratic pause in parentheses): 'That summons thee to heaven [PAUSE] or to hell' (II.i.64). Williamson`s pause upsets purposely the pace of the line; and it points up a change in voice quality that implies the intentions of Macbeth - to enter a 'hell' by the very action he pursues. The halting rhythm produces a discordant effect which stresses the hellishness of his ambition. And when Williamson raises the volume of his utterance while speaking in a flattened bass tone, it is in total contrast with the rest of his speech, signalling a sense of *gravitas* to the television audience. The tone is a clear indication to the audience that Duncan`s murder is about to take place and that an important transition will ensue from it.

The mood certainly alters to one of bloody realism when the viewer is presented with a medium close-up image of Macbeth`s soiled hands, as the result of the 'deed'. In Act II.ii the 'deed' is brought to us visually via this metonymic image. The dramatic irony of the image is its association with Lady Macbeth`s later scene of 'sleep-walking', and the focal point of her hands: '...What, will these hands / ne`er be clean? -' (V.i.42-3). For when Macbeth holds up his bloodied hands to his face, the television audience is taken aback by the stark realism of Lady Macbeth`s equally bloodied hands which are suddenly thrust into view from the right of screen, without forewarning.[31] The image creates an eerie sense of dismemberment - of hands from bodies, and it portends the horror of bloody actions and their regenerative nature. The same image hints at the essential notion also, that bloody actions are to be paid for by bloody consequences. It is, therefore, of no surprise that Williamson`s Macbeth is entranced by the bloody vision:

> What hands are here? Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.
> Will all Neptune`s ocean wash this blood
> Clean from my hand? No; this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red. (II.ii. 59-63).

Williamson`s Macbeth stares at his hands mesmerised by them, speaking in a gruff, panting voice which connotes Macbeth`s distracted mind. In fact, it is an almost breathless delivery that signifies Macbeth`s spent energy. And Williamson`s deep throaty tones are reminiscent of the previous 'dagger' scene. Likewise here, they help to convey a sense of Macbeth`s lurid imagination in all its gory details - 'Ha! they pluck out mine eyes.'. Macbeth is overwhelmed by his macabre thoughts. He visualises vast seas replete with the red hue of blood as he focuses on the blood running down his hands: 'The multitudinous seas incarnadine, / Making the green one red.'. The sense of bewilderment in that vision is captured by the production in the subsequent image when Lady Macbeth`s bloody hands abruptly interrupt Macbeth. Indeed, we see he is startled, for her hands visually complement his imaginings. And their hands combined symbolise the red deluge he perceives. Then Lady Macbeth speaks, 'My hands are of your colour; but I shame / To wear a heart so white...' (II.ii.64-5), and at the syntactical break in the middle of the first line she joins hands with him in a gesture of their complicity. However, at the same time, her pragmatism attempts to persuade Macbeth to leave the scene where they are potentially in view of others: '...I hear a knocking / At the south entry:- retire we to our chamber' (II.ii.65-6). Lady Macbeth is aware that Macbeth continues to be in a distracted state, attempting to pull him towards their 'chamber' ironically by the hand, but without success: '...Your constancy / Hath left you unattended' (II.ii.68-9). Here, instead of

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[31] It is the unanticipated vision of Lady Macbeth's bloodied hands that make the image most effective rather than simply the appearance of blood.

Both productions studied in this chapter manage to avoid the relentless imagery of 'crude' bloody violence that characterises Polanski's *Macbeth*: 'it is [even] difficult not to laugh at the decapitation of Macbeth' at the end. Deborah Cartmell, ***Interpreting Shakespeare On Screen*** (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 2000), p.19.

Lady Macbeth accusing Macbeth of the loss of his 'firmness',[32] the production places emphasis on the word 'constancy' as his mindfulness of their need to escape the situation. Macbeth does remain firm. For we see that Lady Macbeth is unable to budge his towering body. The visual contrast is important, as Macbeth physically overshadows Lady Macbeth. His comparative height and broad physique suggest strongly to the audience his reputed capabilities as a soldier; and more significantly, his natural strength over Lady Macbeth stands out as a visual portent of her much diminished influence over him later.

Macbeth stays in his preoccupied state, heedless of their necessity to escape, continuing to hold out his hands, stupefied with regret: 'To know my deed, `twere best not know myself' (II.ii.73). The inertia of his substantial physique is in direct contrast to the nimble mobility of the smaller figure of Lady Macbeth whose agility of mind, at this point, is necessary if they are to avoid witnesses of their presence: 'Get on your night-gown, lest occasion call us, / And show us to be watchers' (II.ii.70-1). The image of this, Macbeth`s obliviousness, introduces an element of pathos. His hands continue to be a televisual focal point for Macbeth`s disturbed perceptions. In Act II.iii, as Macbeth and Lennox wait together outside Duncan`s chamber while Macduff has entered, ironically to wake the king, there is a cut to an image of Macbeth`s hands. Macbeth has his hands behind him (out of Lennox`s sight) and the camera directs us, in a close-up image, to observe them moving in ceaseless agitation. And later in Act III.ii, Lady Macbeth attempts vainly to placate Macbeth`s restless insecurity in respect of Banquo and Macbeth replies: 'There`s comfort yet; they are assailable' (III.ii.39) - ('they' refers to both Banquo and his son Fleance). There is a matched cut which changes the shot size from medium close-up to close-up, taking its cue from the caesural break in the text. And the close-up image reveals a frightened-looking Lady Macbeth as Macbeth clasps his great hands tightly around her comparatively small neck without realising it. At this point Macbeth is characterised as terribly distracted, viewed looking beyond Lady Macbeth, ironically loosening his grip at, 'Then be thou jocund' (III.ii.40).

The close-up image allows the television audience to understand the text via facial expressions, creating Shakespeare scenes of great intensity. These televisual Shakespeare scenes produce such focus difficult to rival on stage. It is also a point that can be made about the wide utilization of voice in a television Shakespeare, which is so clearly evident in Williamson`s Macbeth. His idiosyncratic style generates rasps, whispering and hissing; and often he alternates between querulous and deep guttural tones. It is a style that evokes a very 'humanistic' portrayal of Macbeth, and allows the expansiveness of the character to make an impression on the small screen. In Act III.ii, when he relates his thoughts and tortured mind to his wife, the frequent changes in voice enhance the sense of Macbeth`s personal turmoil for the viewer. At the culmination point of his expressions of frustration and anxiety he exclaims, 'O! full of scorpions is my mind, dear wife!' (III.ii.36). In a hoarse voice Macbeth cries out to his wife. His eyes are tightly shut, and in a stylised and powerful gesture he draws his hands towards his face. As he does, Macbeth moves his fingers in an agitated motion such that brings to life, for the viewer, the notion of 'scorpions' and a sense of the great pain that besets him. It is a television moment of vivid intensity.

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[32] *The Arden Shakespeare - Macbeth*, ed. K. Muir (London: Methuen, 1951), footnote to lines 67-8 which quotes the interpretation of Chambers: 'Your firmness has deserted you'.

Later in Act V.v, the intense pace of the action continues as Macbeth prepares himself for the defence of Dunsinane. Macbeth is interrupted however, by the news of Lady Macbeth`s death. Macbeth`s reaction initiates a change in tempo:

> She should have died hereafter:
> There would have been a time for such a word.-
> To-morrow, [LONG PAUSE] and to-morrow, and to-morrow,
> (V.v. 17-19).

The objective spirit with which Macbeth readies his defences is reflected in Williamson`s almost-perfunctory verse-speaking. Thus, it is a distant voice that coldly declares 'She should have died hereafter'. But after the first 'To-morrow', there is an exaggerated pause (as indicated in parentheses above) marking a change in tempo and in turn, a transition of mood towards pain and loss. Each 'to-morrow' that follows is characterised by a tortuously long duration with a curling rasp, as Williamson raises his upper-lip, which points up Macbeth`s profound contempt and bitterness. A quicker tempo returns later in the speech, though Williamson maintains the grating tones:

> Life`s but a walking shadow; a poor player,
> That struts and frets his hour upon the stage,
> And then is heard no more: it is a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying [PAUSE] nothing. (V.v. 24-7).

At 'full of sound and fury', the actor raises the volume of his delivery in a stylised form of verse-speaking to impress the meaning of the words 'sound' and 'fury'. This method stresses the contrast in meaning with the word 'nothing' in the very next line - emptiness as the result of the busyness of a life: its 'sound' and 'fury'. And in the final line of Macbeth`s soliloquy, there is an unorthodox break (marked in parentheses above) after which Macbeth growls 'nothing' accentuating the duration of the second syllable. The effect of this moment is to impress the idea on the audience that Macbeth looks into a nihilistic void. Then what follows is a time of realisation in which Macbeth recognises 'th` equivocation of the fiend' (V.v.43).

The close-up, the developing shot and the sense of space.

While Macbeth proceeds in his realisation, in typical style of this BBC production, the camera dollies in gradually to create a medium close-up image of Macbeth: an intimate shot appropriate for the revelations of Macbeth's innermost thoughts. It is an example of a shot that TV employs to reveal the interior life of a character. And it is a shot that remains part of the 'vocabulary' of TV camera-use in the BBC TV Shakespeare series by the virtue of its frequent usage.

Jack Gold, the director, also adopts the close-up to convey the theatrical aside. The audience is introduced to this kind of television 'vocabulary' early in the drama. In Act I.iii, after being presented with the Thane of Cawdor (as the witches had foretold earlier in the scene), we are presented with Macbeth`s aside: 'Glamis, Thane of Cawdor!/ The greatest is behind...' (I.iii.116-7). However, we do not watch Macbeth speak the lines, but we do hear them. The method is effective in giving an impression that the audience is privy to the character`s hidden thoughts.[33] And in a later aside in the same scene the audience does watch Macbeth speaking and, therefore, experiences his swaying mind in a more typical way: '...This supernatural soliciting/ cannot be ill; cannot be good' (I.iii.130-1). The close-up shot for the aside puts the audience in a position of witness to Macbeth`s anxious quizzing, while Williamson looks directly at camera. But as the shot develops Williamson starts to look away from the camera while speaking, and the audience is placed in an uncertain position. Initially, the camera places us in the role of onlooker, potentially looking through a 'two-way mirror' by which there is a hint of collusion with the character. Then suddenly, the camera shows us an apparent 'one-way mirror' through which we watch things happening. The 'one-way watching' is one that switches focus to include movement, making us aware that the character is acting outside us, without any hint of interaction. And in this particular sequence, Williamson`s gradual turning around away from the television audience emphasises the character`s distraction and agitation suggested in the text`s aside.The transition this television aside represents, in terms of the camera`s role, is similar to the 'dagger' scene in Act II.i, related above. Both instances distinguish themselves as exceptional in this production, compared to the more frequent medium close-up and close-up shots, because they combine the close-up and the sustained single camera shot to produce a dramatic long take. They help the BBC *Macbeth*'s visual style to stand out, and indeed, point to the idiosyncrasies of the directorial approach.

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[33] The use of sound in this way - the voice-over - is exploited by Roman Polanski`s cinematic adaptation of *Macbeth* (1971). The film's verbal text conveys some of Macbeth`s and Lady Macbeth`s soliloquies as well as asides, but the audience does not see the characters speak the words.

Gold allows occasionally for the action to unfold in front of the single camera, which is less conventional camera work compared to the plays discussed so far from the series. In reference to his *Merchant of Venice*, three years prior to the *Macbeth* in the series, Willis comments, 'Gold makes effective use of single camera sequences, developing movement in front of the camera rather than consistently cutting between several shots'.[34] And there is evidence of a similar style of approach to his *Macbeth.* An example stands out in Act I.v (examined earlier in this chapter) in which a single camera trails Lady Macbeth`s movements, thereby providing depth to the television image, until the entrance of Macbeth, when a second camera is introduced. Indeed, with Lady Macbeth alone 'on stage', to cut to another camera shot would disturb the intimacy of the scene and the notion of Lady Macbeth seducing the camera. Notwithstanding this, the single camera sequence lasts for ninety seconds which is not unconventionally long.[35] Similarly, at the beginning of Act I.vii, described above, the BBC`s banqueting scene uses single camera but gives the audience relief from tightly-framed two- and three-character shots with a gradual panoramic sweep (an image not unfamiliar to viewers of TV news reporting a mobilising army across the mountainscape of Afghanistan or a series on the African Congo, for instance).

In keeping with the series' presentation style, Gold maintains a multi-camera system for conversations between characters in a scene: medium close-up range, over-the-shoulder shots and reaction shots. We witness the facial reactions of those at the Macbeths' feast to Macbeth`s 'fit',[36] at the sight of Banquo`s 'ghost'.Then one camera zooms in to present a close-up image of Macbeth exclaiming his horror. The intimacy of the shot reveals the very human fear of the character, but the tight-framing also symbolises his isolation. The notion is appropriate for the text`s exposé of Macbeth`s gradual detachment from himself and the world, which he intimates at the end of his reign:

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[34] S. Willis, p.210. Jack Gold`s *Merchant of Venice*, first broadcast, December 1980.

[35] Particularly when we compare Jonathan Miller`s camera work in the BBC TV *Othello* (1981), in which there are many single-camera sequences of several minutes.

[36] Act III.iv.55, Lady Macbeth`s initial explanation to their guests for Macbeth`s strange behaviour.

> ...I have liv`d long enough: my way of life
> Is fall`n into the sere, the yellow leaf;
> And that which should accompany old age,
> As honour, love, obedience, troops of friends,
> I must not look to have;... (V.iii.22-26).

His list of what he must forego, of what could have been, 'honour, love, obedience, troops of friends', stresses how removed he is. And Gold brings the sense of Macbeth`s lone, 'fall`n' status, via close-up shots, to the audience`s attention.

In a similar way, we are presented with big close-up shots of the crown of Scotland. They create metonymic images which remind us of what lies at the centre of the play`s action. For example, at the start of Act III.i, the production introduces the new king with a big close-up of his crown. Then the camera zooms out to reveal a close-up image of the crown and its wearer. And in the final act we gain an impression significantly, and not surprisingly, of Macbeth being possessive of the king`s coronet. He is continually seen in close-up and in medium close-up holding and wearing the crown. In Act V.viii, while dressed in armour and with his crown on Macbeth battles with Macduff, and as they fight in close proximity Gold presents a close-up shot of Macbeth. The close image exposes Macbeth`s vain efforts to retain what the audience already realises and what the television picture emphasises as a plain ornament, representative of Macbeth`s empty kingship. For the television audience, by this stage, is aware that Macbeth has no support and that a kingdom without its people renders his kingship worthless.

Indeed, despite being studio-bound, there is an emphatic sense of space to the production. The perceived necessity of depth and manoeuvrability, to allow developing shots for example, is an idiosyncrasy in Gold`s directorial style: "We`re using strong dynamic approach shots and perspectives...".[37] The peculiarities of this approach were a critical aspect of the production for the set designer, Gerry Scott:

> Every set, no matter how small it is, used the whole width of the studio, even if it was just shot through a window, so you were aware of the massive feeling of it...It had to be massive. Also Jack [Gold] likes to shoot 360 degrees virtually everywhere. Whatever we did had to be able to cope with that, and

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[37] Jack Gold in an interview with Fenwick, 'The Production', Fenwick, p. 20.

when you`re shooting 360 degrees across a studio like TC1, that`s a big area.[38]

Thus, when we view Macbeth at the end alone inside Dunsinane, the large spatial perspective strengthens the idea, as previously suggested, of a barren kingship - leading to a kingship ready for change. Then the next shot provides an arresting image of the figure to instigate that change: Macduff armed at the castle`s portcullised entrance, (a visual contrast to Duncan as the unprepared victim). As Macduff searches for Macbeth who waits by his throne, the actor playing Macduff, Tony Doyle, walks towards camera as though he approaches via a long corridor. The inevitable space that allows such an approach gives the image its depth, and permits the viewer to catch sight of a silhouette of the witches, not for the first time, in the background of the image at the portcullis. This adds to the notional depth of the television picture, insofar as Gold likes to remind us of what is orchestrating the action in the background of Shakespeare`s text. Undoubtedly, Gold's preoccupation with manipulating the sense of vast space is there to remind us of a wider canvas in *Macbeth.* It promotes the sense of open heath and skies and the enormity of passion the Macbeths display which gradually turns in on itself to create destruction of monstrous proportions.

The Nunn *Macbeth* - TV as a two-way mirror.

The self-destructive power of the Macbeth figures is evident in the ITV/Trevor Nunn version of *Macbeth.* However, the ITV production, similar to the RSC theatre production it is based on, gives importance to closer visual perspectives. The result is, for instance, a greater frequency in the use of the close-up camera shots than we find in the BBC *Macbeth.* The BBC production uses a greater variety of spatial perspectives and indeed, makes use of colour to suggest huge skies, for example; whereas the ITV version is notable for its monochromatic appearance. At the beginning, we are introduced to the playing-space which instantly conveys the idea of confinement that is almost claustrophobic - 'a pitch of continuous tension', says Marvin Rosenberg.[39]

Although Rosenberg uses a musical metaphor in which 'pitch' refers to the high tone produced by, for example, the tightened strings of a violin, 'pitch' may be perceived here as an area in which an action is played out. For the area of play is the first image presented to us. The image conveys a circle defined by a white line with the seated participants/actors positioned on its periphery. This method of television presentation mimics the ideas originated in the small-theatre production, referred to at the beginning of the chapter. In the television version the camera pans to each participant in the circle for its introduction, and in dimmed lighting the actor stares expressionless and motionless directly at camera. The resulting television image sets in motion the idea of the use of camera as a 'mirror'. That mirror is one through which we focus on facial and bodily movement. The level of focus is enhanced by the darkened background which does not allow distraction from the characters' actions. In turn, there is a sense of tightened space that involves a concentrated experience of television viewing. The ITV adaptation of the Nunn *Macbeth*, therefore, essentially repeats the small-theatre event of drawing its audience in via a cheek by jowl experience which reproduces 'unblinking, alarming mouth-to-eyebrow enlargements of the human face'.[40] As noted, in reference to the close-up image in the BBC *Macbeth*, to view the characters in close proximity creates a sense of ambivalence: comfort and discomfort. In the Nunn *Macbeth* we experience a similar sort of attraction: we are privy to the interior life of the character. Yet by the same token, there is an uneasiness produced by the frequency of close-ups which exhausts the viewer to the extent that the proximity becomes stifling. And the dark background to the television image is an important part of one's sense of a suffocating atmosphere.

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[38] Gerry Scott, in an interview with Fenwick, 'The Production', Fenwick, pp. 20-1.

[39] M. Rosenberg, 'Trevor Nunn's *Macbeth*', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 28 (1977), p.196.

The darkness works as a shroud to protect and to disguise, and as a contrasting feature of the presentation. The darkness reveals by contrast, the pale and almost brilliant white appearance of the figure of Duncan as an old man. The 'paleness' is a mark of Duncan's fragility which is emphasised by his being led often by the hand. Duncan's frail body is adorned with a white robe embellished with a small number of sparkling jewels which, nonetheless, serve to attract us to the light that stresses Duncan's angelic characteristics. The final touch is Duncan's white hair and beard that hint at his sage humility. Indeed, the form of Duncan stands out while all the other characters are in dark dress.[41] The overall sartorial slant is contemporary, unlike the BBC approach to costume. Yet the style of costume is markedly neutral in the ITV production: the male characters generally wear an indistinctive black jacket and trousers with a contrasting whitish garment underneath. This is helped by the addition of long, black leather trench coats, as worn by Macbeth and Banquo, which lend these figures an air of dignity and militaristic authority that is immediately intimidating to a modern audience which is used to the stereotypical image of Nazi-Gestapo officers. Like the BBC *Macbeth*, the ITV production's attitude to costume is a suggestive one that hints at the play's menacing world. For as we discover in the ITV version, the light that radiates from Duncan is quickly threatened by an overreaching darkness - Macbeth's. Macbeth's dark appearance in the television image comes to externalise the darkness of his interior life: 'Vaulting ambition...' (I.vii. 27).

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[40] Herbert Kretzmet, 'The Mail TV Critic', *Daily Mail*, 5 January 1979.

[41] The only other characters we view in white, as a mark of their innocence, is Lady Macduff and her son.

In view of the strength of light that pervades Duncan, Macbeth can be in no doubt of the heinous nature of regicide and what opposes it, according to the Shakespeare text:

> Macb. ...this Duncan
> Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
> So clear in his great office, that his virtues
> Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongu'd, against
> The deep damnation of his taking-off;... (I.vii.16-20)

The awareness of Duncan's qualities showed by Macbeth is voiced in quasi-religious terms: 'his faculties so meek'; 'clear in his great office'; 'virtues'; 'angels' and 'damnation'. And the religiosity of Duncan, indicated by his cassock-like robe, is made clear to the viewer from the beginning by a medium close-up shot of his kneeling and praying, then kissing a crucifix he wears round his neck. He is undeniably viewed as a Christian king.

Macbeth is portrayed in this production as irreligious and anti-redemption or more specifically, anti-Christian. He is presented as the antithesis of Duncan - Duncan, who is seen to hit his own breast when he prays at the same time exclaiming '*mea culpa*' repeatedly. This is in spite of the text's description from Lady Macbeth of Macbeth's gentle 'nature' (I.v.13): 'It is too full o' th' milk of human kindness...' (I.v.14). Instead, the production rather plays on her later revelation from the same speech: '..; wouldst not play false,/ And yet wouldst wrongly win' (I.v.17-18). The apparent redeeming feature - the 'milk': the luminous quality of Macbeth's 'nature' is yet a malleable one that would sour. For 'it' will ultimately 'wrongly win' and, therefore, contradict itself 'not [to] play false'. Duncan should, therefore, prove to be the only one between them who is in possession of (in Macbeth's own words) a shining and pious nature: 'clear' and 'meek' , and contrary to Macbeth's own milky, unclear nature.

Macbeth's awareness is the great, outstanding feature of Shakespeare's protagonist. Yet he remains vulnerable and pliable. Macbeth yields to his wife's chiding, willing or no:

Lady M. ...When you durst do it, then you were a man;
And, to be more than what you were, you would
Be so much more the man... (I.vii.49-51)

Macb. If we should fail? (59)

When Lady Macbeth undermines his sense of his own manhood, 'When you durst do it, then you were a man', with a sophist's touch when telling him he would be 'much more the man' by murder, Macbeth proves persuadable in a way that subjugates himself, 'If we should fail?', begging encouragement.

It is by no means an accident that Lady Macbeth is shrouded in black in the ITV production. We only ever view her hands and face while even her head is covered. In this guise, Lady Macbeth is viewed as not dissimilar from 1 Witch, the distinctly older of the three Witches. Consequently, Lady Macbeth appears nominally as a fourth Witch, capable of fallacious argument and with a strong hold over Macbeth, at least until he is king. But she is clearly without the Witches' preternatural powers. From as early as Act I.iii, before their encounter with Macbeth and Banquo, we see 1 Witch manipulate a bendable, 'voodoo doll' (M. Rosenberg, p.195),[42] as she exclaims with a smile how she will torture a sailor on his voyage:

...I'll drain him dry as hay:
Sleep shall neither night nor day
Hang upon his penthouse lid;
He shall live a man forbid... (I.iii.18-21).

The doll itself is a visual omen, an instance of this production's dramatic irony, of what shall befall Macbeth. And the power the Witch displays in denying the sailor his sleep: 'Sleep shall neither night nor day', and more generally 'He shall live a man forbid' is a precursory warning of the Witches' influence over Macbeth. For at the end of Act III.iv, the television audience is shown a Macbeth as King of Scotland, '...all/ as the weird women promis'd' (Banquo, III.i.2), played by Ian McKellen, salivating in a post-rage state, tormented into child-like behaviour. He effetely waves his guests, 'good night', in a condition of bewilderment while he clings, on his knees, to Lady Macbeth who mothers him and visibly upset, gently reprimands him with, 'You lack the season of all natures, sleep' (III.iv.141). Macbeth, aware of sleep as the 'Balm of hurt minds...' (Macbeth, II.ii.39) answers his wife with some resilience:

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[42] The introduction of a 'voodoo doll' is a notion that harks back to Welles' film: 'the mud voodoo figure of Macbeth the witches pull up from the murky depths of their cauldron - a crude, primitive, roughly molded but at the same time powerful and evocative substitute for Macbeth himself' (Anderegg, pp.80-1).

> Come, we'll to sleep. My strange and self-abuse
> Is the initiate fear, that wants hard use:
> We are yet but young in deed. (III.iv.142-4).

But as they fade from view into the dark background of the image, struggling to walk, desperately clasping each other, we doubt '[they] 'll to sleep', and so we bear in mind the earlier portent: "...Sleep no more.../ Glamis hath murder'd sleep,'..." (Macbeth, II.ii.41-2). Their distressed embrace is captured in a close-up image. The close image helps to bring us into the subjects' confounded world. Lady Macbeth is in tears and we see the perspiration on Macbeth's face and his wide-eyed, anxious stare. A cut to a big close-up image reveals his slight tremulous head movements as he speaks, impressing on us Macbeth's wretchedness. It is as though every word that he utters hurts. So that when Macbeth finally drags himself with his wife into the black background, their purpose, as expressed by him as 'We are yet but young in deed' rather does not belong to the Macbeths wholly. Indeed, his words, just a few lines earlier: '...I will to the Weird Sisters:/ More shall they speak,' (133-4), spoken in his shaken state strike a note of pathos. Their aspirational tone of commanding the Witches with 'shall...speak' is almost farcical. Yet plainly, Macbeth's hope, based on an anticipated visit to the Witches, underlines the need he has of them and highlights their pervasive and invasive nature in regard to the Macbeths.

Not long after (Act III.v omitted in accordance with modern theatrical adaptation) Macbeth, with a certain fear in his face apparent from a medium close-up shot, walks cautiously towards the three Witches. This wariness is in view despite the defiant bravado of his introduction: 'How now, you secret, black, and midnight hags!' (IV.i.47). The situation Macbeth approaches, as presented by this production, has the atmosphere and semblance of a black mass. The Witches are all tightly gathered in the dark round two low-burnt candles while they produce a soft, harmonised incantation of: 'Double, double toil and trouble;/ Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.' (10-11). As soon as Macbeth kneels before them, and requests an audience with their 'masters' (62): 'Call 'em; let me see 'em' (63), he is stripped semi-naked by 1 Witch. The visual significance of this act is Macbeth's overt submission to the Witches. His skin is then daubed with the Witches' potion by another Witch. Importantly, at the centre of the television image, we witness an inverted image of the Cross marked onto Macbeth's back, and as his head tilts backward the same taints his forehead. Thus, the antithesis of Duncan is complete. In his hardened state of, 'young in deed', that by implication refuses any expiatory pangs, Macbeth becomes an anti-Christ figure.[43] In addition, however, in an ironic twist to this production, Macbeth has matured in his 'great office' as king to be the worshipper of grotesque dolls and, therefore, the occupier of the lowest level in the hierarchy.

This is the hierarchy of the Witches' world as presented to us. For the Witches wield three misshapen and gruesome-looking dolls' heads before the eyes of Macbeth. After the Witches have disappeared, Macbeth retains these dolls. In subsequent scenes related to the fortification of Dunsinane against Malcolm's invading force, we see Macbeth continually holds them to him while occasionally looking at them in admiration as he speaks. Thus, the dolls become a visual representation of Macbeth's dependency on the words of the Witches. The dependency in turn, as we view Macbeth keeping the dolls close to him, suggests a form of madness. It is the insanity of Macbeth's state, both in his personal psychosis and in the topsy-turvy unruliness of his kingdom where the translation of virtues - 'harm...is laudable'; 'good...Accounted dangerous folly', is inverted:

Lady Macd. ...I have done no harm. But I remember now
I am in this world, where to do harm
Is often laudable, to do good sometime
Accounted dangerous folly...
(IV.ii.73-6).

For the audience, the point of an upturned world is made clear by Lady Macduff's direct address to camera of those above mentioned lines - (noting that this direction is not used anywhere else in the scene).

From a theatrical text the production's method is to create a televisual 'aside'. A further instance of this would be when Macbeth realises the worthlessness of the Witches' words:

...And be these juggling fiends no more believ'd,
That palter with us in a double sense;
That keep the word of promise to our ear,
And break it to our hope...
(V.viii.19-22).

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[43] Equally, there is much Christian symbolism in Welles' *Macbeth.* Rothwell remarks that when there are any 'pagan elements' in Welles' film, there is instant conflict (Rothwell, p.71).

Immediately prior to Macduff's rebuff, 'Despair thy charm...Macduff was from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd' (13-16) of Macbeth's 'I bear a charmed life; which must not yield/ To one of woman born' (12), Macbeth smiles ingratiatingly at the doll's head he holds before him, after plucking it from behind his breast-plate. Then, within the next close-up shot the viewer observes a significant change in Macbeth's facial expression. Macbeth's smile at once vanishes and his face becomes a magnified image of extreme fear: a rigid glare and facial muscles twitch at 'Accursed be that tongue that tells me so' (17). Macbeth turns away then to speak directly to camera. Macduff remains in the background of the image but out of focus, which suggests he is not privy to Macbeth's words; and thus, the situation is turned into an aside. The nature of the aside is to put the audience in the position of witness, which bears a resemblance to the BBC *Macbeth.* The notion of 'witness' is part of a 'two-way mirror' effect. In the ITV *Macbeth,* the audience is immediately attracted to the 'mirror' by its sheer proximity, in which Macbeth's face almost fills the entire television frame. The degree of closeness the image presents is absent from the BBC's 'vocabulary' of camera use. The ITV adaptation draws us in by an enlarged, exaggerated image to share Macbeth's awakening to the duplicity of the Witches' words, 'That palter with us in a double sense'. In so doing, the presentation points up a vital aspect of Macbeth's character and struggle: his awareness. And through our appreciation of Macbeth's openness to his own susceptibility - the vainglory of his 'hope' exposed by empty 'word[s] of promise' - we are attracted to the character by a feeling of sympathy. Hence unlike Macduff, who is shown in a cross-cut shot from a second camera to be transfixed in amazement, we comprehend Macbeth's action at, 'And break it to our hope'. At the point of utterance, Macbeth holds the doll up to his face and in a deliberate gesture, slowly pushes and twists his sword into the doll's eye before throwing it to the ground. We identify, as the audience, with Macbeth's anger. We also sense the exposure of his interior life as a battling soul, on the one hand refusing conflict with Macduff: ' I'll not fight with thee' (22) upon the realisation of sophistry by the Witches; and then, a few moments later contradicting himself: 'Yet I will try the last...lay on, Macduff;...' (32-3). The ITV production here provides us with a clear indication of Macbeth's defiant soul as he attacks Macduff with full vigour.

In the fight Macbeth knocks Macduff to the ground and relieves him of his sword. The action conveys Macbeth's strength and how he applies all his resources to the final conflict, which he engages in without reflection: "And damn'd be him that first cries, 'Hold, enough!'" (34). In accordance with the text, the two of them exit while in combat:

Exeunt, fighting. They exit right of the television frame with the appearance of Macbeth pursuing Macduff, thus suggesting the defeat of Macduff. Yet Macbeth's pursuit is further demonstration of his hardened soul - the tenacious devotion of its destruction, not to be redeemed. This is indeed, Macbeth's achievement. Our final image of the intransigent Macbeth is fittingly, a parallel image of him as Duncan's murderer: in a medium close-up shot he holds up two daggers and moves off into the dark to kill.

In common with the BBC approach, using close-up creates an ambivalence. The audience is at once attracted to Macbeth and repelled by his menace. However, unlike the BBC, the ITV version produces asides which are not indicated in the Shakespeare text in order to develop a sense of profound intimacy with a character. It is an intimacy both warming and nauseous - sickening in its unrelenting presence. At the end of Act III.iv, as described above, Macbeth is effectively paralysed by his traumatic encounter with Banquo's 'Ghost', and speaks distractedly to his tearful wife of how he craves more knowledge from the Witches:

> ..; for now I am bent to know,
> By the worst means, the worst. For mine own good,
> All causes shall give way:..
> (III.iv.134-6).

Macbeth unleashes extreme resolve to satisfy his desire to realise his fate, 'By the worst means, the worst'. And the assertion initiates a solipsistic process, as Macbeth's world turns in on itself, to eschew all else: 'For mine own good,/ All causes shall give way'. Macbeth does not say, 'our' but 'mine', and therefore excludes even his wife. And at this very point in the television scene (we note also that this is the last time the Macbeths share the 'stage' together) the audience is suddenly presented with a cut to a big close-up image of Macbeth's face, well-nigh surreal in its exaggerated television form. We have another opportunity for a televisual aside. Lady Macbeth is out of frame and, consequently, our impression is that she does not hear Macbeth's words:

> ...I am in blood
> Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
> Returning were as tedious as go o'er...
> (III.iv.136-38).

The audience is made aware of Macbeth's interior world which rudely interrupts our own. The rather larger-than-life face of a ruthless murderer looks in on our interior life: our domestic environment.

The big close-up image of Macbeth produces a 'shock-effect' of nightmarish quality which demands our attention. The image displays a use of television as a directive medium, restricting our wandering eye to the extent of the relatively small screen. The limited size of the television screen does not allow the eye to roam, particularly when confronted with an over-sized facial image 'peering in' at the audience's eye-level. The fact that the usual method of television watching has the screen positioned at a comfortable level of eye contact and proximity affords this image of Macbeth and others a certain disturbing aspect. They disturb what one might term as the audience's 'comfort zone'. The 'comfort zone' has pyscho-realistic implication. It is interpreted here as a sphere of contact that correlates strongly with the everyday and real interactions that members of the audience would experience in the routine of their daily lives. Their face-to-face interrelational communication is maintained by eye-level association and a shared recognition, albeit subconsciously, of an accepted distance between speaker and listener.[44] And that quotidian sense of 'comfort zone' has been breached by an image of Macbeth which is perceived as too close. So near, the image intimidates and creates a claustrophobic impression. The resulting discomfort approximates with the image in the poetry Macbeth speaks. Macbeth is immersed 'in blood...so far' that it so clings to him he must 'wade', and there is no escape for him: 'Returning were as tedious as go o'er...'. Similarly for the audience, there is no relief from such a close-up image of Macbeth. Its apparent insistence and more-than-real appearance flood the viewer's perception to conjure a satiated feeling not too far removed from the sickening poetic image of the sticky, thickening blood surrounding Macbeth.

At the same time as provoking repugnance however, the exaggerated visual form of Macbeth's face is also attractive. The sense of enlargement so alienates the viewer in taking over the entire televisual perspective that it has mesmeric appeal. The characteristics of the audience's interest bear similarities to the idea of an abhorrent mirror-image. Despite the disconcerting experience of looking at the horrible image there is the need to look and in consequence, there is the pleasure elicited from having looked. And the notion of the 'mirror' is crucial to the way the ITV *Macbeth* works as television. The apparent use of the television screen as a 'mirror' is an essential part of the intimate rapport the production builds with its audience, presenting recurrent images of the human face and body. This is very much the real use of a mirror, as an object of domestic furniture, a television audience would quickly appreciate. In consequence, the specific 'mirror' style of this television presentation creates a sense of familiarity which goes towards an explanation of the production's popularity as good television.

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[44] I refer to an aspect of communication which is culturally-specific.

Macbeth as a television experience.

It works because television is a domestic medium that operates most successfully within familiar and comforting patterns. John Corner comments that television is, 'a device in a mutually modifying relationship with daily routine'.[45] Television is indeed an accepted part of home-life. Domestic behaviour accommodates it and is presupposed by it; and as such, television is effectively an extension of domestic life, 'converting the variability and risks of outside into a homely idiom' (Corner, p. 88). One might claim, therefore, that when producing a *Macbeth* for television the sense of domesticity ought to be emphasised as a means of attracting television's innately domestic audience. For it is no accident that the television soap-opera genre in the UK, dominated by *Eastenders* and *Coronation Street*, with their story-lines based around 'ordinary' family lives, continuously attract the highest television-audience ratings.[46] These programmes acquaint and re-acquaint the viewer with characters doing regular activities - usual jobs, typical pastimes in recognisable habitats - in order to create parallels with the real lives of the audience. To this extent, *Eastenders* and *Coronation Street* are realistic. They draw empathy from the viewer, accomplishing an, 'intertwining of real and virtual relationships and settings, so important to their success' (Corner, p. 89). Nonetheless, within that 'virtual relationship' between the viewer and the TV character in his/her fictional environment, the viewer is faced with a concentration of human emotional content and experience. The upshot is the world of the soap-opera is discernibly more-than-real. For example, a character, namely Ken Barlow, who has appeared in *Coronation Street* since it began more than forty years ago, has been a lover, a spouse and a widower several times over. Also, a relatively small community of recognisable characters that one finds in *Eastenders*, will contain examples of murderers, drug-users, rape victims and so forth, as well as those who reflect the more benign aspects of society.

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[45] John Corner, 'The Domestic Contexts Of Reception', *Critical Ideas In Television Studies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 87-90.

[46] *Eastenders* (14.5 million); *Coronation Street* (12 million). The figures are arbitrarily selected samples of viewing from the Christmas period, 2001. The numbers are a general reflection of the consistently high audience ratings these programmes achieve on each broadcast over a six-day week and, therefore, indicate their huge attraction. Source: Barb, (The Broadcasters' Audience Research Board).

The idea of 'more-than-real' has its parallel in ITV's *Macbeth* with its regular close-ups of Macbeth, for instance. The efficacy of this visual style serves to formulate the production in the mode of popular television presentation. The frequency of the enhanced images of Macbeth help forge a 'virtual relationship' between character and viewer. Undeniably, one may criticise the ITV production for over-emphasis of close-up, 'mirror'-type images which serve to simply force a 'relationship' of intimacy. The resulting danger is that the viewer will retreat and ultimately switch off, of course. However, another viewer may well be attracted by the almost obsessive quality of the rapport the production insists on. And an important point here is Ian McKellen's manner of delivering Macbeth's lines. As the well-nigh bizarre facial image stares into our living-rooms, the intimate bondship is reinforced by an introspective quietness in the verse-speaking. In Act II.ii, subsequent to the murder of Duncan, Macbeth is distracted by the goriness of his bloody hands and paints graphic images in his mind:

> ...this my hand will rather
> The multitudinous seas incarnadine,
> Making the green one red. (61-3).

In a big close-up shot, McKellen is viewed arching his bloodied hand and moving it back and forth in a slow motion that mimics the appearance and movement of the sea's waves. And as McKellen finishes the line, 'Making the green one red', in a muted voice he continues his breathing, not conceivable in all but the most intimate of theatre spaces, but which television conveys distinctly as an impression of the sound of waves hitting the shoreline. Certainly, the perceptible hush of private thought which is easily conveyed on television, as opposed to theatre, is not exclusive to McKellen's Macbeth.

Judi Dench, playing Lady Macbeth, uses televisual opportunity to unleash the character's interior world in a mood of quiet that is both cold and sharp. In Act I.v, on hearing news of Macbeth's approach to Dunsinane, Lady Macbeth immediately issues a murderous warning in the form of a soliloquy:

> The raven himself is hoarse
> That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan
> Under my battlements... (35-7).

At the beginning of the speech the image of the 'raven', as a bird of ill-omen (Muir, p. 29), welcomes Duncan to Dunsinane. During the entire speech one camera is used. The shot initially is a medium shot and the camera then dollies in progressively to present a medium close-up of Lady Macbeth. There is no big facial close-up as with Macbeth and, therefore, comparatively our perspective (though a medium close-up) gives the lines a certain distance and coldness. For Lady Macbeth appears with the lighting directed from the left-of-screen, to leave the right side of her face (from the viewer's perspective) in shadow. Thus, as Dench stares directly at camera, the lighting effect promotes a harsh and intimidating facial aspect. Dench then speaks calmly, slowly and purposefully. She does not raise her voice and 'Under my battlements' is uttered almost at the level of a whisper. However, Dench does put stress with a rising intonation on the word 'my' which clearly personalises Lady Macbeth's desire to usurp Duncan; but the stress is not so harsh to detract from the overall naturalistic tone adopted by Dench. After the word 'battlements' there is a decidedly long pause which is syntactically supported by the text: 'Under my battlements. [LONG PAUSE] Come, you spirits' (37). (I have noted Dench's break in the line in parentheses). Due to the contemplative pace of the delivery, the pause is not so long as to upset the rhythm of the verse. Instead, the delay in speaking heightens the sense of introspection in Lady Macbeth, and intensifies the atmosphere inherent in the soliloquy.

With an apparent concentrated and pensive look Lady Macbeth moves round clockwise in a tight circle. Here, the dramatic effect of Dench's movement implies the winding up of Lady Macbeth's mind to become tautly focused on her solicitation: '...Come, you spirits'. Equally, as soon as she recommences speaking, Lady Macbeth kneels in a rigid pose, one arm to her side with a tightly-clenched fist and the other stretched out before her like the hand of a clock pointing directly at camera. The fixed posture suggests the time has arrived for Lady Macbeth to summon all her will to invoke without qualm, 'direst cruelty' (40). The body movement presents also a neat, visual image that echoes Lady Macbeth's later assurance to the wavering Macbeth: '...screw your courage to the sticking-place, / And we'll not fail...' (I.vii.60-1). At her 'sticking-place' Lady Macbeth concentrates her daring but ironically, fails. For we discern, due to the possible intimacy of television, shorter and heavier breathing which culminates in a pause between, 'direst' and 'cruelty'. The pause is not indicated in the text, but is supported by the naturalistic tones which suggest Lady Macbeth's fear. This leads to the interjection of an exclamation as Lady Macbeth shrieks 'cruelty [!]' and recoils from her 'sticking-place' to run and momentarily disappear into the darkened background of the television image. It is as though she were afraid of her own words. However, Lady Macbeth returns to the spot walking towards us with her back to camera. Then she turns around and we see the look of dread on her face. Her movement signifies a transition. Lady Macbeth reappears with greater determination. She strikes the same pose as before and continues to speak, while battling against any apprehension she may feel. For Dench articulates the lines to convey a deep tension in Lady Macbeth's voice. The verse is delivered in hushed, intimate tones. The pace Dench produces is decidedly quickened and her breathing is perceptibly handicapped to denote Lady Macbeth's anxious state.

Effectively, we become witnesses to Lady Macbeth's troubled mind via her direct address. The sense of 'witness' is made more acute when the camera dollies in to present a close-up at '...Come to my woman's breasts' (44). Nevertheless, as spectators, we are placed in an awkward position. With her strained body movement Lady Macbeth reaches out to us, and yet she does not. For she holds out her arm to touch the darkness and what we may perceive through the poetry as an abyss of 'thick Night' (47). It is an image which by Act V.i has transformed into a pit of despair for Lady Macbeth, apparent in the darkness of her sleep-walking with only a *taper* for comfort: 'Hell is murky' (34). The nightmarish image represents the horror of Lady Macbeth's world as she glimpses that which she most fearfully but ironically with tenacity, summoned earlier in Act I.v.

Once again, in both Acts I.v and V.i, the intimacy the ITV production offers disconcerts the viewer. In I.v, when Lady Macbeth outstretches her hand towards us, she seems so close we could touch her. The sense of touch then becomes 'virtual'. The 'virtual' is characterised by drawing the audience into an empathetic relationship with the character, so we feel we are 'looking in' on rather than 'looking at' the action. And the notion of 'looking in' is extended to seeing into the very soul of Lady Macbeth. (One may use the word 'soul' here because of the Christian ideas exploited by the ITV *Macbeth*). I have already mentioned the point in V.i when we gain an insight into the state of Lady Macbeth's soul as she sleep-walks with her *taper*. And in I.v it is the hushed, naturalistic tones of Judi Dench's delivery which help awaken us to the interior struggle of Lady Macbeth - caught between very human fear and inhuman invocation:

> ...Come you spirits
> That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here;
> ...Make thick my blood,
> Stop up th'access and passage to remorse,...
> (37-41).

The close focus and intimacy make us feel we are experiencing Lady Macbeth's attempts to go against nature: 'unsex me here'; and witness her desire to thwart her redemptive soul: 'Stop up th'access and passage to remorse'. I have also mentioned that we are witness to the dread in Lady Macbeth (conveyed by Dench's verse-speaking) which gives the television scene a very realistic quality. It is the realism of feeling at close quarters to the action, able to listen to the private tones of the character. Yet it is also a realism that presents an element of voyeurism. It is not the sexual voyeurism we find in Act I.v of the BBC *Macbeth*, but a voyeurism by which we look in on ITV's Lady Macbeth's dire suffering, despite her appeal to evil powers. The voyeuristic experience here is the discomfort of peering in on a self-destructive force, as Lady Macbeth and Macbeth create sheer havoc within themselves. As Germaine Greer comments - by the final Act, Macbeth, 'is too paralysed by despair to consort with his wife to exert himself to rule the kingdom he has won'.[47] And the lure of a voyeuristic, intimate look into such profundity as the death of the soul or human despair is no doubt, a major contribution to the televisual success of Nunn's *Macbeth.*

However, a study of the merits of the ITV *Macbeth*, of which there are many, should not detract us from its obvious weaknesses. Over-use of the close-up shot is its major drawback as an example of television Shakespeare. In this respect it is not unique. There are similarities of repeated camera shots proving to be a production's downfall. From earlier attempts by BBC TV, in 1960, to do 'a series of Shakespeare histories...under the general title, *An Age Of Kings*' the BBC earned general plaudits for what was deemed then an ambitious television project. The BBC treated the 'main body of Shakespeare's history-plays from *Richard II* to *Richard III* as a coherent sequence with a continuity of theme running right through. The texts were somewhat cut... and rearranged into fifteen episodes...with the same actors playing the same parts throughout and the same producer and director (Michael Hayes and Peter Dews respectively) in charge of the whole series...*An Age Of Kings* probably offers the fairest ground to date for judging television's potential in adapting Shakespeare'.[48] As successful and popular TV in its day, *An Age Of Kings* was nonetheless compromised as good television by a dependency on the medium shot. Constant use of such a shot gives the image a static feel, denying flexibility to the overall look of the production. Indeed, Russell Taylor comments himself that, 'if you do everything in medium shot it will just look dull' (Russell Taylor, p. 103). Equally, when a production is typified by any form of camera shot or angle an element of monotony will creep in. What instinctively follows is the audience loses concentration. It is a reaction to which the ITV *Macbeth* is vulnerable. By creating so many close-up shots and direct address angles, the production weighs heavy under a burden of intensity.

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[47] Germaine Greer, *Shakespeare: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), p. 72.

[48] John Russell Taylor, 'Shakespeare in Film, Radio and Television', *Shakespeare: A Celebration, 1564-1964*, ed., TJB Spencer (Baltimore: Penguin Books, 1965), pp. 99-103.

The Nunn *Macbeth* and television audience.

The BBC *Macbeth* motions along with a degree of variation in its use of camera, voice, music and even colour. In comparison, the ITV programme rests on highlighted facial and body movement to become its visual effects. Such movement comes to the fore of the image when the characters are immersed in shadow and darkness. Their actions are given special focus, and the space in which they move is constantly shifting, being recreated by the absence of anything visible. What few props exist are relatively discreet, so that each setting is unobtrusive. Thus, when our close-up view is interrupted by the sight of blood the impact is immediate and startling. The red is emphasised, being lit to contrast with the dark surroundings. At the very end of Act III.iii a close-up shot and the distinctive hue of red combine to show the bloodied face of Banquo lying on his back dead. The image remains with the audience as one of vivid realism.

The realism is clearly, one of violence and horror, and this reminds the audience of ideas central to *Macbeth*. The realism unmasks the uncompromising and tyrannical force behind the overreaching of 'vaulting ambition' towards political hegemony. For unchallenged leadership is what Macbeth seeks. It is a significant concept which a modern television audience can appreciate in relation to its own political landscape. Used to the realism of a world in which its general political enemy, specifically the Soviet Union at the time (symbolised by a red colour) was emphatically perceived as despotic, a Western audience would be able to appreciate the strong sense of repression conveyed in this production. It is indeed, a repressive and frustrating darkness that prevents Banquo from protecting himself against his enemy's attack. The atmosphere is felt by the audience as all-pervasive and intensely stifling. The setting's constant proximity and the detail of the characters it throws up mean that the audience finds it tough to escape. The act of television viewing is transformed into one in which the viewer feels imprisoned within the relatively small confines that is the television frame. This in turn, discourages the viewer from approaching the production in its entirety.

As television viewing, put simply, the ITV *Macbeth* is overbearing. Hence, it becomes television that is not terribly 'user-friendly'. Expressed figuratively, this means as a whole the ITV *Macbeth* proves indigestible, but it holds the audience's attention in bite-size chunks. And without doubt, this *Macbeth* challenges its television audience. Indeed, a strong element of the curiosity of the programme emanates from its verbal text, as already discussed. The verbal text produces a closeness with its listener which means that the voice does not need to project as it might well do in the theatre. The volume of the actor's voice is reduced to a level where the judgment of pitch and intonation resembles that of everyday speech or intimate conversation. By this method of delivery a sense of realism is created, for the rhetoric of the poetry is much less apparent. We are therefore, listening to Shakespeare in a gently discreet form. And combined with a visual text that adopts frequent direct address to camera, the televisual experience gains a decidedly 'personal' aspect, albeit virtual.

Even the 'add-on' of music to the verbal text in the ITV *Macbeth* arises surreptitiously. Musical interjections of church-organ and hushed choir-singing are infrequent. However, they occur throughout the production and remind us of the Christian ideas it espouses, as signified earlier. The church-organ sounds are of the same quality each time. Sometimes they are of sombre character and occasionally, comparatively animated during Macbeth's coronation, for example. Spasmodically, the music is used to link scenes, but it is only present to illustrate parts of the action in a basic way - celebratory or signifying a negative atmosphere. For instance, as the English army approaches Dunsinane, the action moves back and forth between Malcolm and his followers and Macbeth and his preparations. As Malcolm draws closer and Macbeth becomes more isolated, the church-organ music continually conveys a solemn and threatening mood. Borrowing a term, 'expressionist', used to refer to the style of the BBC *Macbeth*, it is not one to suit the rather predictable pattern of music-use in the ITV programme. Music, as part of the verbal text, is more of an 'add-on' rather than a more developed and integral part of the production's overall style, as we find with the BBC production. One might say, because the ITV production manipulates the sole instrument of a church-organ, it maintains a theme. This is true and fits with the repetitive simplicity in the production's style.

When there is no music there is a continuous quiet. It allows Macbeth and Lady Macbeth to soliloquize to a music of silence which enthrals the audience with a degree of intimacy unparalleled in the theatre. Indeed, Ian McKellen and Judi Dench vary the use of their voice to give meaning to the Shakespeare text, but the private tones they frequently produce have a consistently, realistic quality. The effect is in contrast to the stylisation of voice evident in the BBC production where we find sudden changes in voice quality: rasps, hisses and guttural sounds, as described earlier. Thus, we may conclude that there is less focus on the manipulation of the voice in the ITV version; and then, we return to the audience's ambivalent response. There is the reassuring atmosphere of expression in the ITV approach but there is, also, the inescapable focus of expression captured in this production. The impact on the television audience, which is evident in several aspects of the ITV *Macbeth*, is emphatically disconcerting and makes the ITV adaptation unwatchable when viewed as just one programme; whereas, the BBC effort is more watchable from the viewpoint that it does not rely on the same degree of intensity.

Conclusion.

Moreover, in the BBC *Macbeth* we have seen television Shakespeare that is representative of the concluding period of the BBC series. I have pointed out the importance of *Macbeth* as one of the most frequently televised Shakespeares, and the consequent need to compare the BBC version to the ITV/Nunn *Macbeth* as a successful adaptation produced near the same time. The two productions focus attention on the inner-world of the Macbeth figures and their subsequent breakdown. However, I have shown that the ITV *Macbeth* uses frequent close-up camera work to do this; whereas, the BBC *Macbeth* is a production that has a comparatively varied approach and, therefore, is potentially more responsive to the television medium. Its sartorial style may resemble something of a BBC costume-drama, but I have argued that this aspect is moderated by the suggestive quality of the presentation. Indeed, colour and music is used in an 'expressionist' (Fenwick, p.20) way to create a distinct mood that communicates the idea of menace permeating the world of *Macbeth*. And that threat imposed by the Macbeths on that world is realised by varied spatial perspectives. As described in the chapter, Gold exploits the television close-up to bring an element of intimacy and intensity to a scene. But Gold does not rely on close-up for this effect. For he also develops the close-up as part of a single camera long take. The consequent sequence is characterised by a fluidity as it trails a character, zooming in and out of close focus, to create a tantalising and progressive dynamic. Certainly, Gold provides his audience with a sense of spatial continuity. And this element is a significant aspect of the production's evocation of the immense emotion of the Macbeths and their connection to a metaphysical existence represented by the Witches. For Gold's production is not one that is restricted by a policy of literal representation. The BBC *Macbeth* has a more flexible style which is evident in its approach to verse-speaking. In particular, the voices of Nicol Williamson (Macbeth) and Jane Lapotaire (Lady Macbeth) are articulated to portray the respective characters in a psychologically realistic way. But they speak distinctly also in a stylised way, as I have demonstrated, while avoiding upsetting the general prosody of the verse. The result is a mixed style. Psychological realism is present but it does not destroy the verse by dominating it. Thus, we have a workable compromise which is a reflection of the production as a whole.

It is appropriate to conclude, therefore, by stating that the ITV/Nunn production retains some positive aspects of a previously successful theatre production. However, as television, the rapport it tries to build with its new audience through frequent big close-ups and occasional extreme close-ups creates what I have explained as a 'two-way mirror' effect. It is claustrophobic and ultimately off-putting.

In comparison, Gold gives his television audience space to breathe, figuratively speaking. In an approach that shows greater spatial awareness,[49] Gold brings a maturity to television Shakespeare and the Shakespeare series, exemplified by the variation in his style. Indeed, in conclusion one ought to make reference to a generally upbeat, critical review which remarks that the BBC's *Macbeth* 'offers fine performances by first-rate actors set in a convincing and consistent production. Yet the director takes risks...'.[50] Gold does 'take risks' which is a move indicative of a certain confidence at this point in the BBC series. His *Macbeth* is a synthesis of styles to be found in the productions I discuss in this thesis, and it results in a feasible television version of a popular and consequently, difficult Shakespeare play to adapt.

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[49] Rothwell comments on the various camera angles and shots Welles uses in his film, within a set that is theatrically influenced; and he mentions also, that Welles creates large spaces in order to shoot the scenes.

[50] Michael Mullin, 'The BBC *Macbeth*', *Shakespeare on Film Newsletter*, 9:1 (December 1984), p.2.

5. JANE HOWELL'S HISTORY CYCLE

In this final chapter I shall discuss Jane Howell's BBC presentations of all parts of *Henry VI* and of *Richard III*, all of which were transmitted in 1983.[1] I will present Howell's televisual tetralogy as the antithesis of the Messina productions analysed in the first chapter. I will show how Howell, using a basic and self-contained set, draws attention to the Shakespeare text as artifice. By using the same set throughout the tetralogy, she emphasises a seamlessness to the histories; and I will discuss the importance of that idea of 'seamlessness' in viewing the plays as a sequence which climaxes with *King Richard III.*[2] And as she uses the same set throughout, with no attempt at literal representation, I shall comment on the direct way in which that allows Howell to communicate with her audience, presenting concepts in the plays she regards as relevant to her modern audience. I intend to argue here that without the distraction of a realistic setting Howell manages to keep the Shakespeare text at the fore of our viewing experience. This impression is strengthened by a certain dependency on direct address and the ability of the actor to deliver to-camera via facial expression. It is a method representative of Howell's stylised interpretation that has a shock-quality, conveying a brutal realism against the background of stylised effect.

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[1] All four plays were broadcast on consecutive Sundays on BBC2: 2nd, 9th, 16th and 23rd January 1983. The times of transmission on the Sunday evenings varied slightly. *Henry VI - Part 1* was broadcast at 7.15-8.50pm (a five-minute break for *News on 2*), concluding 8.55-10.55pm. *Part 2* was broadcast at the same times. *Part 3* went out at 7.15-9.05pm (a five-minute break for *News on 2*), concluding 9.10-10.55pm. And finally, *King Richard III* was transmitted at 7.15-8.35pm (a five-minute break for *News on 2*), concluding 8.40-11.15pm (including *Interval* at 9.55-10.00pm).

[2] In British television production, Howell's cycle certainly has its forerunners in respect of the BBC's *An Age of Kings* and to a lesser extent *The Wars of the Roses.* I refer to *An Age of Kings* above in Chapter 4, p. 139. *An Age of Kings* was a made-for-television adaptation of Shakespeare's history plays from *Richard II* to *Richard III*, captured within fifteen relatively short half-hour slots transmitted between 28th April and 17th November 1960 (and repeated between 7th January and 15th April 1962). Rothwell comments that 'except for a few disclaimers, the reception was positive', which may go some way towards an explanation for the repeated broadcast a couple of years later. Kenneth Rothwell, *A History of Shakespeare on Screen*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p.96.

In 1965, Michael Barry, the BBC's Head of Plays, televised the Royal Shakespeare Company Stratford Memorial Theatre production of *Henry VI - Parts 1* to *3* and *Richard III*, directed mainly by Peter Hall and scripted by John Barton. For television four Shakespeare plays were transformed into three: *Henry VI*, *Edward IV* and *Richard III*. Essentially, it was a theatre production done in television terms. Stratford was turned into a television studio and twelve cameras recorded the event. McKernan puts it in the context of a television event (that can not be compared to Howell's later efforts in direct terms as a production created with a purely televisual medium in mind): 'filmed on an enlarged stage at Stratford, and though not a bald recording from the stalls, being instead focused squarely on the actors, is nevertheless in thrall to the theatre. The acting is marvellous, but the value of the recording is chiefly as a record, not as a creative work'. Luke McKernan, 'The Real Thing at Last, in *Walking Shadows - Shakespeare in the National Film and Television Archive*, eds. Luke McKernan and Olwen Terris (London: British Film Institute, 1994), p.16.

An introduction to the permanent set, its associations and its implied use in *Henry VI Part 1.*

Certainly, to refer to Jane Howell's productions of Shakespeare's tetralogy as non-realistic, is a relatively straightforward proposition. Shaun Sutton, the producer of the second half of the tetralogy, describes the set which was erected inside an unused warehouse: 'there was one setting for the four plays, a sort of stylised arena of rostrums and walls, entrances and doorways, stairways and ramparts. It was, in many ways, rather like a Spanish arena for bull-fighting'.[3] There's no pretence from Howell towards realistic representation of the history Shakespeare's plays refer to; or dare I say, anything akin to the pictorial response of Moshinsky. Howell herself comments, "the set was practically copied from an adventure playground I saw...something which was modern, which said something to us today...but also had a mediaeval flavour. Adventure playgrounds, which they make for teenagers, have got enormous big wooden struts and are made from gash timber, old doors, anything, painted in very bright colours which look like crude heraldry".[4] Howell's reaction to the set she uses, although instinctive in its origin, indicates a desire to draw 'parallels'[5] between the world of the television audience and that of a savage mediaeval period as portrayed through Shakespeare. It is fair to say, however, that any contemporaneous theme of violence contained in the tetralogy is not hard to detect. Whether or not we refer to the early 1980s (when the BBC broadcast Howell's productions) or to today's global scene, the television audience was and still remains confronted by daily news stories of violence perpetrated by individuals or states. The accumulative effect of round-the-clock, round-the-world access to information portraying human cruelty and even natural forces of destructiveness, particularly now with a satellite/cable television network, impacts on us with a sense of ceaseless turmoil. And when we are presented with a play which constructs the idea of a world permeated by chaos and brutality - warring between England and France and power-wrangling at the heart of the English state - it is not difficult for a television audience to perceive similarities relevant to the world they experience.

Yet, my argument is not to undermine the essence of what Howell attempts to do in her productions. It is merely reasonable to point up that violent behaviour is a common feature of human interaction, fortunate or unfortunate and whether or not we discuss it in relation to the past or the present; and it is an aspect of humanity of which no doubt, Shakespeare was aware. His tetralogy is a testament to human savagery leading to further savagery; and to a lack of learning from a history of savagery resulting in its continuation. The continuation of the act of killing can only reach its zenith once those involved have fallen in consequence of the act; a concept with which Howell clearly sympathises. Indeed, her choice as the director to, 'use the same company of actors throughout the four plays having actors doubling parts instead of continually introducing new faces, as would theoretically have been possible with the resources of television' (Fenwick, p.29) reflects a deliberate move to sharpen our perception of a principal theme in the plays. The case of 'actors doubling parts' in place of the introduction of 'new faces', as well as mimicking the Elizabethan stage,[6] strongly implies that lessons of violence are never learnt and never disappear. It is a fatalistic trend that pervades the plays in Howell's eyes. In consequence, at the end of the production of *King Richard III*, we are presented with the image of a pyramidal mound of bloodied cadavers. The rough architectural form is significant because it suggests, while we look steadily from the bottom to the top as the camera slowly peds up, that as the violence peaks there are increasingly fewer bodies; that is, violence becomes self-defeating. One might view the image as didactic; though if nothing else it signals a general truth. Atop of the dead-human pyramid is the cackling figure of Queen Margaret cradling the hunched body of Richard III in a perverted *pietà*.[7] It is the final image which delivers a last, sombre twist to the plays; and one that represents a distorted monument to genocide with the piled-up bodies beneath, reminiscent of the Jewish Holocaust or other, more recent genocidal episodes of human history.[8]

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[3] Shaun Sutton, in a letter to the author, dated 5th March, 1992.

[4] Jane Howell in an interview with Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Henry VI Part 1* (London: BBC Publications, 1983), p.23.

[5] 'Jane's vision of the plays and her parallels with modern concerns - her sense of the plays' continuing validity...'. Quoted from Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Henry VI Part 3* (London: BBC Publications, 1983), p.26.

Howell does and any director should keep in mind that television Shakespeare is likely to be seen by an audience which is not necessarily familiar with Shakespeare. And that audience will be at the very least acquainted with some aspect of television output.

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[6] Edward Burns remarks in relation to *Henry VI Part 1*, that the 'Elizabethan stage may well have had 'extras' of some kind, to swell ceremonial scenes, but...spoken roles could be shared out among a cast used to doubling', 'Appendix 2 - Casting', *The Arden Shakespeare - King Henry VI Part 1*, ed. E. Burns, Third Series, (London: Thomson Learning, 2000), p.297.

[7] Shaun Sutton, in an interview with the author on 8th April, 1992, suggested this final image signified Margaret as the originator of the 'whole mess'. However, I am disinclined to accept the interpretation as Margaret does not appear until towards the end of *Henry VI Part 1*. Also, it is clear to me that Howell is interested in stimulating the audience's imagination sufficiently to produce their own interpretations rather than directing them towards a specific reading of the text.

[8] I refer to images of genocide in Rwanda, Bosnia and more recently Sudan, for example. They are images with which today's television audience would be familiar; and bearing in mind that the events took place after Howell's productions.

The prominent feature of that output is the endlessness which is dominated by, excepting outside fiction programmes and films, 'to-camera presentation',[9] typified by news and current affairs programming. Thus, to interpret a group of plays which depict human conflict, in televisual terms, the director ought to be aware of the televisual context within which the viewer will experience it. The programming schedule may well juxtapose, for instance, *Henry VI Part 1*, with any range of factual broadcasting that offers documentary footage of violence. If not directly juxtaposed, then that factual presentation is not very far away due to television's perpetual nature. This is one of the ways by which images of real piles of corpses become entrenched in the mass consciousness,[10] derived from television's mass appeal, 'disseminating images, often with high impetus, across the full range of public and private life', (Corner, p.127). And 'the full range' of television viewing is what Howell's versions of Shakespeare's underperformed tetralogy are up against.[11] Her approach has to challenge the modern imagination benumbed by the frequency of images from television, in particular, of the consequences of real conflict and hatred; and so she must make her Shakespeare stand out among the swathes of viewing possibilities, so the finger refrains from reaching out to the other buttons on the remote control. However, for a television audience to perceive a three-hour-plus uninterrupted transmission ahead of them plagues what is already a difficult task. For this commentator at least, it was unrealistic to watch as a whole programme, though there are other reasons besides viewing-time which account for this reaction that I shall refer to later.[12]

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[9] John Corner, 'Image', *Critical Ideas in Television Studies* (Oxford, OUP, 1999), p.25.

[10] In February 2005, several of the terrestrial, national television network channels in Britain broadcast a variety of programmes linked by a single theme, celebrating sixty years since the Allies freed the 'inmates' from the Auschwitz concentration camp, (and other similar camps), at the end of World War II.

[11] In respect of the *Henry VI* trilogy, it 'was popular in Shakespeare's lifetime. *Part 1* especially being a box-office winner. Later generations, concentrating on Shakespeare's later plays, neglected it almost completely. *Part 1* was revived once (almost completely rewritten) in 1738, *Part II* for German celebrations of the Shakespeare tricentennial in 1864 and *Part III* not at all. In 1906 Frank Benson revived the whole trilogy for the first time, and it has had sporadic performances since: in the USA in 1935, at Birmingham in 1951-3, at the RSC in 1977 and 1988. It has also become known in adaptation: as part of *An Age of Kings* (1960) and *The War of the Roses* (1963-4). Apart from that, the rest is -largely unjustified- silence'. Kenneth McLeish and Stephen Unwin, *A Pocket Guide to Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Faber and Faber, 1998), p.77. Notable for their absence from any reference to modern adaptations are Howell's adaptations. As well as simply an oversight, the authors may well have considered Howell's efforts as sufficiently unremarkable to warrant inclusion.

Although this is not to say that the BBC productions are without merit. Holderness identifies the 'remarkable boldness'[13] of Howell's style, though I think his description should be regarded within the context of the entire Shakespeare series and its apparently limiting precepts at the outset.[14] Howell does make a bold move nevertheless, to step aside from what might be construed as a submission to television's overarching desire for realism. This does not mean that she side-steps the television issue of realism altogether. Put simply, Howell does not attempt to prioritise the notion of 'reality'. Before embarking on this history cycle, Howell makes her viewpoint clear: "I'm more interested in an essence than in 'reality' - I get very *bored* with 'reality' ".[15]

Thus, we find in Howell's vision of Shakespeare's tetralogy (in particular, *Henry VI Part 1*) there is evidence of strong reference to 'an essence' of child-play. And her monument to the child-like aspect she discerns is the creation and the use of a permanent set that mimics 'an adventure playground'. The connotations of such a set as a primary acting-space are energetic and chaotic, but with an unfortunate sense of the amateurish, in relation to its appearance. 'Energetic' and 'chaotic' are suitable notions to apply to the action of the plays, but the 'adventure playground' look belies also, a practical consideration of funding. It is no secret that Howell turned her group of actors into a troupe that almost resembled repertory theatre rather than television production. According to Sutton, Howell spent 'seven months' (Sutton, letter to author) working with them; and undoubtedly, it was the main burden of expense for the BBC on this occasion. As a result, there was perhaps insufficient funding to render anything beyond a stylised context for the enactment of a set of history plays. It is difficult to evaluate to what extent the ironic parallel with children's television production was intentional from Howell's point of view, though there is one. For children's television is partly memorable for its simple and often stylised sets and backdrops. The principal cause was the fact that 'these programmes usually had very limited budgets'.[16] But what it encouraged the child-viewer to do is a valid issue referred to by Bingham, in respect of the Howell productions: 'the sets allowed a child's imagination to complete the scene...*suggested* but left unfinished', (Bingham, p.227).

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[12] It is difficult to make any direct comparisons with other current or past fiction-type television broadcasts, as no more than two hours is the running-time at one 'sitting', for anything considered long in television terms. Chosen at random, on 27th February, 2005, the longest time given to a piece of modern television drama, *The Walk*, is two hours, (though one should bear in mind that the channel is ITV1 and, therefore, the two-hour running-time includes time for advertisements). Particularly with regard to the contemporary TV schedules, there are many production companies vying for air-space. So much so, that a three-hour-plus classic drama programme, (to be followed by a sequence of similar output), would go against the trend. Indeed, as recent as November 2005, the BBC adapted four of Shakespeare's more popular plays: *Much Ado*, *Macbeth*, *Taming of the Shrew* and *Midsummer Night's Dream* in a series entitled 'Shakespeare Re-told' in which each programme was just ninety-minutes long. What is more, I am not alone in my inability to watch just one of Howell's four productions at one sitting. In the Arden edition of *Henry VI Part 1*, Edward Burns remarks, 'the production [is] unwatchable in more than small sections at a time', (Arden, 3rd series, 'Appendix 3'), p.306.

[13] Graham Holderness, 'Radical potentiality and institutional closure: Shakespeare in film and television' in *Political Shakespeare - new essays in cultural materialism*, eds. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), p.181.

[14] It is necessary to recall that contention was brought to the series immediately when the BBC TV Managing Director, quoted in *The Birmingham Post*, 2nd November, 1978, prescribed 'straight' productions. The cautious approach this attitude implied however, could translate as a diplomatic response to corporate sponsorship, even if direct pressures from the sponsors were not in any way conspicuous, (as noted in my second chapter with reference to Shaun Sutton).

[15] Jane Howell in an interview with Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - The Winter's Tale* (London: BBC Publications, 1981), p.19.

The 'child-play' associations indeed, do not necessarily denote a regressive step for Howell's history cycle. In respect of the artificiality of the set, it unequivocally characterises the adaptations as pieces of artifice. The so-called 'playground' points up for the viewer that what they see and hear is artifice, taking away the viewer's potential reliance on the realism of typical television fare. What is more, it marks out Howell's versions as distinct within the BBC Shakespeare series. There are no other directors during the seven-year cycle (1978-85) who share Howell's almost total disregard for realistic representation. From this viewpoint, there is a certain 'boldness' and audacity in drawing a television audience's imagination to the 'essence' of a set; and particularly, a set that reflects a teenager's stomping ground, as her aim. It is an approach which has a certain appeal and rate of success.

When one reflects on a characterisation of adolescence or a young man on the brink of adulthood, within the context of Shakespeare's tetralogy, it is hard to neglect reference to Jacques' sardonic description in, *As You Like It*:

> ...Then a soldier,
> Full of strange oaths, and bearded like the pard,
> Jealous in honour, sudden and quick in quarrel,
> Seeking the bubble reputation
> Even in the cannon's mouth... (II.vii. 149-53)

The 'soldier' is a mocking portrayal of late adolescence or early adulthood. It is a reflection of the sensitivity of youth, 'Jealous in honour'; and as such, it is redolent of the enmity between Richard Plantagenet and Somerset which emerges in *Henry VI Part 1*.

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[16] Dennis Bingham, 'Jane Howell's First Tetralogy - Brechtian Break-Out or Just Good Television?', *Shakespeare on Television*, eds., JC Bulman and HR Coursen (Hanover, NH: University Press of New England, 1988), p.227.

We witness the two figures guarding the 'honour' of their 'roses' (symbols of the houses of York and Lancaster) with almost puerile impetuosity in *Part 1* :

> Plantagenet   Meantime your cheeks do counterfeit our roses;
> For pale they look with fear, as witnessing
> The truth on our side.
>
> Somerset   No, Plantagenet,
> 'Tis not for fear but anger that thy cheeks
> Blush for pure shame to counterfeit our roses,
> And yet thy tongue will not confess thy error.
>
> Plan.   Hath not thy rose a canker, Somerset?
>
> Som.   Hath not thy rose a thorn, Plantagenet?
> (II.iv.62-9).

They exchange insults in a tit-for-tat fashion, using their respective roses as the ruling metaphor for honour: 'Hath not thy rose a canker, Somerset?/ Hath not thy rose a thorn, Plantagenet?'. At this point in the tetralogy the 'War of the Roses' has not begun, so we become observers of its precursory spirit - its early manifestations. In this embryonic state the language of argument is akin to the tireless goading of the child's playground with its circular declamations. From one side, 'your cheeks do counterfeit our roses', countered by a mere echo of words from the other side as, 'Blush for pure shame to counterfeit our roses'. The childish ridicule from both sides has the tendency to undermine anything but crude reasoning behind the dispute. It is perhaps, therefore, appropriate that Howell uses a rudimentary set which resembles the form of an outdoor area aimed at children's self-expression.

The suggestive set becomes an arena for unchecked expression. It allows space for the vociferous and rebellious posturing of the young nobles: Somerset and Richard,[17] to reach for the 'bubble reputation'. Indeed, they are involved in a form of verbal combat in an attempt to make their mark. In the very next scene, Act II.v, Richard's ambitiousness surfaces:

> ...therefore haste I to the Parliament,
> Either to be restored to my blood,
> Or make my ill th'advantage of my good. (ll.127-9).

Richard refers to his request to be directly 'restored' by the king and his court -

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[17] In Howell's *Henry VI Part 1*, both Plantagenet and Somerset, played by Bernard Hill and Brian Deacon, are presented as young rivals. Their argument and indeed, their youthfulness are counterpoised by the ongoing feud between the Duke of Gloucester and the Bishop of Winchester, David Burke and Frank Middlemass respectively, presented as more mature figures.

'Parliament', to his 'blood', which is the house of York. His expectation in this regard is understandable; but the final line of the scene warps our initial sense of that tolerable aim. We are all of a sudden hit by the suggestion of a menacing and rebellious streak in Richard to the point of treasonous malice: 'make my ill th'advantage of my good'. He hints at being prepared to pursue his 'ill' ambition to the core, in the vein of a Machiavellian protagonist[18] , without regard for legitimacy. Thus, the inference we take from Richard's assertion is that he is ready to embrace that 'reputation' or ambition, 'Even in the cannon's mouth'. The 'cannon's mouth' may be interpreted here as the very centre of power that he would be willing to challenge, and which is in *Henry VI Part 1*, the king.

In *As You Like It*, Jacques nevertheless ridicules the determination of youth by implying the death of the 'soldier' because he is prepared to enter the 'cannon's mouth', inspired by the illusory or 'bubble' sense of honour. Should we see, therefore, Richard in parallel to Jacques' image of the young 'soldier', we may well anticipate Richard's demise. Undoubtedly, Richard's last line of Act II.v ominously looks forward to his career through the next two instalments of *Henry VI*; and it pre-empts possibly, the ascent to the throne of the house of York in *Richard III.* The sharp utterance, 'make ill th'advantage of my good', certainly creates immediate dramatic tension for the remainder of *Henry VI Part One*. It is left to Exeter, in Howell's production presented as an old man[19] and so ironically by definition, a survivor of his youth and, therefore, by implication wiser, to project clearly the disastrous and fatal consequences of daring the 'cannon's mouth':

> As fest'red members rot but by degree
> Till bones and flesh and sinews fall away,
> So will this base and envious discord breed. (III.i. 192-4).

Exeter's soliloquy is spoken subsequent to Richard's reinstatement as Duke of York. The gory horrors of 'fest'red members' and of 'bones', 'flesh' and 'sinews' that 'fall away' are tantamount to slaughter. The image brings us back to Sutton's analogy of Howell's set with an 'arena for bull-fighting', a blood sport in which animals are ritually killed. One does, therefore, perceive some perverse but intended irony that Howell situates Act II.iv in a small 'garden' setting that is in itself, a set within that 'arena' where the mass killings take place into the next part, and so forth.

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[18] Edward Burns comments with regard to this line that, 'Whatever has been established in the rest of the scene as to Richard's place in the dynastic pattern, he here speaks as a Machiavellian individualist, who will seize an opportunity given, or create one for himself, whether his status is ratified by the King or not' (Arden, p.194).

[19] Shakespeare hints at the probable old age of Exeter, when Exeter speaks of hoping to die before the bloodshed he foresees: 'Which is so plain that Exeter doth wish/ His days may finish ere that hapless time' (III.i.200-01).

The Stage Direction of the Alexander text adopted by the BBC describes Act II.iv as taking place in *The Temple garden.*[20] Howell's 'garden' however, is unsurprisingly stylised in the sense it is suggestive. It is conveyed as a small, circular area that is clearly, to a television audience's eyes,[21] a piece of rough cloth representing a patch of turf and so, overtly unrealistic. Thus, the style of presentation which challenges the audience's imagination is in keeping with the rest of the set. Yet it manages also, to remain on its own terms and apart. A hue of dark green does show through against the image's background of 'bright colours', which are the primary colours: red, blue and yellow, of the established set. The 'garden' has also, a distinctively knotted and tufty appearance which contrasts with the smooth surfaces of the 'walls', doors and 'stairways' of the permanent set. Certainly, the different aspects of colour and texture make the 'garden' stand out from the 'adventure playground'. The contrastive quality of a 'playground' with which we associate (at this point in the play) the restlessness of state politics and the hurly-burly of war, helps the audience to accept the 'garden' as relief from the mayhem. We are, therefore, more inclined to perceive the symbolic value of the 'garden' as a place of calm.

In emphasis of the quiet and the lighter atmosphere Howell's 'garden' suggests, we see the noble figures relaxing, either sitting or lying on the 'grass'. Prior to the static positions the actors take up, they enter laughing and hence, exhibit among the nobles a unity of common light-relief. Their concord is emphasised by the circular form of the 'garden' which implies uniformity. But it is not long before the conversation of the nobles grows into a contradiction of the implied metaphor. Indeed, conspicuous by his apparent humourless facial expression, and by the fact that there is a short delay before he enters behind the others, Richard attracts our immediate attention. His discordant mood jars sufficiently with the general tone to create an unease that prevails. The jollity is certainly short-lived. And Howell stresses the juvenile and fickle behaviour of the nobles. She shows their smiling at each other like children as they muffle their laughter in front of Richard, because he does not see the joke: 'Great lords and gentlemen, what means this silence?' (II.iv, l.1). Their playful attitude a few moments later, creates a game sequence of plucking red and white roses to indicate whose side they are on. The character of Vernon, played by David Daker, sums up the rules while speaking in a mock-businesslike but well-humoured manner:

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[20] This Stage Direction is not mentioned in the First Folio.

[21] Howell adopts close-focus camera work for some images in this scene.

> Stay, lords and gentlemen, and pluck no more
> Till you conclude that upon whose side
> The fewest roses are cropp'd from the tree
> Shall yield the other in the right opinion. (II.iv.39-42).

Vernon suggests a solution that carries the weight of childlike simplicity. His proposal for Somerset or Richard to concede or 'yield' to the other's 'right opinion', based on the 'fewest roses...cropp'd from the tree', is supported by both. Somerset responds first: 'Good master Vernon, it is well objected:/ If I have fewest I subscribe in silence' (43-4). In a competitive riposte Richard acquiesces too, but with contrastingly fewer words: 'And I' (45). The brevity may well indicate that Richard is, though willing to go along with the game, unconvinced. At this point, the audience stays with the game and the gentle humour intended, although we suspect Richard will step in at the final moment to disagree resolutely. But Vernon continues with 'Then, for the truth and plainness of the case' (46). In Howell's production, Vernon's utterance is conveyed plainly with a smile while he clutches Somerset by the shoulders. In reciprocation, Somerset confidently laughs and effectively, jollies along with Vernon's banter. Their physical proximity sets up the television audience to assume Vernon will take Somerset's rose and thus, provoke the serious visage of Richard Plantagenet into full-blown anger. However, Howell presents an ironic moment that turns the mood of the scene completely. Vernon withdraws from personal contact with Somerset in order to obtain a white rose: 'I pluck this pale and maiden blossom here' (47). Vernon's movement away from Somerset is stressed by the multi-camera set-up as the image cuts away to Vernon walking towards the white rose 'briar' (30). And against the viewer's expectations it is paradoxically, Somerset who loses his sense of humour to become instantly angry, and not Richard.

Somerset immediately enters the frame from the left and draws his dagger. Not only is Vernon taken aback, but the audience is also, unprepared to witness threatening behaviour from Somerset: 'Prick not your finger as you pluck it off,/ Lest, bleeding, you do paint the white rose red' (49-50). The appearance of Somerset's pointing dagger accentuates the sense of menace behind the words 'prick', 'pluck off', 'bleeding' and 'red'. Without doubt, Somerset's facial expression belies a seriousness where there was previously up until very recently, laughter. The affected mood swing is underlined by the medium close-up image. It is a singled-out instance, but the close-up is used in Howell's overall approach to effect a serious point or a significant moment in the action. In respect of Act II.iv, the 'garden scene', the two-shot medium close-up is used to reinforce the fickle humour of the nobles. Its usage in the scene is, subsequent to Somerset's threat aimed at Vernon, more frequent as soon as Somerset and Richard clash. The nonchalant childplay Howell implies in the scene has dissipated to reveal that an apparent petty game has serious undertones, particularly when the players are not children. And it is characteristic of Howell's style that she presents the audience with 'distractions' to expose meaning in the text.[22]

The Dauphin, the presentation of Joan La Pucelle and Howell's treatment of battle scenes in *Henry VI Part 1.*

The childlike characteristics of the production are 'distractions' for the viewer. They draw in the viewer in order to, at some later moment, throw us with a turnaround in events which is given a more serious aspect by the contrast; or a startling image which is lent more *gravitas*. By this method, we are then provoked into thinking about what we see and hear; although Howell's approach does carry risks. She drives us, perhaps too dogmatically, towards a focus on the conflict between the houses of York and Lancaster[23] in *Part 1*. At the beginning of *Henry VI Part 1*, after the funeral of Henry V, we are taken immediately to 'France' to observe the warring states.

The French nobles are costumed in dark-blue jackets with golden imprints of the *fleur-de-lis*.[24] The colour of their costumes is effectively coded, which assists the audience in a similar vein to that of distinguishing the houses of Capulet and Montague in the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet*. In *Henry VI Part 1*, the French nobles are differentiated from the French soldiers, dressed in a noticeably lighter hue; and of course, the French are set apart from the English who wear generally red. Each time we view the French the audience is thus, quickly able to pick out the figures of the nobles.[25] The character of Charles the Dauphin, therefore, stands out for our scrutiny. Played by Ian Saynor, the

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[22] Bingham argues for Brechtian-style " 'alienation' tactics" from Howell, (Bingham, p.224).

[23] Bingham comments that Howell, 'keep[s] us from taking the French conflict - which will be more or less settled in Part 1 - too seriously. She points instead to the overriding conflict of the tetralogy - the struggle for power between the houses of Lancaster and York', (Bingham, p.224).

[24] The colour of blue is associated with the royalty of France; and the fleur-de-lis is a lily flower that represents the 'royal arms of France'. *The Reader's Digest Oxford Wordfinder*, ed. Sara Tulloch (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[25] We are also, assisted by the camera shot and by their prominent headgear often worn or carried, which resembles a modern-day 'American football' helmet, (Fenwick, p.25).

Dauphin is presented as a particularly young man in relation to the nobles of his court, (Alençon and Reignier specifically, played by Michael Byrne and David Daker respectively); and rather naive. When in Act I.ii, the French retreat from battle, the Dauphin speaks directly to camera: '...I would ne're have fled/ But that they left me midst my enemies' (23-4). The actor's delivery of the verse makes us aware of its artifice, making a psychologically realistic interpretation redundant. In a wide-eyed approach typical of how Saynor plays the Dauphin, he appeals to us in the manner of an over-indulged child blaming others for the fault and, thereby, undermining his own authority of leadership. The actor raises the pitch of his voice slightly to affect innocence, and places a long stress on 'I'. To try and convince us further that he is in the right when he says 'I', the Dauphin overstates his defence by pointing directly at himself. Saynor heightens, also, the intonation on the final syllable of 'enemies' - (the third syllable has been underlined). In so doing, he adds emphasis to the duration of '-mies'. And in combination, the stressed intonation and duration of the syllable help convey the purposely overplayed facial expression that implies a whining child.

There is unquestionably, a comic edge to the presentation of the Dauphin. The comic form is derived from over-emphasis and mimicry, which culminates with the Dauphin approaching us directly as a man behaving like a feeble-minded child. The method holds a certain fascination. The unrealistic demeanour of that comic effect pushes our imagination; and with familiarity we come to accept it as a norm. Thus, by a strange paradox it becomes a reality for the audience, though an insubstantial one. For Howell runs a risk with a television audience. When we listen constantly to Saynor's exaggerated verse-speaking the illusion that that norm or reality creates can prove tiresome. A television audience is used to many conditions of direct address, for instance; and Saynor's 'to-camera' may well be too closely associated with the relentless, heightened pitch and naive mannerisms of a children's television-programme presenter by the audience. If not, because of the viewer's proclivity towards the expectation of a solid realism, the performance of the Dauphin may prove too flimsily camp to warrant any regard but that of a caricature figure. In this received guise of a relatively, singularly-dimensional Dauphin the audience may be dissuaded from watching further.

Nevertheless, the childlike portrayal of the Dauphin does allow some provocative overtones in his relationship with Joan La Pucelle. A young Brenda Blethyn, as Joan La Pucelle, utilizes a broad northern accent which gives the character some earthiness, at least perceptible to a British audience.[26] The regional accent contrasts with the featureless accents of the surrounding French nobles. The difference helps to identify Joan as a distinct oddity and in turn supports the notion that she is of rural heritage: 'a shepherd's daughter (I.ii.72); or that she at least belongs to another world outside the one of the royal court of France. The intimation is, therefore, that she is relatively unsophisticated. When she first comes into the presence of the Dauphin, Reignier's suggestion of her immodesty and boldness: 'She takes upon her bravely at first dash' (I.ii.71), is reflected in Blethyn's interpretation of Joan. On first introduction, Joan strides ahead of the Bastard of Orleans and makes no gesture of deference at all to the court, even when the Dauphin reveals himself. Blethyn delivers the verse with a quality of voice that resounds with booming authority, delivering a synopsis of how Joan arrived before the Dauphin. Finally, in her address to the Dauphin, Joan demands in an assertive tone, that denotes impatience with her listener who maintains a wide-eyed, open-mouthed stare: 'Resolve on this' (91). There is then a noticeable pause before Joan well-nigh shouts in an instructive manner of persuasion: '...thou shalt be fortunate/ If thou receive me for thy warlike mate' (91-2). Viewed in medium close-up, a role-reversal is signified as we witness the simple-minded goggling of the Dauphin via a reaction shot. In this manner, the production establishes the notion of Joan's power, ironically reducing the Dauphin to a bemused and somewhat besotted fool.

Indeed, Joan's hold over the Dauphin is emphasised after she has overcome the Dauphin in a duel. Typical of Howell, the important moment is pointed up by the close-up camera work. Via a close-up image, we watch a starry-eyed Dauphin kneel in servitude, as though begging like a child, to a victorious Joan who remains standing. Her position in relation to his indicates her influence over him, as do his words, 'Meantime, look gracious on thy prostrate thrall' (117). The words 'thrall' and 'prostrate' signal his submission, although Howell does not interpret 'prostrate' literally. However, the Dauphin looks up to Joan from his kneeling position with a decidedly ingenuous, facial expression. She puts a hand to both sides of his head, stressing the young Dauphin's surrender and malleability. At the same time, Joan's body language suggests a gentle intimacy akin to mothering. Thus, when she looks to us with a certain knowingness - reflected by her eye movement and a discrete smile - as the Dauphin looks up to her with an appealing countenance, we are instantly reminded of Joan as a real, physical woman. There is an ironic, seductive quality to her look to-camera which indicates a contradictory idea of Joan. For previous to this moment, she had made her celibacy clear to the Dauphin: 'I must not yield to any rites of love' (113).

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[26] We should bear in mind that when originally shown, each play of the series was broadcast in the USA soon after being transmitted in Britain. And mistakenly, an American critic, choosing to focus his attention on Howell's productions of the tetralogy, Dennis Bingham, regarded Blethyn's accent as, 'odd bumpkin-cockney dialect', (Bingham, p.224).

Howell creates a Joan, therefore, whose mystic qualities are encapsulated in an ambivalent guise. There is a certain conflict of perception between what Joan does and what she says, and the audience is effectively caught in the middle, distracted and confused. We are positioned halfway between imagination and reality. The peculiarity of the character is evident with regard to her accent, her fearless behaviour and style of speech, raising our imagination to accept her defeat of the Dauphin as a manifestation of her unearthly powers: 'Christ's Mother helps me, else I were weak' (106). Yet, her motherly attitude and sexual overtones awaken us to the concept of Joan's physicality and Joan as a sexual woman. Once again with Howell, our sense of what is happening becomes disrupted. We are suddenly and abruptly struck with the realistic notion of attraction between two adults; and that certainly, the Dauphin is no child.

Contradiction and contrast, as we witness with Moshinsky, are used effectually by Howell, although her interest is not inspired by the notion of 'chiaroscuro'. Rather, Howell works against our expectations in order to gain our attention. She presents Joan La Pucelle as an attractive, young woman in opposition to the 'devil's dam' (I.v, 5) and 'witch' (6), of Talbot's description; and contrary to Richard of York's 'ugly witch' (V.iii.34) as he looks upon her as captive. Talbot himself, played by Trevor Peacock, is shown in a somewhat unrealistic guise, contrasting with the heroic image of Talbot introduced as the 'worthy leader' (I.i.143). He speaks with an obvious, artificially gruff voice, and moves around uncomfortably in 'armour' which is markedly too big for him. The suggestion may well be that Talbot's task of retaining English gains in France is a case of overreaching ambition - a notion well-suited to the tetralogy. It looks ahead to the other plays, therefore, and to Talbot's ultimate inability to defeat his enemy, the French, which is his clear aim. Indeed, the visual presentation of Talbot has a derisory element to it which sits incongruously with the character's general exploits up to the end of *Henry VI Part 1*. Effectively, it mocks the figure of Talbot, pointing up the absurdity of his efforts which only end up with his own downfall, in consequence of the petty vanities of his own countrymen: Somerset and Richard of York. The implied irony is Howell's. By presenting him as a ridiculous figure, she trivialises Talbot in relation to what is spoken about him and his outstanding leadership as an army general: the 'princely leader' (IV.iii.

17); and the 'noble-minded Talbot' (IV.iv.37). The sense of contrast that Howell delivers, allows the audience to avoid being subsumed by the character's heroic image; and thus, we are left to ponder with more objectivity on the violence Talbot is associated with.

The violence of many of the battle scenes between the French and English is, similarly, trivialised by Howell. The fighting appears as a game, emphasising the whole set as a play area. One moment, in Act I.ii, the French run through a set of doors to battle with the English (off-camera) shouting with bravado; and then the next, the French are seen running back through the same doors shouting in fear, signalling their retreat. This televisual long take conveys a comic element. However, Howell's approach to the violent engagements, whether it is between the French and English or not, however, has potential weaknesses in terms of its televisual impact. And as television fare, it is difficult in *Henry VI Part 1* to make no mention of the 'localised' fracas (comparative to the English-French conflict) between Winchester and Gloucester, with both of them appearing perched on hobby-horses (Act I.iii). We do not have the real horses preferred by Moshinsky and, comparatively, it makes Winchester and Gloucester look ostensibly ludicrous. In particular, as older men, the visual contrast of their being presented on toy-horses forges the notion of a senile, childish squabble. Enforcing this concept, at Gloucester's words to Winchester: 'Thee I'll chase hence, thou wolf in sheep's array' (55) he attacks Winchester with obvious intent and Winchester defends himself. But the word 'chase' is very difficult for either character to perform. It is immediately clear that they are both able to muster only restricted movement in order to battle with each other, because they are attached to their 'horses', literally. Moreover, when they do manage to clash swords, the action is not matched to the aggressive words. Gloucester, for example, threatens to 'cuff' Winchester 'soundly' (48). We view them instead, battling in a stylised fashion which palpably slows down their action. As a result, their vociferous language is made to sound like mere puff, fuelled by inflated, egocentric aspiration; and we see a fight that resembles a playground argument. We hear indeed, the appropriate noises of conflict but see no substance. The many figures in the background of the images which convey the fight between the two factions, create the right atmosphere via sound and countenance; but the participants fight in a style that is visually unrealistic. Hence, a problem ensues for the television audience, for the image though it aspires towards stylisation, has a tenuous quality.

Initial problems with the cycle.

Despite Howell's seeming aversion to realism (mentioned above) in this television scene the images are caught between theatrical effect and television's innate demand for realistic portrayal. Neither is achieved satisfactorily. In a stylised form, the fight sequence could be more effectively produced with action slowed down further. In addition, a range of shots should be exploited to include television's relatively sophisticated use of close-up[27] and rapid editing in a multi-camera set-up. Instead, Howell adopts a long take, single camera shot which denies the scene certain flexibility. To remain in shot, the apparent fight has to be contained, whether it is in the background or foreground, taking away a naturalistic element from the action. Even as a stylised *tableau vivant* the performance is not sufficiently exaggerated or large to appear convincing; and nor is it solidly physical to persuade a television audience that it is any way realistic. Consequently, as television the scene recalls the amateurish effect mentioned in respect of the earlier productions in the series such as *The Tempest*. The expectations set up, whether it is through realistic representation or stylisation, are met only half-way; and thereby, poor viewing conditions are created. In the clash between Winchester and Gloucester, it is a veritable case of 'too many heads in the shot'[28] as Howell tries to present an image with depth. The single camera attempts some selection to convey the scene, but the outcome seems arbitrary. The camera is not engaging with the action but merely pointing at it. The resulting sense of randomness and remoteness the camera work produces may well be off-putting for a television audience; but the television scene depicting Act I.iii is not an isolated instance.

In the initial battles between the French and English there is a good deal of characters dashing about, which creates an atmosphere that approaches slapstick. In the event, the camera work has to keep up with the constant, hectic movement. It does so, but often the image, which presents different aspects of the battle taking place amidst the disintegrated-looking set, appears randomly selected because of the long shots and, sometimes, extreme long shots employed. When we see the fighting, similar to Act I.iii, via long shot, the depth of visual presentation rather points up frailties in the overall projection of the sense of battle. Undoubtedly, Howell wishes to sensitise the audience to the randomness and absurdity of the conflict between the English and French, as well as the vainglorious aspirants within the English state. However, it is perhaps Howell's intention to reveal seemingly undirected camera work and a haphazard-looking environment as a reflection of the dispersive and fragmentary nature of continual violence. Yet, in doing so, there is a sense that she underrates the demands of television and its audience.

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[27] Shaun Sutton comments that, 'television had perfected, over the years, the art of the close-up'. Letter to the author, 5th March 1992).

[28] Michèle Willems, 'Verbal-Visual, Verbal-Pictorial or Textual-Televisual? Reflections on the BBC Shakespeare series', *Shakespeare Survey*, 39 (CUP, 1986), p.100.

To assume Howell does not think about her television audience would be to underestimate, though, the progressive elements of her tetralogy. The trivialisation of battle at the beginning of *Henry VI Part 1* contrasts with the final battles which show the defeat of Talbot at the end. The long shot images portray various combatants which reflects the amorphous and chaotic aspects of the violence; but Howell intersperses the scene with medium and close-up images too. What is more, it is evident to the viewer that the fighting is more determined, aggressive, physical and ultimately, realistic. For Howell does not detract from showing the gruesome and bloody options of what two foes can do to each other, via close-up shots. And in relation to the apparent half-hearted efforts of the fighting presented earlier, the nastiness portrayed in the close-up images of the final battle in *Part 1*, is made nastier by its contrastive quality. In addition, the significantly more serious atmosphere of this tangibly, darker battle, (helped by the dim lighting), gives the idea of Talbot's defeat more impetus. We view Talbot in a superimposed, close-up image, over his son who is seen fighting while surrounded by the French, as Talbot cries, 'Where is John Talbot [!]' (IV.vi.4). The television image brings a touching moment amidst the chaos, of notional unison between father and son; but it is also ironic, for we see that Talbot shouts in desperation of being unable to find his son. The image becomes, therefore, a precursory note to the son's untimely death and to similar unnatural acts to follow in the remainder of the tetralogy. Indeed, the unpleasantness depicted by the images of war at the end of *Part 1*, ready the viewer for the dark and bitter hostilities in the plays to ensue in Howell's sequence of productions. And those images demonstrate that Howell does not eschew the challenge of communicating Shakespeare to a mass television audience. She is plainly aware that if she were to serve up one brutal image after another, from beginning to end, it would merely desensitise her audience.

The doubling of roles and the significance of Gloucester's death in *Henry VI Part 2*.

Howell taps into television convention by presenting the plays as a thirteen-hour mini-series, broadcast on successive Sundays, 2nd-23rd January, 1983. The audience had only to wait one week for *Henry VI Part 2* and, therefore, was able to make some retrospective comparisons with *Part 1*. In doing so, the observant viewer would be aware of certain changes.

It is apparent to the viewer acquainted from *Part 1* with the permanent set that the set's former brightness has been somewhat subdued in *Part 2*. Oliver Bayldon, the set designer, remarks: "vandals have come into the play-park and burned it overnight. It's still a play-park but it's not a place for playing games any more, it's got sinister. It's gone very sombre...".[29] The main set is a more threatening space - 'sinister'; and Bayldon's apposite, descriptive comment of 'sombre' denotes a change in mood in *Part 2*. Indeed, in *Part 2* Howell generates no sense of childplay. And her actors doubling roles takes on significant meaning in relation to the play's atmosphere. Trevor Peacock and David Burke play the prominent characters in *Part 1*, of Talbot and Gloucester, respectively. Burke continues as Gloucester in *Part 2*, until the character's demise at the beginning of Act III. By Act IV, the television audience will recognise them both in very different roles as commoners, Jack Cade and Dick the Butcher. Indeed, if the viewer has not seen *Part 1*, he/she will still appreciate Burke's almost instant transition from Gloucester to Dick the Butcher, who together with Cade advocates a sense of mob-rule. It is very much an ironic twist intended by Howell. For in *Part 2* Gloucester's death initiates a revolt by the 'commons' :

> The commons like an angry hive of bees
> That want their leader, scatter up and down
> And care not who they sting in his revenge.
> (III.ii.125-7).

Warwick's reference to 'leader' signifies Gloucester, and indicates Gloucester's popularity. In 'revenge', the 'commons' demand 'Lord Suffolk straight be done to death' (III.ii.244); and the king acquiesces to their request by exiling Suffolk from English territory, 'on pain of death' (III.ii.288). Soon after, Shakespeare transports us to witness the dying Cardinal Beaufort (III.iii); and thus, beginning with Gloucester, we look on Henry's court in the process of breaking down. Perversely for the viewer, in Howell's production, the face of Gloucester, a figure like Talbot in *Part 1* who upholds the chivalric spirit of loyalty to England's sovereign, is suddenly transformed into an anarchic enemy of Henry's crown. Hence, through Dick the Butcher the face of Gloucester becomes part of that revolt instigated by Gloucester's death. In this odd, paradoxical visual statement by Howell, using Peacock as well as Burke in widely different roles, she enforces the nightmarish vision of *Part 2;* [30] and at the same time, she provokes her audience into thinking about social change in respect of the the worlds they occupy (Willis, p.172).

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[29] Quoted by Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Henry VI Part 2* (London: BBC Publications, 1983), p.20.

The use of close-focus to convey political chaos in *Henry VI Part 2*.

Howell continues, certainly, to point up ironic contrasts to convey the profundity of social collapse within the world of the text. She uses close-up, for instance, to emphasise moral decay. Close images bring the adulterous relationship between Suffolk and Queen Margaret to the fore, making their intimacy more apparent and intense. In consequence, we are witness to images that portray a touching warmth and passion which serve to imply a moral inversion - two corrupt characters displaying loving affection. The close-up camera work reflects their feelings. The sense of loss is made vivid in the picture of their distressed faces and Margaret's tears. When they embrace and Margaret says, 'farewell' (III.ii, 356) the camera movement echoes their parting, dollying out from close-up to medium close-up, revealing how upset Suffolk remains, (Suffolk to the right of the framed image), at her words. However, it is clear in the image that they still touch, and when Suffolk utters his dire need to be with Margaret, ''Tis not the land I care for, wert thou thence;/ A wilderness is populace enough' (359-60), the camera dollies in to a close-up shot as they embrace once more, reflecting the anguish at their imminent parting. The image strengthens the barren sense of 'wilderness' when they will be parted but also, the sense of inseparability when together. Their intimacy is once more, clearly visible through close-up when Suffolk kneels to rest his head against Margaret's breast with his head facing us while she holds it, giving special significance to the words:

> Here could I breathe my soul into the air,
> As mild and gentle as the cradle-babe
> Dying with mother's dug between its lips;
> (Act III.iii.391-93).

His 'soul' could 'breathe', because her heart is so near to his mouth. But his mouth, in an ironic visual parallel, is close also to the 'dug' of the 'dying', 'cradle-babe'. Their love, however, is underlined by a lingering kiss at Margaret's utterance, 'And take my heart with thee' (408) as they separate, which offers a reciprocative notion to Suffolk's head next to her breast. The camera dollies in to a close-up for the kiss to impress the audience finally, with a sense of the couple's ardent relationship. Slowly then, the camera dollies out to echo their words of departure. Lastly in respect of Margaret and Suffolk, the camera presents us with a metonymic image of separation, focusing on their hands letting go. Then Howell uses another close-up image (though more specifically a medium close-up), but one of the dying Cardinal via a slow fade in and ironically superimposed on the couples' hands. Such a juxtaposition of shots implies the fate of Suffolk and indeed, the couple.

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[30] Willis refers to familiar faces in widely different roles contributing to an escalating sense of nightmare in the series. Susan Willis, *The BBC Shakespeare Plays: Making the Televised Canon* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), p.170.

Throughout *Part 2*, close-up shots are used increasingly to convey the degeneration and the mounting violence in the court of Henry and beyond. Unlike *Part 1*, the violence is not portrayed in battle until late into the play with the Jack Cade rebellion in Act IV.ii. Wilders comments that there are three 'episodes' in *Part 2* which 'form a steadily increasing climax of violence...The first depicts the fall of Gloucester, the second the rise and fall of Cade, and the third the rise of York...'.[31] Howell does not show us the violence of Gloucester's murder, in line with the text, but we see the aftermath:

> But see, his face is black and full of blood;
> His eye-balls further out than when he liv'd,
> Staring full ghastly like a strangled man;
> His hair uprear'd, his nostrils stretch'd with struggling
> His hands abroad display'd, as one that grasp'd
> And tugg'd for life,... (Act III.ii, ll.168-73).

Howell requires the audience to stretch its imagination slightly, revealing Gloucester's corpse when Warwick describes it, as above, via medium long shot and medium shot. The medium image is, however, effectively illustrative of the text. When Warwick points out to those around Gloucester's bed that 'his face is black', 'staring full ghastly' with 'hair uprear'd' and 'hands abroad display'd', the medium image represents those aspects which communicate the horror of the murderous act. It is the first notable, ghastly image of *Part 2* that signals a turn in events. But as the violence multiplies and intensifies, the close-up image is more in evidence to enforce the sense of a maelstrom of conflict where life and state are out of control.

When Cade and his followers are in the process of destroying parts of London,

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[31] John Wilders, 'The Introduction', *BBC TV Shakespeare - Henry VI Part 2* (London: BBC Publications, 1983), p.11.

'...first go and set/ London Bridge on fire; and, if you can, burn down the Tower too' (IV.vi.11-12) the consequence of Cade's command in Howell's production is enacted round a bonfire over which books are ritually burnt. Wells comments in relation to this television scene, that there is, ' a timeless...impetus and vitality' to it.[32] The event is portrayed via different perspectives in respect of camera work. The images include Cade's men destroying books, 'casting [the books] into the air', and pages, 'floating down onto [the fire]' (Wells). Quick, multi-camera editing is employed to promote the notion of regressive censorship and complete mayhem.[33] Howell presents big close-up images of the devastation in progress may well have a certain timelessness Wells refers to, but the book-burning would invariably strike the sensitive television viewer as reminiscent, for example, of real images of a similar action in history from Nazi Germany.[34] Moreover, in the same scene images of murder and torture are interspersed in close-up. As a result, the audience becomes intimately acquainted with various ghastly forms of dispatching victims: garrotting, burning and a slow cutting of the throat.[35] And throughout, there are frequent, superimposed big close-up images of Cade laughing maniacally. This image is an ironic inversion of the head of chivalric Talbot from *Part 1*, played also by Trevor Peacock. There is little doubt that the visual link is deliberate from Howell; and she wishes the audience to connect the two figures as similar in terms of each being perpetrators of ceaseless and mindless slaughter. With the continual apparition-like presence of Cade over the carnage in Act IV.vi, we perceive Cade as the originator and motivating power behind what Howell presents, in 'essence', to be anarchic rule.

Cade represents 'Misrule'[36] in response to ineffectual rule; and ironically, misrule appears to be succeeding. Before Cade's rebellion even reaches London we view the results of ineffectual rule. The rebels march on in accordance with Cade's 'Come let's march towards London' (IV.iii.16);[37] and their success is a point stressed by a camera shot that tilts down and zooms in to produce a medium close-up of them dragging dead, bloodied soldiers by the feet as they move away and off-camera - an enactment of Cade's words: '...and the bodies shall be dragged at my horse heels till I do come to London,...' (IV.iii.13-14). As the image fades out a close-up image of Suffolk's head in a bloodied cloth fades in, to dolly out slightly to a medium close-up image of Queen Margaret, holding the head in her lap. The juxtaposition of the close perspectives and dominant images of blood bring the two scenes (IV.iii and IV.iv) together seamlessly, indicating an omnipresence that pervades also, the very heart of the state. Every one is affected and nobody is safe. As we look on Margaret, the audience perceives movement in the background of the image, but in clear contrast, she remains static while addressing us directly. Hence, it is plain to the audience that the close-up cuts her off from the activity near to her as she mourns Suffolk's death, cradling his head as a baby close to her breast. The image created is a perverse parallel to their last embrace before Suffolk's departure, conveyed equally via close-up (and referred to above). Indeed, the decidedly sombre tone of *Part 2* is summed up in the appearance of Margaret in this image. Her dark apparel matches her tearful, moribund expression, displaying her face's pallid complexion more vividly, by stark contrast. The close perspective intensifies our perception of her distress behind the tears, and her vacillation between anger and sorrow. We discern a driven but controlled anger in Margaret (played by Julia Foster) as she snarls in a way that partly exposes her teeth when closing her darkened eyes to spit out, 'Think therefore on revenge and cease to weep' (IV.iv.3) - her 'revenge' being an ominous, key note that looks towards *Henry VI Part 3*. Then, in the very next line, her anger ceases and her tears continue as she holds Suffolk's head up to us with a discernible look of supplication and pathos on her face: 'But who can cease to weep, and look on this?' (4) appealing to the audience's sense of pity.

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[32] Stanley Wells, 'The History of the Whole Contention', *Times Literary Supplement*, 4th February, 1983.

[33] 'The montages were, says Howell, her sole venture into film techniques', Fenwick, 'The Production', p.21.

[34] 'On 10 May 1933. a remarkable act of barbarism...took place in the city of Berlin. Students from the Wilhelm Humboldt University, all of them members of right-wing student organisations, transported books from their university library and from other collections to the Franz Joseph Platz, adjacent to the university. Accompanying their actions with declaimed denunciations of the authors, they proceeded to toss thousands of titles, by writers famous and obscure, foreign and native, into the flames of an already ignited bonfire', Guy Stern, *The Burning of the Books in Nazi Germany, 1933: The American Response*, (The Simon Wiesenthal Center, Annual 2, 1997), p.1. Admittedly, this event in Nazi Germany is one of the most infamous caught on camera. Today's UK television audience may indeed recollect television news footage of the burning of numerous copies of Salmon Rushdie's *Satanic Verses*, in Bradford's city centre, January 1989.

[35] One might accuse Howell of producing gratuitous images for television consumption in this scene. However, I am rather inclined to regard it as a reflection of Howell's sense of her television audience, aware that the more realistic the image of violence, the more sensitive her audience is to the notion of violence she wishes to convey.

[36] Jane Howell comments: "The way Trevor and I tried to do it is that Cade is a Lord of Misrule: it's like some sort of devilishness that is in all of us". Fenwick, 'The Production', *Henry VI Part 2*, p.27.

Facial expression, the 'framed set' and the 'known set'.

In her use of close-up images and particularly those adapted for direct address, Howell is very dependent on the effects produced by her actors' facial expressions.

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[37] The Alexander text, (used by the BBC), refers to, *Another part of Blackheath*, as the location for, Act IV.iii. However, the Folio does not state any location - (Arden edition, third series), p.311.

Howell is reliant on the actor's skill and, therefore, it is not surprising that throughout the cycle the major roles are played by actors with whom she has some familiarity.[38] One character, whom we see in *Part 1* and *Part 3* addresses us often also in *Part 2*, is Richard, Duke of York, played by Bernard Hill. His face would be significantly familiar too for a television audience not only interested in television Shakespeare, in 1983. Bernard Hill would have been associated with the rather aggressive, dramatic figure of Yosser Hughes.[39] There is no direct relationship between the characters of York and Hughes. One represents a figure from mediaeval history and is a creation originally for the theatre, and the other conceived purely for television. However, should the viewer be at least, subliminally aware of the sudden, violent behaviour of Hill's bleak, television character, it would enforce the perception of intensity and menace in the face of York staring at us. In Act V.i, York appears with his army from Ireland behind him, ready to usurp King Henry: 'From Ireland thus comes York to claim his right/ And pluck the crown from feeble Henry's head' (1-2). For the soldiers of York's force, the BBC adopts costumes notable for their darker appearance in comparison with any soldier we see in *Part 1.* The sartorial style is closer-fitting and sharper-looking, finished off by a small, black-polished helmet; all of which gives a stronger sense of intimidation. The viewer may catch also, from time to time, a glint of leather. Even York's red leather jacket has a dullish, brown hue to it that helps to reinforce the shadowy atmosphere perceptible to us in *Part 2*. And via medium close-up, we engage with the very serious countenance of York to witness his increasing rage and resentment: 'This hand was made to handle nought but gold' (7). In Howell's production, there is a strong theatrical gesture as the actor raises his hand to us; and the television close-up draws it to our specific attention. Here, Howell unifies theatrical effect and television convention. In combination, the physical gesture is made to look big, creating the effect of looking more real than real. One becomes aware then, of what Taylor regards as the 'framed set'.[40]

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[38] 'With this sequence of four plays Howell has once again, as is both her habit and her policy, brought together a group of actors many of whom she has worked with before', Fenwick, 'The Production', p.25.

[39] Bernard Hill was not an established 'television-star' at the time, but a television actor who achieved a certain notoriety as the character, Yosser Hughes, in a TV drama series by Liverpool playwright, Alan Bleasdale, named 'Boys From The Black Stuff'. The series was broadcast in 1982 by the BBC, not long before the transmission of Howell's history cycle. Yosser Hughes was the drama's main character, tormented by his inability to find work to feed his family, he was forced to beg people aggressively with "Gissa job". The television audience could certainly perceive a parallel between the pent up anger of Richard, Duke of York, and Yosser Hughes. The similarity in them as angry characters adds to Howell's desire for the audience to value Shakespeare as contemporary.

[40] Neil Taylor, ***Shakespeare on TV - a study of two productions in the BBC TV Shakespeare*** (Birmingham University: MA Thesis, submitted, September 1983), p.17.

Taylor distinguishes two concepts in Howell's *Henry VI Part 2*, of presentation. He refers to the permanent, scaffold-like set as the 'known set' and each camera image presenting the 'framed set'. Howell's style does exemplify well Taylor's viewpoint. I would add that Howell's overall intention is for the audience to use its imagination. Once the audience becomes well-acquainted with the 'known set',[41] there is also the sense of that set when it is off-camera, outside the 'framed set'. In 'essence' (a key word to explain Howell's approach, noted above) it is the 'set' of the audience's imagination. Similarly, a demand of the audience's imagination is required by the text when, for instance, a place is located by a character. During the Cade rebellion, when Cade exclaims, '...Come, let's march towards London' (IV.iii.16), the audience has to imagine the mob's progress in the direction of 'London', as actors exit. In Howell's version, at Cade's words, all his followers look towards the right-of-frame to signify 'London' beyond and then, move off in that perceived direction. However, in Taylor's terms of the 'framed set', the sense of the television-frame containing a set in itself is most conspicuous when we are confronted with a close-up shot addressing us directly. The viewer's attention is well-nigh demanded by a larger-than-life exposition of a range of facial signals enforcing verbal expression (a point echoed in my earlier chapters).

When York is interrupted standing before his army, by the entrance of Buckingham, there is a matched cut providing a sense of real time, from medium close-up to a close-up shot; and York turns to face us. The facial focus reveals and vitalizes the notion of disturbance in his words, 'The King hath sent him, sure' (V.i.13). York smacks his lips as if in relish of the challenge he anticipates, and he screws up his eyes to denote his suspicions and emphasise a scheming mind. These gestures are large and appear in the foreground of a close image as exaggerated facial movements; and as such, the magnified countenance distracts the viewer with its 'unreal' features. If the effect were used more often, it is likely that it would not engage the viewer sufficiently, or it would simply prove off-putting. Howell however, adopts this type of close focus sparingly, to mark a specific turning-point in events within the drama. Here, York is on the verge of open warfare against King Henry; and he confides in us: 'the King hath sent him, sure [PAUSE] I must dissemble' (13). In delivering the line, the actor, Hill, produces a relatively long pause (noted above in parentheses). Yet, it does not interfere with the rhythm of the verse and reflects the deliberation given to his facial expressions. The pause indicates also, a change in York's tone as he decisively reacts to Buckingham's presence, imparting his machinations to the viewer: 'I must dissemble'. In aiming his externalised inner-thoughts at us the figure of Buckingham is by implication, cut out, despite being visible to the audience in the background of the image, to the extreme-right of the 'framed set'. And the viewer is thus, presented, as is often the case, with a style of production that is decidedly non-realistic, as we become in consequence, 'alone' with York though there are other characters in proximity.

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[41] Especially if the viewer watches *Part 2* having already experienced *Part 1*.

Close-focus and alienation.

Through direct address - a mode of communication Howell adopts sufficiently for it to strike one as an essential feature of her style, as mentioned above - and close-up images, she merges techniques from theatre and television to effect a form of 'alienation' (Bingham, pp.223-4) for the television viewer. We are estranged from a sense of the production as 'real', when a character like York steps outside the world of the text in order to speak to us. In doing so, we are ostensibly coerced into giving our attention and pulled into a relationship of pseudo-*cameraderie* that presses us to think. But as television viewers, comfortable with to-camera presentation, we are prepared to engage with the character; and Howell exploits this aspect of television-viewing. She takes away that sense of comfort, and thus, disturbs or 'alienates' the viewer by making us contend close-up with such politically, self-seeking individualists in *Part 2* as York and Margaret. As a result, we become perceptive to the deception they exercise in the world around them; actions which are instrumental in changing the English political landscape in *Part 2*, and which prepare us in readiness for *Part 3* and beyond. Indeed, in the final battle of *Part 2*, when the Yorkists fight for the first time in the tetralogy against King Henry, Howell creates images that suggest a pervasive atmosphere of treachery which will linger into *Part 3*. In the fight between York and Old Clifford, depicted often in slow-motion with an ominously leaden drumbeat, any sense of chivalric spirit has dissipated. The one-to-one fight turns dirty, as they slash out with fists and feet; and the mortal wound from York is delivered by stabbing Old Clifford in the back.

Any idealistic spirit of conflict has no place in Shakespeare's tetralogy beyond *Part 1*, according to Howell. And *Henry VI Part 3* encompasses a seamless transition of ideas inherited from *Part 2*. The entire series is underpinned by the notion of revenge, and Wilders comments that it is, 'a word which is spoken with increasing frequency as

[*Henry VI Part 3*] develops'.[42] Even King Henry, who invariably speaks with moral dignity, and in *Part 2*, is prepared to compromise with Cade rather than allow the loss of life, 'For God forbid so many simple souls/ Should perish by the sword!..(IV.iv.10-11) promotes retribution in his followers in *Part 3*:

> Earl of Northumberland, he slew thy father;
> And thine, Lord Clifford; you both have
> vowed revenge
> On him, his sons, his favourites and his friends
> (I.i.54-6).

As Henry stands with certain peers in Howell's production, staring at York seated 'in the chair of state' (I.i.51), Henry appeals to the 'vowed revenge' of Northumberland and Clifford.[43]

Usurpation and betrayal indeed, provoke vengeance in *Part 3*; but the idea of change also gains currency in *Part 3*, and Howell's production reflects a sense of perpetual transformation. There is no longer any apparent colour to her 'playground' set but a charcoal grey; and in the opening scene, the idea of the set's continuous deterioration is clearly indicated. For we watch from the other side as York and his followers literally hack through a set of doors to attain access to the king's throne. In this action, the audience is very much under the impression of an image Oliver Bayldon, the set designer, alludes to: that 'vandals have come into the play-park'.[44] Vandalism or wilful destruction and even mutilation are certainly striking features of Howell's adaptation of *Part 3*. In contrast to *Part 2*, there is violent conflict from the outset in *Part 3* and it maintains an unstoppable pace throughout. Towards the end, in Act V, there is yet another battle between the Lancastrians and Yorkists, historically known as the Battle of Tewkesbury. However, once fought, the leader of the victorious Yorkists, King Edward, signals a change: 'Now here a period of tumultuous broils' (V.v.1). The King's authoritative stance is that a conclusion, 'a period' of contentions, 'broils', has been reached. In the BBC production, contrary to the indefatigable spirit of the Yorkists breaking down the doors of 'Parliament' in the first scene, the Yorkists after the Battle of Tewkesbury are shown to be weary, despite their triumph. Edward's words are delivered without a trace of jubilation or raised intonation. He does not appear with a countenance that expresses satisfaction; and his restrained manner is reflected by those around him. Indeed, the television image reveals the space the Yorkists occupy to be empty, suggestive of the desolation created by war. But in the background the darkness of the permanent set stands out, more conspicuous in view of the 'snow' that lies on the floor they tread upon. It echoes the bedraggled wasteland of the spirit in the English state as well as its literal decline as a consequence of social upheaval. England has become a tired state, and the tone is re-emphasised at Edward's ascension to the 'royal throne' (V.vii.1) *Part 3*'s final scene. In the corresponding television scene, using a long take (a technique often preferred by Howell) there is a clear period of some seconds' silence as Edward slowly climbs the steps to the 'throne', maintaining eye-contact with the 'throne' throughout. Once he is at the 'throne', in a relatively exaggerated gesture, Edward slumps into the seat and manifests a visible sign of his exhaustion, symbolic of England's exhaustion, via a distinctive sigh.

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[42] John Wilders, 'Introduction to *Henry VI Part 3*', *BBC TV Shakespeare - Henry VI Part 3* (London: BBC Publications, 1983), p.11.

[43] The Arden edition remarks that, 'Among Shakespeare's plays, *Henry VI Part 3* is second only to *Titus Andronicus* - (another play in the BBC TV Shakespeare series directed by Jane Howell) - in the number of words with the root *venge*, just as the two plays are comparable in depiction of anger, studied hate and stage violence', John D. Cox and Eric Rasmussen, eds., *The Arden Shakespeare - King Henry VI Part 3*, Third Series (London:Thomas Learning, 2001), p.190.

[44] Quoted earlier, in reference to *Henry VI Part 2*. Bayldon acknowledges that the 'play-park' changes into a darker 'place' during *Part 2*; but at the same time, he is no doubt indicating a general development of aspects of the permanent set which also feature in *Henry VI Part 3* and *Richard III*.

Edward's comportment is also an expression of relief after a time of frantic change. It denotes the change to a settled monarchy without the pressure of any undefeated foe; or so it seems. For the end of *Henry VI Part 3* marks a point of progression in the perceived enemy. In *Part 1*, the enemy to the English state was clearly delineated to be that of France. However, in *Part 1* as in *Part 2* the sense of adversaries from within the state emerge and develop. As *Part 3* moves forward, the idea of 'within' has become more insidious to include the notion of an enemy inside the family of York itself - at the very centre of kingship by the end of the play. Indeed, during the 'tumultuous' events of *Part 3* George of Clarence, brother to Edward and Richard, changes sides to join the Lancastrians. His actions, though, are part of and a reflection of the constant flux of fortunes Shakespeare depicts. In Act I, York ascends the throne only to be then defeated in battle. The Lancastrians retain, therefore, the crown, but only to be deposed in Act II after further conflict; and thus, events proceed with the diadem switching sides continually until Act V, which signifies the conclusive success of the Yorkists. And in between the violence even the Yorkist stalwart Warwick changes allegiance. Warwick is aptly referred to as 'the setter-up and plucker-down of kings' (II.iii.37), denoting his strong influence. Moreover, the description of Warwick echoes the see-saw rhythm of the alternating circumstances of which Clarence may be regarded as mere victim. Ultimately, he returns to fight for the Yorkists; and significantly, Clarence does not display the stealthy ambition explicit in Richard, his brother.

The Machiavellian machinations of Richard are explicit to the television viewer. Effectively, the figure of Richard, once Richard of York his father is dead, takes over his father's role of speaking to us directly via medium close-up.[45] He does not only follow his father in name but inherits certain of York's traits:

> Why, I can smile and murder whiles I smile,
> And cry 'Content!' to that which grieves my heart,
> And wet my cheeks with artificial tears,
> And frame my face to all occasions.
> (III.ii.182-85).

Richard of Gloucester's murderous and ambitious thoughts are conveyed in duplicitous terms: 'murder whiles I smile'; expressing joy at what 'grieves' him; producing 'artificial tears' and generally belying reality with appearance as he 'frame[s] [his] face to all occasions'. Indeed, Shakespeare's language has progressed in its presentation of the deceitfulness from the Machiavellian-type figure. For Gloucester's cunning is markedly more elaborate that that of his father's 'I must dissemble' (*Part 2*, Act V.i.13).

In similar fashion to the way Howell acquaints her audience with York, she 'frames' also Gloucester's 'face' for us. We become intimate with Gloucester's inner convictions by way of a single camera long take. His entire soliloquy (III.ii.124-95) is addressed to-camera, beginning with a medium shot. And Howell makes the viewer progressively familiar with the character's ulterior motives by changing the image eventually to medium close-up and, ultimately, to a close-up of Gloucester. The real-time effect of the long-take intensifies our awareness of Gloucester coupled with a medium close-up image, as the character sits at a table to share his conspiratorial ruminations with us, starting 'Why, I can smile, and murder whiles I smile' (182). As we are drawn closer and closer to Gloucester as the camera dollies in, paralleling the build-up of his duplicitous remarks, the viewer is made to feel steadily more uncomfortable. Gloucester is now the self-determining, political individualist. He mirrors his father. Gloucester represents a metamorphosis of York, but is a more complex creature. As a reflection of York, Howell allies close-focus and direct address to present Gloucester in order to attract similar judgement of Gloucester's character by the viewer. Comparable to the presentation of York in *Part 2*, we are equally disturbed by the intimacy created by the close image of Gloucester. The inclusion of a table as part of the *mise-en-scène*, which we witness as the camera shot develops towards the framing of Gloucester's head-and-shoulders, promotes a disturbing notion of everyday casualness in his address. The communal connotations of domesticity constructed by the image serve as a contradictory device, placating us against Gloucester's malicious and treasonous deliberations. Howell exploits here, the easygoing and commonplace relationship between the audience and their television. She uses the contradictory element of a relaxed atmosphere to heighten our appreciation of the iniquitous nature and startling ambition of Gloucester's words, impressing us with the character's dark irony. The point-of-view shot forces the uncomfortable effect of Gloucester speaking to us at a level appropriate to being sat in proximity to him at the table; an impression that is exacerbated by the long-take. Thus, as we watch him we become increasingly attentive to his scheming inner-world; and our sense of being so close up provokes us to disentangle ourselves from being caught up in that world. In being so 'alienated', we become sensitive to a concept within Howell's tetralogy of continuous deception. So much has changed since the wars between England and France in *Part 1* that nothing has changed. Never-ending periods of violence have produced nothing positive.

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[45] Direct address from Gloucester has its predecessor in Olivier's *Richard III*. Olivier as Richard performs as 'narrator and master of ceremonies'. The camera constantly takes Richard's viewpoint and he '[moves] out from the dramatic space and [tells] us what he will do next'. HR. Coursen, 'Three Films of *Richard III*', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film*, ed. R. Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.100. Howell continues to have Richard addressing his television audience directly in her *Richard III*.

Gloucester is the embodiment of that nihilistic trend, and someone who is disconcertingly very apparent. In spite of the 'unreal' aspect of Gloucester's direct address to us, stepping outside the world of the text, the notion of physicality through proximity in Act III.ii, creates a strong sense of realism. Hence, when Gloucester's tone changes to anger the emotion strikes us with more intensity, as he exclaims, 'Tut, were it farther off, I'll pluck it down' (III.ii.195). 'It' refers to the crown, and as part of the final line of his soliloquy, the phrase 'pluck it down' raises dramatic tension that pre-empts violent deeds. In the corresponding television image, the suggestion of calm domesticity is shattered. This idea is emphasised by Gloucester standing up from the table and walking away with intent. His purposefulness and displeasure are reinforced via his facial expression of gritted teeth and sharp head movement.

Gloucester's ardent desire for the crown harks back to earlier scenes in the tetralogy involving his father York. In *Henry VI Part 3* however, we see the demise of

Richard, Duke of York, murdered in his attempt to seize the kingship from the Lancastrians led in battle by Queen Margaret. Margaret, in revenge for York's kingly ambitions, sets to torture him after his capture by the Lancastrians. By doing so, in *Part 3*, the sense of revenge becomes decidedly more stark and personal. The 'personal' aspect of the scene is explored by Howell's use of the close-up to impress her television audience with the retribution that has uglified into inhumane acts. Close-up images portray the exchanges between York and Margaret as she taunts him on the 'molehill' (I.vi.67) placing a paper crown on his head as well as presenting York with a 'napkin' (79) tainted with his son's blood. Wounded in the battlefield, the realism of York's cries of pain as he is dragged by soldiers to the 'molehill' are overridden by the realistic tears of emotional pain at the news of Rutland's, York's youngest son's death - merely a boy. Through close-up we are privileged witnesses to effectively, a personal battle between York and Margaret, whose victor is ostensibly Margaret. The close images create a sense that the viewer is the only onlooker, though we are aware of the presence of a group of peers and soldiers beyond the television frame also (to the right of the television frame) from prior, juxtaposed images. Their attendance on Margaret is emphasised in a reaction-shot of Northumberland responding to York's sentiment over his dead son: '...his passion move me so/ That hardly can I check my eyes for tears' (I.iv.150-1) visibly crying, illustrative of the verbal text. York too, as Margaret informs him of his young boy's assailant Clifford, looks beyond her to remind us of the group watching outside the 'framed set' of their two heads, appealing to the 'set' of our imagination. Yet, the perspective of those beyond the television frame is inferior to ours. We look on from contrasting vantage points.

Howell utilizes a two-camera set-up, and the viewer gains an over-the-shoulder position in relation to both characters in a two-shot. Also, the viewer is able to look up at York, via a low angle shot, perched on the 'molehill' from Margaret's standpoint, or look down, via a high angle shot, at Margaret from York's perspective. Thus, the audience is cast into a neutral role, recording events from both sides, but from a confidential viewpoint. Despite our proximity, therefore, Howell puts her audience in an impartial position, encouraging us to objectify what we observe. When York refers to Margaret's unnatural behaviour, we do not view the distress in his face as a reflection of his embittered utterance:

> How coulds't thou drain the life-blood of the child,
> To bid the father wipe his eyes withal,
> And yet be seen to bear a woman's face?
> (I.iv.138-40).

The television audience hears the raging and lamenting of York, but we are focused on the facial reaction of Margaret from a close-up shot. As a consequence, we are distinctly aware of a difference between her stone-faced aspect and York's language of inhumane actions: 'To bid the father wipe his eyes' with 'the life-blood of [his] child', after killing that child - 'drain[ing] the life-blood'. Indeed, the facial image reveals a slight smirk from Margaret, in response to York's accusations, reflecting an appalling self -satisfaction in Margaret. This intimate visual detail, difficult to appreciate in a theatre, gives a realistic edge to the inhumanity verbalised by York. The plain contrast between her cold countenance, made so apparent by the television image, and York's heartfelt words of bitter mourning disturb the viewer. In so doing, Howell incites us to respond thoughtfully to the inhumane notion contained in the tetralogy. We are, therefore, able to respond more sensitively to the quick editing effect that exposes a juxtaposed facial image of York shouting in tears and anger, next to Margaret's impassive stare, 'Bid'st thou me rage? Why, now thou hast thy wish;/ Wouldst have me weep? Why, now thou hast thy will' (143-4). The realism of York's sorrow - 'rage' and 'weep' - is portrayed not only by verbal communication but also, emphasised by his distraught countenance the television viewer is privileged to scrutinize via a close-up image.

The realism of the inhumanity enacted by the characters in *Part 3* is more frequently not shown by Howell in the act itself, but in the characters' reactions to the act. At the end of Act I.iv, York is murdered by Clifford and Margaret in act of vengeance. Clifford revenges his 'father's death' (175) and Margaret 'to right [the] gentle-hearted king' (176). In Howell's version, their stabbing of York is visually presented in close-up, but the insertion of daggers and swords happens in the audience's imagination, beyond the television's bottom frame. In preference, Howell has the camera dolly in to ped up slowly in order to present a close-up shot of Margaret's reaction as her eyes linger on the blood of York running down her sword. Thus, the savage act of revenge belongs to her facial expression. She stares as in wonderment complemented by the utterance of a distinguishable sigh. And she opens her mouth long enough to suggest an animalistic instinct apt for a 'she-wolf' (I.iv.111), that desires to taste her prey on her bloodied weapon. It is a close visual image which resonates with the brutality that characterises the sense of revenge in *Part 3*. Undoubtedly, it is a visual metaphor for pitiless retribution, similar to an earlier image involving Clifford. Representing the aftermath of his killing of Rutland from Act I.iii, Clifford's face is enhanced by a close-up image which shows him wiping the blood of Rutland from his sword onto his face. The primitive act is made bolder by its revelation in close-up. Its realism is related to the proximity of the television audience to the action, in combination with our knowledge of the butchery he has just committed. However, as with the facial reactions of Margaret shown in the following scene, the realism is far from real. The viewer is 'alienated' by the exaggerated gestures of inhuman behaviour, demonstrated by larger-than-life facial images. The overall effect is a magnified realism to ensure the viewer remains in contact with the 'essence' of the play; that is to say, the potential meaning within this play in addition to the others in the tetralogy.

Violence and montage.

It is a series of history plays in which Howell raises our awareness of relentless violence and what it achieves and becomes by the end. By *Part 3*, Howell has enhanced the profile of the ruthlessness of that violence, reflecting the continuous political changes and disorder within the English state. The unrelenting pace of the breakdown is mirrored by some of the filmic techniques Howell adapts. Images are superimposed, overlapping as they fade in and out. Noticeably in *Part 3*, it is a technique relied upon often to convey battle scenes and in particular, the ultimate fight in *Part 3*. In Act V's Battle of Tewkesbury the passage of time is emphasised. In the images of the conflict we move seamlessly it appears, as one image overlaps another, from fierce combat without any indication of weather conditions through to a concluding image of battle-weary soldiers, 'just lashing out in all directions' (Fenwick, p.25) against a snowy setting. The montage of images that construct our sense of the battle represents the perpetual motion of change sweeping along in *Part 3* and in the other plays. Howell chooses also to overlay the images with the sound of drumming which in the final image is replaced by the realistic noise of a blizzard, though for Howell the most important element of realism comes from her actors: their movements, their countenances and their voices. The voice of a character can be often heard, in *Part 3* particularly, in an image that denotes a change of scene as an echo from the previous scene. When Margaret condemns York 'Off with his head, and set it on York gates;/ So York may overlook the town of York' (I.iv.179-80), the sound of her cruel judgement lingers into the juxtaposed image which signifies a change of scene. The scene presents the three sons of York which impresses Margaret's words with a haunting irony. Such fluidity of sound linked with the use of superimposed images demonstrates an approach by Howell which exemplifies Wilders' assessment of the Shakespeare plays on television providing the 'continuity almost certainly achieved in renaissance theatre'.[46]

Reflecting on Howell's tetralogy in relation to the productions in the BBC TV Shakespeare series up to and inclusive of *Richard III*, Wells regards it as 'probably purer than any given...since Shakespeare's time'.[47] 'Purer' is no doubt, a reference to the use of the entire Shakespeare text for the four plays with only minor omissions. In this sense, Howell's approach satisfies an original edict for the series of "definitive...to do the whole text",[48] from the series' pioneering first producer, Cedric Messina. However, such implicit collaboration of thought would appear to be coincidental in view of Messina's other objectives 'to keep the audience unaware of theatrical conventions, omit as much artifice as possible'.[49] For Howell is reliant on 'theatrical conventions' and 'artifice' to give shape and meaning to the individual plays of the three *Henry VI*s and *Richard III*, and to create contemporary meaning for the television viewer in respect of the tetralogy as a whole. She is observant of theatre convention but, as I have commented above, Howell combines it with televisual practices and particularly, television's use of the close-up. Close images, as we have seen above and in earlier chapters, create a certain intimacy between the audience and some of Shakespeare's more forceful characters. Richard of Gloucester is one such figure who emerges from *Henry VI Part 2* and *Part 3* to be the 'super villain'[50] of *Richard III*. And it is important in respect of Howell's approach in producing the four plays as a series with a single troupe of actors, to view the influential character of Richard of Gloucester as a product of the two plays prior to *Richard III*.

From the viewpoint that Howell's *Richard III* resonates with its predecessors, Wells' observation of 'pure' has an added sense. For as the BBC's script editor, David

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[46] John Wilders, *Times Higher Educational Supplement*, 10th July, 1981, p.13.

[47] Quoted in my 'Introduction', p.13. Stanley Wells, 'The History of the Whole Contention', *Times Literary Supplement*, 4th February, 1983.

[48] Alan Shallcross, the script editor at the beginning of the BBC TV Shakespeare series, quoted in interview. Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *BBC TV Shakespeare - Romeo and Juliet* (London: BBC Publications, 1978), p.21.

[49] James C. Bulman, "The BBC Shakespeare and 'House Style'", *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 35 (1984), p.572.

[50] Michael Mannheim, 'The Shakespeare Plays on TV', *Shakespeare on Film Newsletter*, 8:2 (April, 1984).

Snodin, notes in relation to *Richard III*: "What usually happens is that it's done as an entity to itself and a lot of the references to the earlier plays are taken out and it becomes a play about a megalomaniac rather than a play about the Wars of the Roses".[51] However, Howell's version keeps 'the references to the earlier plays', bringing to *Richard III* a certain 'pure' value. The BBC production attempts to steer away from a complete focus on the protagonist. It rather treats Richard as a creation of a society dominated by the War of the Roses.[52] In Howell's *Henry VI Part 2* and *Part 3* we have seen the Richard of *Richard III* as a very capable and ambitious soldier. His fighting spirit is reflected in his very first words spoken in *Henry VI Part 2*: 'And if our words will not, then our weapons shall' (V.i.140) alongside his brothers and the Duke of York his father, once York has openly pronounced his enmity in front of King Henry. The pragmatism of Richard's utterance, 'our weapons shall' do the talking rather than diplomacy - 'words', is emphatically illustrated shortly after by Howell, in presenting a lengthy duel between Richard and Somerset (the principal Lancastrian figure after the King at this point) in which the two figures are alone on the set. Howell conveys Richard's dogged determination as a strong and skilled soldier in a long-take of his fight with Somerset, which ends with three decisive cuts and thrusts of Richard's sword to finish off Somerset. Similarly, in *Henry VI Part 3* Richard's grim persistence is represented by his persuasive tone to his father, at a point when York has sworn to allow King Henry to remain sovereign until his death and,therefore, at least overtly, thinks no more of open aggression on the battlefield. Richard insists to his father '...I cannot rest/ Until the white rose that I wear be dy'd/ Even in the lukewarm blood of Henry's heart' (I.ii.32-4).[53] In Howell's version, York's face is at the fore of the image with his back turned while Richard speaks; and at hearing the final words of Richard's speech we see a distinct smile from York. York's countenance mirrors the impressive stance of Richard and, certainly, York's next remark denotes how convincing Richard is: 'Richard enough; I will be King, or die (I.ii.35). York's reprimand of 'Richard enough [!] - exclaimed in the television scene - is countered with a full smile of acquiescence from York at 'I will be King, or die' as he turns round to embrace Richard and look to his other sons and followers. And Richard's bloodthirstiness inferred from 'the white rose that I wear be dy'd/...in the lukewarm blood of Henry's heart' is exemplified some time later in another long take of a one-on-one combat between Richard and Clifford in Act II.iv: 'Now, Clifford, I have singled thee alone' (1). Although the BBC production adopts the Alexander text, it is of interest to note that the Arden edition of *Henry VI Part 3* prefers the stage directions of *The True Tragedy of Richard Duke of York* (1595). The Arden comments it "clarifies that Clifford is getting the better of Richard until Warwick arrives: 'They fight and then enters *Warwicke* and rescues *Richard*, & then *exeunt omnes*'" (Arden, note 11.1, p.247). In complete contrast, Howell chooses to represent a close-matched fight between Richard and Clifford. It is shown in one long take and there is no sign of Richard yielding or even being dominated by Clifford. The reverse is, perhaps, truer for at the end of the fight sequence it is Clifford who is seen to be backing off before he escapes through a swing-door. The image suggests Richard is winning the fight but it becomes ambiguous when, at the same point, the figure of Warwick rushes into the frame. Then, immediately, Richard is seen angrily clashing swords with his ally Warwick, bellowing the words: 'Nay, Warwick, single out some other chase;/ For I myself will hunt this wolf to death [!]' (II.iv.12-13). Howell's Richard exclaims the words to Warwick in fierce admonition; and it is a warning that resonates through the rest of the tetralogy - the tenacity to 'hunt' whomever he regards his prey, 'to death'.

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[51] David Snodin in an interview with Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Richard III* (London: BBC Publications, 1983), pp.20-1.
In stating this point, Snodin no doubt has the popular cinema version from Lawrence Olivier in mind. Olivier plays Richard in the film he directs: *Richard III* (1955). In comparison with Ron Cook's Richard who is underplayed in Howell's production, Olivier's Richard is 'a cartoon figure, with his humped back, false oversized nose, beetle brows, lurching limp, and withered arm he resembles a Halloween or Guy Fawkes prankster' (Rothwell, p.62). Indeed, according to Jorgens, Olivier is dominant and all the others seem peripheral. Jack J. Jorgens, 'Shakespeare on Film and Television', in ***William Shakespeare: His World, His Work, His Influence - Volume III - His Influence***, ed. JF. Andrews (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), p.685. And as I shall comment in the chapter, Howell's vision of *Richard III* is certainly quite different, where the other characters are not left on the periphery.

[52] Howell, in an interview with Fenwick, comments that *Richard III* is not about Richard, but "a play about society", 'The Production', p.30.

[53] At this point in *Part 3*, Richard's comment in respect of Henry appears merely as an expression of overreaching ambition; but indeed, the irony is that in the penultimate scene of the play it is exactly what Richard carries out.

It is enough to provoke terror in whomever he perceives as his adversary. In the only battle of *Richard III*, Howell is consistent in showing Richard as a feared and accomplished soldier, echoing images from *Henry VI Part 2* and *Part 3*. When he is attacked at Bosworth (V.iv) the BBC production shows him first alone shouting: 'A horse! A horse! My kingdom for a horse!' (13). Howell stresses the ironic pathos of Richard's cry as he is then suddenly surrounded by Richmond's soldiers. However, their large number and their initial reluctance to strike at him denotes their dread of Richard. What is more, he kills some of them before he is wounded; and despite his wounds, still they do not manage to kill him. It is left to Richmond to deliver the mortal blow by long sword. Howell presents, indeed, a drawn-out and terribly violent death for a character that personifies the words of Old Clifford from *Henry VI Part 3*: the 'heap of wrath, foul indigested lump' (V.i.157).

Richard III as the end of a TV cycle.

By presenting the four plays as a mini-series, Howell succeeds in creating a metaphor of 'heap of wrath, foul indigested lump' for the state of England as a consequence of its wars with France and its internal wars. And by producing *Richard III* at the end of the series rather than a lone production, Richard is progressively perceived as the true embodiment of the metaphor. Howell's Richard, from his first appearance to his demise in *Richard III*, vacillates between smiles and abrupt, unpredictable fits of temper - a 'heap of wrath'. Her Richard is also visually represented as a manifestation of that 'foul' temper with a 'lump' on his back as well as an ungainly walk produced from the further physical disability of a limp.[54] In Howell's *Richard III*, therefore, we rather see the play as a concluding episode in a violent saga and Richard as its ultimate, misshapen creation. In *Richard III*, however, Richard's proclivity for violence, except at the end, is thwarted. This aspect to Richard's circumstances is more apparent to the viewer who has followed Howell's series. We are more aware as *Richard III* develops that there is no soldiering for him to do and, therefore, no obvious outlet for his violent disposition. Thus, Howell makes us aware of a certain, menacing tension that might otherwise be missed should *Richard III* be experienced in isolation.

Howell has shown us that murderous behaviour typifies the character of Richard, and in her *Richard III* we are caught in anticipation of how that urge in him will manifest itself. As with his soldiering, Richard's menace is more apparent due to his diminutive physical appearance. It is another instance in the tetralogy where Howell works against our expectations to stimulate our interest. By casting Ron Cook in the role of Richard,[55] she uses his small stature to effect a greater impression of Richard's soldiering. For when he appears in any kind of group image, his comparative short height in relation to those in proximity to him is immediately obvious to the viewer. In *Richard III*, Richard is often imaged with others; and in particular, we watch images of Richard and Buckingham (Michael Byrne) conspiring together in which Buckingham is shown to be significantly taller. By presenting their complicity within this framed visual contrast Howell conveys a stronger sense of Richard's efficacy, and it is certainly on show when as King he dismisses Buckingham: 'Thou troublest me; I am not in the vein' (IV.iii.122). Despite Buckingham reaching out to touch Richard while sat on the throne, in an intimate gesture reminiscent of their recent friendship, Richard snaps at him 'Thou troublest me' in response to Buckingham's reminder of Richard's past pledge to him: 'The earldom of Hereford and the movables/ Which you have promised I shall possess' (IV.iii.94-5). In a dominating reaction, Richard disdainfully pushes away Buckingham's hand with abrupt certainty, repeating that he is 'not in the vein' of giving. Immediately, then, Richard's control over Buckingham is underlined by Richard's body language as he steps down from the throne and walks away from Buckingham with his back to him. The sense of Richard's spurning of Buckingham is concluded by the camera movement which trails Richard's exit to leave Buckingham, consequently, 'defeated' in isolation outside the 'framed set'. And within the 'framed set' we witness the pocket-sized king walking out in his contorted fashion. The visually explicit disadvantages of Richard in comparison with the tall, upright Buckingham make Richard's rejection of him all the more striking, conveying the sharpness of Richard's potency.

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[54] It is often visually apparent that Howell's Richard has a form of calliper attached to his left leg to emphasise the character's disability and discomfort.

[55] In terms of Shakespearean 'star' roles, the BBC television Shakespeare series uses generally, a well-known actor. I have commented already on Anthony Andrews as Mercutio, Michael Hordern - Prospero, Nicol Williams - Macbeth and Alan Howard - Coriolanus. It would seem, therefore, an attempt by Howell to de-emphasise the role of Richard by casting a relatively unknown actor, Ron Cook. Her choice is also consistent with an overriding philosophy in doing the tetralogy in a 'communal' style of having the same troupe perform all four plays.

Richard's miniature size, fit for the small-screen, helps convey an impish quality. Howell makes us question, therefore, how Anne in Act I.ii might be won over by such a figure when he is in the wooing vein - Anne made widow by Richard in *Henry VI Part 3*. In *Richard III*, Richard confirms his assassination of Anne's husband as he stands before her: '..; 'twas I that stabb'd young Edward' (I.ii.181). However, his standing before Anne in Howell's television scene merely points up Richard's physical deficiencies. It is apparent that Richard is certainly no taller than Anne but ultimately, despite all, he convinces her: 'since you teach me how to flatter you,/ Imagine I have said farewell already' (I.ii.222-3). Anne, played by Zoe Wanamaker, delivers her 'farewell' to Richard in a comparatively gentler and more conciliatory tone - 'to flatter you' - than her earlier vociferous outburst: '... thou lump of foul deformity [!]' (57). The distinct contrast in Wanamaker's expression reflects Anne's eventual willingness to indulge Richard's 'foul deformity'. The different approach confirms Anne's submissiveness and, therefore, gives a stronger sense to Richard's wiliness and an impression of how formidable a creature he really is. Howell's production presents a conception of Richard's prowess as a soldier and politician, but in the scene with Anne (I.ii) an idea of Richard's sexual potency is brought to the fore. Howell achieves this concept by the use of close-up and multi-camera editing; and nowhere in the scene is it more effective than when Richard speaks bluntly of his carnal intentions towards Anne:

> Anne: And thou unfit for any place but hell.
> Gloucester: Yes, one place else, if you will hear me name it.
> Anne: Some dungeon.
> Gloucester: Your bed-chamber.
> Anne: Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest!
> Gloucester: So will it, madam, till I lie with you.
> Anne: I hope so.
> Gloucester: I know so. [LONG PAUSE] But gentle Lady Anne,..
> (I.ii.109-114).

Throughout the above mentioned exchanges, Howell uses two cameras to cut between close-up images of Anne and Gloucester. This method typically introduces an intimacy to their conversation, in spite of Anne's spirited rejection of Richard: 'unfit for any place but hell' and 'Ill rest betide the chamber where thou liest!'. The close-up image conveys the disconcerted spirit of Anne at hearing Richard's desire for her: to be in her 'bed-chamber' and to 'lie' with her. The close images and rapid editing rather afford their dialogue a certain energy and intensifies the rhythm of the altercation. The result of this approach stresses more acutely the shock-effect of Richard's words on Anne as the montage of images suddenly halts to linger on her stultified reaction. She tries stoutly to defend herself with 'I hope so', but when Richard responds, 'I know so', the camera image stays with Anne's face for a reaction shot of some seconds to indicate the futility of her responses, and to suggest she has become enmeshed by Richard's verbal tactics. No longer engaged in the tactics of war, Richard has to employ scheming in another manner to trap his enemy. And the effect of this visual interlude gives also the sense of a disturbing growth of sexual symbiosis between them. However, as noted in her other productions forming the tetralogy, Howell is very much dependent on the reality of the facial expressions of her actors. In respect of Zoe Wanamaker, the notion of Anne's ambivalent reaction of attraction and loathing rests within the 'framed set' of Wanamaker's countenance. She opens here eyes wider to stare with a vulnerable look at Richard after he has uttered, commandingly, 'I know so' (114). She fixes her look on him to suggest Anne's scornful regard of Richard and yet, at the same time, that Anne is mesmerised by him. Richard's effectiveness is thus underlined. And by de-emphasising the character of Richard - playing him with an actor of small stature -[56] Howell effectively points up the enormous capabilities of Richard, by visual contrast, leading to an impression of his great stature which is confirmed when he is later crowned King.

The cycle darkens.

Moreover, Ron Cook's height is appropriate for the surreptitious atmosphere Howell brings to her *Richard III*. His small figure complements Richard's discreet, political machinations that take place in the covert environs of Howell's darkened set. It is the same basic permanent set the television viewer has watched deteriorate and grow tired-looking as the tetralogy has progressed from *Henry VI Part 1*. Its silhouetted form of a devastated arena that once resembled an 'adventure playground' gives the set an eerie quality when perceived in the dim lighting of *Richard III*. Rather than a disordered state the set has become representative of the fallen state of England, couched in darkness and imperceptible as a consequence. Appropriately, therefore, the act of murder takes place beyond the 'framed set', concealed from the television audience, becoming increasingly dependent on the 'set' of the audience's imagination, comparative to *Richard III*'s predecessors. It is true that we do see Clarence attacked with a dagger; however, it is visually evident the stabbing does not kill him for we see him chased off-camera, after which we are reliant on sound effects to convey to us the messy and ugly nature of his murder. The hidden violence of Howell's *Richard III* perpetuates a mood of fear and anxiety. This constant tension is reflected in the furtive behaviour of some of the characters and emphasised by Howell's camera work. When Queen Margaret first appears in Act I.iii she does so in dark and inconspicuous garments which cover her entire body, except her hands and face.[57] What is more, she is positioned discreetly out of the sight of others, behind the throne on which the present queen, Queen Elizabeth, sits. Howell's intentional visual irony is that it is the throne which once belonged to Margaret. A more insidious aspect, however, is her sudden prominence before the viewer's eyes. Rapid editing from a long shot conveying a group image to a medium close-up of Margaret at the fore of the image, hiding from the rest who are still in focus in the background (to the right of the television image), lends Margaret a preternatural quality. This unreal sense of Margaret, which contrasts with her image from *Henry VI Part 3* as Henry's pragmatic warrior-queen, gives an added poignancy to the curses she utters once she has decided to appear before the others from behind the throne: 'Can curses pierce the clouds and enter heaven?/ Why then, give way, dull clouds, to my quick curses!' (I.iii.194-5). The ethereal nature of her words 'clouds', 'heaven' and 'dull clouds' accentuate the mysterious element of Margaret's unexpected appearance; but also, her reference to 'clouds' and 'dull clouds' is an indirect allusion to the shadowy atmosphere of *Richard III*.

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[56] Refer also to above footnote 51 in this chapter.

[57] It is noteworthy that in the major filmic versions of *King Richard III*, before and after Howell's cycle, the character of Queen Margaret is omitted. This cut is at the expense of historical and social contexts which Howell's version evidently does not miss out. In effect, the inclusion of Margaret in *Richard III* emphasises the play as part of a sequence rather than a play in isolation. The filmic adaptation of *Richard III* released since Howell's tetralogy is directed by Richard Loncraine and Ian McKellen (1996).

The shady ambience of Howell's set, its form hardly discernible in the dim light, gives it an abstract quality. 'Abstract' in the sense of the set's notional visibility, becomes the norm for the viewer as *Richard III* reaches its conclusion. 'Abstract' is, therefore, an apposite context in which we witness the culmination of the doubling of roles preferred by Howell. Out of the set's darkness appears the faces of characters from the other Howell histories: those of Somerset, York, Warwick and Edward, played by Brian Deacon, Bernard Hill, Mark Wing-Davey and Brian Protheroe, respectively. Typical of Howell's preference for a stylised presentation and part of the terrifying vision she wishes to convey is the fact that, there is no attempt to mask the actors' faces in any way: 'No great attempt was made to disguise each actor as he came on in a new role' (Fenwick, p.27). This gives their re-appearance its surreal edge. All of the figures grouped together represent the conclusive part of the doubling, trebling and so on, of roles, forming the ultimate nightmare; and Howell unsurprisingly casts all of them as Richmond's aides against the house of York and enemies to Richard III. They embody a precursory nightmare to Richard's 'dream' (V.iii.178) of the ghosts of those he has murdered in *Henry VI Part 3* and *Richard III*. Howell's precursory vision stretches beyond *Henry VI Part 3* to imply retribution from the events of the earlier plays - general vengeance from the house of Lancaster and personal revenge ('revenge', as noted above, is a theme well-suited to the tetralogy). For the actor Brian Deacon, who played the Lancastrian, the Duke of Somerset, slain by Richard in *Henry VI Part 2*, is Richmond, Richard's nemesis in *Richard III*; and undisguised, the television audience recognises the link as soon as we are introduced to the face of Richmond.

Concluding *Richard III* and Howell's multi-faceted version of the cycle.

The reality of the actor's face is essential to Howell's stylised presentation and consequent message to her audience. The re-emergence of the faces from the previous plays from the series adds to the tension in the general build up in Act V, towards the Battle of Bosworth. Indeed, in Act V.iii, once Richard is alone in his tent after dismissing Ratcliffe, Howell presents Richard seated in a medium close-up shot looking up, as though he anticipates somebody entering the tent. This image is swiftly juxtaposed with that of the face of Mark Wing-Davey, entering the tent recognisable as the actor who played Warwick in the earlier plays. For a moment, the audience is taken aback, until the camera pans right to reveal that the tent is Richmond's. However, Howell's use of the filmic technique of *montage* helps to build the atmosphere of suspense, rhythmically building towards the tetralogy's climax in its final battle. In apposite fashion for Howell, the figure of Richard fighting his last battle, emerges from a set that is abstracted by darkness and smoke. Thus, when we view his bloody death[58] in this indiscernible and amorphous arena, that throws up nightmarish apparitions, the bloodiness of that act is more apparent. The result is a brutal realism which contrasts with the stylised effects.

There is no attempt by Howell, as in the rest of the cycle, to create a realistic effect merely for its own sake as witnessed in the initial plays of the series, described earlier in this thesis. On the contrary, Howell highlights artifice through stylised presentation. But once the stylisation is established the realism, when it is introduced to these plays, becomes all the more penetrating and shocking.

And the realistic vision of violence we take with us from Howell's tetralogy provokes us to make numerous comparisons with our own, contemporary world. Certainly, aware of television's multifarious communicative role in the world, Howell's stylised approach is a multi-faceted response to that demand. In consequence, her energetic visions of Shakespeare's early history plays contrast heavily with the 'dull' verdict meted out to the BBC series' adaptations of three of Shakespeare's more

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[58] Similar to Richard's death in Olivier's film with Richard surrounded 'by a horde of soldiers who butcher him as if at boar hunt'. J. Jorgens, 'Shakespeare on Film and Television', in ***William Shakespeare: His World, His Work, His Influence - Volume III - His Influence***, ed. JF. Andrews (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), p.687. In Howell's version, Richard is attacked by a 'horde' of soldiers but it is Richmond who delivers the mortal blow.

6. CONCLUSION

In this thesis, my aim has been to view the BBC TV Shakespeare series as an exploration of visual styles to find a suitable form to transfer the Bard to the popularising medium of television.

The Shakespeare series produced television Shakespeare that rightly deserves to be referred to, adopting Miller's description, as 'briefly brilliant'. It is a comment I use to distinguish creative and resourceful productions in the BBC series which I have detailed in respect of Moshinsky, Gold and Howell. Miller himself (who introduced Moshinsky and Howell to the series) employs the phrase to describe 'imaginative productions' which are distinct from the BBC's effort to create television Shakespeare with 'an undateable permanence' that merely results in 'quaint' examples.[1]

'Quaint' as a pejorative message is a more apt way of describing the BBC's *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest*. However, the underlying argument in my opening chapter is that despite Messina's productions being dismissed as kitsch, this does not mean that they cannot be taken seriously as objects of study. They should be regarded within a larger framework of an evolving visual style (as I have presented in this thesis). I have shown that the weaknesses of the first two seasons (as reflected in my close study of *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest*) were, in a sense, necessary in order to create a reaction that resulted in more sophisticated visual styles later on.

With more than forty countries having purchased the BBC TV Shakespeare series, and the series having been sponsored via a transatlantic agreement, there can be little doubt of the series' worldwide influence. Its influence on how people perceive Shakespeare is enormous particularly when considering the aftermarket video sales (also mentioned in my 'Introduction').[2] And I have presented in the thesis a number of positive points to reconsider in the BBC Shakespeare to impress a modern audience that Shakespeare and television can work together. Davies notes that completion of the BBC Shakespeare, in 1985, critical discussion of 'screened Shakespeare' flourished, helped by 'the rapid growth in the availability of video-cassettes and the rise of interest in performance studies'.[3]

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[1] The descriptions of 'briefly brilliant' and 'permanently quaint' are originally used by Miller to polarise criticism of the BBC's policy for its Shakespeare series. It was a policy Miller found to be a 'self-defeating enterprise'. Jonathan Miller, ***Subsequent Performances*** (London: Faber and Faber, 1986), p.67.

[2] A selection of the more popular Shakespeares from the series were released as recently as the summer of 2004: ***Hamlet, King Lear, Macbeth*** and ***A Midsummer Night's Dream*** on DVD (Digital Versatile Disc). One distinct reason for their re-release is perhaps the fact that each production had a 'star' actor in a leading role: Derek Jacobi, Michael Hordern, Nicol Williamson and Helen Mirren respectively.

Admittedly, since the end of the BBC TV Shakespeare series television has not commissioned much Shakespeare. McKernan comments that 'the BBC TV Shakespeare series seems to have quietened activity on British television screens at least'.[4] It is hard to disagree with McKernan but the situation may not necessarily be a reflection of an unwillingness to tackle Shakespeare on television. It is more likely the reflection of a general change within television culture itself, in Britain.[5]

What is for sure is that we can not discount an indirect influence the BBC series had on doing Shakespeare after 1985. On film principally, Shakespeare flourished in the fifteen years following the end of the BBC Shakespeare. Lanier remarks on what happened a mere five years later: 'For all their varied approaches to adaptation and their equally varied performances at the box office, the Shakespeare films of the 1990s might be understood in retrospect as participating in a much larger *fin de siècle* project, the recuperation of traditional literary culture for an age of mass media'.[6] During the 1990s there were at least thirteen film adaptations of Shakespeare, some of which are relevant to the plays studied in this thesis.

In 1996, Baz Luhrmann directed a modern version of *Romeo and Juliet.* 'Modern' in Luhrmann's film is a contemporary vision of the play with a bustling modern-day Los Angeles as the general backdrop for Verona. Peter Greenaway directed *Prospero's Books* (1991), (referred to in my chapter discussing *The Tempest)* . Unlike the BBC version with its reticent camera trickery, *Prospero's Books* embraces the medium of 'digital cinema to create enhanced illusions of life',[7] marrying visual innovation with Renaissance text. In 1996, there was Adrian Noble's film adaptation of his stage production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* However, it was made for

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[3] Anthony Davies, 'Shakespeare on Film and Television: a retrospect', in ***Shakespeare and the Moving Image***, eds. A. Davies and S.Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), p.13.

[4] Luke McKernan, 'The Real Thing at Last', in ***Walking Shadows***, eds. L. McKernan and O. Terris (London: British Film Institute, 1994), p.13.

Since the end of the BBC TV Shakespeare series in April 1985 with Howell's ***Titus Andronicus***, Shakespeare and television have rarely met. The BBC has only commissioned two complete Shakespeare plays since then: David Thacker's ***Measure for Measure*** (1994) and John Caird's ***Henry IV*** (1996).

[5] John Wyver of Illuminations, an independent television company, which produced the Royal Shakespeare Company's ***Macbeth*** (2001) for Channel 4, starring high-profile actors Anthony Sher and Harriet Walter, comments: "it's almost impossible to get any broadcaster to commission full-length, serious versions of classic drama". John Wyver in an interview with Daniel Rosenthal, ***The Times***, 23rd August 2004, p.18.

[6] Douglas Lanier, 'Nostalgia and Theatricality', in ***Shakespeare The Movie II***, eds. R. Burt and LE. Boose (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p.154.

[7] Peter S. Donaldson, 'Shakespeare in the Age of Post-Mechanical Reproduction', in ***Shakespeare the Movie II***, eds. R. Burt and LE. Boose (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p.105.

American television and only 'theatrically released in England'.[8] Nevertheless, 1999 saw an international Hollywood version of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, directed by Michael Hoffmann. Athens and the fairy world are distinguished by outdoor location for Athens and 'what is patently a sound stage' for the forest. Not too distinct from the Moshinsky production, however, 'the iconography of the fairy world is ... filtered through Renaissance painting and Pre-Raphaelite fairy lore' (Lanier, pp.155-6).

In 1996, there were two versions of *Richard III* which have already been referred to in this thesis. Firstly, one directed by Richard Loncraine and Ian McKellen with McKellen as Richard. The milieu of this *Richard III* is British aristocracy of 1930s society with 'mannequin women, opulent surroundings and ruthless politics' (Rothwell, p.219). The context, therefore, contrasts with Howell's BBC *Richard III*. But both share a sense of theatricality and stylised presentation. The film is, indeed, an adaptation of an acclaimed Richard Eyre stage production. Coursen damns the comparative film effort as 'a shallow meretricious shadow' of the original.[9] In terms of its stylised film form, McKellen refers to its 'heightened reality'.[10] Al Pacino's *Looking for Richard* (1996) focuses on 'the interpretive struggles' Pacino faces in staging *Richard III* and, therefore, is part documentary. In an indirect link with Howell's tetralogy, Pacino puts an emphasis on 'the performance process'[11] which is, effectively, the essence of Howell's *Richard III* as part of a sequence of plays using the same troupe of actors throughout.

In addition to the films mentioned above, *Shakespeare: the Animated Tales* was shown on television in Britain during the 1990s. There were twelve animation features in all, including thirty-minute versions of *The Tempest* (directed by Stanislov Sokolov, 1992); *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (directed by Robert Saakianz, 1992) and *Richard III* (directed by Natalia Orlova, 1994).[12] And although there is no direct association with the BBC TV Shakespeare series, the *Tales* demonstrates television's continued willingness to engage with Shakespeare, adapting Shakespeare to different media forms showing 'how new modes of production refashion and reinstate mixed media in the Shakespeare canon' (Osborne, p.141). More recently, in 2005, BBC TV transmitted four adaptations of Shakespeare plays under a general title: *Shakespeare Re-told.* The mini-series included *Macbeth* and *A Midsummer Night's Dream.*[13] Unlike their counterparts from the BBC TV Shakespeare series the 2005 adaptations generally do not use Shakespeare's language (save for the occasional quotation); and all of the programmes have a contemporary setting. However, they associate themselves with the Shakespeare originals in terms of storyline but, more significantly, they mirror the tone of the respective texts.

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[8] Kenneth Rothwell, *History of Shakespeare on Screen*, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), pp.232-3.

[9] HR. Coursen, 'Three Films of '*Richard III*', in *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Film*, ed. R. Jackson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), p.102.

[10] Ian McKellen, *William Shakespeare's 'Richard III': A Screenplay* (New York: The Overlook Press, 1996), p.24.

[11] Douglas Lanier, *Shakespeare and Modern Popular Culture* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.149.

[12] The two series of *Tales* represented 'interaction between the highly valued but traditionally laborious artistry of Russian animation and Western technology'. Laurie Osborne, 'Mixing Media and Animating Shakespeare tales', in *Shakespeare the Movie II*, eds. R.Burt and LE. Boose (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), p.141.

The BBC TV Shakespeare series asserted various solutions for doing Shakespeare on television. I argue that the initial edict of 'straight'[14] performances of Shakespeare was unhelpful. It led, certainly during the first period of producership, to a restrictive approach that required change. Indeed, as a form of reaction to that first period during the rest of the series, which included a further two producers, there was a wider interpretation of what 'straight' might mean. The result was presentations of different styles which provided a degree of success in exposing the Shakespeare text through the medium of television.

But at the beginning of the large scale television project, there was little of a sense of progression and inventiveness. In his 'Preface' to the opening production *Romeo and Juliet*, Cedric Messina reflects on BBC TV's aptitude for doing Shakespeare: 'BBC Television is not inexperienced in the presentation of Shakespeare's plays, and indeed as early as 1937, on the first regular television service in the world, it presented a full-length version of *Julius Caesar.* Since then, thirty of the plays have been presented, the more popular ones many times over'.[15] Messina justifies the BBC's attempt to present thirty-seven broadcasts of Shakespeare plays. Yet in doing so, rather he looks back as though there is no question as to how Shakespeare should be done on television. His attitude reflects complacency, most significantly when championing the BBC as 'not inexperienced' at Shakespeare. The inference of self-satisfaction we take from this first producer's comments points to productions which struggle to move beyond the retrospective mode of a 'traditional' presentation (a term which the second producer, Jonathan Miller, found unclear).[16] This does not mean that Messina suggests re-enactments of previous, televised versions. He clearly does not: 'They are not intended to be museum-like examples of past productions' (Messina, p.8). However, as I have shown in the two presentations, *Romeo and Juliet* and *The Tempest*, 'polarised' in the sense that they are from the start and the end of Messina's producership, there is little evidence to indicate much more than an unprogressive attitude.

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[13] Each programme was broadcast on a Monday evening at 8.30-10.00pm (at primetime) on BBC1. *Macbeth* was shown on 14th November and *A Midsummer Night's Dream* was shown on 28th November 2005.

[14] Quoted from the BBC's opening press conference addressed by the then BBC TV Managing Director, Alistair Milne. *The Birmingham Post,* 2nd November 1978, p.2.

[15] Cedric Messina, 'Preface', *BBC TV Shakespeare - Romeo and Juliet* (London: BBC Publications, 1978), p.6.

There are blatant contradictions in what Messina sets out to achieve. He enthuses: ' In the thirty-seven plays there are a thousand speaking parts and they demand the most experienced of actors and the most excellent of directors to bring them to life' (Messina p.8). Notwithstanding this kind of self-promotion, it is clear that there is a good deal of inexperience rather than 'the most experienced of actors and... excellent of directors' when examining *Romeo and Juliet.* Without doubt, credibility is won by including well-known actors of the time, notably from theatre: Michael Hordern (Capulet) and John Gielgud (Chorus), and from film: Celia Johnson (Nurse). But the audience is somewhat short-changed when the BBC, for example, uses 'a fourteen-year-old London grammar school girl, Rebecca Saire' (Messina p.9), in the role of Juliet.[17] What is more, Messina uses a director, Alvin Rakoff, who expresses little or no experience of Shakespeare: "[I thought] it is going to be one of the ones I don't understand, like *All's Well That Ends Well.* So when [Cedric Messina] came out and said it was *Romeo and Juliet* I was delighted. At least I could read it and understand it without too much help".[18]As the opening broadcast of the entire series that is set to 'make the plays, in permanent form, accessible to audiences throughout the world' (Messina, p.8) the use of a director, who might have a good deal of television experience, but admits to struggling in his comprehension of Shakespeare does point up a certain shortsightedness in the BBC's attitude. Messina's only recorded response for justification of his choice of director is "he's very good at romantic stuff - he *is* romantic" (Fenwick, p.19). Messina's comment is also simplistic in suggesting *Romeo and Juliet* is merely a romance.

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[16] A point referred to in the chapter that discusses *Macbeth.* Miller in an interview with Anne Pasternak-Slater, *Quarto,* 10 (September, 1980), pp.9-12.

[17] It is not merely coincidental that a range of reviews and criticism lambasted the BBC's casting of Juliet for the young actress' inability to deliver the profundity of emotion the character expresses: 'Saire's Juliet... persuasively, youthful and eager, nevertheless lacks passion', (Tom Shales, *Washington Post,* 14/02/79); 'Miss Saire... seems more a petulant child than a passionate young woman', (M Silverman, *New Orleans Times-Picayune,* 14/03/79); and 'Saire's rather plain Juliet never arouse[s] our interest', (J Jorgens, 'The BBC TV Shakespeare Series', *Shakespeare Quarterly,* 30 [Summer, 1979]).

[18] Alvin Rakoff, in an interview with Henry Fenwick. Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *BBC TV Shakespeare - Romeo and Juliet* (London: BBC Publications, 1978), p.19.

With respect to Messina, it is apparent that his enthusiasm for the project did not recede while he remained producer. In his preamble to *The Tempest* (1980), a presentation towards the end of his producership, Messina still promotes the observance given to realistic detail that resembles comments from the 'Preface' of *Romeo and Juliet*. His reflections on the BBC's *Tempest* point up the insistence of representing a real storm - an 'actual storm'.[19] The constant belief in foregrounding the realistic aspects of a presentation of Shakespeare reaches a point of irony when it comes to *The Tempest*, however. For it is a play that pays little heed to the sense of a 'realistic' world. The world of *The Tempest* is indeed, under the influence of Prospero's 'Art'. As such, the 'storm' of the opening scene is a vivid creation of Prospero's, its full horror conveyed by Ariel as Prospero's servant who enacts that 'storm': '... the fire and cracks/of sulphurous roaring, the most mighty Neptune/ Seem to besiege and make his bold waves tremble' (I.ii.203-5). The ideas of devastation through 'fire', tumultuous noise of 'cracks' and 'sulphurous roaring' and the overwhelming violence of the sea implied by 'mighty Neptune', 'besiege' and 'bold waves' that 'tremble', together create a sense of utter destruction. The vivid physicality and commotion conjured by the imagery is wanting from the 'actual storm' Messina perceives in his production.

'Conservative' is a criticism directed at the series as a whole by Holderness, but emphatically placed at the feet of Messina: 'the conservative cultural views of the original producer'.[20] Banham, writing at the end of Messina's time as producer indirectly echoes Holderness' criticism of 'conservative' in relation to the series so far: 'the opportunity... was to astonish and delight [the audience], not to confirm [its] prejudices that Shakespeare is wordy and dull... .[21] The assessment of unimaginative productions is reflected, for instance, in the use of camera-trickery throughout *The Tempest*. There may be reasons of technical limitations, but the BBC's *Tempest* loses an opportunity to develop the fantastical aspect of Prospero's isle - the kind of 'stuff/As dreams are made on' (IV.i.157). But unfortunately there is an inevitable response from Messina: "We've not done anything too sensational in the shooting of it - there's no arty-crafty shooting at all".[22] With *The Tempest* there is occasion for the BBC to be adventurous and this version does not do this.

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[19] Cedric Messina, 'Preface', *BBC TV Shakespeare - The Tempest* (London: BBC Publications, 1980), p.8.

Under the stewardship of Jonathan Miller, as the second producer of the BBC Shakespeare[23] we do indeed see a different emphasis. In his concluding statement regarding the BBC TV Shakespeare, Holderness does argue against what he regards as an over-emphasis of 'naturalism' (Holderness, p.196) within Miller's view of how Shakespeare should be done on television. But Miller does recognise that there are boundaries: 'There are, of course, limits upon that because of the sort of language [in

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[20] Graham Holderness, 'Radical potentiality and institutional closure: Shakespeare in film and television', in *Political Shakespeare - new essays in cultural materialism*, eds. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), p.196.

In the same essay, Holderness indicates that reproducing Shakespeare on TV is not new, but the sheer 'scale' and 'massive investment of cultural capital' involved in the BBC TV Shakespeare series delivers a sense of 'the most significant intervention to date into the reproduction of Shakespeare'. In noting 'the nature of commercial underwriting' from the USA, he argues the BBC Shakespeare has to be an 'economically viable' project. As a result, he raises the issue of a clash of interests: '[it is] unusual to find critical excellence and market value...quite so firmly identified', as Messina tries to in his original 'Preface': "these productions will offer a wonderful opportunity to study the plays performed by some of the greatest classical actors of our time". Cedric Messina, *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Richard II* (London: BBC, 1978), p.8.

Holderness remarks further that, Messina readily accepted the constraints of "traditional" productions, quoting Messina: "We've not done anything too sensational in the shooting of it - there's no arty-crafty shooting at all. All of them are, for want of a better word, straightforward productions", (Messina discusses 'The Shakespeare Plays', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 30 [Spring, 1979], p.137). Thus, in his conclusive reference to the BBC Shakespeare, Holderness reproaches it for being far too restrained: '...there can be little doubt that overall a conservative "drag" [to the series] is applied by a combination of factors: the constraints of commercial underwriting; the consequent concern of the BBC to build high-quality prestige into the series; the conservative cultural views of the original producer, [that is, Messina]...', (pp.194-6). For Holderness, the exception to the conservatism he criticises in the series is Jane Howell's tetralogy.

[21] Martin Banham, 'BBC Television's Dull Shakespeares' *Critical Quarterly*, 22:1 (Spring 1980), p.34

[22] "It" does not refer directly to *The Tempest*, but it is representative of an overall regulated aspect to how Messina views things should look in line with general policy. Cedric Messina, 'The Shakespeare Plays', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 30 (1979), p.137.

[23] Miller's time as producer covering the period, October 1980 to January 1983 (in terms of British broadcasting dates).

Shakespeare] that is being spoken.'[24] What is more, Miller introduced the director Jane Howell to the series. As director of the *Henry VI - Richard III* tetralogy at the end of Miller's producership, this was the exemplary television adaptation of the entire series according to Holderness: '[the] conservatism of the whole series can be measured against one remarkable exception, Jane Howell's production of the first historical tetralogy' (Holderness, p.196). It is evidence perhaps that Miller was not so dictatorial in his approach to producing for the series as Messina, allowing Howell to experiment with her highly stylised history plays.

Likewise, I have looked at productions from Elijah Moshinsky (Moshinsky being another director Miller introduced to the series) which tackle some of the more obscure Shakespeare plays. The accompanying BBC text for *All's Well That Ends Well*, Moshinsky's directorial debut for the series, comments 'It has never been considered one of Shakespeare's easier works, not is it one of his more popular ones'.[25] Moshinsky was chosen by Miller, aware of his 'many credits in opera and theatre'.[26] And in contrast with the majority of Messina's directors, there is a firmer sense of intention with respect to Moshinsky's presentations. In spite of his lack of television work prior to the series (Willis, p.135) Moshinsky shows awareness of the visual potential of the medium. His *All's Well*, like his *Coriolanus* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*, is adapted to appeal to the audience's visual imagination.[27]

Moshinsky's approach in *All's Well* exhibits a suggestive visual style. He constructs television images that engage the viewer with a quality of contrasting light - an aspect of his TV version of "chiaroscuro" (Fenwick, p.17). His use of the camera is not terribly sophisticated in *All's Well* in the sense that there is a predictable pattern. He does adopt close-up shots often, but he does dolly in progressively from an establishing shot to a medium shot and finally to close-up, should he wish that his audience pays particular attention to what is being said or what action is being portrayed. Notably, the pace of transition is slow. It gives an unhurried rhythm to the play as a whole and provides the audience with the time to absorb the contrasting effects intended. In addition however, Moshinsky's idiosyncratic style most significantly involves providing a certain depth to the image. The specific angle he adopts mimics the interiors of Dutch-renaissance paintings. In doing so, Moshinsky demonstrates the flexibility of the television image. He shows that it can work on different visual levels. So we witness scenes through doorways which give a solid background as a comparative feature to the foreground of the image; and in this way a sense of realism is brought to the image. Certainly, Moshinsky manifests a predilection for the portrayal of interiors, and as I have argued, this aspect to his style is relevant to the television medium.

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[24] Tim Hallinan, 'Jonathan Miller on the Shakespeare Plays', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 32 (1981) p.134.

[25] Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *BBC TV Shakespeare - All's Well That Ends Well* (London: BBC Publications, 1981), p.17.

[26] Susan Willis, *The BBC Shakespeare Plays - Making The Televised Canon* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991), p.135.

[27] As noted in the chapter where Moshinsky's work is discussed, Moshinsky's *Love's Labours Lost* (1984) was not looked at in view of the 'eighteenth-century aspect of that production' (Willis, p.140), different to the Renaissance/Jacobean associations in the productions chosen. Moshinsky also directed *Cymbeline* (1982); but in comparison with his other versions his script alterations are far more extensive: 'In *Cymbeline* he changes the text far more' (Willis, p.154). It is no doubt a mark of his success in the series, compared with Messina's directors particularly, that Moshinsky was used to direct five of the BBC productions.

His *Coriolanus* also contains many interior scenes. And when the action is in a public place there is no image of the sky. Indeed, it is a very contained presentation but purposefully so. Any sense of space beyond the image is either conveyed by realistic background noises or by close-up shots. For in his *Coriolanus*, in comparison with *All's Well*, Moshinsky uses a lot more close-up imagery.

Moshinsky keeps Coriolanus himself at the fore of the audience's attention. He does this via many close-up images of him whether face-on or in profile. The approach gives a strong sense of physicality and directness to the production by which the audience can appreciate realism from the character's presence. In effect, Moshinsky pre-empts Howell's attitude in bringing realism to television Shakespeare through camera work that centres on the actor instead of any prettified detail from a setting. This helps to bring the audience in direct contact with the text. The level of intimacy it implies also stresses certain details of character. The continual presence of close images effectively cuts Coriolanus off from others. The close-ups intimate at his proud stance and unwillingness to bend towards the will of others.

The sense of containment implicit in the frequent close-up image also suggests paradoxically, the expansiveness of the character of Coriolanus. He is restrained from complete self-expression that would declare the sentiments of an Imperialist Rome which does not exist literally in the historical world of *Coriolanus*. Indeed, Moshinsky's *Coriolanus* may be viewed as a series of portraits, most of which involve the figure of Coriolanus. This does not indicate the absence of a setting. For Moshinsky the setting in *Coriolanus* is secondary. Moshinsky remarks that he desired to "provide a rather primitive background texture".[28] Nevertheless, at the same time Moshinsky clearly indicates that "pictorialism" (Fenwick, p.18) is not a feature of his *Coriolanus*. In spite of Moshinsky's comments the portraiture that exists in his *Coriolanus* draws likenesses with the picture frame.[29]

Moshinsky's "pictorialism" is also adapted to his *Midsummer Night's Dream*. In comparison with the attempt to create an unreal world in *The Tempest* of Messina's era, Moshinsky utilises rapid montage and different angled shots which are wholly absent from the BBC's *Tempest*. Unsurprisingly, as we have noted elsewhere Moshinsky exploits the notion of contrasts in *Midsummer Night's Dream* to convince his audience. In order to effect a believable fairy-wood he creates distinct differences when constructing our perception of the play's location of Athens, centred around interiors, denoting a controlled environment. Moreover, there are no unusual camera angles. Characters are most often presented at a table, giving the image a static quality.

Equally, the audience feels disconnected when witnessing the fairy-kingdom of the wood. It is important that we do so to believe the wood is a very different environment to Athens and because Moshinsky's wood is like his Athens, studio-bound. As he does with the scenes portraying Athens, Moshinsky establishes our sense of the fairy-wood through long shot. However, from the juxtaposition of images we immediately appreciate a different rhythm amongst the fairy kingdom. Different angled images deliver an alternative perspective, representing the two sides of the dispute. This point is emphasised by the elevated angle from Oberon's perspective who sits astride a horse. Consequently, the angle of our view looks down from his as we look on the figure of Titania. In respect of the scene of their meeting, the audience is witness to a succession of medium and medium close-up images. As soon as the meeting is over, a close-up of Oberon denotes the change. There is a sudden juxtaposition to a close-up which defamiliarises the viewer. We become effectively disconnected from our sense of spatial relations and our disorientation is accentuated when Puck's head then appears from below the television image. His immediate presence is particularly striking in view of the image of him at a distance from Oberon and Titania, previously.

Thus, Moshinsky proves in the three productions that have been discussed to be a generator of atmosphere and creator of images. He steers away from the restrictive code of the realism of Messina's time as producer. Moshinsky's version of 'straight' and 'traditional' involves a visual style which incorporates images of the Renaissance, but he manipulates a concept of contrast within those images. As a consequence, Moshinsky's realism is produced from contrasting features to create meaning; and the audience is invited to consider that meaning as the realism of what underlies the message of the text.

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[28] In an interview with Henry Fenwick. Henry Fenwick, 'The Production', *The BBC TV Shakespeare - Coriolanus* (London: BBC Publications, 1984), p.19.

[29] This is a quotation originally to be found in the chapter detailing Moshinsky's productions, p.77.

In discussing Jack Gold's BBC *Macbeth*, my argument has indicated that there is a sense of mature evolution to the series in respect of visual style. Similar to Moshinsky, Gold is not reliant on presenting meaning based on the ability to provide literal representation. There is an aloof attitude in the reported reaction of Gold's producer, Shaun Sutton, who implies that the BBC knows how to do Shakespeare and, therefore, does not need to give much thought to the process: '... in some ways like Messina's... that after all these years the BBC knows how to televise drama and need not think about it'.[30] The result is an element of costume-drama to the BBC's *Macbeth*, which is reminiscent of the Messina productions discussed, if mitigated by the connotative attributes of the setting for Dunsinane (inspired by the twentieth-century Spanish avant-garde artist, Antonio Tapie) and the empathetic use of colour.

However, there is too a stylised quality to this BBC presentation. Occasionally, a character (like Macbeth) will effectively step outside the world of the text to address the camera directly. In doing so, the viewer is confronted with the internal voice of the character. And in view of Macbeth, our impression of him is also maintained by close-up.

The profundity of Macbeth's growing detachment is pointed up by the close-up image. We see, for example, the bitter curling of his lip as he speaks. But Gold uses close imagery also in a symbolic way, not too dissimilar from Moshinsky and Howell. Close-up severs Macbeth from his environs. Conversely, close images of Lady Macbeth, as I have argued, contain her within her environment to suggest entrapment by, in Lady Macbeth's case, over-ambitious thought. Yet, this is not to say that Gold is reliant on close images to the same extent as the ITV/Nunn *Macbeth*, as I have described in the chapter. Gold's *Macbeth* utilizes space in a wider sense.

The range of Gold's approach in his *Macbeth* demonstrates a continuous awareness of his audience. The BBC *Macbeth* does not suffer from the restrictive atmosphere of its ITV/Nunn counterpart. It is, in contrast, the element of diversity which reflects Gold's consideration for the viewer; the viewer has a lot more to consider in their perception of *Macbeth*, which may well occupy them sufficiently to prevent their switching off.

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[30] Willis, p.32. Originally quoted in the chapter which discusses the BBC's *Macbeth*, p.106.

The BBC *Macbeth* in certain ways reflects the attitude of Jane Howell in her direction of the tetralogy. Introduced to the series by Jonathan Miller, Howell stands out as evidence that Miller advocated as a producer something quite different from the 'conservative' interpretation of television Shakespeare of which Holderness accuses him. Howell is admired particularly by Holderness and Wells, as I have mentioned, for her adaptation of Shakespeare's *Henry VIs* and *Richard III*. Howell, similar to Gold, is intent on conveying a sense of space to the audience which provides the necessary dynamic and adaptability for the Shakespeare text to emerge from the medium of television. And the convincing result she achieves contradicts the initial boast of the series that literal representation is the form of realism most appropriate for doing Shakespeare on television.

As I have shown in my discussion of Howell's histories, 'artifice', which Messina wanted to exclude,[31] is an essential notion to Howell's presentation. Her frank exposure of the plays as pieces of artifice underlies the general, stylised presentation. Howell's productions really begin with the use of a permanent set that starts as a copy of a modern concept of an 'adventure playground'. Its use and clear display are a direct rejection of Messina's desire for a lack of 'artifice'. Howell's set is the rejection of an embellished image that pretends towards realistic depiction. In addition, the set is more typical of a theatre providing functional levels of acting space without the elements of adornment: a 'wooden structure of palisades, steps, platforms, alcoves, walkways, gates, and swinging doors on, around and within which the actors work'.[32] The effect of such a set is, therefore, a form of refusal to work within parameters in which Messina states that the audience should be 'unaware of theatrical conventions' (Bulman, p.572).

For *Henry VI Part 1* the set is exhibited under bright lighting, so the audience becomes familiar with its theme of artifice quickly. Progressively through the tetralogy, we become used to the set's functional role with respect to the swing-doors, various platforms and so forth. And as the tetralogy's theme of violence continues, the set's symbolic quality develops. It represents the eventual deterioration of the English state to become moribund by *Richard III* under perpetual dim lighting until the final act and the ascendancy of the Tudor dynasty. Before Act V in *Richard III*, though, the set's dark appearance is suggestive of the cycle's nihilistic theme Howell wishes to convey to her audience. She wants to relay a modern message of the self-destructive force of violence through Shakespeare's version of a mediaeval conflict. The sense of receding levels of reality projected via different media is part of her contention in this series of plays. For in spite of her television adaptation being an enactment of a sixteenth-century theatrical text portraying an even older historical event, Howell focuses on a 'communal' message which overrides the complexities of bringing the different media and diverse epochs together. That 'communal' notion is that all human history shares experience of violence but more specifically, that violence begets violence.

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[31] James C Bulman, 'The BBC Shakespeare and 'House Style'', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 35 (1984), p.572.

[32] Stanley Wells, 'The History of the Whole Contention', *The Times Literary Supplement*, 4th February 1983, p.105.

Howell's series of plays that encapsulates Shakespeare's second tetralogy delivers a self-conscious piece of television viewing. Whether or not it is 'purer than any given...since Shakespeare's time' (Wells, *TLS*) is a matter of speculation. What is without question is that her *Henry VI*s and *Richard III* represent a direct and adventurous effort to create watchable television Shakespeare. This is not to say Howell's cycle of plays is without some idiosyncratic weaknesses. Particularly in *Henry VI - Part 1*, the viewer suffers with having to discern characters in overcrowded images in respect of the number of heads seen in one shot. And as the series evolves, it becomes notable that Howell is rather over-reliant on certain actors' abilities to communicate directly to-camera. Ron Cook as Richard of Gloucester is a case in point. Moshinsky and Gold do make certain concessions to the BBC directive of presenting Shakespeare in a 'traditional' way. On the other hand, 'traditional' does not reflect Howell's attitude. Howell's presentations do not resemble how the BBC is used to doing Shakespeare on television. In this sense Howell's histories are the antithesis of what Messina sets out to achieve during his producership.

The BBC TV Shakespeare series as a whole could be, and often has been, judged as a critical failure.[33] Writing at the end of the series, Jorgens comments that 'it may be symptomatic of the conservatism and artistic timidity of the times. Whatever the reason, the energy to produce Shakespeare has shifted to television, a medium less well suited to his plays'.[34] However a concerted attempt, especially after the first period of producership as I have shown, was made to explore the possibilities of the medium of television to interpret the Shakespeare text. The BBC Shakespeare found original styles that reached beyond the initial instinct of 'conservatism' and 'timidity' in presenting a Shakespeare play. The work of Moshinsky, Gold and Howell is typically less naive than earlier attempts to translate Shakespeare for television. I have shown that their versions extended the 'vocabulary' of television Shakespeare to include examples which introduce depth within the image, as well as suggesting spatial perspective outside the natural parameters of the television image. Also, there were presentations that were not afraid to use the actors themselves as the most prominent visual attribute, or others which were self-consciously frank about their being plays bound by a studio-setting.

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[33] For example, commenting shortly after the end of the series, Stanley Wells remarks in his concluding statement: '...few of these productions would grip a reluctant viewer by the throat, nor do they comprehensively tackle - let alone solve - the problems of adapting Shakespeare to the television medium'. Stanley Wells, 'The Canon in the Can', *Times Literary Supplement*, 10 May 1985, p.522.

[34] Jack J. Jorgens, 'Shakespeare on Film and Television', in *William Shakespeare: His World, His Work, His Influence - Volume III*, ed. JF. Andrews (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1985), p.700.

I have highlighted through a series of close studies of a wide range of productions how sophisticated artists can use and illuminate the Shakespeare text in the context of television's expected realism, presenting a case for Shakespeare working on television within television's innately domestic and didactic context. Thus, one can obtain an appreciable reading of Shakespeare via television which, effectively, goes against Jorgens' pronouncement mentioned above.

There is very little close examination amongst contemporary criticism of how Shakespeare's language can be articulated on television and of the influences of television camera work and *mise-en-scène* to enlighten a reading of the Shakespeare text, which is my aim in this thesis. The question of how best to put Shakespeare on our small screens may remain an open one after this argument. However, I have presented close readings which offer a progressive response to help close the gap at least somewhat. Currently and more so in the not so distant future we will see, as Rothwell remarks, different entertainment media coming closer together, for example, through the onset of HD (High Definition) transmission. New technology should, certainly, make 'Shakespeare on television and film increasingly synergetic' (Rothwell, p.118). It will thus, become imperative for Shakespeare on television - a medium 'like nothing else in history, ... [with] the power to manipulate ordinary people' (Rothwell, p.230) - to be given consistently similar forms of scrutiny afforded the BBC TV Shakespeare series in this thesis. The ultimate objective would be to work towards helping to find 'ways of shifting gears, style, and conventions as lightly and deftly on the screen as within the mental processes reflected by Elizabethan blank verse onto the screen of the mind'.[35]

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[35] Brook refers to film adaptations of Shakespeare. However, in the event of cutting-edge technology bringing different media closer together I have adopted the quotation as appropriate for television in the near future. Peter Brook, *The Empty Space* (London: Pelican, 1972), p.80.

Appendix

BROADCAST DATES[1]

(Cedric Messina, producer)

	British	American
Romeo and Juliet	3 December 1978	14 March 1979
Richard II	10 December 1978	28 March 1979 (repeated 19 March 1980)
As You Like It	17 December 1978	28 February 1979
Julius Caesar	11 February 1979	14 February 1979
Measure for Measure	18 February 1979	11 April 1979
Henry VIII	25 February 1979 (repeated 22 June 1981)	25 April 1979
1 Henry IV	9 December 1979	26 March 1980
2 Henry IV	16 December 1979	9 April 1980
Henry V	23 December 1979 (repeated 23 April 1980)	23 April 1980
Twelfth Night	6 January 1980 (repeated 29 June 1981)	27 February 1980
The Tempest	27 February 1980	7 May 1980
Hamlet	25 May 1980	10 November 1980 (repeated 31 May 1982)

(Jonathan Miller, producer)

	British	American
The Taming of the Shrew	23 October 1980	26 January 1981
The Merchant of Venice	17 December 1980	23 February 1981
All's Well That Ends Well	4 January 1981	18 May 1981
The Winter's Tale	8 February 1981	8 June 1981
Timon of Athens	16 April 1981	14 December 1981
Antony and Cleopatra	8 May 1981	20 April 1981
Othello	4 October 1981	12 October 1981
Troilus and Cressida	7 November 1981	17 May 1982
A Midsummer Night's Dream	13 December 1981	19 April 1982
1 Henry VI	2 January 1983	27 March 1983 and 3 April 1983
2 Henry VI	9 January 1983	10 April 1983 and 17 April 1983

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[1] Based on, 'Appendix I', Susan Willis, *The BBC Shakespeare Plays - Making the Televised Canon,* (The University of North Carolina Press, 1991), pp.320-1.

(Shaun Sutton, producer)

	British	American
King Lear	19 September 1982	18 October 1982
The Merry Wives of Windsor	28 December 1982	31 January 1983
3 Henry VI	16 January 1983	24 April 1983 and 1 May 1983
Richard III	23 January 1983	2 May 1983
Cymbeline	10 July 1983	20 December 1982
Macbeth	5 November 1983	17 October 1983
The Comedy of Errors	24 December 1983	20 February 1984
The Two Gentlemen of Verona	27 December 1983	23 April 1984
Coriolanus[2]	21 April 1984	26 March 1984
King John	24 November 1984	11 January 1985
Pericles	8 December 1984	11 June 1984
Much Ado About Nothing	22 December 1984	30 October 1984
Love's Labour's Lost	5 January 1985	31 May 1985
Titus Andronicus	27 April 1985	19 April 1985

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[2] Underlined are the individual productions studied in this thesis.

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The texts used for direct reference are listed below according to the date of publication:-

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