

**SCOTT**

**AND**

**SHAKESPEARE**

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by Lidia Garbin**

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## INTRODUCTION

The Scott-Shakespeare analogy has been a major motif in the critical writings on Scott and the *Waverley Novels*. It reached its peak in the nineteenth century and, though in a less overt manner, characterised much twentieth-century Scott criticism. I will introduce my analysis of the interrelations between the two authors with a brief history of this analogy, which, following the first published work which treated it, I will call the “parallel”.

The presence of Shakespeare in Scott’s works, especially in the novels which are my main concern here, cannot be ignored by the reader who is familiar with Shakespeare. The only full-length study attempted to date is Wilmon Brewer’s *Shakespeare’s Influence on Sir Walter Scott* (1925) which charts the relationship between Scott and Shakespeare from the viewpoint of influence.<sup>1</sup> His study has been called ‘a long and indiscriminating book’.<sup>2</sup> Besides listing quotations, allusions, and echoes from Shakespeare’s plays in the works of Scott, Brewer does not offer an interpretation of the topic he sets out to explore in his book’s title. Although he does not see Scott as fighting against Shakespeare in a Bloomian way, Brewer assumes a debt on the part of Scott and sees Shakespeare as a literary mine from which the novelist drew most of his material. However, Brewer’s book was written over forty years before Walter Jackson Bate and Harold Bloom theorised the concept of influence as we know it.

In the works of W. J. Bate and Bloom, the relationship existing between the individual writer and tradition, between the poet and her/his forebears, is seen as a

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<sup>1</sup>Wilmon Brewer, *Shakespeare’s Influence on Sir Walter Scott* (Boston, MA: Cornhill, 1925).

<sup>2</sup>Robert Kay Gordon, ‘Scott and Shakespeare’s Tragedies’, *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada*, third series, 39 (1945), 111-17 (p. 111, n. 1).

tension or a strain which burdens the modern poet. After its publication in 1970, *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet* became an essential text for literary critics who found in its formulations a way of explaining modern authors' sense of inferiority towards their predecessors and at the same time of reassessing the present as the best time an author could expect to live in. According to W. J. Bate, English poets had begun to feel the pressure that tradition exerted on them in the post-Renaissance period. The 'burden' of his book's title is the threat with which past masters menace modern poets to overshadow and/or overpower their imagination. Given the great achievements of the past, modern poets struggle to overcome the restraining effect of fear that their predecessors might have exhausted all the possibilities of writing a great original poem. "Influence" for W. J. Bate is a negative concept: a restriction which modern poets must endure with serene acceptance because they can only 'proceed [...] toward progressive refinement'.<sup>3</sup>

In *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, published three years after W. J. Bate's ground-breaking essay, Bloom refines the argument of his predecessor. Bloom's work is concerned 'with strong poets, major figures with the persistence to wrestle with their strong precursors, even to the death.'<sup>4</sup> The modern, strong poets are assailed by an intense anguish which leads them to fight against the past masters who most obsess them, in an attempt to affirm their artistic identity. The later authors are only motivated to write when their imagination is captured by a poem of a precursor or father-poet. In order to write an original poem, they must 'misread' their past master's work. This act

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<sup>3</sup>Walter Jackson Bate, *The Burden of the Past and the English Poet* (1970; London: Chatto & Windus, 1971), p. 10.

<sup>4</sup>Harold Bloom, *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry* (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 5. Thomas McFarland takes issue with Bloom's restriction: 'there are stars of differing intensity and size, and there are planets and moons; and what looks like stars sometimes turns out to be whole galaxies, which again take different shapes: pinwheels, blobs, rings - there is even one identified as the "Sombrero" galaxy.' See his 'Field, Constellation, and Aesthetic Object', *New Literary History*, 13 (1982), 421-47 (p. 429).

of 'misreading' becomes a process of revision, which Bloom subdivides into six phases or 'revisionary ratios', each of which represents a movement of approach, or separation from, the precursor's poem.<sup>5</sup> Bloom's theory of the "anxiety of influence" is a broad model of Agon and is specifically concerned with poetry. Bloom explicitly excludes Shakespeare from his study.<sup>6</sup> We could argue that Scott's transformation of Shakespeare's dramatic situations into the different genre of the novel is a kind of 'misreading', and avoids confrontation between author and precursor which is Bloom's main concern. I can find no direct evidence that Scott perceived Shakespeare with 'anxiety' as precursor or that he systematically tried to misread him.

Scott did not look at Shakespeare as a negative figure, or as an obstacle to his imagination; on the contrary, he viewed him as a past master, a benefactor. My thesis resists the idea of influence as either a debt which an author has to contract in order to enrich her/his creative imagination or as the outcome of a personal fight with a past master. Accordingly, in the discussion of the Scott-Shakespeare "parallel", the vocabulary of influence will be used, but not the vocabulary of anxiety with its negative connotations of burden.

The approach to the "parallel" adopted in the present study is more in accordance with T. S. Eliot's idea of influence as the outcome of the natural process of literary history. In 'Tradition and the Individual Talent' (1919), Eliot distinguished between tradition, or the whole of the best works which have ever been written, and the 'talent', or the ability of the individual poet to write. According to Eliot, modern poets can only

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<sup>5</sup>See Bloom, pp. 14-16.

<sup>6</sup>Bloom gives three main reasons for this decision. One is historical: Shakespeare composed his dramas in the period preceding 'the flood' of anxiety. One regards the difference between drama and lyric: lyric is more subjective and therefore more likely to express personal feelings than drama. The third and 'main cause' is Christopher Marlowe, 'Shakespeare's prime precursor [...] a poet very much smaller than his inheritor.' (p. 11) In the Preface to the second edition of *The Anxiety of Influence*, Bloom explains his exclusion of Shakespeare from the first edition by saying that at the time, he 'was not ready to meditate upon Shakespeare and originality.' He finally admits: 'One cannot think through the question of influence without considering the most influential of all authors during the last four centuries.' See *The Anxiety of Influence: A Theory of Poetry*, 2nd edn (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. xiii.

write when they make use of all the accomplishments achieved by past literature: ‘not only the best, but the most individual parts of [an author’s] work may be those in which the dead poets, his ancestors, assert their immortality most vigorously’.<sup>7</sup> Eliot views poetry as the result of a constant engagement with tradition. Tradition, Eliot writes, ‘involves, in the first place, the historical sense, [...] and the historical sense involves a perception, not only of the pastness of the past, but of its presence.’<sup>8</sup> According to Eliot, every time a new work is created, the whole existing order, and our perception of it are altered:

The existing monuments form an ideal order among themselves, which is modified by the introduction of the new (the really new) work of art among them. The existing order is complete before the new work arrives; for order to persist after the supervention of novelty, the *whole* existing order must be, if ever so slightly, altered; and so the relations, proportions, values of each work of art toward the whole are readjusted; and this is conformity between the old and the new.<sup>9</sup>

There is no fight involved in this process. Eliot’s view of the relation between past and present, and by extension, between past and modern authors, ‘is a judgment, a comparison, in which two things are measured by each other.’<sup>10</sup> Despite Eliot’s focus on authors, his treatment of tradition has an affinity to the theory of intertextuality.

Intertextuality was born in response to the hegemony exerted by influence and was in part a reaction to influence’s author-centredness.<sup>11</sup> The concept was formulated by Julia Kristeva in her essay of 1966 ‘Word, Dialogue, and Novel’. For Kristeva, a text cannot exist as a self-sufficient whole for two major reasons. First, the writer is himself a reader of texts, and consequently his creation is interspersed with references,

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<sup>7</sup>T. S. Eliot, ‘Tradition and the Individual Talent’, in *Selected Essays* (London: Faber and Faber, 1932), pp. 13-22 (p. 14).

<sup>8</sup>Eliot, p. 14.

<sup>9</sup>Eliot, p. 15.

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

<sup>11</sup>For an overview of the theory of intertextuality, see *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, ed. by Michael Worton and Judith Still (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990).

quotations, allusions, and echoes; second, a text becomes available only during the reading process, “to read” meaning to trace other words in a word, other texts in a text:

any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another; [...] the writer’s interlocutor, then, is the writer himself, but as reader of another text: the one who writes is the same as the one who reads. Since his interlocutor is a text, he himself is no more than a text rereading itself as it rewrites itself.<sup>12</sup>

For Kristeva, “intertextuality” signifies the multiple ways in which a literary text is linked to or echoes other texts, whether by open or covert allusions and quotations.<sup>13</sup>

With intertextuality, the work supplants the author, and more authority is given to the reader.<sup>14</sup> Intertextuality is also more democratic than influence. It regards authors of every kind, from the greatest to the least original, and is concerned with allusions and quotations from all kinds of sources, including non-literary ones.<sup>15</sup> Despite these differences, the two theories have coexisted and still coexist in critical studies. As Carmela Perri argues, ‘these two phenomena stand at two ends of a continuum, a spectrum with influence at one pole, shading into increasingly more consciously specified inter-textual reference at the other pole, that of allusion.’<sup>16</sup> In the present work,

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<sup>12</sup>Quoted in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, ed. by Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), p. 20.

<sup>13</sup>See also Gérard Genette’s *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1982).

<sup>14</sup>See Michael Riffaterre’s ‘Compulsory reader response: the intertextual drive’, in *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, pp. 56-78.

<sup>15</sup>In her recent study of the Shakespeare-Dickens parallel, Valerie L. Gager has analysed the ‘dynamics of influence’ of the relationship between the two authors. See her *Shakespeare and Dickens: The Dynamics of Influence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). For discussions of intertextuality, in particular of quotation, allusion and echo, see See Herman Meyer, *The Poetics of Quotation in the European Novel*, trans. by Theodore and Yetta Ziolkowski (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1968); E. E. Kellett, *Literary Quotation and Allusion* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1933); *Intertextuality*, ed. by H. E. Plett (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991); Michael Wheeler, *The Art of Allusion in Victorian Fiction* (London: Macmillan, 1979); Ziva Ben-Porat, ‘The Poetics of Literary Allusion’, *PTL: A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature*, 1 (1976), 105-28; Reuben A. Brower, *Alexander Pope: The Poetry of Allusion* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1959); M. H. Abrams, *The Mirror and the Lamp: Romantic Theory and the Critical Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1953); J. K. Chandler, ‘Romantic Allusiveness’, *Critical Inquiry*, 8 (1981-82), 461-87.

<sup>16</sup>Carmela Perri, review of *The Art of Allusion in Victorian Fiction*, by Michael Wheeler, *Style*, 15 (1981), 463-64 (p. 464).

I will use the neutral word “parallel” as my usual means of access to the relationship between Scott and Shakespeare.

My own work is divided into three parts. Part I is the analysis of the Scott-Shakespeare analogy. It begins with the history of the “parallel” and continues with the examination of Scott’s contribution to it. The discussion of the most used form of intertextual reference in the Waverley Novels will conclude Part I. A survey of chapter-tags will show that Scott’s recourse to previous sources, and Shakespeare in particular, was a way of establishing himself in a literary and cultural tradition and finding thereby a place in literary history.

The focus of Part II is primarily on Scott’s Shakespeare. Included in Part II is Scott’s idea of a ‘luxurious’ reading of Shakespeare and his contribution to an edition of the plays. This was never fulfilled and we are left with no conclusive evidence of what Scott, as a critic or as an editor, thought of his favourite author. In the indirect criticism left by Scott in his miscellaneous prose writings - novels, reviews, essays - and in his letters and journal we find his personal view of Shakespeare and of Shakespeare’s contribution to drama and the theatre. Part II will also attempt to explain why Scott did not follow in his predecessor’s footsteps and write plays, a decision which puzzled many of his contemporary readers and some of his later critics. Part II will continue with the reading of two novels in which Shakespeare is a strong presence. In *Kenilworth* (1821) Shakespeare appears briefly as one of the characters. With this device, Scott introduces a critique of Shakespeare and the setting in Elizabethan times offers him the opportunity to give a judgement of drama and the theatre from the viewpoint of Shakespeare’s contemporaries. The second novel I will consider in detail is *Woodstock* (1826), whose setting in the 1650s continues and completes the discussion started by *Kenilworth*. *Woodstock* provides Scott’s commentary on an ageing Bardolater in a time

of political difficulties - perhaps an ironic mirror for Scott himself. In this novel, Scott equates Royalism with love of Shakespeare and Puritanism with rejection of Shakespeare. The obvious imbalance in the text between the two political creeds in favour of Royalism is tempered by a critique of the Restoration. Is the restoration of the monarchy seen as successful and positive in literary history? What was Scott's view of this period when Shakespeare was rejected and/or transformed?

The significance of Shakespeare in the career of Scott has often been acknowledged. The influence of Scott on our perception of Shakespeare, on the contrary, has only been hinted at by those critics who hoped through comparison with Scott to explain obscure features of Shakespeare. The reading of selected novels will allow me to assess the question of the "parallel" more definitively. Part III will focus on four novels which are linked together by a common Scottish setting and by the use of Shakespeare's plays. The first two novels I analyse have received much attention by critics. Other significant aspects of these two novels have been comparatively neglected. The discussion of *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819) will show how Scott's creativity was affected, but not overpowered, by three of Shakespeare's major tragedies. Scott's interpretation of Shakespearean character in this novel contributed to the development of character criticism. The question of the importance of theatrical performance in Scott's imaginative process will also be addressed in this chapter. The reading of *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) tackles the central moral dilemma of Jeanie Deans's lie via a reading of *Measure for Measure*. This comparison has often been cited as an instance of Shakespeare's influence on Scott. Scott's handling of Jeanie's problem is also, I will argue, a critical reading of the problem in Shakespeare's play. Part III will continue with a discussion of *The Pirate* (1822) which Graham McMaster has called 'Scott's

“*Tempest*”.<sup>17</sup> The relationship with Shakespeare’s romance appears from the motto on the title-page. What has not been considered, however, are the many echoes from *The Enchanted Island* (1670), the Restoration adaptation of *The Tempest* by Dryden and Davenant. Finally, *The Black Dwarf*, an unjustly neglected novella, will be read via a comparison with *Timon of Athens*.

Shakespeare’s omnipresence in Scott’s writings shows that he was a powerful force in Scott’s thought and creative processes. The following discussion of the Scott-Shakespeare analogy endeavours to provide a supporting document to the importance of the “parallel” in both Scott and Shakespeare studies.

### **Note on the Editions**

For the novels I am analysing in detail in Parts II and III I have referred, where possible, to the most scholarly and most recent editions. For *Kenilworth*, *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *The Black Dwarf* I quoted from the new Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels. For *The Heart of Midlothian*, I referred to The World’s Classics edition by Claire Lamont. For *Woodstock* and *The Pirate* and the other novels for which the Edinburgh Edition has not yet been published, I used the Dryburgh Edition. Since the individual Edinburgh Editions dispense with the 1829-33 Introductions and Notes from the *magnum opus*, I have referred both to the Dryburgh Edition and to Mark A. Weinstein’s collection of *The Prefaces to the Waverley Novels* (1978). As regards Shakespeare’s plays, I have quoted from *The Complete Works* (1988) edited by Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, and occasionally from other editions of the plays.

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<sup>17</sup>Graham McMaster, *Scott and Society* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 182.

## PART I

### Scott and Shakespeare

#### 1.1 The “Parallel”

Let both divide the crown:  
*This*, lifts a mortal to the skies;  
*That*, draws an angel down.

These lines adapted from Dryden close the first detailed study specifically devoted to the “parallel” between Scott and Shakespeare.<sup>1</sup> *A Parallel of Shakspeare and Scott* was published anonymously in 1835, three years after the death of the novelist. The significance of this work resides in the insights it provides into Scott’s relation to Shakespeare, but also in its formulation approximately one hundred and fifty years before the first theorising of “influence” took place. The author of the *Parallel* attempted to undertake a comparative study of a novelist and a classic author, whereas traditionally, “parallel studies” had concentrated on poetry and drama. The Renaissance battle between Ancients and Moderns concerning imitation initiated a long tradition of studies of this kind.<sup>2</sup> The *Parallel* continued the tradition. The anonymous author’s approach to Scott via Shakespeare, however, was not innovative in its concerns, nor in its vocabulary. Romantic reviewers and critics resorted to Shakespeare as the paragon by which they could judge the work of their contemporaries. This practice acquired major

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<sup>1</sup>Anon., *A Parallel of Shakspeare and Scott; Being the Substance of Three Lectures on the Kindred Nature of their Genius, Read before the Literary and Philosophical Society of Chichester, 1833 and 1834* (London: Whittaker, 1835), p. 81; henceforth referred to as *Parallel*. Cf. John Dryden’s ‘Alexander’s Feast, or the Power of Music; An Ode in honour of St. Cecilia’s Day’, in *The Works of John Dryden*, ed. by Sir Walter Scott, rev. by George Saintsbury, 18 vols (Edinburgh: William Paterson, 1882-93), XI (1885), 186-92, st. vii, lines 13-16; henceforth referred to as *The Works of John Dryden*.

<sup>2</sup>See W. J. Bate, pp. 23-25.

significance with criticism of Scott, especially of the Waverley Novels, reaching its zenith in the Victorian period.

To the anonymous critic 'parallel' is not synonymous with 'equality'.<sup>3</sup> He repeatedly refers to Shakespeare as Scott's 'great model', 'great' and 'dramatic prototype', 'splendid' and 'divine original', thus sharing the general feeling of the age for which Shakespeare had acquired the status of a god.<sup>4</sup> The critic also acknowledges that: 'it is impossible not to perceive that the public mind, the national character, even our language, has taken an impulse from the writings of Shakspeare; and the full impress of that influence is not yet, perhaps, fully received.'<sup>5</sup> This is the reason why, according to the author, Scott, 'perhaps unconsciously, made him his model; or rather, insensibly took his cast of mind and character from that divine original.'<sup>6</sup> This comment implies that Scott's "emulation" of Shakespeare, albeit unconscious, allowed him to create major works of art. Towards the end of his study, the author claims that if the relationship linking the two writers is not to be considered in terms of a parallel, then it is certainly 'a strong resemblance.' Here, he seems to swerve from his initial belief that Scott modelled himself on Shakespeare, to suggest a kind of equality between the two authors:

In Scott, the likeness of a younger brother, perhaps, - but still, a brother, and bearing the impress of the same divine original; and sufficient to establish the position with which we started, - that although there were nothing new under the sun, and the world should seldom rejoice in the advent of another Shakspeare, there may be such renewal of the inventive and imaginative faculties as vindicate the unimpaired powers of the human mind and the unexhausted and inexhaustible resources of nature.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>*Parallel*, p. 4.

<sup>4</sup>*Parallel*, pp. 5, 6, 57.

<sup>5</sup>*Parallel*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>6</sup>*Parallel*, p. 57.

<sup>7</sup>*Parallel*, p. 80.

The author's definition of Scott as Shakespeare's 'younger brother' and the emphasis on the word 'brother' anticipate the theory of influence according to which the modern poet is always linked to his forebears by a 'family romance'.<sup>8</sup> Shakespeare's Englishness and Scott's Scottishness set them apart. Scott, however, often referred to England and Scotland as sister countries. By extension, the two authors can be viewed as siblings, and the argument would go against Bloom's Oedipal, intergenerational model of influence. Scott's allegiance to Scotland and his contribution to the creation of a national literary tradition displace the idea of filial descent from the English tradition. If W. J. Bate and Bloom, following Freud and Nietzsche, saw the relationship between the modern poets and their forebears in terms of an Oedipal struggle, or of a filial descent, by defining Scott as Shakespeare's brother, as his "peer", the author of the *Parallel* gave an original turn to the whole idea of the 'family romance'.

T. J. B. Spencer's *The Tyranny of Shakespeare* (1959) is one example, among many, of the way Shakespeare's critics have had recourse to Scott in their writings. Spencer's essay is especially appealing because it gives a critique of, and attempts to give an explanation for, Shakespeare's continual presence in his successors' works. Spencer affirms that he got the idea for the title of his essay from a passage in Scott's 'Essay on the Drama' (1819). According to Scott, in the fourth era of British dramatic history, Shakespeare 'reigned a Grecian prince over Persian slaves; and they who adored him did not dare attempt to use his language.'<sup>9</sup> Spencer's idea of the tyranny of Shakespeare coheres with the belief expressed by Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein that 'a

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<sup>8</sup>Bloom, p. 27.

<sup>9</sup>T. J. B. Spencer, *The Tyranny of Shakespeare: Annual Shakespeare Lecture of the British Academy* ([n.p.]: [n. pub.], 1959), p. 154. See Walter Scott, 'An Essay on the Drama', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works of Sir Walter Scott, Bart*, 28 vols (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1851-57), VI (1852), 219-395 (p. 377).

later author may regard an ancestor less as a benefactor than as a despot.’<sup>10</sup> By using the metaphor of the Grecian prince, Scott by no means wanted to portray Shakespeare as a tyrant in a disparaging sense. The quotation taken in its context has a different meaning. Scott was there saying that although ‘Shakspeare may, indeed, be inimitable,’ minor poets could still rival him.<sup>11</sup> This quotation from the ‘Essay on the Drama’ reveals that Scott’s feelings for Shakespeare were not feelings of anxiety. Scott lamented that Shakespeare had been seen for a long time, and was still seen in his own times, as “untouchable”. He believed that it was possible to reach, if not to achieve successfully, Shakespeare’s greatness and although he was here referring to dramatists, we can extend his statement to poets and novelists so as to include Scott himself. Spencer ends his essay with the remark that ‘Shakespeare is a dead issue’, lamenting that the lack of opposition to his tyranny constitutes a loss in critical writing.<sup>12</sup> Scott was a subject of the Grecian prince but he was not a Persian slave. He adored Shakespeare but, as I will show in Part II, he could also detach himself from his feelings of affection for the Bard to write original and constructive criticism.

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<sup>10</sup>Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein, ‘Figures in the Corpus: Theories of Influence and Intertextuality’, in *Influence and Intertextuality in Literary History*, ed. by Jay Clayton and Eric Rothstein (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), pp. 3-36 (p. 7).

<sup>11</sup>‘Essay on the Drama’, p. 377.

<sup>12</sup>Spencer, p. 171.

## 1.2 The blockheads talk of my being like Shakespeare — not fit to tie his brogues

Some of Scott's critics have deduced from the comment above that Scott 'hated being compared with Shakespeare'.<sup>1</sup> However, this neglects the fact that Scott himself had initiated the history of the "parallel" in his review of *Tales of My Landlord* for the *Quarterly Review* of 1817. There, Scott had stated that: 'The characters of Shakspeare are not more exclusively human, not more perfectly men and women as they live and move, than those of this mysterious author.'<sup>2</sup> John Gibson Lockhart reports how Scott once acknowledged that 'the greatest success' any follower of Shakespeare could achieve 'would be but a spiritless imitation, or, at best, what the Italians call a *centone* from Shakespeare'.<sup>3</sup> Similar comments recur enough in the writings of Scott to allow us to think of them as means by which Scott parried the comparison with his ancestor. In the Prefatory Letter to *Peveiril of the Peak* (1822), the Rev. Dr. Dryasdust asks the Author of *Waverley* if he intends to apply Shakespeare's method to his historical writings. The Author promptly answers:

May the saints forefend I should be guilty of such unfounded vanity! I only show what has been done when there were giants in the land. We pigmies of the present day may at least, however, do something; and it is well to keep a pattern before our eyes, though that pattern be inimitable.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The quotation is taken from *The Journal of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. by W. E. K. Anderson (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 252 (11 December 1826); henceforth referred to as *Journal*. See Moray McLaren, *Sir Walter Scott: The Man and Patriot* (London: Heinemann, 1970), p. 61. J. C. Smith also said that: 'It annoyed Scott to be compared to Shakespeare.' See his 'Scott and Shakespeare', in *Essays and Studies by Members of the English Association*, collected by L. Binyon (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1938), XXIV, 114-31 (p. 114).

<sup>2</sup>Walter Scott, 'Tales of My Landlord', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, XIX (1853), 1-86 (p. 65). There has been much debate among Scott scholars as to the authorship of this review. In the Introduction to *Chronicles of the Canongate* (1827) Scott said that it was written by William Erskine 'with far too much partiality' adding that he 'supplied [his] accomplished friend' with information and that his friend 'took the trouble to write the review.' See *The Prefaces to the Waverley Novels*, ed. by Mark A. Weinstein (Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press, 1978), pp. 70-80 (p. 77); henceforth referred to as Weinstein. We know that the review was written by Scott; see, for instance, James T. Hillhouse, *The Waverley Novels and their Critics* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1936), p. 17, note 3.

<sup>3</sup>John Gibson Lockhart, *Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart*, 10 vols (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1856-57), X, 195; henceforth referred to as Lockhart.

<sup>4</sup>Weinstein, p. 68.

In the 'General Preface' (1829) to the Waverley Novels, however, Scott admitted that it was easy to fall in 'such unpremeditated and involuntary plagiarisms as can scarce be guarded against by any one who has read and written a great deal.'<sup>5</sup> Scott acknowledged that Shakespeare was the 'pattern' or model he followed, but also that the intertextual references to his and other authors' works were the result of his extensive reading and prodigious memory.

When at the first Annual Dinner of the Edinburgh Theatrical Fund, held on 23 February 1827, Scott disclosed his identity as the Author of Waverley, he was reported to have said:

I am willing, however, to plead *guilty* ... Like another Scottish criminal of more consequence, one Macbeth,  
 'I am afraid to think what I have done;  
 Look on't again I dare not.'  
 ... The wand is now broken, and the book buried. You will allow me further to say, with Prospero, it is your breath that has filled my sails ...<sup>6</sup>

Scott's identification with Prospero is a deliberate attempt to identify with Shakespeare - the burying of the book and the breaking of the magic staff were at that time seen as Shakespeare's metaphor for his farewell to the stage.<sup>7</sup> Scott had been introduced by Lord Meadowbank as: 'the Great Unknown - the minstrel of our native land - the mighty magician who has rolled back the current of time, and conjured up before our living sense the men and manners of days which have long passed away'.<sup>8</sup> Scott picked up this

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<sup>5</sup>Weinstein, p. 100.

<sup>6</sup>Reported in Edgar Johnson, *Sir Walter Scott: The Great Unknown*, 2 vols (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1970), II, 1008-9.

<sup>7</sup>See for instance Julian Patrick, 'The Tempest as Supplement' and Barbara Howard Traister, 'Prospero: Master of Self-Knowledge', in *William Shakespeare's 'The Tempest'*, ed. by Harold Bloom, *Modern Critical Interpretations* (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988), pp. 69-84 and 113-30 (especially pp. 71-72, 127-28).

<sup>8</sup>Johnson, II, 1008.

analogy and carried it further with the imagery of the 'mighty magician' and the parallel with Shakespeare. As chairman Scott proposed a toast in honour of Shakespeare:

He was a man of universal genius, and from a period soon after his own era to the present day he has been universally idolized. When I come to his honoured name, I am like the sick man who hung up his crutches at the shrine, and was obliged to confess that he did not walk better than before. It is indeed difficult, gentlemen, to compare him to any other individual. The only one to whom I can at all compare him is the wonderful Arabian dervise, who dived into the body of each, and in that way became familiar with the thoughts and secrets of their hearts.<sup>9</sup>

Scott's difficulty in comparing Shakespeare to other individuals might be a covert hint at the recurrent comparison between himself and Shakespeare. As he had before compared Shakespeare to the Grecian prince, here Scott chose the metaphor of the 'Arabian dervise' to express Shakespeare's superiority. The above quotation recalls Hazlitt's and Keats's comments on Shakespeare's chameleon qualities.<sup>10</sup>

In the age of Bardolatry, the highest compliment one could pay a British writer was to link his name with that of Shakespeare. Although other novelists were compared to the dramatist, the comparison was not so persistent and did not pervade the criticism of their works to the same extent as with Scott. A good amount of literature has been written on the "kindred spirit" of Scott and Shakespeare. Some works are mere eulogies of one or both the authors, others offer interesting and useful insights into the study of their works. Although the writings on their kinship flourished in the period between the

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<sup>9</sup>David Vedder, 'Memoir of Sir Walter Scott, Bart., with Critical Notices of his Writings, Compiled from Various Authentic Sources (Dundee, 1832)', in *The Lives of the Great Romantics by their Contemporaries: Scott*, ed. by Fiona Robertson (London: Pickering & Chatto, 1997), pp. 23-43 (pp. 40-41).

<sup>10</sup>William Hazlitt wrote: 'He seemed scarcely to have an individual existence of his own, but to borrow that of others at will, and to pass successively through "every variety of untried being," - to be now *Hamlet*, now *Othello*, now *Lear*, now *Falstaff*, now *Ariel*.' See his essay 'On Posthumous Fame. - Whether Shakspeare Was Influenced by a Love of it?', in *The Round Table*, in *The Complete Works of William Hazlitt*, ed. by P. P. Howe, Centenary Edition, 21 vols (London and Toronto: J. M. Dent, 1930-34), IV (1930), pp. 21-24 (p. 23); henceforth referred to as Howe. Keats wrote to Richard Woodhouse on 27 October 1818: 'A Poet is the most unpoetical of anything in existence, because he has no identity; he is continually in for, and filling, some other body.' Reported in *The Romantics on Shakespeare*, ed. by Jonathan Bate (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1992), p. 199; henceforth referred to as *The Romantics*.

publication of *Waverley* in 1814 and the end of the nineteenth century, twentieth-century critics have also resorted to the Scott-Shakespeare analogy. The parallel with Shakespeare served the purpose of explaining those features of Scott which made him different from his contemporaries, in the same way as the metaphor of the natural or wild genius or of the mirror of nature served late-eighteenth- and early-nineteenth-century critics to illustrate and justify the novelty and originality of Shakespeare.<sup>11</sup>

Besides the *Parallel*, the first work that I have been able to trace which attempts a comparison between the two writers appeared in Scott's lifetime. In *An Essay on the Genius of Shakespeare* (1826), H. M. Graves looked for the contemporary novelists who could reach the greatness of the dramatist. Darblay, Mrs Radcliffe, and E. A. Bennett were all good novelists, writes Graves, but 'enchanted - powerful - imitated but inimitable Scott!' overshadowed them all, for he was 'the Shakespeare of novel writers.'<sup>12</sup> Graves's last comment would reappear in Scott criticism frequently.

William Hazlitt, a connoisseur of both Shakespeare and Scott, produced an interesting critique of their relationship which also dealt with the idea of "genius". In the essay on 'Sir Walter Scott, Racine, and Shakespear' published the same year as Graves's work, Hazlitt only mentioned the French dramatist briefly, focusing for the main on a comparison between the two British authors. Hazlitt's work consists for a large part of a listing of the characteristics which made the two writers different. He recognised Shakespeare's superiority over Scott which derived from a difference in their genius, namely 'the difference between *originality* and the want of it, between writing and transcribing.'<sup>13</sup> For Hazlitt, Shakespeare was endowed with the special gift of

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<sup>11</sup>See below, ch. 2.1.

<sup>12</sup>H. M. Graves, *An Essay on the Genius of Shakespeare with Critical Remarks on the Characters of Romeo, Hamlet, Juliet, and Ophelia; Together with Some Observations on the Writings of Sir Walter Scott* (London: James Bigg, 1826), pp. 71, 75.

<sup>13</sup>William Hazlitt, 'Sir Walter Scott, Racine, and Shakespear', in *The Plain Speaker: Opinions on Books, Men, and Things*, in Howe, XII (1931), pp. 336-46 (p. 340).

invention, whereas Scott could only compile. He did not think that Scott emulated Shakespeare consciously; on the contrary, he attributed Scott's "use" of Shakespeare to his powerful memory which allowed him to retain a great amount of information which he could use at his pleasure, whereas Shakespeare's greatness lay in his ability to seize upon a ruling passion from which everything would then evolve. Hazlitt did not share his contemporaries' general opinion that the two belonged in the same class of writers. The distinction between the novelist, who gives us 'what we see and hear', and the dramatist, who gives us 'what we are' well illustrates his view of the two authors.<sup>14</sup> Ultimately, the difference was one of genius, and of literary genres: 'The genius of Shakespear is dramatic, that of Scott narrative or descriptive'.<sup>15</sup> The feeling one gets when reading Hazlitt's essay is that on the whole he wanted Scott to be more "dramatic", more like Shakespeare.<sup>16</sup>

In 1828 Nathan Drake collected some *Memorials of Shakespeare* by different writers. He concluded his work with an essay 'Containing Three Miniature Portraits of Shakspeare by Dryden, Goëthe, and Sir Walter Scott; and a Brief Parallel between Shakspeare and Sir Walter Scott as Delineators of Character.'<sup>17</sup> Drake sees a kinship between the two authors, as the title of the essay makes clear, in their character portrayal:

There are, indeed, no two other writers, either in our own or any other language, who in the kindred provinces of the drama and romance have brought forward such numerous, and, at the same time, such varied and well sustained groups of characters.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Hazlitt, p. 344.

<sup>15</sup>Hazlitt, p. 346.

<sup>16</sup>See also below, ch. 3.4, for Hazlitt's criticism of *The Black Dwarf*.

<sup>17</sup>*Memorials of Shakspeare; or, Sketches of His Character and Genius, by Various Writers*, ed. by Nathan Drake (London: Henry Colburn, 1828), pp. 475-94.

<sup>18</sup>Drake, p. 493.

In particular, 'No man has equalled Shakspeare in the delineation of *humorous character*.'<sup>19</sup> Scott, with Fielding, Smollett and Sterne, approached Shakespeare in this regard:

Like Shakspeare, indeed, Sir Walter appears to be deeply imbued with a love of the ludicrous; nor has any writer since our great dramatist exhibited so many proofs of a perfect mastery in the difficult and dangerous province of tragicomedy, his romances being rich in instances where broad humour and deep pathos are not only brought into contact, but mingled throughout, and not unfrequently with the effect of heightening each other.<sup>20</sup>

The significance of Drake's essay resides in the fact that of the many authors he takes into consideration, such as Coleridge, Goethe, and Dryden, the only one who is compared to Shakespeare is Scott.

*A Parallel of Shakspeare and Scott* was the first and, until Brewer's study, only work to be entirely dedicated to the relationship between Scott and Shakespeare. According to the anonymous author, the resemblance between the two writers resided mostly in their powers of 'universality', 'appropriation', and 'copiousness'. 'Universality' defined their capacity of identifying themselves with every kind of life and nature; 'appropriation' described their using a great variety of materials taken from history, legends, ballads, superstition, and their borrowing most of their plots from previous works. Their 'kindred genius' lay in their capacity to draw from resources other than their own.<sup>21</sup> 'Copiousness' referred to their habit of often over-informing the narrative and writing quickly. Scott's choice not to write dramas but to turn to narrative composition was ascribed to this particular trait, because drama needs condensation and economy, two qualities which, according to the anonymous author, Scott did not

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<sup>19</sup>Drake, p. 487.

<sup>20</sup>Drake, pp. 488-89.

<sup>21</sup>*Parallel*, pp. 6-7, 11-12.

possess.<sup>22</sup> The critic recognised one superiority Scott had over Shakespeare in his managing to unite the pathetic and the humorous in many of his characters, Caleb Balderstone of *The Bride of Lammermoor* being the most obvious example, whereas Shakespeare, in his view, never did so. As for the influence that Shakespeare was thought to have exerted on Scott, the anonymous author asserted that Scott 'had his dramatic prototype in view, though, perhaps [he was] not always sensible of it'.<sup>23</sup>

In his essay on Scott of 1838, Thomas Carlyle also referred to Shakespeare. He did not deny the novelist's genuine and healthy soul, which he praised, but he could not bring himself to accept Scott's ambition and worldliness.<sup>24</sup> He considered the Waverley series as the first example of popular novels, which could be read by all kinds of people, but he accused them of being the first example of literature as a trade. For Carlyle the primary duty of a novelist was to improve and edify and not to amuse, while Scott was contented with the applause of his reading public. In the Introductory Epistle to *The Fortunes of Nigel* (1822) the Author of Waverley claims: 'I care not who knows it, I write for general amusement'.<sup>25</sup> For Carlyle, the Waverley Novels were prejudiced by their author's lack of intellectual depth and of a spiritual and philosophical message. Like most of his contemporaries, Carlyle also fell into the inevitable comparison between Scott and Shakespeare, but this was in order to dissent from his contemporaries' admiration for the novelist:

your Shakspeare fashions his characters from the heart outwards; your Scott fashions them from the skin inwards, never getting near the heart of them! The one set become living men and women; the other amount to little more than mechanical cases, deceptively painted automatons.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>22</sup> *Parallel*, pp. 14-15 .

<sup>23</sup> *Parallel*, p. 6.

<sup>24</sup> Thomas Carlyle, 'Sir Walter Scott', in *Critical and Miscellaneous Essays*, 7 vols (London: Chapman & Hall, 1839-69; repr. 1872), VI, 21-80.

<sup>25</sup> Weinstein, p. 44.

<sup>26</sup> Carlyle, 'Sir Walter Scott', p. 69.

Carlyle was the author of 'The Hero as Poet' (1840) in which he recognised Shakespeare as a prophet, 'the chief of all Poets hitherto; the greatest intellect who, in our recorded world, has left record of himself in the way of Literature. [...] Perfect, more perfect than any other man', and English people's 'honour among foreign nations'.<sup>27</sup> Carlyle could not see anyone as the heir or the kin of Shakespeare, and Scott was no exception.

Mary Lascelles has called Brewer's *Shakespeare's Influence on Sir Walter Scott* 'a statistical feat'.<sup>28</sup> Despite its assumption of a debt on the part of Scott, Brewer's work still represents an invaluable tool in the study of the relationship between the two authors. Brewer did not discuss their kindred spirits, or their kinship, as his predecessors had done. Instead he assumed that Scott had taken Shakespeare as his model, and that he succeeded in writing by imitating and "using" him. He dedicates the first part of his work to Shakespeare's "presence" in Scott's life and then offers a detailed account of the intertextual presence of Shakespeare's works in the Waverley Novels which at times resembles a concordance. Brewer was a skilled source-hunter who looked at the Scott-Shakespeare analogy from a filial perspective.

Other twentieth-century critics have been equally apt to suggest parallels between Shakespeare and Scott, but in most cases they limit themselves to repeating the views expressed by previous authors. John Buchan notices that both Scott and Shakespeare wrote fast, and sometimes, badly. Their attitude towards sex was similar: they were not obsessed by it; on the contrary, their treatment of love was always innocent and delicate. Rather blandly, the critic comments that both authors had the power of 'charging our life with new and happier values.'<sup>29</sup> J. C. Smith's 'Scott and

<sup>27</sup>Thomas Carlyle, 'The Hero as Poet: Dante; Shakspeare', in *On Heroes, Hero-Worship and the Heroic in History* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1872), pp. 73-106 (pp. 95-96, 104-5).

<sup>28</sup>Mary Lascelles, 'The Sir Walter Scott Lectures for 1960: I. Scott and Shakespeare', *University of Edinburgh Journal*, 20 (1961-62), 23-33 (p. 23).

<sup>29</sup>John Buchan, *Sir Walter Scott* (London: Cassell, 1932), p. 351.

Shakespeare' (1938) starts from the statement that 'to-day' (that is in 1938) 'we would not pit [Scott] against Shakespeare'.<sup>30</sup> Smith is not an admirer of Scott; he explains that his paper's main concern is that the comparison between the two writers might, hopefully, throw some light on Shakespeare.<sup>31</sup> The epithet 'gentle', with its association of social gentility, that Ben Jonson twice applied to Shakespeare, in Smith's opinion could also be applied to Scott.<sup>32</sup> Smith concludes the essay with this statement: 'at heart they both were dreamers.'<sup>33</sup> At times the parallel becomes a comparison of the physical appearances of the two writers. Smith in particular concentrates on their senses of hearing and smell, and on their visual gifts. Robert Carruthers had already commented on Lawrence Macdonald's bust of Scott which he thought showed some traits that belonged to Shakespeare:

The extreme length of the upper lip was a personal characteristic of Sir Walter, which he was glad to see artists reduce, and which none of the portraits fully represents. [...] The Stratford bust of Shakspeare, it will be recollected, has the same long upper lip, as well as the memorable high forehead, that distinguished Scott.<sup>34</sup>

Arthur M. Clark's essay is more focused on the two authors' writings. Like his predecessors, Clark notices the careless abundance and disregard of rules which characterise the works of both Scott and Shakespeare, their free use of historical events

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<sup>30</sup>Smith, p. 114.

<sup>31</sup>Smith lists 'three current heresies about Shakespeare.' The first one regards the 'impersonal' Shakespeare of Matthew Arnold's sonnet 'Others abide our question. Thou art free'; the second is Sir Sidney Lee's belief that Shakespeare wrote to earn a living and that he turned from comedy to the problem plays because Ben Jonson had surpassed him in the first; the third heresy is the idea of 'Shakespeare as a pure embodiment of creative genius'. See Smith, pp. 114-15.

<sup>32</sup>See below, ch. 2.1, for Ben Jonson's criticism of Shakespeare.

<sup>33</sup>Smith, p. 130.

<sup>34</sup>Robert Carruthers, "'Abbotsford Notanda", which includes extracts from William Laidlaw, *Recollections of Sir Walter Scott* (in Robert Chambers, *Life of Sir Walter Scott*, 1871)', in *Scott*, ed. by Fiona Robertson, pp. 329-45 (p. 340). Fiona Robertson has recently focused on the oil painting of 'Sir Walter Scott on the occasion of his visit to Shakespeare's tomb in Holy Trinity Church, Stratford-upon-Avon, on 8 April 1828' for a short parallel between Scott and Shakespeare. See her 'Scott's Halting Fellow: The Body of Shakespeare in the Waverley Novels', *The Scott Newsletter*, 33 (1998), 2-13 (p. 3).

for the purpose of their works, and their writing for general amusement.<sup>35</sup> He observes that both authors had the special gift of mingling gravity and humour in their writings and he admits that Scott probably took from Shakespeare the device of introducing touches of humour in the narrative to relieve or to intensify it. Their treatment of the supernatural is another common trait, and in this regard *The Bride of Lammermoor* provides perhaps the best example of the similarity. Clark defines Scott as the 'greater master of pathos', who viewed humanity as a heterogeneous mixture of different elements, and Shakespeare as the 'greater master of tragedy', who concentrated on what was permanent and universal.<sup>36</sup> On the whole, however, the two resembled each other because they both wrote about everyday and immutable passions and feelings and because they did not set themselves up as doctrinaire.<sup>37</sup>

Lascelles acknowledges Shakespeare's "influence" on Scott on different grounds, offering a new perspective in the criticism of the parallel. In a lecture given in 1960, she affirms: 'Scott may or may not have derived assurance from Shakespearian precedent - there is no telling.'<sup>38</sup> To Lascelles, the only kind of influence that matters is the one by which the earlier author 'releases latent power in his successor'.<sup>39</sup> Lascelles's argument focuses on the author as "agent": the ancestor is the agent, the successor is the patient. Her view is not dissimilar to that of T. S. Eliot. The forefather helps the modern author to write, making use of her/his own abilities. In the case of Scott, since Shakespeare wrote the best drama that could ever be written and had in this way made

<sup>35</sup> Arthur Melville Clark, 'Lecture 1958', in *Sir Walter Scott 1771-1832: An Edinburgh Keepsake*, ed. by Allan Frazer (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1971), pp. 110-21 (pp. 111-13).

<sup>36</sup> Clark, p. 118.

<sup>37</sup> Scott had himself acknowledged that he had thrown 'the force of [his] narrative upon the characters and passions of the actors; - those passions common to men in all stages of society'. See Walter Scott, *Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, Dryburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels, 25 vols (London and Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black, 1892-94), I (1892), p. 3.

<sup>38</sup> Lascelles, p. 23.

<sup>39</sup> Lascelles, p. 24.

any emulation impossible, Scott had discovered the way of driving the latent forces of drama into the novel.

There is one strand of Scott criticism which has developed a discussion around the historical novel's debt to Shakespeare's view of history; this is undoubtedly the most consequential of the studies of the parallel so far. Henry Augustin Beers states that 'Shakspeare dramatised history; Scott romanticised it.'<sup>40</sup> Patrick Cruttwell is more accurate when he sees a parallel between the Waverley Novels and Shakespeare's history plays in their contribution to the revitalisation of British history. Cruttwell recognises Shakespeare's superiority over Scott, which depended on Shakespeare's personal gifts, such as 'a much tenser form and a deeper vision of human life' and on the atmosphere of the age in which he lived, when the audience in particular was more receptive and uniform than Scott's reading public.<sup>41</sup> Cruttwell also focuses on both writers' natural ability for portraying society at a given moment in time and showing how the great events affect both low and high classes. The communities they depicted belonged to recent societies that still exerted some influence on their own society in some way: in Shakespeare's time the Middle Ages had not yet completely disappeared, and in Scott's time the effects of the recent revolutions could still be felt. Another positive feature they both possessed, according to Cruttwell, was the capacity to 'rise above their personal prejudices': Shakespeare was a supporter of legitimate monarchy, but this did not prevent him from understanding, and sometimes admiring the usurpers; Scott, although disagreeing with the Covenanters and the enthusiasts of Scotland, admired their heroism and recognised the importance they had had in Scottish history.<sup>42</sup>

<sup>40</sup>Henry Augustin Beers, 'Walter Scott', in *A History of English Romanticism in the Nineteenth Century* (London: Kegan Paul, 1902), pp. 1-47 (p. 31).

<sup>41</sup>Patrick Cruttwell, 'Walter Scott', in *The Pelican Guide to English Literature: From Blake to Byron*, ed. by Boris Ford (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1957), V, 104-11 (p. 108).

<sup>42</sup>Cruttwell, p. 108.

According to H. J. C. Grierson, if Scott 'had held any view with greater and clearer singleness of mind' in his portrayal of history:

We should have followed with greater interest the conflicts and development of [his heroes'] inner life. But I venture to think that the same is true in a measure of Shakespeare, though he conceals, or compensates for, the same want of complete clearness as to the inmost significance of the character by his unmatched command of the poetry of passion.<sup>43</sup>

Grierson apologises for Scott's inaccuracy in the representation of historical events by stating that sometimes Shakespeare also lacked precision. Elsewhere he admits:

Yet Shakespeare's plays are not historical in the same sense as Scott's novels, for Shakespeare makes no effort to reproduce local and temporal color, to give a picture of the manners, the dress, the speech of men in the age of which he was writing.<sup>44</sup>

For Grierson, Scott's historical novels are more true to history than Shakespeare's histories.

In his Introduction to *The Victorian Historical Novel: 1840-1880*, Andrew Sanders affirms that Shakespeare's history plays 'taught Scott most,' and 'through Scott, helped to determine much of the later development of the Victorian novel.'<sup>45</sup> Sanders focuses on the parallel between the history plays and Scott's historical novel as the outcome of the two authors' similar view of, and attitude towards, history and historical events.<sup>46</sup> Scott stated in his 'Life of Kemble' (1826) that: 'it will scarcely be denied, that a man had better know generally the points of history as told him by Shakspeare,

<sup>43</sup>H. J. C. Grierson, *Sir Walter Scott, Bart: A New Life, Supplementary to, and Corrective of, Lockhart's Biography* (London: Constable, 1938), p. 312.

<sup>44</sup>H. J. C. Grierson, *Sir Walter Scott: 1832-1932*, preprinted from *Columbia University Quarterly*, 25 (1933), 1-17 (p. 3).

<sup>45</sup>Andrew Sanders, *The Victorian Historical Novel: 1840-1880* (London: Macmillan, 1978), p. 7.

<sup>46</sup>Sanders, p. 6.

than be ignorant of history entirely.’<sup>47</sup> In the Prefatory Letter to *Peveiril of the Peak*, the Author of *Waverley* answers Dryasdust, who has questioned his free use of history, in the following words:

The great Duke of Marlborough, for example, having quoted in conversation some fact of English history rather inaccurately, was requested to name his authority. ‘Shakspeare’s historical plays,’ answered the conqueror of Blenheim; ‘the only English history I ever read in my life.’ And a hasty recollection will convince any of us how much better we are acquainted with those parts of English history which that immortal bard has dramatized than with any other portion of British history.<sup>48</sup>

Una Pope-Hennessy recalls this comment by the Author of *Waverley* as Scott’s ‘way of countering all criticism from more meticulous historians’:

Who else but Sir Walter Scott, writing a tale of the twelfth, fifteenth or sixteenth century, could have produced a setting that is always rather more than less right and people it with characters that have their proper being as truly as do our contemporaries? A novelist, after all, is not a chronicler, and even a tale may impart knowledge, to say nothing of a Shakespearian play.<sup>49</sup>

Other critics have preferred to focus on the two writers’ portrayal of character as a major similarity between their works. Carlyle is one of the few who does not agree with this view. Stephen Gwynn recalls his negative statement in this regard (quoted above) to reject it:

That is the sort of telling phrase that a schoolboy instantly gets by rote to reproduce in an examination paper. But what does it mean? Did Shakespeare begin by conceiving Hamlet’s heart and proceed to infer his outward semblance? Scott indeed commonly introduces a character with some description of the personal appearance - and Shakespeare never does. One excellent reason is that such description is impossible in a play. But the essential part is this. Scott, having told you at first what his people look like, never again insists on it [...] Scott did not probe deep, in

<sup>47</sup>Walter Scott, ‘Life of Kemble - Kelly’s Reminiscences’, in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, XX (1851), 152-244 (p. 158); henceforth referred to as ‘Life of Kemble’.

<sup>48</sup>Weinstein, p. 68.

<sup>49</sup>Una Pope-Hennessy, *Sir Walter Scott* (London: Home & Van Thal, 1948), pp. 11-12.

comparison with Shakespeare; he could not create beings of such subtle complexity or such force; but he saw with clear and candid eyes into human nature, and expressed what he saw, not in long psychological disquisition, not in pretentious rhetoric, but - as Shakespeare did - by producing the sudden act, or the swift word, in which the whole nature is revealed.<sup>50</sup>

For Gwynn, Carlyle's statement is biased. The Victorian critic failed to acknowledge that Scott wrote novels, whereas Shakespeare wrote dramas.

Virginia Woolf linked Scott's name with Shakespeare's when she considered Scott's characterisation. Scott's characters only serve the purpose of forwarding the plot: the readers know what they do and say, but they do not know what their inmost thoughts are. Scott was 'not among the great observers of the intricacies of the heart', Woolf thought, but he had the power of presenting a scene and letting the readers make it out and analyse it for themselves. He was 'perhaps the last novelist to practise the great, the Shakespearean art, of making people reveal themselves in speech.'<sup>51</sup> Woolf was one of the modern novelists who "disliked" Scott but quoted him in their novels and mentioned him in their critical writings.<sup>52</sup> She began her essay on *The Antiquary* (1816) with this remark: 'There are some writers who have entirely ceased to influence others, whose fame is for that reason both serene and cloudless, who are enjoyed or neglected rather than criticised and read. Among them is Scott.'<sup>53</sup> Woolf thought that Scott was one of those writers whom either a reader loved passionately, or rejected entirely: she belonged to the second class of readers. She ranked Scott among the 'bad writers', who could only write through a process of intuition, and not of thought, and who wrote books which would become a refuge and delight for readers, because they sprang from artificial

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<sup>50</sup>Stephen Gwynn, *The Life of Sir Walter Scott* (London: Thornton Butterworth, 1930), pp. 280-81.

<sup>51</sup>Virginia Woolf, 'The Antiquary', in *The Moment and Other Essays* (London: Hogarth Press, 1947), pp. 55-59 (pp. 58, 59). Woolf's characters reveal themselves in monologues and streams of consciousness, instead. She used *The Antiquary* in her characterisation of Mr Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* (1927).

<sup>52</sup>See, for instance, E. M. Forster and James Joyce.

<sup>53</sup>Woolf, 'The Antiquary', p. 55.

kingdoms. These 'bad writers', according to Woolf, seemed to follow the example of Scott or Shakespeare.<sup>54</sup> Woolf's comment on Scott's 'Shakespearean art' was noticed by other critics. Grierson would later observe how 'Both writers alike start from a story, traditional or springing from the poet's own inventive faculty, and are content to let the characters come to life as the story develops.'<sup>55</sup> In 1895, George Saintsbury, after praising the *Waverley Novels*, wrote of Scott:

the consensus, I believe, of the best critics would put him next to Shakespeare as a creator of individual character of the miscellaneous human sort, however far he may be below not merely Shakespeare but Fielding, Thackeray, and perhaps Le Sage in a certain subtle intimacy of detail and a certain massive completeness of execution.<sup>56</sup>

In his *Journal*, Scott wrote that Shakespeare and Burns were the two major writers to whom he could turn when he was at a loss to find the right sentence, or turn of phrase, during the composition of his novels: 'Long life to thy fame and peace to thy soul, Rob Burns. When I want to express a sentiment which I feel strongly, I find the phrase in Shakespeare - or thee.'<sup>57</sup> According to Cruttwell, in both Shakespeare and Burns, Scott could find the human and colloquial elements which contributed to the greatness of the *Waverley Novels*.<sup>58</sup>

The parallel between the two authors often assumes the shades of a panegyric which does not take into account the substance and the contents of their work. In 1972, Robert Speaight could still affirm that:

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<sup>54</sup>Virginia Woolf, 'Bad Writers', in *The Essays of Virginia Woolf*, ed. by Andrew McNeillie, 3 vols (London: Hogarth Press, 1986-88), II: 1912-1918 (1987), 326-29 (p. 328). Woolf's assimilation of Shakespeare and Scott reappears in Mrs Ramsay's thoughts on her husband: 'He showed his uneasiness quite clearly now by saying, with some irritation, that, anyhow, Scott (or was it Shakespeare?) would last him his lifetime.' See *To the Lighthouse* (London: Hogarth Press, 1963), p. 167.

<sup>55</sup>Grierson, *Sir Walter Scott, Bart*, p. 313.

<sup>56</sup>George E. B. Saintsbury, 'The Historical Novel: Scott and Dumas', in *Essays in English Literature 1780-1860*, second series (London: J. M. Dent, 1895), pp. 328-55 (p. 346).

<sup>57</sup>*Journal*, p. 252 (11 December 1826).

<sup>58</sup>Cruttwell, p. 108.

It is an odd coincidence that the only two writers of major importance in the English language [...] who had the same initials were William Shakespeare and Walter Scott. [...] Still we can deduce enough from the records of the one and the writings of the other to affirm that Scott was, so to speak, a Shakespearian kind of man, and indeed in some respects a Shakespearian kind of writer.<sup>59</sup>

Speaight does not proceed further in his critical analysis of the parallel; he acknowledges that the resemblance between the 'two great men' is to be found in their request of a coat of arms, and in their 'genius' being 'gentle' - another use of Ben Jonson's praise of Shakespeare.<sup>60</sup> As regards their methods of work, the critic praises Scott's 'Shakespearian - ear' in his 'vernacular dialogue', but then limits his observations to the fact that Shakespeare had to comply with the wishes of his monarch, while Scott had to comply with the wishes of his reading public.<sup>61</sup> Speaight tries to revalue Scott's novels for the eyes of twentieth-century readers who should read *Waverley*, *The Antiquary*, *Old Mortality* (1816), and *Rob Roy* (1818), which are all concerned with 'political conflict or social change', and he comments that: 'It requires a genius like Shakespeare or Tolstoy to write about such matters with objective sympathy.'<sup>62</sup>

One of the characteristics which distanced Scott from the other major Romantics was his employment of a different literary genre. John Bayley praises Scott because, contrary to the other Romantics, he did not fail in "imitating" Shakespeare:

Alone of the Romantics, Scott was able to make effective use of the Shakespearean tradition, and his popularity is closely connected with the steady growth of Shakespeare's reputation throughout the eighteenth century. We have seen how Romantic poetry imitated Shakespeare's style, but neither poetry nor the drama was able to profit from the world of his plays. Fiction did so; the conflict between two worlds, two ideals, which is the basis of so many - and of the histories in particular - is

<sup>59</sup>Robert Speaight, 'Sir Walter Scott', *Essays by Divers Hands Being the Transactions of the Royal Society of Literature*, n. s., 37 (1972), 108-21 (p. 113).

<sup>60</sup>Speaight, p. 113.

<sup>61</sup>Speaight, pp. 116, 114.

<sup>62</sup>Speaight, p. 118.

profoundly understood by Scott and adapted to his own purposes, unconsciously perhaps, but with results of the highest importance. [...] Indeed, Keats's perception of the Shakespearean approach fits Scott better than any of the other Romantics, including - at least on the human and dramatic level - Keats himself. In contrast with such ill-fated young Romantics as Goethe's Werther and Büchner's Lenz, Waverley may be said to be the first *successful* Romantic hero, the first who is robust enough and has sufficient powers of self-acclimatisation to achieve the feat which Catherine Morland - due to the limitations of her age and sex, and her creator's satiric purpose - had scarcely attempted.<sup>63</sup>

In the Romantic period when there was a strong emphasis on, and a deep concern with, originality Scott distinguished himself by engaging with tradition, anticipating Eliot's advice to twentieth-century authors. Bayley proceeds:

Fiction and the drama, on the other hand, tend to accept their materials, and to present them to their audience as something in *action*, rather than as something waiting to be explored. The spectator or reader is passive, watching a conflict in which he is not called upon to engage himself, and enjoying character - like that of Falstaff or Goriot or Balfour of Burley - simply for what it is, whereas in the early Romantic poetry the probing process of the poet's imagination depends for its success upon the full co-operation of the reader in the same voyage of discovery.<sup>64</sup>

If in Romantic poetry we, as readers, are asked to participate into the workings of the poet's mind, in reading Shakespeare or Scott, according to Bayley, 'We do not feel ourselves to be, in some sense, a necessary extension of the writer's mind'.<sup>65</sup>

In her review of the collection of essays *Scott in Carnival* (1991), Michelle Raye Williams observes that today intertextuality has become the focus of Scott studies, but she notices that little space is given to Shakespeare: 'The influence of Shakespeare on Scott is one which has been repeatedly documented. References to this aspect of Scott's work in the papers of this collection are, therefore, indirect and allusive.'<sup>66</sup> Although it

<sup>63</sup>John Bayley, 'Romance or Reality?', in *The Romantic Survival: A Study in Poetic Evolution* (London: Constable, 1957), pp. 24-40 (p. 28).

<sup>64</sup>Bayley, p. 31.

<sup>65</sup>Bayley, p. 32.

<sup>66</sup>See *Scottish Literary Journal Supplement*, 41 (1994), 43-46 (p. 44). Only two essays in the entire collection mention Shakespeare.

is true, as this brief overview has shown, that the presence of Shakespeare in Scott's writings has been widely 'documented', we cannot take it for granted and dismiss it as an example of the many intertexts which colour Scott's work. Scott's "treatment" of Shakespeare and his works in his narratives is intertextual. The parallel between the two authors, however, can also be seen as a kind of influence by which the disciple at times becomes an agent in the advance of the critical understanding of the original author. It is possible to split the study of Scott into the two categories of 'being' and 'doing'.<sup>67</sup> The first one regards his feelings of Bardolatry, whereas the second one concerns his intertextual practice. If influence approaches the text diachronically and focuses on the agency of authors, intertextuality deals with the text in a synchronic way. With regard to the present study, Scott can be read via Shakespeare, but the opposite is also true: Shakespeare can be read via Scott.

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<sup>67</sup>See Clayton and Rothstein, p. 14.

### 1.3 The Epigraph

Go to.

D--n the mot-toe.

It is foolish to encourage people to expect mottoes and such like Decoraments. You have no credit for success in finding them and there is a disgrace in wanting them. It is like being in the habit of shewing feats of strength which you at length gain no praise by accomplishing while there is some shame occurs in failure.<sup>1</sup>

It is revealing that the major study of Scott's use of the epigraph bears as its title Scott's censure of this literary device.<sup>2</sup> Scott's annoyed comment has often been read as evidence of his resentment of a literary phenomenon which he helped to establish but which he then found difficult to handle. It has seldom been considered that this comment comes from an entry to his journal for 24 March 1826 and could have been made by a bad-tempered Scott who was haunted by financial troubles and worried by his wife's illness. Scott's exclamation is preceded by this comment: 'Sent off copy, proofs etc. J. B. clamorous for a motto.' Ballantyne had obviously been asking for a motto, possibly for the title page of *Woodstock*, the novel Scott was then finishing.<sup>3</sup> Whether Scott's irritation at the necessity of mottoes is interpreted as a momentary outburst, or as his real annoyance with this literary device, it raises an issue which, approached by several critics, has never been commented upon fully. Did Scott consider epigraphs as ornamental devices which readers expected and that a writer had to provide in order to satisfy their wish, and thus be successful? If he was annoyed by them, why did he go to

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<sup>1</sup> *Journal*, p. 119 (24 March 1826).

<sup>2</sup> Dieter A. Berger, "'Damn the Mottoe": Scott and the Epigraph', *Anglia*, 100 (1982), 373-96.

<sup>3</sup> In a footnote to the above entry, W. E. K. Anderson writes that '*Woodstock*, unlike most of the earlier novels, has no motto on the title page, although each chapter (except ch. 7) is headed, as usual, by a short quotation.' The Dryburgh and Standard editions of the novel bear the following motto from Chaucer on the title page: 'He was a very perfect gentle Knight.' Andrew Lang's Border edition does not bear any motto on the title page. The entry for 26 March 1826 reads as follows: 'Finishd *Woodstock* however *cum tota sequela* of title page introduction etc.' See *Journal*, p. 120. Did Scott include the motto in what he wrote '*cum tota sequela*'? Ballantyne's request for a motto would help to explain why in the manuscript of *The Pirate*, for instance, the title-page motto, which has so much relevance to the whole narrative, appears in Ballantyne's handwriting, as Mark A. Weinstein, who is currently editing *The Pirate* for the Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels, has informed me.

pains to find the right ones? Scott's attitude towards the 'mot-toe' is not so paradoxical as it first appears.

The most complete study of Scott's epigraphs so far has been Dieter A. Berger's essay, which contains a brief but illuminating history of this literary convention and a survey of Scott's favourite sources for the mottoes. According to Berger, the habit of attaching mottoes to the title page of a literary work already existed in Chaucer's time and in the work of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century dramatists. The epigraph, however, was not fully established, since it did not appear in the works of Shakespeare, Marlowe, and Chapman. It acquired the status of common literary practice in the Augustan age when quotations from the Classics were used to imply the authoritative knowledge of Classical culture and learning. The change occurred with eighteenth-century writers who, breaking with their predecessors, began to draw only from English sources. This radical move was due to an augmented consciousness of a native tradition, which would later be emphasised by the Romantics. The employment of the epigraph was extended from the single motto on the title page to quotations at the head of each chapter; the practice was particularly suited to the new-born genre of the novel which lent itself to being divided into sections. Gothic writers had made a consistent use of chapter-tags, and Scott's good acquaintance with their works, especially with those of Ann Radcliffe, Matthew Gregory Lewis, and Charlotte Smith, suggests that he probably adopted the habit of prefixing his chapters with short quotations from them.

Epigraphs have a structural function: they establish important connections with the plot, scenes, characters, settings of the narrative that follows, anticipating the action and commenting on the characters and on the events: in a few lines they prepare the reader for what is afterward dealt with in fullness. As with quotations, and on a larger scale, other intertextual devices, the process of recognition of the intertext on the part of

the reader becomes less difficult when epigraphs derive from the work of well-known authors, such as Shakespeare. Recognition enables the readers to set the quotation in its original context and to establish the right connection between that context and the narrative they are reading. Heinrich E. Plett has drawn attention to the fact that quotations sometimes lose their identity as the offspring of a text:

If texts become so well known that they develop into storehouses of quotations, the user of these quotations may easily lose sight of their original contexts. The quotations then become autonomous language units and assume the status of *adagia* and *aphorisms*.<sup>4</sup>

This is often the case with Shakespeare, whose lines have become an essential part of the everyday language of the English.<sup>5</sup> When they choose a chapter-tag, however, authors generally have the original text in mind and consciously establish a connection between their chapter and the text from which the quotation has been borrowed, or between the quotation itself and the chapter's narrative. With regard to Scott's employment of the epigraph, Ernest Edward Kellett has written: 'The purpose of Scott [was] to attune the minds of his readers to what was coming, to set their expectations on the alert, for a satisfied expectation is always better than a surprise.' In his choice of epigraphs, Scott reached 'the acme of suggestive quotation.'<sup>6</sup>

J. Logie Robertson was right when he stated in the Preface to his edition of *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott* that:

the mottoes and lyrical fragments of the Novels are of all Scott's work the most difficult part to edit. His manner of procedure in supplying his

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<sup>4</sup>Heinrich E. Plett, 'Intertextualities', in *Intertextuality*, pp. 3-29 (pp. 16-17).

<sup>5</sup>See Morton W. Bloomfield, 'Quoting and Alluding: Shakespeare in the English Language', in *Shakespeare: Aspects of Influence*, ed. by G. B. Evans, Harvard English Studies: 7 (Cambridge, MA, and London: Harvard University Press, 1976), pp. 1-20.

<sup>6</sup>Ernest Edward Kellett, *Literary Quotation and Allusion* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1933), pp. 89, 90.

chapters with mottoes was indeed calculated, if not designed, to puzzle the critical reader.<sup>7</sup>

In the following discussion of Scott's epigraphic method I will attempt to give an assessment of Scott's authorial intentions towards his readers.

A survey of the chapter-tags of the *Waverley Novels* reveals Scott's preference for verse quotations taken from British, especially English, dramas and poems. This is consistent with Scott's taste in literature, since the literary genres which helped him to write were poetry, ballad, and tragic and comic drama. Scott's mottoes have often been taken as evidence that his interest in poetry had not exhausted after he turned to novel writing. According to Wolfgang G. Müller: 'The quotations in the *Waverley novels* frequently serve to poeticize the text, but they also tend to highlight the contrast between subjective lyrical expression and objective narrative prose.'<sup>8</sup> Müller's comment only refers to quotations taken from poetry, but the tags taken from drama, which are the expression of Scott's lifelong interest in the theatre, helped to "dramatise" the text, mingling, rather than contrasting, dramatic expression and narrative prose. There is another, simpler explanation for Scott's use of poetry quotations instead of prose ones for his chapter-headings. Poetic tags are more likely to catch the readers' eye than prose passages; and their condensed form is more suited to the printed page.

Scott started to prefix epigraphs to chapters in *Waverley*, the first of the series. Among his poetry, only *The Field of Waterloo*, *Glenfinlas*, and 'The Fire-King' bear a motto.<sup>9</sup> In this first novel, epigraphs only appear in the third volume; the previous volumes being prefixed with titles explanatory of the following narrative. The chapter-

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<sup>7</sup>*The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. by J. Logie Robertson (London: Henry Frowde, Oxford University Press, 1908), p. iii.

<sup>8</sup>Wolfgang G. Müller, 'Intertextuality in Sir Walter Scott's *Waverley Novels*: Some Forms and Functions', in *Anglistentag 1992 Stuttgart Proceedings*, ed. by Hans Ulrich Seeber and Walter Göbel (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer, 1993), XIV, 173-85 (p. 178).

<sup>9</sup>From Akenside, Collins, and 'Eastern Tale', respectively.

title device reappears in *Redgauntlet* (1824), the only novel in which no chapter-tags are used, and in *Quentin Durward* (1823), *Saint Ronan's Well* (1824), and *Chronicles of the Canongate I Series* (1827) where titles to chapters are followed by a tag.<sup>10</sup> The mottoes' replacement of the chapter-titles suggests that Scott meant them to have the same function: to anticipate the chapter's narrative. For Wolfgang Karrer: 'Titles and mottoes for chapters or parts of a text extend their overcoding over exactly the part they are assigned to.'<sup>11</sup> Mottoes and titles have therefore the same role in the narrative, but the verbal parallels and thematic analogies established by mottoes reach where titles cannot.

In the early novels, from *Guy Mannering* (1815) to *Saint Ronan's Well*, excluding *Redgauntlet*, all chapters are preceded by a quotation. In the later novels, from *The Betrothed* (1825) onwards, the practice still appears consistently, but we find a few chapters with no heading.<sup>12</sup> With *Anne of Geierstein* (1829) Scott got his taste for epigraphs back and all its chapters bear a quotation. In a total of 30 works - *Redgauntlet* excluded - and 1002 chapters, only 98 chapters do not bear tags. This leaves us with 904 epigraphs. If we also exclude *Waverley*, in which the use of the epigraph was not yet definite, in a total of 930 chapters, 898 bear a tag, and only 32 do not have an epigraph.

The six tags of *Waverley* are worth looking at in detail because in them we find the characteristics which reappear in the other narratives. The first quotation used by Scott as a chapter-tag comes significantly from Shakespeare: "TO ONE THING CONSTANT NEVER"<sup>13</sup> In the Dryburgh Edition of the novel, in contrast to the following chapter-tags, which appear in lower case, this first epigraph is printed in capital letters and is left unattributed so that it is easy to mistake it for a title; but the

<sup>10</sup>Title to chapters appear only in the first of the tales contained in *Chronicles of the Canongate*.

<sup>11</sup>Wolfgang Karrer, 'Titles and Mottoes as Intertextual Devices', in *Intertextuality*, pp. 122-34 (p. 123).

<sup>12</sup>In *Mannering*, *Antiquary*, *Dwarf*, *Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, *Midlothian*, *Lammermoor*, *Montrose*, *Ivanhoe*, *Monastery*, *Abbot*, *Kenilworth*, *Pirate*, *Nigel*, *Pevekil*, *Quentin Durward*, *Ronan's Well*, and *Anne of Geierstein* all chapters are preceded by a motto.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. *Waverley*, ch. 54, p. 334 and *Much Ado*, II. 3. 64.

quotation marks signal its literary descent.<sup>14</sup> David Glenn Kropf borrowed this quotation as the title of his chapter on Scott's narrative art. Although he recognises its derivation from Shakespeare, Kropf does not consider this quote as a chapter-tag, but views it as a title instead.<sup>15</sup> Reporting the Author's dissent with Francisco de Ubeda's complaint about his pen's 'mutability', which is also 'to one thing constant never', in chapter 19 of *Waverley*,<sup>16</sup> Kropf writes: 'It is as if Scott were several writers at once; *Waverley* becomes a work of collective rather than anonymous authorship.'<sup>17</sup> The metaphor of the 'mutability' of the author's pen could be extended to Scott's use of the epigraph. Scott writes in this chapter that: 'the most useful quality of [his] pen, [is] that it can speedily change from grave to gay, and from description and dialogue to narrative and character.'<sup>18</sup> He refers here to his command of the narrative technique, but this comment can also be applied to his employment of the motto.

The second tag which appears in *Waverley* is attributed to 'Shakspeare' and comes from *The Merry Wives of Windsor*: 'Now is Cupid like a child of conscience - he makes restitution.'<sup>19</sup> This line refers to the 'restitution' of Tully Veolan to the Baron of Bradwardine, but according to Kropf, it 'can also be read in terms of the narrator's practice in the novel as well.' Kropf's reading of this epigraph is worth quoting in full:

Like Cupid, the narrator has been 'marrying' numerous fragments and citations from previously written texts in order to compose *Waverley*: not only are there the many literary references from the books Edward has read, but further, the Baron continually cites as he speaks, plus there are the historical works that the narrator of 1805 undoubtedly consulted in

<sup>14</sup>This quotation appears in lower case in Claire Lamont's edition, but still in quotation marks; see *Waverley; or, 'Tis Sixty Years Since*, ed. by Claire Lamont (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 254; Lamont does not acknowledge the source for the quotation (p. 454).

<sup>15</sup>David Glenn Kropf, 'The Novelist: "To One Thing Constant Never" (Scott)', in *Authorship as Alchemy: Subversive Writing in Pushkin, Scott, Hoffmann* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1994), pp. 105-50 (p. 137). Other critics have not considered this epigraph as such; see for instance Graham Tulloch, *The Language of Walter Scott: A Study of his Scottish and Period Language* (London: Andre Deutsch, 1980), p. 23.

<sup>16</sup>*Waverley*, p. 116.

<sup>17</sup>Kropf, p. 137.

<sup>18</sup>*Waverley*, p. 116.

<sup>19</sup>*Waverley*, ch. 66, p. 407 and *Merry Wives*, V. 5. 27-28.

writing a novel that takes place ‘sixty years since.’ But *now*, toward the end, the Cupid-narrator is struck by pangs of conscience. Just as he brings Waverley home, so he begins to bring the novel home as well.<sup>20</sup>

The metatextual function of the epigraph is here evident. Besides connecting the text to previous literary works, epigraphs served Scott the purpose of commenting on his own narrative practice.

Chapter 67 bears a few lines slightly altered from *The Paradise of Dainty Devices* (1576-1606):

Happy’s the wooing  
That’s not long a-doing.<sup>21</sup>

This tag parallels Edward’s short courtship of Rose Bradwardine in the following chapter. The fourth tag is taken from Isabella’s pleading speech in *Measure for Measure*: ‘To-morrow? O that’s sudden! - Spare him! spare him!’<sup>22</sup> This line draws a direct parallel between the scene in the play and the narrative of the chapter. Flora pleads for Fergus’s life as Isabella pleads for Claudio’s. The tag to chapter 69 is signed ‘Campbell’, a favourite source for epigraphs, and it comes from ‘Lochiel’s Warning’:

A darker departure is near,  
The death drum is muffled, and sable the bier.<sup>23</sup>

These lines anticipate the hero’s last meeting with Fergus MacIvor and the latter’s execution. Chapter 71 is finally marked ‘Old Song’, but its tag derives from a song in Herd’s *Ancient and Modern Scottish Songs* (1776): ‘This is no mine ain house, I ken by

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<sup>20</sup>Kropf, p. 126.

<sup>21</sup>*Waverley*, p. 413.

<sup>22</sup>*Waverley*, ch. 68, p. 420 and *Measure*, II. 2. 85.

<sup>23</sup>*Waverley*, p. 427.

the bigging o't.<sup>24</sup> The motto is used again to establish a parallel of resemblance between the lines of the play and the following narrative.

This brief account of *Waverley's* chapter-tags has revealed Scott's incomplete confidence as to their application. A survey of the tags' attributions shows no consistent method. In the following novels, the attribution of the tag can consist of the author's name, or of the work's title, often with a genitive to stress the kinship, or of both; sometimes it includes the act, scene, line or book reference, and the translator; at other times the works' titles are spelt differently from chapter to chapter.

Title-page mottoes are also a common denominator of Scott's novels but contrary to chapter-headings their use was already established at the time when *Waverley* was published. They appear in 19 of the 30 *Waverley* Novels; of these 19, 4 come from Shakespeare.<sup>25</sup> The tag on the title page of *Waverley* was borrowed by Robert Coningsby Gordon as the title for his work on Scott: 'Under which King, Bezonian? speak, or die!'.<sup>26</sup> This line from *2 Henry IV* epitomises the role played by the tags taken from the history plays in the *Waverley* Novels: Scott chose them deliberately to invite a comparison with the historical novel. The quotation from *2 Henry IV* replaces the name of the author on the title page of *Waverley*. Besides seeing a parallel with the main concerns of the novel, i.e. Edward Waverley's ambivalent allegiance to both political parties in the 1745 Jacobite uprising and the dilemma in his search for his own identity, for Kropf: 'the epigraph situated so prominently on the title page points to the problematic that defines the identity of *Waverley's* origins. The novel's

<sup>24</sup>*Waverley*, p. 438.

<sup>25</sup>*Waverley*, *Pirate*, *Redgauntlet*, and *Anne of Geierstein* bear a title-page epigraph from Shakespeare. The other novels whose titles are followed by a quotation are: *Antiquary*, *Dwarf*, *Mortality*, *Rob Roy*, *Midlothian*, *Lammermoor*, *Ivanhoe*, *Montrose*, *Kenilworth*, *Peveiril*, *Nigel*, *Ronan's Well*, *Woodstock*, *Two Drovers*, *Surgeon's Daughter*.

<sup>26</sup>*2 Henry IV*, V. 3. 114. See Robert Coningsby Gordon, *Under Which King? A Study of the Scottish Waverley Novels* (Edinburgh: Oliver & Boyd, 1969).

sovereign/father/writer can also be seen as multiple because of the network of citation that delineates its composition.<sup>27</sup>

Herman Meyer has stated that:

The quotation thus becomes an important indication for literary sociology, because in it the extent and nature of the literary culture of the public are reflected. In this connection it is of central importance whether or not a people has at its disposal a national literature which it regards as classically exemplary and as the firm basis of its own culture.<sup>28</sup>

Early-nineteenth-century Scotland did not have an established national literature 'at its disposal'. Scottish readers, however, were well acquainted with Shakespeare and with Scots tales and songs. Scott's novels were addressed to a British readership and Scott's use of intertexts from both Scottish and English sources contributed to the establishment of a British literary culture. For Karrer:

literary titles and mottoes do not only reflect the social fantasies of their readers [...] They reproduce or challenge the literary canon, genre hierarchies and social ranking etc. [...] Titles and mottoes may just be miniatures, but also a beginning for a more pragmatic study of intertextuality, including questions of ranking, authority, ideological reproduction and hierarchical overcoding.<sup>29</sup>

Scott's epigraphs, and by extension, his use of other literary intertexts, reproduced and challenged the literary canon. Scott did not only quote famous writers such as Shakespeare but contributed to enlarge the canon by choosing tags from less well-known authors. It is intriguing that there are no tags from the Gothic novelists who taught Scott a great deal, and from some of his contemporaries, such as P. B. Shelley and Keats. If the Gothic novelists did not offer poetic passages suitable for chapter-

<sup>27</sup>Kropf, p. 107. Henri Suhamy also considers the epigraphs, the various narrators, prefaces, notes, etc., surrounding the Waverley Novels as the expression of a kind of 'impersonnalité' or 'dédoublement.' See his *Sir Walter Scott* (Paris: Éditions de Fallois, 1993), p. 236.

<sup>28</sup>Herman Meyer, *The Poetics of Quotation in the European Novel*, trans. by Theodore and Yetta Ziolkowski (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1968), p. 18.

<sup>29</sup>Karrer, p. 133.

headings, the two poets did not produce works which met Scott's views of life, society, and politics. Although Scott showed a predilection for verse quotations both for the tags and the narrative, his use of poetic passages did not challenge genre hierarchies. Karrer's view of mottoes can be applied to Scott's Shakespearean epigraphs:

Mottoes in nineteenth century literature and in twentieth-century criticism rank authors - and by implication their texts - like a device for gentry and nobility. Notice that many of the ennobling symbolic titles are intertextual, drawing on the Bible, Shakespeare, Shelley etc. Intertextuality in titles and mottoes may pragmatically serve to legitimize, ennoble, and dissemble products from a market economy, promising a use value the texts they introduce often do not have.<sup>30</sup>

Shakespeare in particular showed the two qualities which according to Morton W. Bloomfield are necessary for an author to become a foremost figure in a literary tradition: 'canonicity' and 'monumentality.'<sup>31</sup> Scott did not introduce epigraphs into his narratives in order to enhance the value of his own works. He was aware that he would be charged with this accusation and he began chapter 3 of *Rob Roy* thus: 'I have tagged with rhyme and blank verse the subdivisions of this important narrative, in order to seduce your continued attention by powers of composition of stronger attraction than my own.'<sup>32</sup> This comment appears to convey the author's humble feelings towards the past; its veiled irony, however, cannot be overlooked and has the purpose of attracting the reader's attention to the writer's work.

Berger classified the chapter-tags of the Waverley Novels into four categories. Renaissance drama and Shakespeare constitute the first and most influential type; Shakespearean tags will be analysed below, separately. The second type is represented by 'old plays', 'old ballads', 'old songs', and 'anonymous' mottoes which have often

<sup>30</sup>Karrer, p. 133.

<sup>31</sup>Bloomfield, p. 4.

<sup>32</sup>Walter Scott, *Rob Roy*, Dryburgh Edition, IV (1893), p. 22; the tag comes from John Gay's *Fables*.

been assumed to be ‘probably’, ‘apparently’ by Scott or ‘Scott’s own invention’.<sup>33</sup> This class of mottoes, which are generally attributed to Scott, is the result of Scott’s frolicsome treatment of the epigraphic device, a continuation of other “tricks” he played on his readership, such as that of the anonymous Author of *Waverley* or the succession of fictitious narrators. We have seen above that Scott did not follow a constant method in signing the tags; as regards the attribution of the quotations Scott was perhaps more inconstant. He often attributed the tags to the wrong authors. An instance is provided by chapter 29 of *Old Mortality* where the motto is signed ‘Marlow’ but is not to be found in any of Christopher Marlowe’s works; an echo from *Hamlet* is detectable, instead:

And, to my breast, a bodkin in her hand  
Were worth a thousand daggers.<sup>34</sup>

After the battle, Edith’s harsh words regarding his traitorous conduct in the political conflict are like ‘daggers’ to the disguised Morton. The allusion is to Hamlet’s determination to ‘speak daggers’ to his mother and to her subsequent prayer to her son to say no more because his words ‘like daggers enter in mine ears.’<sup>35</sup>

At other times Scott would attribute his own lines to other authors such as Dr Watts or Lindsay. Some other times, he left them unattributed, thus leading his critics to believe that he was the author, whereas he derived them from other sources instead. The majority of these 18 unsigned mottoes derive from sources other than Scott.<sup>36</sup> Susan Manning reports that the motto to chapter 12 of *Quentin Durward*, ‘is unattributed in the

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<sup>33</sup>According to my analysis, this category comprises a total of 184 epigraphs: 94 tags are taken from ‘old plays’, 18 from ‘old ballads’, 11 from ‘old songs’, 29 are signed ‘anonymous’, 18 are left unattributed, 14 are taken from different vague sources, such as ‘True Story’, ‘Ancient Drama’, and ‘Ancient Scottish Ballad’. Tom B. Haber counts 94 ‘old play’, 26 ‘old ballad’, 12 ‘old song’, 29 ‘anonymous’, and 10 unattributed tags; see ‘The chapter-tags in the *Waverley* Novels’, *PMLA*, 45 (1930), 1140-49 (p. 1140). James Crichton-Browne counts 24 unattributed tags; see “‘Hamlet’ and “‘Lammermoor’”, *The Contemporary Review*, 98 (1910), 69-73 (p. 69).

<sup>34</sup>Walter Scott, *The Tale of Old Mortality*, ed. by Douglas Mack (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), p. 229.

<sup>35</sup>*Hamlet*, III. 2. 385 and III. 4. 85.

<sup>36</sup>Of these, four, including the tag to ch. 54 in *Waverley*, are taken from Shakespeare.

page proofs. In response to Ballantyne's marginal query "From what?", Scott scribbled "anything" - and the epigraph subsequently appeared in the 1st edition as "Old Play", Scott's usual transparent disguise for his own doggerel blank verse.<sup>37</sup> In the Introduction to *Chronicles of the Canongate* (1827), Scott admitted that:

The scraps of poetry which have been in most cases tacked to the beginning of chapters in these novels are sometimes quoted either from reading or from memory, but, in the general case, are pure invention. I found it too troublesome to turn to the collection of the British poets to discover apposite mottoes, and, in the situation of the theatrical mechanist, who, when the white paper which represented his shower of snow was exhausted, continued the storm by snowing brown, I drew on my memory as long as I could, and, when that failed, eked it out with invention. I believe that, in some cases, where actual names are affixed to the supposed quotations, it would be to little purpose to seek them in the works of the authors referred to. In some cases I have been entertained when Dr. Watts and other graver authors have been ransacked in vain for stanzas for which the novelist alone was responsible.<sup>38</sup>

In a letter of 26 June 1827 to John Swinton, Scott, referring to Sir James Stuart's admiration for some lines from *Woodstock*, wrote:

The lines he quotes from *Woodstock* & honours with his approbation are my own as indeed are almost all the *tags* which are not otherwise marked and to say truth some part of those which are. I was internally very much diverted by a lady who would fain have persuaded me that she was a great admirer of Dr Watts hymns & quoted one of these same little deceptions.<sup>39</sup>

Two weeks later, he confirmed in a letter to Sir James Stuart that:

The verses which you honour with your approbation are mine as are almost all in those *Waverley* novels which bear no other persons signature or are marked as *old plays* or the like. There may be exceptions but they must be few for I have always found it easier to write a line or two for the purpose than to hunt about for something apropos. Indeed

<sup>37</sup>Walter Scott, *Quentin Durward*, ed. by Susan Manning, The World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992), p. 547.

<sup>38</sup>Weinstein, p. 78.

<sup>39</sup>*The Letters of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. by H. J. C. Grierson, Centenary Edition, 12 vols (London: Constable, 1932-37), X, 232-33; henceforth referred to as *Letters*.

many of those which are marked with names are not to be found in the authors referred to.<sup>40</sup>

There seems to be an anxiety on the part of Scott when he states that he has invented most of the 'old play' mottoes. This is perhaps due to the fact that these comments appeared in 1827 when he also acknowledged his authorship of the *Waverley Novels* publicly.

The category of epigraphs from 'old' plays, songs, and ballads suggests that Scott did not consider mottoes as burdens but that, on the contrary, he enjoyed playing with them, and consequently with his readers' knowledge of literature. For Berger, Scott 'was intentionally fooling his readers, treating them as blockheads and being "entertained" by their bewilderment.'<sup>41</sup> Berger, however, agrees with R. C. Gordon's comment on Scott's 'degree of contempt for his craft and for his public', which shows little understanding of Scott's benevolent, if at times playful, attitude towards his readership.<sup>42</sup> What was Scott's purpose when he invented a motto? George Eliot's use of the epigraphic convention in *Middlemarch* (1871-72) has been seen as the way in which 'Eliot [was] obsessively stating her credentials. Yet, curiously, not a few of these epigraphs are subversive and witty quotations of her own creation, as if she were ridiculing the convention of citing authorities.'<sup>43</sup> Was this also Scott's intention? Eliot's invented mottoes were left unasccribed, whereas Scott's, excepting the 18 instances quoted above, are always attributed to a source, real or fictitious. His ascription of the

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<sup>40</sup>*Letters*, X, 246-47 (7 July 1827). In a letter to Archibald Constable of 23 March 1822 Scott approved of Constable's plan for a volume of poetry from the novels, but added: 'It is odd to say but nevertheless it is quite certain that I do not know whether some of the things are original or not and I wish you would devise some way of stating this in the title.' He suggested that on the title page of the volume the following statement should be printed: 'The author of *Waverley* finding it inconvenient to toss over books for a motto generally made one without much scrupling whether it was positively & absolutely his own or botched up out of pieces & fragments of poetry floating in his memory. But this would have an awkward effect if he was supposed to found merit on them as original.' See *Letters*, VII, 104.

<sup>41</sup>Berger, p. 379.

<sup>42</sup>R. C. Gordon, *Under Which King?*, p. 6.

<sup>43</sup>Sandra M. Gilbert and Susan Gubar, *The Madwoman in the Attic: The Woman Writer and the Nineteenth-Century Literary Imagination* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1979), p. 531.

tag to chapter 14 of *The Monastery* (1820) to a 'New Play', the only epigraph of this kind in the Waverley Novels, was perfectly acceptable to his readers because he had created a kind of literary community with them.<sup>44</sup> For Müller, 'intertextuality as it manifests itself in a text is to a large extent the result of individual artistic decisions. Intertextuality does not, as a rule, constitute itself without the controlling hand of the author.'<sup>45</sup> Epigraphs can be viewed as an example of authorial intervention conditioning the readers' response to the text; in the case of Scott, however, his intertextual play was allowed by his readers' acceptance of the various "tricks" he was already playing on them, and his authorial intervention was in its turn conditioned by his readers' response to it. Intertextual practice has been seen by Meyer as an element of "play": 'Play may have a certain element of irresponsibility; but it is a paradoxical truth that the quotation, as an element of play, nevertheless arrives ultimately at aesthetic responsibility.'<sup>46</sup> In the Introductory Epistle to *The Monastery*, Captain Clutterbuck says to the Author of Waverley: 'you usually throw out a few lines of verse (by way of skirmishers, I suppose) at the head of each division of prose'.<sup>47</sup> This intentional comparison of mottoes with 'skirmishers', which the *OED* defines as: 'One of a number of soldiers taking part in a skirmish or acting in loose order apart from the main body of an army or battalion', seems to point to the fact that epigraphs sometimes were acting apart from the main body of the text, and therefore independently from their author.

According to Lockhart, Scott's habit of prefixing to chapters, tags of his own invention had started during the composition of *The Antiquary*:

It may be worth noting, that it was in correcting the proof-sheets of this novel that Scott first took to equipping his chapters with mottoes of his own fabrication. On one occasion he happened to ask John Ballantyne, who was sitting by him, to hunt for a particular passage in Beaumont and

<sup>44</sup>Walter Scott, *The Monastery*, Dryburgh Edition, X (1893), p. 113.

<sup>45</sup>Müller, p. 173.

<sup>46</sup>Meyer, p. 12.

<sup>47</sup>*Monastery*, p. xxi.

Fletcher. John did as he was bid, but did not succeed in discovering the lines. 'Hang it, Johnnie,' cried Scott, 'I believe I can make a motto sooner than you will find one.' He did so accordingly; and from that hour, whenever memory failed to suggest an appropriate epigraph, he had recourse to the inexhaustible mines of 'old play' or 'old ballad,' to which we owe some of the most exquisite verses that ever flowed from his pen.<sup>48</sup>

Lockhart's account is one of the many anecdotes he tells about his father-in-law, but it is supported by Scott's comment, quoted above, which probably gave Lockhart the authority to report this episode. A. N. Wilson has expressed his scepticism regarding Scott's invention of the epigraphs attributed to 'old' sources. In a note to the tag to chapter 18 of *Ivanhoe* (1820), Wilson, recording Lockhart's information, writes:

One hesitates to say outright, however, that Scott made particular lines up. His misquotations show that he often did not check his sources; sometimes (see Chapter XIII) the distortions are almost tantamount to a poem different from the half-remembered lines. On the other hand, when he thought he was making things up, there are often strong echoes of the old poets.<sup>49</sup>

Wilson does not consider Scott's own remarks on his epigraphic practice, nor the fact that, as Graham Tulloch has rightly observed, Scott 'felt none of the modern textual scholar's compulsion to check every word.'<sup>50</sup> The author of an article for *The Times Literary Supplement* of July 1921 wrote that Scott's 'quotations are frequently inaccurate; the inaccuracies are sometimes deliberate adaptations and sometimes illustrations of the defects of a strong memory.' The critic added that Scott 'certainly did something to establish, though not to introduce, the modern habit of casual, as

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<sup>48</sup>Lockhart, V, 145-46. Lockhart's last statement is part of the tradition which sees Scott as a poet who had been obliged to turn to novel writing after the coming of Byron. Berger suggests that 'Scott's inserted poetry has to be considered not only as a continuation of his earlier career but also as a kind of secret compensation, as an attempt to keep up with contemporary poets like Byron, Wordsworth, Coleridge, and Campbell whom he quotes so often in his mottoes.' (p. 383) It is, however, difficult to think of Scott trying 'to keep up' with the Romantic poets, whom he so much admired, through a literary device which was not still considered as established, and which was connected to the genre of the novel.

<sup>49</sup>Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, ed. by A. N. Wilson (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1984), p. 562.

<sup>50</sup>Tulloch, p. 23.

distinguished from formal, quotation.<sup>51</sup> Other editors and critics of Scott have referred to some of his quotations as “misquotations”, but how can we state with assurance that they are not to be considered as “intentional”, or as “adaptations”, instead? Sometimes, when the attribution is wrong, such as with the tag from ‘The Passionate Pilgrim’ preceding chapter 36 of *The Antiquary*, ascribed to Shakespeare, but in fact not by him, Scott’s inaccuracy derives from reasons other than his carelessness. *The Passionate Pilgrim* was included in an anthology of twenty poems published by William Jaggard in 1599. The poems by Shakespeare are only five: Sonnets 138 and 144, Langaville’s sonnet, Berowne’s sonnet, and Dumaine’s love poem in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*. The collection of poems was published as ‘*The Passionate Pilgrime* by William Shakespeare’ leading many, among them probably also Scott, to believe Shakespeare was the author. In 1780 Edmond Malone published a two-volume *Supplement* to Steevens’s edition of the *Works* and, of the poems, he printed *Venus and Adonis*, *The Rape of Lucrece*, the *Sonnets*, *The Passionate Pilgrim*, and *A Lover’s Complaint*.<sup>52</sup> It should not surprise us that Scott believed the poem he quoted to be Shakespeare’s, since Brewer, a twentieth-century critic, still thought so.<sup>53</sup>

In doubtful cases, such as the instance provided above and the examples of misquotations or half-remembered lines, the circumstances in which the first and the following editions of the novels appeared should be considered. In order to maintain the anonymity of the Author of *Waverley*, Scott’s manuscripts were transcribed by an amanuensis and then printed under the supervision of Ballantyne. Many mistakes and typographical errors occurred during this process; the hurry in which the novels were composed and printed also justifies some of the “inaccuracies” and “misquotations”

<sup>51</sup>Anon., ‘Scott and Shakespeare’, *Times Literary Supplement*, 7 July 1921, pp. 425-26 (p. 425).

<sup>52</sup>See Peter Martin, *Edmond Malone, Shakespearean Scholar: A Literary Biography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), p. 44, note 72.

<sup>53</sup>Brewer, p. 258.

with which Scott has been charged. An analysis of the manuscripts of the novels would provide us with the information and evidence necessary for an accurate analysis of the chapter-tags.<sup>54</sup>

Berger's third type of epigraphs is represented by the tags taken from literature in Middle English and pre-Renaissance poetry. Mottoes from neo-Classical authors and from the Romantics form the fifth type. Scott had specialised in the neo-Classical period in his biographical and literary studies. The tag to chapter 17 of *Guy Mannering* is signed: 'POPE, *imitated*.'<sup>55</sup> As Jane Millgate informs us, the attribution was added in the *magnum opus* when the epigraphic convention had already been established; in the manuscript and first editions it was left unsigned.<sup>56</sup> The use of italics for the past participle 'imitated' seems to ironise Pope's imitative practice and suggests Scott's distance from his predecessor; in reality, it consciously draws attention to Scott's use of the epigraph as a repository of his readings, and therefore of his sources, and at the same time it signals his ironic treatment of this literary device. As regards his contemporaries, mottoes derive from Byron and Coleridge, but also from Wordsworth and Southey. In particular, the quotation from Canto I of *Childe Harold's Pilgrimage*: 'My native land, good night!' reappears four times in the Waverley series.<sup>57</sup>

Besides their structural function in the novels, epigraphs played other significant roles. They popularised ancient plays, poems, songs, and ballads, but also contemporary authors and works; they made the narratives more attractive to the readers and helped to instil the association of Scott with Scotland and antiquarianism into the readers' minds. Scott aptly headed the three series of *Tales of My Landlord*, a series of novels about Scotland and Scottish people, with a quotation from Burns:

<sup>54</sup>This will be possible when the Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels is completed.

<sup>55</sup>See Walter Scott, *Guy Mannering*, Dryburgh Edition, II (1892), p. 106.

<sup>56</sup>Jane Millgate, *Scott's Last Edition: A Study in Publishing History* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1987), p. 81.

<sup>57</sup>This line is prefixed to chapters 36 of *Mortality*, 28 of *Midlothian*, 38 of *Abbot*, and 8 of *Peveiril*.

Hear, Land o' Cakes and brither Scots,  
 Frae Maidenkirk to Jonny Groats',  
 If there's a hole in a' your coats,  
                   I rede ye tent it;  
 A chiel's amang you takin' notes,  
                   An' faith he'll prent it!<sup>58</sup>

The Shakespearean tags, in particular, contributed to the development of the history of the “parallel” with Shakespeare, and possibly to its birth.

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<sup>58</sup>From 'On the Late Captain Grose's Peregrinations thro' Scotland, collecting the Antiquities for that Kingdom' (1789), in *The Poetical Works of Robert Burns*, ed. by J. Logie Robertson (London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1917), pp. 127-29, lines 1-6.

## 1.4 Shakespearean Epigraphs

Shakespearean mottoes are the most frequent in Scott's works. *Guy Mannering* shows the highest number: 22 out of 58; *The Surgeon's Daughter* (1827) the lowest: 1 out of 8.<sup>1</sup> According to Berger and Tom B. Haber, the Shakespearean chapter-tags in the Waverley Novels are 202.<sup>2</sup> James Crichton-Browne counts 212 out of 972 epigraphed chapters.<sup>3</sup> My analysis reveals instead 217 out of 904 epigraphed chapters. Appendices A and B contain respectively my list of the Shakespearean tags in the Waverley Novels and of the plays they derive from.

Shakespearean epigraphs outnumber the epigraphs taken from other single authors; this is consistent with the presence of Shakespeare in the Waverley Novels as Scott's main inspirational drive. As Tulloch has observed, 'Scott's chapter tags are another source of information about the authors he remembered best.'<sup>4</sup> Interest in chapter-mottoes as revealing of his reading had already been expressed during Scott's lifetime. In *The Retrospective Review* of 1827, the author of an article on the poetry of the Waverley Novels wrote:

The snatches of verse thickly scattered over the series of his novels indicate the description of study to which he has resorted for the nourishing his imagination; and in this point of view our task absolutely assumes an air of utility and importance. It will be seen that he has been by no means anxious to exhibit his quotations with minute and faithful accuracy; but he has put together those parts of the different originals; and even made such alterations of his own, as fancy or convenience might suggest.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Crichton-Browne counts 19 Shakespeare tags in *Mannering* (p. 69). Only 8 of the 15 chapters of *The Surgeon's Daughter* bear mottoes. *The Highland Widow* also has only one tag from Shakespeare, but the narrative is only divided into two chapters.

<sup>2</sup>Berger, p. 380; Haber, p. 1146.

<sup>3</sup>Crichton-Browne, p. 69.

<sup>4</sup>Tulloch, p. 23.

<sup>5</sup>Anon., 'The Poetry contained in the Novels, Tales, and Romances of the Author of Waverley', *Retrospective Review and Historical and Antiquarian Magazine*, second series, 1 (1827), 16-39 (p. 16).

Hazlitt also expressed his:

admiration of the good-nature of the mottoes, in which the author has taken occasion to remember and quote almost every living author (whether illustrious or obscure) but himself - an indirect argument in favour of the general opinion as to the source from which they spring.<sup>6</sup>

Mottoes are generally relevant to the chapter they precede, establishing connections with the following narrative; often, however, the works from which they derive do not appear to have much in common with the narrative. In this sense, the theory according to which Scott wanted to reveal the source of his inspiration through the mottoes is not supported by strong evidence.

A major issue in the discussion of Scott's epigraphs is at what point in the work's life they were added. The answer to this question will help us to determine whether the epigraphs and their original contexts also functioned as inspirational sources in the creative process. According to Christopher R. Harding, if the ink in which the tag is written in the manuscript is different from the ink in which the end of the previous chapter and the chapter under consideration are written, the tag can be considered as an 'afterthought'; but, if the ink of the tag is the same as the ink in which the following chapter is written, we can conclude that Scott was thinking of the source, from which the tag came, during the composition. After a 'cursory study' of the Scott manuscripts in the Pierpoint Morgan Library, Harding reached the conclusion that 'most of the tags were written at the same time as the body of the chapter.'<sup>7</sup> However, the

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<sup>6</sup>William Hazlitt, 'Sir Walter Scott', in *The Spirit of the Age: or, Contemporary Portraits*, in Howe, XI (1932), pp. 57-68 (p. 67).

<sup>7</sup>Christopher Robert Harding, *The Influence of Renaissance Drama in the Novels of Sir Walter Scott* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, Harvard, 1976), p. 87. The editors of Scott, who have analysed the manuscripts, have provided valuable information which supports Harding's conclusion. During the revision of his novels for the *magnum opus*, Scott provided several, previously unheaded, chapters, with appropriate mottoes, because, according to Iain Gordon Brown: 'In many novels a chapter without its own epigraph seemed to Scott naked and incomplete.' See his 'An Illustrated Commentary on the Interleaved Set', in *Scott's Interleaved Waverley Novels: An Introduction and Commentary*, ed. by Iain Gordon Brown (Aberdeen: Pergamon Books and Aberdeen University Press, 1987), pp. 49-129 (p. 125). For instance, ch. 20 of *The Talisman* did not have a tag, and Scott inserted one signed Anonymous; in

conclusion reached by Harding and other Scott editors can be reached without analysing the manuscripts. Scott gave us the clue to it in the novels themselves. A few lines from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* precede chapter 12 of *Pevekil of the Peak* and the narrative starts with the following comment: 'The celebrated passage which we have prefixed to this chapter has, like most observations of the same author, its foundation in real experience.'<sup>8</sup> The narrative of the chapter often recalls the motto verbally, as in chapter 6 of *The Talisman* (1825) which is headed by the following 'old play' tag:

Now change the scene - and let the trumpets sound,  
For we must rouse the lion from his lair.

The chapter begins with these words: 'The scene must change, as our programme has announced'.<sup>9</sup> Chapter 2 of *Guy Mannering* is preceded by Hotspur's lines in *1 Henry IV*:

Comes me cranking in,  
And cuts me from the best of all my land  
A huge half-moon, a monstrous cantle, out.<sup>10</sup>

In the following narrative, we are told the fortunes of the Ellangowans, and several verbal parallels with the motto are detectable:

The apprizor therefore (as the holder of a mortgage was then called) entered upon possession, and, in the language of Hotspur, 'came me cranking in,' and cut the family out of another monstrous cantle of their remaining property.<sup>11</sup>

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chapter 13 of the same novel, Scott erased the last line of the motto because it contained a reference to bankruptcy and added two lines of his own. The analysis of the Interleaved Set of the Waverley Novels would provide us with much information in this regard.

<sup>8</sup>Walter Scott, *Pevekil of the Peak*, Dryburgh Edition, XV (1894), p. 125.

<sup>9</sup>Walter Scott, *The Talisman*, Dryburgh Edition, XX (1894), p. 59. The epigraph seems to be identified with the programme of a theatrical piece; this tag supports the view which sees Scott's novels as intrinsically "dramatic".

<sup>10</sup>*Mannering*, p. 6 and *1 Henry IV*, III. 1. 95-97.

<sup>11</sup>*Mannering*, pp. 7-8.

These are only a few examples but they are enough to allow us to conclude that most epigraphs were written during the composition of the novels and were therefore a part of the creative process. Whether they were calculated as sources of inspiration, or whether they came to Scott's mind while he was composing his work, epigraphs affected the narrative of the chapter they headed and consequently the readers' response to the novels themselves. Shakespearean tags, in particular, served other purposes. They contributed to Scott's character portrayal and to his view of history, often providing him with a precedent for narrative and plot devices. In the discussion below, I will consider a few instances of each of the above functions; other tags will be analysed below in Parts II and III in the discussion of selected novels.

Most critics who dealt with the "parallel" noticed, and sometimes founded their criticism on, the two authors' gift for creating memorable characters. Scott himself gave birth to this strand of criticism when he wrote in his *Quarterly Review* article of 1817 that the characters of the mysterious author were not inferior to those of Shakespeare.<sup>12</sup> Although in most cases Scott's Shakespearean characterisation is built on quotations and allusions in the text, Shakespearean tags sometimes contribute to the portrayal of a character by establishing a direct parallel with a Shakespearean one. The character of the Earl of Leicester in *Kenilworth* provides an example for this kind of portrayal.

The reading of *Kenilworth* suggests a parallel with *Othello*. The two works show a similarity of plot and characterisation. There are, however, no overt quotations or allusions to *Othello* in the novel. Like *Othello*, *Kenilworth* has as its main theme a tragedy caused by jealousy. The chapter describing the crooked ways by which Varney manages to convince Leicester of Amy's supposed infidelity, however, is not prefixed

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<sup>12</sup>See above.

by a tag from *Othello* but by a few lines from Leontes's speech of accusation of Hermione in *The Winter's Tale*:

I have said  
 She's an adulteress - I have said with whom  
 More, she's a traitor, and Camillo is  
 A federary with her, and one that knows  
 What she should shame to know herself.<sup>13</sup>

Like Leontes's, Leicester's suspicions are unfounded and false, but whereas in *The Winter's Tale*, it is Leontes's imagination which leads him to think his wife is an 'adulteress', in *Kenilworth* Leicester is fooled by Varney.

Leicester is the counterpart of the Moor of Venice: he is an esteemed leader in the state, a noble and proud man who can be easily led to credulity and who is unable to control his passions. He is often described as having a dark complexion; Sussex once calls him a 'gypsy'.<sup>14</sup> Two traits, however, distinguish Leicester from Othello, and these are ambition and vanity, by which the Moor is untainted.<sup>15</sup> These characteristics belong to Macbeth. The narrator uses a direct quotation from Shakespeare's play to establish a direct analogy between Leicester and Macbeth, when he describes Leicester's attempts 'to gather [...] "golden opinions from all sorts of men."' <sup>16</sup> Three epigraphs from *Macbeth* openly draw a parallel between Scott's character and the Scottish tragic hero.

The first tag precedes chapter 21:

<sup>13</sup>Cf. Walter Scott, *Kenilworth: A Romance*, ed. by J. H. Alexander (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), ch. 36, p. 334 and *Winter's Tale*, II. 1. 89-93.

<sup>14</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 342; see also pp. 75, 185.

<sup>15</sup>*Kenilworth*, pp. 183, 354, 357. Other parallels with *Othello* are those between Amy Robsart and Desdemona, Amy's father and Brabantio, Tressilian and Roderigo, and the elopements of the couples. The character who more than any others is clearly indebted to Shakespeare's play is Varney, Leicester's master of the horse, who shows a strong resemblance to Iago. There are many other parallels in the plot, such as that between the glove embroidered with the crest of the Earl in seed pearls that Amy loses in her struggle with her jailers and Desdemona's 'handkerchief / Spotted with strawberries'; cf. pp. 338-39 and III. 3. 439-40.

<sup>16</sup>Cf. *Kenilworth*, p. 168 and *Macbeth*, I. 7. 33. When Macbeth utters these words, he is thinking of stepping back from his purpose, but he is encouraged by his wife, as Leicester is continually strengthened in his purpose by Varney; see p. 184.

Vaulting ambition, that o'erleaps itself,  
And falls on 'tother side.<sup>17</sup>

At this stage of the narrative, Leicester stands high in the favour of the Queen and Elizabeth herself seems to be thinking of a possible union with him. The epigraph emphasises Leicester's ambition, but also the fact that Leicester's favourite star may suddenly change its course, thus foreshadowing the narrative's tragic ending. The second tag is taken from Lady Macbeth's speech to her husband during the banquet:

You have displaced the mirth, broke the good meeting  
With most admired disorder.<sup>18</sup>

In this chapter, the Queen rebukes Leicester for his inattention and his bad moods during the celebrations at Kenilworth Castle and, like Lady Macbeth, she requests him to 'favour us with more of your good countenance'.<sup>19</sup> Macbeth is distressed by the murder he has committed and by the apparition of the ghost of Banquo; in the same way, Leicester is upset by the presence of Amy at the Castle which could place him in a difficult position with the Queen.<sup>20</sup> The third epigraph regards the hero's state of mind: 'How is't with me, when every noise appals me?'.<sup>21</sup> Tressilian approaches Leicester in order to speak to him about Amy and, although 'The words were simple in themselves, [...] Lord Leicester was in that alarmed and feverish state of mind when the most ordinary occurrences seem fraught with alarming import'.<sup>22</sup> The knocking at the gate in the play and Tressilian's words in the novel bring out the pangs of a guilty conscience.

<sup>17</sup>Cf. *Kenilworth*, p. 209 and *Macbeth*, I. 7. 27-28.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. *Kenilworth*, ch. 37, p. 342 and *Macbeth*, III. 4. 108-9.

<sup>19</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 343.

<sup>20</sup>This parallel between Amy Robsart and the ghost of Banquo allows us to suggest that perhaps Leicester subconsciously wants Amy dead; she is, in fact, the only apparent obstacle to his union with Elizabeth.

<sup>21</sup>Cf. *Kenilworth*, ch. 38, p. 352 and *Macbeth*, II. 2. 56.

<sup>22</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 352.

The three epigraphs from *Macbeth* in *Kenilworth* served Scott the purpose of directing his readers' attention to Shakespeare's play so as to make them draw a parallel between the two heroes. *Macbeth* was one of Scott's favourite plays. In the 'Essay on the Drama' he wrote:

It is to the character of Macbeth, to his ambition, guilt, remorse, and final punishment, that the mind attaches itself during the whole play; and thus the succession of various incidents, unconnected excepting by the relation they bear to the principal personage, far from distracting the attention of the audience, continues to sharpen and irritate curiosity till the curtain drops over the fallen tyrant.<sup>23</sup>

In his portrayal of Leicester, it is debatable whether Scott achieved Shakespeare's greatness in the portrayal of Macbeth. He managed, however, to keep his readers' attention attached to the character throughout the narrative, and the epigraphs helped him in this purpose. Scott's imagination was probably affected by Macbeth's behaviour when he described Leicester's attempts to disguise his "crimes", that is his secret marriage with Amy Robsart, and later her murder.

*The Antiquary* offers an instance of deep psychological observation in the description of Isabella Wardour's state of mind when she thinks that Oldbuck will tell her father of her love relationship with Lovel:

She remained behind, attempting to converse with the ladies of Monkarns, but with the distracted feelings of Macbeth, when compelled to disguise his evil conscience, by listening and replying to the observations of the attendant thanes upon the storm of the preceding night, while his whole soul is upon the stretch to listen for the alarm of murder, which he knows must be instantly raised by those who have entered the sleeping apartment of Duncan.<sup>24</sup>

In *Guy Mannering*, a tag from *Macbeth* associates Meg Merrilies to the witches:

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<sup>23</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 300.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. Walter Scott, *The Antiquary*, ed. by David Hewitt (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), p. 181 and *Macbeth*, II. 3. 41-62.

Say from whence  
 You owe this strange intelligence? or why  
 Upon this blasted heath you stop our way  
 With such prophetic greeting?  
 Speak, I charge you.<sup>25</sup>

Meg leads Dominie Sampson to meet the young Bertram. In this parallel with the witches, a comparison with Mrs Siddons is made:

The mixture of insanity and wild pathos with which she spoke these last words, with her right arm bare and extended, her left bent and shrouded beneath the dark red drapery of her mantle, might have been a study worthy of our Siddons herself.<sup>26</sup>

When she leads Bertram in the journey through his memory which she hopes will make him recollect his true identity, Meg is presented with 'her skinny forefinger in a menacing attitude.'<sup>27</sup> The parallel between Meg and the witches is supported by another echo from the play when she takes Bertram and Dinmont 'across the wintry heath'.<sup>28</sup>

Scott commented on the witches in his 1818 review of Maturin's *Women; or, Pour et Contre: A Tale*:

The interview with the incarnate fiend of the forest, would, in these days, be supposed to have the same effect upon the mind of Bertram, as the 'metaphysical aid' of the witches produces upon that of Macbeth, awakening and stimulating that appetite for crime, which slumbered in the bosom of both, till called forth by supernatural suggestion.<sup>29</sup>

In *Kenilworth* we have no 'metaphysical aid'; Scott substituted the Iago-like character Varney for the supernatural witches. The portrayal of Varney is an example of a

<sup>25</sup>Cf. *Mannering*, ch. 46, p. 325 and *Macbeth*, I. 3. 73-76.

<sup>26</sup>*Mannering*, pp. 390-91.

<sup>27</sup>Cf. *Mannering*, p. 386 and *Macbeth*, I. 3. 42-43.

<sup>28</sup>Cf. *Mannering*, p. 387 and *Macbeth*, I. 3. 75. The witches reappear in *Antiquary*, p. 110, *Rob Roy*, p. 286, and *The Bride of Lammermoor*, ed. by J. H. Alexander (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), pp. 192, 257, 264.

<sup>29</sup>Walter Scott, 'Women; or, Pour et Contre', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, XVIII (1853), 172-208 (p. 207).

different, subtler characterisation for which Scott used no epigraphs but a series of hints and parallels instead.

In *Ivanhoe* Scott undertook the portrayal of a Jew. He borrowed three epigraphs from *The Merchant of Venice* to direct the readers' attention to Shylock. This does not necessarily mean that he wanted to associate the two characters. In reading the novel, those acquainted with Shakespeare's comedy soon realise that, despite the obvious similarities, the two characters are fundamentally different. This leads us to consider Scott's portrayal of Isaac of York as a deliberate revision of Shylock. The distance between Isaac and Shylock was noticed by Brewer who wrote:

Shakespeare made commendable the discomfiture of the Jew by the Christians and showed the meanness of Jewish character. Scott deprecated persecution on religious grounds and showed the noble character of the Jews.<sup>30</sup>

According to Brewer, Scott redeemed Shakespeare's Jews:

Scott makes his Jewish characters not similar to those of Shakespeare but opposite. [...] For in *The Merchant of Venice* Shakespeare gave expression to the religious prejudice of the sixteenth century and in *Ivanhoe* Scott spoke for the tolerance of the eighteenth century and the broad human sympathy of the nineteenth.<sup>31</sup>

Brewer's crude assumptions need refining. For Joseph E. Duncan:

The Hebraic culture, as represented by Isaac and Rebecca, is a kind of touchstone by which both Normans and Saxons may be judged. The Jews are conventionally charged with avarice, partly for the sake of comedy, but they are also the best representatives in the novel of the Christian virtues of love and sacrifice. Isaac and Rebecca are good Samaritans who care for Ivanhoe when his father Cedric is too proud to do so. Isaac rises to true heroism in his determination to endure any physical torture or financial sacrifice to save his daughter. This courageous devotion is in contrast with Cedric's treatment of Ivanhoe.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>30</sup>Brewer, p. 299.

<sup>31</sup>Brewer, p. 298.

<sup>32</sup>Joseph E. Duncan, 'The Anti-Romantic in *Ivanhoe*', in *Walter Scott: Modern Judgements*, ed. by D. D. Devlin (London: Macmillan, 1968), pp. 142-47 (p. 146).

Scott the historian was aware of the vicissitudes of the Jewish people and *Ivanhoe* could be considered as his response to the Jewish “problem”. In the early nineteenth century, England became a shelter for the Jews who were forced to leave other countries where they suffered persecution. In order to understand Scott’s view of the Jews, we should read the Dedicatory Epistle prefixed to *Ivanhoe*. Laurence Templeton illustrates to Dryasdust his choice of writing about ‘our ancient manners in modern language’, saying that what he has applied to the language, ‘is still more justly applicable to sentiments and manners.’ He explains his view with a parallel between Christians and Jews and two quotations from *The Merchant of Venice*:

Our ancestors were not more distinct from us, surely, than Jews are from Christians; they had ‘eyes, hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions’; were ‘fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer,’ as ourselves.<sup>33</sup>

Shylock was traditionally performed as a comic character, and consequently the audience showed him little sympathy. Richard Cumberland’s *The Jew* was performed in 1794, and, according to Toby Lelyveld, ‘it started a vogue for sentimental plays with long-suffering, whining and well-intentioned Jewish characters who were always vindicated in the end.’<sup>34</sup> Scott knew Cumberland, and although he thought ‘the old rogue [...] wanted originality’, his portrayal of Isaac of York recalls Cumberland’s conception of the Jew.<sup>35</sup> Scott also knew Edmund Kean whose performance as Shylock on 26 January 1814 initiated a new tradition in the acting of *The Merchant of Venice*.<sup>36</sup> Kean represented a passionate and tragic Shylock whose ‘Hath not a Jew eyes?’ speech

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<sup>33</sup>Weinstein, pp. 34-36.

<sup>34</sup>Toby Lelyveld, *Shylock on the Stage* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), p. 36.

<sup>35</sup>*Journal*, p. 58 (12 January 1826).

<sup>36</sup>Lelyveld, p. 40. For Scott’s comments on Kean see *Letters*, I, 479; III, 416, 423; IV, 23, 41, 57, 290, 432, 437, 458; V, 339; XII, 362, 363, 424.

gave the actor great acclaim. We cannot see Isaac of York as 'a persecuted martyr', but we can see him as humane and humble, certainly not to be compared to the harsh and avenging Shylock of Macready or to the mannered Shylock of J. P. Kemble.<sup>37</sup> According to Lelyveld, the audience who went to see Kean in this role: 'felt that Shylock had been wronged, but that despite his bitterness and anguish, he kept his dignity and grandeur, and the result was a Manfred-like character dear to the romantic soul.'<sup>38</sup>

In *Ivanhoe*, the epigraphs from *The Merchant of Venice* are always applied to the character of Isaac of York. His request for shelter at Rotherwood in chapter 5 is preceded by Shylock's famous speech to which Kean had given such pathos:

Hath not a Jew eyes? Hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? Fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is?<sup>39</sup>

The following epigraph precedes chapter 6:

To buy his favour I extend this friendship:  
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;  
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.<sup>40</sup>

Chapter 22 where Isaac has to choose between his wealth and his daughter is prefixed by the following quotation:

My daughter! O my ducats! O my daughter!  
... O my Christian ducats!  
Justice - the Law - my ducats and my daughter!<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Lelyveld, p. 51.

<sup>38</sup>Lelyveld, p. 58.

<sup>39</sup>Cf. Walter Scott, *Ivanhoe*, Dryburgh Edition, IX (1893), p. 38 and *Merchant*, III. 1. 54-59.

<sup>40</sup>Cf. *Ivanhoe*, p. 47 and *Merchant*, I. 3. 167-69.

<sup>41</sup>*Merchant*, II. 8. 15-17. A closer analysis of the other two Jewish characters of the novel, Rabbi Ben Samuel and Rebecca, points out their distance from their Shakespearean counterparts Tubal and Jessica. See Brewer, pp. 298-300.

These three epigraphs from *The Merchant of Venice* are strengthened by the presence of two mottoes from other sources which also apply to the character of the Jew. Chapter 10 is preceded by the following tag from Christopher Marlowe's *The Jew of Malta*:

Thus, like the sad presaging raven, that tolls  
The sick man's passport in her hollow beak,  
And in the shadow of the silent night  
Doth shake contagion from her sable wings;  
Vex'd and tormented, runs poor Barrabas,  
With fatal curses towards these Christians.<sup>42</sup>

The tag to chapter 28 is signed *The Jew* and has been attributed to Scott:

The wandering race, sever'd from other men,  
Boast yet their intercourse with human arts;  
The seas, the woods, the deserts, which they haunt,  
Find them acquainted with their secret treasures;  
And unregarded herbs, and flowers, and blossoms,  
Display undreamt-of powers when gather'd by them.<sup>43</sup>

In 1820, six dramas taken from *Ivanhoe* were performed. Their titles show that the main interest was centred in the character of the Jew and of his daughter.<sup>44</sup> Lelyveld tells us that the representations of these dramatic versions of the Jewish theme contributed to the expansion of tolerance towards the Jews in early-nineteenth-century England.<sup>45</sup>

Shakespearean epigraphs have also the function of recalling a precedent on which Scott would rely to build his own narrative technique. This device appeared in *Guy Mannering*, his second novel, where three tags come from *The Winter's Tale*. The

<sup>42</sup>Cf. *Ivanhoe*, p. 93 and Christopher Marlowe, *The Jew of Malta*, ed. by N. W. Bawcutt, The Revels Plays (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1978), II. 1. 1-6.

<sup>43</sup>*Ivanhoe*, p. 254.

<sup>44</sup>Richard Ford, *Dramatisations of Scott's Novels: A Catalogue*, Oxford Bibliographical Society (Oxford: Bodleian Library, 1979), pp. 20-21.

<sup>45</sup>Lelyveld, p. 58.

first precedes chapter 11 in which the narrative is resumed after an interval of seventeen years:

*Enter Time, as Chorus*  
 I, that please some, try all, both joy and terror  
 Of good and bad; that make and unfold error,  
 Now take upon me, in the name of Time,  
 To use my wings. Impute it not a crime,  
 To me, or my swift passage, that I slide  
 O'er sixteen years, and leave the growth untried  
 Of that wide gap.<sup>46</sup>

These lines are recalled in the narrative which follows:

Our narration is now about to make a large stride, and omit a space of nearly seventeen years; during which nothing occurred of any particular consequence with respect to the story we have undertaken to tell. The gap is a wide one.<sup>47</sup>

'[N]early seventeen years' parallels Shakespeare's 'o'er sixteen years': both create a 'wide gap'. *The Winter's Tale* helped Scott to forward his narrative by providing a precedent. In *Guy Mannering*, the seventeen-year disruption of time serves many purposes. First, it allows the narrator to provide the reader with a direct knowledge of past events together with their effects on the main characters. It also introduces new characters whose fate depends on those past events. Finally, it shows the social and economic changes which had taken place in Scotland in that period of time.

In the 'Essay on the Drama', Scott recognised that: 'The extravagant conduct of the plot in the *Winter's Tale* has gone far to depreciate that Drama, which, in passages of detached beauty, is inferior to none of Shakspeare's in the opinion of the best judges.' Scott suggested that the staging of this play 'might perhaps be improved in acting, by performing the three first acts as a play, and the fourth and fifth as an afterpiece.'<sup>48</sup>

<sup>46</sup>Cf. *Mannering*, p. 68 and *Winter's Tale*, IV. 1. 1-7.

<sup>47</sup>*Mannering*, p. 68.

<sup>48</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 303.

David Garrick's *Florizel and Perdita* (1758) begins after the sixteen-year gap and respects the unities.<sup>49</sup> J. P. Kemble maintained the time break, but got rid of the figure of Time thus leaving the audience in a state of confusion and bewilderment when the second half of the play started. Daniel Terry's *Guy Mannering; or, The Gipsy's Prophecy* (1816) commenced after the gap of time, setting the example for ten following dramatisations of *Guy Mannering*.<sup>50</sup> Scott kept faithful to Shakespeare when he employed the quotation from 'Time, as Chorus' to bridge the two halves of his narrative.

The two other tags from *The Winter's Tale* in *Guy Mannering* do not refer directly to the chronological break in the narrative, but they are there to remind the reader of the link with Shakespeare's play established earlier on and to sustain Scott's device. Bertram's journey into Scotland is prefixed by four lines from Autolycus's song:

Jog on, jog on, the footpath way,  
And merrily hend the stile a;  
A merry heart goes all the day,  
A sad one tires in a mile a.<sup>51</sup>

The following chapter is also tagged by some lines from Autolycus's speech: 'Gallows and knock are too powerful on the highway.'<sup>52</sup> The chapter relates Bertram's rescue of Dinmont from an assault by robbers, after which Dinmont invites him to spend a few days at his house in Liddesdale. Bertram's stay at Charlie's Hope offers Scott the opportunity to describe the blissful and ancient life of a Scottish farm and to portray a hunting scene.

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<sup>49</sup>For a survey of eighteenth-century performances of the play, see Dennis Bartholomeusz, 'The Winter's Tale' in *Performance in England and America 1611-1976* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), pp. 28-41.

<sup>50</sup>A dramatic version of 1863 kept the seventeen-year time-lapse, and an 1886 version a gap of twenty years. See Ford, pp. 11-14.

<sup>51</sup>Cf. *Mannering*, ch. 22, p. 138 and *Winter's Tale*, IV. 3. 123-26.

<sup>52</sup>Cf. *Mannering*, ch. 23, p. 145 and *Winter's Tale*, IV. 3. 28.

Besides lending Scott the time-gap device, *The Winter's Tale* furnished him with two motifs, the lost child and the jealous husband, which he then reworked. According to Jane Millgate, the presence of *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* in *Guy Mannering*:

serves to define not merely the continuities between Scott's fiction and its pastoral and romance predecessors, but also what is essentially different about his transposition of the stylized patterns and timeless themes of romance into the realistic and time-bound world of the novel.<sup>53</sup>

For Graham McMaster, 'More central however is the abstraction of the idea of winter and the deliberateness of the "seasonal" imagery.'<sup>54</sup>

In *Pevekil of the Peak*, the lapse of time is supported by a motto from *Antony and Cleopatra*:

*Cleopatra*. Give me to drink mandragora,  
That I may sleep away this gap of time.

This tag is situated between two references to the time gap. The first comes at the end of chapter 9: 'The progress of the history hath hitherto been slow; but after this period so little matter worthy of mark occurred at Martindale that we must hurry over hastily the transactions of several years.'<sup>55</sup> Chapter 10 does not begin with a reference to the epigraph as it often happens in the other narratives, but to the previous chapter, instead:

There passed, as we hinted at the conclusion of the last chapter, four or five years after the period we have dilated upon, the events of which scarcely require to be discussed, so far as our present purpose is concerned, in as many lines.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Jane Millgate, 'The Structure of "Guy Mannering"', in *Scott and His Influence: The Papers of the Aberdeen Scott Conference, 1982*, ed. by J. H. Alexander and David Hewitt, Occasional Papers: Number 6 (Aberdeen: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1983), pp. 109-18 (p. 115).

<sup>54</sup>McMaster, *Scott and Society*, p. 162.

<sup>55</sup>*Pevekil*, p. 100.

<sup>56</sup>*Pevekil*, p. 101.

The narrator proceeds to inform the readers of the events which occurred during those four or five years, re-enacting the function which Time as Chorus has in *The Winter's Tale*.

Scott discussed the unity of time in his introduction to Dryden's *All for Love* (1677). He started by comparing Dryden's drama to its predecessor, *Antony and Cleopatra*. With regard to the unity of time, he wrote:

Time is lost before [the spectator] can form new associations, and reconcile their bearings with those originally presented to him, and if he be a person of slow comprehension, or happens to lose any part of the dialogue, announcing the changes, the whole becomes unintelligible confusion. In this respect, and in discarding a number of uninteresting characters, the plan of Dryden's play must be unequivocally preferred to that of Shakespeare in point of coherence, unity, and simplicity. [...] The union of time, as necessary as that of place to the intelligibility of the drama, has, in like manner, been happily attained; and an interesting event is placed before the audience with no other change of place, and no greater lapse of time, than can be readily adapted to an ordinary imagination.<sup>57</sup>

Scott, however, employed the chronological break and did not seem anxious about his readers' understanding of the narrative. He was aware that they would follow the events easily, but he still thought it was necessary to emphasise the lapse of time; and in *Peveiril of the Peak* he referred to it three times in the space of two pages.

In *Saint Ronan's Well* a plot device is introduced which Shakespeare had made use of both in *Hamlet* and in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. In chapter 20, the people at the Well decide to set up a dramatic performance at Mowbray's Castle; the chapter which describes it is prefixed by the title 'THEATRICALS'. A quotation from *Hamlet* follows: 'The play's the thing.'<sup>58</sup> Among many dramatists, Lady Penelope selects

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<sup>57</sup>*The Works of John Dryden*, V (1883), p. 308. Scott also preferred Dryden's choice of the unity of place: 'Shakespeare, with the licence peculiar to his age and character, had diffused the action of his play over Italy, Greece, and Egypt; but Dryden, who was well aware of the advantage to be derived from a simplicity and concentration of plot, has laid every scene in the city of Alexandria.' (p. 307)

<sup>58</sup>Cf. *Hamlet*, II. 2. 606 and Walter Scott, *Saint Ronan's Well*, ed. by Mark A. Weinstein (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1995), p. 181.

Shakespeare 'as the author whose immortal works were fresh in every one's recollection.' *A Midsummer Night's Dream* is chosen 'as the play which afforded the greatest variety of characters, and most scope of course for the intended representation.'

Everybody looks for a copy of the play,

for, notwithstanding Lady Penelope's declaration, that every one who could read had Shakspeare's plays by heart, it appeared that such of his dramas as have not kept possession of the stage, were very little known at Saint Ronan's, save among those people who are emphatically called readers.<sup>59</sup>

This passage deploys some irony towards the "admirers" of Shakespeare, who proclaim their knowledge of Shakespeare to enhance themselves in other people's eyes. It also emphasises the fact that a play acted is more likely to be remembered than a play read.

In *Hamlet*, the 'Mousetrap' is used to confirm Hamlet's suspicion that Claudius murdered his father. In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, the performance of Bottom and his friends works as a device by which the fairies can manipulate the humans. In *Saint Ronan's Well*, the performance is the vehicle through which Scott conveys some irony towards bourgeois pretensions. There are no changes in the characters in this chapter; the Earl of Etherington even keeps his mask on to avoid being recognised by Clara Mowbray.<sup>60</sup>

Chapter-tags often provide a background to the plot of the chapters they head. In *Kenilworth* the tag from *Richard II* derives from Richard's speech when he summons Bolingbroke and Mowbray to his presence in order to try to appease their animosity:

Then call them to our presence. Face to face,  
And frowning brow to brow, ourselves will hear  
The accuser and accused freely speak;

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<sup>59</sup>*Ronan's Well*, p. 183.

<sup>60</sup>In *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Lord Dalgarno takes Nigel to a performance of *Richard III* in which Burbage interprets Richard. The narrator's description of Nigel's feelings at the performance reminds us of Scott's belief that the theatre had the capacity to modify the audience's state of mind. See *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Dryburgh Edition, XIV (1893), pp. 149-51.

High-stomach'd are they both and full of ire,  
In rage deaf as the sea, hasty as fire.<sup>61</sup>

Bolingbroke and Mowbray are replaced by Leicester and Sussex. At the end of chapter 16, Elizabeth formally summons her two principal advisors at the privy council.

Other times, mottoes illustrate the plot of the whole novel. In *The Abbot* (1820) the chapter describing Mary's abdication is prefixed by a few lines from Richard II's speech when he surrenders the crown:

I give this heavy weight from off my head,  
And this unwieldy sceptre from my hand;  
With mine own tears I wash away my balm,  
With my own hand I give away my crown,  
With mine own tongue deny my sacred state,  
With mine own breath release all duteous oaths.<sup>62</sup>

Although the abdication of Mary is kept private, the tag emphasises the monarch's semi-voluntary resignation of the crown. Robert Kay Gordon sees instead a parallel between the scene of Mary's abdication and Act II, scene 1 in *Henry VIII*:

In *The Abbot* (chaps. xxi and xxii) when Ruthven, Lindesay, and Melville prevail upon Queen Mary to resign her throne, Scott was probably thinking again of Mrs. Siddons and Kemble. He greatly admired their portrayal of Queen Katherine and Wolsey in *Henry VIII*. A comparison of the scene in *The Abbot* with *Henry VIII*, III.1., the scene in which Katherine is forced by Wolsey and Campeius to give up her title as Queen, makes it hard to believe that one scene did not influence or perhaps suggest the other.<sup>63</sup>

Gordon's suggestion is valid. We have seen above how in *Kenilworth Macbeth* is the play which most affects the character of the Earl and his sub-plot though the play that most affects the novel as a whole is *Othello*. In this instance, however, Scott chose a

<sup>61</sup>Cf. *Kenilworth*, ch. 16, p. 150 and *Richard II*, I. 1. 15-19.

<sup>62</sup>Cf. Walter Scott, *The Abbot*, Dryburgh Edition, XI (1893), ch. 22, p. 227 and *Richard II*, IV. 1. 194-95, 197-200.

<sup>63</sup>R. K. Gordon, 'Scott and Shakespeare's Tragedies', p. 113, n. 5.

quotation from *Richard II* and not from *Henry VIII* and this points to the fact that he wanted to draw a parallel with the first play. *Richard II* was a favourite of Scott, furnishing 15 chapter-tags and many allusions to abdication. As we will see below, the play is central to *Woodstock*. In *Anne of Geierstein*, King René is led to 'Resign [his] useless and unavailing dignity' as a monarch by his daughter; chapter 32 is preceded by these lines from *Richard II*:

For I have given here my full consent,  
To undeck the pompous body of a king,  
Make glory base, and sovereignty a slave,  
Proud Majesty a subject, state a peasant.<sup>64</sup>

In the Waverley Novels, we also have tags which establish a series of parallels between their source and the following chapter. The most quoted example is the motto preceding chapter 24 of *The Bride of Lammermoor*:

*Hamlet.*       Has this fellow no feeling of his business -- he sings at grave making.  
*Horatio.*       Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness.  
*Hamlet.*       'Tis e'en so: the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense.<sup>65</sup>

The quotation is taken from the famous dialogue between Hamlet and the grave-digger on which the conversation between Edgar and Mortsheugh is modelled. In Scott's novel, the meeting occurs on the occasion of the funeral of Alice Gray and not of the hero's beloved. This is the only epigraph from *Hamlet* in the novel; the association of Edgar with Hamlet has already been prepared by numerous verbal echoes. When the readers come to this chapter they have already accepted Edgar as a Hamlet-like character.

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<sup>64</sup>Cf. Walter Scott, *Anne of Geierstein*, Dryburgh Edition, XXIII (1894), p. 401 and *Richard II*, IV. 1. 239-42.

<sup>65</sup>Cf. *Hamlet*, V. 1. 65-70 and *Lammermoor*, p. 194.

Epigraphs not only provide verbal parallelisms and analogies but also have the function of illustrating Scott's view of history. For Scott, the greatest achievement of Shakespeare's chronicles was to have taught history to men and women of all classes. The history plays reminded the audience of long-forgotten national events: 'What points of our national annals are ever most fresh and glowing in our recollection? - those which unite history with the stage.'<sup>66</sup> Scott remarked that:

It may be said by the rigid worshipper of unadorned truth, that history is rather defaced than embellished by becoming the subject of fictitious composition. These scruples are founded on prejudice - that mischievous prejudice which will not admit that knowledge can be valuable unless transmitted through the dullest and most disagreeable medium. Many are led to study history from having first read it as mingled with poetic fiction.<sup>67</sup>

Georg Lukács treated Scott's representation of history in his seminal work *The Historical Novel* (1937). Lukács praised Scott's conception of history, which was that of a 'realist' who portrayed the past ages as they actually were and made them re-liveable to the reader of a later age. The main aim of the historical novel, in fact, is to evoke the present by portraying the past; in this way, the knowledge of the past becomes 'valuable' to the present.<sup>68</sup> Like the epigraphs from Scottish ballads and songs, which contributed to shaping Scotland's literary taste and identity, quotations from the history plays served Scott the purpose of commenting on political issues of the past and of the present. According to Bloomfield:

by using quotation and allusion, one bridges the distance between past and present and to some extent between present and future. [...] past and present come together in using, and quoting from, the great literature, above all the canonical and monumental literature of the past whereby the union of a man with a great man in the past is achieved [sic].<sup>69</sup>

<sup>66</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 157.

<sup>67</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 158.

<sup>68</sup>Georg Lukács, *The Historical Novel*, trans. by H. and S. Mitchell (1937; London: Merlin, 1962).

<sup>69</sup>Bloomfield, p. 16.

The function described by Bloomfield is probably better illustrated by the tags from the history plays which are the most frequent in the *Waverley* Novels, providing 81 chapters with a quotation.

The 2 *Henry IV* tag on the title page of *Waverley*, quoted above, illustrates how Scott managed to bridge the distance between past and present; between the past described by Shakespeare and the present of his own narrative. In the play, a dialogue between Pistol and Shallow is construed on a misunderstanding about the identity of the King. In the novel, the hero starts out as a supporter of the Hanoverian dynasty and later changes his mind, becoming a supporter of the Jacobite cause. *Waverley's* decision is accompanied by an unuttered quotation from *King John*. The hero's unspoken quotations are significant because they regard the changes of direction in his life. After the disillusionment with the Hanoverian dynasty, Edward wonders why he did not:

like other men of honour, take the earliest opportunity to welcome to Britain the descendant of her ancient kings and lineal heir of her throne? Why did not I -  
Unthread the rude eye of rebellion,  
And welcome home again discarded faith,  
Seek out Prince Charles, and fall before his feet?<sup>70</sup>

This quotation from *King John* sanctions Edward's decision to become a supporter of the Jacobite cause. The same lines appear in a later novel, *Woodstock*, as Sir Henry Lee's very last quotation from Shakespeare.<sup>71</sup> *Woodstock*, also a tale of rebellion, ends with the restoration of the legitimate monarch, whereas in *Waverley* the insurrection is destructive and concludes with the flight of the royal heir.

<sup>70</sup>*Waverley*, p. 216 and *King John*, V. 4. 11-13.

<sup>71</sup>See below, ch. 2.4.

*Old Mortality* is a novel about political conflict and social change which depicts the Covenanters' revolt of 1679 against the government of Charles II. Of the 12 epigraphs from Shakespeare in this novel, half derive from *1 and 2 Henry IV*, *Richard II*, and *Henry V*. The same frequency of history plays tags appears in *Ivanhoe*, *The Abbot*, where the 4 Shakespearean epigraphs are taken from the history plays, *Quentin Durward*, *Woodstock*, *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1828), and *Anne of Geierstein*.

The above analysis of the "parallel" and of the epigraph prepares the ground for my discussion of Scott's criticism of Shakespeare in Part II. Scott's insight as a literary and dramatic critic is often overlooked by Scott scholars and has not yet been the object of serious study. After reassessing Scott's much neglected Shakespearean criticism in his miscellaneous prose writings and in some of his narratives, I will focus on Scott's intention to edit Shakespeare's works.

The analysis of Scott's criticism of Shakespeare will lead me to focus on Scott's involvement with drama. The theatre was Scott's lifelong passion. He was an assiduous theatre-goer and a good theatre critic. He also tried his skill in dramatic writing producing five pieces. Scott's dramas were obscured by his poems and novels which were more appealing to the reading public, and they were not performed on the stage. On the contrary, the high dramatic potential of the Waverley Novels made them easily transformed into dramas, melodramas, burlesques, and operas whose performances attracted huge audiences. The great success met by these adaptations may suggest the essentially dramatic character of Scott's work. This chapter will endeavour to suggest that Scott's latent dramatic power could not be released into a theatrical production, but developed instead in the dramatic novel.

The reading of *Kenilworth* and *Woodstock* will conclude this section. *Kenilworth* gives a view of Shakespeare as he was seen by his contemporaries in the age of Elizabeth - as a player - and offers a critique of his innovative contribution to the theatre. *Woodstock* gives an interesting and illuminating view of the way Shakespeare was “appropriated” by the Cavaliers in the troubled years of the Interregnum and in particular of the way in which Shakespeare became a *raison d’être* for the main character of the novel - in which Scott possibly presented a self-portrait.

## PART II

### Scott's Shakespeare

#### 2.1 Shakespeare read 'luxuriously'

The length of Scott's lifespan (1771-1832) allowed him to experience both the late-eighteenth-century re-discovery of Shakespeare and the Romantics' Bardolatry. Scott's contribution to the popularization of Shakespeare in the nineteenth century has been underestimated. As a foremost literary figure in the British intellectual panorama of the period, Scott had influence on the taste of the British, and European, reading public. His enthusiasm for Shakespeare, which emerges in his writings, the great success of the Waverley Novels and the huge number of readers they attracted naturally exerted a strong impact on his readership.

Shakespearean idolatry may be said to have started officially with the Stratford Jubilee of 1769. According to Graham Holderness, before that date 'there were a few isolated prophets,' but only with Garrick's Jubilee did Bardolatry assume the character of 'an organised evangelical movement',<sup>1</sup> which, Frank Ernest Halliday writes, 'firmly established the Shakespeare Cult as an integral part of the English way of life.'<sup>2</sup> The word 'Bardolatry', or worship of the Bard, was coined by George Bernard Shaw in 1905. Shaw's intention when he devised this term was not one of praise.<sup>3</sup> As Michèle Willems comments, Shaw's 'combat contre ce qu'il baptise "bardolatry", n'est qu'une

<sup>1</sup>Graham Holderness, 'Bardolatry: or, the cultural materialist's guide to Stratford-upon-Avon', in *The Shakespeare Myth*, ed. by Graham Holderness (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988), pp. 2-15 (p. 3).

<sup>2</sup>Frank Ernest Halliday, *The Cult of Shakespeare* (London: Gerald Duckworth, 1957), p. xi.

<sup>3</sup>Shaw first used the word 'Bardolatry' in an article for *The Daily News* of 13 April 1905. See *Shaw on Shakespeare: An Anthology of Bernard Shaw's Writings on the Plays and Production of Shakespeare*, ed. by Edwin Wilson (London: Cassell, 1961), pp. 1-3.

manière parmi d'autres de prendre ses distances à l'égard d'une société traditionaliste, dominée par un *Establishment* qu'il méprise, et dont Shakespeare lui semble être la bonne conscience et l'alibi.'<sup>4</sup> The word soon detached itself from the political meaning which Shaw had attributed to it and assumed a positive nuance indicating "love of the Bard."

One of the main duties of a Bardolater is to visit Shakespeare's home town. It may appear strange that Scott, a Shakespeare worshipper, waited until almost the end of his life to make his pilgrimage to Shakespeare's shrine:

We visited the tomb of the mighty wizzard. It is in the bad taste of James Ist's reign but what a magic does the locality possess. There are stately monuments of forgotten families but when you have seen Shakspeare what care we for the rest? All around is Shakspeare[']s] exclusive property.<sup>5</sup>

After seeing the tomb of the 'mighty wizzard', there is not much left to see. At the time he visited Stratford-upon-Avon, Scott was a middle-aged man and the visit represented the crown of his desires:

This visit gave me great pleasure; it really brought Justice Shallow freshly before my eyes - the *lucres* in his arms which do become an old coat well were not more lively plainly pourtrayd in his own armorials in the hall window than was his person in my mind's eye.<sup>6</sup>

In the eighteenth and still into the early nineteenth century, critics venerated Shakespeare as the noble savage, the true child of nature, and regarded his writings as the self-revelation of a great personality endowed with unusual sensibility: he 'was the

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<sup>4</sup>Michèle Willems, *La Genèse du Mythe Shakespearien: 1660-1780*, Publications de l'Université de Rouen (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1979), p. 14.

<sup>5</sup>*Journal*, p. 454 (8 April 1828). Scott probably refers to the Janssen monument, which Samuel Schoenbaum has called 'a respectable example of Jacobean Renaissance style.' See Samuel Schoenbaum, *Shakespeare's Lives* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1970), p. 5; henceforth referred to as Schoenbaum.

<sup>6</sup>*Journal*, p. 455.

glory of English letters.’<sup>7</sup> Although critical essays on Shakespeare had appeared since the appreciative tones of Dryden’s *Essay of Dramatic Poesy* (1668), the sixty-year period which spans the two centuries produced the greatest amount of critical contributions to Shakespearean scholarship.<sup>8</sup>

Scott’s position in Shakespearean criticism is a peculiar one. He possesses a doubleness of vision for he agrees with both the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century views. As Robert W. Babcock attempts to demonstrate, much Romantic criticism derived from ideas which were first formulated in the previous century.<sup>9</sup> Jonathan Bate opposes Babcock who, in his view, does not realize that ‘it is the combination of ideas, the arguments into which they are built, that matter most’, but he allows that ‘Romantic Shakespearean criticism synthesizes and refines what has gone before.’<sup>10</sup>

As a critic, Scott has been defined as ‘a child of the eighteenth century’.<sup>11</sup> He developed his criticism from the writings of Dryden, Dr Johnson, and other eighteenth-century editors, but he agreed especially with Dr Johnson’s views: he believed that Shakespeare composed his dramas rapidly and almost carelessly, that he despised regularity, and that he preferred to write many dramas which contained faults than a few of them perfectly.<sup>12</sup> Given Scott’s reverence for Shakespeare, he could not but admire the means by which the dramatist had achieved immortality and he recognized his spontaneous self-expression and neglect of rules as the best way of writing for authors

<sup>7</sup>David Nichol Smith, ‘Introduction’, in *Eighteenth Century Essays on Shakespeare*, ed. by David Nichol Smith, 2nd edn (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1963), pp. xi-lxii (p. xi); henceforth referred to as Nichol Smith.

<sup>8</sup>For an anthological survey respectively of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century writings on Shakespeare, see Nichol Smith and *The Romantics*.

<sup>9</sup>See Robert W. Babcock, *The Genesis of Shakespeare Idolatry, 1766-1799: A Study in English Criticism of the Late Eighteenth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1931), pp. 211-39. Babcock writes of ‘imitation’ by the Romantics (p. 211).

<sup>10</sup>Jonathan Bate, *Shakespeare and the English Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1986), pp. 12, 14.

<sup>11</sup>Oliver Elton, *Sir Walter Scott* (London: Edward Arnold, 1924), p. 85.

<sup>12</sup>Scott’s allegiance to Dr Johnson’s critical writings is easily detectable in his indirect criticism of Shakespeare; see below.

to adopt. Although his ideas on Shakespeare as a playwright came mostly from the eighteenth-century school, Scott took something from the Romantic one with which, and with whose proponents, he was also intimate. A. W. Schlegel and S. T. Coleridge, the two foremost critics of the Romantic period, opposed Dr Johnson's *Preface* (1765) and especially his belief that Shakespeare wrote without a moral purpose. Their rejection of the eighteenth-century view came from a new approach to Shakespeare's plays which perceived them as 'organic' wholes. Coleridge, in particular, insisted that every work of art must be judged by its own organic laws, that is by getting to its focus and judging all the parts as so many irradiations from it. He imputed the past condemnation of Shakespeare as a wild genius to an error of the critics who had confounded 'mechanical regularity with organic form.'<sup>13</sup> To Coleridge, Shakespeare's plays were perfect specimens of organic unity: they were unified in feeling, character, and impression, and the product of a mind endowed with the ability of infallible insights into the human heart. It is possible to suggest that the profound and illuminating Shakespearean criticism of both the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, although they were often in contrast to each other, contributed to increase Scott's fondness for the dramatist and offered a favourable context for his intertextual practice.

Scott treated Shakespeare and his work on several occasions and from many points of view. His critical approach to Shakespeare was atypical. He did not write a direct study of Shakespeare, nor did he focus his attention on him as Coleridge, for instance, did in his lectures or marginalia.<sup>14</sup> His views of Shakespeare lie scattered throughout the whole corpus of his work. Scott's Shakespearean criticism is always encompassed by a context which does not concern Shakespeare directly; it derives from, and applies to, the discussion of another author's work or of a particular topic, a

<sup>13</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 128.

<sup>14</sup>See below for Scott's intention to publish an edition of Shakespeare.

character or plot-situation in the novels, or a Shakespearean actor's performances. Scott's major treatment of Shakespeare appears in 'The Life of John Dryden' (1808), the 'Essay on the Drama' (1819), and the 'Life of Kemble' (1826). The first two works are relevant to the understanding of Scott's opinions on the drama and the theatre, whereas the memoir of Kemble provides valuable criticism on Shakespeare's tragic heroes. Scott's opinions regarding Shakespeare and drama in general are detectable in most of his other miscellaneous writings. His approach changes in the novels where characters and plot become the starting point from which he develops an indirect analysis of Shakespeare as a man and as a writer and comments on the Shakespearean performers of his day.

Scott was a great admirer of Dryden whose *Works* he edited. His 'Life of Dryden' is a tribute to a poet he considered 'second only to [...] Milton and [...] Shakspeare.'<sup>15</sup> From the very beginning of this biography, Scott departed from the discussion of Dryden to write about Shakespeare. He agreed with Dryden's portrayal of Shakespeare as the man who, 'of all modern, and perhaps ancient, poets, [...] had the largest and most comprehensive soul, and intuitive knowledge of human nature'.<sup>16</sup> He shared the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century view of Shakespeare as the "poet of nature" which had begun with Ben Jonson's eulogy in the 1623 Folio. In his dedicatory poem, Jonson wrote of Shakespeare:

Nature herself was proud of his designs,  
And joyed to wear the dressing of his lines, [...]  
Yet must I not give nature all; thy art,  
My gentle Shakespeare, must enjoy a part.<sup>17</sup>

<sup>15</sup>Walter Scott, 'The Life of John Dryden', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, I (1852), p. 453; henceforth referred to as 'Life of Dryden'. See also below, ch. 3.3, for Scott's portrayal of an admirer of Dryden.

<sup>16</sup>Reported in 'Life of Dryden', p. 79. Cf. 'An Essay on Dramatic Poesy', in *The Works of John Dryden*, XV (1892), 283-377 (p. 344).

<sup>17</sup>Ben Jonson, 'To the memory of my beloved, The AUTHOR MASTER WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, AND what he hath left us', in *The Complete Works*, pp. xlv-xlvi, lines 47-48, 55-56.

Ben Jonson's identification of Shakespeare's works with the works of nature left a strong impression on later critics. Dryden thought that Shakespeare 'was naturally learned; he needed not the spectacles of books to read nature; he looked inwards, and found her there.'<sup>18</sup> Later, Dr Johnson described the Renaissance dramatist as 'the poet of nature; the poet that holds up to his readers a faithful mirror of manners and of life.'<sup>19</sup> Alexander Pope, on the contrary, questioned this view of Shakespeare and attributed his alleged 'want of learning' to 'the many blunders and illiteracies of the first Publishers of his works' who were to be considered as ignorant.<sup>20</sup> To Pope, Shakespeare was 'not so much an Imitator, as an Instrument, of Nature'. Pope disagreed with the view which saw Shakespeare's characters as 'Copies' of nature. On the contrary, he thought that nature spoke through Shakespeare.<sup>21</sup>

The Art/Nature opposition became commonplace criticism in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. As Gary Taylor observes:

the argument between critical theorists over the respective merits of Art as opposed to Nature, technique against intuition, had resolved itself during the Restoration period into a battle between Ben Jonson (in the corner of Art) and William Shakespeare (in the corner of Nature), and Rowe's defense of Shakespeare throughout the preface repeatedly entails a corresponding spoken or unspoken denigration of Jonson.<sup>22</sup>

In Margreta de Grazia's view, the contrast between the learning of Ben Jonson and the supposed ignorance of Shakespeare owes its 'historical force and longevity to two monumental publications.'<sup>23</sup> Shakespeare's First Folio gave birth to the 'topos' of

<sup>18</sup>Cf. 'An Essay on Dramatic Poesy', p. 344.

<sup>19</sup>Samuel Johnson, 'Preface to "The Plays of William Shakespeare" 1765', in Nichol Smith, pp. 104-50 (p. 106).

<sup>20</sup>Alexander Pope, 'Preface to "The Works of Shakespear" 1725', in Nichol Smith, pp. 44-58 (p. 52).

<sup>21</sup>Nichol Smith, pp. 44-45.

<sup>22</sup>Gary Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present* (London: Vintage, 1989), pp. 79-80.

<sup>23</sup>Margreta de Grazia, *Shakespeare Verbatim: The Reproduction of Authenticity and the 1790 Apparatus* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991), p. 46.

Shakespeare as the 'poet of nature' which recurs in all critical writings on Shakespeare until the time of A. W. Schlegel and Coleridge. Ben Jonson's 1616 Folio had instead associated its author with art.<sup>24</sup>

Scott followed the example of his predecessors in contrasting the two Elizabethan dramatists:

The one is like an ancient statue, the beauty of which, springing from the exactness of proportion, does not always strike at first sight, but rises upon us as we bestow time in considering it; the other is the representation of a monster, which is at first only surprising, and ludicrous or disgusting ever after.<sup>25</sup>

The indication of Shakespeare as a 'monster' sounds like a strange way of describing a favourite author, but it is expressive of Scott's idea of Shakespeare as almost a "supernatural entity". Scott underlines the differences between the two dramatists in the 'Essay on the Drama', and this time he lets his predilection for Shakespeare emerge more clearly:

Much, perhaps, might have been achieved by [...] blending the art of Jonson with the fiery invention and fluent expression of his great contemporary. But such a union of opposite excellences in the same author was hardly to be expected; nor, perhaps, would the result have proved altogether so favourable, as might at first view be conceived. We should have had more perfect specimens of the art; but they must have been much fewer in number; and posterity would certainly have been deprived of that rich luxuriance of dramatic excellences and poetic beauties, which, like wild-flowers upon a common field, lie scattered profusely among the unacted plays of Shakspeare.<sup>26</sup>

Scott's use of the adjective 'fiery' and 'fluent' with regard to Shakespeare and the simple indication of 'art' for Jonson reveal his preference for Shakespeare's method of composition. The union of Shakespeare's qualities with Jonson's art would probably

<sup>24</sup>See de Grazia, pp. 45, 33-39.

<sup>25</sup>'Life of Dryden', p. 8.

<sup>26</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 342. The 'unacted plays' were those which had dropped out of the repertory.

have given 'perfect' works of art but much fewer in number. Appropriately, the image of the 'wild-flowers upon a common field' is chosen to describe Shakespeare's power of invention and his versatility.

In their Preface to the First Folio, Heminges and Condell had praised their fellow-player for never revising his work: 'His mind and hand went together, and what he thought, he uttered with that easiness that we have scarce received from him a blot in his papers.'<sup>27</sup> Ben Jonson's answer to this statement has often been quoted as an example of his envy of, and harsh feelings towards, Shakespeare but it constitutes instead balanced critical judgement:

I remember the players have often mentioned it as an honor to Shakespeare, that in his writing, whatsoever he penned, he never blotted out line. My answer hath been, 'Would he had blotted a thousand,' which they thought a malevolent speech. I had not told posterity this but for their ignorance, who chose that circumstance to commend their friend by wherein he most faulted; and to justify mine own candor, for I loved the man, and do honor his memory on this side idolatry as much as any. He was, indeed, honest, and of an open and free nature; had an excellent fancy, brave notions, and gentle expressions, wherein he flowed with that facility that sometime it was necessary he should be stopped. [...] There was ever more in him to be praised than to be pardoned.<sup>28</sup>

Scott also commented on Shakespeare's rapidity of composition:

Shakspeare, [...] appears to have composed rapidly and carelessly; and, sometimes, even without considering, while writing the earlier acts, how the catastrophe was to be huddled up, in that which was to conclude the piece.<sup>29</sup>

Dr Johnson had been less commendatory in this regard:

The plots are often so loosely formed, [...] It may be observed, that in many of his plays the latter part is evidently neglected. When he found

<sup>27</sup>Quoted in Schoenbaum, p. 57.

<sup>28</sup>Ben Jonson, *Timber, or Discoveries Made upon Men and Matter*, ed. by Felix E. Schelling (Boston, USA: Ginn, 1892), p. 23.

<sup>29</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 341.

himself near the end of his work, and, in view of his reward, he shortened the labour, to snatch the profit.<sup>30</sup>

Scott appropriated this characteristic of Shakespeare to justify his own method of composition: he also wrote at a huge rate and this often led him to 'huddled' endings. In the Introductory Epistle to *The Fortunes of Nigel* he found some consolation in the thought that 'the best authors in all countries have been the most voluminous; and it has often happened that those who have been best received in their own time have also continued to be acceptable to posterity.'<sup>31</sup>

Ben Jonson's poem contained a statement which gave rise to a long debate on Shakespeare's education. He affirmed there that Shakespeare had 'small Latin and less Greek,' and all the following critics agreed with his belief that Shakespeare ignored the Ancients.<sup>32</sup> The controversy was settled in 1767 with the appearance of Richard Farmer's *Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare*, which has been defined as 'one of the age's most remarkable monographs.'<sup>33</sup> Farmer demonstrated Shakespeare's scarce acquaintance with the classical and modern languages and concluded that 'his *Studies* were most demonstratively confined to Nature and his own Language.'<sup>34</sup> Scott also considered Shakespeare's lack of learning in the 'Essay on the Drama': 'The general opinion of critics has assigned genius as the characteristic of Shakspeare, and art as the appropriate excellence of Jonson'.<sup>35</sup> He thought that if Shakespeare had been more learned, he would have probably followed the Classical school and consequently he

<sup>30</sup>Nichol Smith, p. 114.

<sup>31</sup>Weinstein, p. 55.

<sup>32</sup>See 'To the memory of my beloved', line 31. Cf. Schoenbaum, pp. 149-53.

<sup>33</sup>Schoenbaum, p. 150; see also pp. 151-52 for an account of Farmer's method of investigation.

<sup>34</sup>See Richard Farmer, 'An Essay on the Learning of Shakespeare: Addressed to Joseph Cradock, Esq. 1767', in Nichol Smith, pp. 151-202 (p. 201).

<sup>35</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 341.

'might have mistaken the form for the essence, and subscribed to those rules which had produced such masterpieces of art.'<sup>36</sup>

Shakespeare's qualities, which were denied to Ben Jonson, were 'that vivid perception of what is naturally beautiful, and that happiness of expression, which at

once conveys to the reader the idea of the poet.'<sup>37</sup> In Scott's view, one of Shakespeare's

major achievements was that in reading his work, 'we often meet passages so congenial to our nature and feelings, that, beautiful as they are, we can hardly help wondering they

did not occur to ourselves'.<sup>38</sup> Scott anticipates Lamb who in his essay 'On the Tragedies

of Shakespeare' wrote that Shakespeare 'fetched' from his own mind 'those images of virtue and of knowledge, of which every one of us recognizing a part, think we comprehend in our natures the whole; and oftentimes mistake the powers which he positively creates in us, for nothing more than indigenous faculties of our own minds'.<sup>39</sup>

Coleridge would later also say that: 'The reader often feels that some ideal [...] trait of our own is [...] caught or some nerve has been touched of which we were not before aware [...] In the plays of Shakespeare every man sees himself without knowing that he

sees himself as in the phenomena of nature'.<sup>40</sup> Scott appreciated the humanity and

directness of Shakespeare's work but never disparaged Ben Jonson. On the contrary, he

saw him as a good substitute for Shakespeare. As Dalgarno observes in *The Fortunes of*

*Nigel*: 'Our Swan of Avon hath sung his last; but we have stout old Ben, with as much

learning and genius as ever prompted the treader of sock and buskin.'<sup>41</sup>

<sup>36</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 336. Cf. 'An Essay on Dramatic Poesy': 'Those who accuse him to have wanted learning, give him the greater commendation' (p. 344).

<sup>37</sup>'Life of Dryden', pp. 7-8.

<sup>38</sup>'Life of Dryden', p. 8.

<sup>39</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 118. A similar view is expressed by Hazlitt's comment on *Hamlet*: 'It is we who are Hamlet.' See 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', in Howe, IV (1930), pp. 165-361 (p. 234).

<sup>40</sup>*The Collected Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge: Lectures 1808-1819: On Literature*, ed. by R. A. Foakes, 2 vols (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1987), I, 352. The quotation above is taken from Lecture 9 (1811-12).

<sup>41</sup>*Nigel*, p. 154. Ben Jonson first called Shakespeare 'Sweet swan of Avon' in his dedicatory poem to the First Folio, line 71. The 'treader of sock and buskin' is probably here meant to be the 'actor'. See *OED*:

What did Scott think of Shakespeare's authorial intentions? He must have felt a particular pleasure when he observed that:

Shakspeare, composing for the amusement of the public alone, had within his province, not only the inexhaustible field of actual life, but the whole ideal world of fancy and superstition; - more favourable to the display of poetical genius than even existing realities.<sup>42</sup>

At this point, Scott departed from Dr Johnson, who had viewed this characteristic of Shakespeare as unworthy of his genius:

He sacrifices virtue to convenience, and is so much more careful to please than to instruct, that he seems to write without any moral purpose. [...] This fault the barbarity of his age cannot extenuate; for it is always a writer's duty to make the world better, and justice is a virtue independant on time or place.<sup>43</sup>

Scott appreciated the fact that Shakespeare wanted to entertain his audience. As we have seen, he also aimed at the satisfaction of his readers: 'I care not who knows it, I write for general amusement'.

In the 'Essay on the Drama' Scott wrote a brief account of the history of drama from its Greek and Roman origins to his own times. The study becomes particularly interesting when it comes to consider the English Renaissance. At the time when Shakespeare began to compose, 'The English stage might be considered equally without rule and without model'. It was an advantage for Shakespeare not to have any models to follow. This supposed 'unprivileged' position allowed him to enhance his faculties without undergoing any constrictions or limitations:

Fortunately for the full exertion of a genius, as comprehensive and versatile as intense and powerful, Shakspeare had no access to any

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'The high thick-soled boot (*cothurnus*) worn by the actors in ancient Athenian tragedy; frequently contrasted with the 'sock' (*soccus*), or low shoe worn by comedians.'

<sup>42</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 337.

<sup>43</sup>Nichol Smith, p. 114.

models of which the commanding merit might have controlled and limited his own exertions.<sup>44</sup>

Scott probably derived this idea from Pope and Dr Johnson who had also emphasized this trait of Shakespeare.<sup>45</sup> The sudden arrival of Shakespeare as a dramatist took the English nation by surprise:

The sun of Shakspeare arose almost without a single gleam of intervening twilight; and it was no wonder that the audience, introduced to this enchanting and seductive art at once, under such an effulgence of excellence, should have been more disposed to wonder than to criticise; to admire - or rather to adore - than to measure the height, or ascertain the course, of the luminary which diffused such glory around him.<sup>46</sup>

This is an argument familiar to the eighteenth-century tradition. The Renaissance audience adored Shakespeare and seldom questioned him, because, as Dr Johnson wrote:

The *English* nation, in the time of *Shakespeare*, was yet struggling to emerge from barbarity. [...] A people newly awakened to literary curiosity, being yet unacquainted with the true state of things, knows not how to judge of that which is proposed as its resemblance.<sup>47</sup>

Shakespeare's contemporaries did not possess the critical tools necessary to give a critique of his plays. This stress on the barbarity of the audience is ironic in view of Scott's revaluation of medieval culture. In fact, his medieval novels are far from depicting the Middle Ages as barbaric. Scott acknowledged Shakespeare's influence on the taste of England but admitted that his success depended on the favourable period he happened to live in:

The effect of the genius of an individual upon the taste of a nation is mighty; but that genius, in its turn, is formed according to the opinions

<sup>44</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 336.

<sup>45</sup>Nichol Smith, pp. 46-47, 112.

<sup>46</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 347.

<sup>47</sup>Nichol Smith, pp. 122-23.

prevalent at the period when it comes into existence. Such was the case with Shakspeare.<sup>48</sup>

On the one hand, Scott's work was formed under the influence of the age's taste for antiquarianism, royalist history and a new interest in changing social customs through history; on the other hand, he was an innovator in the field of the historical novel and became the greatest historical novelist of his time because of the originality of his work.

Shakespeare was 'formed' by the favourable 'circumstances' of Renaissance England, and in his turn he 'formed' the future generations by exerting a strong impact on English life and manners: 'Such is the action of existing circumstances upon genius, and the re-action of genius upon future circumstances.'<sup>49</sup>

Another important merit of Shakespeare was that he shaped the British theatre in such a way that it never conformed strictly to Classical rules again:

He followed the path which a nameless crowd of obscure writers had trodden before him; but he moved in it with the grace and majestic step of a being of a superior order; and vindicated for ever the British theatre from a pedantic restriction to classical rule. Nothing went before Shakspeare which in any respect was fit to fix and stamp the character of a national Drama; and certainly no one will succeed him capable of establishing, by mere authority, a form more restricted than that which Shakspeare used.<sup>50</sup>

Before Shakespeare no dramatist had contributed to the creation of a national drama and, according to Scott, no dramatist would ever repeat his achievements. Scott did not rebuke Shakespeare for not following the Classical rules. On the contrary, he appreciated his success in 'liberating' English drama from the possible dominance of the Classics.

<sup>48</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 336.

<sup>49</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 337.

<sup>50</sup>'Essay on the Drama', pp. 336-37.

When he came to consider his own times, the fourth era of English dramatic history, Scott praised Garrick 'for having led back the public taste to the Dramas of Shakspeare.' Shakespeare's plays, in fact:

had been altogether forgotten, or so much marred and disguised by interpolations and alterations, that he seems to have arisen on the British stage with the dignity of an antique statue disencumbered from the rubbish in which it had been enveloped since the decay of the art.<sup>51</sup>

According to Scott, Garrick's great achievement was that he had 'polished' Shakespeare's work. Scott here forgot, or did not want to acknowledge, Garrick's feats as an adapter of Shakespeare. Although Garrick had:

showed the world how the characters of Shakspeare might be acted, and so far paved the way for a future regeneration of the stage, no kindred spirit arose to imitate his tone of composition. His supremacy was universally acknowledged; but it seemed as if he was regarded as an object of adoration, not of imitation; and that authors were as much interdicted the treading his tragic path, as the entering his magic circle. It was not sufficiently remembered that the faults of Shakspeare, or rather of his age, are those into which no modern dramatist is likely to fall; and that he learned his beauties in the school of nature, which is ever open to all who profess the fine arts. Shakspeare may, indeed, be inimitable, but there are inferior degrees of excellence, which talent and study cannot fail to attain; [...] He reigned a Grecian prince over Persian slaves; and they who adored him did not dare attempt to use his language.<sup>52</sup>

Idolatry of Shakespeare prevented imitation of his work; the tone of Scott's comment sounds here like one of condemnation. Although Shakespeare was unapproachable, Scott believed that, through study, a gifted writer could come close to his greatness. This statement has a particular relevance with regard to the argument as to whether Scott emulated Shakespeare or not. Scott 'dared attempt' to reach Shakespeare's excellence, although in a different literary field. The assertion that Shakespeare studied the book of

<sup>51</sup>'Essay on the Drama', pp. 376, 376-77.

<sup>52</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 377.

nature comes from the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century views and appears in the review of *Tales of My Landlord* where Scott compared himself to Shakespeare:

The volume which this author has studied is the great book of Nature. [...] The characters of Shakspeare are not more exclusively human, not more perfectly men and women as they live and move, than those of this mysterious author. It is from this circumstance that, as we have already observed, many of his personages are supposed to be sketched from real life.<sup>53</sup>

Scott believed that the acquaintance with Shakespeare's work was essential for the development of the artist's potential. In a letter of 1811, he suggested that Sarah Smith should have:

Shakespeare and the Dramatists of that golden age of theatrical genius as often in your hand as you can. There are no writings which tend so much to lay open the recesses of the human heart, and to develop the workings of those passions which it is your business to represent and which you bring out so well.<sup>54</sup>

This piece of advice seems to come from Scott's own experience as a poet, and later, as a novelist: that he derived assurance from Shakespeare and the other Elizabethans is amply testified by his work.

A point of some interest is Scott's opinion on Shakespeare's everlasting fame; in this regard he left contrasting views. In a letter to Joanna Baillie, he drew a parallel between her and Shakespeare in order to assure her of her future reputation:

Had Shakespeare lived just now assuredly his vivacity and picturesque powers might have secured him some favourable notice even from the Edinr. Review but do you think the soliloquy of Hamlet or the speech of Jaques would have met with quarter. In fact these with some modern efforts are cases in which the vulgar must be taught what they are to admire, must have the excellencies of the picture dissected and pointed out to them and alas who is disposed to take that trouble for a contemporary.<sup>55</sup>

<sup>53</sup>'Tales of My Landlord', pp. 64-65.

<sup>54</sup>*Letters*, III, 31 (12 December 1811).

<sup>55</sup>*Letters*, III, 176-77 (16 October 1812).

In Scott's view, Baillie's work, like Shakespeare's, needed to be analysed by the critics who then had to explain it to the readers. This was common practice with Shakespeare but unfortunately no one would take pains to do that for a contemporary. According to this letter, if Shakespeare had been Scott's contemporary, he would not have received the same commendation and praise. Scott's criticism of Shakespeare does not neglect to point out some other negative features. He thought that 'the higher order' of the works of some of Shakespeare's contemporaries 'may claim to be ranked above the inferior dramas ascribed to him.'<sup>56</sup> Among these dramatists, he ranged:

Massinger, who approached to Shakspeare in dignity; Beaumont and Fletcher, who surpassed him in drawing female characters, and those of polite and courtly life; and Jonson, who attempted to supply, by depth of learning, and laboured accuracy of character, the want of that flow of imagination, which nature had denied to him.<sup>57</sup>

A negative statement, which he derived from Dryden and agreed with, regards Shakespeare's comedy and tragedy; the former he accused of falling at times into sophistry, the latter of being sometimes bombastic.<sup>58</sup> In the discussion of Euphuism, Scott stated that Shakespeare was also guilty of showing 'too many instances of this fashionable heresy in wit; and he, who could create new worlds out of his own imagination, descended to low, and often ill-timed puns and quibbles.'<sup>59</sup>

On the whole, Scott's approach to Shakespeare was not that of the 'scholar'. His was the voice of the common reader who wanted to enjoy Shakespeare's work in its essence and immediacy. In a letter of 1822 to Heinrich Voss, Scott stated what he thought was the ideal way of reaching the meaning of the poet:

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<sup>56</sup>'Life of Dryden', p. 2.

<sup>57</sup>'Life of Dryden', pp. 2-3.

<sup>58</sup>'Life of Dryden', p. 79.

<sup>59</sup>'Life of Dryden', pp. 5-6.

I agree entirely with you that the Commentators of Shakespeare have overburthend the text with notes and with disputes trivial in themselves and not always conducted either with taste or temper. Still we owe them a great deal for the quantity of curious miscellaneous information respecting the poet and his times [which] has been assembled by Reed, Malone, Stephens and others and which certainly could not otherwise have been presented to an ordinary reader in such an inviting shape. The great fault seems to be that they must & will have every thing completely & accurately explaind without considering that Shakespeare like all other poets who write in a hurry very frequently uses a form of words the meaning of which is clear enough when the full sentence is considered although it may be very difficult to dissect the sentence grammatically and apply the special and separate meaning to each branch or word in it. There are I believe some good editions with selections of the notes but I think to read Shakespear[e] luxuriously one should use two copies the one for perusal altogether without notes and the other a full edition cum notis variorum to consult upon any point of difficulty or interest.<sup>60</sup>

A feeling of dissatisfaction with notes may be dated back to Rowe's and Capell's editions of Shakespeare. The first had few explanatory notes to the plays, whereas the commentary to the second appeared later in separate volumes.<sup>61</sup> Dr Johnson himself had declared that although notes are necessary, 'they are necessary evils.'<sup>62</sup> In particular, a passage from his *Preface* is worth looking at because it accords with Scott's idea of 'luxurious' reading:

Let him, that is yet unacquainted with the powers of *Shakespeare*, and who desires to feel the highest pleasure that the drama can give, read every play from the first scene to the last, with utter negligence of all his commentators. [...] Let him read on through brightness and obscurity, through integrity and corruption; let him preserve his comprehension of the dialogue and his interest in the fable. And when the pleasures of novelty have ceased, let him attempt exactness, and read the commentators.<sup>63</sup>

For Dr Johnson, the perusal of notes during the reading of a play 'refrigerate[s]' the readers' mind and makes them eventually reject the work they have been reading.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>60</sup> *Letters*, XII, 450-51 (March-April 1822).

<sup>61</sup> Taylor, pp. 75, 142.

<sup>62</sup> Nichol Smith, p. 148.

<sup>63</sup> Nichol Smith, p. 148.

<sup>64</sup> Nichol Smith, p. 148.

Scott shared his predecessor's view and thought that the reader could catch the essence of the work only by reading it 'luxuriously', or in an edition without notes; the annotated edition should be referred to only to elucidate difficult passages. Scott's scepticism with regard to commentaries emerges from a remark he made in his review of John Todd's edition of Spenser (1805). After criticizing the editor for overloading 'poor Spenser' with commentaries and notes, Scott stated: 'As none merits, so perhaps few English authors so much require, the assistance of a skilful commentator.'<sup>65</sup> His distinction between the two kinds of reading reappears in a comment on the banishment of the Fool from the performance of *King Lear*: 'They who prefer to this living variety of emotion, the cold uniformity of a French scene of passion, must be numbered among those who read for the pleasure of criticism, and without hope of partaking the enthusiasm of the poet.'<sup>66</sup> Scott was grateful to Shakespeare's editors for the quantity of information they had supplied on the author and his times but he did not accept their urge to explain everything. He thought that the meaning of Shakespeare's lines is clear at a first reading; they only become laboriously complicated when judged by standards of grammar.<sup>67</sup>

In the same letter to the German editor, Scott gave him some advice regarding his edition of Shakespeare:

In abridging the notes for the use of the German reader I am sure you will find your task more easy than your modesty seems to make you apprehend. You may readily dispense with all the philological and antiquarian notices which are only interesting to the English reader. The historical notes may be greatly abridged. It is of little consequence to foreign nations how many Earls of Northumberland fell in the contests of Yorke and Lancaster or whether Shakespeare is correct in the pedigree of Roger Mortimer. The critical notes of Johnson and those which are explanatory of ancient manners are the one so interesting and the other so

<sup>65</sup>Walter Scott, 'Todd's edition of Spenser', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, XVII (1853), 80-101 (p. 95).

<sup>66</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 319.

<sup>67</sup>*Letters*, XII, 450-51.

necessary to understand the author that I have little doubt they will in the opinion of all nations add greatly to the value of the text.<sup>68</sup>

Scott admitted it was 'necessary' to know the notes which describe 'ancient manners' and be acquainted with Dr Johnson's criticism but believed that the 'philological and antiquarian notices' were of little interest to a non-English reader. This comment is questionable. Any reader of Scott is aware that he did not apply this tenet to his own writings: his poems and novels are loaded with notes which, for the most part, pertain to 'antiquarian notices' and historical events.<sup>69</sup> His view that German readers would not be interested in historical accuracy goes against his own practice: his Scottish novels were also addressed to a non-Scottish public.

Scott agreed to contribute to an edition of Shakespeare. In a letter to Archibald Constable of 1822 he wrote:

A Shakespeare to say truth has been often a favourite scheme with me - a sensible Shakespeare in which the useful & readable notes should be condensed and separated from the trash - but it would require much time & I fear more patience than ever I may be able to command. Then when the world sees it they would certainly be disappointed for if a name of notoriety they would expect some thing new on a subject where there is nothing new to be said and when they found it was only a selection & condensation of the labours of former editors they would be apt to conceive themselves imposed upon. Yet so long ago as when John Ballantyne was in Hanover Street I did think seriously of such a thing and I still think it a desideratum in English literature.<sup>70</sup>

The project finally took place and to the ten-volume work Scott had to provide the first volume containing a general introduction and a biography of the dramatist. Only Volumes II, III, and IV were printed and can now be found at Boston Public Library;

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<sup>68</sup>*Letters*, XII, 451.

<sup>69</sup>The choice of the editors of the new Edinburgh Edition of the Waverley Novels to publish the novels as they first appeared to Scott's readers could also be seen as an attempt to read Scott 'luxuriously.' See David Hewitt's General Introduction to the edition.

<sup>70</sup>*Letters*, VII, 79 (25 February 1822). For Scott's comments on this edition, see also *Letters*, I, 413; VII, 270-72; VIII, 225; IX, 51, 385; X, 59, 76-77, 88, 112, 159, 178, 186, 224-25, 267, 275; XI, 302.

another copy of Volume II was found in Scott's study at Abbotsford in 1933 and is now at the National Library of Scotland. These volumes include twelve comedies, which were printed at Edinburgh by John Ballantyne. They do not bear title pages and each play has a brief introduction and footnotes.<sup>71</sup> According to Balakrishna Rao, the edition was not completed because of the 'uncertainty, after the completion of the *Shakespeare* as to whom the work should belong, to Constable or to Cadell'.<sup>72</sup> A letter from Lockhart to Scott supplies more information about this edition:

In regard to Shakespeare, I should be very sorry to take *advantage* of Constable's Bankruptcy to break an engagement which those of right coming into his shoes wished to stand entire - even if it were a bad bargain. But I think it on the whole a good one, and this, with the complete understanding which I had from the beginning, that you were to receive the sum stipulated for your *Life* and Preface viz., I think, £ I,500. Besides nearly half *my* work was done, ere the printing was stopped, and unless the book goes on again I cannot expect any remuneration for the labour already expended, except £ I00 which Constable paid me about a year ago, finding it, as he then said, for his convenience to settle for each volume as soon as completed. Four volumes are printed now, and I never knew until I had my agent's accounts lately that he had not paid for the whole of them in their succession.<sup>73</sup>

According to Lockhart, four volumes were printed, while Rao, who quotes from a letter from Constable's son, writes they were only three.<sup>74</sup> There is no evidence that the fourth volume was Scott's introductory volume. Scott's biography and introduction was probably never completed: on 11 April 1827 he wrote to Cadell that he thought he 'could undertake to finish the life in a twelve month.'<sup>75</sup>

From the letters he exchanged with his publisher, it is clear that it was to be a popular edition, with selected notes:

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<sup>71</sup>A brief description of how the project came to life appears in the contents page of Volume II.

<sup>72</sup>Balakrishna Rao, 'Scott's Proposed Edition of Shakespeare', *Indian Journal of English Studies*, 6 (1965), 117-19 (p. 118).

<sup>73</sup>*The Private Letter-Books of Sir Walter Scott*, ed. by Wilfred Partington (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1930), p. 40 (17 June 1826).

<sup>74</sup>Rao, p. 118.

<sup>75</sup>*Letters*, X, 186.

I mean an Edition of Shakspeare with a text as accurate as Weber and you can make it, which would be to you both a labour of love, and a selection of notes from former editions with some original commentaries, exclusive of all trash and retaining only what is necessary to the better understanding the Author or to justify disputed readings of importance. I do conceive that such a Book printed well, leisurely and accurately in an elegant but not an expensive form would cut out all the ordinary editions and afford a most respectable profit to the adventurers as well as credit to the press.<sup>76</sup>

If this edition had been completed and published, it is fair to guess that it would have been ranked among the popular editions of Shakespeare together with Walker's 1730s cheap edition and Charles Jennens's editions of the 1770s.<sup>77</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>*Letters*, I, 413 (23 October 1810).

<sup>77</sup>For an account of these editions, see Jonathan Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions: Politics, Theatre, Criticism 1730-1830* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), pp. 23-25, 34.

## 2.2 The Dramatic Novel(ist)

making any serious theatrical attempt is as much out of my mind as flying in a balloon.<sup>1</sup>

Drama is central to any critical discussion of Scott's art, but it acquires special significance in the analysis of the Shakespeare-Scott analogy. The theatre was the means by which Shakespeare first affected, and appealed to, Scott's imagination, and all his life it remained the medium via which he assimilated and interpreted Shakespeare's plays. In the autobiographical sketch which opens Lockhart's memoir, Scott related episodes and anecdotes regarding his first acquaintance with Shakespeare. His first theatrical experience took place at a very early age, at a performance of *As You Like It*, a play for which he maintained 'a particular respect'.<sup>2</sup> During his childhood, in his mother's room, he found 'some odd volumes of Shakspeare' which he read by the light of a fire.<sup>3</sup> He 'was always the manager' of the 'private theatricals' he set up in the dining-room, where he would play with his siblings and friends; the anecdote of him playing Richard III because 'the limp would do well enough to represent the hump' is well-known among Scott connoisseurs.<sup>4</sup> In his youth he acquired the habit of reading aloud poems and plays to his circle of friends; according to Mrs Cockburn, 'he reads like a Garrick.'<sup>5</sup> Theatre-going was Scott's lifelong habit, and passion, and it led him to surround himself with the major performers of the time. His regular correspondence with the actors Daniel Terry and Sarah Smith, the Scottish poet and playwright Joanna Baillie, and other friends and literati of the period illustrates his continued interest in the theatre and his accurate and extensive knowledge of stage-related matters.

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<sup>1</sup>*Letters*, V, 193 (24 September 1818).

<sup>2</sup>*Journal*, p. 319 (23 June 1827); see also Lockhart, I, 30.

<sup>3</sup>Lockhart, I, 49.

<sup>4</sup>Lockhart, I, 155.

<sup>5</sup>Lockhart, I, 63, 120.

In 1950, G. H. Needler wrote: 'Nowadays nobody ever thinks of Scott as a dramatist.'<sup>6</sup> Needler's statement does not apply to the present century only; Scott was never thought of, nor, I would suggest, did he ever think of himself as a dramatist. His lack of success in the dramatic field was not isolated: other Romantics, most notably Shelley and Byron, wrote dramas which did not meet the acclaim enjoyed by their poetical works and which often did not even reach the stage. The difficulty, and often the impossibility, of staging Romantic drama is to be seen in the context of what Catherine B. Burroughs has recently called the 'Closet Versus Stage Controversy'.<sup>7</sup> This found its source in the very nature of Romantic drama which addressed the mind, rather than the eye.

British Romantics were strongly influenced by the Germans; as Allardyce Nicoll suggests, this influence was not a positive one because 'they took from Germany, not its strength, but its weakness.'<sup>8</sup> Scott himself recognised in the 'Essay on the Drama' that: 'There was good and evil in the importation derived from this superabundant source.'<sup>9</sup> The 'evil' was represented by the fact that even the great names of German drama, such as Lessing, Schiller, and Goethe, 'sometimes forgot that their pieces, in order to be acted, must be adapted to the capabilities of a theatre; and thus wrote plays altogether incapable of being represented.'<sup>10</sup> For Nicoll, one of the causes for the lack of success of the British Romantics' drama was their inability to express the 'vague transcendental philosophy' of German drama;<sup>11</sup> this, however, did not apply to Scott since, as Pratyush Ranjan Purkayastha has stated: 'Unlike most of the contemporary poets, Scott had no

<sup>6</sup>G. H. Needler, *Goethe and Scott* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 29.

<sup>7</sup>See Catherine B. Burroughs, *Closet Stages: Joanna Baillie and the Theater Theory of British Romantic Women Writers* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1997), p. 8.

<sup>8</sup>Allardyce Nicoll, *A History of English Drama 1660-1900*, 2nd edn, 6 vols (1930; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), IV: *Early Nineteenth Century Drama 1800-1850*, p. 192.

<sup>9</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 381.

<sup>10</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 384.

<sup>11</sup>Nicoll, p. 192.

metaphysical or philosophical thoughts and ideas to project in his dramas.’<sup>12</sup> Scott was the victim of ‘the other baneful influence of the German style [which] mingled historical setting with strange diablerie.’<sup>13</sup> This influence found manifestation in Scott’s 1799 translation of Goethe’s *Götz von Berlichingen*. Scott himself, in a letter to Sarah Smith of 1808, took *Götz* as evidence of his inadequacy to write for the stage:

In the days of my youth I wrote a tragedy and believe I have it still lying by me. [...] It is upon the vile German plan which was then the rage and is in its present state unfit for any other purpose than to afford you a guess how far you could encourage me to a more serious trial of skill. - I must needs say in justice to myself that my taste is much sobered and mended since this desperate attempt and that I see at least the faults of a bombast and turgid stile though I may be unable to attain a true tone of passion and feeling.<sup>14</sup>

For Robertson Davies, the decline in play writing in the period from 1800 to 1880 was due to the would-be dramatists’ ‘unwilling[ness] to submit to the discipline of the theatre, which at this time was particularly vexatious to proud and original minds.’ Moreover, the financial gains of a dramatist were less rewarding than those of a novelist or a poet.<sup>15</sup> Scott shared his contemporaries’ reluctance to subject their creativity to the ‘discipline’ of the stage and was aware he was not endowed with the talent required to produce a play which could be staged as well as read. Except for *The House of Aspen* (1799) and *The Doom of Devorgoil* (1816), his dramatic creations were not meant to be “actable”: they were consciously designed for the closet.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Pratyush R. Purkayastha, *The Romantics’ Third Voice: A Study of the Dramatic Works of the English Romantic Poets*, Salzburg Studies in English Literature (Salzburg: Institut für Englische Sprache und Literatur, 1978), p. 145.

<sup>13</sup>Nicoll, p. 193.

<sup>14</sup>*Letters*, II, 89 (17 September 1808).

<sup>15</sup>Robertson Davies, ‘Playwrights and Plays’, in M. R. Booth and others, *The Revels History of Drama in English: 1750-1880*, 8 vols (London: Methuen, 1975-1983), VI: 1750-1880 (1975), 145-269 (p. 192).

<sup>16</sup>*Halidon Hill* (1822), *Macduff’s Cross* (1822), and *The Ayrshire Tragedy, or Auchindrane* (1830) were all thought of for the closet. According to Raymond Lamont-Brown, ‘*Halidon Hill* underlines that Scott was unable to write a performable drama.’ See his ‘*Halidon Hill: The Work of “Two Rainy Mornings”*’, *Scott Newsletter*, 25-26 (1994-95), 10-18 (p. 16).

Scott's letter to Daniel Terry of 22 February 1818 in which he explained to the actor the difficulties he met in reworking *The Doom of Devorgoil* according to his suggestions helps us to locate Scott's embarrassment, and consequent unwillingness, to write for the stage:

The truth is that one who has dealt so deep in fictitious narratives as I have done gets a habit of writing rather to the mind than to the eye & I am very sensible that much which tells in the closet as elucidating character must prove redundant upon the stage & of course heavy (my emphasis).<sup>17</sup>

As we shall see below, the passage from novel writing to play writing represented an obstacle which Scott would never manage to overcome. The rest of the letter contains Scott's view of the nineteenth-century stage:

Speaking quite in general & without reference to the inclosed sheets I should incline to think that the time is very favorable for a strong effort by a powerful [?] to bring back the public to a more simple & less meretricious taste in dramatic composition. It seems to me as if the public eye & ear should now be well nigh sated with exhibitions of noise & shew & that even music though it adorns so delightfully the lighter species of the drama interrupts & breaks the chain of interest as a song sometimes breaks short an agreeable & interesting conversation in private society. Now when the Pendulum has just nigh reached its highest ascent on the one side the slightest touch sends it to the other & I should think that a plot of deep interest (could such be found or devised) conducted by a rapid march & evolved in language strong natural & forcible with just enough of pomp to render the scene decorous & graceful but not to become itself an object of attention might succeed very marvellously by the mere force of novelty. This however does not apply to our Christmas tale which is avowedly composed on the existing plan & must therefore be constructed according to its rules. But were I a young fellow about London having experience of the theatres & courage & patience as well as conscious talent I would think this a favorable crisis for attempting a dramatic revolution.<sup>18</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Letters, V, 88 (22 February 1818).

<sup>18</sup>Letters, V, 89-90.

The times were ripe for a powerful figure to push the Pendulum back towards dramatic composition. Scott was not that figure; the last statement of the above quotation makes it clear he could not revolutionise the Romantic stage. At the same time, however, he thought ‘that the age ha[d] no reason to apprehend any decay of dramatic talent.’<sup>19</sup> Although this belief seems to contrast with other statements of his, such as: ‘the age of the drama has passd away’, and ‘[t]he reign of Tragedy seems to be over,’ Scott hoped that one of his contemporaries would help to resurrect them.<sup>20</sup> The ‘powerful’ figure could be Byron, whose *Manfred* (1817) he praised in the ‘Essay on the Drama’, comparing its author to Aeschylus, or Joanna Baillie, whom he believed had given ‘her countrymen the means of regaining the true and manly tone of national tragedy.’<sup>21</sup>

Davies has stated that: ‘Encouraged, Scott might have written drama as good as his novels.’<sup>22</sup> Scott was often asked why he would not apply his creativity to dramatic writing. His explanations are sometimes vague, but they are generally founded on the practical difficulties he would encounter in writing for the theatre, an activity which he once called ‘a most desperate business.’<sup>23</sup> One ‘unsurmountable difficulty’ was his ‘little acquaintance with Stage effects. Upon which, rather than upon any Poetry that may be thrown into the language of the Piece, the success of a new Play must necessarily turn.’<sup>24</sup> Behind Scott’s decision not to write for the contemporary stage were, however, several other reasons. The fear of losing the fame he had acquired with

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<sup>19</sup>‘Essay on the Drama’, p. 388.

<sup>20</sup>*Letters*, XII, 317 (1 February 1810), and VI, 13 (11 November 1819). For Scott, ‘drama’ seemed to be synonymous with ‘tragedy’.

<sup>21</sup>‘Essay on the Drama’, p. 387. Joanna Baillie, whom Burroughs has recently called ‘Romantic drama’s “mother”’, was the major playwright of the age; see Burroughs, p. 14. In a letter to Sarah Smith of 4 March 1808 Scott wrote of Baillie as ‘the best dramatic writer whom Britain has produced since the days of Shakespeare and Massinger.’ (*Letters*, II, 29; 4 March 1808). Scott had early recognised her talent as a playwright in the Introduction to Canto 3 of *Marmion* where he compared her to Shakespeare; see *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*, pp. 113-14, stanza v.

<sup>22</sup>Davies, p. 194.

<sup>23</sup>*Letters*, IV, 473 (13 July 1817).

<sup>24</sup>*Letters*, XII, 409 (19 September 1811).

his poems and novels was a major deterrent. In 1808, he admitted to Sarah Smith that writing a play was:

an idea that has often occurred to me. But success in that line is of so very difficult attainment and depends on such a variety of requisites with which I am totally unacquainted that I doubt if ever I shall have the courage to risque losing upon the boards of a theatre any poetical reputation that I have acquired.<sup>25</sup>

He once tried to dissuade Matthew Weld Hartstonge from submitting a dramatic piece to a manager with the following advice: 'N'allez pas dans cette galere [...] to London you must go, cut, carve and correct at the pleasure first of the managers and then of the players, have your whole play to write half over again.' Another aspect he should consider, Scott added, was that: 'There is a touch of the ridiculous which clings to the author of an unsuccessful piece while success by no means makes up to the candidate for public applause the risque which he runs in case of failure.'<sup>26</sup> He often stated that he would write for the stage only to help a friend in need, and this is how *Macduff's Cross* (1822) and *Halidon Hill* (1822) were born.<sup>27</sup>

Nineteenth-century actors and audiences were two other barriers that Scott was not prepared, nor inclined, to surmount. Only 'the want of money' could lead an author to 'encountering the plague of trying to please a set of conceited performers and a very motley audience'.<sup>28</sup> He wrote to Joanna Baillie:

I cannot think with much patience on such persons as Reynolds and Morton garbling my unfortunate verses and turning that into dramatic dialogue which is but well enough as it stands in minstrel verse - and

<sup>25</sup>*Letters*, II, 89 (17 September 1808).

<sup>26</sup>*Letters*, IV, 472, 473 (13 July 1817). See also V, 447 (3 August 1819): 'the time is long gone by that I could, or dared, have attempted anything for the stage, and I by no means feel disposed to risk any reputation I have acquired, upon so slippery and uncertain an adventure.'

<sup>27</sup>See *Letters*, VI, 13 (11 November 1819): 'I have sometimes written & may again write little trifles of that kind to assist a friend on the principle of giving what I had when silver & gold were scarce with me.' *Macduff's Cross* and *Halidon Hill* were written on Joanna Baillie's request; see *Letters*, VII, 62-63 (10 February 1822), 207 (July 1822), 284-85 (29 December 1822), 296-97 (8 January 1823).

<sup>28</sup>*Letters*, VI, 13 (11 November 1819). See also *Letters*, V, 339 (4 April 1819); IV, 358-59 (4 January 1817).

therefore once more do I wish the whole affair at the bottom of Loch Katrine nor do I care if they carried the whole race of Melo-drama along with them provided the stage were left open for the tragedies of a certain fair lady who does not know her own merit or believe what her friends tell her on that point.<sup>29</sup>

But he would have been delighted to have famous actors, many of which were his close friends, act in his own dramas. As he wrote to Sarah Smith:

Believe me it would give me great pleasure indeed should it ever be my lot to see you in a character of my writing and it would give me some confidence to a dramatic attempt did I think it would be so strongly supported. I question much if a tragedy on the ancient solemn plan would suit the taste of the modern public though something of a dramatic romance or Melo-drama as it is affectedly stiled might perhaps succeed.<sup>30</sup>

Scott could not accept 'mechanicks & tradespeople' among the audience and he especially objected to the presence of prostitutes in theatres.<sup>31</sup> He believed that the lower classes had 'least real taste for the stage as an elegant amusement.'<sup>32</sup> Romantic playwrights could not offer to their audience the kind of amusement the latter expected from a theatrical performance. As Davies puts it:

What had a Byron, a Shelley, even a Scott, to say to an audience of which an important part might be made up of coal-heavers, sweated milliners and sempstresses, costermongers, rat-catchers, dolls' eye-makers, dog stealers, pure-finders, rag-and-bone men, hawkers and all the rest of the *dramatis personae* of *London Labour and the London Poor*, as well as decent but illiterate labourers and their wives, who wanted their money's worth on their night out?<sup>33</sup>

Scott's feelings for the contemporary theatre became harsher with the passing of time and his explanations for not writing for the stage assumed a bitter tenor. If in 1810 he could write to Joanna Baillie that he was 'too cunning' to write a tragedy, in 1818 he

<sup>29</sup>Letters, II, 420-21 (31 December 1810).

<sup>30</sup>Letters, II, 89 (17 September 1808).

<sup>31</sup>Letters, IV, 358 (4 January 1817), and 'Essay on the Drama', p. 392.

<sup>32</sup>Letters, II, 472 (5 April 1811).

<sup>33</sup>Davies, p. 193.

wrote to Lady Abercorn that he ‘would much sooner write an opera for Punch’s puppet-show’ than a tragedy, as some magazines purported he was busy with, and to the Duke of Buccleugh that ‘making any serious theatrical attempt is as much out of my mind as flying in a balloon.’<sup>34</sup>

Scott’s readers and critics were led to believe that he possessed dramatic skills by his ‘old play’ chapter-tags. In the Introductory Epistle to *The Fortunes of Nigel* Captain Clutterbuck relates to Dryasdust a conversation he has had with the Author of *Waverley*. To the Captain’s question whether ‘sorcery’ was ‘the reason why you do not make the theatrical attempt to which you have been so often urged?’, the Author replies:

It may pass for one good reason for not writing a play, that I cannot form a plot. But the truth is, that the idea adopted by too favourable judges, of my having some aptitude for that department of poetry, has been much founded on those scraps of old plays which, being taken from a source inaccessible to collectors, they have hastily considered the offspring of my mother-wit.<sup>35</sup>

Scott explained to Robert William Elliston the reasons why he could not devise a dramatic plot:

It is not so much the power of conceiving dramatic character, and putting its expressions into the language of passion, which ensures success in the present day, as the art of constructing a fable, and interesting the spectators in a series of events, which proceed gradually to a striking conclusion. [...] I never yet began a poem upon a preconcerted story, and have often been well-advanced in composition before I had any idea how I was to end the work.<sup>36</sup>

He possessed ‘the power of conceiving dramatic character,’ which in the past was sufficient to achieve success; but, like the dramatists of the past, including Shakespeare, he did not know ‘the art of constructing a fable’. In the ‘Essay on the Drama’, Scott

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<sup>34</sup>*Letters*, II, 304 (20 February 1810); V, 188, 193 (10 and 24 September 1818).

<sup>35</sup>Weinstein, pp. 49-50.

<sup>36</sup>*Letters*, V, 447 (3 August 1819).

wrote of Shakespeare's 'hurried' endings as the result of the dramatist not knowing 'while writing the earlier acts, how the catastrophe was to be huddled up, in that which was to conclude the piece.'<sup>37</sup> In the comment above, Scott linked his name to that of Shakespeare in order to justify his inability to write a play for the contemporary stage, indirectly suggesting that in a more favourable age he might have done so.

In the Introductory Epistle to *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Scott disclaimed his authorship of the 'old play' tags to suggest that the encouragement to write for the theatre was founded on a wrong assumption.<sup>38</sup> During Scott's visit to Rome in 1832, Cheney asked him why he never wrote a tragedy as he had often been advised to. As he had previously confided to Sarah Smith, Scott admitted he had thought about it 'Often, but the difficulty deterred me - my turn was not dramatic.' Cheney urged that:

Some of the mottoes, [...] prefixed to the chapter of his novels, and subscribed 'old play,' were eminently in the taste of the old dramatists, and seemed to ensure success. - 'Nothing so easy,' he replied, 'when you are full of an author, as to write a few lines in his taste and style; the difficulty is to keep it up - besides,' he added, 'the greatest success would be but a spiritless imitation, or, at best, what the Italians call a *centone* from Shakspeare.'<sup>39</sup>

Here, Scott openly acknowledges the difficulty of imitating Shakespeare, although he admits it is easy to write a few lines in imitation of a favourite author. It is interesting that in the passage above Cheney refers to the 'old dramatists' whereas Scott refers to Shakespeare, revealing that for him Shakespeare was the "dramatic past". By writing dramas, Scott ran the risk of imitating, and therefore of being accused of imitating, Shakespeare, his great precursor. Shakespearean idolatry in the nineteenth century,

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<sup>37</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 341.

<sup>38</sup>Scott's comment is to be read as part of the 'trick' with which he composed the Epistle. As he wrote: 'The Introductory Epistle is written, in Lucio's phrase, "according to the trick," and would never have appeared had the writer meditated making his avowal of the work.' See Weinstein, p. 183. We have seen above, ch. 1.3, that Scott elsewhere admitted his authorship of this class of epigraphs.

<sup>39</sup>Lockhart, X, 195.

especially in the Romantic period, represented a 'burden', in W. J. Bate's phrase, which the Romantics could not unload, but had to accept. For Nicoll, British Romantics failed 'to escape from the trammels of [the] Elizabethan idolisation. It is not too much to say that Shakespeare cast a blight upon the would-be higher drama of the time.'<sup>40</sup> Shou-ren Wang also includes 'the psychological interpretation of Shakespeare' among his four main reasons for the 'unacted drama' of the Romantic period.<sup>41</sup> Scott had stated in *Marmion* (1808) that he could not, nor did he intend to, emulate Shakespeare in dramatic writing.<sup>42</sup> His choice not to write dramas would be easily explained in Bloomian terms: Scott could not measure himself against the greatest name of British literature for fear of failing in the attempt. In the 'Essay on the Drama', however, he argued that although Shakespeare was 'inimitable', it was still possible to attempt to emulate him.<sup>43</sup> If Scott did not dare to imitate Shakespeare, he got closer to him in the dramatic novel.

Scott's reluctance to write for the theatre ultimately depended on what he called 'The ruinous monopoly of the two theatres'.<sup>44</sup> He was in favour of smaller, more intimate theatres where he thought Romantic drama could be staged successfully:

The present wretched taste for dramatic composition is indeed so interwoven with the miserable monopoly granted to the two theatres that many obstacles must arise to the revival of true tragic taste. When a theatre is built on a large scale enough to hold one half of the common

<sup>40</sup>Nicoll, p. 89.

<sup>41</sup>The three other reasons are: 'the ascendancy of character in modern drama, [...] the influence of Goethe's *Faust*, and the deteriorating state of the theatre'. See Shou-ren Wang, *The Theatre of the Mind: A Study of Unacted Drama in Nineteenth-Century England* (London: Macmillan, 1990), p. xv. For Brewer, Scott's first 'desire to emulate' Shakespeare found expression in his translation of *Götz*, 'the most Shakespearean work of German literature.' See his 'Shakespeare in the Career of Sir Walter Scott', in *About Poetry and Other Matters* (Francetown, New Hampshire: Marshall Jones, 1943), pp. 57-63 (p. 59).

<sup>42</sup>See the Introduction to Canto Third of *Marmion*, in *The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*, pp. 112-15. In stanza v the poet reports William Erskine's request that he 'Restore the ancient tragic line, / And emulate the notes that wrung / From the wild harp, which silent hung / By silver Avon's holy shore'; in the following stanza, the poet's answer makes it clear he cannot, or does not want to comply with the request: 'In task more meet for mightiest powers / Wouldst thou engage my thriftless hours.'

<sup>43</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 377.

<sup>44</sup>*Letters*, II, 472 (5 April 1811). See also *Letters*, IV, 358 (4 January 1817): 'dramatic composition is in a degraded state' because of 'the Monopoly of the two patents.'

play-going folks it must of course be too large either for expression or action and I suppose the large boots and masques of the ancient stage must speedily be resorted to. But this is too artificial and absurd an order of things to subsist for ever and depend upon it that whenever small theatres (I mean moderate sized theatres) are again in request the taste for legitimate tragedy will revive on its proper field and I shall live to hold up your tragic pall by an Epilogue or clear the way for you by a prologue.<sup>45</sup>

One of the ‘disgraceful consequences’ of large theatres was ‘the necessary effect of depraving the art of acting by compelling the substitution of violent gesture & loud tones for those of real passion & feeling.’<sup>46</sup> The London stages were a bane for the would-be dramatist of the Romantic period and a smaller theatre in Edinburgh was Scott’s cure for the malaise which had spread among the dramatic talents of the age. On 16 July 1809, he wrote to Robert Southey to inform him that: ‘We have or are about to have a very nice Theatre at Edinr.’, and added: ‘Should you ever produce a Drama I think we will by and bye be able to do more than those immense London stages fit only for pantomime and raree show.’<sup>47</sup> Scott’s project of a small theatre in Edinburgh was developed in clear opposition to the London stage.<sup>48</sup>

Despite his many objections to the contemporary stage, Scott tried his skill in dramatic writing producing a translation of *Götz* and five other dramatic pieces. *The Doom of Devorgoil* was, however, his only real dramatic attempt, and his only drama to be meant for the stage. His letters to Terry regarding this project illustrate Scott’s good knowledge of the theatre but also an obvious lack of theatrical experience which he himself thought was necessary to write a “performable” drama. Scott was eager to make a success of this attempt and he even took ‘a few lessons’ from ‘Schlegel on the Drama’

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<sup>45</sup> *Letters*, II, 421 (31 December 1810).

<sup>46</sup> *Letters*, XII, 317 (1 February 1810).

<sup>47</sup> *Letters*, II, 206.

<sup>48</sup> Scott’s involvement with, and contribution to, the Edinburgh theatre is illustrated by Christopher Worth in his article “‘A very nice Theatre at Edinr.’: Sir Walter Scott and Control of the Theatre Royal’, *Theatre Research International*, 17 (1992), 86-95.

regarding the supernatural;<sup>49</sup> but he admitted in the note added in 1830 that ‘The manner in which the mimic goblins of *Devorgoil* are intermixed with the supernatural machinery, was found to be objectionable, and the production had other faults, which rendered it unfit for representation.’<sup>50</sup> When reading Scott’s correspondence with Terry, we should not forget that Scott’s contribution to *Devorgoil* was a secret known only to a few. It was Scott’s ‘fairy gift’ to his godson, Terry’s first born, and Scott’s only condition was that: ‘as I take no concern in the merit or in the emoluments of the piece in case of success so I shall only be damnd by proxy if damnd I am.’<sup>51</sup> Scott feared a bad reception and suggested that he could ‘write a prologue’ to flatter the audience’s applause by saying that the play was ‘a bravoura sort of a dramatic Anomaly claiming exemption from rule.’<sup>52</sup> On the whole, Scott’s lack of confidence in his dramatic capabilities emerges as the main reason for the failure of the play:

What I find most difficult is to make a good dramatic story for I am not quite so timid as to conception & expression of character. But these exits & entrances annoy me strangely, especially as my habits are now even less theatrical than formerly.<sup>53</sup>

Scott made a significant comment in a letter written to reassure Terry that the finished play was to be considered as the actor’s property only:

I should never have dreamed of making such an attempt in my own proper person; and if I had such a vision, I should have been anxious to have made it something of a legitimate drama, such as a literary man, uncalled upon by any circumstance to connect himself with the stage, might have been expected to produce.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>49</sup>*Letters*, IV, 437-38 (29 April 1817).

<sup>50</sup>*The Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott*, p. 965.

<sup>51</sup>See *Letters*, IV, 287 (12 November 1816) and V, 50 (14 January 1818).

<sup>52</sup>*Letters*, V, 61 (17 January 1818).

<sup>53</sup>*Letters*, V, 149 (18 May 1818).

<sup>54</sup>*Letters*, V, 77 (8 February 1818).

Scott's ambiguous statement that he would never have written a drama like *Devorgoil* in his own persona sounds derogatory towards Terry.<sup>55</sup>

Among the many reasons which made Scott reluctant to write dramas was also the important fact that his poems and novels had been adapted for the stage from the beginning. It was only natural that if Scott had ever felt the urge to write for the theatre, this diminished as a consequence of his having reached popular success on the stage, albeit indirectly. With the dramatic novel Scott achieved what he could expect to achieve as a dramatist: to speak to his audience's minds, as well as to their eyes and ears - a combination which he thought could not be attempted on a Romantic stage.

The phenomenon of the dramatisations of the Waverley Novels found a precedent in the adaptations of Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare's works were adapted and revised in the Restoration period and throughout the eighteenth century; Scott's novels were adapted and often underwent a revision in the transition from novel to play during their author's lifetime and throughout the nineteenth century. The large success met by the adaptations of his work might be suggested as evidence of Scott's probable success as a dramatic writer. When Byron obscured his fame as a poet, Scott did not choose to write dramas, although the stage adaptations of his poems and his translation of *Götz* might have led him to attempt the dramatic field. Instead, he channelled his dramatic talent into the dramatic novel. In the self-review of 1817 we find much of Scott's self-criticism which, although it concerns only his first five narrative works, can be extended to the whole series of novels. We have suggested that on that occasion Scott gave birth to the "parallel" studies; in the same way, he might have given rise to the "dramatic" critique of his work. He wrote that the anonymous author (himself):

<sup>55</sup>Later in his life, however, he thought he could improve this 'Little drama' and 'piece of nonsense.' See *Journal*, p. 553 (26 April 1829).



with an attention which amounts even to affectation, [...] has avoided the common language of narrative, and thrown his story, as much as possible, into a dramatic shape. In many cases this has added greatly to the effect, by keeping both the actors and action continually before the reader, and placing him, in some measure, in the situation of the audience at a theatre, who are compelled to gather the meaning of the scene from what the *dramatis personae* say to each other, and not from any explanation addressed immediately to themselves.<sup>56</sup>

In his letter to Terry of 22 February 1818, Scott explained that he could not write for the stage because by writing 'fictitious narratives' he had acquired 'a habit of writing rather to the mind than to the eye'. 'Ear', 'eye', and 'mind' are key words in Scott's critical vocabulary. Another significant concept in the critique of Scott's work is that of 'dialogue', which for Scott was the means by which he could unite fiction and drama.

In the first chapter of *The Bride of Lammermoor*, the exchange between Dick Tinto and Peter Pattieson on painting and literature turns into a debate about the necessity of dialogue in fictitious narratives. Tinto complains to Pattieson that: 'Your characters, [...] make too much use of the *gob-box*; they *patter* too much'.<sup>57</sup> Pattieson questions this 'salutary criticism': 'how is it possible for an author to introduce his *personae dramatis* to his readers in a more interesting and effectual manner, than by the dialogue in which each is represented as supporting his own appropriate character?'

Tinto argues that Pattieson has:

given us a page of talk for every single idea which two words might have communicated, while the posture, and manner, and incident, accurately drawn, and brought out by appropriate colouring, would have preserved all that was worthy of preservation, and saved these everlasting said he's and said she's, with which it has been your pleasure to encumber your pages.<sup>58</sup>

<sup>56</sup>'Tales of My Landlord', p. 4. Scott admired Jane Austen's device of 'saying as little as possible in her own person, and giving a dramatic air to the narrative, by introducing frequent conversations; which she conducts with a regard to character hardly exceeded even by Shakspeare himself.' See his 'Miss Austen's Novels', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, XVIII (1853), 209-49 (p. 228).

<sup>57</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 10.

<sup>58</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 10-11, 11.

Pattieson accuses Tinto of confounding the art of painting which ‘necessarily appealed to the eye’ with poetry which ‘addressed itself to the ear, for the purpose of exciting that interest which it could not attain through the medium of the eye.’<sup>59</sup> Tinto in the end wins the argument by saying that:

Description, [...] was to the author of a romance exactly what drawing and tinting were to a painter; words were his colours, and, if properly employed, they could not fail to place the scene, which he wished to conjure up, as effectually before the mind’s eye, as the tablet or canvas presents it to the bodily organ.

The painter thinks that:

an exuberance of dialogue, [...] was a verbose and laborious mode of composition, which went to confound the proper art of fictitious narrative with that of the drama, a widely different species of composition, of which dialogue was the very essence; because all, excepting the language to be made use of, was presented to the eye by the dresses, and persons, and action of the performers upon the stage.<sup>60</sup>

At the conclusion of this exchange, Tinto seems to have convinced Pattieson, who states he will attempt ‘to make one trial of a more straight forward style of composition, in which my actors should do more, and say less, than in my former attempts of this kind.’<sup>61</sup> Did Pattieson (Scott) succeed in this attempt? The conversation between the two friends marks the birth of *The Bride of Lammermoor*, perhaps the most dramatic of Scott’s novels.<sup>62</sup> Daniel S. Butterworth has viewed the introductory chapter to *The Bride*

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<sup>59</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 11.

<sup>60</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 11.

<sup>61</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 12. Frank Jordan Jr identifies Pattieson with Scott in ‘Walter Scott as a Dramatic Novelist’, *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 5 (1967-68), 238-45 (p. 244). The identity of Tinto remains obscure. As Jordan wonders, Tinto may ‘represent an actual critic, some acquaintance or reviewer of Scott, or does he represent simply another side of Scott himself, so that he is imaginary?’ (p. 244).

<sup>62</sup>Simon Edwards ‘challenge[s] the supposition that the much vaunted greatness or maturity of *The Bride of Lammermoor* (“the most mature” is David Brown’s phrase) lies in its affinity with tragic drama.’ See his ‘*The Bride of Lammermoor* and the Borders of Character’, in *Scott in Carnival*, ed. by J. H. Alexander and David Hewitt (Aberdeen: Association for Scottish Literary Studies, 1993), pp. 254-63 (p. 254).

of *Lammermoor* 'as a paradigm for the novel's story.'<sup>63</sup> For Butterworth, the irony of the introductory debate emerges from Lucy Ashton's silence, which becomes the ultimate cause of the novel's tragic finale. Instead of proving Tinto's point, *The Bride of Lammermoor* shows that even with less dialogue, the dramatic effect can be achieved in a novel successfully.

Frank Jordan Jr has interpreted the debate prefixed to *The Bride of Lammermoor* as the way in which Scott was 'questioning the dramatic method of fiction, questioning the propriety of making dialogue the exclusive or even major narrative method in fiction;' and 'at the same time claiming that for Walter Scott, a particular novelist, the dramatic method is the natural method, claiming that dialogue is for him the most artistically satisfying narrative technique.'<sup>64</sup> Scott was not 'questioning' the dramatic method of fiction intentionally: the 1817 self-review showed his confidence in the adoption of this method. There seems to be an internal contradiction in Jordan's comment. His second proposition is more appropriate. The review of *Tales of My Landlord* 'shows Scott's determination to be a dramatic novelist and, more than that, his determination to be recognized as a dramatic novelist.'<sup>65</sup> According to Jordan, the phrase 'dramatic novelist' is applicable to 'a novelist who constructs his plots on the dramatic patterns of acts and scenes and designs his characters as though they were sketches to be completed by actors and actresses.'<sup>66</sup> In the case of Scott, the phrase also applies to the dramatic novelist who constructs his plots on the recollections of theatrical performances he has witnessed.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>63</sup>Daniel S. Butterworth, 'Tinto, Pattieson, and the Theories of Pictorial and Dramatic Representation in Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor*', *South Atlantic Review*, 56 (1991), 1-15 (p. 1).

<sup>64</sup>Jordan, p. 245.

<sup>65</sup>Jordan, p. 242.

<sup>66</sup>Jordan, p. 243.

<sup>67</sup>See below, ch. 3.1, for Scott's portrayal of Edgar Ravenswood as modelled on J. P. Kemble's Hamlet.

Scott's views on fiction and drama are developed and refined in his 'Memoir of Henry Fielding' (1820). Fielding was one of the many 'who, eminent for fictitious narration, have either altogether failed in their dramatic attempts, or at least have fallen far short of that degree of excellence which might have been previously augured of them.'<sup>68</sup> Scott tries to give an explanation for this 'failure, which has occurred in too many instances to be the operation of mere chance'. He analyses the two literary genres and starts by equating them:

Force of character, strength of expression, felicity of contrast and situation, a well-constructed plot, in which the development is at once natural and unexpected, and where the interest is kept uniformly alive, till summed up by the catastrophe - all these are requisites as essential to the labour of the novelist, as to that of the dramatist, and, indeed, appear to comprehend the sum of the qualities necessary to success in both departments.<sup>69</sup>

The comparison continues but, at a certain point, it turns into a contrast:

It is the object of the novel-writer, to place before the reader as full and accurate a representation of the events which he relates, as can be done by the mere force of an excited imagination, without the assistance of material objects. His sole appeal is made to the world of fancy and of ideas, and in this consists his strength and his weakness, his poverty and his wealth. He cannot, like the painter, present a visible and tangible representation of his towns and his woods, his palaces and his castles; but, by awakening the imagination of a congenial reader, he places before his mind's eye, landscapes fairer than those of Claude, and wilder than those of Salvator. He cannot, like the dramatist, present before our living eyes the heroes of former days, or the beautiful creations of his own fancy, embodied in the grace and majesty of Kemble or of Siddons; but he can teach his reader to conjure up forms even more dignified and beautiful than theirs. [...] The author of a novel, in short, has neither stage nor scene-painter, nor company of comedians, nor dresser, nor wardrobe; words, applied with the best of his skill, must supply all that these bring to the assistance of the dramatist. Action, and tone, and gesture, the smile of the lover, the frown of the tyrant, the grimace of the buffoon, - all must be told, for nothing can be shown. Thus, the very dialogue becomes

<sup>68</sup>Walter Scott, 'Memoir of Henry Fielding', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, III (1852), 77-116 (p. 81).

<sup>69</sup>'Memoir of Henry Fielding', p. 81.

mixed with the narration; [...] telling, in short, all which, in the drama, it becomes the province of the actor to express.<sup>70</sup>

The task of a novelist is more demanding than that of the painter or the dramatist. The novelist, in fact, cannot, like the painter, present a 'visible' work of art, or, like the dramatist, employ the talents of performers. Nonetheless, the works produced by a novelist are superior to those produced by a painter or by a dramatist. A novel writer only makes use of 'the mere force of an excited imagination', and must therefore combine dialogue with narration. The above distinction between novelists, and painters and dramatists underlines what, according to Scott, are 'amongst many others, the peculiar difficulties of the dramatic art, and they seem impediments which lie peculiarly in the way of the novelist who aspires to extend his sway over the stage.'<sup>71</sup>

Scott's memoir of Fielding was reviewed in the *Quarterly Review* of September 1826. The anonymous critic took issue with Scott's statement that 'a good acting play may be made by selecting a plot and characters from a novel, yet scarce any effort of genius could render a play into a narrative romance.'<sup>72</sup> The reviewer thought this account was 'bold' and 'unfounded', and argued:

The popular novels of the day are often, indeed, *dramatised*, in a certain sense of the word, and the people flock to see them. But are any such performances entitled to be talked of as 'good acting plays'? On the contrary, the best of them that we have seen (for example *Rob Roy*) must be admitted to amount to an arbitrary sequence of individual scenes, which would be unintelligible to any audience that wanted the means of filling up every here and there the most lamentable and hopeless *hiatus* from previous and perfect knowledge of the not merely plundered, but maimed, mutilated, mangled romance; [...] Fielding and Smollett had their day of being, as the author of *Waverley* somewhere styles the process, *Terryfied*.

<sup>70</sup>'Memoir of Henry Fielding', pp. 82-83.

<sup>71</sup>'Memoir of Henry Fielding', p. 86.

<sup>72</sup>'Memoir of Henry Fielding', p. 84.

This passage from the review is highly ironic, and even more so in the following statement:

Before Sir Walter is entitled to argue as he has done, he must - at the least - show us, on the one hand, an author of *Macbeth* trying in vain to write an historical romance, or a full-grown Molière failing in a novel; and on the other, an author of *Waverley* making a deliberate but fruitless inroad on the province of the drama.<sup>73</sup>

The critic was obviously not aware of the fact that Scott had composed dramatic works and had made with *The House of Aspen* and *The Doom of Devorgoil* 'a deliberate but fruitless inroad on the province of drama.'

Hazlitt believed that Scott could not write a tragedy, and argued against the general request that Scott write plays: 'It is not a sound inference, that, because parts of a novel are dramatic, the author could write a play.'<sup>74</sup> He disapproved of the *Waverley* dramatisations:

we are not convinced that the author of *Waverley* could not write a first-rate tragedy, as well as so many first-rate novels. If he can, we wish that he would; and not leave it to others to mar what he has sketched so admirably as a ground-work for that purpose.<sup>75</sup>

Hazlitt is undecided as to whether Scott possesses dramatic talent. While stating that Scott should not allow his novels to be dramatised, he also acknowledges that the *Waverley* narratives constitute good bases on which dramas could be built. Scott himself did not disapprove of adaptations: his admiration for Dryden's versions of Shakespeare sometimes exceeds his worship of the Elizabethan dramatist. He also understood the necessity of introducing sometimes radical changes when translating a

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<sup>73</sup>Anon., review of *Lives of the Novelists, by Sir Walter Scott*, *Quarterly Review*, 34 (1826), 349-78 (pp. 361, 362).

<sup>74</sup>William Hazlitt, 'Dramatic Criticism', in Howe, XVIII (1933), pp. 187-417 (p. 310).

<sup>75</sup>Hazlitt, p. 310.

narrative on to the stage.<sup>76</sup> He did not object to the dramatisations of his works, either.

In a letter to Baillie of 31 October 1810 he admitted that he was flattered with the success met by the stage version of 'The Lady of the Lake':

As for the Metamorphosis of the Lady of the Lake into Drama or rather into three Dramas for the same adventure is to be tried at Dublin London and Edinburgh I would not willingly have you believe either that I affect or possess stoicism enough to be insensible to the applauses of a crowded theatre. On the contrary I think that of all kinds of popular plaudits this is the manner in which an author has his most ample satisfactory and perhaps intoxicating draught of success.<sup>77</sup>

At this stage, Scott could not foresee the theatrical success which his other literary productions would achieve:

But I shall have no more honour supposing any of these attempts successful than the cook who roasted a turkey yesterday has for the caporota (I think house-wives call it so) which a sister of the trade has presented us with to-day out of the reliques of the feast.<sup>78</sup>

He knew that in order to test the real value of his dramas he had to see them staged. As he wrote to Baillie:

I certainly agree with you on the general point that there is a better chance of plays succeeding after action than after their first appearance in print. The theatrical effect has in the latter case that fair play which it cannot have in the former [*sic*]. But I still think your pieces must and will obtain possession of the stage while you can yet watch their progress and observe the impression they make upon the audience.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>76</sup>Scott attended a dramatisation of Fenimore Cooper's *The Pilot* and approved of it saying that it was 'extremely popular, the Dramatist having seized on the whole story and turned the odious and ridiculous parts assigned by the original author to the British, against the Yankees themselves.' See *Journal*, p. 219 (21 October 1826).

<sup>77</sup>*Letters*, II, 420 (31 December 1810).

<sup>78</sup>*Letters*, II, 420.

<sup>79</sup>*Letters*, II, 421.

The opposition between stage and closet was not clear-cut in the case of Scott. In the Introductory Epistle to *The Fortunes of Nigel*, Captain Clutterbuck draws the Author's attention to it:

*Author.* You are quite right; habit's a strange thing, my son. I had forgot whom I was speaking to. Yes, plays for the closet, not for the stage -

*Captain.* Right, and so you are sure to be acted; for the managers, while thousands of volunteers are desirous of serving them, are wonderfully partial to pressed men.

*Author.* I am a living witness, having been, like a second Laberius, made a dramatist whether I would or not. I believe my muse would be *Terryfied* into treading the stage, even if I should write a sermon.<sup>80</sup>

This exchange could be read as a critique of the nineteenth-century stage. Contrary to some of his contemporaries, Scott had been favoured by the stage since he managed to reach it, perhaps, as he states, unknowingly, but certainly not unwillingly. When he attended the opera *Ivanhoe* in Paris, he commented on it thus:

It was superbly got up, the norman soldiers wearing painted helmets and what resembled much hauberks of mail which lookd very well. The number of the attendants and the skill with which they are moved and grouped on the stage is well worthy of notice. It was an opera and of course the story greatly mangled and the dialogue in a great part nonsense. Yet it was strange to hear anything like the words which I (then in an agony of pain with spasms in my stomach) dictated to William Laidlaw at Abbotsford now recited in a foreign tongue and for the amusement of a strange people. I little thought to have survived the completing of this novel.<sup>81</sup>

The enthusiasm emerging from this comment shows that Scott was proud of having provided material for the stage.<sup>82</sup> He also contributed to the dramatisations of some of his novels. We have seen above that *The Doom of Devorgoil* was a collaborative work. William Ruff and Ward Hellstrom, who have explored Scott's contribution to Terry's

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<sup>80</sup>Weinstein, pp. 51-52.

<sup>81</sup>*Journal*, p. 226 (31 October 1826).

<sup>82</sup>He showed a predilection for *Rob Roy*; see, for instance, *Letters*, V, 135 (30 April 1818), and H. Philip Bolton's 'Playing Rob Roy as Robin Hood', in *Scott in Carnival*, pp. 478-90.

adaptations of the Waverley Novels, state that the extent of Scott's work is difficult to assess because: 'To admit collaboration on the dramatic adaptations of those novels would have been tantamount to confirming the suspicions of the public, a procedure which Scott sedulously avoided.'<sup>83</sup> According to the two critics, Scott composed the songs of the manuscript 'Right and Might; or, The Castle of Ellangowan' of *Guy Mannering; or, the Gipsy's Prophecy* (1816), but they are unsure about his authorship of the songs in the published edition of the play.<sup>84</sup> In the stage adaptation of *The Heart of Midlothian*, 'Scott's was the dominant hand at least in the manuscript of the play', whereas he did not contribute to the revision of Isaac Pocock's *The Antiquary* (1818).<sup>85</sup>

Scott's direct collaboration to the adaptations of his novels has been ascertained for a few of them only. I would suggest that some of Scott's novels were written with an eye to the stage so that his comment that he had been 'made a dramatist whether [he] would or not' could also be read 'according to the trick'. In a letter to Terry of 30 April 1818 he wrote:

There is in Jedediah's present work a thing capable of being woven out a Bourgeoise tragedy. I think of contriving that it shall be in your hands sometime before the public see it, that you may try to operate upon it yourself. This would not be difficult, as vol. 4, and part of 3d, contain a different story. *Avowedly* I will never write for the stage; if I do, 'call me horse.' And indeed I feel severely the want of knowledge of theatrical business and effect; however, something we will do.<sup>86</sup>

The 'different story' was *The Bride of Lammermoor* but then *The Heart of Midlothian* took up the four volumes. On 16 May 1818 he wrote to Terry: 'I think we could hammer a neat *comédie bourgeoise* out of the Heart of Mid-Lothian.'<sup>87</sup> Two days later he added:

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<sup>83</sup>William Ruff and Ward Hellstrom, 'Scott's Authorship of the Songs in Daniel Terry's Plays', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 5 (1967-68), 205-15 (p. 206).

<sup>84</sup>Ruff and Hellstrom, p. 209.

<sup>85</sup>Ruff and Hellstrom, pp. 212, 214.

<sup>86</sup>*Letters*, V, 135.

<sup>87</sup>*Letters*, V, 148.

You shall have the new Tales as soon as the first story is completely in proof & you must beg to secure the ear of your manager before other competitors come to dramatize the book. It is a singular & I think a bad way of amusing the public in point of taste but that is no good reason why you should not make the most of the many headed brute & shew before him such forage as his sort for the time is disposed to delight in.<sup>88</sup>

Although he thought of the dramatisations as ‘a singular & [...] a bad way of amusing the public’, Scott believed it was right to exploit the contemporary taste. The above quotations support the view that some of Scott’s works were intentionally designed and composed with a view to their staging.

The latent dramatic power of the Waverley Novels became manifest in the dramatisations which assured Scott enormous success on and off the stage. If Scott did not contribute to reviving the interest in drama in the nineteenth century by writing plays, he helped to revitalise the Scottish theatre by providing the material for the dramatisations of his works. Scott contributed to the popularisation of Shakespeare both in his country, and, via the the historical novel and the Waverley dramatisations, abroad.<sup>89</sup> In this regard, two novels deserve a more detailed treatment: *Kenilworth*, set in 1575 England, during the full blooming of Elizabethan theatre, and *Woodstock*, set in 1651, during the Interregnum. These two novels are usually celebrated for the historical portraits of Queen Elizabeth and Cromwell; in the following chapters I will read them as Scott’s commentary on Shakespeare as a man, as a player, and as a playwright.

<sup>88</sup>*Letters*, V, 149-50 (18 May 1818). See also V, 169 (11 or 18 July 1818).

<sup>89</sup>Scott influenced the Brontës, Conrad, Dickens, George Eliot, Hardy, James, Manzoni, Balzac, Poe, Stendhal, Twain, to cite only a few names. In the nineteenth century Europe saw the birth of national literature and Scott and Shakespeare were often seen as twin models.

## 2.3 Shakespeare at Kenilworth

*Kenilworth* is Scott's only novel which introduces Shakespeare as a living character. The novel is set in Elizabethan England at the time of the Kenilworth revels when Shakespeare was eleven. In 1575, Shakespeare's work had not been written, yet most of the characters of the novel are acquainted with his plays. The introduction of Shakespeare as a grown man at the court of Queen Elizabeth is anachronistic.<sup>1</sup> Bishop Percy first suggested in 'On the Origin of the English Stage' (1794), that the twelve-year-old Shakespeare had attended the revels at Kenilworth which was only a short distance from Stratford-upon-Avon.<sup>2</sup> Scott accepted this tradition, but altered the age of his hero. This 'lie' to history gave him the opportunity to write a passage on drama and the theatre as viewed by Shakespeare's contemporaries.

The episode in *Kenilworth* where Shakespeare appears occurs in chapter 17. While Leicester is approaching the Queen's barge, the narrator reveals the presence of the dramatist by accompanying Leicester's quotation from *Macbeth* with this statement: 'in the words of one, who at that moment stood at no great distance from him'. Soon after, Leicester addresses Shakespeare directly:

Ha, Will Shakspeare - wild Will! - thou hast given my nephew, Philip Sydney, love-powder - he cannot sleep without thy Venus and Adonis under his pillow! - we will have thee hanged for the veriest wizard in Europe. Hark thee, mad wag, I have not forgotten thy matter of the patent, and of the bears.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The introduction of Spenser, Sidney and Raleigh is also anachronistic.

<sup>2</sup>Reported in Schoenbaum, p. 139.

<sup>3</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 168. Before addressing Shakespeare, Leicester speaks to Edmund Spenser: 'Master Edmund Spenser, touching your Irish petition, I would willingly aid you, from my love to the Muses; but thou hast nettled the Lord Treasurer.'

The Earl calls Shakespeare 'wild Will' and 'mad wag', but at the same time recognizes him as 'the veriest wizard in Europe.'<sup>4</sup> The narrator thus describes the meeting between the two: 'The Player bowed, and the Earl nodded and passed on - so that age would have told the tale - in ours, perhaps, we might say the immortal had done homage to the mortal.'<sup>5</sup> The use of the capital letter for 'Player' emphasizes that for the Elizabethans Shakespeare was also, perhaps mainly, an actor, whereas he was seen and read as a playwright by Scott's contemporaries.

Leicester's speech introduces two episodes in the life of Shakespeare: his request of a coat of arms and the petition of Orson Pinnit, the keeper of the royal bears. In 1596 the College of Heralds granted a coat of arms to John Shakespeare, though, as Samuel Schoenbaum reports, the application had probably been made by his son as the records refer to 'William Shakespeare, Gentleman.'<sup>6</sup> Orson Pinnit's petition is especially relevant to the present discussion because it allows Scott to make a few significant remarks on drama through the characters. The Queen calls Pinnit's complaint a 'gamesome matter':

He complains, that amidst the extreme delight with which men haunt the play-houses, and in especial their eager desire for seeing the exhibitions of one Will Shakspeare, (whom I think, my lords, we have all heard something of,) the manly amusement of bear-baiting is falling into comparative neglect; since men will rather throng to see these roguish

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<sup>4</sup>This way of calling Shakespeare derives from Garrick's poem 'Warwickshire': 'And the wag of all wags, was a *Warwickshire* wag'; see *The Praise of Shakespeare: An English Anthology*, ed. by C. E. Hughes (London: Methuen, 1904), pp. 113-15 (p. 114), stanza vi, line 4. Schoenbaum reports that in the jestbook *Shakespeare's Jest, or the Jubilee Jester* (c. 1769), Shakespeare is called 'the Warwickshire wag,' and 'our wag.' See Schoenbaum, p. 160.

<sup>5</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 168.

<sup>6</sup>Schoenbaum, p. 36. See also Charles Wilfrid Scott-Giles for Shakespeare's knowledge of heraldry: *Shakespeare's Heraldry* (London: J. M. Dent, 1950), pp. 17-41. Scott was probably acquainted with the life of Shakespeare in the *Biographia Britannica: or, the Lives of the Most Eminent Persons Who Have Flourished in Great Britain and Ireland, from the Earliest Ages, down to the Present Times*, 7 vols (London: printed for J. Walthoe and others, 1747-66), VI, Part I (1763), 3627-39 (p. 3627). Scott owned an edition of 1747 of the *Biographia Britannica*; see J. G. Cochrane, *Catalogue of the Library at Abbotsford*, Series: Bannatyne Club (Edinburgh: T. Constable, 1838), p. 233.

players kill each other in jest, than to see our royal dogs and bears worry each other in bloody earnest.<sup>7</sup>

Scott had already alluded to this subject in the 'Essay on the Drama' where he stated that when Shakespeare arose: 'The ruder amusements of the age lost their attractions; and the royal bear-ward of Queen Elizabeth lodged a formal complaint at the feet of her majesty, that the play-houses had seduced the audience from his periodical bear-baitings!'.<sup>8</sup> Scott considered 'This fact [as] worth a thousand conjectures'. In his view:

the converts, transported by their improving taste from the bear-garden to the theatre, must, generally speaking, have felt their rude minds subdued and led captive by the superior intelligence, which not only placed on the stage at pleasure all ranks, all ages, all tempers, all passions of mere humanity, but extended its powers beyond the bounds of time and space, and seemed to render visible to mortal eyes the secrets of the invisible world.<sup>9</sup>

At the time, there was a conflict between bear-baiting and theatre performances. In his *Letter* (1575), Robert Laneham reported that on the sixth day of the revels Queen Elizabeth attended a fight between dogs and bears; the editor of the *Letter*, Frederick J. Furnivall, informs us that:

An Order of Privy Council, in July 1591, prohibits the exhibition of Plays on Thursdays, because on Thursdays bear-baiting, and such like pastimes, had been usually practised; and an injunction to the same effect was sent to the Lord Mayor, wherein it is stated, that 'in divers places the players do use to recite their plays to the great hurt and destruction of the game

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<sup>7</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 173. The identity of Orson Pinnit remains obscure. For J. H. Alexander: 'this feigned name suggests a pun on Italian *orso* ('bear') on the one hand, and *whoreson* on the other, plus restraining (an animal). Orsin is the bear-warden in Samuel Butler, *Hudibras* (1663).' See *Kenilworth*, p. 507. But Scott's allusion to the same subject in the 'Essay on the Drama' suggests that although the name might be fictitious the person of the bear-warden was not.

<sup>8</sup>'Essay on the Drama', pp. 347-48.

<sup>9</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 348.

of bear-baiting, and like pastimes, which are maintained for her Majesty's pleasure.'<sup>10</sup>

Both the editor of *Kenilworth Festivities* (1825) and John Nichols in his *Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth* (1823) drew a parallel between the treatment of bear-baiting in Laneham's *Letter* and Orson Pinnit's petition in *Kenilworth*: 'There is a singular coincidence between Laneham's description of a bear-fight, and that given in the Romance of "Kenilworth," where the Earl of Sussex presents a petition from Orson Pinnit, Keeper of the Royal Bears, against Shakspeare and the players.'<sup>11</sup> In particular, the editor of *Kenilworth Festivities* began his preface by stating that the reprint of the account had been caused by 'The uncommon interest which has been excited by the admirable historical romance of Kenilworth'.<sup>12</sup>

Scott had resorted to Laneham's *Account of the Queen's Entertainment at Killingworth Castle* as his source for the description of the revels. In a note to the novel, he explicitly refers to it as 'a very diverting tract, written by as great a coxcomb as ever blotted paper.'<sup>13</sup> In the same note, Scott informs the reader that the original of the letter was very rare but had been reprinted in Nichols's *Progresses* and in *Kenilworth Illustrated* and adds, referring probably to Nichols: 'The Author takes the liberty to refer to this work as his authority for the account of the festivities.'<sup>14</sup>

Orson Pinnit's petition is the starting point of a discussion of drama. Queen Elizabeth asks Leicester and Sussex their opinion on the matter. Sussex stands godfather

<sup>10</sup>Robert Laneham, *Captain Cox, his Ballads and Books; or, Robert Laneham's Letter*, ed. by Frederick J. Furnivall (London: Taylor, 1871), p. 16.

<sup>11</sup>*Kenilworth Festivities: Comprising Laneham's Description of the Pageantry, and Gascoigne's Masques, Represented before Queen Elizabeth at Kenilworth Castle Anno 1575* (Warwick and Leamington: John Merridew, 1825), p. 98 (footnote to p. 25). Cf. John Nichols, *The Progresses and Public Processions of Queen Elizabeth*, 3 vols (London: John Nichols and Son, 1823), I, p. 439n.

<sup>12</sup>*Kenilworth Festivities*, p. iii.

<sup>13</sup>*Kenilworth*, Dryburgh Edition, XII (1893), p. 460, note 16. Robert Laneham is also a character of the novel; see note 9, p. 458.

<sup>14</sup>*Kenilworth*, Dryburgh Edition, p. 460.

to Orson Pinnit, who, as he says, 'was a stout soldier before he was so mangled by the skenes of the Irish clan MacDonough'.<sup>15</sup> Sussex 'wish[es] Will Shakespeare no harm. He is a stout man at quarter-staff, and single falchion, as I am told, though a halting fellow;' and he speaks with admiration of Shakespeare's legendary incursion into Sir Thomas Lucy's deer-park: '[he] stood, they say, a tough fight with the rangers of old Sir Thomas Lucy of Charlecot, when he broke his deer-park and kissed his keeper's daughter.'<sup>16</sup> Sussex's description of Shakespeare as 'a halting fellow' is part of the tradition which derives Shakespeare's lameness from sonnets 37 and 89.<sup>17</sup> This allusion is especially intriguing because Scott was also affected by lameness after he was attacked by infantile paralysis at the age of two.<sup>18</sup> Sussex's reference to the deer-stealing episode is a variation of the legend according to which Shakespeare 'not only took the game but also seduced the keeper's daughter.'<sup>19</sup> Queen Elizabeth is annoyed at the allusion: 'I cry you mercy, my Lord of Sussex, [...] that matter was heard in council, and we will not have this fellow's offence exaggerated - there was no kissing in the matter, and the defendant hath put the denial on record.'<sup>20</sup> According to the author of the life of Shakespeare in the *Biographia Britannica*: 'Shakespeare owed his release at last to the Queen's kindness.'<sup>21</sup>

The deer-stealing legend had begun with Nicholas Rowe's *Account* of 1709. Rowe reported there that Shakespeare

had, by a Misfortune common enough to young Fellows, fallen into ill Company; and amongst them, some that made a frequent practice of Deer-stealing, engag'd him with them more than once in robbing a Park that belong'd to Sir *Thomas Lucy of Cherlecot*, near *Stratford*. For this he

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<sup>15</sup> *Kenilworth*, p. 173.

<sup>16</sup> *Kenilworth*, p. 174.

<sup>17</sup> See de Grazia, p. 156.

<sup>18</sup> Grierson, *Sir Walter Scott, Bart*, p. 10.

<sup>19</sup> Schoenbaum, p. 114.

<sup>20</sup> *Kenilworth*, p. 174.

<sup>21</sup> *Biographia Britannica*, p. 3628. The author drew this assumption from the fact that Falstaff, a favourite with the Queen, is made a deer-stealer in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*.

was prosecuted by that Gentleman, as he thought, somewhat too severely; and in order to revenge that ill Usage, he made a Ballad upon him. And tho' this, probably the first Essay of his Poetry, be lost, yet it is said to have been so very bitter, that it redoubled the Prosecution against him to that degree, that he was oblig'd to leave his Business and Family in *Warwickshire*, for some time, and shelter himself in *London*. It is at this Time, and upon this Accident, that he is said to have made his first Acquaintance in the Play-house.<sup>22</sup>

Malone had invalidated this myth by affirming that Sir Thomas did not own a park when the stealing was said to have happened.<sup>23</sup> Scott alluded to the legend more directly in the description of his visit to Stratford-upon-Avon. Charlecote, where Scott was welcomed by Mr Lucy, was:

surrounded by venerable oaks realizing the imagery which Shakspeare loved so well to dwell upon, rich verdant pastures extend on every side and numerous herds of deer were reposing in the shade. All showd that the Lucy family had retaind their 'land and beeves.' [...] He told me the park from which Shakspeare stole the buck was not that which surrounds Charlecote but belongd to a mansion at some distance where Sir Thomas Lucy resided at the time of the trespass. The tradition went that they hid the buck in a barn, part of which was standing a few years ago but now totally decayd. This park no longer belongs to the Lucys.<sup>24</sup>

Scott indirectly referred to the tradition of the ballad which Shakespeare was said to have written as a revenge on Sir Thomas:

This visit gave me great pleasure; it really brought Justice Shallow freshly before my eyes - the *luc*es in his arms which do become an old coat well were not more lively plainly pourtrayd in his own armorials in the hall window than was his person in my mind's eye.<sup>25</sup>

Sussex admires Shakespeare as a 'man' but is unable to appreciate his performances as a dramatist and a player. As regards Shakespeare's 'practice [...] on the

<sup>22</sup>See Nicholas Rowe, 'Some Account of the Life &c. of Mr. William Shakespear 1709', in Nichol Smith, pp. 1-22 (p. 3).

<sup>23</sup>de Grazia, pp. 105-6. See also Schoenbaum, p. 245.

<sup>24</sup>*Journal*, p. 454 (8 April 1828). Cf. Schoenbaum, pp. 108-14.

<sup>25</sup>*Journal*, p. 455. Cf. *Merry Wives*, I. 1. 8-20 and Schoenbaum, p. 110.

stage', Sussex again 'wish[es] the gamesome mad fellow no injury. Some of his whoreson poetry [...] has rung in mine ears as if they sounded to boot and saddle.' But, he continues, 'it is all froth and folly - no substance or seriousness in it'.<sup>26</sup> Being a soldier, Sussex censures the actors' performances as men of war:

What are half a dozen knaves, with rusty foils and tattered targets, making but a mere mockery of a stout fight, to compare to the royal game of bear-baiting, which hath been graced by your Highness's countenance, and that of your royal predecessors, in this your princely kingdom, famous for matchless mastiffs, and bold bearwards, over all Christendom?<sup>27</sup>

The Dean of St Asaph's, who represents the clergy, accuses the 'naughty foul-mouthed knaves' of introducing 'profane and lewd expressions, tending to foster sin and harlotry,' and of making people reflect 'on government, its origin and its object' thus shaking 'the solid foundations of civil society.'<sup>28</sup>

The favourable comments of Leicester and the Queen are contrasted to these critical views. The Earl, however, also sees the theatre as a means of keeping the subjects away from the policy of the government:

And in behalf of the players, I must needs say that they are witty knaves whose rants and whose jests keep the minds of the commons from busying themselves with state affairs, and listening to traitorous speeches, idle rumours, and disloyal insinuations. When men are agape to see how Marlow, Shakespeare, and others, work out their fanciful plots as they call them, the mind of the spectators is withdrawn from the conduct of their rulers.<sup>29</sup>

The Queen does not share Leicester's view; on the contrary, she remarks:

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<sup>26</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 174.

<sup>27</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 174. In Sussex's speech there is an echo from *Henry V*, Prologue to Act IV, 50-53.

<sup>28</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 175.

<sup>29</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 175.

touching this Shakespeare, we think there is that in his plays that is worth twenty Bear-gardens; and that this new undertaking of his Chronicles, as he calls them, may entertain, with honest mirth, mingled with useful instruction, not only our subjects, but even the generation which may succeed to us.<sup>30</sup>

Queen Elizabeth's appreciation of the history plays as a means of teaching history to her subjects echoes Scott's own belief in the importance of history as a civilizing device. Scott believed that 'a man had better know generally the points of history as told him by Shakspeare, than be ignorant of history entirely.'<sup>31</sup>

Leicester praises the Queen by saying that her reign does not need the help of Shakespeare to keep it alive in the memory of future generations, although he admits:

Shakespeare hath so touched some incidents of your Majesty's happy government, as may countervail what has been spoken by his reverence the Dean of St Asaph's. There are some lines, for example - I would my nephew, Philip Sidney, were here, they are scarce ever out of his mouth - they are in a mad tale of fairies, love-charms, and I wot not what besides; beautiful however they are, however short they may and must fall of the subject to which they bear a bold relation - and Philip murmurs them, I think, even in his dreams.<sup>32</sup>

The lines Leicester cannot remember and that Walter Raleigh then quotes, are taken from 'the celebrated vision of Oberon' in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

That very time I saw, (but thou could'st not,)  
 Flying between the cold moon and the earth,  
 Cupid, all arm'd: a certain aim he took  
 At a fair vestal, throned by the west;  
 And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,  
 As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts:  
 But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft,  
 Quench'd in the chaste beams of the wat'ry moon;  
 And the imperial vot'ress passed on,  
 In maiden meditation, fancy free.<sup>33</sup>

<sup>30</sup>Kenilworth, p. 175.

<sup>31</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 158.

<sup>32</sup>Kenilworth, p. 176.

<sup>33</sup>Cf. Kenilworth, p. 176 and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, II. 1. 155-64.

The narrator comments: ‘The verses were not probably new to the Queen, for when was ever such elegant flattery so long in reaching the royal ear to which it was addressed?’<sup>34</sup>

Scholars from Rowe onwards have agreed that this passage is an allegory for Elizabeth’s reign. In the *Variorum* of *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*, Horace Howard Furness reports that in *A Specimen of a Commentary* (1794) Whiter ‘gave a wholly new turn to the discussion when he observed that the whole passage “is very naturally derived from the *Masque* or the *Pageant*, which abounded in the age of Shakespeare [...]”’.<sup>35</sup> Boaden developed Whiter’s idea and found the source for this passage in “‘*The Princelie Pleasures*,” which Leicester devised for the entertainment of the Queen at Kenilworth in 1575, when Shakespeare was a boy.’<sup>36</sup> Furness reports Boaden’s commentary:

‘Where is the improbability,’ he asks [...] ‘that Shakespeare in his youth should have ventured, under the wing of Greene, his townsman, even to Kenilworth itself? It was but fourteen miles distant from Stratford. Nay, that he should at eleven years of age have personally witnessed the reception of the great Queen by the mighty favourite, and perhaps have even discharged some youthful part in the pageant written by Mr Ferrers, sometime lord of misrule in the Court? Was there nothing about the spectacle likely to linger in one of “imagination all compact,” a youth of singular precocity, with a strong devotion to the Muses, and little inclined, as we know, to “drive on the affair of wool at home with his father”?’ Nay, is there no part of his immortal works which bears *evidence* upon the question of his youthful visit? We should expect to find such graphic record in a composition peculiarly devoted to *Fancy*, and there, if I do not greatly err, we undoubtedly find it.’<sup>37</sup>

<sup>34</sup>*Kenilworth*, p. 176. This is another instance of anachronism; *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* was in fact composed ca. 1594-95.

<sup>35</sup>*A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: A Midsommer Nights Dreame*, ed. by Horace Howard Furness, 7th edn (1895; Philadelphia and London: J. P. Lippincott, 1923), p. 78.

<sup>36</sup>*A New Variorum*, p. 79.

<sup>37</sup>*A New Variorum*, p. 79.

The 'graphic record' is Oberon's vision which Shakespeare would then compose from memory of the magnificent celebrations he witnessed as a boy. Furness reports and comments on Boaden's account thus:

'Shakespeare's impression of the scene was strong and general; he does not write as if the tracts of Gascoigne and Laneham lay upon his table. His description is exactly such as, after seventeen years had elapsed, a reminiscence would suggest to a mind highly poetical.' After referring to Leicester as 'Cupid,' 'who then, or never, expected to carry his romantic prize,' and to the Queen as the 'fair vestal,' Boaden concludes: - 'But the splendid captivations of Leicester were not disdained by all female minds, and the bolt of Cupid is seldom discharged in vain. Shakespeare has told us where it fell, "upon a little western flower." Why, alas! can we not ask the kindred spirit, Sir Walter Scott, whether he can conceive his own Amy Robsart more beautifully and touchingly figured than she appears to be in this exquisite metaphor?' Doubtless Sir Walter's 'kindred spirit,' when in the flesh, would have smilingly answered his questioner that no fairer description could be anywhere found of 'his own Amy Robsart,' but that the Earl of Leicester's Amy Robsart had been dead fifteen years when The Princely Pleasures took place at Kenilworth.<sup>38</sup>

Boaden specifically proposed that the masque which was the origin for the passage describing Oberon's vision was found in Gascoigne's *Princely Pleasures*. Furness then reports Nicholas J. Halpin's criticism of this passage from the play. Halpin thought that the entertainments at Kenilworth were Leicester's 'bold stroke for a wife', which eventually failed.<sup>39</sup> Halpin found in the works of Laneham and Gascoigne the indication of the day when Leicester's plans were 'frustrated'. As Furness reports:

There certainly appears to have been one day during which the Queen remained indoors, and the pageants prepared for that day were postponed. Both Laneham and Gascoigne attribute the Queen's seclusion to the weather, but Halpin prefers to believe that it was due to a cause, which Sir Walter Scott imagined and made use of, in *Kenilworth*; 'or to an event of a similar kind, *an offence, to wit, arising out of female jealousy.*'<sup>40</sup>

<sup>38</sup>A *New Variorum*, pp. 79-80.

<sup>39</sup>A *New Variorum*, p. 83.

<sup>40</sup>A *New Variorum*, p. 83.

The Earl of Leicester married Lettice, widow of the Earl of Essex, in 1576 and in

Halpin's opinion:

This last date brings us so close upon the royal visit to Kenilworth and to the disturbance of its festivities, that whatsoever were the embarrassments ascribed to Leicester by Sir Walter Scott, or whatever the incident alluded to by Shakespeare in the line - 'before milk-white, now purple with Love's wound' - I cannot withhold my belief that they bear true reference to the Lady Lettice, Countess of Essex and none other.<sup>41</sup>

Scott's novelistic interpretation of Elizabeth's feelings on the day she remained indoors

was the starting point of both Boaden's and Halpin's criticism of Oberon's vision.

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<sup>41</sup>Quoted in *A New Variorum*, p. 83.

## 2.4 Cavalier Shakespeare

*Woodstock; or, the Cavalier* stands out among Scott's works for being his last novel to introduce a character who quotes Shakespeare to an extraordinary extent and in which the figure of the dramatist haunts the frame of the narrative. After it, only *The Fair Maid of Perth* shows considerable allusion to Shakespeare.

*Woodstock* can be read as complementary to *Kenilworth*. As in *Kenilworth* Shakespeare and his works are made familiar to the entourage of Elizabeth at a time when the dramatist was only a boy, in *Woodstock* Shakespeare is made to die some twenty years before his actual death.<sup>1</sup> The anachronism in *Kenilworth* is successful because it allows the discussion of Shakespeare's work by his contemporaries. In *Woodstock*, Scott might have easily introduced Shakespeare as a contemporary of Sir Henry Lee; instead, he chose to make him a memory for most of the characters: in this way, recourse to Shakespeare becomes expression of a longing for a glorious past which is contrasted to the poverty of the present. *Woodstock* also completes the critical discussion of Shakespeare introduced by *Kenilworth*. The judgement of Shakespeare by several characters of Cromwell's time who come from different backgrounds is the means by which the same characters reveal their personality: they are "judged" by the reader through their appreciation or rejection of Shakespeare's work. It is also a literary device by which Scott fixes in his readers' minds the main critical views on Shakespeare during the troubled period of the Civil War.

The character of the Shakespeare-mad Sir Henry Lee emerges in *Woodstock* as a representative of the old order of Cavaliers. His devotion to Shakespeare works as a bridge between him and his creator: the old knight's appreciation of Shakespeare as 'the

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<sup>1</sup>The action of *Woodstock* takes place in October 1651 when Sir Henry Lee is sixty-five; the knight states that Shakespeare died when he was a child, but in 1616 Sir Henry was already a grown-up man. See Walter Scott, *Woodstock; or, The Cavalier*, Dryburgh Edition, XXI (1894), pp. 1, 20, 31.

brightest and best poet that ever was, is, or will be!' cannot but remind us of Scott's admiration of the Bard.<sup>2</sup> The parallel may be extended further. At the time of the composition of *Woodstock*, Scott was an elderly man whose world had been turned upside down by a financial blow; his fictional creation is also an elderly man who 'seemed bent more by sorrow and infirmity than by the weight of years.'<sup>3</sup> The vast number of intertextual references to the plays allows Scott to make significant considerations on the government of the state and on the legitimacy of monarchy which lie at the core of the narrative.

Sir Henry's love for Shakespeare is introduced early in the novel. After some bickering with her father, Alice is relieved to hear him quote his 'favourite' because she knows that: 'Our little jars are ever wellnigh ended when Shakspeare comes in play.'<sup>4</sup> Sir Henry is a Bardolater and the unparalleled frequency with which he intersperses his speeches with Shakespearean quotations is emphasised by the narrator's ironical comment:

He graced his nephew's departure, however, with a quotation from Shakspeare, whom, as many others do, he was wont to quote from a sort of habit and respect, as a favourite of his unfortunate master, without having either much real taste for his works or great skill in applying the passages which he retained on his memory.<sup>5</sup>

If, as I have suggested, Scott portrayed himself in the character of the old knight, it is natural to suppose that Scott was also thinking of himself when he endowed his character with the habit of quoting Shakespeare at all times and in the greatest variety of

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<sup>2</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 302. Shakespeare is here called 'poet' because in the period of the Puritan revolution theatres were temporarily closed and plays were therefore read. For an overview of the period's effects on the drama, see Hyder E. Rollins, 'A Contribution to the History of the English Commonwealth Drama', *Studies in Philology*, 18 (1921), 267-333; Louis B. Wright, 'The Reading of Plays during the Puritan Revolution', *Huntington Library Bulletin*, 6 (1934), 73-108; and Ernest Sirluck, 'Shakespeare and Jonson among the Pamphleteers of the First Civil War: Some Unreported Seventeenth-Century Allusions', *Modern Philology*, 53 (1955-56), 88-99.

<sup>3</sup>Cf. Lockhart, VIII, 353-57 and *Woodstock*, p. 15.

<sup>4</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 20.

<sup>5</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 54.

situations - 'as many others do'. Scott, however, had 'real taste' for Shakespeare and his intertextual practice shows his command of Shakespeare's text. This comment by the narrator can be seen both as a sort of 'self-defence' on the part of Scott and an ironical remark directed at the knight. Like Scott's, Sir Henry's quotations come from a deep and excellent knowledge of Shakespeare's work. Sir Henry's intertextual practice, however, shows a self-consciousness which does not always appear in Scott's writings: he regularly acknowledges his source by accompanying the quotations with expressions such as: 'as old', 'honest', 'mad Will says'.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, most of his quotations appear in quotation marks. The effect of these devices is that of making Shakespeare a constant presence in the narrative.

Sir Henry's devotion to Shakespeare is a target for ironical comments from some of the characters. Alice leads her father to speak of Shakespeare in order to divert his attention from a topic which is disagreeable to her, but he perceives her manoeuvre: 'thou wouldst lead the old man away from the tender subject.'<sup>7</sup> Satirical comments come from Prince Charles who scorns the knight's affection for Shakespeare when the old man offers to read *Richard II*.<sup>8</sup> On one occasion, the Prince quotes a passage from *I Henry IV* to Sir Henry with evident sarcasm but the knight does not sense the irony.<sup>9</sup> Later, he quotes a line from *Julius Caesar* to Everard commenting: 'as your future father-in-law would say'.<sup>10</sup> Even Phoebe rebukes the knight for quoting Shakespeare in a moment of high danger and distress.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>See for instance *Woodstock*, pp. 20, 149, 150, 212, 215, 270, 296, 298, 301, 307, 382, 394, 395, 415, 418.

<sup>7</sup>*Woodstock*, pp. 20-21.

<sup>8</sup>See below for the analysis of this passage.

<sup>9</sup>Cf. *Woodstock*, p. 301 and *I Henry IV*, IV. 1. 111.

<sup>10</sup>Cf. *Woodstock*, p. 348 and *Julius Caesar*, V. I. 119, 122. The Prince's comment is genuine this time and his affection for the knight appears in his 'glistening' eyes.

<sup>11</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 415.

Shakespeare is a lifelong companion to the knight as he was to Scott. At the critical moment of Cromwell's approach, the knight sits down 'perhaps for the last time, with my Bible on the one hand and old Will on the other, prepared, thank God, to die as I have lived.'<sup>12</sup> Reading Shakespeare is one of the few consolations of his old age when his main companion is Wildrake, the other Cavalier and Shakespeare connoisseur of the novel.<sup>13</sup> The knight's last words before dying are also a quotation from Shakespeare.<sup>14</sup> Sir Henry explains to his daughter the reason for his attachment to Shakespeare thus:

His book was the closet-companion of my blessed master, [...] after the Bible - with reverence for naming them together! - he felt more comfort in it than in any other; and as I have shared his disease, why, it is natural I should take his medicine. Albeit, I pretend not to my master's art in explaining the dark passages; for I am but a rude man, and rustically brought up to arms and hunting.<sup>15</sup>

Shakespeare was Charles I's favourite author. The knight's explanation of his idolatry of Shakespeare contains an allusion to Milton of which he is unaware. Milton had called Shakespeare 'the Closet Companion of [King Charles's] solitudes'.<sup>16</sup> The fact that a Bardolater and Cavalier borrows a phrase from one whom he considers as an enemy to Shakespeare is highly ironical, especially in view of his later admiration of Milton's *Comus* (1634). According to Sir Henry, the late King was a scholar of Shakespeare, whereas he acknowledges he is not skilled enough to aspire to a hermeneutic reading of the plays. Sir Henry's fondness for the dramatist derives more from his feelings of

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<sup>12</sup>Woodstock, p. 400.

<sup>13</sup>Woodstock, pp. 455. Wildrake's quotation from *Twelfth Night* (II. 3. 56-57) endears him to Sir Henry who exclaims: 'Aha, canst thou quote Shakspeare? [...] pleased at discovering a new good quality in his acquaintance' (pp. 246-47).

<sup>14</sup>Woodstock, p. 462.

<sup>15</sup>Woodstock, p. 20.

<sup>16</sup>Quoted in Taylor, p. 9. Cf. John Milton, *Eikonoclastes: 1*, in *Complete Prose Works of John Milton* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953- ), III: 1648-1649 (1962), 350-68 (p. 361). T. A. Birrell informs us that Sir Thomas Herbert, whom he calls a 'very duplicitous man', was the source for the story that Charles I was reading Shakespeare and Jonson during his last days. See his *English Monarchs and their Books: from Henry VII to Charles II*, The Panizzi Lectures 1986 (London: British Library, 1987), p. 47.

loyalty to the late King than from literary appreciation. To him, Shakespeare is a medicine which heals his wounded spirits in times of adversity. Jonathan Bate has remarked that: 'there is a strand within Bardolatry which turns Shakespeare against the power of the State and repossesses him in the name of liberty.'<sup>17</sup> For A. N. Wilson, Shakespeare's work constitutes a refuge for the old knight in times that are adverse to his beliefs:

Who, for instance, like Sir Henry Lee in *Woodstock*, would not pine for the company of Ben Jonson and memories of Shakespeare, when the contemporary world echoed to the mad farce of the Civil War and the ranting of crop-eared fanatics?<sup>18</sup>

Sir Henry's appropriation of Shakespeare serves to keep his faith in royal legitimacy alive but also to express his rebellion against the new order.

Scott's deep knowledge of history led him to balance Sir Henry's enthusiastic admiration of the Bard with some of the other characters' rejection of Shakespeare. The Prince, heir to the late King, does not share his father's ardour for the dramatist and his view of Shakespeare anticipates the Restoration taste. Central to the politics of the novel and to the historical portrait of Charles is the episode in which Sir Henry proposes to him a reading of *Richard II*. The chapter is prefixed by a few lines from that play:

For there, they say, he daily doth frequent  
With unrestrained loose companions;  
While he, young, wanton, and effeminate boy,  
Takes on the point of honour, to support  
So dissolute a crew.<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions*, p. 7.

<sup>18</sup>A. N. Wilson, *The Laird of Abbotsford: A View of Sir Walter Scott* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980), p. 10.

<sup>19</sup>Cf. *Woodstock*, ch. 23, p. 275 and *Richard II*, V. 3. 6-7, 9-10. Two other chapter-tags from *Richard II*, besides the one quoted above, provide a parallel with the Prince; cf. chs. 21, 25, pp. 249, 296 and *Richard II*, V. 5. 67-68; I. 3. 118.

The tag in which the newly crowned Henry IV asks to see Prince Hal prepares the reader for Alice's description of Prince Charles in the following narrative. Unconscious that she is speaking to the exiled sovereign, Alice lists Charles's negative features and suggests that he should 'rule his passions and be guided by his understanding.'<sup>20</sup> Scott had drawn a portrait of Charles II as the restored monarch of England in *Pevekil of the Peak* where he depicted him as:

the most amiable of voluptuaries, the gayest and best-natured of companions, the man that would, of all others, have best sustained his character, had life been a continued banquet, and its only end to enjoy the passing hour and send it away as pleasantly as might be.<sup>21</sup>

Elsewhere, Scott called him: 'A merry monarch, scandalous and poor'.<sup>22</sup> In *Pevekil of the Peak*, an epigraph from *Henry V* also draws an analogy between Charles II and Henry V:

But O!  
 What shall I say to thee, Lord Scroop, thou cruel,  
 Ingrateful, savage, and inhuman creature?  
 Thou that didst bear the key of all my counsels,  
 That knew'st the very bottom of my soul,  
 That almost mightst have coin'd me into gold,  
 Wouldst thou have practised on me for thy use!<sup>23</sup>

In this passage, King Henry accuses his former favourite, Lord Scroop, of high treason. In the novel, Charles is waiting for his favourite, the Duke of Buckingham, who also stands accused of treason.<sup>24</sup> The analogy between the two works ends here for, whereas in the play King Henry sends his former friend to death, in the novel Charles II is ready

<sup>20</sup>Woodstock, p. 275.

<sup>21</sup>*Pevekil*, p. 519.

<sup>22</sup>Walter Scott, 'Molière', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, XVII (1853), 137-215 (pp. 207-8). See also 'Life of Dryden', p. 60 and *Pevekil*, pp. 465, 519.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. *Pevekil*, ch. 48, p. 546 and *Henry V*, II. 2. 90-96.

<sup>24</sup>The narrator comments: 'At no period of his life, not even when that life was in imminent danger, did the constitutional gaiety of Charles seem more overclouded than when waiting for the return of Chiffinch with the Duke of Buckingham'; see *Pevekil*, p. 546.

to pardon Buckingham before listening to his explanation. Scott's aim in the choice of this epigraph was to illustrate the difference between the two sovereigns: whereas Hal changes his way of life when he becomes King and, to use Alice Lee's words, learns to 'rule his passions and be guided by his understanding', Charles does not put a restraint on his 'constitutional gaiety'.

The reading, or better, the non-reading, of *Richard II* in *Woodstock* represents a turning point in the narrative since both the treatment of Shakespeare and the politics of the novel are developed from it. Sir Henry only manages to read the first line of the play to the Prince, who, suddenly, leaves the room.<sup>25</sup> Charles regards the knight's attempt to entertain him as an 'atrocious complot with Will Shakspeare, a fellow as much out of date as himself, to read me to death with five acts of a historical play, or chronicle, "being the piteous Life and Death of Richard the Second?"'.<sup>26</sup> The Prince avoids listening to the reading of a Shakespearean play by a representative of the old school who 'read [Shakespeare's plays] with more zeal than taste'.<sup>27</sup> To Charles's Restoration taste, Shakespeare stands for all that is old-fashioned. The Prince, who embodies the new generation, cannot endure:

to hear him read one of those wildernesses of scenes which the English call a play, from prologue to epilogue - from Enter the first to the final *Exeunt Omnes* - an unparalleled horror - a penance which would have made a dungeon darker, and added dulness even to Woodstock!<sup>28</sup>

In the 'Life of Dryden' Scott explained Charles II's and his followers' dislike of Shakespeare by saying that their literary taste had been formed at foreign courts. Scott

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<sup>25</sup>Cf. *Woodstock*, p. 277 and *Richard II*, I. 1. 1.

<sup>26</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 279.

<sup>27</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 284.

<sup>28</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 278.

laments that this circumstance prevented a revival of the dramatists who had dominated the stage before the Civil War.<sup>29</sup>

The Prince's reaction to Sir Henry's attempt to read *Richard II* is motivated by deeper personal feelings which are to be regarded from a political point of view. In the fate of Richard II, Charles sees both his father's fate and his own situation. Richard's deposition and death recall to his mind the decapitation of Charles I and Cromwell's "usurpation". Moreover, he feels himself threatened by the skilful politician Cromwell as Richard was endangered by the cunning soldier Bolingbroke. In this parallel, Sir Henry plays the role of old John O'Gaunt who warns Richard of his fate when he tells him that he is 'in reputation sick'.<sup>30</sup> An episode in *Peveril of the Peak* gives us an insight into Charles II's feelings for the death of his father. During a dialogue between the King and his favourite:

Charles paused, as the duke spoke, beside a window which looked full on Whitehall, and his eye was involuntarily attracted by the fatal window of the Banqueting House, out of which his unhappy father was conducted to execution. Charles was naturally, or, more properly, constitutionally, brave; but a life of pleasure, together with the habit of governing his course rather by what was expedient than by what was right, rendered him unapt to dare the same scene of danger or of martyrdom which had closed his father's life and reign; and the thought came over his half-formed resolution like the rain upon a kindling beacon.<sup>31</sup>

Charles II's uneasiness at beholding the scene of his father's death derives both from his painful recollection of that event, as the mournful son of the King, and from his fear of sharing the same fate. The 'half-formed resolution' which the view of that scene extinguishes is his intervention in favour of Sir Geoffrey Peveril to spare his life: after recollecting his father's fate, the King decides to leave the matter to the council.

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<sup>29</sup>'Life of Dryden', p. 58.

<sup>30</sup>See *Richard II*, II. 1. 96.

<sup>31</sup>*Peveril*, pp. 370-71.

A brief account of the critical reception of *Richard II* helps to understand the Prince's rejection of this play in *Woodstock*. The first example of a political appropriation of *Richard II* dates back to 1601, at the eve of the Essex plot.<sup>32</sup> *Richard II* was viewed as an anti-monarchical play for a long time and therefore its performance was banned.<sup>33</sup> Especially Nahum Tate's adaptation of it, as Gary Taylor observes, 'so obviously ran the risk of reminding audiences of their own Charles II that it was banned before it could be performed.'<sup>34</sup> Michael Dobson tells us why: 'when it appeared in December 1680, Charles was facing a House of Commons potentially the most dangerous since 1640, and no play depicting the feasibility of deposing an English monarch could possibly be tolerated.'<sup>35</sup>

Why did Sir Henry select *Richard II* among Shakespeare's plays? Nicola J. Watson sees Sir Henry's frequent recourse to Shakespeare 'as a marker of the political correctness of royalism and as the disciplinarian and reformer of royal peccadillo'.<sup>36</sup> This particular play is aptly chosen. The knight hopes for the reformation of the present state of the monarchy. The Prince refuses to listen to his reading of *Richard II* because that play contains a warning of his weaknesses. We have already seen how Charles does not correspond to Alice Lee's ideal of a good King. His negative features are emphasized in the discussion of Davenant's claim where the future King almost champions him as the heir of Shakespeare.<sup>37</sup>

An interesting link which Watson draws in her essay on *Woodstock* allows us to develop the discussion of the politics of the novel. Watson starts from the fact that, in

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<sup>32</sup>See *Richard II*, ed. by Peter Ure, The Arden Shakespeare (London: Methuen, 1956), pp. lvii-lxii.

<sup>33</sup>See Bate, *Shakespearean Constitutions*, p. 62.

<sup>34</sup>Taylor, p. 24.

<sup>35</sup>Michael Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660-1769* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 81.

<sup>36</sup>Nicola J. Watson, 'Kemble, Scott, and the Mantle of the Bard', in *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, ed. by Jean I. Marsden (Hemel Hempstead: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), pp. 73-92 (p. 78).

<sup>37</sup>See below.

the novel, Charles I is made the owner of Shakespeare's First Folio, whereas historians tell us that he owned a copy of the Second Folio (1632).<sup>38</sup> In *Woodstock*, Sir Henry is also the owner of 'the first folio - beloved of the Bannatyne, it was Hemminge and Condel - it was the *editio princeps*'.<sup>39</sup> Scott never explicitly states that Sir Henry's folio was Charles I's copy; Scott therefore did not amend history as Watson suggests.<sup>40</sup> Our claim does not destroy Watson's argument, although to know that Charles I owned the second folio cannot but remind the reader of Malone's urge not to open a second, or a successive copy of Shakespeare's F1.<sup>41</sup> If we equate the old Cavalier with the late King, the parallel between legitimate monarchy and authenticity of Shakespeare's work is still valid and the knight's First Folio can be seen, as Watson states, 'as the British Constitution's sacred text'.<sup>42</sup> The link between the First Folio and legitimate monarchy especially emerges from the behaviour of some of the characters. Being Royalists, Sir Henry and Wildrake often quote from Shakespeare, showing a vast knowledge of his work. Conversely, the non-Royalist characters, such as Everard and Tomkins, who stand on the opposite political side, are unable to appreciate Shakespeare.

If Charles's refusal of Shakespeare is motivated by a different literary taste and by personal feelings, the Puritans' dislike and rejection of the dramatist are caused by the supposed immorality of his work. The discussion of the Puritan view is introduced by the knight's defiance of 'the present age, bundle all its wits, Donne, Cowley, Waller, and the rest of them together, to produce a poet of a tenth part of the genius of old Will.'<sup>43</sup> Everard Markham, Sir Henry's Puritan nephew, is called upon to give his own

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<sup>38</sup>See for instance Birrell, p. 44.

<sup>39</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 41.

<sup>40</sup>Watson calls Sir Henry 'the present owner' of the folio (p. 79).

<sup>41</sup>de Grazia, p. 120.

<sup>42</sup>Watson, p. 79.

<sup>43</sup>See *Woodstock*, p. 302.

judgement of Shakespeare. He admits he loved Shakespeare's works in the past and therefore cannot condemn them all, but he expresses his inability to accept them:

I cannot, even in Shakspeare, but see many things both scandalous to decency and prejudicial to good manners - many things which tend to ridicule virtue, or to recommend vice, at least to mitigate the hideousness of its features. I cannot think these fine poems are an useful study, and especially for the youth of either sex, in which bloodshed is pointed out as the chief occupation of the men, and intrigue as the sole employment of the women.<sup>44</sup>

Everard is preoccupied with the morals and welfare of the people and his religious beliefs force him to refuse the 'immorality' of Shakespeare's work. When he gives his disparaging view of his uncle's idol, Everard does not realize he is making a mistake because, as the narrator states, 'it would be as easy to convert him to the Presbyterian form of government, or engage him to take the abjuration oath, as to shake his belief in Shakspeare.'<sup>45</sup> Sir Henry's first reaction is against the Puritans as a whole who do not understand that in Shakespeare's works:

the noblest sentiments of religion and virtue - sentiments which might convert hardened sinners, and be placed with propriety in the mouths of dying saints and martyrs - happened, from the rudeness and coarse taste of the times, to be mixed with some broad jests and similar matter, which lay not much in the way, excepting of those who painfully sought such stuff out, that they might use it in vilifying what was in itself deserving of the highest applause.<sup>46</sup>

Sir Henry's apology for Shakespeare's supposed want of taste is in accordance with Scott's and Dr Johnson's idea of the barbarity of the audience in Shakespeare's time.<sup>47</sup> Sir Henry defies his nephew to cite a Puritan 'poet with enough both of gifts and grace to outshine poor old Will, the oracle and idol of us blinded and carnal Cavaliers' and, at

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<sup>44</sup>Woodstock, p. 303. Cf. above the view of the Dean of St Asaph's in *Kenilworth*, p. 175.

<sup>45</sup>Woodstock, p. 303.

<sup>46</sup>Woodstock, p. 304.

<sup>47</sup>See above.

this request, Everard quotes a passage from an author whose works, he thinks, 'might equal even the poetry of Shakspeare, and which are free from the fustian and indelicacy with which that great bard was sometimes content to feed the coarse appetites of his barbarous audience.'<sup>48</sup> Everard recites a passage from Milton's *Comus* and his uncle is so impressed that he asks him to quote it again.<sup>49</sup> Sir Henry must admit his admiration for the unknown Puritan poet and he does it, ironically, with a quotation from Shakespeare: 'all his noble rhymes, as Will says, "Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh."'”<sup>50</sup> At the revelation that the unknown poet is Milton, the climax is reached and Sir Henry banishes his nephew from his house.<sup>51</sup> He could still accept Everard's negative criticism on his hero, and, as we have seen, he tries to apologize for some of Shakespeare's "faults", but he cannot endure a comparison between Shakespeare and Milton, the Puritan poet *par excellence*. Everard's attack on Shakespeare's work becomes the cause of the rupture with his uncle and is an example of the way in which the knight mingles his literary taste, for him synonymous with Shakespeare, with his political beliefs.

Everard's comment on Shakespeare is on the whole moderate and discloses a certain admiration for the Bard. Another Puritan in the novel gives an extreme detraction of Shakespeare both as a man and an author. Tomkins's harsh criticism of Shakespeare is provoked by Joceline's kiss to Phoebe, which makes him exclaim:

here is the king and high priest of those vices and follies. Here is he, whom men of folly profanely call nature's miracle. Here is he, whom princes chose for their cabinet-keeper, and whom maids of honour take for their bed fellow. Here is the prime teacher of fine words, foppery and folly. Here! (dealing another thump upon the volume; and oh! revered of the Roxburghe, it was the first folio - beloved of the Bannatyne, it was Hemminge and Condel - it was the *editio princeps*). On thee,' he

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<sup>48</sup>Woodstock, p. 305.

<sup>49</sup>Cf. Woodstock, p. 306 and Milton, *Comus*, in *The Complete Poems*, ed. by B. A. Wright (London: J. M. Dent, 1980), pp. 47-75, lines 210-22.

<sup>50</sup>Cf. Woodstock, p. 307 and *Hamlet*, III. 1. 161.

<sup>51</sup>Woodstock, p. 308.

continued - 'on thee, William Shakspeare, I charge whate'er of such lawless idleness and immodest folly hath defiled the land since thy day.'<sup>52</sup>

Tomkins's charges against Shakespeare are the product of an irrational mind. When he accuses Shakespeare of giving lessons against morality his good acquaintance with the plays is revealed:

Seeks a wife a foul example for adultery, here she shall find it. Would a man know how to train his fellow to be a murderer, here shall he find tutoring. Would a lady marry a heathen negro, she shall have chronicled example for it. Would any one scorn at his Maker, he shall be furnished with a jest in this book. Would he defy his brother in the flesh, he shall be accommodated with a challenge. Would you be drunk, Shakspeare will cheer you with a cup. Would you plunge in sensual pleasures, he will soothe you to indulgence, as with the lascivious sounds of lute. This, I say - this book is the wellhead and source of all those evils which have overrun the land like a torrent, making men scoffers, doubters, deniers, murderers, makebates, and lovers of the wine-pot, haunting unclean places, and sitting long at the evening wine.<sup>53</sup>

Tomkins's intention is to denigrate Shakespeare, but he cannot avoid praising him, though unconsciously, and acknowledging his charisma by calling him 'a wizard having such infinite power over men's souls'.<sup>54</sup> Tomkins's contradictory literary taste is stressed later in the narrative when he recites 'pithy passages from *Venus and Adonis*' to catch Phoebe's attention.<sup>55</sup> Tomkins's doubleness is reflected in his conduct in the political issue. Watson speaks of Tomkins's disparagement of Shakespeare as 'an opposing, "jacobinical" view, which is equally convinced of Shakespeare's royalism but wholeheartedly rejects it'.<sup>56</sup>

In the discussion of the Puritanical judgement of Shakespeare a controversial topic is encompassed: William Davenant's claim to be an heir of the dramatist. The 'tradition'

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<sup>52</sup>Woodstock, p. 41. Note another reference to Shakespeare as 'cabinet-keeper'.

<sup>53</sup>Woodstock, p. 42.

<sup>54</sup>Woodstock, p. 42.

<sup>55</sup>Woodstock, p. 357.

<sup>56</sup>Watson, p. 79.

of Davenant's illegitimate descent from Shakespeare first appeared in John Aubrey's *Brief Lives* (1680), and it occupies the pages of most editions of Shakespeare.<sup>57</sup> Scott related it in his foreword to Dryden's adaptation of *The Tempest*:

Sir William was the son of an innkeeper in Oxford, whose house was frequented by our immortal Shakspeare: and hence an ill-founded tradition ascribed to him a paternal interest in young Davenant: But this slander on Shakspeare's moral character has been fully refuted in the Prolegomena to Johnson and Steevens' edition of his plays.<sup>58</sup>

In a note to the novel, Scott wrote: 'This gossiping tale is to be found in the Variorum Shakspeare. D'Avenant did not much mind throwing out hints in which he sacrificed his mother's character to his desire of being held a descendant from the admirable Shakspeare.'<sup>59</sup> The Prince explains to Sir Henry on which basis Davenant founds his claim, but the knight cannot believe 'the enormity of the pretension; [...] Will D'Avenant the son of the brightest and best poet that ever was, is, or will be!'.<sup>60</sup> Sir Henry and his nephew defend Shakespeare from the accusation of licentiousness, while the Prince almost patronizes Davenant's claim. Everard's comment is especially intriguing because it contains a reference to *King John*: 'would he purchase the reputation of descending from poet, or from prince, at the expense of his mother's good fame? His nose ought to be slit.'<sup>61</sup> The allusion is to Falconbridge who dishonours his mother by hinting he is an illegitimate son.<sup>62</sup> In the play Falconbridge is the illegitimate son of Richard Coeur-de-lion and he represents a threat to King John's throne. As Watson points out:

Given that the outcome of this opening scene is a confirmation of his bastardy, an illegitimacy that plays out, in little, King John's own very

<sup>57</sup>See Schoenbaum, pp. 98-105.

<sup>58</sup>*The Works of John Dryden*, III (1883), p. 101.

<sup>59</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 480, note 6.

<sup>60</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 302.

<sup>61</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 302.

<sup>62</sup>*King John*, I. 1. 59-65.

tenuous claim to the throne, this reference to *King John* serves to underline the importance of maintaining the closest links between legitimacy and the monarchy.<sup>63</sup>

Everard's comment causes a jest about Davenant's nose, for, as Scott explains in a footnote, Davenant lacked the nose of his supposed father.<sup>64</sup> Davenant contracted syphilis and lost his nose as a consequence of mercury treatment; this, according to Schoenbaum, 'provided the wits with matter for amiable jests.'<sup>65</sup> Although Davenant was a Royalist and during the Restoration became, as Taylor informs us, 'both maker and epitome of a new Shakespeare', Sir Henry Lee cannot appreciate him because of his claim.<sup>66</sup>

Shakespeare has a great significance in Sir Henry Lee's life in helping him to face difficult situations and historical events. Sir Henry himself acknowledges the strength he gets from Shakespeare. During Cromwell's incursion into the Lodge, Phoebe asks the knight to 'leave alone playbooks,' and think of their predicament, but he answers: 'If I had not made up my mind to that many days since, [...] I had not now met this hour with a free bosom.

As gentle and as jocund as to rest,  
Go I to death: truth hath a quiet breast.'<sup>67</sup>

Shakespeare is the 'medicine' that his other idol, Charles I, used to take, and the knight, too, recurs to him as a kind of drug. When Cromwell and his soldiers are approaching the Lodge to capture the Prince, Sir Henry resorts to Shakespeare in order to receive them with a strong heart, and the enemies of the crown do not find him vulnerable. Annoyed at Cromwell's interrogations, Sir Henry tells him that although he owes him:

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<sup>63</sup>Watson, p. 80.

<sup>64</sup>Woodstock, p. 302n.: 'D'Avenant actually wanted the nose, the foundation of many a jest of the day.'

<sup>65</sup>Schoenbaum, p. 98.

<sup>66</sup>Taylor, p. 53.

<sup>67</sup>Cf. Woodstock, p. 415 and *Richard II*, I. 3. 95-96. The original lines in the play read as follows: 'As gentle and as jocund as to jest, / Go I to fight. Truth hath a quiet breast.'

Respect for thy great place, and let the devil  
 Be sometimes honour'd for his burning throne,  
 yet I feel my patience wearing thin.

The Duke of *Measure for Measure*, disguised as a friar, addresses these words to Angelo to whom he has temporarily entrusted the government of the town.<sup>68</sup> The knight redirects the quotation to Cromwell whom he does not recognize as the legitimate authority.

Sir Henry Lee's last Shakespearean quotation comes at Charles's triumphant entrance in London as King. Charles II greets the Cavalier and 'the old man, detaining him with the other hand, said something faltering, of which Charles could only catch the quotation: -

"Unthread the rude eye of rebellion,  
 And welcome home again discarded faith."<sup>69</sup>

In *King John*, Melun warns Salisbury and Pembroke to go back to their legitimate sovereign. Again, the knight places Charles in an uncomfortable position:

Extricating himself, therefore, as gently as possible, from a scene which began to grow painfully embarrassing, the good-natured King said, speaking with unusual distinctness to insure the old man's comprehending him, 'This is something too public a place for all we have to say. But if you come not soon to see King Charles at Whitehall, he will send down Louis Kerneguy to visit you, that you may see how rational that mischievous lad is become since his travels.'<sup>70</sup>

Shakespeare's words are used to sanction the restoration of the legitimate monarch on his throne and Sir Henry Lee's death.<sup>71</sup> A new era has begun which will not leave room for old Cavaliers like Sir Henry.

<sup>68</sup>Cf. *Woodstock*, p. 418 and *Measure*, V. 1. 290-91.

<sup>69</sup>Cf. *Woodstock*, p. 462 and *King John*, V. 4. 11-12.

<sup>70</sup>*Woodstock*, p. 462.

<sup>71</sup>In *Waverley* the same lines sanction the hero's decision to leave his commission to the Hanoverian monarch (p. 216).

The reading of *Kenilworth* and *Woodstock* has illustrated Scott's interpretation of the period which saw the birth and the immediate development of Shakespeare's career, and in particular of the Elizabethan reception and the Restoration rejection of Shakespeare. In other novels, Scott resorted to Shakespeare in several different ways; there, his criticism is less direct but more profound. In the following section, I will analyse four novels which epitomise Scott's intertextual recourse to Shakespeare's plays and complement our reading of the "parallel".

## PART III

### Four Novels and the “Parallel”

#### 3.1 *The Bride of Lammermoor*: Scott’s Shakespearean Tragedy

John Speirs has defined *Lammermoor* as ‘Scott’s earliest 19th-century experiment in a Shakespearian tragedy in novel form’.<sup>1</sup> The eighth of the Waverley Novels constitutes the most notable example of Scott’s Shakespeareanism and the best illustration of a subtle use of Shakespearean tragedy in a novel.

In writing the following discussion of Shakespeare’s presence in *Lammermoor*, I referred to three texts which especially focus on the parallels and similarities between the two authors and their works. Wilmon Brewer’s *Shakespeare’s Influence on Sir Walter Scott* was complemented in 1976 by Christopher R. Harding’s unpublished dissertation *The Influence of Renaissance Drama in the Novels of Sir Walter Scott*. Harding suggests well-known parallels between Shakespeare’s plays and Scott’s novels and offers some more details which Brewer overlooked, but he does not go farther than that. Frank McCombie’s article, ‘Scott, *Hamlet*, and *The Bride of Lammermoor*’ (1975) is relevant to the discussion of the import of *Hamlet* on the plot of Scott’s novel, especially insofar as it brings out two themes, melancholy and revenge, which Brewer had only slightly touched upon. McCombie, however, only mentions Lucy’s derangement briefly, as deriving from Ophelia’s madness. An important contribution to this last topic has been recently provided by Helen Small in her *Love’s Madness: Medicine, the Novel, and Female Insanity 1800-1865* (1996).

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<sup>1</sup>John Speirs, ‘Poetry into Novel’, in *Poetry towards Novel* (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), pp. 283-333 (p. 301).

## *Hamlet*

Cross-fertilisation of Shakespearean sources represents one of Scott's major achievements in his adaptation of Shakespearean plots and characters. *Lammermoor*, in particular, can be taken as a foremost example of his Shakespearean technique. Scott's exploitation of the motifs of revenge and consciousness in his recreation of Hamlet as an eighteenth-century hero and of Ophelia's madness as the prototype for his mad heroines are my major concern in this sub-chapter. Scott's transposition of the Renaissance way of representing a character onto the nineteenth-century novel had to undergo necessary changes and modifications in order to please his reading public; the essence of the characters, however, remained Shakespearean.

Brewer regards *Hamlet* as 'A third notable influence of Shakespearean tragedy' on *Lammermoor* which comes after that of *Romeo and Juliet* and *Macbeth*.<sup>2</sup> The resemblance of *Lammermoor* to these two tragedies is obvious enough; Scott himself pointed it out by means of direct allusions and epigraphs to the chapters. With the exception of the tag to chapter 24 analysed above, the presence of *Hamlet* is not signalled by verbatim quotations. Allusions to and echoes from the play are however frequent and obvious to the reader who is familiar with the play.

Scott begins to build his plot by interspersing his narrative with verbal and syntactical echoes from *Hamlet*. The analogies in the first half of the novel aim at preparing the reader for the events of the climax, after which there are fewer verbal echoes. In the second part of the novel there is less need for frequent Shakespearean allusion as the cumulative effect started at the beginning is still vivid in the reader's mind. McCombie suggests that this decrease in allusions is due to Scott's partial loss of his conscious powers during the composition of the novel.<sup>3</sup> The legend of its

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<sup>2</sup>Brewer, p. 289.

<sup>3</sup>Frank McCombie, 'Scott, *Hamlet*, and *The Bride of Lammermoor*', *Essays in Criticism*, 25 (1975), 419-36 (p. 430).

composition has contributed to making *Lammermoor* unique in the range of Scott's novels and, as Fiona Robertson reports, for a long time critics have approached it as 'the product of Scott's deepest desires and fears, released by the delirium of illness'.<sup>4</sup> According to Jane Millgate, the myth surrounding the creation of *Lammermoor* has prevented the readers from approaching it as 'a controlled work of art'.<sup>5</sup> Scott's structural use of Shakespearean allusion in the novel is evidence of its being 'a controlled work of art'.

The characterisation of the hero, Edgar, Master of Ravenswood, as a Hamlet-like type appears evident from the very beginning. Edgar is twenty and 'little acquainted [...] with life', just as Hamlet, though older, has been studying in Wittenberg, away from the court and active life up to the beginning of the play.<sup>6</sup> Edgar and Hamlet are good-

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<sup>4</sup>Fiona Robertson, 'Introduction', in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, ed. by Fiona Robertson, The World's Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), pp. vii-xxix (p. x).

<sup>5</sup>Jane Millgate, *Walter Scott: The Making of the Novelist* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1984), p. 171. *Lammermoor* was published at a time when Scott was seriously ill and had to take heavy doses of laudanum to kill the pain. James Ballantyne's statement that Scott 'did not recollect one single incident, character, or conversation it contained', reported by Lockhart (II, 142), led many critics to express the conviction that it was the product of an opiate dream. As Alethea Hayter puts it, *Lammermoor* 'is one of the best-attested examples of an opium interlude in the work of a non-addicted writer'; see her *Opium and the Romantic Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), p. 294. See also Buchan, p. 193. Millgate firmly opposes this thesis and makes a detailed reconstruction of the chronology of the composition of *Lammermoor* to demonstrate that it was not the product of a feverish dream. According to Millgate, Scott started composing *Lammermoor* in May 1818; in March 1819 he was taken seriously ill and at the end of the first week in April he was obliged to dictate the rest of the novel which was sent off to the publisher by 2 May 1819. When she analysed the manuscript, Millgate discovered that only the last fifth of the novel could have been dictated, the rest of it being written in Scott's own hand. J. H. Alexander also asserts that Scott wrote it 'between early September 1818 and (probably) late April or early May 1819,' and that it was published in June 1819. Alexander views Lockhart's account of Scott's dictating the novel as 'demonstrable romancing: most of the manuscript survives in Scott's hand, as do his corrected proofs from 240.28 to the end. There is a germ of truth in Lockhart, however: the last part of the manuscript was certainly dictated; the surviving proofs were probably preserved as evidence of authorship to complement the incomplete manuscript.' See *Lammermoor*, p. 271. It can be argued, therefore, that the last fifth of the novel is the most impressive and hallucinatory part of the novel, and therefore the original comments by Ballantyne and Lockhart maintain some force. See also John Sutherland's recent article 'Turns unstoned: has anything worthwhile ever been written under the influence of drugs?', *Times Literary Supplement*, 30 October 1998, p. 30.

<sup>6</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 98 and *Hamlet*, I. 2. 113.

natured men who can acknowledge their limits and faults.<sup>7</sup> They are highly conscious of their rank,<sup>8</sup> and show the attributes and qualities of the ideal man. Hamlet has:

The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword,  
Th'expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,  
Th'observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down!<sup>9</sup>

Edgar 'has parts and address, as well as courage and talents,' and is provided with 'education, sense, and penetration.'<sup>10</sup> Edgar borrows other features from the most illustrious of Elizabethan melancholics. His language is sometimes affected by the ambiguity which often distinguishes Hamlet's speech.<sup>11</sup> He loves to walk for hours in solitude and is inclined to musing and meditating.<sup>12</sup> He feels the same distaste for alcohol expressed by Hamlet. After the funeral, during the reception at Wolf's Crag, the 'custom' of the mourners 'to carouse deep healths to the memory of the deceased,' is 'fully observed'; Edgar is well aware that what his guests say under the influence of alcohol will soon be forgotten. Hamlet's distaste at the drinking habits in Denmark, 'a custom / More honoured in the breach than in the observance' is echoed in the above passage.<sup>13</sup>

The colour of the melancholic was mourning black, related to night and mystery, and Edgar's dark, 'sad-coloured' suits throughout the novel recall Hamlet's 'suits of solemn black'.<sup>14</sup> After the shooting of the wild bull and his first meeting with Lucy,

<sup>7</sup>After a quarrel with Bucklaw, Edgar begs his pardon as Hamlet asks Laertes to forgive him before the game; in both cases they admit they have 'done [the other] wrong'. Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 56 and *Hamlet*, V. 2. 172.

<sup>8</sup>Edgar's words of introduction after the shooting of the wild bull: 'I am the Master of Ravenswood' (p. 43) recall Hamlet's claim at the graveyard scene: 'This is I, / Hamlet the Dane.' (V. 1. 253-54)

<sup>9</sup>*Hamlet*, III. 1. 154-57.

<sup>10</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 49, 50.

<sup>11</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 42.

<sup>12</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 120 and *Hamlet*, II. 2. 160-61.

<sup>13</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 21 and *Hamlet*, I. 4. 18-19.

<sup>14</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 76, 41 and *Hamlet*, I. 2. 78; see also lines 68 and 77. The main reason for their wearing black, however, is the death of their fathers.

Edgar, 'looking as gloomy as a night in November', tells his companions Bucklaw and Craigenfelt that he will not leave for the continent with them as planned:

The Master of Ravenswood entered the room accordingly, his cloak muffled around him, his arms folded, his looks stern, and at the same time dejected. He flung his cloak from him as he entered, threw himself upon a chair, and appeared sunk in a profound reverie.<sup>15</sup>

The Elizabethan melancholic was affected by feelings of sadness and fear which were said to cause brooding and meditation, indecision and inaction. For Shakespeare and his contemporaries melancholy depended on the imbalance of the four humours.<sup>16</sup> Scott, a nineteenth-century novelist acquainted with a new concept of human psychology, develops an idea of melancholy which retains most exterior traits of the Elizabethan prototype but which is less preoccupied with marking the decisions of the character. Scott detaches himself from the Renaissance determinism of the four humours when he describes Edgar as 'naturally of a gloomy cast' and 'naturally contemplative and melancholy.'<sup>17</sup> Ophelia's description of Hamlet reveals that his melancholy is only recent and is, as Gertrude suggests to Claudius, the result of 'His father's death and our o'er-hasty marriage'.<sup>18</sup> Hamlet often disguises his melancholy with a cheerful and exuberant behaviour, as in his meeting with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.<sup>19</sup> On the contrary, Edgar is never shown in a happy mood. 'Some secret sorrow, or the brooding spirit of some moody passion,' the death of his father added to the ruin of his family, increase his 'natural' gloom.<sup>20</sup> This is a verbal echo of Claudius's account of Hamlet's state of mind: 'There's something in his soul / O'er which his melancholy sits on

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<sup>15</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 52.

<sup>16</sup>See Vieda Skultans, *English Madness: Ideas on Insanity, 1580-1890* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), pp. 17-18.

<sup>17</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 21-22, 82.

<sup>18</sup>*Hamlet*, III. 1. 153-64; II. 2. 57.

<sup>19</sup>*Hamlet*, II. 2. 226-72.

<sup>20</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 41.

brood'.<sup>21</sup> That 'something' or 'secret sorrow' is for both men the death of their fathers, the first tragic event in their lives, which plunges them into a deep state of dejection and disillusionment from which they are unable to rise. At the beginning of the novel, Lord Allan Ravenswood has just 'died of a broken heart': Lord Ashton's legal juggling deprived him of all his possessions and, in Edgar's words, 'dug [his] grave'.<sup>22</sup> When the play opens, King Hamlet has recently died, poisoned by his brother who has then succeeded him on the throne.<sup>23</sup> Edgar, like Hamlet, speaks of his 'affectionate father murdered' even though Lord Allan died a natural death.<sup>24</sup>

The figure of the dead father has great significance in both the novel and the play and constitutes the central motif of the vengeance plot. Both Hamlet and Edgar have idealized the figure of their parents. Hamlet contrasts Claudius unfavourably to his own father when he compares the first to a satyr and the second to Hyperion.<sup>25</sup> Edgar is upset by the changes that have been made at Ravenswood Castle since he left with his father and, looking at the new pictures on the walls, he wonders whether it was 'to make room for such scarecrows as these, [...] that my ancestors have been torn down from the walls which they erected.'<sup>26</sup> Edgar and Hamlet have heard their fathers curse those who led them to a premature death. In a midnight meeting, the Ghost of his father asks Hamlet to: 'Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder.'<sup>27</sup> Edgar, a witness to Lord Allan's last moments of life, 'heard the curses which he breathed against his adversary, as if they had conveyed to him a legacy of vengeance.'<sup>28</sup> After Lord Ashton's attempt to

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<sup>21</sup>*Hamlet*, III. 1. 167-68.

<sup>22</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 128, 21.

<sup>23</sup>*Hamlet*, I. 5. 35-40, 59-70.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 58 and *Hamlet*, II. 2. 586.

<sup>25</sup>*Hamlet*, I. 2. 140. See also III. 4. 53 when Hamlet shows his mother: 'The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.'

<sup>26</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 144. Moreover, Edgar must endure Lord Ashton's attempt on request of the Presbyterian Church to stop the ceremony of his father's burial which is being conducted according to the English communion rites; see *Lammermoor*, p. 19. In the same way, though in this case figuratively, the funeral of Hamlet's father has been interrupted by his 'mother's wedding' (I. 2. 176-77).

<sup>27</sup>*Hamlet*, I. 5. 25.

<sup>28</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 19.

interrupt the burial of his father, Edgar, openly hinting at his revengeful purposes, tells the participants that he will 'requite' his opponent for 'the ruin and disgrace' he has caused to his family.<sup>29</sup> We will later know that on that 'fatal' night Edgar 'cut a lock from my hair, and, as it consumed in the fire, I swore that my rage and revenge should pursue his enemies, until they shrivelled before me like that scorched-up symbol of annihilation.'<sup>30</sup> Edgar's vows of revenge arise from his own disposition of character, as the narrator's disclaimer indicates: 'Alas! what fiend can suggest more desperate counsels, than those adopted under the guidance of our own violent and unresisted passions?'.<sup>31</sup> On the contrary, Hamlet is burdened with an injunction to revenge 'by heaven and hell'.<sup>32</sup> In his recreation of Hamlet, Scott does not need to borrow the supernatural device of the Ghost to urge his hero to action because Edgar is willing to listen to his father's curses 'as if' they prompted him to his revenge. At times, Edgar's desire for revenge sounds inappropriate to his situation; such an attitude would suit Hamlet better, whose father was actually murdered. Again, Scott solves the problem posed by the transposition of a Renaissance character onto a nineteenth-century narrative by endowing Edgar with 'a stern and unforgiving character, more ready to resent than to pardon injuries'.<sup>33</sup>

Lord Ashton bears the principal responsibility for Lord Allan Ravenswood's ruin and is the usurper of the Ravenswoods' estate as Claudius is guilty of King Hamlet's death and the usurper of his throne. When the heroes express a desire to leave their native country, Claudius and Lord Ashton respectively try to make them change their minds. Claudius is averse to Hamlet's wish to go back to Wittenberg: while Hamlet is in Elsinore, he can keep an eye on him. On the contrary, Edgar becomes a danger to Lord

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<sup>29</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 21.

<sup>30</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 157.

<sup>31</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 22.

<sup>32</sup>*Hamlet*, II. 2. 587.

<sup>33</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 45.

Ashton as an agent of the Marquis of A's party abroad. Before leaving, Edgar intends 'to confront the oppressor [...] and upbraid him with his tyranny and its consequences'; he wants to state his wrongs so as to shake 'his soul within him.'<sup>34</sup> Hamlet sets up the play in order to 'force [Claudius's] soul', hoping in this way to 'catch the conscience of the King.'<sup>35</sup> Hamlet succeeds in 'shaking' Claudius's soul and later his mother's, whereas Edgar abjures his vows of vengeance for Lucy's sake.<sup>36</sup>

Catherine Belsey specifies two readings for the word 'conscience' in *Hamlet*, one meaning 'consciousness', the other 'knowledge of right and wrong'.<sup>37</sup> The first reading is a legacy of the Romantic interpretation of the tragedy which saw Hamlet as: 'the tender, delicate, sensitive prince, unequal to the sacred duty of revenge, endlessly inventing excuses to escape from the harsh reality of action.'<sup>38</sup> Scott's interpretation of the character of Hamlet in his portrayal of Edgar slightly differs from that of the other Romantics since Edgar does not try to find excuses not to execute his revenge; it is Fate which, by introducing Lucy and love into his life, stops him from his purpose.

Both Edgar's and Hamlet's desire for revenge is accompanied by a will to regain their patrimonies from the usurpers. When he thinks that Lord Ashton now owns what should belong to him by right of inheritance, Edgar feels the same resentment as Hamlet that Claudius has become King: both are afflicted by 'the destruction of [their] hopes'.<sup>39</sup> Their rights are also menaced by their lovers' brothers. Laertes and Sholto, ambitious and impulsive men of action, are introduced into the plots in contrast to the respective heroes. They are rivals for the heroes' titles: Colonel Sholto will inherit what should belong to Edgar and Laertes, a favourite with the king, is hailed by the mob as the

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<sup>34</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 58.

<sup>35</sup>*Hamlet*, II. 2. 555, 607.

<sup>36</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 158.

<sup>37</sup>Catherine Belsey, 'The Case of Hamlet's Conscience', *Studies in Philology*, 76 (1979), 127-48 (p. 127).

<sup>38</sup>Belsey, p. 129.

<sup>39</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 21 and *Hamlet*, V. 2. 65-66.

successor to the throne of Denmark.<sup>40</sup> Edgar and Hamlet do not take their revenge at once but linger until the end of the plot. If Hamlet's delay might be a consequence of his melancholic attitude, Edgar's hesitation is caused by 'two contradictory passions, - a desire to revenge the death of his father, strangely qualified by admiration of his enemy's daughter.'<sup>41</sup> Edgar's situation responds to the Player King's speech in *Hamlet*: 'Our wills and fates do so contrary run / That our devices still are overthrown'.<sup>42</sup> When Edgar and Hamlet seem to be abandoning their revengeful purpose something occurs that stirs them to it again. During a tremendous storm, Edgar gives shelter to Lord Ashton and his daughter at Wolf's Crag; his kiss of welcome to Lucy is followed by a frightful thunderbolt: 'It seemed as if the ancient founder of the castle were bestriding the thunder-storm, and proclaiming his displeasure at the reconciliation of his descendant with the enemy of his house.'<sup>43</sup> Quite naturally we are reminded of the Ghost's reappearance to Hamlet 'to whet [his] almost blunted purpose.'<sup>44</sup> This scene, in fact, had left a strong impression on Scott's mind.<sup>45</sup> This second preternatural call to action, though, does not hasten the heroes' revenge.

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<sup>40</sup>*Hamlet*, IV. 5. 106. Perhaps the main contrast between Hamlet and Laertes regards the latter's lack of scruples in avenging his own father's death. Laertes follows Claudius's advice that 'Revenge should have no bounds.' (IV. 7. 101) He is ready 'To cut [Hamlet's] throat i'th' church.' (IV. 7. 99) According to Mark Rose: 'Laertes [...] becomes the model of the kind of revenger that Hamlet so disdains.' See his 'Hamlet and the Shape of Revenge', *English Literary Renaissance*, 1 (1971), 132-43 (p. 140). Hamlet does not dare to kill Claudius when the latter is at prayer lest his soul goes to Heaven (III. 3. 87-88). Louis R. Barbato tells us, however, that Kemble cut 'line 127b, where Laertes' willingness to cut Hamlet's throat in church contrasts Hamlet's refusal to kill the King at prayer.' See his 'Hamlet on the Nineteenth Century London Stage: The Kemble, Phelps, and Irving Promptbooks', *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, 121 (1985), 151-59 (p. 157).

<sup>41</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 70.

<sup>42</sup>*Hamlet*, III. 2. 202-3.

<sup>43</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 93. The Gothic setting of Wolf's Crag, 'the solitary and naked tower, situated on a projecting cliff that beetled on the German Ocean', recalls 'the dreadful summit of the cliff / That beetles o'er his base into the sea' of the Castle of Elsinore. Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 59, 22 and *Hamlet*, I. 4. 52. See also pp. 19, 86, 126 for further descriptions of Wolf's Crag. McCombie has pointed out Scott's use of the verb 'beetle' which is 'Shakespeare's sole use of the word in this sense' (p. 422).

<sup>44</sup>*Hamlet*, III. 4. 101.

<sup>45</sup>See Walter Scott, 'Novels of Ernest Theodore Hoffmann', in *The Miscellaneous Prose Works*, XVIII (1851), 270-332 (pp. 275-76); see also 'the unexpected apparition of Major Bridgenorth' in *Peveril*, p. 189. There is an established similarity between *Lammermoor* and Horace Walpole's *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) which in this case serves as a bridge between *Hamlet* and *Lammermoor*; see *The Castle of Otranto*, ed. by Oswald Doughty (London: Scholartis Press, 1929), p. 101.

Why cannot Edgar and Hamlet take their revenge? What is it that stops Hamlet from behaving like another Elizabethan avenger and Edgar like one of his ancestors? According to Harold Skulsky, Hamlet is offered two alternatives of revenge: 'the law of the talon and the code of honor', between which he cannot choose.<sup>46</sup> In John A. S. Phillips's view, Hamlet's delay derives from his being a former student at Wittenberg whose knowledge of the philosophy of his day has led him to form doubts on life and death.<sup>47</sup> Phillips sees Hamlet as both 'a thinker *and* a doer' and this tension in his nature as leading to 'one of the most dramatic conflicts in the play.'<sup>48</sup> Hamlet himself acknowledges his weakness.<sup>49</sup> He only acts when he is obliged to and his final revenge, a 'psychological' revenge, comes as an 'anti-climax'.<sup>50</sup> Edgar has also something of the scholar. Bucklaw observes that 'his heart is all steeled over with reason and philosophy', and Lord Ashton is 'much struck with his depth of observation, and the unusual improvement which he had derived from his studies.'<sup>51</sup> In Edgar's case, however, the conflict is not between thought and action, but between love and religious beliefs, and action.

In his 1893 Introduction to the Border Edition of the novel, Andrew Lang distinguished Edgar from Scott's earlier heroes whom he described as 'lookers on':

Edgar is compelled by fate to accept his fortunes, not to flee from them as he had wished and intended to do. Considered historically, he is, indeed, an interesting personage. He inherits the blood and the traditions of a long Scottish line of nobles. [...] But times had altered, law had begun to be a power, and with changed times had come a changed type of character.<sup>52</sup>

<sup>46</sup>Harold Skulsky, 'Revenge, Honor, and Conscience in *Hamlet*', *PMLA*, 85 (1970), 78-87 (p. 78).

<sup>47</sup>John A. S. Phillips, 'Why Does Hamlet Delay? - Hamlet's Subtle Revenge', *Anglia*, 98 (1980), 34-50 (pp. 40-41).

<sup>48</sup>Phillips, p. 45. For Phillips, Hamlet's delay is 'a necessary and integral part of the plot.' (p. 37)

<sup>49</sup>*Hamlet*, II. 2. 585-90. If Hamlet is made a 'coward' by conscience, Edgar's delay is caused by his love for Lucy; cf. *Hamlet*, III. 1. 85 and *Lammermoor*, p. 120.

<sup>50</sup>Phillips, p. 48.

<sup>51</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 171, 142.

<sup>52</sup>Andrew Lang, 'Introduction', in *The Bride of Lammermoor*, ed. by Andrew Lang, Border Edition, 48 vols (London: John C. Nimmo, 1892-94), XIV (1893), ix-xxiv (p. xv).

The tragedy of the novel is 'a fate worthy of Shakespeare's handling, a series of sorrows that lie somewhat off the path of Sir Walter's genial and buoyant nature.'<sup>53</sup> According to Lang, Scott's:

genius did not strive to soar where Shakespeare's soars in 'Hamlet'; he respected the veil that shrouds the Sphinx, he made no guesses at her riddle, he urged no reproaches against the Judge of the Earth. [...] The absence of all this indignant curiosity about the ruling of our fortunes does not make the tragedy less tragic, does not deprive it of the terror that lives in fates inherited by no guilt of the sufferer, but removes it far from the modern temper.<sup>54</sup>

Scott's character:

muses but little on the ultimate riddles of life, even when, like Hamlet, he has his interview with the Gravedigger [...] In brief, Edgar does not soliloquise enough for the modern taste in the gloomy and the fatefully perplexed; as usual, Scott lets his story tell itself in action.<sup>55</sup>

Lang points out Edgar's inability to emulate his ancestors by comparing him to Hamlet:

Thus the Master is somewhat in the position of Hamlet - he cannot shoot or stab Sir William Ashton, as any one of his ancestors would have done, or procured to be done, with no more scruple than he would have felt in trampling on an adder.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>53</sup>Lang, p. xvi.

<sup>54</sup>Lang, p. xvii.

<sup>55</sup>Lang, p. xvi. As we have seen above in the discussion of Scott's Shakespearean epigraphs, *Hamlet* is directly quoted in an epigraph to ch. 24; the tag comes from V. 1. 65-70. There are many similarities between the tag and the narrative in the chapter. Hamlet stops and jests with the grave-digger and Edgar, 'amused with the professional limitation of the grave-digger's philanthropy', imitates him. See *Lammermoor*, p. 196. Johnie Mortsheugh, like his prototype, philosophises on the death of the woman who he is digging the grave for; cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 196 and *Hamlet*, V. 1. 1-2. Like his predecessor. Mortsheugh explains the differences required for various occupants of the graves; cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 195 and *Hamlet*, V. 1. 1-31. He shows the same harshness against the English; cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 33. 196 and *Hamlet*, V. 1. 144-151. Both sextons have been doing their job for thirty years; cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 195 and *Hamlet*, V. 1. 157-58. In the play the grave-digger speaks of the victory of King Hamlet on Fortinbras and of Hamlet's madness (V. 1. 140-45); in the novel Mortsheugh speaks of the battle of Bothwell Bridge where Edgar's grand-father lost his soldiers (p. 197). The two grave-diggers refer in a negative way to someone who played an important role in the hero's youth, Edgar's father and Yorick respectively; cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 197 and *Hamlet*, V. 1. 174-76.

<sup>56</sup>Lang, p. xv.

Lang seems to take his cue from the passage in the novel where Edgar offers shelter to Lucy and her father during the storm. Edgar feels that:

his sentiments towards [Lord Ashton] were neither those of a feudal enemy nor of a true Christian. He felt as if he could neither forgive him in the one character, or follow forth his vengeance in the other, but that he was making a base and dishonourable composition betwixt his resentment against the father and his affection for his daughter.<sup>57</sup>

Later, Edgar upbraids Blind Alice, who has warned him against revenge, in these words:

‘Are you such a wretched Christian as to suppose I should maintain war with the Ashton family, as was the sanguinary custom in elder times?’<sup>58</sup> Edgar is aware that times have changed, but it is his religious creed and his love for Lucy that prevent him from proceeding to his revenge. For both Edgar and Hamlet “to act” or “not to act” is the question. As McCombie notes, if they act, they will betray their integrity in following their convictions; if they do not take their revenge, they will betray the past and show disrespect for the memory of their fathers.<sup>59</sup> Vengeance is for them a ‘vice’ which leads to corruption and tragedy. Like Hamlet, Edgar recognizes he is affected by it:

it is too true, our vices steal upon us in forms outwardly as fair as those of the demons whom the superstitious represent as intriguing with the human race, and are not discovered in their native hideousness until we have clasped them in our arms.<sup>60</sup>

At the end, neither Hamlet nor Edgar wilfully and deliberately avenge their wrongs. We cannot tell whether Hamlet intends to kill Claudius until he discovers his deceit at the final contest with Laertes. Edgar, besides not avenging the death of his father, does not even fight the duel against his beloved’s brother.

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<sup>57</sup>Lammermoor, p. 120.

<sup>58</sup>Lammermoor, p. 152. Earlier the narrator has compared Edgar to Malisius of Ravenswood, his ancestor who took vengeance on the usurper (p. 24).

<sup>59</sup>McCombie, p. 428.

<sup>60</sup>Lammermoor, p. 58. Cf. *Hamlet*, I. 4. 7-8, 19-20 (Q2).

*Hamlet* was highly praised by the Romantics who found in its main character their fellow creature concerned with an intensely personal meditation on feelings. Jonathan Bate has observed that it is from the Romantics' investigation into the character of Hamlet that 'character criticism' was born.<sup>61</sup> With regard to *Lammermoor*, the critical views on *Hamlet* by A. W. Schlegel, Goethe, Coleridge, Hazlitt and Lamb may have helped Scott in the characterization of Edgar Ravenswood. In *Vorlesungen über dramatische Kunst und Literatur* (1808) Schlegel defined *Hamlet* as an 'enigmatical work' which was always successful on the stage.<sup>62</sup> Schlegel shared his contemporaries' view of Hamlet as a young man endowed with many talents who acts the part of madness with sarcastic brilliance but whose weakness at times leads him to be hypocritical towards himself. Hamlet is too concerned with his own sorrow to care about the people who surround him; in particular, Schlegel condemned his behaviour towards Ophelia. Goethe saw Hamlet as a young man gifted with princely characteristics and moral righteousness whose world is shattered by his father's death. Hamlet understands that he will probably not get the crown and is wrapped in a feeling of nothingness that will not leave him. According to Goethe, the key to the play's significance lies in the Ghost's request that Hamlet commit a revengeful action for which he is not fit, and he 'sinks beneath a burden which [he] cannot bear and must not cast away.'<sup>63</sup> Coleridge shared Schlegel's and Goethe's idea of Hamlet as a young man endowed with all the accomplishments of a Renaissance good-natured prince who experiences a terrible tragedy. Although the Ghost of his father comes from the grave to prompt him to revenge, Hamlet avoids action in all possible ways and takes refuge in 'endless reasoning and hesitating'.<sup>64</sup> According to Coleridge, indecision is not Hamlet's

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<sup>61</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 2.

<sup>62</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 307.

<sup>63</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 306; from *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (1796).

<sup>64</sup>*Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. by H. J. Jackson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 655.

real problem; he knows very well what he ought to do, but he is not able to rouse himself to action. His decision not to kill Claudius while the latter is praying is a pretext for not acting. For Coleridge, Shakespeare's aim in this tragedy was to tell the readers and the audience that 'action is the chief end of existence - that no faculties of intellect, however brilliant, can be considered valuable [...] if they withdraw us from, or render us repugnant to action.'<sup>65</sup>

Hazlitt's criticism of *Hamlet* differs from that of his contemporaries. To him, Hamlet 'is the prince of philosophical speculators; and because he cannot have his revenge perfect, according to the most refined idea his wish can form, he declines it altogether.'<sup>66</sup> 'It is *we* who are Hamlet.'<sup>67</sup> For Hazlitt, every reader and spectator of *Hamlet* sees himself in the protagonist. In 1826 Scott wrote a review of James Boaden's *Memoirs of the Life of John Philip Kemble, Esq., including a History of the Stage from the time of Garrick to the present period*, published the year before. His personal acquaintance and friendship with Kemble gave Scott the authority to express a critique of his theatrical performances, and, most relevant to the present study, this critique gave him the opportunity to write a judgement of Shakespeare's tragic heroes. Scott expressed special admiration for Kemble whom he thought was 'a very magnificent study for any one who is fond of dramatic representation.'<sup>68</sup> For him, Kemble was: 'the grave, studious, contemplative actor, who personated Hamlet to the life'.<sup>69</sup> Scott viewed Hamlet as an 'extraordinary conception':

one of the boldest, most striking, and most effective parts in the drama, and yet it is invested with so much obscurity, that it may be played in twenty different ways without the critic being able to say with certainty which best expresses the sense of the author.<sup>70</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>Samuel Taylor Coleridge, p. 659.

<sup>66</sup>William Hazlitt, 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', p. 234.

<sup>67</sup>Hazlitt, 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', p. 232.

<sup>68</sup>*Letters*, III, 241 (23 March 1813).

<sup>69</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 192.

<sup>70</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 176.

Shakespeare's most famous tragedy constitutes a challenge for the actor who appears in the main role because 'Hamlet unites in his single person a variety of attributes, by bringing any of which more forward, or throwing others farther into the background, the shading of the character is effectually changed.'<sup>71</sup> The following passage illustrates how Scott's view of Hamlet agrees with the Romantics' view:

Hamlet is the predestined avenger called on to this task by a supernatural voice - he is a prince resenting the intrusion of his uncle into his mother's bed and his father's throne. He is a son devoted to the memory of one parent and to the person of the other, and yet, to do justice to his murdered father's memory, he is compelled to outrage, with the most cutting reproaches, the ears of his guilty mother. Wittenberg has given him philosophy and the habits of criticism - nature has formed him social and affectionate - disappointment and ill-concealed resentment of family injuries have tinged him with misanthropy - the active world has given him all its accomplishments.

'The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword,  
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,  
The glass of fashion, and the mould of form.'

To all these peculiar attributes must be added his love for Ophelia, and something which resembles an incipient touch of insanity; for this, after all, is necessary to apologize and account for some parts of his conduct. All these exist in Prince Hamlet, but the art of the performer is to distinguish the proper or most striking mode of exhibiting them. The author has done little to help him in the management of the piece, which as a story indicates nothing decisive respecting the real character of Hamlet. He does not resemble Richard or Macbeth, or most of Shakspeare's other distinguished characters, who show themselves and purposes not by their words and sentiments only, but by their actions, and whose actions therefore are the best commentaries on their characters and motives. On the contrary, Hamlet being passive almost through the whole piece, and only hurried into action in its conclusion, does nothing by which we can infer the precise meaning of much that he says. There exists therefore a latitude about the representation of Hamlet, which scarcely belongs to that of any other character in the drama. It consists of many notes, and the dwelling upon or the slurring of any of them totally changes the *effect* of the air.<sup>72</sup>

<sup>71</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 176.

<sup>72</sup>'Life of Kemble', pp. 176-77. Scott's quotation comes from Ophelia's description of Hamlet in III. 1. 153-64.

Although Edgar has not the 'most effective' part in the novel, Scott's description of Hamlet suits him well.<sup>73</sup> Edgar is also a 'social and affectionate' young man whose misanthropy is the result of a 'family injury' and who possesses all the accomplishments of the active world, although at a first glance he does not seem to be endowed with 'the habits of criticism' that Hamlet acquired at Wittenberg.

As McCombie rightly suggests, when he conceived the character of Edgar Ravenswood, Scott was thinking of Kemble's performance of Hamlet as a 'sensitive hero'.<sup>74</sup> Charles Lamb's statement that it was 'difficult for a frequent playgoer to disembarass the idea of Hamlet from the person and voice of Mr. K.', supports McCombie's argument.<sup>75</sup> Scott himself had affirmed in the 'Essay on the Drama' that play-goers are affected by the actors' performances:

the Englishman's desire to see a particular character is intimately connected with the idea of the actor by whom it was performed. He does not wish to see Hamlet in the abstract, so much as to see how Kemble performs that character, and to compare him perhaps with his own recollections of Garrick in the same part. He comes prepared to study each variation of the actor's countenance, each change in his accentuation and deportment; to note with critical accuracy the points which discriminate his mode of acting from that of others; and to compare the whole with his own abstract of the character. The pleasure arising from this species of critical investigation and contrast is so intimately allied with our ideas of theatrical amusement, that we can scarce admit the possibility of deriving much satisfaction from a representation sustained by an actor, whose personal appearance and peculiar expression of features, should be concealed from us, however splendid his declamation, or however appropriate his gesture and action.<sup>76</sup>

Edgar is a good example of Scott's interpretation of a Shakespearean character in relation to the actors or actresses he had seen performing a particular role, although Kemble does not receive the open praise which is repeatedly lavished on Mrs Siddons as

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<sup>73</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 176.

<sup>74</sup>McCombie, p. 421.

<sup>75</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 112.

<sup>76</sup>'Essay on the Drama', pp. 237-38. As we have seen above, Scott expressed the same belief in *Nigel*.

Lady Macbeth. Scott thought that Kemble succeeded best in the parts which allowed him to linger over a particular mood or passion of the character and to develop it, but he regretted that he did not possess the ability to represent those characters which yield to the events of life:

He seems to me always to play best those characters in which there is a predominating tinge of some over-mastering passion or acquired habit [of] acting and speaking colouring the whole man. The patrician pride of Coriolanus, the stoicism of Brutus and Cato, the rapid and hurried vehemence of Hotspur mark the class of characters I mean. But he fails where a ready and pliable yielding to the events and passions of life makes what may be termed a more natural personage. Accordingly, I think his MacBeth, Lear, and especially his Richard, inferior in spirit and truth. In Hamlet, the natural fixed melancholy of the prince places him within Kemble's range of excellence. But many delicate and suddend turns of passion slip through his fingers. He is a lordly vessel, goodly and magnificent when going large before the wind, but wanting the facility to go 'ready about' and tack, as occasion demands, so that he is sometimes among the breakers before he can wear ship.<sup>77</sup>

Scott appreciated Kemble's portrayal of Hamlet's melancholy as the character's main trait and viewed it as the cause of his success in the performance of this tragedy where melancholy is an 'over-mastering passion' or, to use William Richardson's phrase in his *A Philosophical Analysis and Illustration of some of Shakespeare's remarkable Characters* (1774), a 'ruling passion'.<sup>78</sup> Hazlitt disagreed. In his view, *Hamlet* suffers by being acted. Kemble, in particular, 'unavoidably fails in this character from a want of ease and variety. The character of Hamlet is made up of undulating lines; it has the yielding flexibility of "a wave o' th' sea." Mr. Kemble plays it like a man in armour'.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>*Letters*, IV, 420 (23 March 1817). John A. Mills states that Kemble 'fixed on melancholy as the essence of the character'; see his *'Hamlet' on Stage: The Great Tradition* (Westport, Connecticut, and London: Greenwood Press, 1985), p. 52. Later, he adds: 'Kemble's Prince was universally perceived as a man so weighed down with melancholy and so fastidiously formal that he seemed scarcely capable of crossing a room without first taking thought as to the efficacy and propriety of the act.' (pp. 55-56)

<sup>78</sup>Quoted in *Shakespeare: The Critical Heritage, Volume 6: 1774-1801*, ed. by Brian Vickers (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 121. Scott viewed Hamlet's melancholy as 'natural' and 'fixed', both adjectives he uses in his description of Edgar.

<sup>79</sup>Hazlitt, 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', p. 237.

Bertram Joseph laments that Hazlitt's comment has been interpreted as prejudicial to Kemble's acting. According to Joseph:

Hazlitt was more concerned with his conception than his execution of the part. Kemble was like a man in armour in the sense that he went in one straight line in his development of the character; he did not give the many sides to Hamlet which it was customary to find in Shakespeare's work.<sup>80</sup>

McCombie's thesis that Edgar Ravenswood has more of the Hamlet of Kemble than of Shakespeare is supported by other reviewers' reports according to which Kemble's Hamlet was much less cruel than the original Shakespearean hero.<sup>81</sup> In particular, Kemble eliminated Hamlet's harsh behaviour towards Ophelia and the Queen, a feature that the Romantics resisted. As Louis R. Barbato informs us, Kemble 'returned to kiss Ophelia after the nunnery scene, even though the scene itself contained moments of violence.'<sup>82</sup>

Although praising Kemble exceedingly, Scott did not agree with his strenuous efforts to keep faithful to the original meaning of Shakespeare:

It is a pity he shews too much of his machinery. I wish he could be double caped as they say of watches. But the fault of too much study certainly does not belong to many of his tribe. He is I think very great in those parts especially where character is tinged by some acquired and systematic habits like those of the Stoic philosophy in Cato and Brutus or of misanthropy in that of Penruddock. But sudden turns and natural bursts of passion are not his forte.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>80</sup>Bertram Joseph, *The Tragic Actor* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1959), p. 187. Cf. Hazlitt, 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', p. 237.

<sup>81</sup>McCombie, p. 424. Scott's physical description of Kemble also applies to the character of Edgar Ravenswood. Scott described his friend as a 'tall and stately' man with that sweet expression which is characteristic of men used to serious thinking; see 'Life of Kemble', p. 180. In the portrayal of Edgar, Scott uses the adjective 'stately': a 'well-proportioned and stately figure'; see *Lammermoor*, p. 93.

<sup>82</sup>Barbato, p. 156. For a list of the cuts made by Kemble and other Shakespeare producers, see Claris Glick, 'Hamlet in the English Theater-Acting Texts from Betterton (1676) to Olivier (1963)', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 20 (1969), 17-35.

<sup>83</sup>*Letters*, III, 236 (13 March 1813).

On the whole, there also seems to be a 'latitude' in Scott's view of Hamlet. If Kemble succeeded in the representation of the Prince by fixing on melancholy, what happens then to the 'latitude about the representation of Hamlet' and the multiple aspects which Scott had earlier praised in the same essay?

*Hamlet*, from the frequency with which it appears in Scott's works, appears to be one of his favourite plays. Edgar Ravenswood is a version of Hamlet which responds both to Scott's and the Romantics' interpretation of the character; and Kemble's performance as Hamlet especially allowed Scott to refurbish the Renaissance prince for the purposes of his novel. In the same way, Scott refurbished the character of Ophelia in his portrayal of Lucy Ashton.

When Don Luigi Santa Croce objected to the fate of Clara Mowbray in *Saint Ronan's Well*, Scott justified her fate by saying that he:

could not save her, poor thing - it is against the rules - she had the bee in her bonnet. [...] of all the murders that I have committed in that way, and few men have been guilty of more, there is none that went so much to my heart as the poor Bride of Lammermoor; but it could not be helped - it is all true.<sup>84</sup>

The bride of Lammermoor is, like Ophelia, the young woman whom the hero falls in love with and then forsakes. Lucy Ashton is first introduced while singing a song on a lute, the words of which 'seemed particularly adapted to her character':

Look thou not on Beauty's charming,-  
 Sit thou still when Kings are arming,-  
 Taste not when the wine-cup glistens,-  
 Speak not when the people listens,-  
 Stop thine ear against the singer,-  
 From the red gold keep thy finger,-  
 Vacant heart, and hand, and eye,-  
 Easy live and quiet die.<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup>Reported in Lockhart, X, 191.

<sup>85</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 25. Cf. *Hamlet*, IV. 5 where the stage directions introduce the mad Ophelia with a lute.

According to J. C. Maxwell, this song derives from the Cavalier lyrics of the seventeenth century and in particular from two poems by Thomas Carew.<sup>86</sup> Maxwell interprets it as a poem of resignation and of negation of all action. Claire Lamont proposes a different reading and attacks those critics who have seen in Lucy 'a weak and passive character' claiming that she is so only in her mother's presence.<sup>87</sup> Lamont reads the song by casting it in the conditional. In her words: 'if you withdraw from full participation in living, *then* all you will have is an easy life and a quiet death. You may buy peace, but at what cost.'<sup>88</sup> She sees herself supported by Scott himself who anticipates the presence of a 'germ of passion' in Lucy. Maxwell's and Lamont's interpretations reflect the main views on Lucy's song and are both true. In Lucy's song it is also possible to detect an echo of Laertes's warning to his sister against the attentions of Hamlet:

If with too credent ear you list his songs,  
Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open  
To his unmastered importunity.  
Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister,  
And keep within the rear of your affection,  
Out of the shot and danger of desire.<sup>89</sup>

Laertes asks Ophelia to 'stop her ear against the singer', who, in her case is Hamlet, and to keep her heart 'vacant'. Like Ophelia, Lucy will not listen to this message of renunciation. With Lucy's song, Scott achieves the Shakespearean art of contextualizing

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<sup>86</sup>J. C. Maxwell points out that the opening and the fifth lines of Lucy's song echo respectively the opening line of *Good Counsell to a Young Maid*: 'Gaze not thou on thy beauties pride', and the fifth line of *Conquest by Flight*: 'Then stop your eares, when lovers cry'. See his 'Lucy Ashton's song', *Notes and Queries*, 195 (1950), 210. According to J. H. Alexander, however, 'the lines are Scott's own.' (p. 345)

<sup>87</sup>Claire Lamont, 'The Poetry of the Early Waverley Novels', Chatterton Lecture on an English Poet (12-11-1975), *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 61 (1975), 315-36 (p. 330).

<sup>88</sup>Lamont, p. 331.

<sup>89</sup>*Hamlet*, I. 3. 30-35.

the song, foreshadowing the ending.<sup>90</sup> The song acquires a structural function in the novel as from the beginning Lucy is associated with its message; at the end the singer will suffer and die for refusing to listen to it.

Lamont's analysis of the only other song of the novel, that of Norman the forester, which follows that of Lucy, places an emphasis on the passive image of Lucy as a hunted animal:

‘The monk must arise when the matins ring,  
The abbot may sleep to their chime;  
But the yeoman must start when the bugles sing,  
'Tis time, my hearts, 'tis time.

‘There's bucks and raes on Bilhope braes,  
There's a herd in Shortwood Shaw;  
But a lily white doe in the garden gaes,  
She's fairly worth them al’.<sup>91</sup>

According to Lamont, the second stanza alludes to the medieval literary tradition of the Chase of Love, ‘where the progress of love is described in terms of a stag-hunt.’<sup>92</sup> The critic's interpretation of the ‘lily white doe’ as Lucy Ashton is in particular supported by the widespread metaphors of the deer and the chase in the novel. Lucy is often compared to a deer.<sup>93</sup> In chapter 9, she attends a hunting party with her father at which Bucklaw, her future bridegroom, kills the stag. According to the custom, Bucklaw offers the knife to Lucy warning her against a stag at bay, ‘for a hurt with a buck's horn is a perilous and somewhat venomous matter.’<sup>94</sup> Unconsciously Bucklaw foresees his own fate at Lucy's hands when she is also made a stag at bay: ‘the arrow was shot, and was rankling barb-

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<sup>90</sup>For a discussion of Shakespeare's songs, see Richmond Noble, *Shakespeare's Use of Song With the Text of the Principal Songs* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1923).

<sup>91</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 29.

<sup>92</sup>Lamont, p. 332.

<sup>93</sup>Fiona Robertson has also noticed how Lucy is ‘repeatedly imagined (and imagines herself) as a hunted animal, particularly (Dido-like) as a white doe.’ See her *Legitimate Histories: Scott, Gothic, and the Authorities of Fiction* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), p. 233.

<sup>94</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 80.

deep in the side of the wounded deer.'<sup>95</sup> At the end, after the stabbing, Lucy is described as 'couched, like a hare upon its form'.<sup>96</sup> Even before meeting Edgar, Lucy seems unconsciously to foresee her fate 'at his hands'. When early in the narrative Norman proposes to Lucy and her father to follow the sport, Lucy's 'colour fled at the idea of seeing the deer shot'. In the same passage Norman compares Edgar to Tristrem: 'When Sir Edgar hauds out, down goes the deer, faith'.<sup>97</sup> The deer-imagery permeates the narrative from the beginning to the end: Bucklaw kills the stag and will be wounded by Lucy, a deer at bay, who in her turn is 'wounded' by Edgar. Besides being often compared to a wounded animal, Lucy is also surrounded by strong colour imagery. Scott generally shows some reticence in the treatment of eros. In this novel, however, he employs more explicit sexual imagery, such as in the scene of the killing of the wild bull, emblem of the Ravenswood family, and in that of the killing of the raven after the betrothal.<sup>98</sup>

Lucy shares Ophelia's disposition of character and tragic fate. The 'soft and yielding' temper of the two young and beautiful girls means that they can be easily dominated by other people.<sup>99</sup> Lucy's 'passiveness of disposition' reminds the reader of Ophelia's obedience to her brother and father when they urge her not to encourage Hamlet's offers of love.<sup>100</sup> The fact that Ophelia is easily persuaded to stop seeing Hamlet has puzzled many critics. It has been remarked that one should consider the emphasis placed on filial duty in Shakespeare's age; the same could be said of Lucy whose narrative, as the narrator observes, is set in the early eighteenth century when daughters

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<sup>95</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 241.

<sup>96</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 260.

<sup>97</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 28.

<sup>98</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 36-38, 159. Lucy's red mantle attracts the wild bull (p. 37), the blood of the killed raven stains her dress (p. 159), Henry asks her for a 'carnation ribbon' the night before her wedding (p. 232), and, finally, she is described with 'bloody fingers' and white night-clothes 'dabbled with blood' in the madness scene (p. 260). These are all images related to the loss of virginity and anticipatory of the tragic ending.

<sup>99</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 26 and *Hamlet*, III. 1. 39-44.

<sup>100</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 25 and *Hamlet*, I. 3. 5-10, 115-36.

were expected to obey their parents in all respects.<sup>101</sup> Lucy is compared metaphorically to ‘the flower which is flung into a running stream’ to emphasize her submissive disposition, an image which indirectly recalls Gertrude’s gentle account of Ophelia’s tragic death and anticipates Lucy’s poignant fate.<sup>102</sup>

Lucy’s and Ophelia’s passiveness, though, is only apparent. Lady Ashton:

was mistaken in estimating the feelings of her daughter, who, under a semblance of extreme indifference, nourished the germ of those passions which sometimes spring up in one night, [...] and astonish the observer by their unexpected ardour and intensity.<sup>103</sup>

In the same way, those who surround Ophelia do not go beneath the surface of her characterisation as the ‘fair’ Ophelia. Goethe’s and Anna Brownell Jameson’s views of Ophelia could be applied to Lucy at this stage of the narrative. The first asked: ‘Do we not understand from the very first what the mind of the good soft-hearted girl was busied with? Silently she lived within herself, yet she scarce concealed her wishes, her longing’.<sup>104</sup> Jameson wrote: ‘Ophelia, the young, fair, inexperienced girl, facile to every impression, fond in her simplicity, and credulous in her innocence, loves Hamlet; not from what he is in himself, but [...] [as] the first who has ever whispered soft vows in her ear’.<sup>105</sup>

Helen Small views Lucy’s madness as ‘the key to the novel in its introduction, pursued throughout as its *telos*, and continually subjected to conflicting interpretations.’<sup>106</sup> Ophelia, who according to Small is ‘a standard for later madwomen’, is also the literary precedent for Lucy. Ophelia’s enduring success in the theatre derives

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<sup>101</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 36.

<sup>102</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 26 and *Hamlet*, IV. 7. 135-55.

<sup>103</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 27.

<sup>104</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 307.

<sup>105</sup>Anna Brownell Jameson, *Shakespeare’s Heroines: Characteristics of Women, Moral, Poetical, and Historical*, 2nd edn (1832; London: George Bell and Sons, 1891), p. 161.

<sup>106</sup>Helen Small, *Love’s Madness: Medicine, the Novel, and Female Insanity 1800-1865* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), pp. 131-32.

from the fact that 'she successfully combined "dual messages about femininity and insanity": at once a wistful innocent and a sexually explicit woman.'<sup>107</sup> Lillian Feder rightly observes that madness has become a recurrent literary motif which 'aesthetically, [...] is depicted as a consummation, the ultimate self-expression that is inevitably self-destructive.'<sup>108</sup> Lucy becomes 'gloomy and abstracted,' and her insanity appears in 'the trouble which dwelt in her unsettled eye.'<sup>109</sup> Like Ophelia, she becomes the opposite of what she has been earlier in the narrative, turning fierce against those around her. Both characters lose their inhibitions in their madness: Ophelia sings songs of strong sexual allusiveness, Lucy's language becomes coarse.<sup>110</sup> Scott's description of the mad Lucy is remarkable for its brevity. Lucy becomes:

something white in the corner of the great old-fashioned chimney of the apartment. Here they found the unfortunate girl, seated, or rather couched, like a hare upon its form - her head-gear dishevelled - her night-clothes torn and dabbled with blood - her eyes glazed, and her features convulsed into a wild paroxysm of insanity. When she saw herself discovered, she gibbered, made mouths, and pointed at them with her bloody fingers, with the frantic gestures of an exulting demoniac.<sup>111</sup>

She finally turns from victim to 'actor'. According to Small:

When we look at madness in literature we are looking at a representation of something that is *already* representation. That is, we look at an experience for which the language of description is inescapably representational, and whose pathos is muted because language has been overworked.

In Small's view, literature has 'a privileged relationship to madness: a capacity to gesture beyond rationalism and beyond words towards the emotional tenor of an

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<sup>107</sup>Small, p. 8.

<sup>108</sup>Lillian Feder, *Madness in Literature* (Princeton, N. J.: Princeton University Press, 1980), p. xii.

<sup>109</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 238, 244.

<sup>110</sup>Cf. *Hamlet*, IV. 5 and *Lammermoor*, p. 260.

<sup>111</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 260.

experience otherwise silenced by the language society gives us.’<sup>112</sup> In the return scene, these are Lucy’s only words to Edgar: ‘It was my mother.’<sup>113</sup>

Why do Ophelia and Lucy go mad? Lucy is overwhelmed by ‘an oppressive sense of desertion and desolation’ which has been caused by the loss of her lover: ‘It is decreed, [...] that every living creature, even those who owe me most kindness, are to shun me’.<sup>114</sup> Although Lucy has a family, she feels ‘alone and uncounselled,’ like Ophelia, who has lost her father, whose brother is abroad and whose lover has forsaken her.<sup>115</sup> The absence of a mother figure whom they could turn to for advice adds to their isolation. Ophelia is motherless; Lucy’s mother, everything but a maternal figure, does not ‘feel that distinguished and predominating affection, with which the rest of the family cherished Lucy.’ Their fathers, ‘politic, wary, and worldly’ men, love their daughters but have no qualms about manipulating them.<sup>116</sup> In the first stages of the narrative, Lord Ashton encourages Lucy’s feelings for Edgar hoping in this way to secure what he has taken from the Ravenswoods and later, spurred on by his wife, he insists that she marry someone else.<sup>117</sup> Polonius’s lack of consideration for his daughter emerges fully when he uses her to spy on Hamlet in order to prove whether his madness is the result of her rejection.<sup>118</sup> Their elder brothers, on the contrary, are genuinely fond of their sisters, and later determined to avenge their deaths.<sup>119</sup>

Edgar and Hamlet can be gentle and loving to the women they love, but also cruel and vindictive. It is this latter behaviour that prevents Lucy and Ophelia from standing up for their lovers. Having decided to leave the country after Blind Alice’s

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<sup>112</sup>Small, p. 19.

<sup>113</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 251.

<sup>114</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 240, 233.

<sup>115</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 233.

<sup>116</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 26.

<sup>117</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 126.

<sup>118</sup>*Hamlet*, II. 2. 164-69.

<sup>119</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 26, 264 and *Hamlet*, I. 3. 10-44; V. 1. 232-37, 242-45.

warning, Edgar, without any explanation, asks Lucy to: 'Forget that so stern a vision has crossed your path of life', and in the 'return scene' his sarcasm violently precipitates the ending.<sup>120</sup> In his Introduction to the novel, Lang gives his interpretation of Edgar's violence in the 'return scene' via another comparison with Hamlet:

Then this Hamlet finds his Ophelia - for Lucy, in her soft and fragile beauty, her dutifulness to parental authority, and her final madness, corresponds to Ophelia with some closeness. The position and training of the Master made inevitable, perhaps, the ferocity, as it seems to modern readers, of his behaviour in the scene when the betrothal is solemnly disavowed. But this relapse into ancestral instincts is allowed to pass away, and he is but a broken-hearted man, who rides out to his last duel, and never reaches the ground.<sup>121</sup>

J. Dover Wilson recognizes that: 'The attitude of Hamlet towards Ophelia is without doubt the greatest of all the puzzles in the play'.<sup>122</sup> Hamlet's behaviour in the 'get-thee-to-a-nunnery' scene has been justified by the fact that he does not rely much on Ophelia after she has complied with her father's and the king's plan to spy on him.<sup>123</sup> Hazlitt's opinion of Hamlet's treatment of Ophelia may be applied to Edgar Ravenswood. Hazlitt thought it was 'quite natural in his circumstances. It is that of assumed severity only. It is the effect of disappointed hope, of bitter regrets, of affection suspended, not obliterated, by the distractions of the scene around him!'.<sup>124</sup>

In his recreation of Hamlet, Scott puts in some feelings of repentance for his harsh behaviour towards his beloved. After the burial of Lucy, when Colonel Sholto charges him with her murder, Edgar admits his share of the blame in leading her to an early death.<sup>125</sup> Hamlet's frenzied behaviour at the funeral of Ophelia is far from being that of an affectionate lover, although he claims that no brother could have loved her as

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<sup>120</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 156, 247-54.

<sup>121</sup>Lang, p. xvi.

<sup>122</sup>J. Dover Wilson, *What Happens in 'Hamlet'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1956), p. 101.

<sup>123</sup>*Hamlet*, III. 1. 123.

<sup>124</sup>Hazlitt, 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', p. 236.

<sup>125</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 264.

much as he did.<sup>126</sup> Again, Scott presents us with a Hamlet invested with more gentle manners, and Edgar's regret at Lucy's death is what he and his contemporaries probably thought Hamlet ought to feel for the dead Ophelia. Harding describes Lucy and Ophelia as weak women who 'destroy themselves and precipitate the death of their repentant lovers.'<sup>127</sup> Harding forgets that Lucy is driven to madness by her mother's and Ailsie Gourlay's machinations and by the restrictions they apply on her. She is made to believe that her lover has willingly abandoned her and she feels Ophelia's helplessness when she is deserted by everyone she loves. Edgar and Hamlet are not brought to death by their beloveds, as Harding suggests. On the contrary, it is they who contribute to their beloveds' madness and death. They know they are vulnerable and sensitive, but Hamlet puts his desire for vengeance above his love for Ophelia, and Edgar leaves Lucy alone to cope with her mother's machinations. According to McCombie, Edgar's realization that he needs a stronger partner:

may be the rationalist's apology for Hamlet, but it serves the purposes of *The Bride of Lammermoor* rather more ambiguously. For if Hamlet's tragedy is accentuated by his increasing isolation in an alien world with which, by virtue of his inescapable disposition, he is unable to come to terms, that is not the case with Ravenswood. And beyond that, we wonder - not for the first time - that Ravenswood cannot see in Lucy that dangerous vacancy which is so plain to us. We wonder, in fact, if, in refurbishing Shakespeare's hero, Scott has not removed something vital.<sup>128</sup>

Ophelia dies falling from a willow which in Elizabethan literature was the symbol of unrequited love and of the loss of a lover.<sup>129</sup> In the novel, Scott uses the willow device when he has Henry go to Lucy 'with a willow branch in his hand, which

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<sup>126</sup>*Hamlet*, V. 1. 266-68.

<sup>127</sup>Harding, p. 74.

<sup>128</sup>McCombie, p. 432; cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 164.

<sup>129</sup>For other uses of the willow in Shakespeare, see *Othello*, IV. 3. 27; *Merchant*, V. 1. 9-10; and *Twelfth Night*, I. 5. 257.

he told her had arrived that instant from Germany for her special wearing.’<sup>130</sup> Lucy’s despair is increased by the belief that Edgar has become engaged to another woman.<sup>131</sup> According to this interpretation, the heroine goes mad because she believes her lover has abandoned her. Carroll Camden, disagreeing with the common view according to which Ophelia’s madness is the result of her father’s death, believes that ‘the overriding cause of Ophelia’s madness is clearly spelled out in the play; it is more “the pangs of despiz’d love” which cause her tragic fate than the death of Polonius.’<sup>132</sup>

Philip W. Martin sees the mythical figure of the madwoman as obsessed ‘with past happiness or promises, perhaps an excessive desire for the lost object of her love.’<sup>133</sup> A widely accepted interpretation is that the representation of the madwoman in literature comes from ‘a familiar ideological assumption in which her weakness is also a folly, her lack of reason a symptom of her lack of “masculine” control and responsibility.’<sup>134</sup> Martin focuses on what he calls Lucy’s ‘clandestine pleasures’: ‘the old legendary tales of ardent devotion and unalterable affection, chequered as they so often are with strange adventures and supernatural horrors.’<sup>135</sup> In Martin’s opinion, Scott’s emphasis on ‘what women do on their own’ serves to bring out ‘the unsteadiness of the woman’s independent imaginative life’: ‘This was her favoured fairy realm, and here she erected her aërial palaces. But it was only in secret that she laboured at this delusive, but delightful architecture.’<sup>136</sup> Martin believes that: ‘It is here, in the unlikely setting of a commonplace misogynistic formula, that a gap in the text can be located in

<sup>130</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 237.

<sup>131</sup>See *Lammermoor*, p. 241.

<sup>132</sup>Carroll Camden, ‘On Ophelia’s Madness’, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 15 (1964), 247-55 (p. 248). Cf. *Hamlet*, III. 1. 58-90.

<sup>133</sup>Philip W. Martin, *Mad Women in Romantic Writing* (Brighton: Harvester Press, 1987), p. 1. Woman’s madness becomes ‘a consequence of her private and sometimes her secret emotional life, and in literature it is a shift that might be exemplified by reference to Cowper and Wordsworth.’ (p. 3)

<sup>134</sup>Martin, p. 8. Or, again, the madwoman may be used ‘to break up the ideological snare, [...] and her “unreason” may now be read as a refusal to enter the world of patriarchal normality, a form of radical protest, not necessarily self-initiated or self-aware.’ (p. 15)

<sup>135</sup>See Martin, p. 100 and *Lammermoor*, p. 25.

<sup>136</sup>See Martin, p. 101 and *Lammermoor*, p. 25.

which the concept of woman's autonomy, and perhaps her autoeroticism, may be planted.'<sup>137</sup> But this is not an example of Scott's misogyny; on the contrary, it is an example of his sympathy for a female character. Lucy often imagines herself as 'wandering in the wilderness with Una, or she was identifying herself with the simple, yet noble-minded Miranda, in the isle of wonder and enchantment.'<sup>138</sup> At the end, however, 'The fairy wand, with which in her solitude she had delighted to raise visions of enchantment, became now the rod of a magician, the bond slave of evil genii, serving only to invoke spectres at which the exorcist trembled.'<sup>139</sup>

Martin sees the witch as the predecessor of the madwoman.<sup>140</sup> In the novel, the figure of the witch plays a vital role. Lady Ashton is believed to practise 'necromancy' and becomes an associate of the 'hag' Ailsie Gourlay.<sup>141</sup> Lucy becomes a 'witch' after she has stabbed Bucklaw; in particular, Small sees in the description of Lucy "crouched like a hare upon its form" - a simile which identifies her closely with the novel's malevolent witches (according to popular tradition, witches were able to metamorphose into hares).<sup>142</sup> Small observes that although Scott's depiction of Lucy's madness remains faithful to the common interpretation of the madwoman, there is a departure from the convention in that Scott 'makes his novel acknowledge an element of social determination about female insanity.' This departure served Scott to emphasize the 'breakdown' in the relations between the sexes, political parties, and classes.<sup>143</sup>

David Leverenz's commentary on Ophelia's madness offers another possible interpretation: 'Everyone has used her [...] She is only valued for the roles that further

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<sup>137</sup>Martin, p. 101.

<sup>138</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 25.

<sup>139</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 237.

<sup>140</sup>Martin, p. 22: 'the histories of witches and madwomen have shown them both to be subject to the same kind of diagnoses, and the same stigmatizing processes.'

<sup>141</sup>See Weinstein, p. 123.

<sup>142</sup>Small, p. 125. See also note 200 in Fiona Robertson's edition of the novel (p. 422).

<sup>143</sup>Small, p. 138.

other people's plots. Treated as a helpless child, she finally becomes one, veiling her perceptions of falsehood and manipulation in her seemingly innocent ballads.'<sup>144</sup>

Ophelia and Lucy are not 'helpless' children in their insanity; on the contrary, they reach sexual awareness in the finale. Leverenz is right when he imputes part of Ophelia's distress to her being manipulated by everybody. This is exactly what happens to Scott's heroine.

Although there are no open allusions to Ophelia in Scott's novel, Lucy's madness occurs in the shadow of Ophelia's insanity. We cannot label it as erotomania nor as hysteria though Lucy shares some features that are typical of the hysterical woman: novel-reading, in her case romance-reading, and love of old legendary tales.<sup>145</sup>

Elaine Showalter has proposed 'the *history* of her representation' as a different approach to the interpretation of the character of Ophelia:

Ophelia's symbolic meanings, moreover, are specifically feminine. Whereas for Hamlet madness is metaphysical, linked with culture, for Ophelia it is a product of the female body and female nature, perhaps that nature's purest form. On the Elizabethan stage, the conventions of female insanity were sharply defined. Ophelia dresses in white, decks herself with 'fantastical garlands' of wild flowers, and enters, according to the stage directions of the 'Bad' Quarto, 'distracted' playing on a lute with her 'hair down singing.' Her speeches are marked by extravagant metaphors, lyrical free associations, and 'explosive sexual imagery.' She sings wistful and bawdy ballads, and ends her life by drowning. All of these conventions carry specific messages about femininity and sexuality. Ophelia's virginal and vacant white is contrasted with Hamlet's scholar's garb, his 'suits of solemn black.' Her flowers suggest the discordant double images of female sexuality as both innocent blossoming and whorish contamination; she is the 'green girl' of pastoral, the virginal

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<sup>144</sup>David Leverenz, 'The Woman in Hamlet: An Interpersonal View', in *Representing Shakespeare: New Psychoanalytic Essays*, ed. by Murray M. Schwartz and Coppélia Kahn (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), pp. 110-28 (p. 120).

<sup>145</sup>See Small, p. 18. Edgar warns Lucy against poetry: 'in poetry there is always fallacy, and sometimes fiction.' See *Lammermoor*, p. 164. Martin informs us that Charles Darwin, David Hartley, Sir W.C. Ellis, Thomas Trotter, all published 'writings which identify emotional trauma as an agent inducing madness.' (p. 36) Robert Brudenell Carter saw 'sexual passion' as one of the causes for hysteria (p. 39). Trotter wrote of two causes for woman's madness: 'the mother's bereavement' and 'disappointed love' (p. 38). Martin views all these writings as deriving from 'the mythical tradition which sees the woman as sexually complex, mysterious, and simultaneously dependent on the man for gratification, and thereby, for mental stability.' (p. 40)

'Rose of May' and the sexually explicit madwoman who, in giving away her wild flowers and herbs, is symbolically deflowering herself.<sup>146</sup>

Whereas the eighteenth century eliminated the madness scene from the performance of the play, the nineteenth century 'embraced' it: 'The figure of the madwoman permeates romantic literature, from the gothic novelists to Wordsworth and Scott in such texts as "The Thorn" and *The Heart of Midlothian*, where she stands for sexual victimization, bereavement, and thrilling emotional extremity.'<sup>147</sup>

Another possible cause for Lucy's madness is better illustrated in the tragedy of another Ophelia-like heroine, Clara Mowbray of *Saint Ronan's Well*. In an early chapter, Clara is compared to Ophelia twice:

she was certainly unequal in her spirits; and her occasional fits of levity were chequered by very long intervals of sadness. [...] Her dress, her manners, and her ideas, were therefore very much her own; and though they became her wonderfully, yet, like Ophelia's garlands, and wild snatches of melody, they were calculated to excite compassion and melancholy, even while they amused the observer.<sup>148</sup>

This early association with Ophelia by the narrator works as an anticipation of Clara's tragic fate. Clara's allusion to her being like Ophelia comes as an answer to Lady Penelope's attempt to take care of her by speaking to the Doctor on her behalf:

It is not as you would seem to say, by your winking at Lady Binks - it is not, indeed - I shall be no Lady Clementina, to be the wonder and pity of the spring of Saint Ronan's - No Ophelia neither - though I will say with her, Good night, ladies - Good night, sweet ladies! - and now - not my coach, my coach - but my horse, my horse!<sup>149</sup>

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<sup>146</sup>Elaine Showalter, 'Representing Ophelia: women, madness, and the responsibilities of feminist criticism', in *Shakespeare and the Question of Theory*, ed. by Patricia Parker and Geoffrey Hartman (New York and London: Methuen, 1985), pp. 77-94 (pp. 79, 80-81).

<sup>147</sup>Showalter, p. 83.

<sup>148</sup>*Ronan's Well*, p. 67.

<sup>149</sup>*Ronan's Well*, p. 69. The quotation is taken from *Hamlet*, IV. 5. 70-72. Like Ophelia, Clara has been deprived of her mother at an early age; her father does not care much about her being too busy with sports as Polonius is too involved in political intrigues; her brother, like Laertes, is away from home (p. 66).

Clara's awareness of her mental instability, which reappears in the novel, is even more tragic than Lucy's final fit of madness. Clara's resemblance to Ophelia becomes striking towards the end of the novel. When her brother suggests that she should marry the Earl of Etherington, the former Valentine Bulmer, she can only think of running away. The following morning she is not found in her room and a search for her begins. The chapter is prefixed by a line taken from the Fool's words to Lear: "'Tis a naughty night to swim in.'<sup>150</sup> Both Clara and Lear are outside in a stormy night and both eventually die insane. Clara does not commit suicide as Ophelia, perhaps unconsciously, does; her death is provoked by 'a pressure on the brain, probably accompanied by a suffusion'.<sup>151</sup> However, the last image we have of Clara is with 'her clothes and long hair drenched and dripping with rain', which is strikingly analogous to Ophelia's death by water.<sup>152</sup>

According to H. Michael Buck, as 'Ophelia has trouble processing the treatment that she receives from Hamlet: affectionate then reproachful, reverent then vulgar. In a similar way, Clara can make no sense out of her situation.'<sup>153</sup> Buck maintains that in the characterization of Clara we can find Scott's 'political' concept of insanity: 'Knowing that Scott draws Clara Mowbray out of socio-political concerns, the reader sees an essentially subjective picture of madness - one aspect of Scott's Tory posture that has, to this point, gone unidentified.'<sup>154</sup> Lars Hartveit's view is illuminating in this regard:

Clara Mowbray is part of the mechanism of destruction. She is considered as odd by the Well people. This epithet refers to her unbalanced mental state and her refusal to conform to their social etiquette. Her customary dress is her riding habit. [...] On the satirical plot level Clara provides a major critical focus on the new community. In the melodramatic plot structure, her oddness was caused by Bulmer's treacherous behaviour towards Tyrrel, his half-brother, by impersonating

<sup>150</sup>Cf. *Ronan's Well*, ch. 37, p. 352 and *King Lear*, III. 4. 104-5. See p. 354: 'Gone out, and in weather like this!'

<sup>151</sup>*Ronan's Well*, p. 368.

<sup>152</sup>*Ronan's Well*, p. 365.

<sup>153</sup>H. Michael Buck, 'A Message in her Madness: Socio-Political Bias in Scott's Portrayal of Mad Clara Mowbray of *St. Ronan's Well*', *Studies in Scottish Literature*, 24 (1989), 181-93 (p. 187).

<sup>154</sup>Buck, p. 193.

him at the secret marriage ceremony. To her horror Clara found she had married Bulmer. This treacherous act disrupts the family bonds between the two half-brothers.<sup>155</sup>

According to Small, Scott's use of the love-mad woman in *Lammermoor*, *Ivanhoe*, and *The Heart of Midlothian* serves a political purpose because the madwoman 'provides a controllable narrative framework for thinking about revolutionary politics in a highly unstable political climate.'<sup>156</sup>

There is a parallel between Clara Mowbray and Lucy Ashton. For both girls, madness is accelerated by an anxiety about the inevitable sexual intercourse with men they do not love. But, whereas for Clara - who has experienced sexual love before marriage - this anxiety comes from fear that her sin may be discovered, for Lucy it is caused by a desperate attempt at avoiding any sexual contact with a man she does not love.<sup>157</sup>

The burial of Lucy is, like that of Ophelia, the funeral of a 'lovely, beautiful, and innocent' girl who has been 'exasperated to phrenzy by a long tract of unremitting persecution.'<sup>158</sup> It is celebrated with curtailed services because madness has made the heroine commit a violent act, an attempted murder in the case of Lucy and suicide in the case of Ophelia.<sup>159</sup> The girls' brother and lover are both attending the ceremony.<sup>160</sup> Sholto Ashton accuses Edgar of being the murderer of his sister and challenges him to a

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<sup>155</sup>Lars Hartveit, "'Silent Intercourse': The Impact of the 18th-Century Conceptual Heritage on *The Antiquary* and *St. Ronan's Well*", *English Studies*, 77 (1996), 32-44 (p. 40).

<sup>156</sup>Small, p. 112.

<sup>157</sup>We may offer the interpretation according to which Lucy has had sexual intercourse with Edgar and tries, like Clara, to keep it a secret. In medieval literature, the breaking of the coin had the same value of a marriage contract, but nothing in the novel allows us to draw this conclusion, except the amount of time Lucy and Edgar are allowed to spend together when at Ravenswood Castle; see *Lammermoor*, p. 158 and ch. 20. Cf. Jerome Mitchell, *Scott, Chaucer, and Medieval Romance: A Study in Sir Walter Scott's Indebtedness to the Literature of the Middle Ages* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987), pp. 118-24.

<sup>158</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 263.

<sup>159</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 262 and *Hamlet*, V. 1. 214. James Reed notices that 'Lucy is buried with maimed rites, in a coffin that bears neither name nor date, and in circumstances which vividly recall Madge Wildfire's "Proud Maisie"'. See his *Sir Walter Scott: Landscape and Locality* (London: Athlone Press, 1980), p. 183.

<sup>160</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 264 and *Hamlet*, V. 1.

duel just as Laertes challenges Hamlet.<sup>161</sup> Both Edgar and Hamlet show an unwillingness to fight but in the end they accept.<sup>162</sup> Hamlet and Laertes die during the contest, whereas only Edgar dies in the novel.<sup>163</sup>

Edgar Ravenswood and Lucy Ashton are the literary descendants of Hamlet and Ophelia. The many parallelisms with the plot of the tragedy indicate that although Scott did not overtly refer *Hamlet*, except in the tag to chapter 24, the play affected the composition of the novel. The intertextual use of *Hamlet* was, however, aided by that of *Romeo and Juliet* with which Scott openly asked his readers to draw an analogy.

### ***Romeo and Juliet***

The main borrowing from *Romeo and Juliet* is the plot of the 'star-crossed lovers'.<sup>164</sup> The love-story of Edgar and Lucy is doomed from the beginning as they also belong to two opposed families. In Shakespeare's play, the feud is between 'Two households, both alike in dignity', whereas the two opposed houses of *Lammermoor* belong to different social classes.<sup>165</sup> The intensity of the hatred which separates them is also different. Contrary to what happens in Shakespeare's play, in Scott's novel: 'The hatred which divided the great families in the feudal times had lost little of its bitterness, though it no longer expressed itself in deeds of open violence', so that Lucy herself 'knew little of Ravenswood, or the disputes which had existed betwixt her father and his'.<sup>166</sup> Scott exploits the motif of the feud between two families in order to add credibility to the tragic events of the plot but also as a metaphor by which he can explain the causes for the changes in Scotland and the development of the modern political party-system. The

<sup>161</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 264 and *Hamlet*, V. 2.

<sup>162</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 264-65 and *Hamlet*, V. 1. 286-87.

<sup>163</sup>His disappearance (p. 268) recalls the grave-digger song in *Hamlet* (V. 1. 71-74): 'But age with his stealing steps / Hath caught me in his clutch, / And hath shipped me intil the land, / As if I had never been such.'

<sup>164</sup>*Romeo and Juliet*, The Prologue, 6.

<sup>165</sup>Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, The Prologue, 1 and *Lammermoor*, p. 15.

<sup>166</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 92, 44.

fight between the Ravenswoods and the Ashtons is a legacy of the constitutional revolution of the seventeenth century. The Ravenswoods were supporters of the Stuart dynasty and fell with them; the Ashtons represent the wealthy lawyers to whom governmental authority was delegated in Scotland from the time of James I to that of Scott. The two families are connected with two greater aristocratic families that are contending for national power. The marriage of Lucy and Edgar would thus represent the union of two opposed orders, the old aristocratic and the bourgeois, which is destined never to take place.

Up to the beginning of the plot, Edgar and Romeo do not seem to have taken an active part in the quarrel. Like Romeo, Edgar is an unknown youth who appears to the young girl unexpectedly. The first time Lucy sees Edgar is after he has rescued her from the attack of a wild bull. At first, she does not know who he is, only later does she know his name. Juliet first sees Romeo at the Capulets' ball. She falls in love with him at once and only later does she learn from the Nurse that 'His name is Romeo, and a Montague, / The only son of your great enemy', which makes her prophetically exclaim: 'Too early seen unknown, and known too late!'.<sup>167</sup> In both works the young man's name is only revealed after the first meeting; to know he is the son of her father's enemy does not seem to affect Lucy much whereas Juliet realises the tragic import of her love. Fate works against the young lovers. Edgar is told Thomas the Rhymer's prophecy just before going to Ravenswood Castle, his ancestral home and now his enemy's house. The prophecy tells that:

When the last Laird of Ravenswood to Ravenswood shall ride,  
And woee a dead maiden to be his bride,  
He shall stable his steed on the Kelpie's flow,  
And his name shall be lost for evermoe!<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>167</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 41-42 and *Romeo and Juliet*, I. 5. 135-36, 138.

<sup>168</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 139.

Just before entering the house of Capulet, Romeo has a presage of ill omen:

I fear too early, for my mind misgives  
 Some consequence yet hanging in the stars  
 Shall bitterly begin his fearful date  
 With this night's revels, and expire the term  
 Of a despisèd life, closed in my breast,  
 By some vile forfeit of untimely death.<sup>169</sup>

In both works the ominous feeling disappears when they see the young women.<sup>170</sup>

The young couples ignore the advice of a good friend, respectively Blind Alice and Friar Laurence. Lucy and Edgar, during a suggestive ceremony of troth-plight, 'broke betwixt them the thin broad-piece of gold', while Romeo and Juliet get married secretly.<sup>171</sup> After the secret union with his beloved, the hero is forced to stay abroad for some time. Edgar, who has become an emissary to the Court of St James, is abroad for more than a year. Romeo is exiled to Mantua for the killing of Tybalt.<sup>172</sup> During the absence of the heroes, Lady Ashton and Lady Capulet want their daughters to marry a young man, Bucklaw and Paris respectively, whom the girls do not love.<sup>173</sup> Contrary to Romeo and Edgar, this young man is innocent in the people's eyes. Bucklaw has become rich and can offer Lucy everything she desires; Paris is a 'gallant, young, and noble gentleman'.<sup>174</sup> Although at first Lord Ashton and Lord Capulet raise some objections to their wives' plans, they later urge the marriage, supported respectively by Colonel Sholto and the Nurse.<sup>175</sup> Both girls are granted a delay. Juliet's marriage will be celebrated on Thursday, though the ceremony will be later moved to Wednesday; Lucy

<sup>169</sup>*Romeo and Juliet*, I. 4. 106-11.

<sup>170</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 147 and *Romeo and Juliet*, I. 5. 41-42.

<sup>171</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 158 and *Romeo and Juliet*, II. 5; III. 2. 97.

<sup>172</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 225 and *Romeo and Juliet*, III. 1. 193-94; III. 5. 88-89.

<sup>173</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 170, 173 and *Romeo and Juliet*, I. 3. 71-76.

<sup>174</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, ch. 21 and *Romeo and Juliet*, III. 5. 113.

<sup>175</sup>Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III. 5. 217-25 and *Lammermoor*, p. 226.

agrees to sign the contract of marriage on Saint Jude's Day.<sup>176</sup> Not being able to find a solution by themselves to escape this unwanted marriage, they seek the advice of a clergyman. Juliet goes to Friar Laurence's. There she meets Paris, accepts his courtship and makes an agreement with the friar. Lucy seeks the advice of the Reverend BidetheBent, makes an agreement with him, and then accepts Bucklaw's courtship.<sup>177</sup> There is a slight difference in the chronology of the events, but the agreement they make with the priests is similar. Friar Laurence suggests that Juliet should drink a potion the night before her wedding to Paris which will procure her an apparent death, in the meantime he will write to Romeo and tell him what happened. Lucy convinces BidetheBent to dispatch a letter to Edgar and only later does she accept Bucklaw's courtship, though in 'the calm indifference of despair'.<sup>178</sup>

After discovering the death of their beloved, the heroes give their purse of money to their servants. Prepared to die, Edgar 'threw towards Caleb, [...] a heavy purse of gold'; Romeo gives it to Balthasar just before descending into the Capulets' vault.<sup>179</sup> Caleb and Balthasar regard their masters' deadly paleness as a presage of 'some misadventure.'<sup>180</sup> Colonel Sholto, Lucy's elder brother, attends his sister's funeral. When he becomes aware of the presence of Ravenswood he addresses him in these words: 'I cannot doubt [...] that I speak to the murderer of my sister?' to which Ravenswood replies: 'You have named me but too truly'. The same happens in the tragedy where Paris accuses Romeo of having 'murdered my love's cousin, with which grief / It is supposed the fair creature died'.<sup>181</sup> In both works the lovers are not allowed to mourn in peace. Edgar's prayer to Colonel Sholto that he does not 'urge to farther

<sup>176</sup>Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, III. 4. 20 and *Lammermoor*, p. 232.

<sup>177</sup>Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. 1 and *Lammermoor*, p. 243.

<sup>178</sup>Cf. *Romeo and Juliet*, IV. 1. 89-120 and *Lammermoor*, pp. 243, 244.

<sup>179</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 267 and *Romeo and Juliet*, V. 3. 41.

<sup>180</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 68 and *Romeo and Juliet*, V. 1. 28-29.

<sup>181</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 264 and *Romeo and Juliet*, V. 3. 50-51.

desperation a wretch who is already desperate' echoes Romeo's words to Paris: 'Good gentle youth, tempt not a desp'rate man.'<sup>182</sup> At the end both heroes choose their deaths. On the morning of the duel Edgar rides through Kelpie's Flow, which he earlier said he dreaded, and disappears in the quicksand; Romeo drinks the poison he bought in Mantua.<sup>183</sup>

In both works, the death of the two pairs of lovers puts an end to the feud between their families. But, whereas in *Romeo and Juliet* the end of the hostilities is wanted by both Montagues and Capulets, in Scott's novel no one is left of the Ravenswood family, and Lady Ashton's 'splendid marble monument' stands ironically for the two statues which symbolise the end of the hostilities in Shakespeare's play.<sup>184</sup>

The import of *Romeo and Juliet* on *Lammermoor* is less significant than the influence of *Hamlet* but it is as structurally planned. The parallels and similarities are detailed and help to sustain the plot. As regards the characterization, there is a vague resemblance between Lucy and Juliet. They are young, beautiful and inexperienced women who are susceptible to romantic love.<sup>185</sup> Anna Jameson's description of Juliet's first appearance recalls the introduction of Lucy in the novel: 'the serene, graceful girl, her feelings as yet unawakened, and her energies all unknown to herself, and unsuspected by others.'<sup>186</sup> To Jameson, Juliet becomes a woman when she feigns submission to her parents while at the same time meditating on death;<sup>187</sup> Lucy reaches womanhood in madness. Lucy, however, has little of the 'strong' Juliet. Shakespeare's heroine stands up for her lover even when she has most cause to doubt him - after he has killed her kinsman. She takes Friar Laurence's potion when she sees herself obliged to

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<sup>182</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 264 and *Romeo and Juliet*, V. 3. 59.

<sup>183</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 240, 268 and *Romeo and Juliet*, V. 3. 119-20.

<sup>184</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 269 and *Romeo and Juliet*, V. 3. 297-303.

<sup>185</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 17 and *Romeo and Juliet*, I. 2. 9; I. 3. 13.

<sup>186</sup>Jameson, p. 105.

<sup>187</sup>Jameson, p. 114.

obey her parents' injunction that she marry Paris. A. W. Schlegel thought that the vulgarity of Juliet's parents saved her 'from the struggle between love and daughterly feeling, which here would not have been at all in its place'.<sup>188</sup> Lucy, on the contrary, lacks the strength which would enable her to disobey her parents.<sup>189</sup> Edgar is a mixture of Romeo and Hamlet. We can appropriate Hazlitt's comment on Hamlet, and say that Edgar is 'Hamlet in love.'<sup>190</sup> Edgar shares Romeo's fate, wilfully choosing to die after his beloved's death, but he has little in common with him; he is closer to Hamlet. According to Jameson, 'Romeo and Juliet *must* die: their destiny is fulfilled: they have quaffed off the cup of life, with all its infinite of joys and agonies, in one intoxicating draught.'<sup>191</sup>

Scott's criticism of *Romeo and Juliet* is limited to a passage in *Waverley* and one in the 'Essay on the Drama'. In *Waverley*, the play is the means by which the hero changes his path in life.<sup>192</sup> In the 'Essay on the Drama', Scott opposed the French critics who did not appreciate the blending of lower characters with heroes in the genre of tragi-comedy.<sup>193</sup> He saw Mercutio and the Nurse as essential characters in the play who had the function of enhancing the figures respectively of Romeo and Juliet: 'The touches of nature which Shakspeare has exhibited in his lower and gayer characters, like the chastened background of a landscape, increase the effect of the principal group.'<sup>194</sup> The 'contrast' thus achieved added a sense of reality to the action.<sup>195</sup> In *Lammermoor*, a contrast is provided by the characters of Caleb Balderstone and Maisie, the servants of the Ravenswood household. Scott believed that 'mirth and sorrow, and events which

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<sup>188</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 512.

<sup>189</sup>Lady Ashton plays the same role of Juliet's father but she shows the same lack of motherly feelings of Juliet's mother.

<sup>190</sup>Hazlitt, 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', p. 254.

<sup>191</sup>Jameson, p. 121.

<sup>192</sup>Edward Waverley's reading of *Romeo and Juliet* makes him prefer Rose Bradwardine to Flora MacIvor; see *Waverley*, ch. 54, pp. 334-37.

<sup>193</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 316.

<sup>194</sup>'Essay on the Drama', pp. 316-17.

<sup>195</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 317.

cause both, are more nearly allied than perhaps it is altogether pleasing to allow.'<sup>196</sup> Caleb is beside himself when in chapter 9 his master offers Sir William Ashton and Lucy shelter from the storm at Wolf's Crag and warns them that refreshment will be scanty. In chapter 12, Caleb enters the village of Wolf's Hope to try to procure some provisions for Wolf's Crag. He enters the house of Gilbert Girder, the cooper, and taking advantage of the absence for a few moments of Mrs Girder and her mother, he steals a spit bearing wildfowl. Caleb Balderstone was cited by the anonymous author of *The Parallel* as an example of the way Scott managed to unite the pathetic and the humorous.<sup>197</sup> He is also an example of the way Scott, like Shakespeare, 'increase[s] the effect of the principal group' by the means of 'lower' characters.

### *Macbeth*

The third important Shakespearean presence in *Lammermoor* is *Macbeth*, one of Scott's favourite plays, recurring in his narratives almost as often as *Hamlet*, and often cited in his miscellaneous literary criticism.

If Scott appreciated Kemble's interpretation of Hamlet, he thought that 'in *Macbeth*, Kemble has been as yet unapproachable'.<sup>198</sup> He especially admired:

Kemble's exquisitely and minutely elaborate delineation of guilty ambition, drawn on from crime to crime, while the avenging furies at once scourge him for former guilt, and urge him to further enormities. We can never forget the rueful horror of his look, which by strong exertion he endeavours to conceal, when on the morning succeeding the murder he receives Lennox and Macduff in the ante-chamber of Duncan. His efforts to appear composed, his endeavours to assume the attitude and appearance of one listening to Lennox's account of the external terrors of the night, while in fact he is expecting the alarm to arise within the royal apartment, formed a most astonishing piece of playing. Kemble's countenance seemed altered by the sense of internal horror,

<sup>196</sup>'Essay on the Drama', p. 318. Scott was here referring to the exclusion of the Fool from the performance of *King Lear*; the Fool was omitted from Tate's version which held the stage from 1674 to 1838.

<sup>197</sup>See above, ch. 1.1.

<sup>198</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 191.

and had a cast of that of Count Ugolino in the dungeon, as painted by Reynolds. When Macbeth felt himself obliged to turn towards Lennox and reply to what he had been saying, you saw him, like a man awaking from a fit of absence, endeavour to recollect at least the general tenor of what had been said, and it was some time ere he could bring out the general reply, 'Twas a rough night.'<sup>199</sup>

More than Kemble's performance in this play, however, it was Mrs Siddons's performance as Lady Macbeth which impressed him most. Scott admired her exceedingly,<sup>200</sup> and at her retirement he lamented that 'the stage lost its brightest ornament'.<sup>201</sup>

As Jameson noted, commentators, and Scott is no exception, have always analysed the character of Lady Macbeth with reference to her husband and when they consider her as a character:

it is ever with those associations of scenic representation which Mrs. Siddons has identified with the character. Those who have been accustomed to see it arrayed in the form and lineaments of that magnificent woman, and developed with her wonder-working powers, seem satisfied to leave it there, as if nothing more could be said or added.<sup>202</sup>

Hazlitt admitted that:

In speaking of the character of Lady Macbeth, we ought not to pass over Mrs. Siddons's manner of acting that part. We can conceive of nothing grander. It was something above nature. It seemed almost as if a being of a superior order had dropped from a higher sphere to awe the world with the majesty of her appearance. Power was seated on her brow, passion emanated from her breast as from a shrine; she was tragedy personified.<sup>203</sup>

<sup>199</sup>'Life of Kemble', pp. 191-92.

<sup>200</sup> See *Letters*, I, 375 (11 August 1807); III, 390 (10 December 1813).

<sup>201</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 229. But see *Letters*, V, 358 (17 April 1819) for an unfavourable comment when, hearing she might go back to the stage, Scott writes: 'Surely she is not such an absolute jack-ass.'

<sup>202</sup>Jameson, p. 370.

<sup>203</sup>Hazlitt, 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', p. 189.

What was Mrs Siddons's Lady Macbeth like? According to Jameson, Lady Macbeth was guided by ambition, her 'ruling motive' and 'overmastering passion'.<sup>204</sup>

Mrs Siddons herself, in her criticism of the character of Lady Macbeth, stated that:

In this astonishing creature one sees a woman in whose bosom the passion of ambition has almost obliterated all the characteristics of human nature; in whose composition are associated all the subjugating powers of intellect and all the charms and graces of personal beauty.<sup>205</sup>

The actress chose to bring forward the feature of Lady Macbeth which the Romantics emphasized. Coleridge affirmed that 'Hers is the mock fortitude of a mind deluded by ambition'.<sup>206</sup> Hazlitt viewed her as 'a great bad woman, whom we hate, but whom we fear more than we hate. [...] She is only wicked to gain a great end'.<sup>207</sup> Scott's view of Lady Macbeth agrees with both the Romantics' view and with Mrs Siddons's dramatic interpretation. He was so fascinated by Lady Macbeth that he often referred to her in the portrayal of his female characters. In *The Antiquary* and *The Abbot*, the guilty feelings and consequent distress of Elspeth Mucklebackit and Queen Mary derive from Lady Macbeth and in particular from Mrs Siddons's performance. In *Lammermoor*, Scott's delineation of Lady Ashton owes much to Lady Macbeth; but it is a version of Lady Macbeth which does not seem to recall Mrs Siddons's performance much.

Buchan has defined Lady Ashton as a 'Lady Macbeth à bon marché'.<sup>208</sup> Like her predecessor, Lady Ashton is the primary cause of the tragedy, but she does not share Lady Macbeth's fate; she does not commit suicide nor does she die repentant; instead, she 'lived to the verge of extreme old age,' and did not show 'the slightest symptom either of repentance or remorse'.<sup>209</sup> It is from this last piece of information that we can

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<sup>204</sup>Jameson, p. 371.

<sup>205</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 435.

<sup>206</sup>*The Romantics*, p. 418.

<sup>207</sup>Hazlitt, 'Characters of Shakespear's Plays', p. 188.

<sup>208</sup>Buchan, p. 195.

<sup>209</sup>Cf. *Macbeth*, V. 5. 16 and *Lammermoor*, pp. 268-69.

infer that Scott did not model his character on Mrs Siddons's performance because it was her representation of Lady Macbeth's remorse, especially her sleep-walking scene, that he most admired.

Lord Ashton is indirectly modelled on Macbeth. The narrator makes the reader aware of this similarity at the very beginning when he observes that Lord Ashton's 'ambition and desire of extending his wealth and consequence, found as strong a stimulus in the exhortations of his lady, as the daring aim of Macbeth in the days of yore.'<sup>210</sup> We can speak here of direct influence of the theatrical performance of the play by J. P. Kemble and Mrs Siddons. Their performance as Macbeth and Lady Macbeth had left a strong impression on Scott: 'Those who have had the good fortune to see Kemble and Mrs Siddons in Macbeth and his lady, may be satisfied they have witnessed the highest perfection of the dramatic art.'<sup>211</sup> Lord Ashton regards his wife 'with respectful awe rather than confiding attachment; [...] with jealous fear rather than with love or admiration', while she 'looked with some contempt on her husband'.<sup>212</sup> The Ashtons are not linked by the bond of affection which initially governs the relationship between Macbeth and his wife. Contrary to Macbeth who thinks of his wife as his 'dearest partner of greatness,' Lord Ashton is aware of his wife's superiority.<sup>213</sup> When he spends the night at Wolf's Crag as Edgar's guest and makes plans for the future of his daughter and for his own, he wonders: 'What will my wife - what will Lady Ashton say?'.<sup>214</sup> Lady Ashton, 'jealous of her rights,' as Lucy says, is conscious of her husband's weakness.<sup>215</sup> When she is informed of his plans for the union of Lucy and Edgar, she becomes alarmed that he 'might, in his policy or timidity, prefer'

<sup>210</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 17 and *Macbeth*, I. 5, 7; II. 2.

<sup>211</sup>'Life of Kemble', p. 192.

<sup>212</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 18.

<sup>213</sup>*Macbeth*, I. 5. 10.

<sup>214</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 127.

<sup>215</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 157.

Ravenswood to Bucklaw.<sup>216</sup> Like Macbeth, though, Lord Ashton needs the strength and boldness of his wife: 'her proud, vindictive, and predominating spirit, would be likely to supply him with the courage in which he was deficient'; we cannot help being reminded here of Lady Macbeth's spur to her husband to 'screw [his] courage to the sticking-place'.<sup>217</sup>

Lady Ashton, like her literary ancestor, is the prime mover of the tragedy. She asks that Ravenswood and Lucy dissolve their vow in the same commanding tone as Lady Macbeth asks that Duncan be murdered. In the 'return scene' she is the only person who remains with Lucy, with the exception of the clergyman, and 'her natural audacity' makes her challenge Edgar as Lady Macbeth's boldness allows her to defy the horrors of the room where Duncan lies dead.<sup>218</sup> They show no scruple in sacrificing other people's lives to their ambition and pride. When Macbeth shows some second thoughts about the murder of Duncan, Lady Macbeth incites him in these words:

I have given suck, and know  
How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me.  
I would, while it was smiling in my face,  
Have plucked my nipple from his boneless gums  
And dashed the brains out, had I so sworn.<sup>219</sup>

If Lady Macbeth's are but words, Lady Ashton does not 'hesitate at raising her arm, although she knew that the wound must be dealt through the bosom of her daughter' and has no qualms about making Lucy the victim of the machinations of an old crone to achieve her aim.<sup>220</sup> Both ladies are attributed a diabolic characteristic. Ailsie Gourlay

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<sup>216</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 174.

<sup>217</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 124 and *Macbeth*, I. 7. 60.

<sup>218</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 247 and *Macbeth*, II. 2. 50-55.

<sup>219</sup>*Macbeth*, I. 7. 54-58.

<sup>220</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 235.

states that 'there's mair o' utter deevilry' in Lady Ashton; Malcolm calls Lady Macbeth a 'fiend-like queen'.<sup>221</sup>

The three 'village-hags' are the true literary descendants of Macbeth's witches who resemble their prototypes in their deformed bodies and 'croaking' voices and represent the most striking borrowing from the play.<sup>222</sup> Macbeth's witches appear briefly on three occasions to deliver a prophecy. They predict their encounter with Macbeth after the battle, the greatness of Macbeth and Banquo, and finally the fall of Macbeth.<sup>223</sup> Scott's village-hags have a secondary role as they also appear after the climax and deliver minor decrees, but, like their ancestors, they appear on the scene three times and deliver three prophecies. The first time they foretell that Edgar's death will not be accompanied by a proper ceremony, the second prophecy regards the approaching death of Lucy, and the third speaks of Edgar's imminent death.<sup>224</sup> They speak of dead people and are linked to the devil, as Ailsie Gourlay's mysterious 'I hae it frae a hand sure aneugh' suggests, just as the Weird Sisters are linked to Hecate.<sup>225</sup> James Reed states that 'Despite their prophesyings and their close but superficial resemblance to the Weird Sisters in *Macbeth*, the true function of these old women is social, not supernatural.'<sup>226</sup> Lang is clearer in this regard:

we may not dare to say that Scott has vanquished Shakspeare, but he has equalled him. The Witches of *Macbeth* are witches of poetry; those of Scott are 'realistic,' as it were. Such were the witches historically and in fact, children of social wrongs, children of darkness.<sup>227</sup>

<sup>221</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 257 and *Macbeth*, V. 11. 35.

<sup>222</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 191-92, 264 and *Macbeth*, I. 3. 39-47.

<sup>223</sup>*Macbeth*, I. 1; I. 3; IV. 1.

<sup>224</sup>*Lammermoor*, pp. 192, 257, 264.

<sup>225</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 193 and *Macbeth*, III. 5.

<sup>226</sup>Reed, p. 132.

<sup>227</sup>Lang, p. xx.

Like *Hamlet* and *Romeo and Juliet*, *Macbeth* also affects the plot of *Lammermoor*. For Harding, *Macbeth* offers no parallel scenes to the novel, but two episodes in the novel show a striking resemblance to two events in the play.<sup>228</sup> The apparition of Alice Gray in chapter 23 is indebted both to *Macbeth*'s air-drawn dagger and to the third apparition of Banquo's ghost in the play.<sup>229</sup> After being turned out of Ravenswood Castle by Lady Ashton, Edgar wishes he could speak to Blind Alice once more. Similarly, *Macbeth* would like to have a dagger within reach in order to accomplish the 'fatal deed'. Their wishes are fulfilled and the object of their desire suddenly appears.<sup>230</sup> Edgar tries to approach Blind Alice, but 'As he approached her, she rose up from her seat, [...] and as, after a moment's pause, he again advanced towards her, Alice, or her apparition, moved or glided backwards towards the thicket'. The ghost of Blind Alice moves its 'withered lips [...] fast' as though it wanted to convey something to Edgar, perhaps a last warning, but 'no sound issued from them'.<sup>231</sup> Similarly, *Macbeth* tries to clutch the dagger but cannot.<sup>232</sup> Both Alice and Banquo die before they are able to do what they want, respectively to warn Ravenswood against the danger of a union with the Ashtons and to attend *Macbeth*'s banquet. When the ghost of Alice disappears the narrator wonders whether the apparition 'was real, or whether it was the creation of a heated and agitated imagination'.<sup>233</sup> *Macbeth*, too, wonders whether the dagger is 'sensible / To feeling, as to sight' or if it is:

but  
A dagger of the mind, a false creation  
Proceeding from the heat-oppresdèd brain?<sup>234</sup>

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<sup>228</sup>See Harding, p. 76.

<sup>229</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 188 and *Macbeth*, II. 1. 33-35; III. 4.

<sup>230</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, pp. 187-88 and *Macbeth*, II. 1. 33.

<sup>231</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 188.

<sup>232</sup>*Macbeth*, II. 1. 34-35.

<sup>233</sup>*Lammermoor*, p. 188.

<sup>234</sup>*Macbeth*, II. 1. 37-39.

Edgar's bewilderment at what he has witnessed ('Can my eyes have deceived me, [...] and deceived me for such a space of time?') recalls Macbeth's amazed feelings after the ghost of Banquo has vanished:

Can such things be  
And overcome us like a summer's cloud,  
Without our special wonder?<sup>235</sup>

The other supernatural event that Scott borrowed from *Macbeth* is the 'show of eight Kings' which foretells the end of Macbeth's reign and descent. This scene provides the source for one of Ailsie Gourlay's devices; in order to convince Lucy that Edgar has been unfaithful to her she shows him 'in a mirror glass, [...] in the act of bestowing his hand upon another lady.'<sup>236</sup>

Like Shakespeare's play, the novel is thick with omens and auguries. The 'burst of thunder' which accompanies Edgar's kiss of welcome to Lucy at Wolf's Crag recalls the 'unruly' night that accompanies the murder of Duncan.<sup>237</sup> A parallel can be traced between the prophetic phenomena which attend the Mermaid's fountain, the perspicacity of Blind Alice, and the killing of the raven in the novel and the witches and the birth of Macduff in *Macbeth*. The desolate landscape which surrounds the tower of Wolf's Crag and the village of Wolf's Hope also recalls the 'blasted heath' of Forres.<sup>238</sup>

In both *Macbeth* and *Lammermoor* the same relationship between human will and fate conditions events. In the play fate foretells that Macbeth will get the crown; at first Macbeth does not pay much attention to the prophecy, but Lady Macbeth's insistence makes him change his mind. The prophecy says that Macbeth will be killed by someone who was not born of woman. Macduff will be that person, and Macbeth,

<sup>235</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 189 and *Macbeth*, III. 4. 109-11.

<sup>236</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 241 and *Macbeth*, IV. 1.

<sup>237</sup>Cf. *Lammermoor*, p. 93 and *Macbeth*, II. 3. 53.

<sup>238</sup>*Macbeth*, I. 3. 75.

after destroying Macduff's family, challenges him to a duel, unknowingly seeking his own death. In *Lammermoor* an obscure force coming from the grave, finding fertile ground in Edgar's natural disposition, prompts him to revenge against Lord Ashton. In spite of Thomas the Rhymer's prophecy and Blind Alice's warnings, Edgar forgets his vows of revenge and swears his love to Lucy. After Lucy's apparent change of mind and her final death, he accepts his fate and deliberately seeks his death in Kelpie's Flow as Macbeth does when he realizes that Macduff was not born of woman.

Shakespeare works as the unifying force of this novel. The lasting success of *Lammermoor* is also due to its Shakespearean characterization and atmosphere. The "impact" of *Lammermoor* on later works is the best illustration of its special place among Scott's novels. Among nineteenth-century works, Lord Tennyson's *Maud* (1855), Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), Alessandro Manzoni's *I Promessi Sposi* (1827) and Thomas Hardy's *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* (1891) are indebted both to the characterization and the plot of *Lammermoor*. In the early twentieth century, E. M. Forster exploited Lucy Ashton's song in *A Room With A View* (1908) and Donizetti's opera in *Where Angels Fear to Tread* (1905) to criticise British conventions. Gaetano Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835) still contributes to keeping alive in people's minds the story of the Scottish 'star-cross'd lovers'.

### 3.2 Sweet sister, let me live!

#### *The Heart of Midlothian and Measure for Measure*

Between us and Elizabethan drama stands a familiarity with the novel which, being early formed and lying deep, is seldom taken into conscious reckoning.<sup>1</sup>

According to Mary Lascelles, the ‘English romantic novel’, which finds its origin in Shakespeare, has changed the English way of reading his plays.<sup>2</sup> Scott’s role in this process of adjustment has also been relevant to Shakespearean criticism and will be my concern in this chapter, which focuses on the frequent comparison of *Midlothian* with *Measure for Measure*, and vice versa. The parallel between the two works has often served the purpose of explaining key features of both.<sup>3</sup> The following discussion of the two texts starts from the analysis of the similarity between their respective heroines, especially of the dilemma they find themselves in, and proceeds to show how the reading of *Midlothian* affect our perception of *Measure for Measure*.

*Measure for Measure* is one of the subtexts of Scott’s novel. Shakespeare’s tragicomedy, however, is not Scott’s source for *Midlothian*. In the 1830 Introduction to the novel, Scott clearly drew his readers’ attention to his development of the plot out of the story of Helen Walker.<sup>4</sup> As Brewer, the firmer believer in Scott’s reliance on Shakespeare, remarks: ‘Scott amplifies with fiction the facts from the life of Helen

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<sup>1</sup>Mary Lascelles, *Shakespeare’s ‘Measure for Measure’* (London: Athlone Press, 1953), p. 2. According to Lascelles: ‘it is romantic novels with which we first become acquainted, and the English romantic novel is directly sprung from the English way of reading Shakespeare. Thus our reactions to his plays have been insensibly modified by those very changes which are a condition of life for their offspring.’ Lascelles apologises in a footnote ‘for including Scott; but who, within these islands, would be better pleased with the term British?’.

<sup>2</sup>Lascelles, *Shakespeare’s ‘Measure for Measure’*, p. 2.

<sup>3</sup>The presence of Shakespearean intertexts in the novel has already been illustrated by Brewer, pp. 273-81 and D. Biggins in “‘Measure for Measure’ and “‘The Heart of Midlothian’”, *Études Anglaises*, 14 (1961), 193-205.

<sup>4</sup>Walter Scott, *The Heart of Midlothian*, ed. by Claire Lamont, The World’s Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1982), pp. 3-6.

Walker, which he sets down in his preface, in such a way as to make the story of Jeanie Deans resemble that of Isabella in *Measure for Measure*.<sup>5</sup>

According to Francis Russell Hart: 'Any novel provoking comparison nowadays with *Measure for Measure* suffers for its unwitting presumption.'<sup>6</sup> However, *any* novel provoking comparison with *any* play by Shakespeare is guilty of presumption. This view is the legacy of the nineteenth-century phenomenon of Bardolatry which changed the way in which Shakespeare and his work were perceived. By the time Scott started his literary career, Shakespeare had become an institution. The practice of revision or adaptation, as it was understood in the previous century, came to be seen as negative in the Romantic period and was soon replaced by the practice of allusions, quotations, echoes and suggestions. Any writer who wanted to compete with Shakespeare had therefore to adopt this new approach which would be known later as intertextuality. As regards the comparison of *Midlothian* and *Measure for Measure*, Dorothy Van Ghent shows a clear understanding of the interdependent intertextual relationship of the critical treatments of the two works when she claims:

We are, therefore, not comparing this play as a whole with Scott's novel as a whole, to the denigration of the latter; we are comparing only the pivotal problems in these two works, for what light of judgment one may throw on the other.<sup>7</sup>

Following Van Ghent, I would like to suggest that by studying the novel and the play in relation to one another, each throws light on the moral problem of the other.

The thematic conflict which lies at the core of *Measure for Measure* lends itself to being developed in a narrative. In 1860, Alfred Mézières noticed that *Measure for*

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<sup>5</sup>Brewer, p. 273.

<sup>6</sup>Francis Russell Hart, *Scott's Novels: The Plotting of Historical Survival* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1966), p. 128.

<sup>7</sup>Dorothy Van Ghent, 'On *The Heart of Midlothian*', in *The English Novel: Form and Function* (New York: Harper and Row, 1953), pp. 113-24 (p. 117).

*Measure* was 'more like a novel than a play.'<sup>8</sup> Later, G. G. Gervinus observed that 'the true achievements of "Measure for Measure" would become evident if a novel were taken from the play'.<sup>9</sup> For Melissa Frazier, Gervinus's suggestion is 'largely a reference to the history of "Measure for Measure."<sup>10</sup> Gervinus was aware of the different literary genres from which this play derived and had probably been fascinated by the metamorphic power of its plot which had been transposed into different literary genres.

*Measure for Measure* finds its sources both in prose and drama. Its subtexts range from the fifth novella of the eighth decade of Giraldi Cinthio's *Hecatommithi* (1565) and its dramatic rendition *Epitia* (1573), to George Whetstone's *Promos and Cassandra* (1578) and the contemporary "disguised ruler" plays.<sup>11</sup> Shakespeare's use of a work of prose explains why *Midlothian* assimilated *Measure for Measure* so successfully; Frazier calls Scott's novel 'a true "novelization"' of Shakespeare's play.<sup>12</sup> The two main Restoration revisions of *Measure for Measure* were both dramatic renditions: William Davenant's *The Law Against Lovers* (1662) and Charles Gildon's *Measure for Measure: Or Beauty the Best Advocate* (1700). Davenant and Gildon felt at ease in changing the plot of the play in order to make it fit their own taste and meet their audience's expectations.<sup>13</sup> Scott, on the contrary, did not dare to "re-write"

<sup>8</sup>See *A New Variorum Edition of Shakespeare: 'Measure for Measure'*, ed. by Mark Eccles (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1980), p. 397.

<sup>9</sup>G. G. Gervinus, *Shakespeare Commentaries*, trans. by F. E. Bunnètt (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1883), p. 486. Gervinus thought that: 'A novel taken from Shakespeare's play, furnished with all his characteristic touches and with his representation of circumstances, and placed by the side of the original source or by the side of Whetstone's play, would evidence, in the simplest and most striking manner, the wonderful difference from others which renders our poet so unique and distinct.' (pp. 486-87)

<sup>10</sup>Melissa Frazier, 'Kapitanskaia dochka and the Creativity of Borrowing', *Slavic and East European Journal*, 37 (1993), 472-89 (p. 474).

<sup>11</sup>Scott owned 'Six Old Plays, on which Shakspeare founded his Measure for Measure, Comedy of Errors, Taming the Shrew, King John, Henry IV. and V., and King Lear', ed. by J. Nichols (London, 1779). Among these plays is *Promos and Cassandra*; see *Catalogue of the Library of Abbotsford*, p. 215.

<sup>12</sup>Frazier, p. 474. "Novelization" is Bakhtin's word for the process of intertextualization which works and genres undergo. See Mikhail Bakhtin, 'Epic and Novel', in *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays by M. M. Bakhtin*, ed. by M. Holquist, trans. by Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 3-40.

<sup>13</sup>Since the Restoration, countless authors have based their works on Shakespeare's plays or taken them as the starting point of their own works. For a short list of other texts derived from *Measure for Measure*, among which are Herman Melville's *Billy Budd*, Guy de Maupassant's *Boule de Suif*, and Bob Dylan's

Shakespeare's play. In *Midlothian*, *Measure for Measure* enriches the text of Helen Walker's story but is not the starting point of the narrative.

Before entering the discussion of the relationship between the two works, it is necessary to give a brief synopsis of their plots. Two young people are sentenced to death for committing a crime against which a substitute to the true authority has but recently reinforced the law. The crime is related to seduction and pregnancy, but, whereas in the play the "seducer" is sent to death, in the novel it is the "seduced" who suffers most. As M. C. Bradbrook notes, 'Juliet, whom Claudio "wrong'd," is penitent from the first and therefore absolved by the Duke'.<sup>14</sup> There is a difference in the treatment of Effie and Juliet. Effie is also penitent but she obtains no sympathy for this; on the contrary, she will be punished. The only hope lies in the intervention of the offender's sister. Claudio trusts that Isabella, soon to become a nun, might move the upright Angelo to mercy, but it turns out that the only way by which she can save her brother's life is by losing her chastity. Effie may be saved by Jeanie's telling a lie in court, namely that her sister confessed her pregnancy to her, but this, Jeanie, daughter of a Covenanter, cannot do. It is at this point that the two works offer common ground for criticism.<sup>15</sup>

The main plot event of both works is the outcome of the application of an "unjust" law. There is a similar pattern but the substance of the law in question varies. In the play, law has been reinforced against the widespread sexual disease in Vienna to prevent unlawful unions and illegitimate children. In the age of Shakespeare, unmarried women who became pregnant underwent public trials, often followed by seclusion, or

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'Seven Curses', see Harriett Hawkins, *Twayne's New Critical Introductions to Shakespeare: 'Measure for Measure'* (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1987), pp. 134-40.

<sup>14</sup>M. C. Bradbrook, 'Authority, Truth, and Justice in *Measure for Measure*', in *William Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, ed. by Harold Bloom, *Modern Critical Interpretations* (New York: Chelsea House Publishers, 1987), pp. 7-22 (p. 9).

<sup>15</sup>My analysis is limited to this strand of the plot; for a survey of the sub-plots and the other analogies of plot and characterisation, see Biggins and Brewer.

by the “marking” of their appearance. In *Midlothian*, the child-murder law of 1690, to which Bartoline Saddletree refers in chapter 5, was the result of a long-established practice among young women who, having become pregnant when still unmarried, often killed their illegitimate children in order to avoid the shame and the ordeal they would have to go through if discovered. Reed reports that at the time of Scott’s narrative, when life in Scotland was regulated by the Kirk, offenders were called before its governing body, the Kirk Session, punished with heavy fines and publicly rebuked.<sup>16</sup> With the 1690 Act, even the concealment of pregnancy and childbirth became a capital offence.

Effie and Claudio are sentenced to death by a law which has not been applied for a long time. In his letter to Bailie Middleburgh, George Staunton refers to ‘a law so cruel, that it has hung by the wall, like unscoured armour, for twenty years’.<sup>17</sup> In *Measure for Measure*, Claudio complains:

this new governor  
Awakes me all the enrolled penalties  
Which have, like unscoured armour, hung by th’ wall  
So long that fourteen zodiacs have gone round.<sup>18</sup>

In this regard, Lascelles comments: ‘Scott has, indeed, been at pains to emphasize the likeness of situation: the law by which Effie must die [...] is the outcome of former laxity and precipitate legislation.’<sup>19</sup> Scott, however, did not find himself ‘at pains’ at all since his historical source for Effie had been sentenced to death by the 1690 Act which, as he reports in a note, was the outcome of ‘the great increase of the crime of child

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<sup>16</sup>Reed, p. 105.

<sup>17</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 182.

<sup>18</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, ch. 18, p. 178 and *Measure*, I. 2. 153-56.

<sup>19</sup>Lascelles, *Shakespeare’s ‘Measure for Measure’*, p. 85. Lascelles is probably thinking here of those passages in the novel which emphasise the necessity for a reinforcement of the law as recalling the Duke’s decision to let his substitute apply the law in the play. See p. 183, where Bailie Middleburgh states: ‘The crime has been too common, and examples are necessary.’ The judge also complains during the trial that: ‘the crime has been increasing in this land, and I know farther, that this has been ascribed to the lenity in which the laws have been exercised, and that there is therefore no hope whatever of obtaining a remission for this offence.’ (p. 237) Finally the Duke of Argyle tells Jeanie: ‘The crime has been but too common [...] there should be an example.’ (p. 348)

murder'.<sup>20</sup> Scott's development of the theme of justice recalls the same theme of the play, but Scott based his novel on a historical event.

The most obvious resemblance between *Measure for Measure* and *Midlothian* is found in the two central figures, Isabella and Jeanie. The predicament in which they find themselves is similar: they are both called to perform an act which compromises their identities. Isabella is asked to sacrifice her chastity to save her brother's life and Jeanie to perjure herself in a court of law to save her half-sister's life. Their decision not to do what goes against their conscience has led commentators to criticise the heroines for condemning their brother and sister to death for the sake of their integrity. Isabella's refusal to comply with Angelo's request and her subsequent connivance at the bed-trick have been the object of much criticism by Shakespearean scholars who have only recently shown some understanding of it. *Measure for Measure* was first labelled a 'problem play' by Frederick S. Boas in *Shakespeare and His Predecessors* in 1896.<sup>21</sup> Ernest Schanzer's definition of 'problem play' probably constitutes the best example of the way *Measure for Measure* has been approached for a long time:

A play in which we find a concern with a moral problem which is central to it, presented in such a manner that we are unsure of our moral bearings, so that uncertain and divided responses to it in the minds of the audience are possible or even probable.<sup>22</sup>

The ambiguity of *Measure for Measure* finds its origin in the conduct of Isabella.

Prior to the mid-twentieth century, Isabella was generally seen as a flawed and unsympathetic character. Eighteenth- and nineteenth-century commentators agreed in

<sup>20</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 528, note 23.

<sup>21</sup>See 'Measure for Measure', in *Shakespearean Criticism: Excerpts from the Criticism of William Shakespeare's Plays and Poetry, from the First Published Appraisals to Current Evaluations*, ed. by Laurie Lanzen Harris and Mark W. Scott (Detroit, Michigan: Gale Research Company, 1985), pp. 382-534 (pp. 416-17).

<sup>22</sup>Ernest Schanzer, *The Problem Plays of Shakespeare: A Study of 'Julius Caesar', 'Measure for Measure', 'Antony and Cleopatra'* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1963), p. 6.

condemning the “inconsistence” of her conduct throughout the play. The criticism of Charlotte Lennox and Dr Johnson illustrates the eighteenth-century view. Both took issue with Isabella’s censure of her brother’s suggestion that she accept Angelo’s proposal: Lennox called Isabella ‘a mere Vixen in her Virtue’, and Dr Johnson affirmed that in her ‘declamation there is something harsh, and something forced and far-fetched.’<sup>23</sup> The Romantics appreciated the play but were also unable to accept Isabella’s behaviour. Hazlitt, although admiring the ‘genius’ and the ‘wisdom’ of the composition, admitted that he was not ‘greatly enamoured of Isabella’s rigid chastity, though she could not act otherwise than she did.’<sup>24</sup> Coleridge expressed a general distaste for *Measure for Measure*, which he thought was ‘the only painful - part of [Shakespeare’s] genuine works’. He was particularly incensed by the final resolution of the plot, finding it ‘degrading to the character of woman.’<sup>25</sup> The first positive criticism of Isabella came from a foreign voice. In a lecture of 1808, A. W. Schlegel described Isabella as ‘The most beautiful embellishment of the composition’.<sup>26</sup> His appreciation of Isabella was shared by later critics such as Jameson who praised Shakespeare’s heroine in an essay of 1833.<sup>27</sup> In 1842, Charles Knight detected in Isabella Shakespeare’s attempt to portray ‘female virtue’.<sup>28</sup> In 1872, H. N. Hudson took issue with Coleridge’s negative criticism of the character in *Table Talk* where the poet had described her as ‘unamiable’, and claimed that Isabella’s response to Claudio is dictated by ‘the natural workings of a tender and deep affection, in an agony of disappointment at being urged, by one for whom she would die, to an act which she shrinks from with noble horror, and justly considers worse than death.’<sup>29</sup> In the early twentieth century, two major Shakespeareans

<sup>23</sup> *Shakespearean Criticism*, pp. 389, 391. Dr Johnson was here referring to lines 137-38 in III. 1.

<sup>24</sup> Hazlitt, ‘Characters of Shakespear’s Plays’, pp. 345, 346.

<sup>25</sup> *Shakespearean Criticism*, p. 397.

<sup>26</sup> *Shakespearean Criticism*, p. 396.

<sup>27</sup> *Shakespearean Criticism*, p. 399.

<sup>28</sup> *Shakespearean Criticism*, p. 401.

<sup>29</sup> *Shakespearean Criticism*, p. 407.

again accused Isabella of being insensitive. Arthur Quiller-Couch saw ‘something rancid in her chastity’, and G. Wilson Knight accused her of ‘lack[ing] human feeling.’<sup>30</sup>

Isabella was vindicated by Raymond Wilson Chambers in a British Academy Shakespeare Lecture for 1937, in which he devoted special attention to the pleading scenes.<sup>31</sup> E. M. W. Tillyard acknowledges Chambers’s defence of Isabella but observes that the apology came belatedly because ‘the definitive interpretation of Isabella’s action was given by Walter Scott when he prefixed quotations from *Measure for Measure* to some of his culminating chapters in the *Heart of Midlothian*.’<sup>32</sup> In this sense, Scott’s portrayal of Jeanie Deans made him the precursor of Isabella’s supporters. *Midlothian* implicitly provided a positive reading of Isabella long before anybody came along with a formal positive criticism. It could be objected to Tillyard that A. W. Schlegel had praised Isabella before *Midlothian* appeared and that, since he was acquainted with Schlegel’s criticism, Scott may have taken his cue for Jeanie from the German critic’s praise of the Shakespearean character.<sup>33</sup> Schlegel’s statement in favour of Isabella, however, would not be enough to endear her to Scott. Although he argues that in *Measure for Measure* Shakespeare ‘sounded the depths of the human heart’, Schlegel fails to give a sense of the complexity of Isabella’s moral dilemma.<sup>34</sup>

Scott was aware of the moral complexity of *Measure for Measure* and of the ‘uncertain and divided responses to it in the minds of the audience’. Does the moral problem of *Midlothian* leave the same ambiguity in its readers’ minds? Scott scholars have noticed that the readers of *Midlothian* show a will to participate in the novel. R. C.

<sup>30</sup>*Shakespearean Criticism*, pp. 421, 425.

<sup>31</sup>Raymond Wilson Chambers, *The Jacobean Shakespeare and ‘Measure for Measure’*, Annual Shakespeare Lecture of the British Academy, 1937 (London: Humphrey Milford Amen House, 1937).

<sup>32</sup>E. M. W. Tillyard, ‘*Measure for Measure*’, in *Shakespeare’s Problem Plays* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1950), pp. 118-38 (p. 119).

<sup>33</sup>Schlegel’s lectures were published in England in 1815, therefore before the appearance of Scott’s novel. Scott owned a copy of 1815 translated by John Black; see the *Catalogue of the Library at Abbotsford*, p. 200.

<sup>34</sup>*Shakespearean Criticism*, p. 396.

Gordon claims that *Midlothian* 'dramatises a question of personal morality so crucial that the reader commonly loses all detachment and enters the novel as a judge.'<sup>35</sup>

Alexander Welsh states that, contrary to the other Waverley Novels, where in the balance between 'passion' and 'prudence', prudence is predominant, in *Midlothian*: 'Scott contrived to weigh selfless compassion against a very nice question of rational principle, and the reader joins in Jeanie's moral dilemma.'<sup>36</sup> Throughout the narrative, we never doubt Jeanie's choice, nor do we feel uncomfortable with her behaviour, as we do with Isabella's in *Measure for Measure*.

In her discussion of *Measure for Measure*, Lascelles goes back to *Midlothian* in order to clarify to the reader the central contrast in the play:

Comparison with another treatment of this theme may serve to show the conflict between Isabel and Claudio as one in which neither - given what the dramatist gives, the characters, the situation, the train of events, and given no more and no less - could have acted differently.<sup>37</sup>

After uncovering the kinship between Isabella and her Scottish successor, Lascelles wonders: 'How is it, then, that little of the censure which falls on Isabel has touched [Jeanie]?'<sup>38</sup> There are three main reasons for Jeanie Deans's 'amnesty', as Lascelles calls the fondness with which Scott scholars and readers have regarded Jeanie, as opposed to the lack of sympathy for Isabella. First comes 'her steadfast gentleness in her dealings with her sister;' Jeanie is her younger sister's protector whereas in the play it is Isabella who seeks protection from her older brother. A second reason, according to Lascelles, depends on the tacit assumption according to which, 'in the ordinary course of things, violent death always stands nearer to any man than any woman.'<sup>39</sup> Both Juliet

<sup>35</sup>R. C. Gordon, *Under Which King?*, p. 84.

<sup>36</sup>Alexander Welsh, *The Hero of the Waverley Novels* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1963), p. 128.

<sup>37</sup>Lascelles, *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, p. 84.

<sup>38</sup>Lascelles, *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, p. 86.

<sup>39</sup>Lascelles, *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, p. 86.

and Isabella would gladly give their lives to save Claudio's. The dialogue in the novel between the two sisters where Jeanie swears she would risk her life to save Effie only to be rebuked by Effie's 'Ay, lass, [...] that's lightly said' 'stir[s] in the reader an even more painful response when the issue lies between a man and a woman.'<sup>40</sup> A final reason for this 'censure' is to be found in the different literary genres to which the two works belong. For Lascelles, 'an Elizabethan dramatist [...] may leave us in doubt where the inheritor of Scott's estate [...] can be explicit;' although, she complains, 'a great historical novelist - even Scott himself - might give a clearer account of Jeanie's scruples than of Isabel's.'<sup>41</sup> On the whole, Lascelles considers Jeanie as more commendable than Isabella because:

From the moment of her submission to the Duke, until that in which she pleads for Angelo against his express injunction, [Isabella] is insignificant. We may usefully recall, here, the comparison afforded by *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*: whereas Jeanie takes matters into her own hands and, at severe cost to herself, wins her sister's pardon, Isabel appears to relinquish initiative and, under another's direction, to follow a course at once easier and less admirable.<sup>42</sup>

Tillyard follows Lascelles.<sup>43</sup> In his critique of the play, he refers the readers of Shakespeare who are at a loss as to how they should interpret the main conflict of the play to Scott's novel:

Let anyone who doubts how Shakespeare meant the principal episodes in *Measure for Measure* (and none of these occurs after the first scene of Act Three) to be taken read or re-read these culminating episodes of *The Heart of Midlothian*, including Jeanie's resolution to go to London to obtain a royal pardon for her sister. Not only will he learn how to take the first half of *Measure for Measure* but he should note that in the play there is nothing to correspond to Jeanie Deans's journey to London in the novel.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>40</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, p. 207 and Lascelles, *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, p. 86.

<sup>41</sup>Lascelles, *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, p. 88.

<sup>42</sup>Lascelles, *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, p. 148.

<sup>43</sup>Lascelles's treatment of the parallel between *Measure for Measure* and *Midlothian* comes before Tillyard's study of the same; see her *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, p. 84, note 2.

<sup>44</sup>Tillyard, *'Measure for Measure'*, p. 120.

As regards the bed-trick, Tillyard observes:

To argue, as has been argued, that the plan, by Elizabethan standards, was very honourable and sensible and that of course Isabella would have accepted it gladly is to substitute the criterion of ordinary practical common sense for that of the drama. You could just as well seek to compromise the fictional validity of Jeanie Deans's journey to London by proving that the initial practical difficulties of such a journey at such a date rendered the undertaking highly improbable. In Scott's novel Jeanie Deans does travel to London, and, though Scott had better have shorn her journey of many of its improbable and romantic complications, it is a consistent Jeanie Deans who takes the journey, and her action in taking the journey and in pleading with the Queen is significant. Isabella, on the contrary, has been bereft of significant action, she has nothing to do corresponding to Jeanie's journey, and she has turned into a mere tool of the Duke.<sup>45</sup>

Both Tillyard and Lascelles see Jeanie's undertaking of the dangerous journey to London as more praiseworthy than Isabella's resignation of her will to the power of the Duke. According to their view, Isabella should have opposed the bed-trick and tried another means of rescuing her brother. Jeanie's resolution to go to London to plead for her sister's life because, as she thinks, 'the king's face [...] gies grace',<sup>46</sup> is the legacy of the seventeenth-century belief in the divinity of the monarch who was seen as an 'anointed minister [...] of God'.<sup>47</sup> Jeanie's tramp to London, 'generous as well as venturesome' as Welsh has described it, has generally been viewed as the only alternative left in a world where justice is "unjust".<sup>48</sup> In Fiona Robertson's words, Jeanie's journey is 'a redemption of law. It translates into personal, spiritual (and female) terms what has

<sup>45</sup>Tillyard, 'Measure for Measure', pp. 128-29.

<sup>46</sup>Midlothian, p. 246.

<sup>47</sup>William A. Madden, 'The Search for Forgiveness in Some Nineteenth-Century English Novels', *Comparative Literature Studies*, 3 (1966), 139-53 (p. 141).

<sup>48</sup>Welsh, p. 131.

conspicuously failed in the public, pragmatic (and masculine) world of organized justice.’<sup>49</sup>

If Isabella has provoked some critics for her connivance at the bed-trick and her supposed final acceptance of the Duke’s marriage proposal,<sup>50</sup> Jeanie has intrigued them by her refusal to tell a lie to save her sister’s life. In this regard, A. N. Wilson’s commentary is instructive: ‘Of course, Jeanie Deans could have told a lie to save her sister’s life. But one only has to consider the mountains of literature attempting to explain *Measure for Measure* to see where this sort of moral confusion would lead.’<sup>51</sup> Jeanie’s inability to lie is related to Isabella’s refusal of Angelo’s proposal and her subsequent acceptance of the bed-trick.

Why cannot Jeanie lie in court? David Brown believes that: ‘To lie later in court would be to bring the honesty of her entire life into question, to deny one of the foundations of her personality - her integrity [which is] a practical expression of her life-long faith and trust in God.’<sup>52</sup> As she tells Staunton at their meeting at Muschat’s Cairn: ‘It is not man I fear, [...] the God, whose name I must call on to witness the truth of what I say, he will know the falsehood.’<sup>53</sup> We must not forget that Jeanie is imbued with religious precepts and that, as Alistair D. Walker points out, ‘Jeanie’s truth [...] is prescriptive, a series of commands by which she interprets the world - to act truly is to act according to moral precepts.’<sup>54</sup> According to Welsh, Jeanie’s inability to lie depends

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<sup>49</sup>Robertson, *Legitimate Histories*, p. 214. The distinction female/male that the critic leaves in brackets refers to Scott’s significant achievement in the portrait of his first female heroine, which R. S. Edgecombe calls a ‘sexual adjustment’; see R. S. Edgecombe, ‘Two Female Saviours in Nineteenth-Century Fiction: Jeanie Deans and Mary Barton’, *English Studies*, 77 (1996), 45-58 (p. 49). Mary Anne Schofield complains: ‘little criticism has been directed to the feminine/feminist aspect of a Scott novel.’ See her ‘The “Heart” of Midlothian: Jeanie Deans as Narrator’, *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, 19 (1989), 153-64 (p. 153).

<sup>50</sup>Isabella’s silence at the end of the play does not necessarily register her consent to the Duke’s proposal (V. 1. 533-36).

<sup>51</sup>A. N. Wilson, p. 126.

<sup>52</sup>David Brown, *Walter Scott and the Historical Imagination* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1979), pp. 120-21.

<sup>53</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 156.

<sup>54</sup>Alistair D. Walker, ‘The Tentative Romantic: An Aspect of *The Heart of Midlothian*’, *English Studies*, 69 (1988), 146-57 (p. 149).

on 'The moral pattern of the Waverley Novels [which] takes the shape of an excursion, not an effort to resolve moral conflicts that Scott does not believe in resolving. Given this precondition, *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* is a moral tour de force.'<sup>55</sup> In his reading of the novel, Tillyard recognises that Jeanie and Isabella are different characters; 'yet', he adds:

Scott knew he was here competing with Shakespeare and that Jeanie's problem was Isabella's problem. Jeanie's regard for truth was, like Isabella's for chastity, a matter of fundamental principle, a condition of life's validity. And both regards were equally redeemed from hypocrisy through their holders being less reluctant to sacrifice their own lives than to contribute to their ineluctable inaction to the required sacrifice of the lives of their kin.<sup>56</sup>

Van Ghent sees the 'lie' as the focus of the whole novel and analyses it by referring to the 'analogous case of conscience' offered by *Measure for Measure*: '*Measure for Measure* is an ambiguous play, with an ambiguity that is morally unpleasant, for it offers a conventional solution for a problem too deeply rooted in emotional and nervous responses to be solved conventionally.'<sup>57</sup> Although Van Ghent's view of *Measure for Measure* is very close to the concept of "problem play", with regard to the novel she suggests: 'In the abstract, also, we might pass a ready judgment on Jeanie Deans's refusal to save a sister's life by a lie.' But, as in the play we are concerned with what surrounds and conditions Isabella's decision, so we should also contextualise Jeanie's choice in the novel. Scott, states Van Ghent, '*assumes* that Jeanie's decision to tell the truth contains a vital human attitude toward truth, but', she complains, 'he neglects to explore this assumption in the aesthetic context he provides.'<sup>58</sup> Van Ghent agrees with Lascelles's complaint that Scott should have been more explicit. The clue to the

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<sup>55</sup>Welsh, p. 134.

<sup>56</sup>E. M. W. Tillyard, 'Scott', in *The Epic Strain in the English Novel* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1967), pp. 59-116 (pp. 110-11).

<sup>57</sup>Van Ghent, pp. 116, 117.

<sup>58</sup>Van Ghent, p. 119.

understanding of Jeanie's choice lies in his portrayal of her as a consistent character throughout the whole novel.

Scott scholars who have studied *Midlothian* in relation to *Measure for Measure* have praised Scott's intertextual references to Shakespeare as enriching the moral tissue of the novel. It is difficult, however, to establish the boundary line in the employment of the intertextual tool. With regard to *Midlothian*, Hart claims that: 'an incautiously rigid application of the *Measure for Measure* analogy is quite misleading. The play evolves poetically in a dense atmosphere of diseased sexuality, and no such condition surrounds the narration of Effie's "sin."' <sup>59</sup> *Midlothian* leaves out a central aspect of the play: the sexual. Van Ghent recognises that Effie's "crime" is the same as that presented by Shakespeare in *Measure for Measure*, but she laments that 'never in the book is it even implicitly suggested that this *is* the crime'. The critic finds two other 'obscurities, or rather obscurations' in the novel:

a crime which the book refuses to acknowledge structurally and to place in rhythm with the punishment; and an absurd obscuration of whatever meaning sexual indulgence on the part of a person like Effie might have. The ambiguous meaning of sexual indulgence in *Measure for Measure* is not *obscure* meaning; it is complex meaning, difficult meaning. [...] In Effie's case, though illicit sexual indulgence contributes, so far as we can see, the only structural motivation for Effie's long punishment, it has no 'meaning' except that punishment. In other words, sex must be punished, and that is all there is to it. <sup>60</sup>

Van Ghent's comment reduces Scott's treatment of Effie's plot to a very simple matter. There is more to Effie's "fall" than this. Van Ghent overlooks the real crime for which Effie stands accused. No matter how irrational the 1690 Act may appear to the reader, it remains the historical reason for Effie's condemnation.

<sup>59</sup>Hart, p. 132. Hart is here taking issue with Van Ghent's belief that 'the *real* "crime" in Scott's novel, is also sexual indulgence - for Effie is guilty of no other.' See Van Ghent, p. 117.

<sup>60</sup>Van Ghent, p. 121.

Both Shakespeare and Scott scholars have been led to comment on the similarity between the two works by Scott himself who, consciously and overtly, interspersed the narrative of *Midlothian* with chapter-tags from *Measure for Measure*.<sup>61</sup> In Tillyard's view, Scott's use of tags is 'symbolic' and indicative of the fact that 'Scott's state of mind in composing the greatest scenes in the *Heart of Midlothian* was working like Shakespeare's in the same process; through an uncommon power of self-identification with the men and women in action.'<sup>62</sup> Tillyard, as later Edgar Johnson, only speaks of three epigraphs from the play when four epigraphs establish the connection with *Measure for Measure*.<sup>63</sup> Tillyard directs attention to the three tags which bear the major relevance to the plot. He does not mention the first one which precedes chapter 18 in which Jeanie meets Ratcliffe:

You have paid the heavens your function, and the prisoner the very debt of your calling.<sup>64</sup>

For Tillyard this quotation is not relevant to the Jeanie-Isabella analogy. It is, however, significant because it prepares the reader's understanding of the novel by drawing a first parallel with the play. The three main tags from *Measure for Measure* are prefixed to central chapters of the novel and they reflect the main concern of the play. Chapter 20

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<sup>61</sup>The play is also indirectly present in the plot of the novel itself. In her letter to Jeanie, Effie tells her that on one occasion the Duke of Argyle sat by her at the theatre and that 'something in the play put him in mind of you'; see *Midlothian*, p. 454. The play was, of course, *Measure for Measure* and that 'something' Isabella's efforts to save Claudio. As far as I know, Wilson has been the only critic who has noticed this fact; see A. N. Wilson, p. 124.

<sup>62</sup>Tillyard, 'Scott', p. 110.

<sup>63</sup>Johnson also writes of the 'three chapter captions from *Measure for Measure*' (I, 659). Although the chapter-tags from *Measure for Measure* play a significant part in establishing the analogy, allusions to the 'measure for measure' theme are also frequent in the course of the narrative. First, it is spelt out in the description of the Porteous mob: 'Let us mete to him with the same measure he measured to them.' (p. 67) More strikingly, the 'measure for measure' law is approved by David Deans who accepts his younger daughter's cruel fate with a quotation from the Mosaic Law: 'an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, life for life, blood for blood - it's the law of man, and it's the law of God.' Cf. p. 106 and Exodus 21:23-4, Leviticus 24:20; Deuteronomy 19:21.

<sup>64</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, p. 178 and *Measure*, III. 1. 506-7.

describes Jeanie's visit to Effie in prison and is preceded by Claudio's prayer to Isabella to let him live:

Sweet sister, let me live!  
 What sin you do to save a brother's life,  
 Nature dispenses with the deed so far,  
 That it becomes a virtue.<sup>65</sup>

According to Tillyard, Isabella's 'scorn of Claudio's weakness is dramatically definitive and perfect. To his pathetic pleas, [...] comes, as it must, her own, spontaneous retort from the depth of her being'.<sup>66</sup> Jeanie's bewilderment at her sister's reaction when she understands there might be a chance of escaping death is more "humane" than Isabella's anger at Claudio's feelings of hope.<sup>67</sup> This is due, according to Lascelles, to the fact that the dialogue takes place between two women:

Thus, with a clarity which the relationship between women makes possible, the stubborn point at issue is exposed: the one who must deny a plea for life would willingly give life itself, but cannot forsake principle; the one who pleads has at heart no such regard for that principle as would stand in the way if the other's life were in danger.<sup>68</sup>

Jeanie would give her life to save Effie, but cannot 'forsake' her religion's commandments. Effie would not have these scruples if she were in her sister's position.

The trial at which Jeanie is called as a witness, which Welsh calls 'the trial of Jeanie Deans,' is preceded by the lines in the play where the Duke laments the dangerous lawless situation of his dukedom:

We have strict statutes, and most biting laws -  
 The needful bits, and curbs for headstrong steeds -  
 Which, for these fourteen years, we have let sleep,  
 Like to an o'ergrown lion in a cave,

<sup>65</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, p. 202 and *Measure*, III. 1. 134-37.

<sup>66</sup>Tillyard, '*Measure for Measure*', p. 127.

<sup>67</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 207.

<sup>68</sup>Lascelles, *Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure'*, pp. 85-86.

That goes not out to prey.<sup>69</sup>

This tag emphasises the cruelty of the sudden application of a law which the ruler himself had willingly left unapplied for a long time, but also the justice of that law. The following chapter relates the trial in which Effie is indicted of the crime of child-murder and represents the climax of the first part of the novel.

Lucio's words of advice to Isabella on how she can save her brother precede chapter 25:

*Isab.* Alas! what poor ability's in me  
To do him good?  
*Lucio.* Assay the power you have.<sup>70</sup>

In this chapter, Ratcliffe suggests that Jeanie should 'try MacCallummore; he's Scotland's friend'.<sup>71</sup> The similarity here regards the fact that the sister of the defendant is advised on how to plead for the defendant's life. But, whereas Isabella needs encouragement from Lucio, Jeanie has already made up her mind on what she will do to save Effie's life.

Jeanie obtains an interview with the Queen through the intervention of the Duke of Argyle. Biggins notices Shakespearean echoes in Jeanie's pleading to her sovereign which, as he notes, did not please Nassau Senior, Scott's contemporary, who viewed it as 'much too rhetorical for the person and for the occasion'.<sup>72</sup> In Hart's view, on the contrary: 'Jeanie [...] triumphs with the Queen through an eloquence combining humane compassion and diplomatic shrewdness.'<sup>73</sup> Harry E. Shaw has rightly affirmed that 'To

<sup>69</sup>Welsh, p. 128; cf. *Midlothian*, ch. 22, p. 216 and *Measure*, I. 3. 19-23.

<sup>70</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, p. 243 and *Measure*, I. 4. 73-75.

<sup>71</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 246.

<sup>72</sup>Biggins, p. 197. John O. Hayden reports Nassau Senior's review of the Waverley Novels in the *Quarterly Review* of 1821; see *Scott: The Critical Heritage*, ed. by John O. Hayden (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1970), pp. 215-55 (p. 226).

<sup>73</sup>Hart, p. 143.

convince the queen, Jeanie must be herself', and she *is* herself.<sup>74</sup> As Madden says, Jeanie's words are 'couched in terms [...] explicitly Christian'.<sup>75</sup> In her proverb-like style, Jeanie alludes to unnatural parents and violators of the seventh commandment and unwittingly strikes home.<sup>76</sup> Jeanie's involuntary allusions may be linked to Isabella's questioning words to Angelo in Act II:

Go to your bosom;  
 Knock there, and ask your heart what it doth know  
 That's like my brother's fault. If it confess  
 A natural guiltiness, such as is his,  
 Let it not sound a thought upon your tongue  
 Against my brother's life.<sup>77</sup>

Jeanie's pleading speech is not part of a premeditated discursive strategy in the way that Isabella's entreaty is. Although the Queen finally comments: 'This is eloquence,' Jeanie's words come from her heart and her religious beliefs.<sup>78</sup> According to Grierson, in Jeanie's interview with the Queen Scott 'has done what Shakespeare did in the speech of Antony in Julius Caesar, and what a lesser novelist would have shrunk from attempting; he has given her a speech worthy of the occasion'.<sup>79</sup> We do not feel ill at ease with Jeanie's awkwardness when she finds herself in front of the Queen; on the contrary, we admire her capacity of being true to herself to the last.

In both *Measure for Measure* and *Midlothian* the themes of arbitrary mercy and legitimacy of the true ruler which are central to the development of the plot acquire significance in the pleading scenes. In *Midlothian*, Queen Caroline, like Angelo, is substituting for the true ruler (in her case King George II) temporarily. In the sources of

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<sup>74</sup>Harry E. Shaw, *The Forms of Historical Fiction: Sir Walter Scott and his Successors* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1983), p. 231.

<sup>75</sup>Madden, p. 141.

<sup>76</sup>Jeanie's words remind the Queen of her quarrel with her son and Lady Suffolk of her unlawful position as a royal mistress. See *Midlothian*, pp. 369-70.

<sup>77</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, pp. 367-70 and *Measure*, II. 2. 140-45.

<sup>78</sup>Cf. Jeanie's speech to the Queen, pp. 369-70 and *Measure*, II. 2. 73-75. See also Chambers's criticism of the pleading scenes in the play in his *Jacobean Shakespeare*, p. 36.

<sup>79</sup>Grierson, *Sir Walter Scott: 1832-1932*, p. 12.

*Measure for Measure*, the true ruler represents the infallibility of divine justice, whereas the substitute's failure stands for the inadequacy of human justice. In the play, the Duke is also an arbiter since in the end he does not 'mete out measure for measure' according to the verse in the Sermon on the Mount: 'With what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again.'<sup>80</sup> As Harriett Hawkins affirms: 'The plot is finally resolved by a complex series of events vaguely comparable to the resolution to *Measure for Measure*, and the success of the resolution is, likewise, subject to critical debate.'<sup>81</sup> The question of the legitimacy of the Queen's granting a pardon for Effie has provoked a discussion among Scott's critics. Frazier remarks that the Queen's 'decision to spare Jeanie's sister, [...] if based not on a sudden access of sinful lust, is nonetheless based on an emotional reaction unrelated to a concept of true justice.'<sup>82</sup> For Madden, the Queen's pardon 'becomes for the reader, even while it remains for Jeanie a pure act of Christian forgiveness, the whimsical act of a capricious woman'.<sup>83</sup> The pardon does not come from the Queen's real understanding of Effie's innocence, as the Duke's pardon does not come from his understanding of Claudio's innocence. It does not derive from the application of justice, but from a biased application of one's personal judgement, instead. In both cases, it depends on the impression the pardoners get from the heroines. The Queen and the Duke would probably behave in a different way if they were faced by weaker personalities.

According to Brewer, Scott brought some improvement on Shakespeare's play, showing that he 'was a sedulous but not an indiscriminate imitator.'<sup>84</sup> For Brewer,

A young woman struggling to maintain veracity is less likely to attract unworthy kinds of interest in readers than one struggling to maintain chastity. It is an unusual theme in literature instead of one which has

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<sup>80</sup>Matthew, 7:2; Mark 4:24; Luke 6:38.

<sup>81</sup>Hawkins, p. 134.

<sup>82</sup>Frazier, p. 485.

<sup>83</sup>Madden, p. 143.

<sup>84</sup>Brewer, p. 276.

received in almost every period innumerable treatments. It permits a clearer and nobler moral triumph.<sup>85</sup>

Brewer's point of comparison here is the different issue at stake in the two works; truth for Jeanie, chastity for Isabella. Scott makes truth the very focus of his narrative. As Bradbrook writes, in *Measure for Measure* the issue of 'truth' is 'prominent, but it is not a subject for debate or doubt.'<sup>86</sup> Hart has suggested that Jeanie's refusal to tell a lie recalls Cordelia's conflict in *King Lear*:

Faced with the dilemma created by the confrontation of an inflexible legalism with an inflexible moralism, Jeanie's truth has no language to use. The word with which she answers the court's crucial question reminds us not of Isabella, but of another Shakespearian heroine, also caught in the face of impossibly conflicting demands with no adequate language. Asked what her sister told her, Jeanie replies, 'Nothing' (240). She has no more choice than Cordelia; to say more would be to resort to the facile humanitarian untruth thrust upon both by the spokesmen of opportunistic flexibility. Cordelia's humane lie would not have solved Lear's arrogant blindness; Jeanie's would not solve the problem of Effie's nature or of a cruel and fictional legalism. Jeanie knows this through her absolute faith in law.<sup>87</sup>

Jeanie's 'Nothing', like Cordelia's answer to her father, leaves the judge and the jury in a stupor.<sup>88</sup> Hart's insight is supported by the narrator's description of Jeanie's voice during the interview with the Queen: 'Jeanie had a voice low and sweetly toned, an admirable thing in woman'.<sup>89</sup> We cannot overlook the echo of Lear's description of Cordelia's voice: 'Her voice was ever soft, / Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in woman.'<sup>90</sup> Jeanie's simplicity of manners may also be indebted to Cordelia's lack of craftiness.

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<sup>85</sup>Brewer, p. 277.

<sup>86</sup>Bradbrook, p. 14.

<sup>87</sup>Hart, pp. 137-38.

<sup>88</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 231.

<sup>89</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 366.

<sup>90</sup>Cf. *Lear*, V. 3. 247-48.

Edgar Johnson, Avrom Fleishman, and R. C. Gordon have all lingered on the parallel with *King Lear* suggested by Hart. Johnson claims: ‘The issue is not one of chastity and carnality but of truth and falsehood. When Jeanie is asked what Effie told her, she can only reply, like Cordelia, “Nothing,” and, when pressed, “Alack! alack! she never breathed word to me.”’<sup>91</sup> To Gordon, ‘Jeanie’s “Nothing,” like Cordelia’s, is a clear light in a world of lies, yet it leads to a sentence of death for Effie.’<sup>92</sup> Fleishman remarks on the similarity of the trial scene with the opening scene of the tragedy and adds:

Given this further Shakespearian motif in the novel, it becomes possible to detect the kind of heroine with whom we have to deal. She is a figure of high idealism and unvarying dedication to moral principle, but since that principle excludes all others that conflict with it, her consistency becomes inflexibility, her high principle priggishness, and her idealism destructive pride. Like Shakespeare and (at least by implication) Sophocles, Scott will lead his admirable but limited heroine to a broader conception of morality, one that admits of greater human sympathy than absolute principles usually allow.<sup>93</sup>

There is then a mixture of Shakespearean referents in the portrayal of Jeanie Deans. Isabella’s and Cordelia’s ‘high idealism’, although expressing itself in different ways, also characterises Jeanie. The result is a character with ‘unvarying dedication to moral principle’, whose ‘absolute principles’ ultimately allow for ‘human sympathy’.

McMaster suggests a different reading of *Midlothian*. He believes that the quotations from *Measure for Measure* only refer to the ‘fable’ in the novel; comparisons of the novel with the play such as that by Robin Mayhead, whose study of *Midlothian* focuses on the novel’s main question: ‘What does human justice amount to?’, are

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<sup>91</sup>Johnson, I, 659.

<sup>92</sup>R. C. Gordon, *Under Which King?*, p. 92.

<sup>93</sup>Avrom Fleishman, ‘Scott’, in *The English Historical Novel: Walter Scott to Virginia Woolf* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins Press, 1971), pp. 37-101 (p. 89).

'bound to distort one's reading by directing attention away from the romance.'<sup>94</sup> In

McMaster's view:

it is the Shakespeare of the last plays, particularly of *The Winter's Tale*, who would be a more appropriate comparison. There is, in the first part, tyranny, the spider of sexuality, banishment and death; then the gap of years; and in the second part, birth and rebirth, country festivity, reform and renewal, and an embodiment of grace. The last part of the novel imagines a community that tolerates and harmonises ordinary human frailties, and allows the flowering of justice, love and kindness. In such a society, inevitably, realism has not much place. Its existence bears witness rather to the artist's will to bring it into being, his need to imagine its possibility, magically make it happen, the novel itself being some sort of ritual, in a present which he saw as being only to [*sic*] ready to annihilate the human virtues.<sup>95</sup>

A major similarity with *The Winter's Tale* is the lapse of years which separates Effie's pardon from the tragic denouement of Effie's and Staunton's lives.<sup>96</sup> Walker agrees with McMaster that 'The restoration of life, in more or less symbolic ways, is one of the main concerns of the last section of the novel' and with his comparison of the final part of the novel with the last act of *The Winter's Tale*, but he adds:

I am sure that Scott *is* trying to achieve here a picture of harmony, celebrated partly through domestic bliss, partly through social ceremony, but the similarity is closer to, say, the final acts of *The Merchant of Venice* and *As You Like It* than to *The Winter's Tale*.<sup>97</sup>

Walker's final remark points out the wider Shakespearean influence in this last part of the novel which is not limited to a single play as the treatment of the main plot is. McMaster's argument is valid, as is Walker's, but the analogy with *Measure for*

<sup>94</sup>Graham McMaster, 'Realism and Romance in *The Heart of Midlothian*', *Cambridge Quarterly*, 10 (1982), 202-18 (p. 218). McMaster refers to Robin Mayhead's 'The Heart of Midlothian: Scott as Artist', *Essays in Criticism*, 6 (1956), 266-77 (p. 268).

<sup>95</sup>McMaster, 'Realism and Romance in *The Heart of Midlothian*', p. 218.

<sup>96</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, p. 489, where Plumdamas makes clear that fourteen years have passed since the Porteous mob in 1737, and *Winter's Tale*, IV. 1. 6.

<sup>97</sup>Walker, p. 155.

*Measure*, which also lent something to the romance aspect of the novel, is more central to its plot.

Romance supports the narrative framework of *Midlothian* as it is a significant element of *Measure for Measure*. Tony Inglis recognizes that:

each main movement of *The Heart of Mid-Lothian* is organised (if that is indeed the word?) in relation to an obvious presiding text - *Measure for Measure* for the whole part, including the riot, up to Effie's sentence; *Comus* and *The Pilgrim's Progress* for Jeanie's journey and for Madge Wildfire's fate.<sup>98</sup>

A. N. Wilson believes that '*Measure for Measure* never quite ceases to be a fairy story, and it has all the arbitrariness and amorality of that world. *The Heart of Midlothian* is very far from being a fairy story, yet it seems to have a very simple moral.'<sup>99</sup> Conversely, Inglis thinks that *Midlothian* resembles a tale from the fairy world and he distances it from the play:

At the end of the trial the dilemma, heading towards tragedy, can be avoided only by modulation of genre into folktale; Scott, licensed both by his source anecdote and by the already established analogy with *Measure for Measure*, makes the shift not by a Shakespearean trick of beds and identities, but with the fully-fledged folktale hero's journey, complete with donors, talismans, tests, deceitful waylayings, assault, physical wounding, guidance, helpers, achievement of the object by a trick, and pursuit on the journey home.<sup>100</sup>

Scott himself seems to be unsure as to Jeanie's role in the romance side of the novel. He first affirms that 'she was no heroine of romance' but he then recognises that 'There was something of romance' in her journey to London.<sup>101</sup> *Measure for Measure* is also thick

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<sup>98</sup>Tony Inglis, '... And an Intertextual Heart: Rewriting Origins in *The Heart of Mid-Lothian*', in *Scott in Carnival*, pp. 216-31 (pp. 219-20).

<sup>99</sup>A. N. Wilson, p. 126.

<sup>100</sup>Tony Inglis, 'Introduction', in *The Heart of Midlothian*, ed. by Tony Inglis (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1994), pp. ix-l (p. xx).

<sup>101</sup>*Midlothian*, pp. 251, 268.

with romance motifs, such as the disguised ruler, the bed-trick, and the recourse to a higher authority.

If we look at the novel from a wider perspective, our attention is captured by the presence of other plays in it. *The Merchant of Venice* and *Hamlet* give their contribution respectively to its plot and to its characterization. *The Merchant of Venice* is recalled in two tags and in the treatment of law and justice.<sup>102</sup> *Hamlet*, as often happens in the Waverley Novels, plays a relevant role in the characterization and here it gives the cue for the portrayal of Madge Wildfire. As in *The Bride of Lammermoor* and *Saint Ronan's Well*, Scott exploits the character of Ophelia in the representation of an insane female, but this time he endows her more freely with the typical features of the nineteenth-century stereotype of the madwoman, resorting to the contemporary medical portrait of insanity.<sup>103</sup>

Madge is not the 'deranged, beautiful whore' or the 'mad prostitute' described by Reed.<sup>104</sup> She is a young girl who has been seduced and then abandoned with child by a "demonic" lover. Madge shares the fate of Martha Ray in William Wordsworth's 'The Thorn' (1798) with which Scott openly invites a parallel; but it is Ophelia that gives real substance to her character.<sup>105</sup> The insane girl is introduced in chapter 16 by a quotation from Horatio's description of the mad Ophelia:

She speaks things in doubt,  
That carry but half sense: her speech is nothing,  
Yet the unshaped use of it doth move  
The hearers to collection; they aim at it,  
And botch the words up to fit their own thoughts.<sup>106</sup>

<sup>102</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, chs. 7 and 23, pp. 65, 223 and *Merchant*, III. 1. 66-68; IV. 1. 298, 301.

<sup>103</sup>For Scott's description of Madge, see pp. 163-166, 285, 287, 295, 300-1, 394-97.

<sup>104</sup>Reed, pp. 117, 120.

<sup>105</sup>See *Midlothian*, p. 297. For a discussion of Scott's allusion to the 'poet of Grasmere', see Nathaniel H. Henry, 'Wordsworth's "Thorn" an analogue in Scott's *Heart of Midlothian*', *English Language Notes*, 3 (1965-66), 118-20.

<sup>106</sup>Cf. *Midlothian*, p. 158 and *Hamlet*, IV. 5. 6-10.

The narrator directly establishes the analogy when he claims: 'Of all the madwomen who have sung and said, since the days of Hamlet the Dane, if Ophelia be the most affecting, Madge Wildfire was the most provoking.'<sup>107</sup> Scott's use of different adjectives to describe the two madwomen is revealing of the different interpretations of Ophelia's madness. The 'affecting' Ophelia does not mirror the Romantic image of the madwoman; on the contrary, the 'wild' Madge does. As Inglis tells us: 'Madge falls not within the Sentimental discourse of madness but within the Romantic one.'<sup>108</sup> Helen Small agrees and states: 'In *The Heart of Midlothian* (1818) the symbolic tie between love-madness and rebellion has one of its most memorable formulations.'<sup>109</sup> According to Arnold Kettle, Madge represents more than the Shakespearean madwoman:

Superficially she appears to be essentially a 'literary' figure, owing a good deal to Shakespeare's mad characters and a convenient foil in working out the plot and lending it a certain romantic colouring. But this is not the whole truth about Madge Wildfire. She is a conventional figure - the crazy jilted girl turned harlot - but not merely in a literary sense. These mad, semi-prophetic women who are constantly appearing in Scott's novels (Meg Merrilies is perhaps the best example) have a significance which is not simply that of the exploited theatrical figure.<sup>110</sup>

Like Shakespeare's and Scott's other madwomen, Madge has been most celebrated for her songs which, like Davie Gellatley's lyrics in *Waverley*, are often relevant to the narrative they embellish. Thomas Seccombe appreciates Scott's Shakespearean art of introducing songs into his narratives and sees Madge as:

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<sup>107</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 166.

<sup>108</sup>Inglis, 'Introduction', p. xlii.

<sup>109</sup>Small, pp. 120-21. Small writes: 'George Staunton leads the storming of Edinburgh's Tolbooth Prison disguised in the borrowed clothes of Madge Wildfire, who has been insane ever since he abandoned her with child. In that act of cross-dressing is summed up the displacement of political insurgency on to the figure of the madwoman, as her private, familiar tragedy becomes the costume for a political drama enacted by men.' (p. 121) For Jon Thompson: 'her real significance lies neither in her "picturesque", Ophelia-like dementia, nor her "Elizabethan" songs, but in her challenge to nineteenth-century British ideology.' See his 'Sir Walter Scott and Madge Wildfire: Strategies of Containment in *The Heart of Midlothian*', *Literature and History*, 13 (1987), 188-99 (p. 188).

<sup>110</sup>Arnold Kettle, 'Scott: *The Heart of Midlothian*', in *An Introduction to the English Novel*, 2 vols (London: Hutchinson's University Library, 1951-53), I (1951), 105-22 (p. 116).

one of those wilding freaks of humanity in the representation of which Scott and Shakespeare share a common secret. The hags of Forres and of Lammermoor are alike original and inimitable. Madge's warning lilt to Geordie Robertson in the 'tremendous' scene at the Cairn are Scott inspired; so are her self-communing and her running commentary on *The Pilgrim's Progress* when she is leading Jeanie to church near Grantham: Shakespeare can do these things, but Scott with his dialect somehow, like Sir Andrew, does it more natural.<sup>111</sup>

Seccombe takes his distance from the general opinion according to which Scott borrowed freely from Shakespeare in his portrayal of Madge; instead, he seems to privilege Scott for the absence of affectation, a quality which he happened to "share" with Shakespeare but which he could develop and represent more naturally.<sup>112</sup> Mayhead takes 'Proud Maisie' as an example of the Shakespearean function performed by songs in Scott's narrative: 'The switch from delusion to stern reality which we find in *Proud Maisie* has close relevance to many a situation in *The Heart of Midlothian*.'<sup>113</sup> It is also highly ironic, as Mayhead has remarked, because 'Maisie's bridal bed will be her grave and her bridegroom death.'<sup>114</sup> For Inglis, 'Proud Maisie' is 'the most haunting of Romantic poems on sexuality and death.'<sup>115</sup> Madge and her songs are evidence of Scott's capacity to portray sexuality, a quality he has often been denied to possess.<sup>116</sup>

The references to *Measure for Measure* in *Midlothian* suggest a deliberate intertextual strategy on the part of Scott. The parallel between the two works is held up to our attention and each text affects our reading of the other. The existence of a 'Measure for Measure school', as Hart has called it, in the critical discussions of

<sup>111</sup>Thomas Seccombe, "'The Heart of Midlothian'", in *Scott Centenary Articles* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932), pp. 56-72 (pp. 68-69).

<sup>112</sup>Seccombe, p. 69.

<sup>113</sup>Robin Mayhead, *Walter Scott* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), p. 122.

<sup>114</sup>Mayhead, *Walter Scott*, p. 118. McMaster has viewed the song as 'a marriage that turns into a funeral, a consummation that becomes decay, all images of joy and freshness becoming their opposites at the mere whim of the narrator, showing some deeply sensed wrong in the psyche or in the frame of things. Madge's consciousness is also used to articulate the theme of death and rebirth.' See 'Realism and Romance in *The Heart of Midlothian*', p. 215.

<sup>115</sup>Inglis, 'Introduction', p. xliii.

<sup>116</sup>See for instance Van Ghent's criticism reported above.

*Midlothian* has long been recognized.<sup>117</sup> There also exists a “*Midlothian* school” in the criticism of *Measure for Measure*, as the discussion above has shown. Tillyard, one of the most influential of twentieth-century critics, is explicit that the ‘culminating episodes of *The Heart of Midlothian*’ are a source for the correct interpretation of how ‘Shakespeare meant the principal episodes in *Measure for Measure*’. If *Measure for Measure* stimulates our reading of *Midlothian*, *Midlothian* provides a critical perspective on *Measure for Measure*. By drawing attention to Jeanie’s dilemma, *Midlothian* emphasises the vital importance for Isabella of maintaining her integrity, both physically and morally, and in this way it finds a place in the critical debate surrounding Isabella. It goes further. *Midlothian* comments on the cruelty of the law against the person and on the injustice of the ruler who reinforces that law. It also stresses the arbitrariness of human authority whilst showing the necessity of its exercise.

In the Introduction of 1830, Scott asked his readers ‘to judge how far the author has *improved upon*, or *fallen short of*, the pleasing and interesting sketch of high principle and steady affection’ of his historical prototype for Jeanie Deans (my emphasis).<sup>118</sup> Scott did not improve on Shakespeare’s play, as Brewer suggested, nor is it satisfactory to call *Midlothian* a “re-working” of *Measure for Measure*. One of Scott’s achievements in *Midlothian* is his handling of a theme, already exploited by Shakespeare, from a new perspective. With *Midlothian*, Scott placed himself among the critics of *Measure for Measure* and showed a lucid understanding of Isabella’s predicament. The analogy between *Midlothian* and *Measure for Measure* stands in the line of a series of transmitted texts which started with Shakespeare’s “re-reading” of earlier works. Shakespeare himself inspired other revisionists and this offered Scott a precedent. Shakespeare’s *Measure for Measure* would then pass through *Midlothian* to

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<sup>117</sup>See Hart, p. 128.

<sup>118</sup>*Midlothian*, p. 5.

inspire other works which deal with similar conflicts, such as Alexander Pushkin's *The Captain's Daughter* (1836) and Alessandro Manzoni's *I Promessi Sposi* (1827).<sup>119</sup>

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<sup>119</sup>For a parallel between *Midlothian* and *The Captain's Daughter*, see Melissa Frazier, cited above, and Donald Davie's 'The Heart of Midlothian', in *The Heyday of Sir Walter Scott* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1961), pp. 12-21. For a study of Manzoni's indebtedness to *Midlothian* in *I Promessi Sposi*, see M. F. M. Meikeljohn, 'Sir Walter Scott and Alessandro Manzoni', *Italian Studies*, 12 (1957), 91-98.

### 3.3 *The Pirate*: Scott's Enchanted Island

William Hazlitt's review of *The Pirate* in the *London Magazine* of January 1822 drew a parallel between Scott and Shakespeare:

Ah! who will then call the mist from its hill? Who will make the circling eddies roar? [...] Who will summon the spirits of the northern air from their chill abodes, or make gleaming lake or hidden cavern teem with wizard, or with elfin forms? There is no one but the Scottish Prospero, but old Sir Walter, can do the trick aright.<sup>1</sup>

Besides establishing a connection between the two authors, Hazlitt's view of the novelist as 'the Scottish Prospero' alluded to a kinship between *The Pirate* and *The Tempest*.<sup>2</sup> By choosing two lines from the play as the motto for the novel, Scott himself suggested this as a way of reading it.<sup>3</sup> The Shakespearean presence in *The Pirate* is not so overtly intertextual as it is in some of its predecessors and it has not, therefore, until recently, attracted the notice of Scott's scholars. Brewer was unusually unable to find many correspondences between the two works and ranged *The Tempest* among the minor influences on *The Pirate*. He writes: 'During the course of this novel, the effect of Shakespeare falls off greatly and, where it appears, remains so subdued that we are apt to underestimate its extent.'<sup>4</sup> Brewer accordingly 'underestimates' the relevance of *The Tempest* to some of the covert layers of the novel.

McMaster founds his reading of *The Pirate* on the claim that it is 'Scott's "*Tempest*". According to McMaster: 'The most important key to the novel is the realisation that Scott was here reworking *The Tempest*, with his own materials and in his

<sup>1</sup>Hazlitt, 'Literary Criticism', in Howe, XIX (1933), pp. 1-110 (p. 85).

<sup>2</sup>See above for Scott's identification with Prospero.

<sup>3</sup>Later critics noticed the Shakespearean atmosphere of *The Pirate*; see for instance Hillhouse, p. 177 and Johnson, II, 821.

<sup>4</sup>Brewer, p. 332.

own way.’<sup>5</sup> McMaster’s study of Scott’s novel in terms of *The Tempest* is groundbreaking. McMaster, however, goes too far when he states that Scott’s novel is a ‘reworking’ of the play. My argument in this chapter runs counter to his theory. I intend to demonstrate that Scott’s recollections from *The Tempest* often passed through the Restoration version of it, diverging from Shakespeare’s text. McMaster’s essay constitutes a significant addition to the criticism of *The Pirate*, yet it is limited to a study of the main character and his development and it does not consider the novel’s other subtexts, such as sexuality, colonialism, and the supernatural which directly relate to *The Tempest* and its Restoration adaptation.

Not only did Scott fail to leave a critique of *The Tempest*, but neither did he leave comments or judgements of the play. Scattered references to it can be found in the novels and the miscellaneous writings where he alludes to Shakespeare’s play mainly in order to justify his own supernatural creations. We do not doubt that Scott knew Shakespeare’s *Tempest* very well, but the editor of Dryden’s *Works* and the close friend of J. P. Kemble was also aware of at least two other readings of the play: Dryden and Davenant’s adaptation, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, first performed in 1667 and published in 1670, and Kemble’s 1789 *Tempest* which the actor adapted from Dryden and Davenant’s version. Stephen Orgel informs us that: ‘This version of the play remained in repertory until 1817’, and we can assume that this was the version of the play that Scott saw performed on the stage.<sup>6</sup>

Scott’s admiration for Dryden emerges from his belief that the Restoration playwright had left ‘to English literature a name, second only to those of Milton and of Shakspeare.’<sup>7</sup> According to R. K. Gordon: ‘After Shakespeare, [Dryden] is the English

<sup>5</sup>McMaster, *Scott and Society*, pp. 182, 183.

<sup>6</sup>Stephen Orgel, ‘Introduction’, in *The Tempest*, ed. by Stephen Orgel, The World’s Classics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987), pp. 1-87 (p. 68).

<sup>7</sup>‘Life of Dryden’, p. 453. Claud Halcro’s comment on Dryden: ‘They talk of their Blackmore, and Shadwell, and such-like - not fit to tie the lachets of John’s shoes’ recalls Scott’s when he affirmed that he

poet who has left the deepest impression on Scott's work.'<sup>8</sup> Scott was the biographer and the editor of Dryden with whom and with whose age, George Falle says, he shared 'temperamental affinities'.<sup>9</sup> Moreover, R. K. Gordon adds, Scott approved of Dryden's political views.<sup>10</sup> Despite his admiration for Dryden, Scott often found his dramatic works unacceptable and tasteless. He had generally words of praise for Dryden's adaptations of Shakespeare, as for instance in his prefaces to *Troilus and Cressida* and *All for Love*,<sup>11</sup> but his comments on *The Enchanted Island*, an 'alteration' of Shakespeare's work, sound on the whole disapproving:

It seems probable that Dryden furnished the language, and Davenant the plan of the new characters introduced. They do but little honour to his invention, although Dryden has highly extolled it in his preface. The idea of a counterpart to Shakspeare's plot, by introducing a man who had never seen a woman, as a contrast to a woman who had never seen a man, and by furnishing Caliban with a sister monster, seems hardly worthy of the delight with which Dryden says he filled up the characters so sketched. In mixing his tints, Dryden did not omit that peculiar colouring, in which his age delighted. Miranda's simplicity is converted into indelicacy, and Dorinda talks the language of prostitution before she has ever seen a man.<sup>12</sup>

Scott did not like Dryden and Davenant's version of *The Tempest* for two reasons: the doubling of plot and characters and the open language of sexuality spoken by the two female characters. The Restoration *Tempest* distanced itself from the original Shakespearean play, reflecting the new taste for which Shakespeare was old-fashioned.

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was 'not fit to tie [Shakespeare's] brogues'; cf. Walter Scott, *The Pirate*, Dryburgh Edition, XIII (1893), p. 148 and *Journal*, p. 252 (11 December 1826). Both instances allude to the Bible; John 1:27.

<sup>8</sup>Robert Kay Gordon, 'Dryden and the "Waverley Novels"', *Modern Language Review*, 34 (1939), 201-6 (p. 201). Gordon brings as evidence the fact that 'Dryden provided more chapter-headings for the novels than anybody else except Shakespeare and Scott himself.' According to the critic: 'the novel in which Dryden counts for most is *Pevevil of the Peak*. Naturally enough, since, like *Absalom and Achitophel*, it is largely concerned with the Popish Plot.' (p. 202)

<sup>9</sup>George Falle, 'Sir Walter Scott as Editor of Dryden and Swift', *University of Toronto Quarterly*, 36 (1966-67), 161-80 (p. 163).

<sup>10</sup>R. K. Gordon, 'Dryden and the "Waverley Novels"', p. 201. Halcro says that 'John was a Jacobite'; see *Pirate*, p. 395.

<sup>11</sup>See *The Works of John Dryden*, VI (1883), 243-46 and V (1883), 307-15.

<sup>12</sup>'Life of Dryden', p. 89.

In the following analysis of *The Pirate* I will demonstrate that, although Scott's view of the adaptations of Shakespeare's works anticipated the critical approach which tended to condemn them, at the same time it illustrates the difficulty of keeping the original independent of the adaptation.

Tetsuo Kishi objects to the critical practice of finding faults with the Restoration versions of Shakespeare's works in order to prove that Shakespeare was a far better dramatist. In Kishi's opinion: 'The whole question is not a matter of comparison. What is important is to find exactly which aspects of Shakespeare were unacceptable to Restoration dramatists and to realize what was the motive that urged them to work in their particular fashion.'<sup>13</sup> William Myers defends Dryden's *Tempest* by claiming that the playwright does not mean to 'correct' Shakespeare, but that 'On the contrary, he is *translating* his text, bringing it, that is, into an intelligent witty and original relationship with the professed values and accepted conventions of his own time.'<sup>14</sup> The interpretation of the text of Shakespeare's *Tempest* in the early nineteenth century is relevant to Scott's view of the play in *The Pirate*. Michael Dobson has noticed that '*The Tempest* entered the eighteenth century as a play which addressed the issue of power primarily in terms of patriarchal authority within the family.'<sup>15</sup> Kemble's *Tempest*, coming soon after the storm of the Bastille, was addressed 'to discipline susceptible English womanhood and to warn the youth of Albion against the temptations of French libertinism.'<sup>16</sup> The version of *The Tempest* offered by Dryden and Davenant displaced the central interest of the play from the question of government to the question of sexuality. Kemble chose to adapt his own *Tempest* on their version because, according

<sup>13</sup>Tetsuo Kishi, 'Dryden and Shakespeare', *Shakespeare Studies*, Shakespeare Society of Japan, 10 (1971-72), 39-51 (p. 39).

<sup>14</sup>William Myers, 'Dryden's Shakespeare', in *Augustan Worlds*, ed. by J. C. Hilson, M. M. B. Jones, and J. R. Watson (Leicester: Leicester University Press, 1978), pp. 15-27 (p. 18).

<sup>15</sup>Michael Dobson, "'Remember / First to Possess His Books": The Appropriation of *The Tempest* 1700-1800', *Shakespeare Survey*, 43 (1990), 99-107 (p. 99).

<sup>16</sup>Dobson, p. 106.

to Dobson, it was 'better suited to Kemble's right-wing purposes than Shakespeare's original text.'<sup>17</sup>

In the following reading of *The Pirate*, I will bring evidence to my suggestion that both *The Tempest* and its Restoration version contributed to Scott's work and that Scott managed to accommodate them to each other. The fact that in *The Pirate* Scott does not mention, either by means of quotations or of allusions, the Restoration version but does instead quote from *The Tempest* leads us to think that he wanted to remain faithful to Shakespeare. A further investigation into the novel shows that he could not prevent his memory from recollecting passages and episodes of the version of the play he was more familiar with. Moreover, during the composition of *The Pirate*, Scott was busy with the second edition of Dryden's *Works* and it is legitimate to think that this reminded him of Dryden's contribution to *The Enchanted Island*.<sup>18</sup> The main clue to my analysis of *The Pirate* in terms of the Restoration *Tempest* comes from the character of the 'wandering poet and parcel-musician,' Claud Halcro.<sup>19</sup>

The narrative of *The Pirate* is interspersed with Halcro's quotations from Dryden. The worshipper of Dryden loves to tell how he once met the poet at the 'Wits' Coffee-house' and how he 'had once a pinch out of his own very snuff-box.'<sup>20</sup> Halcro's brief meeting with Dryden represents a landmark in his life and, since then, he has been living on the memory of that encounter. Halcro has a habit of quoting from Dryden's works and referring to the poet by the catchphrase 'glorious John' which causes Bunce to recognise him.<sup>21</sup> Like Halcro, Sir Henry Lee of *Woodstock* accompanies his quotations from Shakespeare with the catchphrases 'mad Will' and 'old wag'.

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<sup>17</sup>Dobson, p. 106. According to Myers, Dryden and Davenant's adaptation had also a political subtext, their enchanted island being 'a comic paradigm of Charles II's' (p. 18).

<sup>18</sup>Cf. *Letters*, VI, 265, 383 (10 September 1820; 20 March 1821).

<sup>19</sup>*Pirate*, p. 21.

<sup>20</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 125, 129. See also 'Life of Dryden', pp. 175, 315, 388.

<sup>21</sup>*Pirate*, p. 389.

As Sir Henry Lee strenuously defends Shakespeare in the difficult and hostile period of the Interregnum, so Claud Halcro is an explicit apologist for Dryden during the contrasted period of the Glorious Revolution of 1688-89. If Sir Henry Lee's devotion to Shakespeare reflects the old Cavalier's political creed (he identifies Shakespeare with the "legitimate" monarchy of the Stuarts), Halcro's enthusiasm for Dryden, also coloured by Jacobite feelings, mirrors his political faith but it also hides something else.<sup>22</sup> In *The Pirate*, Shakespeare is accommodated via Dryden, and Halcro's almost "maniacal" enthusiasm for the Restoration dramatist and poet, which prevents him from appreciating other authors, is to be viewed as a screen for Shakespeare. Halcro's occasional quotations from Shakespeare happen by chance or by accident. One is particularly revealing of his anxiety of the Elizabethan dramatist. He alludes to Ariel's song when he tells Minna and Brenda: 'Jarto Minna and Jarto Brenda, I bid you welcome to these yellow sands; and there, shake hands, as glorious John, or some other body, says, upon the same occasion.'<sup>23</sup> Halcro's confusion as to the author of the lines he is recalling manifests his inability even to name Shakespeare who becomes 'some other body'. Halcro has previously alluded to *Macbeth* through Davenant's adaptation of it when he tells Minna: 'as the queen says in an old play, which was revived for the stage by rare Will D'Avenant, "To bed - to bed - to bed!"'<sup>24</sup>

Introducing his essay on Dryden's *Defence of the Epilogue* (1672) Scott affirmed: 'It is a bold, perhaps a presumptuous task, to attempt to separate the true from the false criticism in the foregoing essay; for who is qualified to be umpire betwixt Shakespeare and Dryden?'.<sup>25</sup> Scott showed his impartiality for the two authors in *The Pirate* when, to balance and to relieve the at times unbearable presence of the admirer of

<sup>22</sup>*Pirate*, p. 395.

<sup>23</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, pp. 314-15 and *Tempest*, I. 2. 377-78: 'Come unto these yellow sands, / And then take hands'.

<sup>24</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, p. 255 and *Macbeth*, V. 1. 63, 65. Davenant adapted *Macbeth* in 1674.

<sup>25</sup>*The Works of John Dryden*, IV (1883), 244-46 (p. 244).

Dryden, he introduced a fan of Shakespeare. The 'stage-struck pirate', John or Jack Bunce alias Frederick Altamont, had been an actor of the Restoration stage until Cleveland 'turned [him] from a stroller by land to a rover by sea.'<sup>26</sup> His numerous quotations from Shakespeare show a wide knowledge of the plays; he is also well acquainted with Dryden's, Davenant's, Lee's and other Restoration playwrights' work, showing none of Halcro's bias.<sup>27</sup> An interesting passage in the novel compares and contrasts the dramatic preferences of Halcro and Bunce. A dispute arises from the former actor's quotation from the Duke of Buckingham's burlesque *The Rehearsal* (1672), which irritates Halcro: 'I will hear nothing of Bayes, [...] it is an impudent satire on glorious John;' for Bunce, instead, 'the *Rehearsal* is the best farce ever was written; and I'll make him kiss the gunner's daughter that denies it. D--n me, I was the best Prince Prettyman ever walked the boards'.<sup>28</sup> In the 'Life of Dryden', Scott described *The Rehearsal* as 'a lively piece, which continues to please, although the plays which it parodies are no longer read or acted, and although the zest of the personal satire which it contains has evaporated in the lapse of time.'<sup>29</sup> Although condemning the personal character of the Duke of Buckingham, Scott could judge his work with objectivity.<sup>30</sup> Scott's portrayal of Halcro was a tribute to a poet and playwright he admired, and, in it, as in his portrayal of Sir Henry Lee, it is possible to detect a shade of self-irony. Halcro's continuous allusions to Dryden substantiate my claim that during the

<sup>26</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 415, 329. Altamont was the hero of Davenant's *Just Italian* (1630).

<sup>27</sup>Brewer states that Scott made Bunce quote from *3 Henry VI* anachronistically: 'What! not an oath? Nay, then the world goes hard, / If Clifford cannot spare his friends an oath.' Cf. *Pirate*, p. 431 and *3 Henry VI*, II. 6. 77-78. According to Brewer, *3 Henry VI* 'has been at all times after the sixteenth century an unfamiliar play and probably was practically unknown during the period of the Restoration.' (p. 332) In a footnote, Brewer reports Sir Sidney Lee's statement that 'John Crowne revised the first two parts of *Henry Sixth* in 1680 but gives no hint that the Third Part attracted any attention before Rowe's Edition (1709).' Brewer's information, or rather his source's, Sir Sidney Lee, is wrong. John Crowne adapted *2 Henry VI* as *Henry the Sixth, The First Part*; his *The Misery of Civil-War* (1680) is an adaptation of *3 Henry VI*. Therefore Scott was right when he had Bunce quote from *3 Henry VI*. Cf. Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, pp. 70-71.

<sup>28</sup>See *Pirate*, pp. 387-88.

<sup>29</sup>'Life of Dryden', p. 117. After this brief quarrel, Halcro and Bunce recognise each other; see *Pirate*, pp. 388-89.

composition of *The Pirate* Scott was recalling Dryden's works, among which was also *The Enchanted Island*.

The 'pirate' of the title is Clement Cleveland.<sup>31</sup> Cleveland is atypical in the panorama of Scott's heroes because he shows no "wavering" feelings. When he arrives at the Shetlands, he is a definite character with a complete, though complex, personality. He is a different man at the end of the novel: his change is brought about suddenly.

The epigraph on the title page is taken from *The Tempest* and precisely from Ariel's song in the first act of the play:

Nothing in him  
But doth suffer a sea-change.<sup>32</sup>

The motto on the title page does not appear in the manuscript of the novel. At the beginning of the proof sheets, John Ballantyne writes 'Motto for the Title-page' and then the motto as reported above.<sup>33</sup> It is not possible to establish whether Scott dictated it or suggested it to his publisher. If it was not his own idea, then he approved of it since it appeared in the following editions. I will start from this premise.

Ferdinand is meant to interpret Ariel's song as a message that his father has died during the storm. Who does the pronoun of the motto refer to in the novel? McMaster believes it applies to Cleveland: 'The sea change is the change that overtakes Cleveland somewhere in the novel, which puzzled early critics, who remarked that he was one man

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<sup>30</sup>For Scott's negative portrait of George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, see 'Life of Dryden', p. 114 and *Peveiril*.

<sup>31</sup>The novel was at first to be called *The Buccaneer* but the title was eventually changed to *The Pirate*. See Constable's letter to Scott of 25 December 1820, in *Letters*, VII, 12. The definitive choice may derive from Byron's *The Corsair: A Tale* (1814) which gives a tag to chapter 22; cf. *The Pirate*, p. 231 and *The Corsair*, in *The Complete Poetical Works*, ed. by Jerome J. McGann (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1980- ), III (1981), 148-213, Canto I, stanza ix, lines 223-26. In the poem, Conrad is called 'pirate'. In Scott's novel, the actual word is often substituted by a euphemism but in the chapter prefixed by Byron's lines, Cleveland himself uses 'the broad word, A PIRATE' and the capital letters make the word stand out in the narrative (p. 245).

<sup>32</sup>Cf. *Tempest*, I. 2. 402-3.

<sup>33</sup>I am grateful to Mark A. Weinstein for this piece of information.

at the beginning and another at the end.’<sup>34</sup> McMaster interprets the transformation of Cleveland’s character in sociological terms:

The somewhat mysterious and sudden change in Cleveland - almost as magical as parts of *The Tempest* - is one way in which Scott underlines his feeling for the importance of the bond between community and character - how much character (morality and personality) depend on circumstances. The changes that Zetland brings about in Cleveland are credible because of the insistence that it was external circumstances that made him what he was.<sup>35</sup>

McMaster’s parallel between *The Pirate* and *The Tempest* is not developed fully. Apart from giving a brief list of quotations from the play, his essay is devoted to the analysis of the textual relevance of the title-page epigraph to the character of Cleveland.<sup>36</sup> According to McMaster, the pattern on which *The Pirate* is built is similar to that of Shakespeare’s last plays: ‘sin-suffering-repentance-redemption.’ But, he adds: ‘there is no single agent of grace in Scott’s tale: the redemptive power is found within the human community. Cleveland, rude and wild, is civilised by the seemingly simple and artless society of Zetland.’<sup>37</sup> McMaster’s insistence on the role played by the island community in transforming Cleveland is not convincing. When he is in the company of the Zetlanders, Cleveland does not show much understanding of their way of life nor does he seem to be particularly interested in their customs. I suggest that his change, if there is such a change, is more likely to come from love. Cleveland himself acknowledges he is a different man after he has met Minna:

I came hither rude and wild, scarce knowing that my trade - my desperate trade, was more criminal in the sight of man or of Heaven than that of those privateers whom your law acknowledges. I was bred in it, and, but

<sup>34</sup>McMaster, *Scott and Society*, pp. 183-84. Early reviewers of *The Pirate* regarded the change in Cleveland as a fault which affected the whole novel; see Hillhouse, pp. 46, 52.

<sup>35</sup>McMaster, *Scott and Society*, p. 192.

<sup>36</sup>McMaster, *Scott and Society*, p. 183.

<sup>37</sup>McMaster, *Scott and Society*, p. 184.

for the wishes you have encouraged me to form, I should have perhaps died in it, desperate and impenitent.<sup>38</sup>

Minna is the 'single agent of grace' in Cleveland's life. As he himself states, 'the wishes [Minna] encouraged [him] to form' are the spurs to his will to change his life.<sup>39</sup>

The quotation on the title page sets up the expectation of some kind of structural outcome which is not fully realised. Martin Scofield analyses T. S. Eliot's quotation of two lines from Ariel's song in *The Waste Land* (1922) on the assumption that 'something new is at work, a process in which the line, simply "stolen" is put to work in a completely new context.'<sup>40</sup> Is it possible to consider the motto to *The Pirate* as 'stolen' from the original play and inserted to work into the new context of Scott's narrative? Scott's quotation is incomplete as it stands. The speech in the play runs thus:

Nothing of him that doth fade  
But doth suffer a sea-change  
Into something rich and strange.

The customary explanatory note to these three lines, as found in Frank Kermode's edition of the play, is that: 'Every part of his body that is otherwise doomed to decay is transformed into some rich or rare sea-substance.'<sup>41</sup> Does Scott's quotation retain the same meaning in the novel? Or is it significant that part of it was omitted? The excision of the half-line 'that doth fade', changing 'of' to 'in' in the first half-line, and of line 404, the secondary clause to line 403, suggests that Scott wanted to convey to his readers a meaning different from the original. In this sense, if we take 'him' to be

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<sup>38</sup>*Pirate*, p. 428.

<sup>39</sup>Cleveland wins Minna's love by using Othello's tactic in the courtship of Desdemona, by telling her 'romantic stories of foreign people, and distant wars, in wild and unknown regions'; cf. *Pirate*, p. 168 and *Othello*, I. 3. 127-68.

<sup>40</sup>Martin Scofield, 'Poetry's Sea-Changes: T.S. Eliot and *The Tempest*', *Shakespeare Survey*, 43 (1990), 121-29 (p. 122). Cf. *The Waste Land*, in *Collected Poems: 1909-1935* (London: Faber and Faber, 1936), pp. 59-84, lines 124-25.

<sup>41</sup>*The Tempest*, ed. by Frank Kermode, *The Arden Shakespeare* (1954; London: Methuen, 1958), p. 35; the commentary is taken from Morton Luce.

Cleveland, he changes but not '[i]nto something rich and strange'; contrary to Alonso, he will not be redeemed. The incomplete quotation catches the readers' attention and refers them to the meaning of the original verse in Shakespeare's text. The expectation that Cleveland will repent as the characters who arrive on Prospero's island do remains unfulfilled. The motif of the sea-change is repeated, though indirectly, in the Mermaid's song at Magnus Troil's festival: 'Fathoms deep beneath the wave, / Stringing beads of glistening pearl,' which again recalls 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.<sup>42</sup>

This further echo is probably unconscious and in the novel it is not applied to Cleveland; it is, however, evidence that Ariel's song was recurring in Scott's mind during the composition of the novel.

Cleveland is the victim of circumstances: his father first initiates him to the irregular life of a pirate and his final reprieve leads him to lose his life fighting for a noble cause. As an outlaw, he has been gentle and has distinguished himself from the depravity of his confederates: Bunce calls him the 'Robin Hood' of pirates.<sup>43</sup> Scott gives us some hints of Cleveland's nobility but he does not carry it out fully. On the contrary, the goodness of Cleveland is obscured by his cold-blooded wounding of Mordaunt and by the irrational resentment he nourishes against him. Cleveland is a mixture of good

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<sup>42</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, p. 161 and *Tempest*, I. 2. 399-404. The first line of the mermaid's song may also be a reminiscence of the following line in Coleridge's *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*: 'Nine fathom deep he had followed us'; see *The Poetical Works of Samuel Taylor Coleridge*, ed. by James Dykes Campbell (London: Macmillan, 1905), pp. 95-110, Part II, line 133; all quotations from Coleridge are taken from this edition.

<sup>43</sup>*Pirate*, p. 334. The reprieve of Cleveland at the final trial comes from his generous conduct towards two Spanish ladies.

and bad but the bad part of him seems to be dominant. We can compare him to Antonio, the only character who does not seem to change in *The Tempest*. Cleveland, however, shows some remorse for wounding Mordaunt and is therefore different from Shakespeare's character, but his repentance does not sound sincere.<sup>44</sup> In the portrayal of Cleveland there is an echo from *The Enchanted Island* and from Kemble's *Tempest* where Antonio is made to express some contrition for his crime. Prospero addresses him in the following words:

*Prosp.* I wonder less, that thou *Antonio* know'st me not,  
Because thou did'st long since forget I was thy Brother,  
Else I never had bin here.

Antonio answers: 'Shame choaks my words.'<sup>45</sup> Antonio's 'shame' is stressed later when he resigns his dukedom to Prospero by his own initiative:

*Ant.* Though penitence forc'd by necessity can scarce  
Seem real, yet dearest Brother I have hope  
My blood may plead for pardon with you, I resign  
Dominion, which 'tis true I could not keep,  
But Heaven knows too I would not.

Prospero forgives him publicly: 'All past crimes I bury in the joy of this / Blessed day.'<sup>46</sup> There is no direct similarity between the passage in the play and Cleveland's feelings of regret for wounding Mordaunt, but Scott's stress on the good feelings of the pirate makes us notice a resemblance with the Restoration Antonio. His portrait of Cleveland's generosity, however, fails to convince us because Cleveland still retains most of the distinguishing traits of Shakespeare's Antonio.

<sup>44</sup>See Cleveland's account to Bunce of his fight with Mordaunt; *Pirate*, pp. 337-38.

<sup>45</sup>John Dryden and William Davenant, *The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island: A Comedy*, 1670 (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969), Act IV, p. 68; henceforth referred to as *Enchanted Island*.

<sup>46</sup>*Enchanted Island*, Act V, p. 79.

The relationship between Mordaunt and Cleveland is characteristic of the world of Romance. They are half-brothers but will only learn the truth about their relationship at the end of the narrative. There is a disruption of the broken-reunited family pattern, however, and the final discovery of the relationship between the two brothers is not cause for rejoicing. Mordaunt rescues Cleveland defying the Zetland legend according to which, if you save a drowning man, the same man will do you 'some capital injury'.<sup>47</sup> Cleveland pays his debt by rescuing Mordaunt during the whale fishing but he later wounds him seriously. It is Norna who saves Mordaunt 'by [her] power and skill, from the very gates of death'.<sup>48</sup> There is another echo from *The Enchanted Island* here. Hippolito is mortally wounded by Ferdinand. After seeing his body, Ariel 'soon found his soul was but retir'd, / Not sally'd out' and set out to find the 'purple Panacea'. When he comes back to dress Hippolito's wound, 'The soul stood almost at life's door'.<sup>49</sup>

Cleveland and Mordaunt do not like each other. Mordaunt feels 'a sort of repelling influence about [Cleveland]'.<sup>50</sup> Cleveland also feels that 'there is a natural dislike - an instinctive aversion - something like a principle of repulsion, in our mutual nature, which makes us odious to each other.'<sup>51</sup> In this regard, Hart has remarked: 'The working of hostile principles in polar oppositions of personality types, given complex plot expression in a tangle of family relations, tempts one to call the novel Scott's *Wuthering Heights*.'<sup>52</sup> In the "unnatural" feelings that divide Mordaunt and Cleveland it

<sup>47</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 74-75, 76; see note 15, p. 455.

<sup>48</sup>*Pirate*, p. 350.

<sup>49</sup>*Enchanted Island*, Act V, p. 74.

<sup>50</sup>*Pirate*, p. 91.

<sup>51</sup>*Pirate*, p. 235; but see p. 182 where Cleveland calls Mordaunt 'my younger brother'.

<sup>52</sup>Hart, p. 295. When Cleveland and Mordaunt quarrel for the possession of a box, Halcro is reminded of Sebastian and Dorax; see *Pirate*, p. 193. In his edition of Dryden's *Don Sebastian* (1689), Scott admires the way in which Dryden contrasted the two characters, and adds that 'Shakespeare laid aside, it will be perhaps difficult to point out a play containing more animatory incident, impassioned language, and beautiful description, than "Don Sebastian." Of the former, the scene betwixt Dorax and the king, had it been the only one ever Dryden wrote, would have been sufficient to ensure his immortality. There is not, - no, perhaps, not even in Shakespeare, - an instance where the chord, which the poet designed should vibrate, is more happily struck'. See *The Works of John Dryden*, VII (1883), p. 292.

is possible to see the lack of natural affection existing between Shakespeare's brothers. In *The Tempest*, Prospero calls his brother 'perfidious', 'Unnatural', and 'most wicked sir'.<sup>53</sup> To Deborah Willis, Antonio is 'the play's true threatening "other"' because he 'seems to be a permanent enemy of state and family order.'<sup>54</sup> In the novel, Cleveland is also a 'threatening other' who brings dissension in the Udaller's state and family. The good nature of Mordaunt makes him the "counter-hero" of the novel. He is loved by the Zetlanders because, contrary to Cleveland, he is, as Norna says, a 'youth of a foreign land, but of a friendly heart.'<sup>55</sup> Scott chooses a quotation from Wordsworth's 'Ruth' (1800) as the epigraph for the chapter which follows Mordaunt's rescue of Cleveland:

He was a lovely youth, I guess;  
The panther in the wilderness  
Was not so fair as he;  
And when he chose to sport and play,  
No dolphin ever was so gay  
Upon the tropic sea.<sup>56</sup>

Wordsworth relates the story of Ruth's elopement with a stranger; the unquoted lines following the quotation make clear that Cleveland, and not Mordaunt, is the stranger of the novel:

Among the Indians he had fought,  
And with him many tales he brought  
Of pleasure and of fear;  
Such tales as told to any maid  
By such a Youth, in the green shade,  
Were perilous to hear.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>53</sup>*Tempest*, I. 2. 68; V. 1. 79; V. 1. 132.

<sup>54</sup>Deborah Willis, 'Shakespeare's *Tempest* and the Discourse of Colonialism', *Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, 29 (1989), 277-89 (pp. 280, 281).

<sup>55</sup>*Pirate*, p. 55.

<sup>56</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, ch. 8, p. 82 and 'Ruth', in *The Poetical Works of Wordsworth*, ed. by Thomas Hutchinson, rev. by Ernest de Selincourt, 2 vols (1904; London: Oxford University Press, 1936), II, 192-95, lines 37-42.

<sup>57</sup>'Ruth', lines 43-48.

By selecting a tag from 'Ruth', Scott establishes a connection between the stranger who seduces Ruth and Cleveland and anticipates the love-story of the narrative. The two plots, however, develop in two opposite directions: Minna does not fly with Cleveland and, whereas, in the end, Wordsworth's Youth "falls", Cleveland "redeems" himself.

One of the main causes of the contrast existing between Cleveland and Mordaunt is their relationship with the Troil sisters. Minna and Brenda are introduced into the narrative by an epigraph taken from a Scots song:

O, Bessy Bell and Mary Gray,  
They were twa bonnie lasses;  
They biggit a house on yon burn-brae,  
And theekit it ower wi' rashes.

Fair Bessy Bell I looed yestreen,  
And thought I ne'er could alter;  
But Mary Gray's twa pawky een  
Have garr'd my fancy falter.<sup>58</sup>

W. S. Crockett admired the 'matchless pair,' saying: 'Never was there a perfecter study in womanly contrasts - temperament, depth of passion, personal appearance'.<sup>59</sup> The contrast between the two sisters is stressed by Halcro's poem, 'Night and Day', which associates Minna with Night and Brenda with Day.<sup>60</sup> Scott follows an established trope when he portrays Minna as the dark, superstitious, meditative beauty, for which the narrator admits 'a certain partiality', and Brenda as the fair and rational beauty.<sup>61</sup> Their fate will also follow the pattern set out in the previous novels, such as *Waverley* and *Ivanhoe*. Both Minna and Brenda recall Miranda. They are inexperienced young women who, motherless, live in an almost uninhabited island with their father. Their limited but

<sup>58</sup>*Pirate*, ch. 3, p. 18.

<sup>59</sup>W. S. Crockett, 'The Pirate "Captain Cleveland"', in *The Sir Walter Scott Originals: An Account of Notable & Worthies the Originals of Characters in the Waverley Novels* (London and Edinburgh: T. N. Foulis, 1912), pp. 297-309 (p. 303).

<sup>60</sup>Halcro's description of Minna in this poem which is not given to the reader, anticipates, according to the narrator, 'though only in a rude outline,' Byron's 'She walks in beauty'. See *Pirate*, p. 21.

<sup>61</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 19-20, 139.

contented knowledge of the world recalls Miranda's 'More to know / Did never meddle with my thoughts.'<sup>62</sup> But it is Minna who especially reminds us of Shakespeare's heroine. She is the one who studies 'the book of nature [...] that noblest of volumes' as printed books are not available to her.<sup>63</sup> The revelation of Cleveland's true identity, like Miranda's meeting with the 'brave new world', is the means by which Minna gets to know the real world. As she herself states: 'The delusions which a solitary education and limited acquaintance with the modern world had spread around me are gone and dissipated for ever.'<sup>64</sup> Scott's negative comment on the "doubling" of characters in the Restoration *Tempest* is intriguing as regards the characterisation of the Troil sisters:

The majestic simplicity of Shakespeare's plan is injured by thus doubling his characters; and his wild landscape is converted into a formal parterre, where 'each alley has its brother.' In sketching characters drawn from fancy, and not from observation, the palm of genius must rest with the first inventor; others are but copyists, and a copy shows nowhere to such disadvantage as when placed by the original.<sup>65</sup>

Despite this commentary, Scott portrays two couples in the novel. In the portrayal of the Troil sisters, he is recollecting Miranda and Dorinda. This claim is reinforced by the contrast between Cleveland and Mordaunt which recalls the Ferdinand-Hippolito subplot of the Restoration play. Much of the misunderstanding in the narrative is caused by the unfounded reports that Mordaunt boasted he could choose between the Udaller's daughters at his pleasure.<sup>66</sup> At the beginning, Mordaunt loves both girls as if they were his own sisters, but he starts to find Brenda more attractive after Cleveland has shown some interest in Minna.<sup>67</sup> Mordaunt's feelings recall Hippolito's desire to have both Miranda and Dorinda, but Mordaunt does not show Hippolito's naivety. The gossip

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<sup>62</sup>*Tempest*, I. 2. 21-22.

<sup>63</sup>*Pirate*, p. 20.

<sup>64</sup>*Pirate*, p. 444.

<sup>65</sup>*The Works of John Dryden*, III (1883), 101-5 (p. 102).

<sup>66</sup>*Pirate*, p. 214.

<sup>67</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 22, 124.

about Mordaunt provokes extreme displeasure in Magnus Troil whose sudden change of behaviour towards him is illustrated by a tag from *Julius Caesar*:

Thou hast described  
A hot friend cooling. Ever note, Lucilius,  
When love begins to sicken and decay,  
It useth an enforced ceremony.  
There are no tricks in plain and simple faith.<sup>68</sup>

The Udaller's decisions are to be respected by his "subjects" and it is revealing that his younger daughter stands up for Mordaunt. In this regard, Johnson has suggested a parallel with *King Lear*: 'Though Minna's high-souled romanticism has no resemblance to the self-seeking brutality of Goneril and Regan, and Magnus Troil is no angry Lear, Brenda's defiance echoes in some degree Cordelia's devotion to truth.'<sup>69</sup> Brenda does not cause her father's resentment because she takes care not to show her allegiance to Mordaunt too openly; but had Magnus known of her secret meeting with Mordaunt, she, like Cordelia, would certainly incur his anger. Brenda's rebellion against her father and against Minna's injunction to disregard the presence of Mordaunt reflects Miranda and Dorinda's disobedience of their father when, contrary to his prohibition, they see Hippolito.<sup>70</sup>

The three main aspects of Prospero - his magic, his authority on the island, and, though less evident, his misogyny - can be detected in three characters of the novel: respectively, Norna of the Fitful Head, Magnus Troil, and Basil Mertoun. Norna has a historical counterpart in the 'old sibyl' met by Scott during his voyage to the Shetlands in 1814 who told him the story of the pirate Gow.<sup>71</sup> The reading of the character of Norna is highly affected by Scott's description of her historical source in the

<sup>68</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, ch. 12, p. 119 and *Julius Caesar*, IV. 2. 18-22.

<sup>69</sup>Johnson, II, 819.

<sup>70</sup>*Enchanted Island*, Act II, p. 28.

<sup>71</sup>See *Pirate*, p. ix and note 14, p. 454, for the description of Bessie Millie.

Introduction and by the narrator's insistent comments on her "baseless" powers throughout the narrative. According to Scott, the source for Norna used to live 'by a trade in favourable winds, which she sold to mariners at Stromness.'<sup>72</sup> In the novel, she becomes the descendant of 'a family which had long pretended to such gifts,' and is 'so eminent, that the name assigned to her, which signifies one of those fatal sisters who weave the web of human fate, had been conferred in honour of her supernatural powers.'<sup>73</sup> The narrator's rational commentary on Norna is part of the explanatory practice adopted by Scott in *The Pirate* which caused the uneasiness of Coleridge and other critics:

In our days, it would have been questioned whether she was an impostor, or whether her imagination was so deeply impressed with the mysteries of her supposed art that she might be in some degree a believer in her own pretensions to supernatural knowledge.<sup>74</sup>

Scott is anxious to let his readers know that Norna is not endowed with any of these supernatural powers but that at the time the novel was set she was generally believed to influence the elements and the course of human life. Johnson has called Norna: 'a sort of half-crazed seeress.'<sup>75</sup> For Angus and Jenni Calder, she 'begins as a counterpart to Meg Merrilies and Edie Ochiltree' but '[t]hen Scott changes his mind and tries to make her a tragic figure, maddened by an exotic and disastrous love-affair.'<sup>76</sup> According to Reed, Norna did not enjoy the success of Meg Merrilies or Edie Ochiltree because in portraying her:

[Scott] never reaches the height of his own conception. A mixture of Shakespearean witch and Scandinavian Norn from one point of view, from another she is no more than a superstitious villager distracted by

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<sup>72</sup>*Pirate*, p. ix.

<sup>73</sup>*Pirate*, p. 53.

<sup>74</sup>*Pirate*, p. 53.

<sup>75</sup>Johnson, II, 816.

<sup>76</sup>Angus and Jenni Calder, *Scott* (London: Evans Brothers, 1969), p. 136.

grief and guilt, her occult powers existing more in the minds of her credulous neighbours than in any charms she possesses.<sup>77</sup>

Negative critiques such as Reed's do not take into account Scott's intention to depict Norna as a mixture of an insane woman and a supposed prophetess. Scott thought he had been 'judged somewhat hastily' by those critics who saw in Norna 'a mere copy of Meg Merrilies', and explained that she was 'the victim of remorse and insanity, and the dupe of her own imposture, her mind, too, flooded with all the wild literature and extravagant superstitions of the North'.<sup>78</sup> Norna is a further study of woman's madness which Scott had already explored in *Meg Merrilies*, *Madge Wildfire*, *Lucy Ashton* and would later portray in *Clara Mowbray*. In a note to chapter 33, in which Mordaunt doubts Norna's "magic", Scott explains that she was 'an instance of that singular kind of insanity, during which the patient, while she or he retains much subtlety and address for the power of imposing upon others, is still more ingenious in endeavouring to impose upon themselves.'<sup>79</sup> Despite this "advertisement" on how to read the character of Norna, Scott linked her to Prospero by the means of analogies and allusions.

Like Shakespeare's magician, Norna devotes herself to studies of magic and to improving her supernatural powers. She consults books in 'various languages,' and performs her magical interventions by the means of a 'staff':

In her hand she held a staff, squared on all sides, and engraved with Runic characters and figures, forming one of those portable and perpetual calendars which were used among the ancient natives of Scandinavia, and which, to a superstitious eye, might have passed for a divining-rod.<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>77</sup>Reed, p. 142.

<sup>78</sup>*Pirate*, p. x.

<sup>79</sup>Scott reports he was told of a similar case of madness, although different in its development, by 'A late medical gentleman, my particular friend,' who related to him 'the case of a lunatic patient confined in the Edinburgh Infirmary.' Cf. note 42, p. 465. Brenda is also aware of Norna's insanity: 'I look on Norna as a woman of very extraordinary abilities, which are very often united with a strong cast of insanity' (p. 213).

<sup>80</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 294, 52.

The reader is openly invited to draw a parallel between the two characters by the epigraph to chapter 6:

If, by your art, you have  
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.

The old domestic and the peddler at Yellowley's house make 'entreaties to Norna,' to make the tempest end recalling Miranda's prayer to her father.<sup>81</sup> Norna eventually listens to them and 'extended her staff of black oak towards that part of the heavens from which the blast came hardest,' singing the 'Song of the Reim-kennar,' or 'Song of the Tempest' to calm it.<sup>82</sup> There is a distinct echo from Prospero's art. After Norna's performance, the storm passes away and the narrator comments: 'it was not improbable that this issue had been for some time foreseen by the pythoness, through signs of the weather imperceptible to those who had not dwelt long in the country'.<sup>83</sup> Despite the narrator's attempt to keep the reader's imagination anchored to the factual, the connection between Norna's and Prospero's superiority over the elements is established.

A fictitious chapter-tag from an 'Old Play' further associates the two characters:

Parental love, my friend, has power o'er wisdom,  
And is the charm which, like the falconer's lure,  
Can bring from heaven the highest soaring spirits.  
So, when famed Prosper doff'd his magic robe,  
It was Miranda pluck'd it from his shoulders.<sup>84</sup>

The motto refers to the scene in the play where Miranda takes the magic cloak off her father's shoulders and it anticipates Norna's revelation to Mordaunt that she is his mother.<sup>85</sup> As Miranda divests her father of his magical powers, although she does it on

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<sup>81</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, p. 54 and *Tempest*, I. 2. 1-2.

<sup>82</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 57-58.

<sup>83</sup>*Pirate*, p. 58.

<sup>84</sup>See *Pirate*, ch. 33, p. 349 and *Tempest*, I. 2. 24.

<sup>85</sup>Cf. *Tempest*, I. 2. 24 and *Pirate*, p. 351. Norna has erroneously believed that he is her son; see pp. 102, 103.

Prospero's bidding, Mordaunt unveils Norna's secret when he doubts her supernatural skills.<sup>86</sup> Norna's speech is tinged with a hue of Prosperian eloquence: 'My throne is a cloud, my sceptre a meteor, my realm is only peopled with fantasies; but I must either cease to be, or continue to be the mightiest as well as the most miserable of beings!'. She reveals to Mordaunt that she has:

no alternative, no middle station. My post must be high on yon lofty headland, where never stood human foot save mine, or I must sleep at the bottom of the unfathomable ocean, its white billows booming over my senseless corpse. The parricide shall never also be denounced as the impostor!<sup>87</sup>

Norna's magic, despite the narrator's attempts at linking it to that of Prospero, is not as convincing. She does not resemble Sycorax either. Sycorax has often been seen as both an antithesis and a parallel to Prospero. According to Orgel, 'On the surface, Prospero and Sycorax are antitheses; [...] as the play progresses, the similarities between the two sorcerers grow increasingly marked.'<sup>88</sup> Harry Berger Jr has also called Sycorax 'Prospero's antithesis'.<sup>89</sup> Shakespeare's magicians live parallel situations. Prospero is banished from Milan because his studies of magic led him to neglect his dukedom and Sycorax is banished from Algiers because of her black magic. The island becomes a refuge for both. Norna tells Mordaunt that magic is all she has got: 'you have dared to tell what I dared not tell myself. [...] you have touched on that dark suspicion which poisons the consciousness of my power - the sole boon which was given me in exchange for innocence and for peace of mind!'.<sup>90</sup> Norna's words may help to throw some light on Prospero's studies of magic as being a refuge from the injuries he has suffered. Paul

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<sup>86</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 354-55.

<sup>87</sup>*Pirate*, p. 355.

<sup>88</sup>Orgel, 'Introduction', p. 20.

<sup>89</sup>Harry Berger Jr, 'Miraculous Harp: A Reading of Shakespeare's *Tempest*', in *William Shakespeare's 'The Tempest'*, ed. by Harold Bloom, *Modern Critical Interpretations* (New York and Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 1988), pp. 9-41 (p. 16).

<sup>90</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 354-55.

Brown sees 'Sycorax as an evil other. Her black, female magic ostensibly contrasts with that of Prospero in that it is remembered as viciously coercive, yet beneath the apparent voluntarism of the white, male regime lies the threat of precisely this coercion.'<sup>91</sup> In this last sense, the relation of Norna to Shakespeare's sorcerers is weak. She also lives in solitude, away from the rest of the world, but hers is a self-banishment, a punishment she inflicts on herself for having caused, as she thinks, the death of her father. Her magic is not so coercive as that of Prospero and Sycorax but there is a hint of her "using" the dwarf Nick Strumpfer, whom she calls Pacolet after *Valentine and Orson*, in the same way as Shakespeare's magicians use Ariel.<sup>92</sup>

The crucial resemblance between Prospero and Norna, however, is their final abandonment of magic. When Vaughan alias Basil Mertoun tells her the truth about Cleveland, Norna faints and from that moment she "changes":

Her dress was changed to one of a more simple and less imposing appearance. Her dwarf was dismissed, [...] [she] would only be addressed by her real appellation of Ulla Troil. [...] Now the sacred volume was seldom laid aside; [...] A clause in her will specially directed that all the books, implements of her laboratory, and other things connected with her former studies, should be committed to the flames.<sup>93</sup>

The echo from *The Tempest* is here stronger than in any other part of the novel. Prospero also discards his magic robes, dismisses Ariel, breaks his staff, buries it, and drowns his book. His abjuration of magic has been given countless interpretations. The most frequent one is that he rejects magic because he no longer needs it at the end of the play. According to Orgel, instead, Prospero himself makes clear that 'the resolution of the play depends on his willingness to perform several acts of renunciation, chief among

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<sup>91</sup>Paul Brown, "'This thing of darkness I acknowledge as mine": *The Tempest* and the discourse of colonialism', in *Political Shakespeare: Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield, 2nd edn (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994), pp. 48-71 (p. 61).

<sup>92</sup>*Pirate*, p. 292.

<sup>93</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 446-47.

which is the abandonment of his magic.’<sup>94</sup> To Charles Stephens, Prospero’s final renunciation is the way by which he redeems himself: ‘Prospero saves himself by his own renunciation of power and revenge and by giving away his daughter in marriage to the son of one of his oppressors.’<sup>95</sup> Prospero abandons his magic in a monologue:

I’ll break my staff,  
Bury it certain fathoms in the earth,  
And deeper than did ever plummet sound  
I’ll drown my book.<sup>96</sup>

Orgel stresses the fact that all we have here is a promise: we will not see Prospero do any of the actions he promises.<sup>97</sup> Norna’s abjuration of her art, or ‘power’ as Cleveland calls it, fulfils Prospero’s promise.<sup>98</sup> In the description of Norna’s renunciation of her supernatural powers, Scott was recalling *The Tempest* but *The Enchanted Island* was also in his mind. In Dryden and Davenant’s version, the abjuration of magic is excised but there is an emphasis, which is not there in *The Tempest*, on Prospero’s repentance for using magic: ‘I’m curs’d because I us’d it’.<sup>99</sup> According to Matthew H. Wikander: ‘The adaptors are eager to resolve what in Shakespeare’s play remains murky: the extent to which Prospero’s powers are black or white magic. Therefore they excise his abjuration of his art, with its famous (or infamous) echoes of Medea.’<sup>100</sup> The different power of magic in the two versions is significant and Wikander supports it by contrasting Ariel’s rescue of Ferdinand in *The Tempest* with that of Hippolito in *The Enchanted Island*. When he saves Ferdinand, ‘Ariel gathers the simples and balms by himself;’ but ‘in the 1667 *Tempest*, he needs the help of Hippolito’s good angel to

<sup>94</sup>Orgel, ‘Introduction’, p. 50.

<sup>95</sup>Charles Stephens, *Shakespeare’s Island: Essays on Creativity* (Edinburgh: Polygon, 1994), p. 14.

<sup>96</sup>*Tempest*, V. 1. 54-57.

<sup>97</sup>Orgel, ‘Introduction’, p. 53.

<sup>98</sup>*Pirate*, p. 409.

<sup>99</sup>*Enchanted Island*, Act IV, p. 69.

<sup>100</sup>Matthew H. Wikander, “‘The Duke My Father’s Wrack’: The Innocence of the Restoration *Tempest*”, *Shakespeare Survey*, 43 (1990), 91-98 (p. 92).

mount to the level of the planets and mix the proper medicines. [...] in the Dryden/Davenant version, the spirit cannot save the mortals without divine aid.’<sup>101</sup>

Wikander adds:

The limitations upon human power in the 1667 *Tempest*, then, do not point in the direction of constitutional compromise or reform. Rather, the inability of Prospero to control events on his island and the impotent guilt of Antonio and Alonzo suggest that human means alone are too flawed to untangle the play’s complexities.<sup>102</sup>

Prospero’s curse on himself for using magic comes after his plans for the union of Miranda and Ferdinand are shattered by Ferdinand’s killing of Hippolito. According to Berger, the epilogue of the Restoration play makes us feel Prospero’s ‘growing conviction that it will take more than human magic to work any changes in our old stock.’<sup>103</sup> Norna realises that the course of human life is ruled by a higher authority. Her repentance derives from the collapse of her plans to unite her son with Minna. Norna has been doubly fooled by her art which does not tell her who her real son is. A tag from *Macbeth* aptly introduces the truth about Cleveland which the reader will only learn later: ‘Fly, Fleance, fly! Thou mayst escape.’<sup>104</sup> As Banquo tells his son to fly, in the same way Norna helps Cleveland to escape. The tag is ironic because Norna, ignoring the fact that Cleveland is her son, unwittingly “forces” the course of events against him. Had the real origins of Cleveland been revealed earlier, he would have probably been accepted by Troil as a suitable husband for one of his daughters. Norna’s final transformation differs from Prospero’s abjuration of his magic in that, as the narrator states, it was not ‘altogether rational’: ‘She appeared deeply to repent of her former presumptuous attempts to interfere with the course of human events, superintended as

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<sup>101</sup>Wikander, p. 93; cf. *Enchanted Island*, Act V, p. 74.

<sup>102</sup>Wikander, p. 93.

<sup>103</sup>Berger, p. 40.

<sup>104</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, ch. 38, p. 405 and *Macbeth*, III. 3. 17.

they are by far higher powers'.<sup>105</sup> Here the “enlightened” Scott is giving a “moral tale” to the readers; Norna’s discharge of her magical powers, in fact, is the result of repentance and remorse. As Lars Hartveit affirms: ‘The novel ends on a didactic note: Norna is shown as a penitent sinner, [...] The supernatural is channelled into the confines of the received Christian tradition.’<sup>106</sup>

Prospero is not the only literary antecedent of Norna. A chapter-tag from Coleridge’s *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* (1797-1798) links her to the Mariner:

I pass like night from land to land,  
I have strange power of speech;  
So soon as e’er his face I see,  
I know the man that must hear me,  
To him my tale I teach.<sup>107</sup>

The song she sings to awake Minna and Brenda is reminiscent of the Mariner’s doom to tell his tale:

One hour is mine, in all the year,  
To tell my woes, and one alone:  
[...]  
To you I come to tell my tale,  
Awake, arise, my tale to hear!<sup>108</sup>

Like the wedding guest of the ballad, Brenda asks Norna to put her tale off until the following morning, but Norna insists.<sup>109</sup> Norna’s story is meant for the attention of

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<sup>105</sup>*Pirate*, p. 447.

<sup>106</sup>Lars Hartveit, ‘A Reading of *The Pirate* in the Light of Scott’s Views on the Craft of Fiction’, in *Scott in Carnival*, pp. 332-44 (p. 343).

<sup>107</sup>Cf. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Part VII, lines 586-90 and *Pirate*, ch. 19, p. 196.

<sup>108</sup>*Pirate*, p. 199. In Norna’s song, especially in ‘One hour is mine’, there is a distinct echo from *Christabel*, Part I, line 211: ‘this hour is mine’. A few other parallels between the novel and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner* sustain the suggestion I made of a possible relationship between Norna and the Mariner. In the Introduction, Scott cites a song by Allan Cunningham: ‘The world of waters was our home, / And merry men were we!’ (p. ix). The ‘merry men’ of Scott’s expedition have little in common with the ‘ghastly crew’ of the poem; *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Part V, line 340. In both works a tempest is the cause of the events, as it is in Shakespeare’s play, and drives a ship astray from its course. Moreover, the Introduction to *The Pirate* bears a motto from Coleridge’s ballad: ‘Quoth he, there was a ship.’ These are the first words of the mariner to the guest he detains from the feast to catch his attention: the interrupted quotation leaves the reader in expectation. Cf. *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Part I, line 10 and *Pirate*, p. vii.

Minna and she often calls her by name in order to make sure she takes heed of her narration echoing Prospero's insistence on having Miranda's attention when he relates their story to her.<sup>110</sup> Norna first identifies herself as an innocent young woman with Minna and then she tells them the story of the 'fatal stranger' who seduced her.<sup>111</sup> She is warning Minna against Cleveland, and the confession of her supposed parricide is meant as a warning against the desperate acts induced by passion.<sup>112</sup>

Norna's tale introduces the theme of the "stranger" and is the cause of the first argument between the two sisters. Minna, incensed like her father at the idea that Mordaunt boasted he could choose between her and her sister, tells Brenda: 'He who ruined Norna's peace for ever was a stranger, admitted to her affections against the will of her family.' Brenda retorts that Norna's seducer was a stranger in 'birth' and in 'manners', openly referring to Cleveland when she says that 'There are other strangers at Burgh-Westra besides this poor Mordaunt Mertoun.'<sup>113</sup> Their quarrel is anticipated by a tag from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*:

Is all the counsel that we two have shared -  
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,  
When we have chid the hasty-footed time  
For parting us - O, and is all forgot?<sup>114</sup>

In *The Enchanted Island*, Miranda and Dorinda also quarrel because of the two young men. Miranda haughtily tells Dorinda: 'there is some difference betwixt / My *Ferdinand*, and your *Hippolito*.'<sup>115</sup> Miranda's claim anticipates Minna's confidence in Cleveland's honesty and nobility as being superior to those of any other man. Ferdinand

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<sup>109</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, p. 201 and *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, Part I, lines 5-12.

<sup>110</sup>*Tempest*, I. 2.

<sup>111</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 202, 207.

<sup>112</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 207, 208.

<sup>113</sup>*Pirate*, p. 215.

<sup>114</sup>Cf. *Pirate*, ch. 20, p. 210 and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, III. 2. 199-202.

<sup>115</sup>*Enchanted Island*, Act IV, p. 71.

and Hippolito fight because of Hippolito's insistence on having both Dorinda and Miranda; the reason for the fight between Cleveland and Mordaunt is not specified but the hostility between them mainly derives from the fact that Cleveland has damaged the relationship between Mordaunt and the two sisters. When Minna accuses Brenda of loving Mordaunt, Brenda retorts: 'would you have me acknowledge for any one such feelings as you allude to, ere he has said the least word that could justify such a confession?'. And she adds: 'if ever I love at all, it shall not be until I have been asked to do so once or twice at least, which has not chanced to me.'<sup>116</sup> This is another echo from the Restoration *Tempest*, and precisely from the scene where Prospero questions Miranda about her feelings after she and Dorinda have seen Hippolito:

*Prosp.* You do not love it?

*Mir.* How is it likely that I should, except the thing had first  
lov'd me?<sup>117</sup>

Believing that she has given her heart to a murderer after overhearing him fight with Mordaunt, Minna falls prey to melancholy (or hysteria) and at one point there is a hint that she even attempts to commit suicide.<sup>118</sup> Worried for his daughter's health, Magnus sends for Norma. When she refuses to speak to his messenger, Magnus sets off with his daughters and attendants to visit her. The 'old play' tag to the chapter where Norma applies her supposed magical powers on Minna explicitly refers to Norma's deception of herself and of those who believe in her powers:

Yet, in her madness hath the art and cunning  
To wring fools' secrets from their inmost bosoms,  
And pay inquirers with the coin they gave her.<sup>119</sup>

<sup>116</sup>*Pirate*, p. 217.

<sup>117</sup>*Enchanted Island*, Act III, p. 31.

<sup>118</sup>*Pirate*, p. 290. Minna's temporary insanity recalls Ophelia's deranged feelings; both characters believe they are in love with a murderer.

<sup>119</sup>*Pirate*, ch. 29, p. 305.

The third aspect of Prospero, misogyny, characterises Basil Mertoun who plays three roles in the novel: he is, in fact, revealed as Mordaunt's father, the seducer of Norna, and Cleveland's father. Mertoun is a misanthrope who cannot even bring himself to love his younger son. When Mordaunt rushes to the rescue of Cleveland he cynically comments:

Should he die now, full of generous and high feeling, eager in the cause of humanity, happy in the exertion of his own conscious activity and youthful strength - should he die now, will he not escape misanthropy, and remorse, and age, and the consciousness of decaying powers, both of body and mind?<sup>120</sup>

Mertoun may be a development of the Timon-like character of *The Black Dwarf*, but his misanthropy is more likely to be the result of misogyny.<sup>121</sup> As he tells his house-keeper: 'as sure as that death and sin came into the world by woman, so sure are their soft words and softer looks the utter destruction and ruin of all who put faith in them.'<sup>122</sup> Mordaunt has noticed 'his father's marked dislike to the female sex,' but cannot guess it comes from his marriage to his mother.<sup>123</sup> In *The Enchanted Island*, Prospero, like Mertoun, is not very fond of women:

Imagine something between young men and Angels:  
 Fatally beauteous, and have killing Eyes,  
 Their voices charm beyond the Nightingales,  
 They are all enchantment, those who once behold' em,  
 Are made their slaves for ever.<sup>124</sup>

In his biography of Dryden, Scott had stressed Dryden's unhappy marriage which seemed to affect his portrayal of women: 'our author's idea of female character was at

<sup>120</sup>*Pirate*, p. 73. See also pp. 71, 73, 84.

<sup>121</sup>McMaster notices Mertoun's resemblance to Timon; see *Scott and Society*, p. 191.

<sup>122</sup>*Pirate*, p. 110.

<sup>123</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 110; there is a hint that Mertoun may have murdered his wife (p. 439).

<sup>124</sup>*Enchanted Island*, Act II, pp. 25-26.

all times low'.<sup>125</sup> In *The Tempest*, this trait of Prospero is less evident but it has been noticed by critics.<sup>126</sup>

At the outset of the present discussion I suggested that *The Pirate* derives both from *The Tempest* and *The Enchanted Island*. Orgel writes: '*The Tempest* is a text that looks different in different contexts, and it has been used to support radically differing claims about Shakespeare's allegiances.'<sup>127</sup> In *The Enchanted Island* Dryden and Davenant transformed Shakespeare's play into a work which suited the political mood of the Restoration. Both *The Tempest* and *The Enchanted Island* have been subjected to political investigation and have been found to be the allegorical representation of the monarchical government existing at the time they were performed. In *The Pirate*, Scott substitutes the purely political allegory with an analysis of its consequences in other spheres of human life and integrates the colonialist reading into it. Zetland and Orkney are subjected to Scotland both economically and culturally. Scott was aware of the threat represented by Scotland to the independence of the Shetlands, but how did he manage to reconcile it with his former charge against England's subjection of his own country? Scott's nationalistic feelings did not prevent him from giving an accurate and faithful portrait of the Shetlands' political position. In the novel, Magnus Troil is the main supporter of the status quo. His antipathy towards the Scots does not derive from the prejudices of a racist, but from the behaviour of the Scots colonisers:

Hither they have come like the clack - geese: every chamberlain has brought over a flock of his own name, and his own hatching, for what I know, and here they roost for ever; catch them returning to their own barren Highlands or Lowlands, when once they have tasted our Zetland

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<sup>125</sup>'Life of Dryden', p. 187.

<sup>126</sup>Cf. *Tempest*, I. 2. 56-57: 'Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and / She said thou wast my daughter'. See Stephen Orgel, 'Prospero's Wife', in *Rewriting the Renaissance: The Discourses of Sexual Difference in Early Modern Europe*, ed. by Margaret W. Ferguson, Maureen Quilligan, and Nancy J. Vickers (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1986), pp. 50-64.

<sup>127</sup>Orgel, 'Introduction', p. 11.

beef and seen our bonny voes and lochs. [...] no, sir, the ancient days and the genuine manners of these islands are no more.<sup>128</sup>

Magnus's last laconic comment reminds us of Scott's nostalgic feelings for the ancient manners of Scotland in *Waverley*.<sup>129</sup> The Shetlands become the counterpart of the Scotland portrayed in his first novel. The colonialist aspect of *The Pirate* is represented by the collision between Magnus Troil and Triptolemus Yellowley. Triptolemus's ideas for improving Zetland's agriculture constitute a menace to Magnus's idea of Zetland as an idyllic society.<sup>130</sup> The epigraph to chapter 11, signed '*Tis Even that We're at Odds*', stresses the threat represented by Triptolemus:

All your ancient customs  
And long-descended usages I'll change.<sup>131</sup>

As a representative of the Scottish colonisers, Triptolemus is regarded with scorn and antipathy by the Udaller, and as a consequence by the Zetlanders. His complaints about the rude manners of Zetland are understandable in the light of the contempt with which his efforts to change the agricultural habits of the island are regarded: 'consider the luckless lot of any inexperienced person who lights upon this earthly paradise of yours. He asks for drink, they bring him sour whey - [...] You ask for meat, and they bring you sour sillocks that Satan might choke upon.'<sup>132</sup> Triptolemus's use of the epithet 'earthly paradise' for Zetland is ironic, but it goes back to Scott's idealistic view of the Shetlands. The idyllic life of the Shetlands is an aspect of their communal lifestyle in which there is no distinction between '*meum* and *tuum*'.<sup>133</sup> As Magnus tells Triptolemus

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<sup>128</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 6-7.

<sup>129</sup>See 'A Postscript which should have been a Preface', in *Waverley*, pp. 447-50.

<sup>130</sup>Triptolemus is compared to Tristram Shandy, see *Pirate*, p. 31. See also Jana Davis, 'Scott's *The Pirate*', *Explicator*, 45 (1987), 20-22.

<sup>131</sup>*Pirate*, p. 108.

<sup>132</sup>*Pirate*, pp. 316-17. There is an echo from Prospero's banquet in *Tempest*, III. 3. Bunce (p. 332) calls Zetland 'these blasted heaths' recalling *Macbeth*, I. 3. 75.

<sup>133</sup>See *Pirate*, p. 447.

during the whale fishing, his island has always been ruled according to a principle of equity and therefore 'every man who risks his life to bring that fish ashore shall have an equal share and partition, according to our ancient and loveable Norse custom and wont'.<sup>134</sup> Magnus is a kind of protective Prospero, an "ideal" Prospero, who strives to defend his country from the invasion of the colonisers and their improvements. In this, he is distanced from Shakespeare's character who is himself a coloniser. For McMaster, Zetland and its community are Scott's 'imaginary construct [...] an utopian and not a realistic account.'<sup>135</sup> This element of fictitiousness of Zetland recalls Shakespeare's depiction of the island in the play. As Prospero's island, Zetland also 'seem[s] to be desert', '[u]nhabitable, and almost inaccessible'.<sup>136</sup> In Shakespeare's play, Gonzalo imagines he is the lord of the island and gives his Utopian vision of its social organisation:

No occupation, all men idle, all;  
And women too - but innocent and pure;  
No sovereignty.<sup>137</sup>

Halcro's remark on the last couplet of his song 'Mary' is significant in this regard:

And the hope would fix there, -  
that is, in the supposed island - a place which neither was nor will be, -  
That should anchor on heaven.<sup>138</sup>

Prospero's island is 'a place which neither was nor will be,' as the several failed attempts at identifying it by critics of *The Tempest* show. The protective aspect of Prospero, namely his preoccupation with the chastity of Miranda, emerges in Magnus's efforts to preserve the virginity of his island. According to Brown: 'the proof of

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<sup>134</sup>*Pirate*, p. 176.

<sup>135</sup>McMaster, *Scott and Society*, p. 184.

<sup>136</sup>*Tempest*, II. 1. 37, 40.

<sup>137</sup>*Tempest*, II. 1. 160-62.

<sup>138</sup>*Pirate*, p. 133.

Prospero's power to order and supervise his little colony is manifested in his capacity to control not *his*, but his *subjects'* sexuality, particularly that of his slave and his daughter.'<sup>139</sup> In the interpretation of *The Tempest* as a defence of colonialism, Prospero's art becomes a way of controlling and of regulating irregular, because still "uncivilised", nature. In *The Pirate*, Scotland's attempt to regulate, dominate, and, therefore, civilise, according to its own modern standards, the Shetlands is viewed by Scott as negative, but eventually inevitable.<sup>140</sup> Scott's "socialist" view of a perfect community cannot be realised because of its incompatibility with the modern world. In this sense, although the depiction of Zetland generally reflects Gonzalo's vision in Shakespeare's play, the development of the narrative shows that the "ideal" world is in the end destined to confront the "civilized" world. Here Scott was mainly drawing from Shakespeare's play since, as Wikander states, 'The Restoration *Tempest* is not political allegory', Gonzalo's Utopian fantasy and Sebastian and Antonio's conspiracy against Alonso being removed from it.<sup>141</sup> Wikander sees the multiplication of the number of seamen in the Restoration play as an emphasis on the problems of colonialism. Trinculo and Stephano's sub-plot in *The Tempest* is doubled in *The Enchanted Island*. Scott's portrayal of the fights between the pirates for the dominance of the ship reflects the fight between Stephano and Trinculo for the supremacy on the island in Dryden and Davenant's version. For Wikander: 'Satirizing the politics of the colonist as well as the

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<sup>139</sup>Brown, p. 51.

<sup>140</sup>See John M. Simpson, 'The Discovery of Shetland from "The Pirate" to the Tourist Board', in *Shetland and the Outside World 1469-1969*, ed. by Donald J. Withrington (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), pp. 136-49 (p. 137). Simpson thinks that 'For Shetland as for many other places, the starting point for a discussion of modern travel and tourism is Sir Walter Scott. Scott could well be called the first tourist.' *The Pirate*, like other Waverley Novels, 'inspired stage plays, again helping to publicise Shetland and its scenery and customs.' Simpson wonders: 'Why has *The Pirate* not prompted a greater flood of imaginative writing or created a greater tourist boom in the Northern Isles than it has?'. He concludes that the fault is not Scott's but of 'The relative inaccessibility of Shetland' (p. 140).

<sup>141</sup>Wikander, p. 97.

mutineer, Dryden and Davenant are able to allude to the conflicting claims of authority over the colonies in the Interregnum.'<sup>142</sup>

One of the main themes emerging from a colonialist reading of the novel is the social and cultural contrast between tradition and innovation. According to Johnson: 'The central theme of the novel is the threat to their society created by the intrusion of strangers with alien and unsympathetic ways of thinking and feeling.'<sup>143</sup> The critic identifies the foreign element with Cleveland who 'has brought to Zetland estrangement, the severing of old ties, dissension between sisters, misunderstandings between parent and children, bloodshed, perhaps murder. The alien principle he represents has done its destructive work.'<sup>144</sup> In the novel, the contrast between past and present resolves itself in a reconciliatory marriage. The marriage between Brenda and Mordaunt can be interpreted in political terms in the same way that the union of Miranda and Ferdinand has been. Prospero's aim in uniting his daughter with the son of his enemy is that of re-establishing 'the line of succession'.<sup>145</sup> The usual explanation for this part of the plot is that Shakespeare was here paying a tribute to the marriage of Princess Elizabeth and the Elector Palatine. In this regard, Stephens's view may be relevant to our understanding of the novel's ending. He believes that the union of Milan and Naples in *The Tempest* echoed the marriage of Margaret Tudor and James IV which brought about, in the person of their great-grandson, the union of Scotland and England in 1603.<sup>146</sup> Magnus wants his daughters to marry a man of Scandinavian descent because only in this way would the line of succession be maintained. He opposes the match between his younger

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<sup>142</sup>Wikander, p. 94.

<sup>143</sup>See Johnson, II, 816. Johnson admires *The Pirate*: 'Nowhere has Scott shown more clearly his profound understanding of the organic role of tradition in a culture.' (II, 821)

<sup>144</sup>Johnson, II, 819. As Harveit observes, the 'Edenic quality' of Zetland 'is threatened both by the pirates and by intruders like Triptolemus Yellowley [...] Scott is as usual ambivalent in his view of the contrasting stages in the process of social evolution.' See Harveit, 'A Reading of *The Pirate*', p. 338.

<sup>145</sup>Orgel, 'Introduction', p. 54.

<sup>146</sup>Stephens, p. 15.

daughter and a stranger to the Norse line but 'at length his Norse blood gave way to the natural feeling of the heart'.<sup>147</sup> His acceptance of Mordaunt into his family represents the symbolic acceptance of the foreign element. More importantly, the final wedding in *The Pirate* shows a willingness to accept the Scots colonisers.

The treatment of the supernatural constitutes the final link between *The Pirate* and *The Tempest*. As in Shakespeare's play the supernatural is mainly related to Prospero, so in *The Pirate* it is related to the character of Norna. Norna's powers are 'venerated' and 'feared' by the Zetlanders, who still live in that primitive stage of civilization when the belief in supernatural events and powers is widespread. As the narrator states: 'Less pregnant circumstances of suspicion would, in any other part of Scotland, have exposed her to the investigation of those cruel inquisitors'.<sup>148</sup> Scott's use and representation of the supernatural in *The Pirate* did not please his contemporaries. The anonymous reviewer of *The Examiner* regarded it as 'dangerous morally'.<sup>149</sup> Coleridge found it unacceptable:

Sir Walter relates ghost stories, prophecies, presentiments, all praeter-supernaturally fulfilled; but is most anxious to let his readers know, that he himself is far too enlightened not to be assured of the folly and falsehood of all he yet relates as *truth*, and for the purpose of exciting the interest and the emotions attached to the belief of their truth - and all this, not with the free life and most happy judgment of Ariosto, as a neutral tint or shooting light, but soberly, to save his own (Sir Walter's) character as an enlightened man.<sup>150</sup>

Coleridge complained about Scott's habit of showing his readers the way they should interpret the supernatural events he describes. Anthony O. J. Cockshut admits that: '*The Pirate* is pervaded, [...] with reflective passages in which superstition is placed under the microscope of the historian, and the reader's personal involvement with the feelings of

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<sup>147</sup>*Pirate*, p. 447.

<sup>148</sup>*Pirate*, p. 52.

<sup>149</sup>Hillhouse, p. 96.

<sup>150</sup>Quoted in Welsh, p. 23.

the characters becomes very faint or disappears'.<sup>151</sup> In the 1810 review of Maturin's *Fatal Revenge*, Scott wrote:

We can believe [...] in Macbeth's witches, and tremble at their spells; but had we been informed, in the conclusion of the piece, that they were only three of his wife's chamber-maids disguised for the purpose of imposing on the Thane's credulity, it would have added little to the credibility of the story, and entirely deprived it of the interest.<sup>152</sup>

Why would Scott adopt this technique in *The Pirate* if he thought it deprived the story of all interest? In his memoir of Clara Reeve (1826), he wondered:

what are the limits to be placed to the reader's credulity, when those of common sense and ordinary nature are once exceeded? The question admits only one answer, namely, that the author himself, being in fact the magician, shall evoke no spirits whom he is not capable of endowing with manners and language corresponding to their supernatural character. Thus Shakspeare, drawing such characters as Caliban and Ariel, gave them reality, not by appealing to actual opinions, which his audience might entertain respecting the possibility or impossibility of their existence, but by investing them with such attributes as all readers and spectators recognised as those which must have corresponded to such extraordinary beings, had their existence been possible.<sup>153</sup>

This comment shows that Scott was aware he could not portray Norna as a "real" prophetess. In the Introduction to *The Pirate*, he had recognised that Gothic writers themselves could not always avoid the explanation of supernatural events:

Indeed, as I have observed elsewhere, the professed explanation of a tale, where appearances or incidents of a supernatural character are referred to natural causes, has often, in the winding up of the story, a degree of

<sup>151</sup>Anthony O. J. Cockshut, *The Achievement of Walter Scott* (London: Collins, 1969), p. 87.

<sup>152</sup>Walter Scott, 'Maturin's Fatal Revenge', in *Miscellaneous Prose Works*, XVIII (1853), 157-72 (p. 167).

<sup>153</sup>Walter Scott, 'Clara Reeve', in *Miscellaneous Prose Works*, III (1852), 325-36 (p. 330). Cf. A. W. Schlegel's commentary on *The Tempest*, in *The Romantics*, pp. 526-28. Schlegel admires the characterisation of Ariel and Caliban and writes: 'In general we find in *The Midsummer Night's Dream*, in *The Tempest*, in the magical part of *Macbeth*, and wherever Shakspeare avails himself of the popular belief in the invisible presence of spirits, and the possibility of coming in contact with them, a profound view of the inward life of nature and her mysterious springs' (p. 527). Scott was acquainted with Schlegel's criticism. See in particular his letter to Terry of 29 April 1817 in which he told his friend he had taken 'a few lessons' from 'Schlegel on the Drama' regarding the supernatural; *Letters*, IV, 437-48.

improbability almost equal to an absolute goblin narrative. Even the genius of Mrs. Radcliffe could not always surmount this difficulty.<sup>154</sup>

As Oliver Elton affirms, Scott ‘felt, like Shakespeare, the thrill of the supernatural along the nerves of his audience; but he could not, like him, find the words of the spell.’<sup>155</sup>

Scott elsewhere affirmed that ‘the introduction of the supernatural and marvellous’ had been ‘the resort of distressed authors since the days of Horace’.<sup>156</sup> His explanatory practice in *The Pirate* was not new, but in the previous Waverley Novels it had not been thrown to the reader so insistently. With regard to *The Pirate*, Lars Hartveit has recently affirmed: ‘The supernatural is thus an important dimension in the novel’s network of sociological and narrative limits. Besides, it is also treated as a psychological phenomenon.’<sup>157</sup> Fiona Robertson’s view points in another direction. She sees *The Pirate* as ‘a deconstruction of fictions based on mystery but also a powerful reinvention and redirection of Gothic plotting.’<sup>158</sup> Was Scott trying to develop a new reading of the supernatural, as Robertson suggests? If his was an attempt to revise the Gothic tradition, then it failed to convey the right impression to the reader. Scott’s portrayal of Norna and of her supernatural pretensions is a modern study of a deranged mind, testifying once again to Scott’s interest in women’s madness.

*The Pirate* can be read as Scott’s *Tempest*, as Scott himself points to the Shakespearean play by means of direct quotations and allusions. The lack of direct allusion to Dryden and Davenant’s play is not to be seen as Scott’s omission but rather as a covert hint to his readers. For Michael Riffaterre: ‘An intertext is one or more texts which the reader must know in order to understand a work of literature in terms of its

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<sup>154</sup>*Pirate*, p. xi.

<sup>155</sup>Elton, p. 47.

<sup>156</sup>*The Monastery*, p. xiii.

<sup>157</sup>Hartveit, ‘A Reading of *The Pirate*’, p. 342.

<sup>158</sup>Robertson, *Legitimate Histories*, p. 177.

overall significance'.<sup>159</sup> Readers may be able to recognise the intertext at a first, or as Riffaterre writes, 'learning' reading in which they limit themselves to reading a text as a sequence of words and events; sometimes, however, intertexts are not so easy to trace. Readers perceive that something is missing from the text and must search for the intertexts in order to fill the text's gaps. This second type of response requires an interpretative reading, which gives the readers 'the key to the interpretation of [the text's] significance'.<sup>160</sup> As regards *The Pirate*, only after a secondary reading can we discover the hidden intertext and thus obtain the key to the novel's significance.

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<sup>159</sup>Michael Riffaterre, 'Compulsory reader response: the intertextual drive', in *Intertextuality: Theories and Practices*, ed. by Michael Worton and Judith Still (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), pp. 56-78 (p. 56).

<sup>160</sup>Riffaterre, p. 76.

### 3.4 Timon and the Black Dwarf

When *The Black Dwarf* appeared in December 1816, it was not greeted with the enthusiasm which hailed the accompanying work, *The Tale of Old Mortality*. *The Edinburgh Review* noticed, however, as early as 1817, that *The Dwarf* ‘possess[ed] merits, which, in any other company, would have entitled it to no slight distinction.’<sup>1</sup> The novel was dwarfed by comparison with *Old Mortality*, a giant among Scott’s productions, already at the early stages of its reception.

When Scott wrote on his own novel, he employed a vocabulary reminiscent of the protagonist. In a letter to John Murray, he wrote that *The Dwarf*: ‘is not very original in its concoction, and lame [and] impotent in the conclusion.’<sup>2</sup> In the 1830 Introduction, he explained how ‘a friendly critic, to whose opinion [he] subjected the work in its progress, was of opinion that the idea of the Solitary was of a kind too revolting, and more likely to disgust than to interest the reader.’<sup>3</sup> This friend’s advice prevented him from expanding the potential of the novel to the form of a longer narrative and Scott lamented that ‘by huddling into one volume a tale which was designed to occupy two,’ he had ‘perhaps produced a narrative as much disproportioned and distorted as the Black Dwarf who is its subject.’<sup>4</sup> This comment is consistent with Scott’s tendency to discuss his texts as bodies. In this instance, however, his comment punningly refers to the body of the character.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Anon., review of *Tales of My Landlord*, *The Edinburgh Review*, 28 (1817), 193-259 (p. 200).

<sup>2</sup>*Letters*, IV, 318-19 (18 December 1816).

<sup>3</sup>Walter Scott, ‘Introduction’, in *The Black Dwarf*, Dryburgh Edition, V (1893), xix-xxiv (p. xxiv). In the General Introduction to the Edinburgh Edition of the novel, David Hewitt states that James Ballantyne’s ‘views were sometimes wrong, and Scott was sometimes wrong to give way to them’; however, when Blackwood suggested that Scott should change the ending of the novel Scott stated his independence quite harshly; see *The Black Dwarf*, ed. by Peter D. Garside (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1993), pp. xv, 125. Except for the references to the 1830 ‘Introduction’, and unless otherwise stated, all quotations are from Garside’s edition of the novel, henceforth referred to as *Dwarf*.

<sup>4</sup>‘Introduction’, Dryburgh Edition, p. xxiv.

<sup>5</sup>See also *Letters*, IV, 323-24, 331 (21 and 26 December 1816).

Fiona Robertson dedicates the introductory chapter of her *Legitimate Histories: Scott, Gothic, and the Authorities of Fiction* (1994) to the discussion of the different critical views of Scott's 'healthy text'. Scott, states Robertson, showed a 'preference for an aesthetic governed by moderation, proportion, and common sense' and 'commonly discussed literary creativity in terms of bodily well-being, describing several of his works as "apoplectic" or "smelling of apoplexy", and condemning *The Black Dwarf* for being just as stunted and misshapen as its central character.'<sup>6</sup> Scott scholars have generally accepted his comments on *The Dwarf* as authoritative disclaimers of its literary value. Johnson's praise: 'even the less than satisfactory *Dwarf*, surpassed what any of Scott's contemporaries were doing', is evidence of the derogatory, though not utterly negative terms in which the novel has long been written about.<sup>7</sup> The recent Edinburgh Edition by Peter D. Garside has done much to re-establish *The Dwarf*'s place in the Scott canon but we still lack a critical study of the novel.

From the very beginning, the figure of the Dwarf has been seen as a major cause for the novel's lack of success. Buchan arbitrarily dismisses him as 'a piece of Gothick extravagance, Matt Lewis crossed with Byron'.<sup>8</sup> Reed has come closer to an investigation of Scott's feelings about his disability in this novel when he has seen in Scott's 'conception of the character of the Black Dwarf, [...] a lame Scott exploring the Byronic psychology of an intelligent, energetic but misshapen man'.<sup>9</sup> Johnson observes that 'Scott has devised for Elshender an acid and malevolent rhetoric that mingles the fever of the Gothic novel with the fury of Timon and the despair of Manfred.'<sup>10</sup> Johnson's following comment is more accurate:

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<sup>6</sup>Robertson, *Legitimate Histories*, pp. 22, 23.

<sup>7</sup>Johnson, I, 589.

<sup>8</sup>Buchan, p. 159. James Fergusson also views the Dwarf as the product of 'Scott's Gothic imagination'; see 'The Black Dwarf: A Peeblesshire Legend', *Scottish Studies*, 15 (1971), 146-49 (p. 147).

<sup>9</sup>Reed, p. 100.

<sup>10</sup>Johnson, I, 591.

The portrayal of the heartache that may be engendered by physical deformity, and by the thoughtless cruelty it sometimes evokes in others, reveals that, like Byron, Scott knew the mood of rebellion, though he had conquered it. The distorted body of the poor Dwarf is a magnified projection of the crippled foot and limping gait that Scott and Byron shared.<sup>11</sup>

It is possible, however, that in 1816 Scott had not completely 'conquered' the 'mood of rebellion' caused by his deformity - if he ever conquered it. This suggestion is supported by Lockhart, whose defence of *The Dwarf* was perhaps unwitting. Scott's son-in-law denigrates the novel's literary value but admits that its attraction resides in the portrait of the Dwarf:

however imperfect, and unworthy as a work of art to be placed high in the catalogue of his productions, [it] derives a singular interest from its delineation of the dark feelings so often connected with physical deformity; feelings which appear to have diffused their shadow over the whole genius of Byron - and which, but for this single picture, we should hardly have conceived ever to have passed through Scott's happier mind. All the bitter blasphemy of spirit which, from infancy to the tomb, swelled up in Byron against the unkindness of nature; which sometimes perverted even his filial love into a sentiment of diabolic malignity; all this black and desolate train of reflections must have been encountered and deliberately subdued by the manly parent of the Black Dwarf.<sup>12</sup>

Lockhart acknowledges that the novel's chief interest lies in the portrayal of the protagonist's gloomy character and 'dark feelings' which characterised Byron's life and works, and claims that *The Dwarf* is the only evidence we have of Scott's experiencing the painful feelings which tormented Byron. Scott, Lockhart writes, generally diverted these 'dark feelings' from the attention of his readers 'deliberately' because his "happy"

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<sup>11</sup>Johnson, I, 592. Johnson also writes of the novel's 'lame and melodramatically contrived ending', recalling Scott's comment above (I, 589).

<sup>12</sup>Lockhart, V, 175-76.

mind could not conceive the desolation and the darkness which affected Byron's.<sup>13</sup> Apart from *The Dwarf*, Scott avoid such self-dramatisation.

*The Dwarf* is the only novel by Scott in which his feelings about his lameness can be detected. We do not possess much information about Scott's disability. Lockhart reports the anecdote of Scott playing Richard III because 'the limp would do well enough to represent the hump'.<sup>14</sup> In the entry to his journal for 30 November 1825, Scott complains that his lameness has deteriorated, but then he boasts: 'My early lameness considered, it was impossible for a man labouring under a bodily impediment to have been stronger or more active than I have been, and that for twenty or thirty years.' He admires Walter, Charles and Lockhart who 'are as active and handsome young fellows as you can see and while they enjoy strength and activity I can hardly be said to want it.' He then adds:

I have perhaps all my life set an undue value on these gifts. Yet it does appear to me that high and independent feelings are naturally though not uniformly or inseparably connected with bodily advantages. Strong men are usually goodhumoured and active men often display the same elasticity of mind as of body. These are superiorities however that are often misused.<sup>15</sup>

He worried about the fate of his favourite grandson, Johnie Lockhart: 'I hope the dear child will escape deformity and the infirmities attending that helpless state. I have myself been able to fight up very well notwithstanding my lameness but it has cost great efforts and I am besides very strong.'<sup>16</sup> Later in his life he felt more constrained by his lameness. After a visit to Borthwick Castle he wrote: 'The feeling of growing and increasing inability is painful to one like me who boasted in spite of my infirmity great

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<sup>13</sup>For a study of Scott's apologia for Byron in *The Dwarf* and *The Dwarf's* influence on Byron's *The Deformed Transformed* and Mary Shelley's *Transformation*, see my article 'Literary Giants and Black Dwarfs', forthcoming in *Scottish Literary Journal*.

<sup>14</sup>Lockhart, I, 155.

<sup>15</sup>*Journal*, p. 21 (30 November 1825).

<sup>16</sup>*Journal*, p. 163 (27 June 1826).

boldness and dexterity in such feats'.<sup>17</sup> The above entries show that Scott did not view his disability as entirely disabling. However, they also disclose that all his life he had been affected by it and that he had to fight to overcome this 'bodily disadvantage'.

The immediate inspiration for *The Dwarf* came from Scott's visit to Adam Fergusson in 1797, during which Scott met David Ritchie of Tweeddale, an unfortunate, deformed dwarf who had retired to live in solitude to avoid the taunts and scorn of people:

Tired at length of being the object of shouts, laughter, and derision, David Ritchie resolved, like a deer hunted from the herd, to retreat to some wilderness, where he might have the least possible communication with the world which scoffed at him.<sup>18</sup>

The Introduction was added in 1830 and in its apology for the novel's lack of success it was the outcome of a fourteen-year-long negative response to the novel. In it, Scott gave his readers a key with which to read his work when he described David Ritchie as 'haunted by a consciousness of his own deformity and a suspicion of his being generally subjected to the scorn of his fellow-men', and when he explained that his 'misanthropy was founded in a sense of his own preternatural deformity'.<sup>19</sup> The Introduction encourages the readers to sympathise with the Dwarf's misanthropy as being the result of his deformity and does not allow them to separate the fictional character from the historical source. According to Garside, the interview between Scott and David Ritchie, the historical source for the Dwarf, published in *Chambers' Edinburgh Journal*, 'indicates a traumatic experience for Scott, engendered by Ritchie's recognition of a kindred spirit in the "limping youth" before him'.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>*Journal*, p. 403 (23 December 1827).

<sup>18</sup>'Introduction', Dryburgh Edition, p. xix.

<sup>19</sup>'Introduction', Dryburgh Edition, pp. xix, xxi.

<sup>20</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 132.

Scott wrote his novel in the Gothic tradition and as such it was meant to cause emotional disturbance in his readers. As he stated in his self-review of 1817: 'the narrative is the worst part of the *Black Dwarf*, and [...] if the reader can tolerate it [...] he will find the work itself contains passages both of natural pathos and fantastic terror'.<sup>21</sup> Modern readers' familiarity with Gothic narratives prevents them from feeling the 'fantastic terror' they excited in nineteenth-century readers, but their modern sensibility makes them feel, more painfully than their predecessors, the 'natural pathos' inspired by the disabled Dwarf. According to R. C. Gordon, 'there was more than wayward miscalculation' behind Scott's choice of a deformed dwarf as a protagonist for his tale: 'For the Dwarf, in a perverse way, represents an effort at transcendence.'<sup>22</sup>

Although he maintains many of the elements belonging to his historical source, Scott does not stick to it entirely. The open recourse to Shakespeare's most exacerbated misanthrope gives character and depth to his fictional creation. Lesley W. Brill observes how most Shakespearean critics have acknowledged that to understand *Timon of Athens* it is important to understand its main character. With regard to Scott's novel, a reappraisal of the character of the Dwarf will lead to a reassessment of the novel itself.<sup>23</sup>

Scott chose a tag from *Timon of Athens* to head the fourth chapter of the novel:

I am Misanthropos, and hate mankind;  
For thy part, I do wish thou wert a dog,  
That I might love thee something.<sup>24</sup>

Timon's words to Alcibiades serve to introduce the first full description of the Dwarf, whom the reader has already met in the previous chapter and to whose misanthropy he has been prepared by Earnscliff's comment: 'It seems to me the very madness of

<sup>21</sup>'Tales of My Landlord', p. 28.

<sup>22</sup>R.C. Gordon, *Under Which King?*, pp. 46-47.

<sup>23</sup>Lesley W. Brill, 'Truth and *Timon of Athens*', *Modern Language Quarterly*, 40 (1979), 17-36 (pp. 17-18).

<sup>24</sup>Cf. *Dwarf*, p. 27 and *Timon*, IV. 3. 53-55.

misanthropy'.<sup>25</sup> Scott chose a quotation from Act IV when most of the action has occurred and Timon is already a misanthrope. With this device he achieved two goals. He made the association between the two characters more obvious to the readers and provided them with some knowledge of the past life of his mysterious character.

The angry rhetoric which colours the Dwarf's speeches is also modelled on Timon's. We know from Garside that among the alterations introduced into the manuscript, 'dense changes amplify the Dwarf's misanthropic outbursts, with Scott making a considerable effort to find an appropriate rhetorical pitch.'<sup>26</sup> When he is addressed by Hobbie Elliott and young Earnscliff, the Dwarf asks them to leave him alone for 'the breath of your human bodies poisons the air around me - the sound of your human voices goes through my ears like sharp bodkins.'<sup>27</sup> The use of the adjective 'human' also appears in *Timon of Athens* with a negative connotation:

Common mother - thou [...]  
Yield him who all the human sons do hate  
From forth thy plenteous bosom, one poor root.<sup>28</sup>

The Dwarf regards 'Common humanity' as a 'noose for woodcocks - that common disguise for man-traps'.<sup>29</sup> Humanity is associated with mortality; the Dwarf keeps Hobbie and Earnscliff at a distance lest they 'infect [him] with the taint of mortality!'.<sup>30</sup>

This is reminiscent of a passage in *King Lear*, a play closely linked to *Timon*:

GLOUCESTER	O, let me kiss that hand!
LEAR	Let me wipe it first; it smells of mortality. <sup>31</sup>

<sup>25</sup> *Dwarf*, p. 22.

<sup>26</sup> *Dwarf*, p. 138.

<sup>27</sup> *Dwarf*, pp. 21-22.

<sup>28</sup> *Timon*, IV. 3. 178, 186-87. See also *Timon*, V. 5. 80 and *Macbeth*, I. 5. 15-16.

<sup>29</sup> *Dwarf*, p. 22; cf. *Hamlet*, I. 3. 115.

<sup>30</sup> *Dwarf*, p. 22.

<sup>31</sup> *Lear*, IV. 5. 128-29. For a parallel between the two plays, see Jan Simko, 'King Lear and Timon of Athens', *Philologica Pragensia*, 8 (1965), 320-42.

Scott's characterisation of the Dwarf approaches the conception of Timon as a God, as someone who towers over the rest of mankind, but, like Timon, the Dwarf is not convincing. For David Cook, Timon's generosity is self-assertion which leads to self-blindness.<sup>32</sup> In Scott's novel, self-assertion in Elshender also leads to self-blindness since he does not realise the impossibility of a union with Letitia, Isabella's mother, and of his dream to 'form with his wife and friend a society, encircled by which he might dispense with more extensive communication with the world.'<sup>33</sup>

If the first meeting with the Dwarf reminds us of Timon's main humour, his description distances him from the Shakespearean character:

The being [...] stood before them in all his native deformity. His head was of immense size, covered with a fell of shaggy black hair, partly grizzled with age; his eye-brows, shaggy and prominent, overhung a pair of small, dark, piercing eyes, set far back in their sockets, that rolled with a portentous wildness, indicative of partial insanity. [...] features, whose habitual expression seemed that of sullen malignant misanthropy.<sup>34</sup>

The above passage is strongly evocative of a landscape. The topography of this description points to undirected growth and abundance, a characteristic which belongs to many of Scott's heroes. Welsh has described the 'dark hero' of the Waverley Novels as:

rough and irregular. [...] not of average size. Rob Roy's shoulders are abnormally wide, his arms abnormally long [...] Elshie the Dwarf is altogether misshapen. The dark hero lacks balance. Passion is not sufficiently tempered by reason and society, and there are hints of insanity about Elshie, Staunton, and Alan M' Aulay.<sup>35</sup>

Scott's hero, Welsh continues, 'is a passionate individual, he is generous and compassionate. He is closer to nature than the civilized passive hero, and generally

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<sup>32</sup>David Cook, "Timon of Athens", *Shakespeare Survey*, 16 (1963), 83-94 (p. 83).

<sup>33</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 105.

<sup>34</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 29.

<sup>35</sup>Welsh, p. 65.

disports himself in a wild, natural setting.’<sup>36</sup> The Dwarf possesses all the requirements for the dark hero listed by Welsh. Scott gives us a full portrait of the Dwarf’s personality in a soliloquy after Westburnflat, the villain of the novel, has left:

‘The villain,’ exclaimed the Dwarf, - ‘the cool-blooded, hardened, unrelenting ruffian, - the wretch, whose every thought is infected with crimes, has thewes and sinews, limbs, strength, and activity enough to compel a nobler animal than himself to carry him to the place where he is to perpetrate his wickedness; while I, had I the weakness to wish to put his wretched victim on his guard, and to save the helpless family, would see my good intentions frustrated by the decrepitude which chains me to the spot. - Why should I wish it were otherwise? What has my *screech-owl voice*, my hideous form, and *mis-shapen* features, to do with the fairer workmanship of nature? Do not men receive even my benefits with shrinking horror and ill-suppressed disgust? And why should I interest myself in a *race* who account me a *prodigy* and an outcast, and who have treated me as such? No; by all the *ingratitude* with which I have been repaid - by all the wrongs which I have sustained - by my imprisonment - my *stripes* - my chains - I will wrestle down my feelings of *rebellious humanity*. I will not be the fool I have been, to swerve from my principles whenever there was an appeal, forsooth, to my feelings, as if I, towards whom none show sympathy, ought to have sympathy with any one. Let Destiny drive forth her scythed car through the overwhelmed and trembling *mass of humanity*! Shall I be the idiot to throw this decrepid form, this *mis-shapen lump of mortality*, under her wheels, that the dwarf - the *wizard* - the *hunch-back* might save from destruction some fair form or some active frame, and all the world clap their hands at the exchange? No, never!’ (my emphases)<sup>37</sup>

The exceptionally dense presence of allusions and echoes of Shakespearean plays in this monologue is a literary analogue to the body of the Dwarf. The dominant plays are, in order, the *Henry VI* trilogy, *Richard III*, *Timon of Athens*, *King Lear*, and *The Tempest*. The *Henry VI* plays and *Richard III* obviously associate the Dwarf with Richard of Gloucester. Richard is called the ‘valiant crookback prodigy’ and ‘an indigested and deformed lump,’ in *3 Henry VI*;<sup>38</sup> a ‘heap of wrath, foul indigested lump, / As crooked in thy manners as thy shape!’ in *2 Henry VI*;<sup>39</sup> ‘lump of foul deformity’ in *Richard III*,

<sup>36</sup>Welsh, p. 65.

<sup>37</sup>*Dwarf*, pp. 44-45.

<sup>38</sup>*3 Henry VI*, I. 4. 76; V. 6. 51.

<sup>39</sup>*2 Henry VI*, V. 1. 155-56.

where he is also associated to a 'wizard'.<sup>40</sup> *Timon of Athens* and *King Lear* are more concerned with ingratitude and 'rebellious humanity.'<sup>41</sup> *The Tempest* offers a parallel with the 'misshapen' Caliban.<sup>42</sup> Scott borrowed the vocabulary with which he portrayed the Dwarf from Shakespeare's deformed characters, notably Caliban and Richard of Gloucester.

The story of the Dwarf is anticipated a few times during the first half of the narrative but it receives an explanation only at the end of it.<sup>43</sup> Ratcliffe, the Dwarf's faithful servant, gives us the information we need to understand the protagonist's misanthropic behaviour. After a description of the Dwarf's generosity, Ratcliffe comments:

It is scarce necessary to say, that the bounty which flowed from a source so capricious was often abused, and his confidence frequently betrayed. These disappointments which occur to all, more or less, and most to such as confer benefits without just discrimination, his diseased fancy set down to the hatred and contempt excited by his personal deformity.<sup>44</sup>

The beginning of Shakespeare's play shows Timon at the highest peak of magnanimity towards his Athenian friends. Timon believes in the act of "giving" for its own sake: 'there's none / Can truly say he gives if he receives.'<sup>45</sup> His generosity comes from love for mankind and disinterested friendship. Yet, as Apemantus observes, it is also due to susceptibility to flattery: 'O, that men's ears should be / To counsel deaf, but not to flattery!'.<sup>46</sup> The Dwarf's philanthropy, Ratcliffe says, is disinterested, but it also finds its origin in a weakness in his character:

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<sup>40</sup>*Richard III*, I. 2. 57; I. 1. 32-40, 56.

<sup>41</sup>For the references to ingratitude, see *Timon*, II. 2. 211; III. 4. 31; V. 1. 63; V. 5. 17 and *Lear*, I. 4. 237; I. 5. 39; III. 4. 14. For those to humanity, see *Timon*, I. 1. 276; III. 7. 104; IV. 3. 302.

<sup>42</sup>*Tempest*, V. 1. 271; cf. also I. 2. 346-47.

<sup>43</sup>See *Dwarf*, pp. 55, 103-7, 111-15.

<sup>44</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 104.

<sup>45</sup>*Timon*, I. 2. 9-10.

<sup>46</sup>*Timon*, I. 2. 250-51.

He appeared to think that it was necessary for him, by exuberant, and not always well-chosen instances of liberality, and even profusion, to unite himself to the human race, from which he conceived himself naturally dissevered. The benefits which he bestowed, from a disposition naturally philanthropical in an uncommon degree, were exaggerated by the influence of the goading reflection, that more was necessary from him than from others, as if it were to reconcile mankind to receive him into their class.<sup>47</sup>

The last sentence of the above same passage reads as follows in the *magnum opus*: 'more was necessary from him than from others - lavishing his treasures as if to bribe mankind to receive him into their class.'<sup>48</sup> The Dwarf's erroneous idea that he needs 'to bribe' his fellow beings in order to be accepted by them, finds a correspondence, albeit antithetical, in Apemantus's refusal to be 'bribed' by Timon:

No, I'll nothing; for if I should be bribed too,  
there would be none left to rail upon thee, and then  
thou wouldst sin the faster.<sup>49</sup>

The connection between the philanthropy of the two characters results from a weakness in them which finds justification in the Dwarf's deformity, but which is due to self-love in Timon. For both characters, however, philanthropy reassures them of being part of human society. There is a shade of egocentrism in their behaviour: Timon needs to be at the centre of the Athenian society and the Dwarf dreams of being the centre of the relationship with his betrothed and his best friend.

Scott's view of the indiscriminate liberality of the Dwarf agrees with the eighteenth-century condemnation of Timon's generosity as unwise. The Dwarf uses wealth to overcome prejudice towards his deformity. The moral injuries he suffers are magnified by a 'diseased fancy' which tends to relate everything to his abnormal appearance. There is a continuous emphasis on the touch of insanity which affects the

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<sup>47</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 104.

<sup>48</sup>*Dwarf*, Dryburgh Edition, p. 112.

<sup>49</sup>*Timon*, I. 2. 241-43.

Dwarf, especially on the part of Ratcliffe, which is often seen as derived from misanthropy. Richard of Gloucester who, as we have seen, also contributes to the characterisation of the Dwarf, is not insane but his “mad-like” wickedness is partly increased by the continual scorn he is subjected to because of his physical deformity. Timon in the end suffers from a kind of mental derangement which is the result of the sudden change in his life. The same happens to the Dwarf whose insanity is the outcome of the shocking discovery that his bride-to-be has married his best friend.

Timon is forsaken by his former friends when he gets into financial troubles; he has not taken heed of Apemantus’s warning that: ‘Men shut their doors against a setting sun.’<sup>50</sup> When the blow arrives, he abandons society and retires into the woods, but he first curses Athens and its inhabitants expressing his rejection of the whole human race.<sup>51</sup> In Scott’s novel, the Dwarf’s escape from human society also derives from a strong delusion. In his account of the Dwarf’s life, Ratcliffe relates how the Dwarf relied on two people, his betrothed bride, and a friend, later revealed to be Isabella’s father, who ‘was literally loaded with benefits by him’.<sup>52</sup> The Dwarf saved Vere’s life during a duel by killing Earnscliff’s father with whom Vere had quarrelled; as a result he was sent to prison. Before the year of imprisonment had elapsed, his friend and his betrothed were married. Vere plays here the same role as Ventidius who abandons Timon who has previously delivered him from prison.<sup>53</sup> Both Timon and Elshender are shunned by their former friends, but Elshender is doubly forsaken.

Scott’s ‘dark hero’ is tainted by misanthropy and guilt and the Dwarf shows both attributes. His feeling of guilt dates back to the duel in which he killed Earnscliff’s father and according to Ratcliffe it is the legacy of Catholicism which the Dwarf had

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<sup>50</sup>*Timon*, I. 2. 141.

<sup>51</sup>*Timon*, IV. 1. 1-41.

<sup>52</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 105.

<sup>53</sup>*Timon*, I. 1. 96-105.

renounced but which 'continued to influence his mind, over which remorse and misanthropy now assumed, in appearance, an unbounded authority.'<sup>54</sup> His remorse is veiled in his speech to Earnscliff when he states that, although his task is to perpetuate the misery of mankind: 'Were *you*', that is Earnscliff, 'on your sick-bed, I might, in compassion, send you a cup of poison.'<sup>55</sup> The Dwarf indirectly anticipates his revengeful purposes when he tells Hobbie and Earnscliff that 'were there a man who had annihilated my soul's dearest hope', he 'would pamper him with wealth and power to inflame his evil passions, and to fulfil his evil designs;' so that 'he should be an earthquake capable of shaking the very land in which he dwelt, and rendering all its inhabitants childless, outcast, and miserable, as I am!'.<sup>56</sup> The Dwarf's revenge on Ellieslaw is subtle to an almost insane degree. Timon's revenge on the Athenians is also indirect but not so sophisticated. Like Timon, Elshender wants the destruction of mankind but he accepts from people what is necessary to live and provides them with herbal remedies and drugs.<sup>57</sup> Earnscliff accuses him of inconsistency: 'you assist to preserve the race that your misanthropy slanders', but the Dwarf promptly argues that he does it in order to 'perpetuat[e] the mass of misery, and playing even in this desert my part in the general tragedy.'<sup>58</sup> In the same devious way, Timon gives gold to prostitutes so that they infect men with venereal diseases.<sup>59</sup>

In the wilderness, Timon finds gold.<sup>60</sup> The Dwarf's wealth parallels Timon's richness but it is not new-found. For Timon, gold becomes the means by which he could return to Athens, but he prefers to give it to prostitutes and robbers, instead. Timon loathes what he sees as the cause of his ruin:

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<sup>54</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 105.

<sup>55</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 34.

<sup>56</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 35.

<sup>57</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 32.

<sup>58</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 33, 34.

<sup>59</sup>*Timon*, IV. 3. 153-66.

<sup>60</sup>*Timon*, IV. 3. 25-26.

Thus much of this will make  
 Black white, foul fair, wrong right,  
 Base noble, old young, coward valiant.<sup>61</sup>

For Elshender gold has also been a primary cause of his tragedy. Had he not been rich, Ellieslaw would not have been his friend and probably he would not have deprived him of his betrothed. In the Introduction, Scott tells us that the historical source for Elshender had accumulated gold because 'wealth is power, and power was what David Ritchie desired to possess, as a compensation for his exclusion from human society.'<sup>62</sup> The novel distances itself from *Timon of Athens* here. Elshender has taken control of Vere's estate, already his own by right, with the help of Ratcliffe. Like Timon, the Dwarf does not attach any value to money unless it helps him in his revengeful purposes such as when he gives money to Westburnflat to kidnap Hobbie's betrothed. However, he gives a purse of gold to Hobbie to help him rebuild his farm, showing that even in his misanthropy, he can still be philanthropic.<sup>63</sup> The Dwarf's equation of money with power is analogous to Richard III's ambition.

Scott's exploitation of the animal versus mankind imagery serves to contrast mankind to the character of the misanthrope. In the play, Timon retires 'to the woods, where he shall find / Th'unkindest beast more kinder than mankind.'<sup>64</sup> The Dwarf owns two she-goats that he loves because they don't belong to the race he has come to abhor:

you, at least, see no differences in form which can alter your feelings to a benefactor [...] While I was in the world, did I ever meet with such a return of gratitude? - No - the domestic whom I had bred from infancy made mouths at me as he stood behind my chair - the friend whom I had supported with my fortune, and for whose sake I had even stained - (he stopped with a strong convulsive shudder) even he thought me more fit for the society of lunatics.<sup>65</sup>

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<sup>61</sup>*Timon*, IV. 3. 28-30.

<sup>62</sup>'Introduction', Dryburgh Edition, p. xxiii.

<sup>63</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 56-57.

<sup>64</sup>*Timon*, IV. 1. 35-36.

<sup>65</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 45. The emphasis on 'race' recurs in *Timon*, IV. 1. 40.

When one of the goats is accidentally killed by Hobbie Elliott's dog, the Dwarf's first reaction is to attack Hobbie: 'Wretch! [...] your cruelty has destroyed one of the only creatures in existence that would look on me with kindness.'<sup>66</sup> If the animal imagery is a means of expressing contempt for men in *Timon of Athens*, in *The Dwarf* the two she-goats become a refuge for the Dwarf.

Elshender's very last act of generosity is the rescue of Isabella Vere from an unwanted marriage. The chapter following Ratcliffe's account of the Dwarf's life describes Isabella's visit to the Dwarf's hut, and is preceded by another tag from *Timon of Athens*:

'Twas time and griefs  
That framed him thus: Time, with his fairer hand,  
Offering the fortunes of his former days,  
The former man may make him - Bring us to him,  
And chance it as it may.<sup>67</sup>

Elshender becomes his former self to help Isabella and in this he distinguishes himself from Timon who does not step back from his new state when Alcibiades asks him to join him in his march against Athens. When the senators ask him to stop Alcibiades's threat to Athens, Timon answers that he hopes Alcibiades will destroy the town.<sup>68</sup> Alcibiades's personal revenge becomes Timon's revenge for the Athenians' treatment of him:

Those enemies of Timon's and mine own

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<sup>66</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 47.

<sup>67</sup>Cf. *Dwarf*, ch. 16, pp. 107-12 and *Timon*, V. 2. 7-11. Isabella visits him with the rose he has previously given her (p. 38). There is a vague parallel with *Beauty and the Beast* here; see Mme Leprince de Beaumont's 'La Belle et la bête', which appeared in her *Magasin des Enfants* (London, 1756). Scott does not seem to mention this tale in his letters or journal but it was well known and several theatrical productions of it appeared in his time.

<sup>68</sup>*Timon*, V. 2. 52-69.

Whom you yourselves shall set out for reproof  
Fall, and no more.<sup>69</sup>

When he presented Caliban and Richard of Gloucester as not utterly wicked characters, Shakespeare showed some sympathy for the deformed. In *The Dwarf*, Scott eventually transformed the supposed wickedness of the deformed misanthrope into generosity and Elshender's last action distinguishes him from Timon. Scott redeemed the Shakespearean character's misanthropy by making him help one of his fellow-beings. Apemantus laments to Timon that: 'The middle of humanity thou never knewest, but the extremity of both ends.'<sup>70</sup> Elshender's misanthropy knows a middle just as in Thomas Shadwell's adaptation of the play Timon accepts the middle in the female character.<sup>71</sup> Ratcliffe plays the same role as Flavius, Timon's servant. Both remain faithful to their masters after the disgrace has befallen them. Flavius pays off some of his master's debts; Ratcliffe helps the Dwarf to come out of the lunatic asylum and assists him until his death. Timon regards Flavius as "human" because he weeps at the view of how much his master has changed:

I love thee  
Because thou art a woman, and disclaim'st  
Flinty mankind whose eyes do never give  
But thorough lust and laughter.<sup>72</sup>

Elshender dies assisted by Ratcliffe.

Timon is abandoned because he has lost all his wealth, that is all that kept him linked to his "false" friends and the Dwarf is rejected because of his ugliness and deformity which are not allowed to coexist with "civil" society. The mixture of

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<sup>69</sup>*Timon*, V. 5. 56-58.

<sup>70</sup>*Timon*, IV. 3. 302-3.

<sup>71</sup>Thomas Shadwell, *The History of Timon of Athens: The Man-Hater*, 1678 (London: Cornmarket Press, 1969).

<sup>72</sup>*Timon*, IV. 3. 483-86.

historical and dramatic sources devised by the author adds pathos to the story. Scott took the strain of misanthropy from Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens* and stressed the moral lesson contained in Shakespeare's play by introducing a deformed dwarf as the protagonist of his own tale. *Timon of Athens* offered Scott a model by which he could give voice to his 'mood of rebellion' against the wickedness of civil society towards its deformed, or simply "different" members.<sup>73</sup>

The connection between Scott's novel and the Shakespearean tradition is stressed by the highly dramatic atmosphere of the novel which at times makes it resemble a theatrical piece. This device serves to prolong the readers' expectations, and it may be the indication that, after all, the novel was not meant to be longer.<sup>74</sup> When he received the *Tales of My Landlord*, Daniel Terry complained to Scott about his definition of *The Dwarf* as 'wish-washy', by saying that, although he found *Old Mortality* extremely good, he 'by no means agree[d] in your own censure of *wishy washy* on the first, for Elshender is a very interesting personage'.<sup>75</sup> Terry proposed to Scott a dramatisation of the novel, but Scott refused it. In a letter of 12 March 1817, Scott explained to the actor that he had 'some doubts whether the town will endure a second time the following up a well-known tale with a dramatic representation - and there is no *vis comica* to redeem the Black Dwarf, as in the case of Dominie Sampson.'<sup>76</sup> In a letter of 2 June 1819, Scott sent Archibald Constable 'the manuscript play' of Erskine Neale's 'Elshender, or the Wise Wight of Mucklestone Moor. A

<sup>73</sup>In *Scott and Society*, McMaster affirms: '*The Black Dwarf* initiates a series of novels that deal with ways in which a society fails its members.' (p. 168)

<sup>74</sup>In a letter to Lady Louisa Stuart, Scott explained that he had 'found I had circumscribed my bounds too much [...] So I quarrelled with my story, & bungled up a conclusion as a boarding school Miss finishes a task which she had commenced with great glee & accuracy.' See *Letters*, IV, 292-93 (14 November 1816).

<sup>75</sup>*Letters*, IV, 288; Terry's letter is dated 5 December 1816.

<sup>76</sup>*Letters*, IV, 402. According to H. J. Oliver, the story of *Timon* 'does not lend itself to treatment in drama.' See *Timon of Athens*, ed. by H. J. Oliver, *The Arden Shakespeare* (London and New York: Routledge, 1959), p. li.

comedy in five acts' which is not extant and of whose performance we do not have any records:

I enclose the manuscript play. I dare say with cutting and paring and the assistance of some person understanding the stage-effect, it might be acted and certainly does credit to the young author's ingenuity. But I question if the circumstance of personal deformity in the principal character would not be fatal. A dwarf would always have something too ludicrous for pathetic effect when actually presented to our eye.<sup>77</sup>

Scott's comment on Neale's adaptation is consistent with his refusal of Daniel Terry's proposal. Despite Scott's censure, *The Dwarf* enjoyed a modest life on the stage, "modest" if compared to the success of his other novels, but still noteworthy. H. Philip Bolton lists six published versions, and twenty productions; in all, sixteen productions were performed during Scott's lifetime but Scott does not always seem to have known them.<sup>78</sup>

In his study of the parallel between Scott and Shakespeare, Hazlitt chose *The Dwarf* as an instance of the fundamental difference between the two authors: 'whenever Sir Walter comes to a truly dramatic situation, he declines it or fails.' Hazlitt in particular focuses on the last scene of the novel when, he complains, 'nothing is done'. Instead, 'the Dwarf enters with a strange rustling noise, the opposite doors fly open, and the affrighted spectators rush out like the figures in a pantomime.' Hazlitt's conclusion is that Scott's handling of the novel's finale is 'not dramatic, but melo-dramatic.'<sup>79</sup> Hazlitt takes this as an example of the difference between Scott and Shakespeare: 'when

<sup>77</sup>See *Letters*, V, 392-93. Cf. Ford, pp. 3-5 (p. 3). Cf. Lamb's commentary on *Othello*, in *The Romantics*, pp. 124-25. Lamb believed that 'What we see upon a stage is body and bodily action; what we are conscious of in reading is almost exclusively the mind, and its movements' (p. 125). With regard to *Othello*, he wrote: 'upon the stage, when the imagination is no longer the ruling faculty, but we are left to our poor unassisted senses, I appeal to every one who has seen *Othello* played, [...] whether the actual sight of the thing did not over-weigh all that beautiful compromise which we make in reading' (p. 124).

<sup>78</sup>H. Philip Bolton, *Scott Dramatised* (London: Mansell, 1992), pp. 158-61.

<sup>79</sup>Hazlitt, 'Scott, Racine, and Shakespear', p. 345.

the true imaginative and dramatic part comes, [...] we find that it is Sir Walter Scott and not Shakespear that is his counsel-keeper, that the author is a novelist and not a poet.'<sup>80</sup>

Despite Scott's reservations and Hazlitt's criticism, the '*vis comica*' of the Dwarf which appears at the end of the novel is analagous to the traditional climax of comedy: the revelation of true identity. Dramatic tension is ensured by the obscure element of Byronic darkness and guilt, only revealed at the end of the novel, and by the deformity of the hero which excites pity in the spectators. The monologues and dramatic dialogues of *The Dwarf* seem almost designed for the stage rather than for a narrative.

Angus Easson writes:

Scott's use of Shakespeare's Timon raises questions of identity. Scott might seem not to be accepting the logic of his own creation. Is Elshie the complete misanthropist? Or is he mad, driven insane by his own deformity and the world's mockery, compounded with society's injustice? As a Timon-figure, he should have no grace for anyone, [...] His misanthropy and madness spring, then, from an unnatural suppression of his true nature; his generous acts [...] arise from that same nature's humanity and sanity. Yet if this explains the seeming inconsistencies in this misanthrope [...], the issue stands of the Dwarf's role as agent. What need is there for the Dwarf?<sup>81</sup>

Scott's sympathy for dwarfs appears in other characters from the Waverley Novels. Fenella and Sir Geoffrey Hudson in *Pevekil of the Peak*, Nicholas Strumpfer in *The Pirate*, Nectabanus in *The Talisman*, and Elshie Elshender, are viewed by Ruth Eller as all partaking 'of the original type: the demonic, irrational imp of the perverse, at the service of magic in whatever form, including poetry.'<sup>82</sup> In particular, Eller sees Elshender as 'the creative, semi-rational but essentially benign demiurge of the emotions'.<sup>83</sup> According to Coleman O. Parsons, Scott's dwarfs are 'lapses in artistic

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<sup>80</sup>Hazlitt, p. 345.

<sup>81</sup>Angus Easson, 'Statesman, Dwarf and Weaver: Wordsworth and Nineteenth-Century Narrative', in *The Nineteenth-Century British Novel*, ed. by Jeremy Hawthorn, Stratford-upon-Avon Studies, second series (London: Edward Arnold, 1986), pp. 17-30 (p. 22).

<sup>82</sup>Ruth Eller, 'The Poetic Theme in Scott's Novels', in *Scott and His Influence*, pp. 75-86 (p. 80).

<sup>83</sup>Eller, p. 82.

taste.’<sup>84</sup> Parsons thinks that dwarfs ‘can hardly be made the subject of morbid fictional study.’ Dwarfs do not suit novels because of their ‘decadent appeal of the malformed and the repellent.’<sup>85</sup> However, dwarfs play an important role in the the Waverley Novels and in this particular novel the Dwarf helps to dramatise the novel. Easson observes that ‘the physical sense of the Dwarf emphasizes the stage’. Whereas Hazlitt thought that ‘nothing is done’ in the last scene, Easson thinks that ‘Scott’s conception of the Dwarf in stage terms, of the external, the physical, the rhetorical, is enforced by Elshie’s exit speech.’<sup>86</sup> The Dwarf’s last speech is for Isabella:

Do not speak to me! do not thwart my determination! it will avail nothing; you will hear of and see this lump of deformity no more. I will be dead to you ere I am actually in my grave, and you will think of me as a friend disencumbered from the toils and crimes of existence.<sup>87</sup>

In the finale, the Dwarf is distinguished from Timon, whose epitaph reads as follows:

Here lies a wretched corpse,  
Of wretched soul bereft.  
Seek not my name. A plague consume  
You wicked caitiffs left!  
Here lie I, Timon, who, alive  
All living men did hate.  
Pass by and curse thy fill, but pass  
And stay not here thy gait.<sup>88</sup>

According to Lockhart and other twentieth-century commentators, the lack of success of *The Dwarf* was due to Scott’s choice of a deformed man as its protagonist. Yet, I would argue that it is this character and the pathos he provokes in both the other characters of the novel and its readers which makes of *The Dwarf* a work of art.

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<sup>84</sup>Coleman O. Parsons, *Witchcraft and Demonology in Scott’s Fiction: With Chapters on the Supernatural in Scottish Literature* (Edinburgh and London: Oliver & Boyd, 1964), p. 259.

<sup>85</sup>Parsons, pp. 258-60.

<sup>86</sup>Easson, p. 23.

<sup>87</sup>*Dwarf*, p. 118.

<sup>88</sup>*Timon*, V. 5. 71-78.

Contrary to Lockhart's belief, this much neglected novel deserves to be placed 'high in the catalogue of [Scott's] productions' both for its stylistic form, as a short tale of regional manners as it was originally conceived, and for its elaboration of the Byronic theme from the viewpoint of physical deformity and misanthropy caused by society's failure to understand "difference". *The Dwarf* is the only work in which the Author of *Waverley* mixed biography and fiction. *The Dwarf* as 'lame' and 'impotent' - if compared to other works by Scott - achieves greatness as a "healthy text", releasing Scott's feelings about deformity and disability into an ordered narrative.

## CONCLUSION

The survey of the “parallel”, the analysis of Scott’s intertextual method, his view of a ‘luxurious’ reading of Shakespeare and of the ‘dramatic novel’, the reading of two English novels and of four Scottish novels have mapped the Scott-Shakespeare analogy from a lineal perspective and have shown that the “parallel”, long discerned, is still helpful to a fuller reading of Scott. The “parallel” has also been one of the forces at work in the reception of some of Shakespeare’s plays.

Having Shakespeare as one of the *dramatis personae* in *Kenilworth* allowed Scott to write about drama and the clear echoes from his 1819 ‘Essay on the Drama’ for the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* show the consistency of his critical views on the subject. Although he only appears briefly and is not allowed to speak, Shakespeare is a pervasive presence in *Kenilworth*, as most of the characters quote from his plays. In particular, the quotation of Oberon’s vision in the context of Elizabeth’s visit to Kenilworth Castle was the cue for the interpretation of the passage by some Shakespearean critics of the nineteenth century, showing Scott’s strength as a critic of Shakespeare. *Woodstock* is a central work in the Scott canon. It was written during a period of financial worries and personal troubles for its author; the protagonist reflects the ageing Scott and like Scott is a Shakespeare idolater. The ironic use of Shakespearean quotations points to Scott’s awareness of his own, at times excessive, Bardolatry. In this novel, Shakespeare worship is made synonymous with Jacobite allegiance; the opposition between Shakespearean Royalists and Miltonic Puritans is also highly ironic: Royalists are made to admire, though unwittingly, Milton and Puritans are presented as unwilling admirers of Shakespeare. The death of Sir Henry Lee marks the end of an era and the beginning of the Shakespeare-free period of the Restoration. The analyses of these two novels and of

Scott's view of drama and its major British exponent led me to attempt to read some of the novels where a profounder, and more indirect relationship is established.

In *The Bride of Lammermoor*, Scott enriched his historical source with references to the three tragedies which most affected the Romantic imagination: *Hamlet*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Macbeth*. Melancholy, madness, eros, the supernatural, the Union and its aftermath, the influence of the theatre and of Shakespearean actors' performances on Scott's creative process, all contribute to the most dramatic of Scott's novels. The characterisation of Hamlet is filtered through his witnessing John Philip Kemble's performance as the Prince of Denmark; in the same way, the Ashtons are the reflection of Kemble's and Sarah Siddons's performances in the Scottish play which also helped Scott's portrayal of the supernatural. *Romeo and Juliet* gave him the scope to depict the social troubles and discomfort brought about by the Union. *The Bride of Lammermoor* constitutes a landmark in Scott's career as a novelist. It is also, and not accidentally, shaped in very complex ways by his great precursor.

My reading of *The Heart of Midlothian* is the best example of the way the parallel works and evidence of the fact that Scott was not a timid critic of Shakespeare. In *The Heart of Midlothian*, he provided an interpretation of a key aspect of the problematic nature of *Measure for Measure*. His understanding of Isabella via Jeanie Deans is an instance of Scott's modern sensibility and it anticipates the argument of Chambers's lecture of 1937. Jeanie's refusal to lie has strong associations with social stability and health in a violent and disordered Edinburgh in the same way that Isabella's rejection of Angelo's proposal reveals the distance between her upright world and the moral disease in Vienna.

In *The Pirate* Scott balanced Shakespeare idolatry with admiration for an author he put second only to Shakespeare and Milton. The presence of an admirer of Dryden

and of an admirer of Shakespeare is encompassed in the double perspective of the novel which has Shakespeare's *Tempest* and Dryden and Davenant's *Enchanted Island* as the two choruses which run through it. As in *Woodstock* Shakespeare idolatry was balanced by the Puritan presence and by imminent Restoration taste, in *The Pirate* the Restoration adaptation aids and complements the original work by Shakespeare. The use of both works allowed Scott to give a reading of *The Tempest* which we could see as anticipating post-colonialist readings of Shakespeare's play.

The Shakespearean referent in *The Black Dwarf* is different from those which characterise the novels analysed previously. *Timon of Athens* is its major Shakespearean precedent and the one Scott asked his readers to make the connection with via the chapter-tags. The character of Richard III is also a strong presence in this novel, and it substantiates the treatment of the "deformed". This novel is in part an essay on personal disability. Misanthropy, madness, and the role of society are interconnected themes, as madness and pregnancy are in *The Heart of Midlothian*. In *The Black Dwarf*, however, the accusation of society bears disturbing tones.

The different kinds of Shakespearean allusion in the novels analysed above show the privileged position occupied by Scott as a Bardolater, as a populariser of Shakespeare and his plays, but more importantly as an interpreter and critic of Shakespeare. They also show that we cannot read Scott properly without considering his relationship to Shakespeare. Brewer's approach conventionally avoided the problem by assuming the greater power of Shakespeare, as most of the studies of the "parallel" had done. The fact that Shakespeare is such a strong pervasive presence in Scott's works should not lead us to assume that Scott slavishly imitated him. The readings of *The Pirate* and *The Black Dwarf* have shown that the presence of Shakespeare is often a screen for other authors or other issues. My reading of *The Heart of Midlothian* has

instead pointed out that references to Shakespeare are sometimes comments on Shakespeare, a metacommentary.

Julia Kristeva wrote that 'any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another'. The Waverley Novels are certainly written as 'a mosaic of quotations'. As regards the "parallel" here considered, they are also 'the absorption and transformation' of Shakespeare's text. For Kristeva, 'The writer's interlocutor [...] is the writer himself, but as reader of another text.' The exchange between Scott the novelist and Scott the reader of Shakespeare gives birth to the "parallel". The parallel with Shakespeare is to be seen in a lineal perspective rather than in a filial line. The relationship between Shakespeare and Scott is not the expression of a burden, which in Brewer's terms passes from Shakespeare on to Scott. Rather it is to be seen as an open relationship between "Scott *and* Shakespeare", as an analogy, a "parallel".

## APPENDIX A

On a total of 904 epigraphed chapters, 217 tags are taken from Shakespeare's plays.

Four title-pages and one introduction also bear a tag from Shakespeare.

<i>Guy Mannering</i>	22/58	
<i>The Heart of Midlothian</i>	15/52	
<i>Woodstock</i>	15/36	
<i>Anne of Geierstein</i>	14/36	+ title page
<i>Quentin Durward</i>	14/37	+ introduction
<i>Saint Ronan's Well</i>	14/39	
<i>Kenilworth</i>	12/41	
<i>The Tale of Old Mortality</i>	12/44	
<i>Ivanhoe</i>	11/44	
<i>The Fair Maid of Perth</i>	9/34	
<i>The Black Dwarf</i>	9/18	
<i>The Bride of Lammermoor</i>	7/35	
<i>The Pirate</i>	9/42	+ title page
<i>The Antiquary</i>	7/45	
<i>Peveril of the Peak</i>	7/49	
<i>Count Robert of Paris</i>	6/27	
<i>The Betrothed</i>	5/31	
<i>The Abbot</i>	4/38	
<i>The Fortunes of Nigel</i>	4/37	
<i>The Monastery</i>	5/37	
<i>Castle Dangerous</i>	3/14	
<i>Waverley</i>	3/6	+ title page
<i>Rob Roy</i>	2/39	
<i>A Legend of the Wars of Montrose</i>	2/23	
<i>The Talisman</i>	2/25	
<i>Chronicles of the Canongate</i>	2/6	
<i>The Surgeon's Daughter</i>	1/8	
<i>The Highland Widow</i>	1/3	
<i>The Two Drovers</i>	—	
<i>Redgauntlet</i>	—	+ title page

## APPENDIX B

This Appendix lists the Shakespearean plays from which Scott derived the tags for his chapters, title-pages and introductions.

<i>1 Henry IV</i>	22
<i>Richard II</i>	15
<i>As You Like It</i>	13 + 1 title page
<i>Macbeth</i> <i>Richard III</i>	11
<i>Measure for Measure</i> <i>The Merchant of Venice</i>	10
<i>Hamlet</i>	9
<i>A Midsummer Night's Dream</i> <i>King John</i>	8
<i>The Merry Wives of Windsor</i> <i>King Lear</i>	7
<i>2 Henry IV</i> <i>The Tempest</i>	6 + 1 title page
<i>Othello</i> <i>Romeo and Juliet</i> <i>Henry V</i>	6
<i>Much Ado about Nothing</i>	5 + 1 introduction
<i>Coriolanus</i> <i>The Winter's Tale</i>	5
<i>3 Henry VI</i>	4 + 1 title page
<i>2 Henry VI</i> <i>The Comedy of Errors</i> <i>Julius Caesar</i>	4
<i>Twelfth Night</i> <i>Henry VIII</i> <i>The Taming of a Shrew</i> <i>The Two Gentlemen of Verona</i> <i>Two Noble Kinsmen*</i>	3
<i>Timon of Athens</i> <i>1 Henry VI</i>	2
<i>Titus Andronicus</i> <i>Love's Labour's Lost</i> <i>All's Well that Ends Well</i> <i>Troilus and Cressida</i> <i>Cymbeline</i> <i>Antony and Cleopatra</i>	1
<i>Pericles**</i>	0

\*Chapters 28 and 29 of *The Monastery* are signed *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. Chapter 33 of *Old Mortality* bears a tag signed Fletcher which derives from the same play. Steevens thought this play had been written entirely by Fletcher, and his theory appeared in Malone's *Supplement* to Steevens's edition of 1778.<sup>1</sup> In 1808, however, Charles Lamb wrote in *Specimens of English Dramatic Poets, Who Lived about the Time of Shakspeare* that *The Two Noble Kinsmen* was 'a tragedy by John Fletcher' and in a note he added that 'Fletcher is said to have been assisted in this Play by Shakspeare.'<sup>2</sup>

\*\* *Pericles* did not appear in the First Folio edition of Shakespeare's plays. In 1780, Malone stated that it was Shakespeare's. Steevens, on the contrary, argued that only some parts of the play were Shakespeare's.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>See Paul Bertram, *Shakespeare and 'The Two Noble Kinsmen'* (New Brunswick, N. J.: Rutgers University Press, 1965), pp. 202-3, note 9.

<sup>2</sup>Quoted in Bertram, p. 209.

<sup>3</sup>See Bertram, p. 206. Scott was aware of Steevens's theories. He owned the following edition of Shakespeare's Works: *Shakespeare's Plays; with the corrections and illustrations of various commentators. With the notes of Dr. Samuel Johnson and George Steevens. 5th edit. revised and augmented by Isaac Reed. With a glossarial Index*, 1803. See *Catalogue of the Library at Abbotsford*, p. 10.

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