THEATRE DESIGN

AT THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE THEATRE

(STRATFORD UPON-AVON)

(1963-1977)

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE WORK OF

ABD'ELKADER FARRAH

Submitted by

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Goldsmiths College, University of London.
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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

Adopting a qualitative mode of research, this study aims to present the Theatre Designer, Abd' Elkader Farrah, as a phenomenon in British theatrical design. More specifically, the study aims to illustrate the role played by Farrah at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre; to present the way in which Farrah's role and contribution affected the production of Shakespearean plays by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), including the contribution made by Farrah's significant ideas and concepts in scenographic design to the RSC. The evaluation compares three theatre designers; Farrah, John Bury and Christopher Morley, all of whom differ in their approaches to theatrical design, through an analytical comparative study of their designs for five Shakespearean plays.

In accordance with the research framework adopted for this study, the aim has been to qualify the research phenomenon, not in terms of number crunching, but rather, with the aim of ascertaining how the informants view the research phenomenon under investigation.

The planning and implementation of the study has been made in three stages. The first stage aimed to discover information related to the context of the present study in the form of background literature, covering the period from 1939 to 1976. The second stage involved identifying the research design of the study on the basis of the relevant literature. It also involved the research sample and the fieldwork and data collection process including the contextual factors which affected this process. Stage three included analysis of the interviews and presenting the findings of this analysis.

These indicate that Farrah's theatrical designs have been a phenomenon in the British theatre scene in terms of his innovativeness, which is significantly represented in Shakespearean plays. Farrah's colleagues saw him, and also his work, as having an individual approach to scenography. His introduction of symbols and hieroglyphic script into his designs was unique, especially as they represent the influence of and also his reflection upon his Middle Eastern cultural background.

Findings also made clear that Farrah's view of things, especially as regards ways to present Shakespeare, is unique, for example in his rejection of conventional symbols in costume. In this sense, the findings have highlighted the influence of the social and cultural contexts in which the designer was brought up and the culture which he absorbed on the approach adopted in the production.

The study illustrates how the designer has distinguished artistic characteristics as well as his relevance beyond the theatre. Farrah's many works were more orientated toward dependence on the arts through using and exploiting movements in the fine arts, such as surrealism and the avant-garde, to their ultimate scenographic designation.

Christopher Morley's designs are more scientifically based, and reflect an artistic doctrine based upon philosophical movements and their impact on the arts. In contrast, John Bury's designs are more floor level stage-based, i.e., launched from the stage floor itself, proceeding from design to execution to materialisation.

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There is always the risk in showing one's appreciation for others that someone will be forgotten. So many individuals helped in direct and indirect ways with the completion of this thesis that I doubt I could ever remember to thank them all.

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CHAPTER ONE

SETTING THE SCENE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Abd' Elkader Farrah, as a theatre designer, contributed largely to the production of Shakespearean plays by the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC) and introduced new and significant ideas and concepts in stage scenographic designs. (I use 'scenographic' to mean 'connected with stage design'.) He is one of those people who have influenced and contributed to the theatre of Shakespeare and presented it to the world. Yet his role in Shakespearean theatre has not been well documented. The aim of this study is to explicate the role which Farrah has played in the Shakespearean theatre and shed light on the way in which his work has contributed to the advancement of Shakespearean production.

Farrah, a North African Arab, became heavily involved in a mainstream British Theatre Establishment. Despite the fact that the literature on the production of the Shakespearean theatre has been bountiful, the role played by Farrah, as a theatre designer, has not yet been well addressed. More specifically, the influence of Farrah has not been drawn upon yet.

The lack of literature on the role played by Farrah as well as the contribution he presented to the Shakespearean theatre has been one of the strong motives for the researcher for focusing on Farrah. Another motive has been the uniqueness of Farrah's experience and contribution, especially if taking into account the fact that he has been

the only African and Middle Eastern artist who has reached a recognised high status in the British National Theatre.

Motivated by the gap between the status he has achieved on the one hand and the contribution he presented on the other, and the paucity of literature on both, the researcher found it essential to focus on Farrah and his role. Besides, Farrah's role in and contribution to Shakespearean theatre in Britain has not yet been addressed by a previous study. This is what makes the present study unique in its approach, objective and orientation.

What makes the study significant firstly for the researcher is that it presents a theatre designer from the Middle East, namely, from the same region of the researcher. Secondly, it presents the role played by this Middle Eastern theatre designer in the theatre of Western Europe. In addition, what makes the present study relevant is that Farrah is the only outsider who has managed to become an important figure in the Royal Shakespeare Company, a success gained by no other non-British member of staff throughout its whole existence. In this sense his contribution in unprecedented in the RSC.

Accordingly, the focus of this study is on Abd' Elkader Farrah and his contribution, as an artist and designer, to the theatre of Shakespeare through his scenographic designs. Examples of this contribution are presented in a delineation of what he contributed to five Shakespearean productions in the period from 1963 to 1975.

1.2 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The study in its present state aims to:

1 illuminate the role played by Farrah in the Shakespearean Theatre;

2 present the way in which Farrah's role and contribution affected the production of the Shakespearean plays by the RSC; and

3 show how three theatre designers, Farrah, Bury and Morley, differed in their approaches to theatrical design, including the contribution of each to theatre design through the five Shakespearean productions.

1.3 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

Difficulties were experienced in conducting the present study. As far as the fieldwork process is concerned, some of those involved in this field did not agree to participate in this study. This could be considered a limitation to the generalisability of the findings of the study. In addition, most of the critiques, published locally and nationally, did not give full reports of the designs of Farrah or the other designers involved in this study, namely, John Bury and Christopher Morley. This lack of resources represented another constraint that faced the researcher.

The majority of critiques concentrated on directors, actors and actresses, only mentioning the scenography in passing. In addition, the sudden death of John Bury denied the researcher the opportunity to interview him and to obtain an essential body of information which could have been beneficial for the study. Moreover, all the criticisms posed by the researcher and the description of the scenography of the concerned plays are on the basis of photographs of various scenes and the descriptions of interviewees, together with their recollections of events which took place over thirty or even forty years ago (for the significance of the study, see 3A).

1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

As indicated earlier, this study is concerned with the contribution and participation of Farrah in the scenography of five of Shakespeare's plays. It is also concerned with contrasting Farrah's style, philosophy and approach to scenography with those of the British designers who were involved in the scenography of these plays, Christopher Morley and John Bury. The three had different expressive styles and individual approaches to the scenographic designs of Shakespearean plays, as the study will suggest in Chapter Five.

Consequently, undertaking this study has a major and significant bearing on an important contemporary historical period of the British theatre in its discussion of the scenographic work of three such important designers.

1.5 STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

The present study is divided into six chapters, as follows:

Chapter One presents a rationale for carrying out the study, the purpose of the study and the potential significance it holds for theatrical work. Also, the limitations of the study are presented. Shakespearean theatre in a Kuwaiti /Arabic context is also presented in this chapter

Chapter Two presents the theoretical framework of the study. It presents an historical overview of the three designers, Christopher Morley, John Bury and Abd' Elkader Farrah, including the social, political and demographic historical background of the period extending from the 1930s to the mid 1970s (1930s-1976). The chapter also

presents a background to the five Shakespearean plays which are to be investigated in the present study.

Chapter Three provides an overview of the methodological issues of the study. There is also an account of the methodology used in the study to generate information related to the plays under investigation.

Chapter Four presents the findings from an analysis of the interviews; these were given by a sample representing academics, actors/directors, theatre managers and designers.

Chapter Five presents the researcher's attempt to provide an analytical and comparative study of five Shakespearean plays.

This chapter also discusses the work of the three artists who designed the scenography for the five Shakespearean plays investigated in this study, attempting in addition to identify the innovations made by each of them, and assesses the extent of their dramatic and scenographic achievements, scene design and accessories. It also discusses the philosophy and psychology of theatre costumes.

Chapter Six concludes the study. It presents the researcher's conclusions about Farrah's contribution to the Shakespearean theatre, and suggests how he succeeded, as a foreigner, in penetrating a British national institution.

1.6 SHAKESPEAREAN THEATRE IN A KUWAITI/ARABIC CONTEXT

There is a strong relationship culturally and theatrically between Kuwait and Egypt. There are cultural exchanges and International Theatre Festivals where work ranging

from the traditional Arabic theatre to the comparatively avant-garde can be seen. There is also an exchange of creative personnel, particularly in the university theatre sector. The Egyptian theatre has become more developed that the Kuwaiti theatre, commissioning new translations of Western classics, which have then been used in Kuwait. The Egyptian audiences have traditionally been regarded as more sophisticated, due to the many European and cosmopolitan influences that have permeated Egyptian history. Nevertheless, theatre in Kuwait is now in a process of future development, and is looking again at how to produce classic plays that appeal to a wide audience of Arabic speakers, who are very different from their western counterparts. The difference between the Eastern and Western public is attributed to inherited national customs and traditions, and reflected in the general taste of the spectator. The Western public has been introduced to the theatrical arts since the Greek and Roman times, through the Middle Ages, Shakespearean and classical theatre, and finally the modern theatre. The Arab, or Eastern, public is not familiar with the different kinds of theatrical arts, except their primitive types, such as the so-called *Khayalul-Dhil Theatre*. Here the actor dresses especially for the occasion in elaborate costumes and acts behind a white screen. The audience only sees his image or shadows on the screen, then are required to judge what the actor is aiming at or what he represents), and also stories told and performed by professional story-tellers. People used to gather around the storyteller in open spaces and listen to his stories. The Western public learned to *watch* things that are performed on the stage, whereas the Eastern public is used to *listen* and *imagine*. Audiences love old Arabic poetry, which has its deep-rooted history in the East. Arabic poetry depends of the language, imagination, listening and memorising. Therefore, when some theatrical groups started to import literary theatrical arts it was very difficult for the Arabic audience to

understand, despite their admiration of the theatrical arts in a new artistic form. The Arabic public found it difficult to grasp the Western approach to linear dramatic and psychological narrative. Some famous poetic presentations involve listening and imagining and philosophical ideas are masked as popular approaches, where audiences absorb the story without being aware that they are thinking and learning. The taste of the Eastern public is radically different from the Western public in content of presentations. They hate philosophy and dislike ambiguity, preferring clear ideas. Hence all plays had to focus, and are still focusing on social and political issues concerning Eastern society as a whole. The Western public prefers to focus on the precise argument, whereas the Eastern public prefers generalisation and is not interested in the particulars of any artistic issue.

In Egypt the understanding and appreciation of Shakespeare is far greater than that in Kuwait. The plays are attended by large numbers of people reflecting a national interest in culture and the arts. In Kuwait Shakespeare, despite the universality of the themes of the plays, theatre is normally presented by English departments in an academic context. The audiences are frequently minority intellectuals, or certain other specific groups. Shakespeare has not had the wide public appeal found in Western Society. The tastes of the wider Arabic public are very individual and specific to the society the theatre serves.

The Higher Institute for Theatrical Arts in Kuwait is an important cultural institution as it presents projects in Drama for the students' graduation, and showcases many aspects of theatrical development, that might not have a wide public appeal. The Institute is a conservatory for new theatrical developments to grow.

Because theatre in Kuwait and other Arabic countries is a minority interest, budgets for productions are very small. This has mitigated against presenting large scale work, in which Shakespeare is categorized, and has led to the rise of The Theatre of the Absurd. Coupled with its broad use of comedy and allusion it has appealed to contemporary playwrights, such as Mohammad Khalid, a playwright and a director, and Ina'am Saud, a playwright, both from Kuwait, and also Kamal Aid in Egypt, and has developed a good audience. However, it is perhaps surprising that contemporary theatre producers have not seized upon the similarities of the so-called Absurdist theatre, and Shakespearean characters such as the workmen in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* or the many low-life characters (Falstaff, Pistol, Bardolph etc.) in *Henry IV*, and find ways of adapting these for a Kuwaiti audience.

Shakespearean theatre in Kuwait and Egypt has common features to the Arabic theatre as a whole, focusing primarily on the tragic aspects of the drama, and the portrayal of archetypical characters easily recognizable to Arab audiences. Hamlet and Claudius are two popular figures whose situations lend the possibility of combining great tragedy and drama. The theatre in Kuwait, particularly in presenting Shakespeare has largely ignored the production and scenographic possibilities that present themselves from the text, and contribute to making the plays more accessible to greater numbers of people. Kuwaiti audiences do love romantic poetry, which can be found in Shakespeare too. However, the directors' main concern is with the actors' portrayal of the principal characters, and their ability to theatricalise basic emotions of anger, sadness, triumph and death.

Shakespearean productions are identified with the early twentieth century, mainly in the form of translations rather than performance. Examples include the translation of

Hamlet by Tanyus Abduh, *King Lear* and *The Taming of the Shrew* by Ibrahim Ramzi, and *Timon of Athens* by Muhammad Taymur, all Egyptians (Badawi, 1988).

It can be concluded that the Eastern attitude to the Classics is totally different from the western attitude. To this Effect, Badawi (1988) states that:

> *"Shakespeare outside the English-speaking world has shown that what happened to his work in Arabic was not altogether dissimilar to the treatment it had received in India or even France or Poland. Foreign plays had to be fully Arabized and made palatable to the tastes of the local audience and public."*

There are two issues relating to Shakespeare's plays as performed in Arabic theatres. The first is that the Arabic translation tended to alter meanings and expressions intended by Shakespeare. The second is that the language should suit the taste of the Eastern public and its concept of the theatre. For instance, when *Othello* is translated into Arabic, the names of the characters are also changed into the local names. *Othello* becomes *Attallah Al-Ghalban*, and *Romeo and Juliet* was changed into *Shahadatul-Gharam* ('Witness for Love'). In other words, these plays were not presented as a distinct Shakespearean art, but Arabised to suit the audience's taste. *Hamlet* was also translated and presented on the stage in 1901, in which the playwright Tanyus Abdullah changed the end whereby *Hamlet* did not die, thus dramatically changing Shakespeare's philosophy and meaning.

At the present time the Kuwaiti theatre is dominated by commercialism, which has deprived the text of its theatrical strength and meaning. This issue here is financial. Production companies are concerned with profit, and want to minimise the expense of the production presented on the stage. The theatre was in a better situation between the 1960s and 1980s. Playwrights adapted texts from the international theatre, and the translation movement was very active until the end of the 1980s. Nonetheless, after the

Iraqi invasion during the 1990s many things changed, mirrored in the theatre, which is in a constant decline. For example, Abdulaziz Al-Musalam, an actor, a director and a proprietor of a production company, graduated in the 1980s, and produced a play entitled *Al-Sittar* - The Curtain. In this production a curtain is raised and lowered vertically by about a metre or so from the stage and only the actors' lower halves are revealed. The performance depended on leg movements and actors' voices). Subsequently, he won the Production Prize in 1989, and the theatrical medium expected him to have a brilliant future because of his directorship ability, preparing the audience to accept him as a model of the Western theatre. Nonetheless, he was influenced after the Iraqi invasion by the new prevailing commercialisation and became interested in production issues rather than in the text. The text of the play, entitled *Al-Bait Al-Maskoon* ("The Haunted House") was very poor, and the scenography was rather substandard. In addition, he was reluctant to invest financially in this play. This partly led to the Kuwaiti audience's lack of interest in attending theatrical productions during recent years. The absence of serious texts presented to high theatrical standards, with real production values reflected interest, and has created a different situation for those believers in the importance of theatre as a universal art.

At this time, the Theatre of the Absurd is more evident in Kuwaiti theatre than Shakespeare, but it is hoped that new production values and the opening up of the world through travel and education, will soon present new opportunities for these greatest plays to be seen and admired by a new public.

CHAPTER TWO

METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES OF THE STUDY

2.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter the methods used to collect data are described. Also presented are the methods used for generating data relating to secondary information. This chapter presents critiques which have appeared in both the local and national press regarding the plays under investigation, scenographic design and the designers involved. Other useful sources of information include books and academic papers published in relation to the plays, which are related to the problem and the objectives of the present study. This chapter presents in full the fieldwork process and the factors and obstacles associated with it.

It is noted that the terms *generate* and *generating* were used earlier. In line with the argument of Mason,[1] they will be used throughout the study, where appropriate, instead of the terms *collect* and *collecting*. As far as the use of interviews in this qualitative study is concerned, Mason also uses the term *qualitative interviewing*, along with three other broad approaches to method: observation, generating and using documents and generating and using visual data. Mason maintains that qualitative interviewing is "*usually intended to refer to in-depth, semi-structured or loosely structured forms of*

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[1] Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative Researching*. London: SAGE Publications.

interviewing". Burgess refers to them as "*conversation with a purpose*".[2] According to Mason, these types of interviews bear the following characteristics:[3]

- their relatively informal style, for example, appearing like a conversation or discussion rather than in a formal 'question and answer' format;

- their thematic, topic-centred, biographical or narrative approach, where, for instance, researchers do not have a structured list of questions, but usually have a range of topics, themes or issues which they wish to cover; and

- the assumption that data is generated through the interaction, because the interviewee or the interaction between the interviewees and researchers or that between the interviewees themselves or both are the sources of data.

In this regard, Mason indicates that most qualitative researchers at some stage use some form of qualitative interviewing for generating data and that many of the principles and issues raised in a discussion of qualitative interviewing are relevant to other methods also. Mason also argues that qualitative interviewing can in fact involve some techniques more commonly associated with other methods, e.g., observing, generating and using documents.[4]

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[2] Burgess, R.G. (1984). *In the Field: an Introduction to Field research.* London: Allen and Unwin.
[3] Mason, J. (1996), *Qualitative Researching.* pp. 38-39.
[4] Mason, J. (1996), op. cit., p. 35.

2.2 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

As far as the design of the study is concerned, it can be argued that the present study adopts the qualitative mode of research. It aims to qualify the research phenomenon not in terms of number crunching methods, but rather in a way which best reflects the way in which the informants view the research phenomenon. It is first necessary to give a short account of what is meant by qualitative research, its main tools and its advantages and disadvantages.

2.2.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

Qualitative research has a long and distinguished history in the human disciplines. The significance of qualitative research for the study of human group life was established during the first part of the twentieth century (the 1920s and 1930s) by the sociological work of the "Chicago School".[5] The use of qualitative research was then extended during the same period to include anthropological studies, followed by a further extension to other social science disciplines, including education, social work and communications.[6]

Qualitative research is a field in its own right, operating in a complex historical field which cuts across five historical periods. These are the traditional period, (the early 1900s until World War II) as associated with the positivist paradigm; the modernist

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[5] Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1998). 'Introduction: Entering the Field of Qualitative Research.' In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds) *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. London: SAGE Publications Inc., p. 1.

[6] Ibid., p. 1.

phase, or the golden age (the post-war years to the 1970s); the era of blurred genres (1970 to 1986), in which the humanities became the central resources for critical, interpretative theory and when the qualitative research project was broadly conceived; the time of crisis representation (in the mid-1980s) when researchers struggled with the problem of how to locate themselves and their subjects in reflexive texts; and finally the double crisis of representation and legitimisation at the present time.[7]

Consequently, any description of what comprises qualitative research must operate within this complex historical field. Denzin and Lincoln offer an initial, generic definition, which is multi-method in its focus, involving an interpretative, naturalistic approach to its subject matter. The aim is to study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings which people bring to them.[8]

Interviews, ethnography, participant observation and case study are the four main and most commonly employed qualitative methods.[9] The specialised qualitative research techniques used are the critical incident technique, the repertory grid, cognitive mapping and the projective methods; phenomenology, ethnomethodology and interpretive practice[10], grounded theory[11]and biographical methods.[12]

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[7] Ibid. pp. 13-22

[8] Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (1998).

[9] Ibid.
Whipp, R. (1998). 'Qualitative Methods: Technique or Size?' In K. Whitfield and G. Strauss (eds.), *Researching the World of Work: Strategies and Methods in Industrial Relations.* London: Cornell University Press.

[10] Holstein, J.A. and Gubrium, J.F. (1998). 'Phenomenology, Ethnomethodology and Interpretative Practice.' In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. London: Sage Publications Inc.

Interviewing is a way of generating empirical data about a sociological subject through asking people to talk about their lives, experiences or views. Accordingly, interviews are special forms of conversation.[13] Holstein and Gubrium add that while such conversations may vary from highly structured, standardized, qualitatively oriented survey interviews, to semi-formal guided conversation and free-flowing informational exchanges, all interviews are "interactional".

Interviews may be defined in different ways by different authors. Mccoby and Mccoby, for example, define interviews as "face to face verbal interchange in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to elicit information or expressions of opinion or belief from another person or persons."[14]. Kahn and Connell describe the interview as a "specialized pattern of verbal interaction - initiated for a specific purpose, focused on some specific content area, with consequent elimination of extraneous material."[15] In addition, they indicate that the interview is a pattern of interaction in which the role relationship of interviewer and interviewee is highly specialized, its specific characteristics depending somewhat on the purpose and character of the interview.

Another attempt to define the term 'interview' is provided by Ackeroyd and Hughes, who stated that an interview is an "encounter between a researcher and a respondent in which the latter is asked a series of questions relevant to the subject of the research. The

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[11] Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1998). 'Grounded Theory Methodology: An Overview.' In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. London: SAGE Publications Inc.

[12] Smith, L.M. (1998). 'Biographical Method.' In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (eds.), *Strategies of Qualitative Inquiry*. London: SAGE Publications Inc.

[13] Holstein, J.A. and Gubraim, F.J. (1998). Op. cit. p. 105.

[14] Mccoby, E. and Mccoby, N. (1954). 'The Interview: A Tool of Social Sciences.' In: G. Lindzey (ed.) "*Handbook of Social Psychology*. Reading, Ma.: Addison Wesley. p. 499.

respondent's answers constitute the raw data analysed at a later point in time by the researcher".[16] Likewise, Babbie, for his part, defines the interview simply as a "data collection encounter in which one person (an interviewer) asks questions of another (i.e. a respondent)"[17].

In fact, an interview, one of the most commonly recognised forms of the qualitative research method, is a primary means of accessing the experiences and subjective views of other people, enabling the researcher to open new dimensions of a problem or to discover clues connecting its different elements, according to Mason.[18]. Recently, Naoum has maintained that an interview is a

> *"face-to-face interpersonal role situation in which the interviewer asks respondents questions designed to elicit answers pertinent to the research hypotheses ...the personal interview is another major technique for collecting factual information as well as opinions."*[19]

The interview, according to Robson, is,

> *"deservedly, a widely used method in small-scale evaluations. It comes in many different forms, typically it takes place in a face-to-face situation with one interviewer and one interviewee. However, group interviews are possible and interviews conducted over the telephone are increasingly used."*[20]

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[15] Kahn, R.I. and Canell, F. (1957). *The Dynamics of Interviewing.* New York: Wiley. p. 16)

[16] Ackeroyd, S. and Hughes, J. (1983). *Data Collection in Context.* Harlow, London: Longman, p. 66.

[17] Babbie, E. (1989). *The Practice of Social Research.* Fifth Edition. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, p. G4.

[18] Mason, J. (1996). *Qualitative Researching.* p. 38

[19] Naoum, S.G. (1999). *Dissertation Research and Writing for Construction Students.* Oxford: Butterworth-Heinemann. p. 56.

[20] Robson, C. (2000). *Small-Scale Evaluation. Principles and Practices.* London: Sage.

As far as telephone interviews as concerned, they seem to produce substantial savings in time and cost, despite the fact that there are disadvantages arising from the lack of direct personal contact.[21] Given the nature of the present study, which requires face-to-face meetings with interviewees for a long period of time, it was impossible to use telephone interviews. This is because the researcher is more concerned with the interaction process between him and the informant than merely to accumulate less-contextualized interview data. In this respect, Burton maintains that face-to-face interviews *"are perhaps the most sociable way to collect survey data, unlike telephone surveys and self-administered questionnaires – at least you see the respondents."*[22] Face-to-face interviewing has a number of advantages over other means of collecting survey data. These include:[23]

- The fact that face-to-face interviews are probably the most effective way of enlisting the co-operation of most populations.

- Other advantages related to what is termed interviewer administration, for example, answering a respondent's questions, probing, prompting; and the facility to use complex question sequences.

- Face-to-Face interviews are a multi-method form and in effect build up a contextual analysis and respond to the visual cues of the respondent.

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[21] Lavrakas, P.J. (1998). 'Methods for Sampling and Interviewing in Telephone Surveys.' In Bickman, L. and Rog, D.J. eds. *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods.* Thousand Oaks, Ca.: Sage.

[22] Burton, D. (2000). 'Data Collection Issues in Survey Research.' In Burton, D. ed. *Research Training for Social Scientists.* London: Sage Publications. p. 323.

[23] Ibid. p. 323.

- It is far easier to build rapport and a relationship of trust with subjects on a face-to-face basis.

- Longer interviews are possible on a face-to-face basis than by telephone and they are preferable for asking open-ended questions. I have referred to this advantage earlier.

- Material which needs to be shown to respondents can be properly presented during a face-to-face interview, for example, a list of options from which subjects have to choose, or a photograph to look at and then comment. During interviews undertaken in the present study, photographs were shown to our respondents so that they could describe scenography or particular scenes and comment on them.

- Interviewers can usually persuade respondents to complete an interview and the quality of data generated is usually superior to that obtained by other methods.

However, although face-to-face interviewing has considerable advantages, it should be noted that interviewing is difficult to do well. While the interviewers are, on the one hand, trying to be 'standard' in their approach, they also need to react to individual circumstances. Burton describes interviewing as a "*process of social interaction which is highly artificial in its outcome, including the answers, which might be influenced by the sex, age, accent and personality of both interviewer and respondent.*"[24]

McNeil suggests that:

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[24] Burton, D. (2000). Op. cit., p. 324.

> *"Interviewers have to strike a careful balance between establishing the kind of relationship with respondents that will encourage them to be frank and truthful and avoiding becoming too friendly so that respondents try hard to please. Friendly but restrained is a phrase used to describe this attitude."*[25]

Ethnography is widely used in employment research and its benefits are broadly similar to those of interviewing; being aware of the rules which govern individual or collective behaviour is the priority. While interviews generate separate pieces of evidence and testimony, ethnography is more inclusive, involving the respondent's direct observation in context and enabling researchers to interact with both respondent and the setting, linking their values, behaviours and circumstances. Ethnography is defined as the:

> *"art and science of describing a group or culture. The description may be of a small tribal group in some exotic land or of a classroom in middle-class suburbia."*[26]

Ethnography typically involves an immersion in the concerned culture which classically, may take anything from several months to two or three years.[27] Fetterman provides detailed, very readable accounts of ethnography in two of his publications.[28]

Case studies are considered to be the emblem of qualitative research, involving detailed investigations of one or a small number of research objects (groups, organisations or industries) in their complex contexts or settings. Case studies typically use a

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[25] McNeill, P. (1989). *Research Methods.* London: Routledge. P. 39.
[26] Fetterman, D.M. (1998). 'Ethnography.' In Bickman, L. and Rog, D.J. eds. *Handbook of Applied Social Research Methods.* Thousand Oaks, Ca.: Sage. p. 473.
[27] Robson, C. (2000). Op. cit. p. 96.

combination of specific techniques: interviews, observations, questionnaires and documentary sources, while in some studies interviews, ethnography and documentary sources are combined. Yin indicates that case studies represent a research strategy, to be likened to an experiment, a history or a simulation, which may be considered an alternative research strategy, but none of these strategies is linked to a particular type of evidence or method of data collection.[29] Case studies may be used as a falsification test in which an extreme or apparently unusual example of the phenomenon in question is studied in an attempt to challenge other researchers' conclusions.[30]

The term '**grounded theory**' was coined by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 in reference to the inductive method of theory construction[31]. Babbie (1989, pp. 51-52) indicates that the social scientist often begins to construct a theory by observing aspects of social life, seeking to discover patterns which may point more or less to universal principles. Grounded theory is a general methodology for developing theory grounded in data systematically collected and analysed and the theory evolves during the actual research. This can be done through a continuous interplay between analysis and data collection.[32]

Qualitative methods have four main advantages, namely that: (1) they are ideal for opening up new topics; (2) they are also an advantage when attempting to uncover many hidden features of employment relationships; (3) informal and illicit behaviour can be

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[28] Fetterman, D.M. (1989). *Ethnography: Step by Step.* Newbury Park, Ca.: Sage. Fetterman, D.M. (1998). Op. cit.

[29] Yin, R.K. (1994). *Case Study Research Design and Methods.* Second Edition. London: SAGE Publications.

[30] Yin, R.K. (1994). Ibid.

[31] Glaser, B. and Strauss, A.I. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory.* Chicago: Aldine.

[32] Strauss, A. and Corbin, J. (1998). Op. cit.

examined in the conditions of trust which may develop in association with interviews or using ethnographic methods; and (4) the open-ended and iterative character of qualitative research encourages full appreciation of processes in depth.[33]

However, qualitative research suffers from the limitations (or disadvantages) of its level of generalisation, induction and transparency. Qualitative studies are often criticised for their concern with the particular at the expense of the general. Qualitative (and also quantitative) techniques are limited in providing a totally reliable base from which to generalise. The positivist tradition produces theory by testing hypotheses, which confirm or deny existing orthodoxies, that is, through a deductive process. The problem of transparency throws qualitative research into confusion.[34] It is also argued that conclusions, drawn up by researchers, may be challenging and innovative, but other academics can only speculate on the ways in which the results were reached.[35] Yet, it is necessary to remember that qualitative methods are particularly appropriate for studies of culture, power and change. These three fields are important for organisational change, as this change involves power vested in the management, an organisation's culture and organisational change. This is a major reason why researchers use qualitative research to look at change. In our case, it can be used to examine organisational change through changes in the set design of Shakespeare's plays between 1966 and 1976.

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[33] Whipp, R. (1998). 'Qualitative Methods: Technique or Size?' In Whitfield, K. and Strauss, G. eds. *Researching the World of Work: Strategies and Methods in Industrial Relations.* London: Cornell University Press.
[34] Ibid.
[35] Whipp, R. (1998). Op. cit.

2.2.2 RESEARCH TOOLS

It was decided that the present enquiry would focus on an exploration of the views and attitudes of set designers, directors, historians, academics and others who have been, involved in theatre design or scenography of Shakespeare's plays at the Royal Shakespeare Company (RSC), all three designers had already been marked as talented new artists, in addition to critics whose views of scenographic design is of particular importance and relevance to the purposes of this study. This kind of study can be achieved by using questionnaires, but such studies are often large scale. Therefore, it is usually necessary for questionnaires to be preceded by a more personal exploration of the views and ideas of the groups involved through small-scale pilot studies.

In the light of the above outline of qualitative research and its main methods and a literature review relating to the topic of the present study, as well as considering time limitations, it seemed appropriate to discuss the necessary questions with a small sample of people through direct interviews. Accordingly, it was decided to plan a series of semi-structured or loosely structured interviews to elicit the views and ideas of the interviewees. Structured interview schedules were also used in some particular cases, as will be indicated later.

The study which follows has been developed through the medium of face to face interviews, supplemented by contemporary written criticism. This interview method is one which allows respondents to express their views directly and also to make suggestions rather freely without being bound to respond to specified answers, as is the

case when questionnaires are used or when a set of closed questions is provided. The interviews helped to identify further problems as perceived by the interviewees, whose professional experience and daily contact with the subject under investigation was of great value in establishing the extent of the difficulties referred to and the actual response to them in current practice. The direct approach of this study had the potential to generate the emergence of helpful ideas about future developments in this field of theatrical studies.

In addition, the interviews also enabled participants to describe their situation. According to Stringer:

> *"The interview process not only provides a record of their views and perspectives, but also symbolically organizes the legitimacy of their points of view".*[36]

The interview approach was adopted, because interviews are often superior to other data-gathering tools as they tend to capture the personal reflection of the interviewees. It seems that people are often more open and honest in speaking with others face to face than when they are asked to make a written response. Information given orally in a situation of personal contact is of greater importance to both interviewer and interviewees than written replies.[37] Interviews are described as unique because they involve the collection of data which has personal reference. The interview used in this way is an essential scientific instrument, which is commonly utilised. The method is very

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[36]Stringer, E.T. (1996). *Action Research: A Handbook for Practitioners.* London: SAGE Publications. p. 62.

[37] Borg, W.R. and Gall, M.D. (1989). *Educational Research: An Introduction.* London: London.

effective when collecting data in educational research where the quality of directness which it gives to opinions and views conveys something of the personality and the passions of those interviewed. The uniqueness of expression achieved through this method is often apparent because it encourages the emergence of fine points, which tend to be lost in impersonal forms of enquiry, such as the questionnaire.

Further, interviews frequently permit a much greater depth of enquiry than other methods of generating research data,[38] because respondents can often be more willing to talk than to write.[39] Best goes on to claim that interviews can also help researchers to 'establish' a friendly and secure relation with their interviewee and this allows more sensitive types of information to be provided more easily.[40] Cohen and Manion usefully explain the contribution of the interview to research technique in terms of three possible purposes: *first*, as a principal means of gathering information with direct bearing on the research objectives; *second,* as a means of testing hypotheses or suggesting new ones; and *third,* as a device which helps the detailed identification of variables and relationships.[41] They also show how the interview can be used in conjunction with other methods in a research undertaking. The present study does not follow these links, since other research tools have not been used.[42]

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[38] Ibid.
[39] Best, J (1981). *Research in Education.* New Jersey: Englewood Cliffs. 4th ed.
[40] Ibid.
[41] Cohen, L. and Manion, L. (1989). *Research Methods in Education.* London: Croom Helm.
[42] Ibid.

As far as the focus of the interviews is concerned, the present work involved a large number of interviewees, covering a wide range of expertise and specialisation relating to the study. The questions formulated were of two types:

(a) General, addressed to all participants irrespective of their field of expertise

(b) Specialisation and specific, addressed to individual interviewees in line with their particular expertise that could not be provided by other participants.

2.2.3 FIELDWORK AND DATA COLLECTION

The study was planned and implemented through three stages, as follows:

STAGE ONE

To generate the information related to the context of the present study and also to provide an assessment of the general background of study, a wide range of literature was reviewed covering the period from 1939 to 1976. The aim was to illustrate changes in the social, political and ethical dimensions of the theatre. This is documented in Chapter Two, together with an additional literature review related to the specific period of the study.

STAGE TWO

This stage involved the identification of the research framework and design of the study. This included the fieldwork process and data collection. The research approach was identified in the light of the relevant literature. Also included in this stage is the selection

of the sample of the study (see Appendix I).

STAGE THREE

Stage three included the analysis of the interviews and a presentation of its findings. (Stage four covers the discussion of the findings in the light of related literature and the comparative and analytical study of five Shakespearean plays).

2.2.4 CONTEXTUAL ISSUES INFLUENCING THE STUDY

It is generally accepted and understood that certain ethical issues must be observed and care should be taken by qualitative researchers in conducting research. Thus, it is helpful to reflect on these ethical issues before attempting to present the findings when the above empirical procedures were implemented. Firstly, the researcher was faced with the reluctance of some individuals to participate in the present study. This reluctance reflects the sensitivities of these individuals in respect of views and ideas relating to the topic. It is likely that some individuals were not willing to express their views openly regarding the work of their colleagues, afraid that such views may be critical of or offensive to them.

It is of paramount importance that researchers should act to protect the confidentiality of their sample, who should under no circumstances be put at risk directly or indirectly.[43] Mason states that "*Qualitative research should be conducted as an* ethical

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[43] Miles, M.B. and A.M. Huberman. (1994). *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook.* 2nd ed. London: SAGE Publications.

practice *and with regard to its political context*".[44] She also adds that, in her view, "*ethical concerns must be high on the research design agenda of any researcher*".[45]

Secondly, qualitative research manuals tend frequently to insist that the informed consent of the study sample is absolutely essential to the integrity of a research project. It is argued that this consent reflects the notion that only individuals informed by the researcher have freedom of choice in participation.[46] Accordingly, only those who give their consent will participate in the study.

Miles and Huberman further maintain that the ideal relationship between researchers and their study sample is that of openness and honesty.[47] Mason also maintains that face-to-face data generating methods can,[48] 'and should' be characterised by a high degree of trust and confidence.[49] This approach was paramount when interview questions were formulated so as to allow the interviewees to give frank and open answers. The straightforward formulation of interview questions makes it unlikely that interviewees will be tempted to invent or elaborate their responses in a manipulative way. This approach, therefore, implies that the information generated is wholly faithful and true. Finally, social changes also have an important impact during the study period. These impacts are discussed critically in the Introductory Chapter.

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[44] Mason, J. (1996) op. cit. p. 6.
[45] Ibid. p. 29.
[46] Miles, M.B. and A.M. Huberman. (1994). Op. cit.
[47] Miles, M.B. and A.M. Huberman. (1994). Op. cit.
[48] Mason, J. (1996) op. cit.
[49] Finch, J. (1984). '"Its Great to Talk To": Ethics and Politics of Interviewing Women'. In C. Bell and H. Roberts (eds) *Social Researching: Politics and Educational Research.* London: Falmer.

2.2.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STDUY

There are several factors relating to the process of obtaining and collecting both the primary and secondary information required for the present study and these can be seen as limitations. Time is one of the biggest constraints: to generate sufficient, appropriate and accurate primary and secondary information is both time-consuming and laborious. In fact, arrangements for contacting interviewees and undertaking interviews is also a lengthy process and requires commuting, sometimes over a large geographical area within the UK. Taping interviews and editing interviewees' views and observations also takes a long time. Generating secondary information relating to the literature reviews (Chapter Two) and using such information to discuss our fieldwork findings is again a time-consuming process.

A second limitation, which may prove problematic in some cases, is the reluctance, or refusal, of certain interviewees to answer some questions, or even to participate at all. When these interviewees refuse to meet with the researcher and answer questions, other candidates have to be identified in order to obtain as much information as possible.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the theoretical background of the study. It focuses on providing an historical overview of the three designers under study, namely, Abd' Elkader Farrah, Christopher Morley and John Bury. This includes the social, political and demographic historical backgrounds for the period extending from the 1930s to the mid-1970s (1930s-1976). This overview is a prelude to presenting the comparison of the five Shakespearean plays, which are under consideration in the present study.

3.2 HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Included within the repertoire at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon between 1963 and 1976, were five productions of plays by Shakespeare; *Richard III* (August 1963 and April 1970), *Henry IV* (*Parts I and II*) (April 1964 and April and June 1975, *Henry V* (August 1966 and January 1976), *The Tempest* (April 1964 and October 1970) and *The Taming of the Shrew* (April 1967 and September 1973). Three very different designers were involved in the productions of these plays: the British designer John Bury, the Algerian designer Abd' Elkader Farrah and the British designer Christopher Morley. The cultural issues associated with the three designers concerning their views about Shakespeare are unique, since such diversity has not been found before or since that time. This is why it deserves analysis and comparison.

Since it is the one and only time a Middle Eastern artist has reached national recognition in Great Britain, it is worth giving particular attention to Abd' Elkader Farrah. 'Farrah' came from Algeria to Britain, via Paris. There he met many artists and was exposed to the intellectual and artistic traditions of several cultures and orientations. In 1949 Farrah painted a huge mural at the Carmalite Convent in Foutainbleau Arvon, that was seen by many people including some theatre directors. This led to opera commissions and an invitation to become Head of Design at the National Drama Centre in Strasbourg, with the avant-garde director Michel Saint-Denis. This was the beginning of a long and fruitful collaboration between the two. When Michel Saint-Denis was invited to create the Old Vic Theatre School in London, he asked Farrah to join him. Eventually in 1962 Michel Saint-Denis was invited to form an experimental studio at the RSC, and through him Farrah also joined the Company and became a resident RSC Associate Artist. This rich experience qualified him to contribute something of what he had learnt to a national British Institution – The Royal Shakespeare Theatre.

John Bury was already an established designer. He had worked extensively with Joan Littlewood, at the Royal Theatre, Stratford East, on a no-money basis for the set, creating political theatre, with a 'hands-on' approach to design. With no formal art training at all, Bury's approach was very much practical construction on the stage using authentic raw materials.

Christopher Morley's designs reflect an artistic doctrine based on philosophical movements and their impact on the arts. This becomes evident in his use of perspective, in theory and in practice, to help the dramatic content of each individual

drama. Morley creates his scenographic design in a way that is appropriate to the time, era and the sequence of scenes and acts

As is often said, 'the theatre is a mirror of society'. During this period of time, massive changes occurred at the Royal Shakespeare Company which reflected the changing contemporary social scene. Such changes were the inevitable outcome of the traumas, effects and consequences of the Second World War.

The historical background to the study includes the period from 1939 until 1966 in which many political, social, demographic and theatrical changes took place and concludes with the ten year period between 1966 and 1976 when the pace of social change quickened.

3.3 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND - SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND DEMOGRAPHIC

Britain, like most other countries in the world, witnessed major changes in its social, political and demographic structure following the Second World War. Europe, North America and many Asian and African countries were engaged in a war between Germany and its allies, on the one hand, and the Allied Forces of the British Empire, the USA, the Soviet Union, France and other European and Middle Eastern countries, on the other. When the Americans bombed Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan, it was the first time the world witnessed the horror of atomic warfare; according to Trussler, this[1]

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[1] Trussler, S. 1994. *The Cambridge Illustrated History of British Theatre*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, p. 300.

"... demonstrated the terrible potential of nuclear conflict - the threat of which cast its shadow over the breakdown of the alliance with the Soviet Union, as Eastern Europe found enforced shelter behind the 'Iron Curtain."

In Britain, women during the war found themselves in great demand to work in factories, offices and local government agencies, since men were either drafted into, or volunteered to join, the Armed Forces. Some five million men and women were in the armed forces in 1945[2]. This movement into the labour market gave women more independence from their husbands, fathers or brothers, who had been the main providers for their families before war broke out.

The privations of war in Europe and elsewhere in the world were followed in Britain, as in other parts of the Continent, by continuing shortages of food and power, particularly in the bleak winter of 1947, the worst for a century[3]. Hugh Dalton, the Chancellor of the Exchequer described that winter as 'an *Annus Horrendus*.'[4] The late 1940s had been years of austerity, when food and clothing were strictly rationed - hence the black-market 'spiv' was a stock figure of comedy - and the 'utility' mark on furniture, clothes and other consumer goods was a joyless sign of practical 'good design'.[5] Trussler[6] describes theatre in Britain between 1939 and 1956 as "The Utility Theatre".

In 1945, the Labour Party won the General Election with a substantial majority. The Labour Government introduced economic interventions on a larger scale and provided a state system of social security. The creation of a mixed economy and a fully-fledged

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[2] Gardiner, J. 1999. *From the Bomb to the Beatles*. Collins and Brown Ltd., London.
[3] Trussler, S. op. cit. p. 43.
[4] Gardiner, J. 1999. op. cit.
[5] Thames and Hudson. 1999, p. 18.

welfare state helped to shape a political consensus, which was to be sustained until the end of the 1970s, when the Conservatives, under Mrs. Thatcher, won a landslide victory against the Labour Government. The state then took responsibility only for the elimination of mass unemployment, the avoidance of the worst extremes of poverty and the alleviation of ill health, most other problems being seen as a matter of personal responsibility.[7] Sylvester[8] maintains that the welfare state, introduced by the post-war Labour government and carried on by its Conservative successors, brought about a real social revolution. The shared experiences of war broke down many class distinctions and new novels such as John Braine's *Room at the Top* (1957) were shocking in their realistic depiction of working-class ambition as well as of sex.

The people's health also started improving during the post-war period. For example, infant mortality showed a steady decline and war babies from all classes remained well nourished due to the fair system of rationing of scarce resources. In the same vein, education also started to flourish. Educational reforms made it possible for poor children to receive a 'good' if still class-ridden schooling, even to enter universities with state support. In 1999, Sir Christopher Frayling, Cultural Historian and Rector of the Royal College of Art looked at this question from the following perspective.

> *"The appearance of Britain has undergone real changes in the past fifty years. Tall buildings, motor traffic and the roads to accommodate it have transformed cities and the means of communication between them; television has changed the way we see our surroundings and has introduced a visual awareness of the rest of the world, so that the exotic has become commonplace ... When looking at the work in the art and design of earlier decades it is important to remember how much smaller the world was, how much more*

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[6] Trussler, S. 1994. op. cit.
[7] Trussler, S. 1994. op. cit, p. 300.
[8] Sylvester, D. 1999. '1950s: A New-Found Land.' pp. 16-55. In *Vision: 50 Years of British Creativity*. Thames and Hudson Ltd., London.

limited the technical resources, how much narrower the concept of British culture (p. 9).[9]

The theatre between 1939 and 1956 reflected all these social changes and the tensions which accompanied them - "sometimes directly, in a new counterpoising of state involvement with commercial interests, sometimes indirectly, in necessary accommodations to changing times and conditions".[10] According to Trussler, the 'West End Theatre' audience was only rarely disturbed by plays presenting the radically changed social circumstances of those years with a degree of honesty rather than evasion. Trussler adds that in the *Linden Tree* (1947), J.B. Priestley engaged with the actual problems and concerns of a middle-class family who felt that they were dispossessed and undervalued. However, the more usual fare consisted of pieces which combined wish-fulfilment with a sort of sublimated average of the proletariat, for instance, a combination typified in William Douglas Home's *The Chiltern Hundreds* (1948), where a socialist aristocrat is defeated at a by-election by a butler, which represents, in every sense, "the Conservative interest".[11]

In the same vein, Hartnoll also referred to the profound effect of the Second World War upon the theatre everywhere, though some of the subterranean influences which led to the final upheaval had been apparent prior to 1939. She writes:

> "*The dispersal of talents under Hitler, the growing dissatisfaction of theatre workers with the limitations imposed by the proscenium arch, the desire to enlarge bounds of experience, the inadequacy of most of the new plays,*

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[9] Frayling, . 1999, p. 9.
[10] Trussler, S. 1994, op. cit., p. 300.
[11] Trussler, S. 1994, op. cit., p. 305.

created an unstable situation which needed only a sudden jolt to set the theatre off in a new direction. This was provided by the work of Bertolt Brecht, the dominating influence in the European theatre of the 1950s .... his early plays showed him attempting to make use both of Piscator's 'epic theatre' and his own theory of 'alienation'. This new approach to the problem of actor-audience relationship consisted in destroying by various technical methods the once-prized 'theatrical illusion' and so preventing the spectators from becoming emotionally involved in the action. Only then, he argued, can they judge the performance and the subject-matter objectively and with intelligence" (p. 255).[12]

Nonetheless, Hartnoll indicated that though this was admirable in theory it only sometimes worked well. In Germany, Bertolt Brecht became a major influence in the theatre, where his own work brought drama and epic together. He asked his actors to remain just 'actors' and to avoid engaging the sympathy of the audience. He singled out the scene at Bosworth Field: "A theatre full of alienation-effects!".[13] Brecht's influence was also reflected in the production of *Henry V* in 1975. Charles Lewson in *The Times* (9th April 1975) referred to this influence.[14] Lewson stresses the contrast between Henry's two onstage assumptions of his regalia: 'the first, with awe and terror as he takes up the Dauphin's challenge and prepares for battle in France, the second with easy confidence after he has been bloodied and before the Battle of Agincourt". This depiction of the relation between costume and role recalls the scene in Brecht's *Galileo* wherein the Pope hardens himself to Galileo's torture while being dressed in the panoply of his office. Brecht's influence was also felt in the 1984 production of

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[12] Hartnoll, P. 1985. *The Theatre: A Concise history.* First published in Great Britain in 1968 as *A Concise History of the Theatre.* Revised edition 1985, reprinted 1989, p. 255.

[13] Levin, H. 2000. *Scenes from Shakespeare.* (Edited by Evans, G.B). Histories. Two Tents on Bosworth Field: *Richard III, V, iii, iv, v. pp. 47-66.* New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc, p. 66.

[14] Quoted in Loehlin, J.N. 1997. *Henry V. Chapter III. We Band of Brothers: Terry Hands (1975).* Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press. p. 57.

Henry V; Lewson maintains that the production as a whole struck him as a harsh and distinctly Brechtian depiction of men at war in a dubious cause.[15]

Jatinder Verma, Director of Tara Arts, the first Asian Theatre Director to be invited to work with his own company in a national theatre, reflects that the so-called 'Angry Decade' of British theatre is marked by the absence of the immigrant phenomenon.[16]

3.3.1 THE 1930S TO MID 1960S

The 1930s and 1940s productions of Shakespeare in Britain did not for the most part make any bid to change the managerial and social structures of theatre. Jackson [17] goes on to say that:

> "*The performance might embody a director's or actor's view of the play or its roles, observe some version of what were understood to be the ways and means of the Elizabethan stage and would by now be expected to achieve a specific aesthetic effect or mood*".

The social purpose of the theatre during this period was defined by Jackson (p. 211) as making the enjoyment and better understanding of Shakespeare "available to all at an affordable cost", like state-funded provision of national insurance, health care, housing, education and the other elements of the welfare state that the post-war government was to implement. In the late 1940s the Olivier-Richardson-Burrell regime at the Old Vic and the revitalising of Stratford seemed to promise that this would be secured. Peter Brook's essay, *The Empty Space*, first appeared in the first edition of *Orpheus* in

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[15] Loehlin, J.N. 1997. *ibid.* P. 57.
[16] Verma,J. 1994. 'Cultural Transformations.' In T. Shank (ed.), "*Contemporary British Theatre.* London: Macmillan Press Ltd.

1948 and was reprinted in *The Modern Theatre: Readings and Documents* in 1967. This described how "the Deadly Theatre" continually oppressed English productions of Shakespeare by taking the opposite view, especially at the Shakespeare's Memorial Theatre (SMT)[18].

Kennedy quotes Brook's remark that:

> "*When I first went to Stratford in 1945 every conceivable value was buried in deadly sentimentality and complacent worthiness - a traditionalism approved largely by town, scholar and press. It needed the boldness of a very extraordinary old gentlemen, Sir Barry Jackson, to throw all this out of the window and so make a true search for values possible once more*" (p. 46).[19]

It was in 1944 that Fordham Flower, who succeeded his father Sir Archie on the Board of Governors of the SMT, soon started dismantling the Victorian traditions which had ruled since 1879.[20]

However, by the mid 1950s, the outlook for the non-commercial theatre seemed less assured. The Old Vic triumvirate of 1949 had been replaced, in what looked like a putsch.[21] Stratford, promoted from its second-rank status first of all by the energetic direction of Sir Barry Jackson and secondly, after 1951, by Anthony Quayle, seemed by the mid-1950s to be without artistic policy beyond survival from one season to the

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[17] Jackson, R. 1996. 'Shakespeare in Opposition: From the 1950s to the 1990s.' pp. 211-230. In Bate, J. and Jackson, R. (eds.) "*Shakespeare: An Illustrated Stage History.* Oxford University Press, Oxford, p. 211.

[18] Kennedy, D. 1994. *Looking at Shakespeare: A Visual History of Twentieth Century Performance. 6 Reinventing the Stage.* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge. Reprinted 1994.

[19] Ibid. p. 165.

[20] Ibid.

[21] Jackson, R., 1996, op. cit.

next[22]. However, Dame Peggy Ashcroft, a leading Shakespearean actress for forty years, made a comment quoted by Peter Waymark (1970) about the Royal Shakespeare Company: "Under Anthony Quayle there was a completely different regime and he managed to get higher standards all round". She added: "Even so the company was only together for the season and there was always this state of anxiety among actors as to what would happen at the end."

The blitz in London disrupted theatres, as it did other aspects of life in London and elsewhere in the UK. According to Trussler, some theatres then played matinees only "- *and even lunchtimes became an enclave for cultural as well as bodily refreshment when the last of the old-barn storming actor-managers, Donald Wolfit, brought his company to London with a programme of pre-prandial Shakespeares*".[23] The only two theatres to carry on playing nightly throughout the blitz were the Windmill, a strip club, and the Unity, a left wing (socialist) political club. Other theatres were either destroyed or badly damaged, the fate of the Old Vic Theatre in Waterloo, Central London..

Three organisations, among others, flourished during the war. These were the Army Bureau of Current Affairs (ABCA), Entertainments National Service Association (ENSA) and the Council for the Encouragement of Music and Arts (CEMA). ABCA and ENSA were military in origin and CEMA was civilian, but they worked on common lines, hoping to bring theatrical experience to new kinds of audiences[24].

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[22] ibid.
[23] Trussler, S. 1994, op cit. p. p. 301.
[24] Ibid. [For further details relating to this period, 1939 to 1956, see Chapter 19: '*The Utility Theatre*', by Simon Trussler and '*The Cambridge Illustrated History of British Theatre*' (1994)].

One of the major social and political events in the mid and late 1950s was the Suez crisis of 1956. This year was also marked by the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian uprising. The Suez conflict provided a convenient cover for the crushing of the Hungarian uprising by the Red Army, a brutal action which destroyed hopes that the death of Stalin in 1952 might lead to a thaw in the Cold War[25]. The 'Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament' (CND) was founded at the end of January 1958, when Canon Collins, a wartime RAF chaplain, announced the formation of the CND in a press conference. The CND's aim was 'to channel the existing emotion in the country and create a climate of opinion which would make it essential for the political parties to follow'.[26] Earlier in the 1950s there was the Korean War, which lasted for three years between 1950 and 1952. Other conflicts in the Far East at that time included the Indo-China War for Liberation when France was defeated by the North Vietnamese Communists. Britain and its troops were either deeply involved or implicated indirectly in these conflicts.

The 1960s witnessed further social, technological and political events and changes. The decade witnessed President J.F. Kennedy's election in 1960 and his assassination in 1963. It witnessed confrontation between East and West, represented by the Cuban Missile crisis in 1962, the erection of the Berlin Wall; removal of Stalin's body from the Red Square in Moscow; and the first man in space (Yuri Gagarin) in 1961 This was followed by John Glenn's space flight in 1962, the Indian-Pakistani border conflict and the Indian-Chinese border conflicts which erupted during the early 1960s. The Six

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[25] Trussler, S. op. cit.

[26] Taylor, R. 1970. 'The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament.' In V. Bogdanor and R. Skidelsky (eds.). *The Age of Affluence, 1951-1964.* Macmillan, Basingstoke, p. 225. Quoted in Gardiner, J. 1999. *From the Bomb to the Beatles.* Collins and Brown Ltd., London. P. 74.

Day War in the Middle East broke out in 1967, the Vietnam War escalated and the USA became directly involved in it. Human Rights Activist, Martin Luther King Jr., and Senator Robert Kennedy were both assassinated in 1968. By the end of the decade, the USSR and China were clashing over border disputes, the old 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland began again and the Apollo 11 Astronauts landed on the Moon.

However, the disasters of the 1960s were not wholly unrelieved. According to Konnikie, it was a great time to be young. She writes: "The new decade began to show its true face by 1963. This was the year of world-wide Beatlemania and it was also the year that the mod cult erupted in Britain".[27] Mods, short for modernisers, personified the fact that the early years of the Swinging Sixties were held to be all about youth, mobility, fashion and an intense interest in the latest sounds on the soul and R&B (Rhythms & Blues) scene. However, the mods, identified by their scooters, were bitter rivals of the rockers, the more traditional "greaser" motorcycle gangs; together they "seemed to spell nothing but trouble and by the mid sixties they had begun to fade out".[28]

The 1960s were also changing times for women. Konnikie is quoted saying as:

> *"The postwar era of the late forties and fifties had seen most women in the West still tied, or returning after war-work, to the roles of wife and mother - though the new availability of domestic gadgets did make these roles less physically demanding than before. But the turbulent social atmosphere of the sixties led to a belief that anything was possible - even a complete revolution - - in the relationships between men and women.*[29]

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[27] Konnikie, Y. 1990. *Fashions of a Decade: The 1990s.* B.T. Batsford, London. Reprinted 1994 and 1997. p. 12.

However, women had made only modest progress by the end of the 1960s with regard to representation in politics, business or the professions. Konnikie goes on to say that many of the fashions and values of the decade tended to push young women into a vulnerable or passive, "dolly-bird" role and a pretty girl in a mini-skirt was not expected to say anything intelligent.

Another social event of the 1960s was the Hippie movement. This movement grew up against a backdrop of compulsory military service - at least, this was the case in the USA, where the movement had its roots.[30]

The 1960s also witnessed further events. The abolition of the death penalty in 1965, the decriminalisation of homosexual relationships in private for consenting adults over twenty-one in England and Wales in 1967; and the legalisation of abortion on social, psychological and medical grounds. By the end of the decade women had started to formulate a systematic and active critique of their own lack of freedom. The possession of drugs also increased towards the end of the decade.[31]

Correspondingly, the British Theatre and especially the Shakespearean theatre, also witnessed massive changes and developments, particularly by the end of the 1960s. [N.B. Trussler gives an extensive account of the period 1956 to 1968 in his Chapter 20, entitled Anger and Affluence. Developments in the Royal Shakespeare Company for the period 1966 to 1976 will be discussed in the following section].[32]

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[28] Ibid. p. 12.
[29] Ibid. p. 16.
[30] Ibid.
[31] Gardiner, 1999. op cit.
[32] Trussler, S. 1994. op. cit.

3.3.2 THE 1963 - 1977 PERIOD

One of the major developments in Britain was the abolition of censorship in 1968. After the unsuccessful prosecution of Penguin Books for their publication of an unexpurgated edition of *D.H. Lawrence's Lady Chatterley's Lover* in 1963, a loosening of most forms of censorship was at least passively encouraged by the Labour government, which remained in office from 1964 to 1970.[33] The Labour MP Michael Foot's Private Member's Bill was successfully steered through Parliament and succeeded in abolishing the powers of the Lord Chamberlain to censor or even ban a play. Hence, the theatre was to be subject simply to the laws of the land rather than to the whims of an archaic official of the royal household. The occasional cause célèbre apart, the laws of the land remained largely unconcerned.[34] The visual liberty permitted since then was first exploited by the theatre when the Irish playwright John Arden, in 'Harold Muggins' and *Squire Jonathan and His Unfortunate Treasure,* both presented in the same month, featured female nudes. Other plays which also featured nudism included *Pyjama Tops* (1969), *The Dirtiest Show in Town* (1971) and *Oh! Calcutta* (1970).[35]

It was also during this period that Charles Marowitz, who had infiltrated the theatre as a director with Peter Brook in an experiment by the Royal Shakespeare Company to create a theatre laboratory, began to explore the theories of Antonin Artaud. This experiment gestated into the influential 'Theatre of Cruelty' season, presented at the

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[33] Ibid.
[34] Ibid. p. 340.
[35] Ibid.

LAMDA Theatre in 1964.[36] As Levin indicates, 'The Theatre of Cruelty' and the theories of Artaud were a major development of our problematic century'.[37] Trussler also maintains that not only did Marowitz's various 'collage' versions of Shakespeare grow out of that season, but so did Brook's production for the RSC at the Aldwych, later that year of Peter Weiss's *Marat-Sade* (a quasi-Brechtian, Marxist-driven, verbose historical epic), which Brook transformed into an exercise in Artaudian 'cruelty'. Brook also directed, two years later and in a similar vein, the self-flagellating 'US' - apparently a collectively-created theatrical statement against British attitudes towards the war in Vietnam, but an experience which seemed to Trussler to feed upon the very liberal masochism it was supposed to despise.[38]

Other developments during this period included experiments in environmental theatre, agitation theatre in the 1970s, the growth of community theatre, new writing (alternative theatre) moving into the mainstream (traditional) theatre, etc. (see Trussler, 1994, pp. 344-361). At this period there were two major British Theatre Institutions, the Royal Shakespeare Company based at Stratford-on-Avon with London home at the Aldwych and the National Theatre, awaiting its new home, lodging temporarily at the Old Vic Theatre in London. Its director was Sir Laurence Olivier.

The National Theatre also experienced certain changes in this era. The National Theatre, like the Royal Shakespeare Company, tried, in its own way, to acknowledge changes which often questioned the very notion of both institutions.[39] Peter Hall

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[36] ibid.

[37] Levin, H. 2000. *Scenes from Shakespeare.* (Edited by Evans, G.B). Histories. Two Tents on Bosworth Field: *Richard III, V, iii, iv, v. pp. 47-66.* New York and London: Garland Publishing, Inc. p. 66

[38] Trussler, S. 1994. op. cit. p. 342.

[39] Trussler, S. 1994. op. cit.

moved from his position as Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company to become Artistic Director of the National Theatre (NT) in 1973, succeeding Olivier in this post. Hall's first task was to prepare the NT for a massive increase in its scale of operations, because of the imminent move to its own newly built theatre on the South Bank of the Thames in London. The new National Theatre Building consisted of three component theatres offering three forms of staging: a large open stage based on the Greek theatre of Epidauros, a conventional proscenium stage and a small flexible 'courtyard' theatre, based on a rectangular box.[40]

Hall's directorial tenure, however, proved to be dogged by controversy. The Royal Shakespeare Company, his former company, appeared to produce better work on a far tighter budget. Nonetheless, he succeeded, as Trussler put it: "in breaking-in theatre spaces which had at first seemed forbidding to actors - and somewhat unyielding to audiences, which were now drawn not from a coterie of groupies but from an increasing hotchpotch of genuine enthusiasts, sullen school parties, packaged tourists and business people dispensing cultural hospitality".[41]

The National Theatre's new slogan was designed by the popular painter Tom Philips and its red, white and blue posters saying "The theatre belongs to you" were to be seen all over London.

3.4. REVIEWS RELATING TO *HENRY IV*

During the period 1963 to 1976, this play was shown in the Royal Shakespeare Theatre. The first production, in April 1964, was directed by Peter Hall and designed

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[40] Ibid.

by John Bury. The second production was in April *Henry IV Part I* and June 1975 *Henry IV Part II*, directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd' Elkader Farrah. A large volume of critiques appeared in the local and national press relating to these productions.

In the 1964 production, Kennedy maintains that Bury evoked what Jan Kott calls the "Grand Mechanism" of history essentially by materials made of metals. These added their heavy weight and resonating sounds to the iron-cold heart of the early history plays and metal seemed everywhere, in broadswords, in costumes, in the furniture, on the walls and floor.[42] John Bury said that they wanted an image, not naturalistic surroundings and that they were trying to make a world which was dangerous and terrible.[43]

The metal clad walls provided the basic set for two cycles of Shakespeare plays.[44] The first cycle, opening in July 1963, was a reduction by writer/dramaturg John Barton of the three parts of *Henry* changed into VI, new plays with the addition of *Richard III*, under the overall title: 'The Wars of the Roses'.[45]. Trewin maintains that everything was stern, metallic and ringing and the stage was wide and bare, a sounding board for fierce words and fierce deeds.[46] The second cycle, the histories were composed of

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[41] ibid. p. 351.

[42] Kennedy, D. 1994. op. cit. p. 179.

[43] Addenbrooke, D. 1974. 'The Royal Shakespeare Company: The Peter Hall years.' London. In Kennedy, op. cit. p. 179.

[44] Kennedy, D. 1994. op. cit. p. 181, illustration 83

[45] Ibid. p. 179.

[46] Trewin, J.C. 1963. '*Birmingham Post*', 18th July.

Richard III, *Henry IV Parts I* and *II* and *Henry VI* with the addition of the Wars of The Roses - opened in April 1964.[47]

Peter Hall, John Barton and Clifford Williams were the directors and the set design for all three was by John Bury. In the majority of articles relating to this production, critics wrote mainly about the production itself and the cast, noting especially the Welsh actor, Hugh Griffith, who played Falstaff and Ian Holm, who played the role of the young Prince Hal (Henry) of Wales. As was the custom of the times, only very little was written about the design although John Bury's work was acknowledged as embodying the major concept of the plays. Neville Miller began his article by stating that those productions were magnificent, great, spontaneous and hot with life, as if history had never been brought nearer.[48] B.J.H. wrote that "*Peter Hall's massive history sequence has got off to a most impressive start.*" He also praised the cast for their acting.[49]

Not all critics, however, were happy with this production. Milton Shulman wrote that comedy was missing from the impressive parade of Shakespeare's histories at the Royal Shakespeare, Stratford-on-Avon, as the power plots, the insane killings, the bestial torturing, the alarums and excursions left little time for laughs.[50] Accordingly it is with some relief that both parts of *Henry IV* turned up to take their stately places in this dramatic pageant of the Bard's view of medieval history. Shulman adds that despite its philosophical concern with the burdens of kingship, *Henry IV* is, essentially,

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[47] Kennedy, D. 1994. op. cit. p. 179.
[48] Miller, N. 1964. 'History vividly brought to life at Stratford.' *South Wales Evening Argus*. Newport. 17th April.
[49] B.J.H. 1964. 'Falstaff's endurance feat in six hours of Henry IV plays.' *Coventry Evening Telegraph*. 17th April.

a comedy and that the play's title "is a howling misnomer in that it is Falstaff's approach to life rather than *Henry IV*'s which dominated the action."

However, Nevill Miller was highly in favour of Bury's design, describing it as brilliant direction and design which were there only to serve the people and that the productions formed a joint masterpiece of design.[51] In favour of this production's design, the Times' dramatic critic maintained that the vast design of the drama shown on the Royal Shakespeare Stage was blocked out in confident strokes and the huge metal walls which John Bury used had already been drenched in history from the previous production, that is *Richard II*, opening up from the court and the battlefield on to a wider landscape of rural Gloucestershire and the taverns of London.[52] Bernard Levin also wrote to this effect, stating that the two plays were also incomparable productions in their own right and that Bury had surpassed even his own standards with his sets.[53] Levin went on to say that the tavern scenes were played among marvellously smoke-blackened beams and the country scenes before lovely, sun-washed walls, which were all composed of the same basic blocks, gates and joists that had served throughout. An article in the Worcester Evening News (1964) also referred to the design, indicating that the stage mechanics, the two revolving triangular constructions upstage, were similar to those used in *Richard II* and the production exploited all the possibilities to their maximum. Bamber Gascoigne (1964) was also in favour of the plays' design, indicating that:

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[50] Shulman, M. 1964. 'Comedy - and just when it was needed.' *Evening Standard*, London. 17th April.
[51] Miller, N. 1964. op. cit.
[52] Dramatic Critic. 1963. 'Earthbound Acting to Enchanting Music.' *The Times*. 3rd April.
[53] Levin, B. 1964. 'A review of Henry IV Parts I and II.' *The Daily Mail*, London. 17th April.

> *"John Bury's setting of two huge periaktoi (revolving three-sided "houses" which keep their basic shape but acquire new faces for each play) is economical and yet infinitely variable; and the strip-cartoon pleasure of seeing the histories in sequence is such that it now seems inconceivable that we were content to have them otherwise.*

Harold Matthews also maintained that "the set Bury has designed had a familiar look as had the sombre costumes designed by him and Ann Curtis."[54] Matthews added that the "plated surfaces swung around from the Council Chamber to show a farm-yard or a roomy interior with a staircase in the Boar's Head Tavern in Eastcheap."

Desmond Pratt, in contrast, expressed a negative attitude to this design, deploring that the same sets used for *Richard II* had been used once again at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre.[55] He added that Bury's ill-boding structure of stone and iron was the background for the uneasy reign of Henry in which the throne was grey instead of golden. Overall the majority of critics who wrote about *Henry IV* were very positive in their approach to its set designs and its designer, John Bury, and recognised the importance of this new "brutalist" approach to Shakespeare, which was using an invented theatrical reality to convey truth.

The two parts of *Henry IV* were also shown Part I during the Spring and Part II in the Summer seasons of 1975. This time Terry Hands directed the play and Abd' Elkader Farrah designed its sets. Here again, many of the reviews highlighted the performances, while only a few of the critics referred to the director and/or the designer. In some cases, there was an implicit reference to the design. For example, Trewin praised Terry Hands for keeping the balance and referred to the empty stage:

> *"As this swelling chronicle rises from the empty spaces of the stage, its thunders of court and battlefield are not to be put down by the Irregular Humorists."*[56]

Wendy Monk also wrote that the stage was empty apart from a pair of galleries used mainly by musicians.[57] She added:

> *"in Hands's production suggestions of the Welsh mountains were lacking, the battlefield is nothing but two heraldic standards and a swirl of smoke and the moon, some clouds and the sun are cast on the back wall of the theatre; only the tavern is furnished in any detail."*

Monk, however, was not impressed by the colour. She wrote:

> *"Visually, then, sparse (to match these inflationary times?) and no worse for that, though a touch of colour and richness in the costumes might have enlivened the occasion. Shiny black mackintoshes, as worn by the nobles, succeed only in looking uncomfortable."*

J.A.P. was highly impressed with the director and the designer's partnership, stating that with Terry Hands as the director and Farrah as the designer it was to be expected that *Henry IV* would be presented with the same simplicity and clarity as *Henry V*.[58] J.A.P. added that that almost bare stage serving the field of Agincourt again did service as the Tavern in Cheapside and for the English court. The set was also described by

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[54] Matthews, H. 1964. 'Richard II and Henry IV Parts 1 and 2.' *Theatre World*, London. May, 1964.
[55] Pratt, D. 1964. 'Death sets curse into motion, deposed king's prophecy.' *The Yorkshire Post*, Leeds. 17th April.
[56] Trewin, J.C. 1975. 'Henry IV, Part One ... at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon.' *Birmingham Post*, 26th May.
[57] Monk, W. 1975. 'Stratford-upon-Avon Henry IV, Part 1.' *The Stage and Television Today*. May, 1975.
[58] J.A.P. 1975. 'Robust 'Henry IV' at Stratford.' *Warwick Advertiser*, Warwick. 9th May.

the Gloucestershire Chronicle as being marked by its simplicity and striking effectiveness, as was the lighting.[59]

R.M.G., for his part, was highly critical of the stage design :

> *"The bare stage and bleak wooden galleries are never enlivened by the flourishes of royal drapery used so effectively in the other play. Costumes are sombre, the rebellious lords in black armour, the ageing Henry IV in autumnal shades."*[60]

B.H. was also highly critical, maintaining that Hands' production of "Henry IV Part 1" struck him as an effort at economy.[61]

King Henry IV Part II was shown in June of the same year. Once again, critics concentrated on the cast, only to refer to the designer occasionally. B.A. Young maintained that the production followed the lines of Part I fairly closely, indicating that instead of having a bridge of tree branches across the stage there was a bare, raked stage across which only a few steps were required to arrive at a new scene.[62] Michael Billington also wrote in favour of this production and indicated that Stratford's historical triptych was memorably completed by Terry Hands' rich, detailed and loving production of *Henry IV Part II.*[63] He added that on the sloping aircraft-carrier stage Farrah's gnarled and withered branches overhung the action, a reminder that this play is haunted by death, sickness and decay. Stewart Levinton's lighting interchanges moved in a second from the metallic tumult of war to the sunlit glow of a Gloucestershire orchard on a late autumn evening and the stage picture was constantly

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[59] Gloucestershire Chronicle. 1975. 'Unfolding a rich and colourful tapestry.' 2nd May, 1975.
[60] R.M.G. 1975. 'Henry IV Part I not up to expectations.' *Berrows Worcester Journal. 1st May.*
[61] B.H. 1975. 'Swan of Avon becomes an ugly duckling.' *Leamington Spa Courier.* 2nd May.
[62] Young, B.A. 1975. 'Henry IV, Part II.' *Financial Times*, London. 25th June.

refreshing. Dick Murray also referred to the hanging tree branches, writing that Farrah's use of tangled tree boughs in his stage design was impressive both in symbolism and artistry.[64]

Critics wrote in favour of both the 1964 and 1975 productions. One thing which the 1975 production may lead us to criticise is the fact that in the 1964 production the two parts were shown on the same day, a six-hour session, while the 1975 productions lasted around 110 minutes (Part I) and 50 minutes or so (Part II). This indicates that a good deal of the original play had been cut, causing some criticism from those who like to see and hear the whole text.

3.5 CRITICAL REVIEWS RELATING TO *HENRY V*

The 1966 and 1970 productions of *Henry V*, included in this study, will be reviewed in this section and these reviews give an insight into the reception of the production by newspaper critics. In retrospect, it is surprising that so large a number of critics wrote in the local and national press about these two productions. Nonetheless, only some of them referred to or wrote about the set designs or the designers. The 1966 production was directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton and the set designed by John Bury.

The 1970 production was directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd' Elkader Farrah. With respect to the 1966 production, most of the articles were about Ian Holm, who played the title role, and about the other main actors. Many of these articles applauded the directors' work. For example, P.B. wrote that most of the praise in modern Royal Shakespeare Company productions must go to the producers.

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[63] Billington, M. 1975. 'Henry IV Part 2.' *The Guardian*, London. 25th June.

P.B. added that in the case of *Henry V*, honours were shared by John Barton and Trevor Nunn, as their inspired original treatment of the familiar scenes imparted a wholly new aspect to the play as a whole, despite the fact that much of it had some similarities to the previous presentation.[65] Trewin also praised the directors, indicating that the production by John Barton and Trevor Nunn was exceedingly intelligent in its own line and in the mean time he praised the cast.[66]

Colin Frame also maintained that both Nunn and Barton directed with an eye to the vivid contrast between the French and the English.[67] Sheila Huftel also referred to the directors as having made the most of it.[68]

E.M.A. wrote that among many memorable and enlightening moments of this production, the directors and designer John Bury should share the credit for the scene that nobody would forget; that is, the siege of Harfleur.[69] F.G. described this production of the two directors as being with-it and madly modern.[70] An article in the Gloucestershire Echo also praised the directors, maintaining that they had neatly used the "short acts of comedy to leaven and illuminate the main historical theme".[71] The writer described the scenery as "plain".

In an article in Time and Tide, the critic seemed to be impressed by John Bury's sets, describing them as "particularly good". The critic added:

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[64] Murray, D. 1975. 'Henry IV at Stratford.' *Chronicle and Echo,* Northampton. 28th June.
[65] P.B. 1966. 'The Small Virile Henry.' *Berrows Worcester Journal.* 18th August.
[66] Trewin, J.C. 1966. 'The New Plays.' *The Lady (Weekly).* 25th August.
[67] Frame, C. 1966. 'Cutting Henry V Down to Size.' *Evening News* (London). August.
[68] Huftel, S. 1966. 'A Complicated, Simple Henry V.' *The Scotsman.* 24th September.
[69] EMA. 1966. 'Tough Enough to Satisfy the 'Sergeant'.' *Leamington Spa Courier.* 19th August.
[70] F.G. 1966. 'The Bard gets 'with it'.' *Jewish Chronicle (Weekly).* 19th August.
[71] Gloucestershire Echo. 1963. 'Strong, Dynamic "Richard III".' Cheltenham: *Gloucestershire Echo.* 21st August.

> *"From a bare stage for the prologue the scenes were slickly set for the courts of England and France and the battle ground of Agincourt.*
>
> *The costumes were practical and imaginative, showing vividly the demands of war and making a striking contrast with the rich red doublet of Ian Richardson and Chorus.*[72]

Writing about the design, Bryden maintained that "John Bury has simply used the bare stage as if it were an open arena, from which Bury has sculpted stately moments of medieval pageantry, but with a shift of lighting, a sway of bodies, he dissolved them into scurries of ragged activity". Bryden added; "while the proscenium was technically still there, Bury abolished it, shattering the tyranny of the fixed picture to gain the three-dimensional freedom of sculpture".[73]

Some critics appeared not to be impressed by this production. Lewis, for example, described the performance as not very successful. He maintained;

> *"It cries outdoor poetry and straightforward epic colour. Instead we were offered ambiguity and doubtful intent: and interesting and minutely thought out interpretation, which lacked all passion."*[74]

Graves was also negative about this production, maintaining that for him *Henry V* presented difficulties of enjoyment.[75]

Only a few critics seem to have written about the 1976 production of *Henry V* directed by Terry Hands, with set and costumes designed by Abd' Elkader Farrah. Loehlin indicates that Terry Hands's directorial choices gave audiences the opportunity to

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[72] Time and Tide. 1966. A Prince Whom All Men Loved. *Time and Tide.* 18th-31st August.
[73] Bryden, R. 1966. Sweating out a Victory. *The Observer.* 14th August.
[74] Lewis, J. 1966. Henry V . Henry VI . Twelfth Night. *Financial Times.* 9th August.

inform the production with their responses to the subject matter of the play and many conservative critics praised the production for what they perceived as directorial restraint.[76] Milton Shulman, for example, wrote in the *Evening Standard* indicating that:

> *"As for Terry Hands's production, it allows the Bard to tell his stirring tale of chauvinism with a minimum of directorial interference."*[77]

Shulman's obliviousness to Hands's 'directorial interference' and his acceptance of the play as simply Shakespeare's tale of chauvinism is surprising, though not uncharacteristic.[78] Loehlin went on to say that more critics responded to the conservative aspects of the play than to any of Terry Hands's qualifying modern attitudes, indicating that a production would have to be very bold indeed to prevent viewers from seeing what they expect or want to see.[79] Milton Shulman described Terry Hands' production as exploding throughout its three-hour span like pyrotechnics during a patriotic jubilee.[80] Shulman also described Farrah's costumes as pointing up the taste gap between the sturdy English and the elegant French, one of the principal differences between Bury's and Farrah's work.

An article in The Times also referred to the design, stating that the production powerfully applied the "Chorus aesthetics by opening in modern dress and moving gradually into costume amid the huge canopies and monumental hardware of Farrah's

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[75] Graves, K. 1966. 'The Noise and Clamour.' *Morning Star.* 12th August.
[76] Loehlin, J.N. 1997. *Henry V. Chapter III. We Band of Brothers: Terry Hands (1975).* Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press. p. 69.
[77] Shulman, M. 1975. '*Evening Standard.*' London. 9th April.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Loehlin, J.N. 1997. op. cit. p. 70.
[80] Shulman, M. 1976. 'Henry V Rules, OK?'. *Evening Standard (London).* 21st January.

set".[81] Loehlin argues that Terry Hands drew his stylistic approach from the Chorus's opening exhortation to 'piece out our imperfections with your thought' and imagined the visual spectacle, which the actors only describe. Hands wrote in his introduction to the published text: '*We could abandon the artistic strictures of "naturalist" theatre, with its cinematic crowds and group reactions and focus on each actor as an individual'*.[82]

Michael Coveney described the scene as the "cast, tracksuited and spring-heeled from the outset, burst into life at the Chorus's summoning, an eruption of 'silken dalliance' heralded by the billowing from the flies of Farrah's huge emblematic canopy".[83] Irving Wardle also referred to the huge canopies and monumental hardware of Farrah's set.[84] A.C.H. indicated that although production gimmickry has tended to be the Royal Shakespeare Company's besetting sin, Terry Hands and Farrah introduced staging effects which were quite breathtaking in their impact.[85] He added that the siege of Harfleur and the battle of Agincourt came to life as never before. The set designed by Farrah suited Hands' anti-illusionist style. To this effect, Farrah stated, when interviewed by Beaumann (1978), that:

> *"I felt that what we wanted to create was not a box of illusions, but something that freed the audience's imaginations and made them conjure their own illusions".*

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[81] The Times. 1964. 'Shakespeare's chronicle made glorious by Falstaff.' *The Times,* London. 17th April.
[82] Loehlin, J.N. 1997. op. cit. p. 53.
[83] Coveney, M. 1976. 'Henry V.' *Financial Times.* 21st January 1976.
[84] Wardle, I. 1976. 'Henry V.' *The Times.* 21st January.
[85] A.C.H. 1976a. 'Long Live the True Henry V!' *Orpington Times.* 24th January.
A.C.H. 1976b. 'This is Shakespeare as it should be staged.' *Dartford and Swanley Chronicle.* 29th January.

Accordingly, the entire stage of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre was redesigned to focus attention on the actor.[86]

Few critics referred to or described the set designs; the majority focused on the directors and/or the players, particularly the main characters of the play. However, the production succeeded in establishing the Hands/Farrah style as the dominant one for the Royal Shakespeare Company throughout the rest of the 1970s. This non-illusionistic style may have been one of the reasons that critics and audiences were very successful in projecting their attitudes on to the production and that the production was, accordingly, very successful.[87]

3.6 CRITICAL REVIEWS RELATED TO *RICHARD III*

Richard III, studied in the present investigation, was produced twice between 1963 and 1976. The first production was in 1963; it was directed by Peter Hall and designed by John Bury. The second, in 1970, was directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd' Elkader Farrah.

Very much has been written or said about the 1963 production, yet very little about the director and the designer. John H. Bird described Peter Hall's production as "*brilliant with a splendid pace.*" He added that in "*John Bury's magnificent set an actor sometimes emerges through a door before the wall itself has swung into place.*"[88] An article in the Gloucestershire Echo described Peter Hall's production of this play not

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[86] Loehlin, J.N. 1997, op. cit., p. 54
[87] Loehlin, J.N. 1997, op. cit., p. 70
[88] Bird, J.H. 1963. 'Richard III Crowns the trilogy at Stratford.' *Evesham Journal*. 22nd August.

only as dynamic and dramatic, but also as breathless in speed and powerful in impact.[89] This points us at once to John Bury's 'hands-on' approach to design that produced such a powerful impact. W.H.W. indicated that Peter Hall's production was helped by the flexibility and quiet strength of John Bury's settings.[90] This is a further reference to Bury's approach to design.

Trewin, in contrast, appeared not to be impressed by this production, calling it: "theatrical enough in one sense; it has plenty of dash and it has the ring of steel on steel" (referring to Bury's set design).[91] Don Chapman was also not very impressed with the play. He indicated that while it is a magnificent performance, it is not plausible enough as an interpretation of Shakespeare's text.[92]

The 1970 production was also written about in great detail as regards the cast, the director and particularly the designer, Abd' Elkader Farrah. Young stated that the production was fine to look at, the main items in Farrah's design being three tall moveable screens which could be lit from behind to simulate stained glass against a black background, along with the customary few props.[93] He added that the stage could be made very impressive, particularly when dressed with the 20-foot tall standards [the heraldic flags]. Irving Wardle maintained that Farrah's design set the tone, a bare stage, as usual, equipped with a lofty stained glass triptych which trundles

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[89] Gloucestershire Echo. 1963. 'Strong, Dynamic "Richard III".' Cheltenham: *Gloucestershire Echo.* 21st August.
[90] W.H.W. 1963. 'Like Visiting a Family we know quite well.' *Birmingham Mail.* 21st August.
[91] Trewin, J.C. 1970. 'Richard III.' *Birmingham Post.* 16th April.
[92] Chapman, D. 1963. 'A King Who Kills with Relish.' *Oxford Post* (London). 21st August.
[93] Young, B.A. 1975. 'Henry IV, Part II.' *Financial Times*, London. 25th June.

forward in separate panels, while in the foreground an array of towering standards are there topped with barbaric emblems of the contending factions.[94]

John Barber referred to the production as being set in the middle of dark medieval interiors which owe their atmosphere to the designer Farrah's giant stained glass windows.[95]

Frank Marcus described Farrah's settings as establishing a feeling of nightmarish horror.[96]

Sheila Bannok referred to the design and settings, describing them as three huge, moveable stained glass windows with "a kind of brooding splendour, which threatens to overpower the action on the stage from time to time".[97]

It appears that only Don Chapman reported the inverted cross which runs the length of the acting arena,[98] and was in fact the basis of the scenographic conception.

However, some articles were not in favour of the set design. W.T., for example, maintained that the set consisted mainly of large screens in the form of stained glass windows, which were often impressive, but he found the heraldic banners and other properties "exceedingly ugly".[99] Trewin was also not as impressed by this production as he was with the 1963 production. He reported that Farrah's sets made ingenious use of stained glass panels and added that the frame was indeed there, "but the picture,

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[94] Wardle, I. 1970. 'Grisly Masquerade.' *Times*. 16th April.
[95] Barber, J. 1970. 'Richard III is blond and handsome.' *Daily Telegraph*. 16th April.
[96] Marcus, F. 1970. 'Foul Deformity.' *Sunday Telegraph*. 19th April.
[97] Bannock, S. 1970. 'King Richard Sows as Something of a Buffoon.' *Stratford Upon Avon Herald*. 24th April.
[98] Chapman, D. 1970. 'Irreverent but Imaginative.' *Oxford Mail*. 16th April.
[99] Wardle, I. 1970. 'Grisly Masquerade.' *Times*. 16th April.

as it stood, was incomplete, its brushwork uncertain and its central figure still waiting to blaze out in full theatrical splendour.[100]

In an article in the Stage and Television, the critic (unnamed) expressed disappointment with the production and its design, maintaining that *with Farrah's settings as spare and bare as anything goes a spare and bare production.*[101]

Harold Hobson maintained that the production had been roughly handled and the audience seemed not to enjoy it.[102]

3.7 CRITICAL REVIEWS RELATED TO *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*

The Taming of the Shrew, considered in the present study, was produced twice during the study period, the first time in 1967 and the second in 1973.

The 1967 production was directed by Trevor Nunn and the set designed by Christopher Morley. The 1973 production was directed by Clifford Williams and the set designed by Abd' Elkader Farrah.

Young described the action in this 1967 version as taking place on a straw-strewn floor of the inn, with benches running along either side. The Lord and his minions and Christopher Sly, who has been made by Trevor Nunn into a key figure, watch from here. Young adds that scenery was lacking,

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[100] Trewin, J.C. 1970. 'Richard III.' *Birmingham Post.* 16th April.
[101] Stage and Television. 1970. 'A Disappointing 'Richard the Third'.' *Stage and Television.* 23 April.
[102] Hobson, H. 1970. 'Time for a Change.' *Sunday Times.* 19th April.

> *"the players extemporising what they need out of benches, tables and so on. The inn is luckily equipped with plenty of entrances; it also has a marvellous folding roof that runs inside out when required to transport us from exterior to interior and vice versa."*[103]

J.A.P. (1967) described Christopher Morley's setting as deceptively simple: the opening scene is the sombre exterior of the inn, in contrast to a winter landscape of snow which dissolves by a highly ingenious lifting of the roof and folding back of the walls into a warm interior where there is much coming and going through back doors.[104]

Chapman also referred to Christopher Sly as being on stage throughout the play, but in the mean time he was positive in his appreciation of Christopher Morley's "clever country house setting amid the frozen snow" which folded back to reveal a snug, timbered exterior.[105]

Graham Samuel was somewhat negative in his criticism of the production and agreed with Young's verdict above that Trevor Nunn had reacted strangely to the old problem of Christopher Sly by making him the centre of the play, though Sly is, in fact, second to Katharina and Petruchio. Nunn made Sly remain with his followers on the stage throughout the play. Samuel added that:

> *"The insistence of two levels with the real story told by strolling players, obscures the central theme of Katharina and Pertuchio, but then so does almost everything else about the production, including the costumes."*[106]

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[103] Young, B.A. 1967. 'The Taming of the Shrew.' *The Financial Times*. 6th April.
[104] Young, B.A. 1967. 'The Taming of the Shrew.' *The Financial Times*. 6th April.
[105] Chapman, D. 1967. 'A merry madcap and his bride.' *Oxford Mail*. 7th April.
[106] Samuel, G. 1967. 'Rough and tumble shrew.' *Western Mail*. 8th April.

Graham Samuel was also critical of Christopher Morley's set, though he called it clever. He referred to the fact that the exterior unfolding to become an interior did not work on the first night and would not fold up again at the end. Graham regarded this as one more time-wasting factor in an evening which had already been prolonged beyond endurance by horseplay. Graham, however, wrote positively regarding the main players, Janet Suzman (Katharina), Michael Williams (Petruchio) and Roy Kinnear (Baptista).

Graham Samuel indicated that Trevor Nunn proved his constant charge against directors of the new "star" category, saying: "that when they find themselves unable to make a text do whatever they want, they produce something else instead". Doreen Tanner also attacked the production, concluding her article by saying that the production missed the basic and still funny joke by "trying to play up every shadowy chance of a laugh that could be dragged out of the text". The production somehow failed to be satisfying.[107]

W.A. Darlington was also critical of the production. He also referred to Christopher Sly as having been given full value by Trevor Nunn and wrote that the play had been kept strictly within such a frame. Darlington referred to the main player's characters in this frame as being "puppets in a crudely designed farce".[108] Trewin also wrote about Christopher Morley's ingenious set, describing it as a "house with a roof that sits up and begs like a flip-top cigarette packet to reveal the interior".[109]

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[107] Tanner, D. 1967. 'Fun, but the real joke was missed.' *Liverpool Post* (Merseyside Edition). 6th April.
[108] Darlington, W.A. 1967. ''The Shrew' acted as uproarious farce.' *Daily Telegraph.* 6th April.
[109] Trewin, I. 1967. 'Energetic Shrew.' *Sunday Telegraph.* 9th April

A new production of *The Taming of the Shrew* opened at Stratford-upon-Avon on Tuesday, 25th September 1973. Clifford Williams directed the production and Abd' Elkader Farrah designed the set. Here again a large number of critical reviews were published in the press. However, only very few of them referred to or described the design. Isaacs, for example, maintains that the set of the play is an inn yard, which was frequently used in Elizabethan times for the performance of plays. This, according to Isaacs, lends a touch of authenticity without detracting from a direct relationship between the audience and the performance.[110] He also expresses his appreciation of the cast, particularly Alan Bates, who played Petruchio and Susan Fleetwood, who played Katherina. Susan Fleetwood was returning to Stratford-upon-Avon in 1973 for the first time since 1969.

Wardle describes Farrah's set and props as rough and basic,

> *"a cart for Petruchio's house, a plank and two stepladders for the road back to Padua. This throws additional responsibility on the cast and gives them the chance to show off their commedia tricks and prowess in tumbling, which they seize with relentless gusto."*[111]

W.H.W. (1973) also referred to Farrah's design. He indicates that the play was given a thatch and timber setting by the designer. Murray (1973) concluded his article with a short paragraph, referring to Farrah's stage design as deceptively simple, with a flexibility which provides the players with much room to romp.

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[110] Issacs, D. 1973. 'This 'Shrew' Is a Dormouse.' *Coventry Evening Telegraph.* Coventry. 26th September.

[111] Wardle, I. 1973: 'A Tamely Passionless 'Shrew' in Stratford's New Approach.' *The Times.* London. 26th September.

The reviews referred to above and many others said very little about the set and its designer. In fact, most of the articles are mainly, or even only, concerned with the director and the cast and their performance. Particular attention was paid by all critics to the main players, Alan Bates, Susan Fleetwood and Sydney Bromley, who played Christopher Sly.

3.8 CRITICAL REVIEWS RELATED TO *THE TEMPEST*

The Tempest was also produced twice during the study period, the first in 1963 and the second in 1970. The 1963 production was directed by Clifford Williams, in collaboration with Peter Brook and designed by Abd' Elkader Farrah. The 1970 production was directed by John Barton and the set designed by Christopher Morley. The 1963 production seems to have been more criticised than applauded in the writings of the critics in the local and national press.

John Percival maintained that Farrah's setting reinforces the aim of looking afresh at the play. "The island is a bare stage, surrounded by a screen which may be opaque or translucent, with mysteriously glowing caves or a sky on which clouds threaten and strange suns burn".[112]

N.K.W., in contrast, maintained that there was something unsuitable in Farrah's translucent settings and in the electronic sound - "Prospero's Isle is certainly packed with noises, though they seem to emanate from science fiction".[113] Dennis Blewett was also not impressed with the play and the design, maintaining that *The Tempest* is

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[112] Percival, J. 1963. 'A Tempest not for Traditionalists.' *The New Daily*. 8th April.
[113] N.K.W. 1963. 'Stratford 'Tempest' is Weak Start to New Season.' *Coventry Evening Telegraph.* 3rd April 1963.

"soufflé Shakespeare, mercifully light on digestion but falling short of succulence". He referred to the set as a "sort of conveyor belt across the stage upon which the actors sometimes travel".[114]

Bernard Levin described this production as the "first science-fiction production of Shakespeare". He added that the result was a wonderful galactic cyclorama, designed by Farrah, on which strange suns and moons wax and wane with alarming frequency and enthusiasm .... [115]

A critic in the Bolton Evening News was critical of the set design. He maintained that Farrah's "indeterminate and sometimes shadowy settings intensify a dreamlike quality of the production, which moves - and often stays significantly still - on a wide and uncluttered stage."[116]

D.E.T.[117] described Farrah's design as "frankly weird" and Eric Shorter described it as a multicoloured cyclorama, apt to disintegrate for goblin entries.[118]

W.T.[119] likened Farrah's set to a semi-circular wall of translucent material on which shadows play and sun, moon and plants appear, while M.A.[120] maintained that the magic of *The Tempest* was destroyed in this production and the scenery was "artificial, ugly and full of press-button gimmicks". M.A. also wondered why the audience had to listen to the harsh, metallic music of this production.

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[114] Blewett, D. 1963. 'The Frothy Tempest.' *Daily Sketch.* 3rd April.
[115] Levin, B. 1963. 'Science Fiction Tempest.' *Daily Mail.* 3rd April, 1963.
[116] Bolton Evening News. 1963. 'Noisy Tempest.' 3rd April.
[117] D.E.T. 1963. 'Tricks Take Force out of Tempest.' *Liverpool Post* (Liverpool). 3rd April.
[118] Shorter, E. 1963. 'Magic Nearly Imperils text.' *Daily Telegraph.* 3rd April.
[119] W.T. 1963. 'This 'Tempest' lacked lustre.' *The Guardian Journal* (Nottingham). 3rd April.
[120] M.A. 1963. 'The Magic that Survived.' *Daily Worker* (London). 4th April.

E.L. described this production as failing to inspire, stating that while there is too much artistry, there was too little art, too many gimmicks and too little rhetoric.[121] Edmund Gardner described the production as dull, lifeless, "loads of old arty-crafty rubbish". He referred to the setting as a kind of circus tent, or battered planetarium.[122]

E.M.A. was critical of the production and its settings, describing the former as a saddening shock and the shipwreck scene as being played in a cut-out well.[123] The shipwreck was similarly severely criticised by J.H.B. (1963), who maintained that:

> *"Stratford has had shipwrecks spectacular and sensational in the past. Not so for this production. The opening scene is surprisingly simple in conception; as new as plastic, as dry as the desert."*[124]

J.A.P. wrote that this production was more notable for exploiting "pantomime tricks" than reflecting the "grace and grandeur" of one of Shakespeare's most delightful plays. As regards the settings, he stated that there seemed no limit to the mechanical ingenuity, a kind of conveyer belt moving actors across the stage and fireworks exploding from three "thunderbolts" . He went on to indicate that Farrah offered a cavernous setting, with constantly changing light effects and a "transparency that is sufficiently mysterious without so many of the other mechanical aids to convey the idea of the island's magic".[125]

John Coe also referred to this production as being seen in terms of pantomime, with a strong science fiction slant investing one gimmick after another. Coe also referred to

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[121] E.L. 1963. 'Tempest Fails to Inspire.' *Coventry Standard.* 5th April.
[122] Gardner, E. 1963. 'The Isle is full of ...?' *Stratford-upon-Avon Herald.* 5th April.
[123] E.M.A. 1963. 'When Gimmickry Runs Riot...' *Leamington Spa Courier.* 5th April.
[124] J.H.B. 1963. 'Magic on Prospero's Enchanted Isle.' *Evesham Journal. 5th April.*
[125] JAP. 1963. 'A disappointing 'Tempest'.' *Warwick and Warwickshire Advertiser.* 6th April.

the entrance of the players on a moving platform reminiscent of a conveyor belt as being distracting and unhelpful enough to make the house laugh "uneasily". The opening scene of shipwreck was ludicrous, he wrote.[126]

John Higgins was not so critical of the production; he was rather gentler in his approach than the others. He indicated that this production seemed more intent on disunity than on the play's unity. He also added that Farrah's designs, dominated by the huge vaulted cyclorama which never allows the audience to stray far from Prospero's cell, were probably the best things in the production. He finished his article: "the moral to be drawn is that you can't create magic out of straightforward artifice".[127]

Colin Frame also found this gimmicky production interesting but profoundly disappointing, "the ethereal quality of the play was missing. It was a sea change - even a seasick change".[128] The dramatic critic of the Times was also not happy with the production and set design,[129] while Trewin maintained that the directors appeared to have little faith in Shakespeare's language; instead they fought against it.[130]

As for the 1970 production of *The Tempest*, very few comments and critiques appeared in the press. W.S. maintained that John Barton conducted this production more brilliantly than ever before. As for the design set, W.S. indicated that it was difficult to describe, "as near like looking down the inside tunnel of an old box camera

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[126] Coe, J. 1963. 'In the Wings.' *Bristol Evening Post.* 6th and 7th April.
[127] Higgins, J. 1963. 'The Tempest.' *Financial Times* (London). 3rd April.
[128] Frame, C. 1963. 'Tempest Gimmicks.' *Evening News.* 3rd April 1963.
[129] Dramatic Critic. 1963. 'Earthbound Acting to Enchanting Music.' *The Times.* 3rd April.
[130] Trewin, J.C. 1963. 'A Laborious opening night.' *Birmingham Post,* 3rd April.

as anything else. He added that this was very stark but used with great imagination.[131] Trewin, on the contrary, described this production as sheer joy, a joy that has not been known since Gielgud.[132]

Ian Richardson did not share these views. He described this production as curiously glum and disappointing. The pace, he wrote, seemed to be quite exaggeratedly slow. As for Christopher Morley's design, Richardson maintained that the whole thing takes place in a long claustrophobic corridor and it would appear to need special compensation in the manner in which the sound of the play is treated.[133]

John Barber wrote that the director has devised the most austere "tempest" within memory. The design Barber described as plain blue walls sloping inward to meet a vast wedge-shaped shutter suspended overhead. He added that the effect is similar to looking down a dark corridor, with a square black door at the end.[134]

Ronald Bryden was also critical of the design, describing it as an "**ultramarine** wind-tunnel, whose latticed white roof heaved and bellied ingeniously into sail, ceiling or clothes-line for Prospero's magic cut-offs".[135]

W.T. also shared these approaches, describing the production as strange, where it should have been magical. He also wrote that Christopher Morley provided a corridor of plain **green** material with a white ceiling which bent and billowed like a sail when

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[131] W.S. 1970. 'Ian Richardson - A Faultless Prospero.' *Gloucester Magazine.* 18th October.
[132] Trewin, J.C. 1970. 'Remembering the Stratford Season.' *Birmingham Post.* 24th October.
[133] Richardson, I. 1970. 'The Tempest at Stratford upon Avon.' *The Guardian.* 16th October.
[134] Barber, J. 1970. 'Richard III is blond and handsome.' *Daily Telegraph.* 16th April.
[135] Bryden, R. 1970. 'Waiting for the Music.' *Observer.* 18th October.

illustrating the shipwreck scene, which was the most effective[136], showing that critics often find it hard to describe colour accurately.

Philip Banner [137]started his article indicating that scenery seemed out, but nudity was definitely in. He described the scenery as just a kind of tunnel that "adapted itself to marvellously well to the bows of a ship or a hanging place for Prospero's glad rags".

From these reviews, it can be concluded that the majority of critics and writers were negative in their criticism of both the 1963 and 1970 productions and their design setting. Only surprisingly few were able to see the huge contribution made by Bury, Farrah and Morley to the total production and the originality of the work, which later history has shown to be true.

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[136] W.T. 1970. ''Tempest' Misses the Magic.' *Nottingham Evening Post.* 16th October.
[137] Banner, P. 1970. 'New 'Tempest' Needs More Than Nudity to Succeed.' *Solihull News.* 24th October.

CHAPTER FOUR

COMPARATIVE AND ANALYTICAL STUDY OF FIVE PLAYS BY SHAKESPEARE

The Taming of the Shrew, April, 1967 compared with *The Taming of the Shrew*, September 1973.

Richard III, August, 1963 compared with *Richard III*, April, 1970.

Henry IV, April, 1966 compared with *Henry IV: Part I*, April, 1975 and *Henry IV: Part II*, June 1975.

Henry V, August, 1966 compared with *Henry V*, January, 1976.

The Tempest, April, 1963 compared with *The Tempest*, October, 1970.

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the works of three artists, Abd' Elkader Farrah, John Bury and Christopher Morley, who designed the scenography for the five Shakespearean plays investigated in this study. This discussion seeks to identify the innovations made by each of them and assesses the extent of their dramatic and scenographic achievements, scenes and accessories. The effects of scenographic design on the audience will be evaluated, as well as its relationship with the text and the cast. It also discusses the philosophy and psychology of theatre costumes. It is inevitable that such analysis should lead us to address the crucial contemporary issue of aestheticism and to explore whether or not it is found in modern stage productions. The chapter will also consider how innovation in scenographic art is paralleled by innovation in the fine arts.

The root of the word 'aesthetics' is from the Greek word 'aiszthesisz', which means awareness through introspection of the self or apprehension through appreciation. However, Baumgarten was the first to use to use the term 'aesthetik' in his book 'Meditationes' as an indication of the aesthetic philosophy and art in which he defines the concept of aesthetics and aesthetic evaluation. 'Philosophical aesthetics lay stress on basic and central problems of theory, especially on such traditional questions as the nature of beauty, artistic value, aesthetic experience, etc. ... and the relation of beauty to truth and moral goodness'[1].[1]

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[1] Salem M.A.N. 1986. *Aesthetics*. University Press, p. 5
[2]Hamada, I. 1981. *Lexicon of Dramatic and Theatrical Terms*. Cairo: DarAl-Maaref, p.270

4.2 THE FUNCTION OF SCENOGRAPHIC DESIGN ON THE STAGE

The term 'scenographic design' comes from a Latin root originally meaning the walls of wood or cloth erected on the stage floor in Roman times to give the audience a realistic or romantic image, which is linked to the content of the plays concerned. Accordingly, the scenographic design of the Greek stage was rather simple, only illustrating the place of events and bearing no relationship to the dramatic rituals or personal psychology of the characters, as indicated in the section on Sophocles' dramas in Aristotle's book, *The Art of Poetry.*[2]

The artistic and dramatic functions of the scenographic design include helping the audience to imagine the material environment from which the stage event emerges. All the events seen and heard on the stage are deployed to create the effect of the scenographic design, be they drawn from the fine arts, architecture, an illustrated scene, backstage, movable and fixed items such as rocks, trees and furniture, or the proscenium. A proscenium is: "*The arch or opening separating the stage from the auditorium together with the area immediately in front of the arch*".[3].

The actual history of scenographic design and the values of its co-existence with other arts did not begin until the Renaissance. Scenographic design had developed into a colossal architectural framework to invoke fear in tragedies, or by contrast hot, joyful colours for comedy. In pastoral plays, the scenographic design was based on natural

scenes in markets and public life. With the development of machines and technology, scene shifting became much quicker (as machinery was now used on the stage), which benefited plays consisting of many scenes, such as those of Shakespeare.

Since the five investigated plays were written by Shakespeare during the English Renaissance, nature played a major role in his works. The Italian Dramatist, Angelo Beolco Ruzzante (1502-1542), who lived at the same time as Shakespeare, stressed the maxim, "proxime ad naturam! Proxime ad antiquos"; that is, the play's relationships are comprehensive, "Approaching nature! Approaching antiquity". Ruzzante defines the characteristics of Renaissance ideals "with regard to what emerges before, during and after the Renaissance". The statue of Venus in Roman Times, the Statue of the Madonna during the Renaissance, approaching aesthetics, the emergence of liberal thinking, pure artistic expression in the literature of the Renaissance, the discovery of America, the development of the economy and relishing the joys of life.

It is natural that the fine arts contributed much to this renaissance, moving man out of his long inertia into a period of great progress; the oil paintings and drawings of Raffaello and Leonardo da Vinci are examples of this. The fine arts were thought to promote the values of freedom and soundness of expression, exactly as they emerged from the feelings and perceptions of Shakespeare's characters.

Irrespective of the "scara reppresentazione", the dependence of the stage on the conventions of classical times paved the way for the emergence of scenography during the Renaissance, from which not only the presentations of Roman emperors but also

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[3] The Collins English Dictionary. 1988. *Collins Dictionary of the English Language*. Patrick Hanks (ed.). Second Edition. London and Glasgow: Collins. p. 1227.

stage spectacles in streets and public squares, on coaches and at wedding parties, have benefited. The English word 'triumph' is taken from its Italian root 'trionfi', the names for these celebrations. The scenographer has another task relating to his work, to bring together on the one hand art ideas and on the other the expectations of the audience. This task relates to what ideas he suggests and views he can co-operate on with the director, in accordance with the production procedures, measures and rules. It is a very demanding discipline requiring the scenographer to have an academic, artistic and literary background, by which he/she can measure, even if arbitrarily, the standards of these audiences. The role of the scenographer at the present time is very difficult and influential to a great extent in implementing the modernity and modernism of any contemporary production.

Since the present study deals with scenographic design and scenes, it is important to mention in the concluding part of this chapter that the art of stage design does not work on its own on the stage. It should translate the approach and the movements of the fine arts into theatrical terms to show them in effectively dramatic ways. As they move from the art exhibition to the stage, they should always be the result of joint decisions between the director and the designer.

The dramatic function of design is to create a special dynamics in the stage space, to assist the dramatic dialogue, the pauses, speech rhythms and the stage movement. Colours have their own rhythm which should echo the sound of the drama, rather than being separate from it, so as to convey the drama to the audience. The beginning of the production means the birth of a new relationship between the actors on the stage, including its design and scenes and the audience. There should be a union between the two based on the elements of the drama. The emotions and movements of the players

through the design fill the stage spaces by means of levels, stairs and heights, which enhance the stage movement and add a physical as well as a dramatic dimension.

The text of the play is the basis for the ideological starting point. It is very important for the director and players to understand the playwright's motivation for writing the play, what the aim is and what the audience are meant to understand from the experience. Here appears the difference between the task of direction and that of re-writing the text, which the Russian Director, V.E. Meyerhold insisted on: "re-writing the play text for direction should be done without any alteration in the playwright's text." The following points can be added in this regard:

1. Re-writing, or re-interpreting also helps achieve the director's new vision in addition to that of the playwright. This fills the text with additions and directional ideas, or, in other words, re-interprets the text.

2. The set of emotions, feelings, relationships between characters, the places of the development of the drama and the characters in the play will then be revealed to the director.

3. It is natural that for each character or role there is a special appropriate rhythm. The total movements of all actors will create a general rhythm which should dominate the drama.

4. The director, through whom the actors present their interpretations of the play text, is the primary creator of this rhythm.

5. Interpretations involve such things as the subplots behind the words, the historical time of the drama and the social, political or ideological situation of the text.

6. In addition to the director, there are the design engineer, costume interpreters, accessory technicians and scenography experts, each of whom should integrate the direction's explanations into their artistic specialisation.

7. Since the task of the scenographer has a great impact on contemporary productions and deals with the aesthetics of the stage, it suggests marks and symbols which enhance the meaning of the dialogue. It also often organises the aesthetics of the stage floor, the place where the actors stand in the scene, provided that they conform with the elements of the design and their location on the stage.

8. It is the scenographer, the director and the lighting designer, who suggest, for example, a rising moon in a beautiful evening scene or a sunrise at the beginning of the day, as well as other effects which depend on imagination, harmony and balance.

9. The scenographer also defines the formation of the boundaries and dimensions on the stage, in collaboration with the director.

10. The scenographer becomes the third eye seeing the stage floor with its cargo of actors, costumes, design, scenes and accessories. This eye is open wider than any others, as if the scenographer were the visual artistic manager of all the moments and duration of the production. Such artistic observation is only exercised by highly sensitive scenographers who understand the harmony and contrast of colours, as well as understanding all the phrases of the play and their meanings.

11. This stage knowledge demanded of the scenographer can be expressed brilliantly during the production, when the audience see a human and artistic

formation (actors in a scene). The harmony of these with the overall design is co-ordinated with an impression of marvellous natural lighting.

12. If the scenographer is truly successful the audience can feel they are looking at an artistic portrait in an art exhibition as well as sharing an experience within the theatre.

It is natural then that the actors perform within the framework and the limits of their roles, or become reincarnated in their roles. They are no longer Sir Laurence Olivier or Sir John Gielgud; the stage has changed Olivier into *Henry V*, *Richard III* and Hamlet or Gielgud into *Romeo/Mercutio* (doubling the roles with Olivier), *Richard II* or Angelo.

The scenography of the stage represents a diagram of the stage scene and expresses the thinking behind the scenography, which seeks the due importance of everything on the stage floor and co-ordinates all the requirements and actions which accompany the stage performance. These should all co-operate in the end to reveal a stage production which is beautiful, complete, co-ordinated and brilliant, capable of influencing an audience composed of all classes, cultures and knowledge. Scenography is not born out of nothing. Its main concern is to incorporate the movements stirring within the fine arts, plastic arts and applied arts, as well as the arts of architecture, scenery and costume design. It is also concerned with searching for methods of exploiting to the full the stage space and perspective. This gives it a new shining face in its dealings with all these arts and within a positive and collaborative relationship with the words, the phrases, monologues, dialogues and debates on stage. Scenography looks at drama as a whole, drawing away from artificiality and creating a stage atmosphere

which allows the drama to breathe naturally, providing healthy conditions for all the shared arts which serve a writer's dramatic text.

The impact of the existence of stage scenography is to make the influence of the fine arts on stage more effective and influential. This relationship between the stage and the scenography has brought about a new artistic language whose features emerged from the fine arts movements at the turn of the twentieth century and flourished after the Second World War. This led to the confirmation of the role and situation of the artist as well as the stage designer. Accordingly, a new European-wide function was added to that of the stage engineer, which became the function of the scenographer.

This function, the aims of which concern the fine arts, drama and aesthetic formation, by means of developed technology, modern machinery and the expression of power and influence, presents productions characterised by vitality and modernism, enjoyment for the audience and a match between modernism and the modern age.

Scenography is founded on psychology and its various sub-divisions such as childhood and adolescent psychology, industrial psychology, military psychology and the psychology of the arts. Psychology plays an important role in determining the scenographic approach on the stage, where the design of the scenery controls everything, including curtains, painted walls, accessories and other ways of creating mood within the audience. As a result of all that is going on in front of the audience during the production (reflected by the successive pictures, colours, scenographic designs, relative sizes and the scenes and acts) the intentions, secrets and inner selves of these stage characters are revealed through the direction with clarity and expressiveness.

This modern function, on today's stage, does not mean a disregard of the principles of drama or a neglect of the play's text. On the contrary, it merely substantiates and supports the role played by the contemporary fine art movement in the theatre and modern scenographic design, in accordance with contemporary practice.

Modernism is one of the major and most complex problems for the arts. To present a modern form of art, or specifically a modern scenographic design, is a problem on its own. Modernism cannot be seen as a passport by which a player or scenographer can get through easily, as a way of making the stage, drama or scenographic design modern. Modernism means a liberation from the old and an attempt to develop stage scenery. It is also a sign of progress to an age of development and technology, echoing the developments in nuclear energy, space rockets, architecture, construction and the revolution of communication and information. In other words, the play and the show must be given something new, notwithstanding its historical origin. Modernism in this new scenographic picture reveals and adorns facts and rejects false situations. Its aspects are new and beautiful in its scenes and scenographic design but of course, it does not deviate from some aspects of traditional realism.

The two biggest enemies of modern design are:

1. Stereotypes and obsolete pictures of construction; and
2. superficial design style.

Both these factors lead the designer to simplify, rather than to probe in his/her designs and to present instead of analyse, and also to over-estimate and accept simplistic designs instead of searching for the difficult and discarding the easy. It is a mistake to

classify modernism into traditional and modern; this is a pre-judgement which does not encourage artistic development.

In the following section, the plays in question will be analysed and compared in the order in which McLeish and Unwin believe they were written:[4]

1. The Early Plays (1588-1596: Elizabethan)

   The Taming of the Shrew: produced 1967 and 1973.

   Richard III: produced 1963 and 1970.

2. The Middle Plays (1596-1603: Elizabethan)

   Henry IV, Parts I and II: produced 1966 and 1975.

   Henry V: produced in 1966 and 1976.

3. The Late Plays (1596-1603: Elizabethan)

   The Tempest: produced in 1963 and 1970.

4.3 *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*

The Taming of the Shrew, a folk comedy written in 1593, consists of an Introduction and five Acts. Its events take place in Padua and the country house of Petruchio. The emotions of love and hatred are finely separated. Shakespeare gives a dramatic lesson in a humorous and entertaining form about women's loyalty, obedience and affection towards their husbands. Katherina is a stubborn young woman and her stubbornness is greater than the stubbornness of a wild cat, a strange example in the surroundings of

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[4] McLeish, K. and Unwin, S. 1998. *A pocket Guide to Shakespeare's Plays.* London: Faber and Faber Ltd. p. xiii.

Padua. She is aggressive to the men asking for her hand in marriage, the queen of shouting, insults and kicking, until Petruchio comes her way. He is the perfect husband for Katherine; he holds her by force, to become both content and obedient to him, thereby reforming her.

Both Christopher Morley and Abd' Elkader Farrah produced designs for this play during the period under investigation. Christopher Morley designed the first production, which opened in April 1967, while Farrah designed the second, opening in September 1973

4.3.1. CHRISTOPHER MORLEY'S DESIGN

Morley believed in using mechanical means to create the effects in his stage design. He was good at using straight lines and could produce ideas for draughtsmen, a deputy or for an assistant to work on. In terms of costumes, he would draw his basic figures out on a chart and then add to those basic details. In this sense his approach was mechanistic. His inspiration in the *Taming of the Shrew* was something he had seen around the countryside of the Midlands. The scene was basically the façade of a barn, set back a little on the stage, with a series of plank facings, panels, doors and windows, which opened outwards. Hence, to create different scenes, a big double door would open and a cart, a table, or other items would be pushed out, so the impression was of an improvised production given by players in 1600 or thereabout. In this sense, he was very traditional, trying to create a modern impression of what an Elizabethan setting might have been like.

Morley also used lighting effectively in his designs. It appears that Adolphe Appia has influenced Morley in this field. The director, James Roose-Evans maintains that "light

to Appia was the supreme scene painter; light alone defined and, at the same time, revealed. The very quality of our emotional response can, as we now know, be established by the degree and quality of light used on the stage. Appia used to demonstrate this by the scene from the opera of *Romeo and Juliet* in which the two lovers meet at Capulet's ball. By merely taking down all the lights on the stage and focusing on the two lovers, the designer can help to emphasise the intensity of the moment in the same way that the score does".[5]

4.3.2 MORLEY'S DESIGNS: AN ANALYTICAL, AESTHETIC AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

The design here emerges from a good idea accredited to the designer. Photographs of the scenographic design setting of *The Taming of the Shrew* reveal several elements in Morley's design:

1. Morley designed his scenography in a simple way, consisting of an anterior part of a house with the minimum amount of accessories, but left a large area for actors to move through.

2. There was a door leading to the outside, as well as a part of the roof over the door. There was also a second door leading to another room with a red curtain.

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[5] Roose-Evans, J. 1989. *Experimental Theatre from Stanislavsky to Peter Brook.* Revised and updated Fourth Edition. London and New York: Routledge. pp. 48-49.

3. The above represented a sitting room, with a chimney on one side and a few small chairs on the left side. On the right side there was a dining table and a barrel of ale.

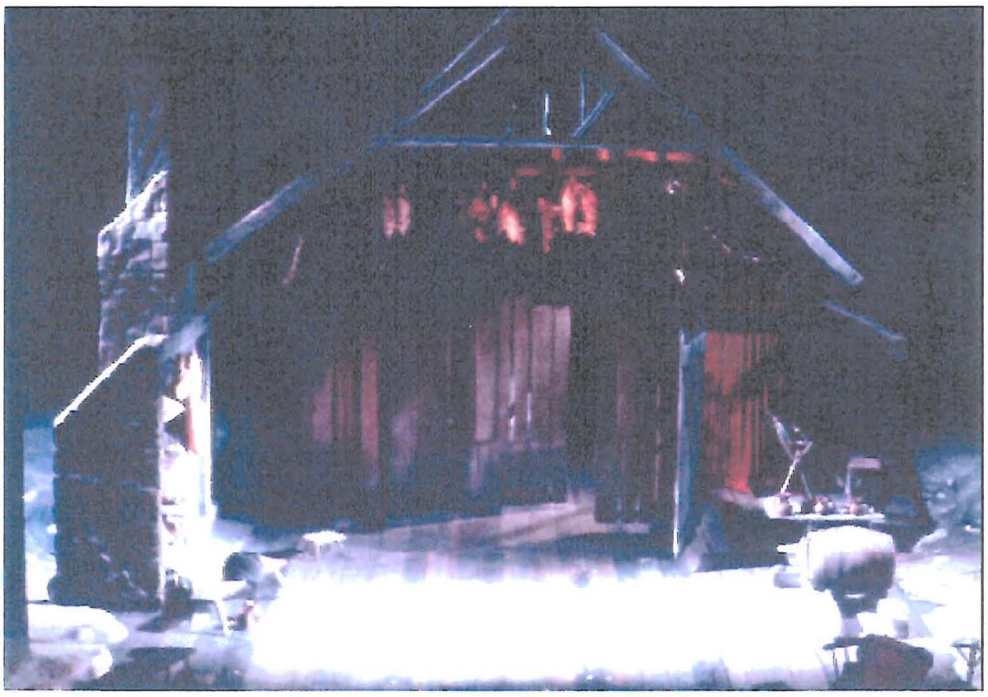

Plate (1)

Design setting of *The Taming of the Shrew* by Christopher Morley.

Plate (2)

Scenes from *The Taming of the Shrew*

4. Morley delineated the area of the scenography by placing the furniture and the chimney on the sides of the wall and lined them up along the sides. This left a large space within the stage to allow actors more space to move.

5. In the scene showing the front of the alehouse, Morley used simple scenography, consisting of a small arm-chair and a larger one, with a table in front of them. There were also stools on which the actors sat in front of the table. The two armchairs were peculiar in that they had high backs, possibly indicating a wall. Morley combined all these elements to successfully suggest a countryside alehouse.

6. Morley left the scene showing the area outside the house as simple as possible and gave the actors free movement within this space. Although he did not describe the area, he gave the impression of a large open-air yard. In this way, Morley alluded to the time of Shakespeare when the stage was characterised as being 'bald' or 'bare' and the movement of the actors suggested to the audience the places where the scenes were performed.

7. Morley's scenographic design, in its realism, conforms to the perpetual idea which was perceptively realised by Shakespeare that human behaviour reveals the depth of inward feelings as well as defining people's humanity. Shakespeare, according to Elizabethan tradition, was conversant with all the features of nature, as manifested in his thirty-seven plays. Nature was classified into different hierarchies believed to be the conductors and keepers of the continuity of life. Shakespeare, like others of his time, knew the names of all flowers, names of all perfumes, old women's sayings, prudence and quoted

proverbs. He also had the knowledge of all predatory and domesticated animals, all kinds of fish, names of nights, stars and sunrise and sunset. He was also conversant with the seas and their names and places".[6] This background of wide knowledge helped the expression of his thought in very precise and effective ways, and provided the metaphysical world of the plays.

8. Morley's design follows a basic philosophy in its aesthetics. Science is concerned with the explanation of technical phenomena and the measurement of aesthetic experiment through other disciplines such as psychology, history, ethics and sociology, which are linked in their methodologies and indications with aesthetics. His scenography for *The Taming of the Shrew* is an example of Aristotelian aesthetics. Aristotle was one of the philosophers of ancient times most concerned with aesthetics in his writings and views of the theories and writings of his predecessors. He avoided Platonic elements in his views, especially with regard to the relationship between the ethical good and aesthetics. He thus maintained the possibility of the artistic expression of ugly things, as in this play, and (in the *Poetics*) revealed the aesthetic qualities in tragedy and comedy, offering the first steps towards a comprehensive perception of dramatic aesthetics.

9. There is a link between Morley and Edward Gordon Craig (1872-1966), who was a pioneer of three-dimensional design for the stage. He simplified all details of scenographic design and reduced them to their cubic dimensions. He

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[6] Eid, K.. 1970. *New Angles in the Drama.* Cairo: Gharib Press. p. 96.

followed the example of the Swiss scenographer Adolphe Appia and represents the break at the beginning of the twentieth century with earlier 'Romantic stage naturalism.'

10. Through his three-dimensional scenographic design, Morley reinforces the prestige and value of the Aristotelian ethic of the unity of time and place. It is also possible that he wanted to re-establish the glory of scenographic art at the beginning of the twentieth century. Morley's design depends on an aesthetic concept with which he as a designer is well acquainted and which he seeks to implement on the stage.

11. This design imparts strength to the stage perspective. Morley increased the stage floor area by allocating a smaller area of the stage to the scenographic design and maximising the space in which the players can move. This is a comedy which through its events is dominated by jumping, fighting and dispute. These acts and movements help create humorous comic situations.

4.3.3 FARRAH'S DESIGN

Abd' Elkader Farrah designed the later production of *The Taming of the Shrew* in a design totally different from that of Christopher Morley. Everything was white and shadows were revealed or created by back lighting only, typically avoiding any use of realistic, or semi-realistic forms. All the play's scenes are performed on one plane - the stage floor itself: grass in front of an ale-house, a bedroom, Bianca's wing, Petruchio's house, a dining hall in Lucentio's house, a garden and a road. The white stage floor is exposed to green lighting to represent grass in front of the ale-house in the Prologue to Act I, Scene I. This effect, aided by the lighting, is atmospheric, but also by the

addition of certain pieces and accessories (props), to represent local atmosphere, the precise locations were created. The design utilises small accessories and pieces of furniture to complement its spatial and social aspects. For example, Farrah added a chair outside the ale-house, a few small pictures and a lantern in the ceiling of the room which suggested that the setting is indoors. He also added other lanterns spread aesthetically so as to suggest outdoor locations. However, the stage floor area on which design depends totally did not give the stage scene enough detail to persuade the audience of the everyday reality of the place and, in particular its social dimensions, even with realistic props.

The whole effect was consolidated by clever lighting. The overall, ambient atmosphere suggested the courtyard of a tavern which had no walls and only one massive roof. The middle of the courtyard was used as an acting area, where the cart and props and so on were, and lit very specifically. The placing of props, tables and people in light completed the stage picture.

4.3.4 FARRAH'S DESIGN: ANALYTICAL, AESTHETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

Photographs illustrating the scenographic design settings of *The Taming of the Shrew*, designed by Farrah, show the following elements:

1. It is clear from this analysis that the designer was an enthusiast for, or at least influenced to a great extent by the art of drawing which takes place in two, rather than three dimensions.

2. The pieces and accessories used, in addition to the plane surfaces, challenged the audience to receive the scenographic design as an entity, as the structure and construction of a traditional stage scene were absent.

3. The entity of the scenographic design and its emergence on the stage effectively shows how hard it is on the modern stage to achieve the dramatic integration of the design.

4. The scenographic design is no longer a luxury, an embellishment or specifically a drawing in this age of information, because it is an indispensable though rich addition to the process of symbolisation or dramatic achievement in any play text.

5. In Shakespeare's plays such as *The Taming of the Shrew*, where there are many different scenes in succession, abstracting reality, as modern fine art does, achieves a continuity and fluency which serve the needs of the play.

6. It is also true that timing techniques were not in use at the beginning of the Renaissance, except in terms of stage marks suggesting the place and occasionally the time, but things have changed since the time of Shakespeare. Developments in technology have intervened, vision is sublimated and it is more difficult to retain the audience. Notwithstanding advanced sophistication and technology, unless the idea is strong and good and meets the demands of the production, the audience will not be satisfied. Simple imaginative ideas, like those of Farrah, can be as effective as technology.

Plate (3)

Scenes from *The Taming of the Shrew*, designed by Farrah

Plate (4)

Further scenes from *The Taming of the Shrew*, designed by Farrah

7. Aristotle revealed the aesthetic qualities in tragedy and comedy and provided the first step in formulating a dramatic aesthetic. His observation was that the scenographic design in any stage play should start from the drama itself. By presenting its dramatic characteristics, defining many of the stage elements and roles with regard to size, type, areas and boundaries, it proved the need to merge and combine the function of scenographic design with all the other elements on the stage. While Farrah based his design on the rules of contemporary drawing and the fine arts, using surrealism in the scenographic design, his design did not benefit directly from what Aristotle stated about scenographic design. It is worth recalling the Aristotelian definition. As indicated earlier, his designs for *The Taming of the Shrew* are examples of Aristotelian aesthetics. However, arguably Aristotle did not follow the Platonic doctrine that there was a relationship between the ethical good and the aesthetically beautiful. He thus attained the possibility of the artistic expression of ugly things (as in this play).

4.4 *RICHARD III*

Richard III was written by Shakespeare in 1592 in five acts, with a cast of thirty-one men and five women. Its central figure is the Duke of Gloucester (who becomes Richard III later on), one of the hero-villains of the Renaissance. He was drenched in an ocean of blood, full of malice and cunning, he pointed to wild and terrible times, a model of evil and an embodiment of iniquity and sin. He was a false and resourceful swindler, brought up surrounded by blood and with a reign based on blood baths. This is symbolised in the blood which is spilled throughout the production, as well as throughout his reign and that time, the reign of King Edward IV.

4.4.1 FARRAH'S DESIGN

Farrah's scenographic design for *Richard III* is influenced by fine arts, especially the different illustrations, meanings and expression. However, repetition here becomes a function and an objective on each occasion. Each time fine art becomes an auxiliary factor in expressing an idea or perspective. Scenographic designations of the background stage suggest rocks and on another occasion suggest blood dropping on the wall. The stage floor seems to have been made of solid wood, there is a breathing space in the scenes relating to the ground floor rooms. Rocks seem to be compacted with each other and placed side by side.

Farrah also used gunking on costumes in his scenographic design of this play. This was around the same time as John Bury used it, though it is believed that Bury was the initiator of this approach. However, Farrah was very open to ideas and he used ideas like any innovative artist.

4.4.2 FARRAH'S DESIGN: ANALYTICAL, AESTHETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

The scenographic settings of *Richard III*, designed by Farrah, reveal many elements and aspects. These can be summarised as follows:

All characters dance on this floor.

1. The crown was placed on the table at a strange, but deliberate angle, though it did not conform to the visual perception of the audience.

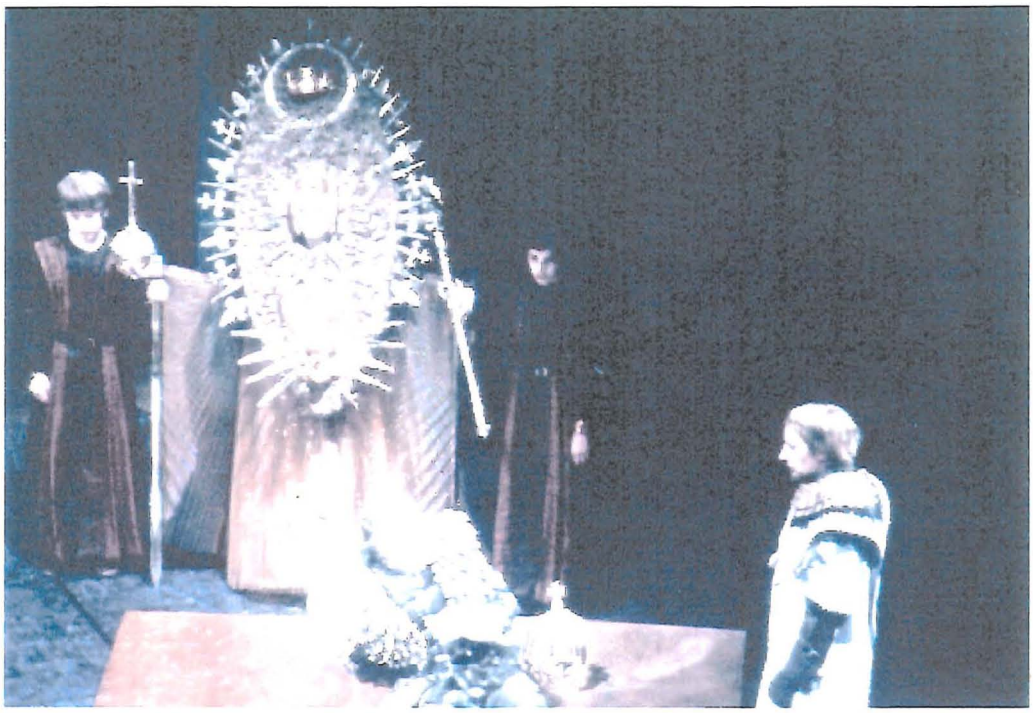
2. The crossing path implies a cross or religion whose teachings *Richard III* abandoned, as is implied by placing the crossing path in an insignificant corner of the stage floor.

3. Placing the crown on its own on a square table adds a political and moral rather than ethical dimension. It discloses Richard's attachment to the royal crown. For him the aim justifies the means. In this, he was following the steps of the cunning Italian politician Nicollo Machiavelli (1469-1527), the founder of Machiavellism, an inhumane violent doctrine and oddly enough, one which arose at the beginning of the age of humanity.

4. In the Duke of Gloucester's monologue (Richard III) the character of *Richard III* is exposed from the beginning of the play, the crown in its excellent position on the stage complements to the audience the evil path inculcated in Richard's soul.

5. The wooden floor or solid rocks in fact refer to Richard's solid heart, the heart that is totally remote from any human feelings. He never sees things except through lifeless, hateful eyes.

6. The design seems to be exposing the feeling of this heart and places them side by side by the rocks. These are moments of innovation in design that are in harmony with the events of the play, depicting perfectly well the savage character of *Richard III.*



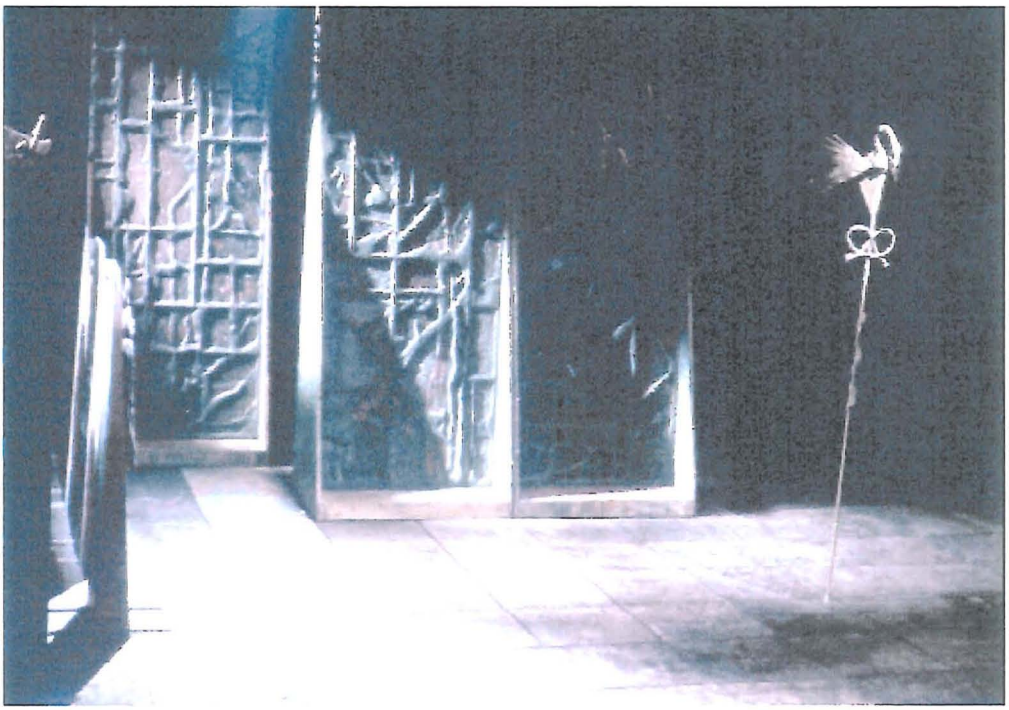


Plate (5)

Scenes from *Richard III*, designed by Farrah

7. The design opted for in other scenes, be it on the floor or in the background, creates an expression on solid walls, that have no space for comfort or breathing.

8. The rope placed along the width of the stage consists only of one piece, possibly pointing to the singularity of Richard and inflating his ego.

9. These are all visual symbols which focused on Richard's character and emerged from it.

10. The designer translated the character in terms of wood, rocks and stones that are equally similar to his heart. The first four acts of the drama take place in the palace at London and at Pomfret Castle, Baynard Castle and the House of Lord Stanley, which are the places where Richard's poison is drunk.

11. The fifth and final acts represent battle fields between Salisbury and near Tamworth, a battle field in Bosworth which are the battles filling the final act. Richard's cry, famous in the history of drama, when his hour comes: "A horse! a horse! my kingdom for a horse" occurs here. He wants a horse on which to escape.

4.4.3 JOHN BURY'S DESIGN

In contrast to Abd' Elkader Farrah, John Bury was not a painter or a decorative artist. While Farrah could be described as a decorative artist with a vision in his mind, using two dimensional paintings, three dimensional objects and pictorial images, as well as being slightly exotic in his approach, John Bury's vision was totally three dimensional in quality and texture. The texture of the material is something he was very keen on

presenting to the audience. He wanted to stretch out and touch things, so that, in the case of the Wars of the Roses, he moved away from using just sheets of metal and carried further the whole work into the process of tarnishing the metal so that the surface looked and felt different; rusting metal. He also used wood with glass stained in grey. He became the advocate of the process of gunking.

By comparison, Bury focused on the suggestion of using steel, but in more depth in the *Richard III* drama than in the Henry plays. This suggestion occupied a large space of the stage floor. Rails were used for changing the scenographic design, the table, the walls from which nails emerge. The atmosphere does not allow any space to breathe or any escape or safety for the characters falling victims one after the other, murdered or killed on Richard's bloody altar. It is a beautifully designed scenography, suitable for suggesting the hero's character, because using steel becomes equal to the steel character.

4.4.4 JOHN BURY'S DESIGN: ANALYTICAL, AESTHETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

Photographs of the scenographic settings of *Richard III*, designed by Bury also reveal various aspects and elements that can be summed up as follows:

1. The combination of the scenographic design suggesting steel and representing the steel character of Richard, has its basis in the Shakespearean dialogue.

2. This dualism materialises two evils together. The dualism doctrine says that the universe is subjected to two contrasting principles in life, one is good, the other is evil. The same dualism also said that a human is body and soul, but this

design, using steel, has transferred Richard into a human with a body but no soul or human feeling. The soul represents evil and distributes it in inspiration and expiration.

3. This union and the organic unity between the scenographic design and the actor's art inevitably influenced two factors:

   a. firstly, in the actor who lives his role between steel walls. Hence the character of the actor playing the role of Richard is strengthened while other characters are psychologically harmed and perish; and

   b. secondly, in the audience watching the performance. They attain feelings of hatred and indignation against Richard, the hero of the drama.

4. The chair with five steps allows the audience to see the actor clearly and refers to an important meaning, that Richard is not content with God's wide earth but wants to reach the heavens, so that the throne is the highest point in the palace, as if he wants to penetrate in his stiffness the stones of the royal roof.

5. The merits of the design, the high throne, the steel walls, and the steel floor, the steel rails and steel nails all have the quality of a traditional, artificial fine art composition. Although the materials are in direct contact with each other, they do not reveal much deep thinking about the needs of the theatre design beyond what these raw elements may create themselves. The audience needs to relate mentally between the events they hear and the scenographic design they see, and an absence of cohesion between the two can limit their understanding of the play.

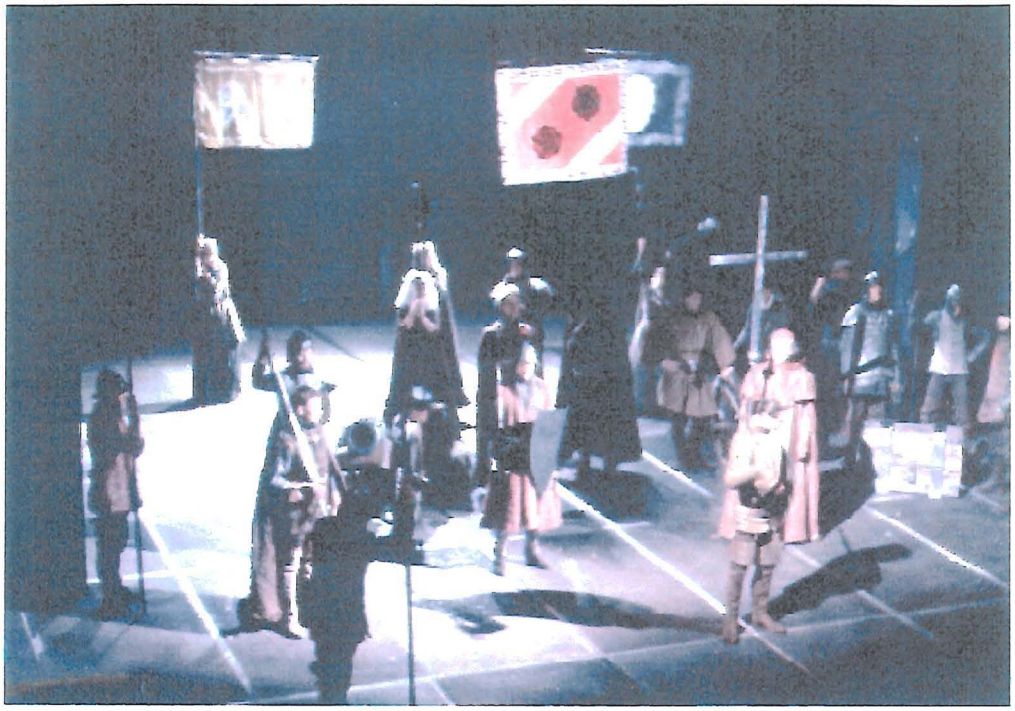


Plate (6)

Scenes from *Richard III*, designed by John Bury

6. The taller the steel wall the more they would have suggested the high position of Richard and of his deeds and conspiracies, and conveyed more clearly the required prison, and enclosed places.

7. In the design, technical skills prevailed and this dominance was in the first place the launch of the design. However, these same skills brilliantly helped the last scene changes, especially in those scenes inclined towards realism or semi-realism, which required effort and specific philosophy of change on the stage floor.

4.5 *HENRY IV: PART I*

Abd' Elkader Farrah and John Bury both designed this play. Bury designed it in April 1964 and was directed by Peter Hall, with John Barton (as dramaturg) and Clifford Williams, as Associate Director. Farrah designed it in April 1975 and was directed by Terry Hands. In *Henry IV: Part I*, Shakespeare's efforts concentrated on showing the bloody conflict between the House of York and the House of Lancaster, which was an important chapter in the history of the Monarchy in England. Shakespeare utilised real events from English history and added further tragedy.

Shakespeare depended in his drama on what Hollingshead, the story-teller, said about the reign of two important Monarchs in English history; Henry IV and *Henry V*. Nonetheless, Shakespeare arguably overlooked history completely, or more accurately he re-wrote it in order to achieve a whole dramatic objective. Accordingly, Henry IV's drama appears to be historical facts mixed with Shakespeare's dramatic imagination. It is an achieving imagination, whereby we see the drama has cancelled all temporal differences among the historical eras in favour of the drama. The play introduces three

conflicting forces, demonstrating the power of the dramatic conflict. These three forces are:

1. The Rebels, the King and the loyal supporters.

2. Hotspur and Prince Hal

3. A force emerging due to the Prince's bad reputation and his idle attitude. This same power becomes the antagonist at the end of the play, illustrating the real value, in terms of value of gold, of the Prince's character.

In the Battle of Shrewsbury loyalty defeated rebellion and Prince Hal defeats Hotspur. The prince's bravery also defeated all the suspicions of inadequacy that have previously clung to his character. Hotspur reveals a character of aggression and vitality throughout the play. Accordingly, Shakespearean drama appears as a magnificent illustration of epic drama, whose dramatic planning culminated in the great epic battle scenes. In Act Five, which consists of five scenes, four scenes (First to Fourth Scenes) were concerned with the warring factions (the King, his supporters and the rebels). In Act Four, Scenes I and II show the rebels' camp, whereas The Boar's Head Tavern is shown in two scenes (Scene IV, Act Two and Scene III, Act Three). In addition, the rest of the play scenes show other places such as the Royal Palace in London, a room at the Crown Prince Residence, Council Chamber at Windsor, an inner yard of an inn at Rochester, a room at Warkworth Castle, a road in Coventry and a room at the Archbishop's House).

4.5.1 FARRAH'S DESIGN

Despite the lack of complete pictures of the play's scenes, which would provide the true and complete visual perception, allowing comparison and evaluation of the scenes and scenographic design within which all events take place, the extreme care taken in designing some of the furniture (chairs and tables) compensates effectively for the absence of such complete pictures in Farrah's stage floor form. A brilliant and unforgettable moment.

For the basic stage of all the Henrys production, Farrah used the back wall of the theatre and painted everything white. Two permanent wings were constructed. He also used three passageways high enough to allow anything big to turn from the wings onto the stage. The floor itself was steeply raised and completely framed with steel. The boarding was blank., giving an impression of huge width.

In the 1964 revival of Henry IV production metal was heavily used, that is for armour and other parts of the costumes. This metal was created with plastic faked texture. Farrah did not depend heavily on using metal, possibly because of the limited finances when he designed his scenography. Instead, Farrah used leather, which had various linings, pieces of metal like pegs or chains tied together. For armour he used non-metal objects.

4.5.2 FARRAH'S DESIGN: ANALYTICAL, AESTHETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

Photographs of the scenographic settings of *Henry IV: Part I*, designed by Farrah reveal various aspects and elements that can be summed up as follows:

Plate (7)

Scenographic settings of *Henry IV: Part I*, designed by Farrah

1. Farrah started by using the surrounding resources. For example, in the Tavern scenes, Farrah designed a table for meeting and socialising as three barrels.

2. The 'comfortable' soft chair is nothing but an old wine barrel, which has been re-designed and re-formed, equally emerging between two colours, light and dark, shown in the picture as white and black. The chair in this clever form suggests that the designer symbolises good as white and evil as black.

3. By using two contrasting colours Farrah illustrates and substantiates one of the dramatic objectives of Shakespeare's play. For example, the erratic Hal, Prince of Wales (later on to become *Henry V*), about whom many rumours were spread relating to his mischievous youth, marking him as a careless young man lost among bad company and influenced by the badly behaved Falstaff, acting as a father figure to the young Prince..

4. The design is not only content to illustrate this contrast between light and dark colours, but accentuates this symbolism by circular fine art lines which appeared as a scenographic designation on the barrels, similar to their counterpart in real life.

5. Fully reiterated repetitions (though not monotonous) are observed, because they did not stand alone, since they are used to reinforce the symbol from which the scenographic design started. One of the characteristics of Farrah's abstract work is the use of dramatic symbols, reiterating the repetition of the dark and light lines as used on the central chair.

6. This gives a conformity and unity to the identity of the two contrasting dissimilar elements or colours (light and dark) that serves the dramatic concept,

on the one hand and the conflict between the House of York and the House of Lancaster, on the other. Through these colour contrasts the design approaches the dramatic content of Shakespeare's play.

7. One photograph shows a rope thrown from a conspicuous place on the stage. The rope seems to have been damaged, giving the impression that its strength or the characteristics of the real and strong ropes that has become weak and feeble thus, it suggests that its parts are unable to hold together.

8. It is likely that the design refers to - once again as a dramatic symbol - to the family line, which has been damaged and weakened between the Houses of York and Lancaster.

9. He established a united organic relationship between solid material and human characters by utilising the fine arts to the needs of the play.

10. This is usually hard to achieve, a matter that is revealed in this design artistic genius and substantial experience in the field of fine arts and attempts at using them dramatically.

4.5.3 JOHN BURY'S DESIGN

By contrast John Bury's solution to achieve the objectives of the drama relied on architectural engineering. His design reveals, from the impression, that he had skilfully and intelligently managed to fill the vacuum of the stage spaces, in terms of his balanced distribution of scenographic design, furniture and heights. This is in addition to the variety of forms they impart to allow accepting the changes in scenes as they are from one scene to the other.

4.5.4 JOHN BURY'S DESIGN: ANALYTICAL, AESTHETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

The design utilised the rear of the backstage to build a wooden gate which forced the audience to believe that it would lead beyond to the place of the play's events.

In the middle of the stage floor, the design utilised the stage space placing the throne on it according to its importance in the course of events. The placing of the throne in the middle is neither chance nor arbitrary, the designer placed it in there to focus the audience attention to the object of conflict between the Houses of York and Lancaster.

The design also allowed the stage proscenium to ascend from below upward in the scenes of meeting at the table, to descend hydraulically, disappearing at the normal level of the stage floor. This was an innovation of contemporary hydraulic technology, which helped the dynamic of the events and changed the set rapidly for the following scenes. It has been much used and copied ever since.

John Bury's design used the following elements:

1. Steps up to the royal throne, using numerous accessoire pieces and the floor steel rails.

2. The dual use of wood and steel in the gate that became the scene changing device, also conveyed an artisan or hand made quality, which was typical of John Bury's individual style.

Plate (8)

Scenographic settings of *Henry IV: Part I* designed by John Bury

3. A combination of heavy metal engineering and industrial weight and colour, was the most prominent memory that impressed the audience. John Bury's concept was primarily tactile rather than symbolic.

4.6 *HENRY IV: PART II*

Abd' Elkader Farrah designed the *Henry IV: Part II* production in June 1975, directed by Terry Hands after John Bury's production in 1964, directed by Peter Hall, John Barton and Clifford Williams.

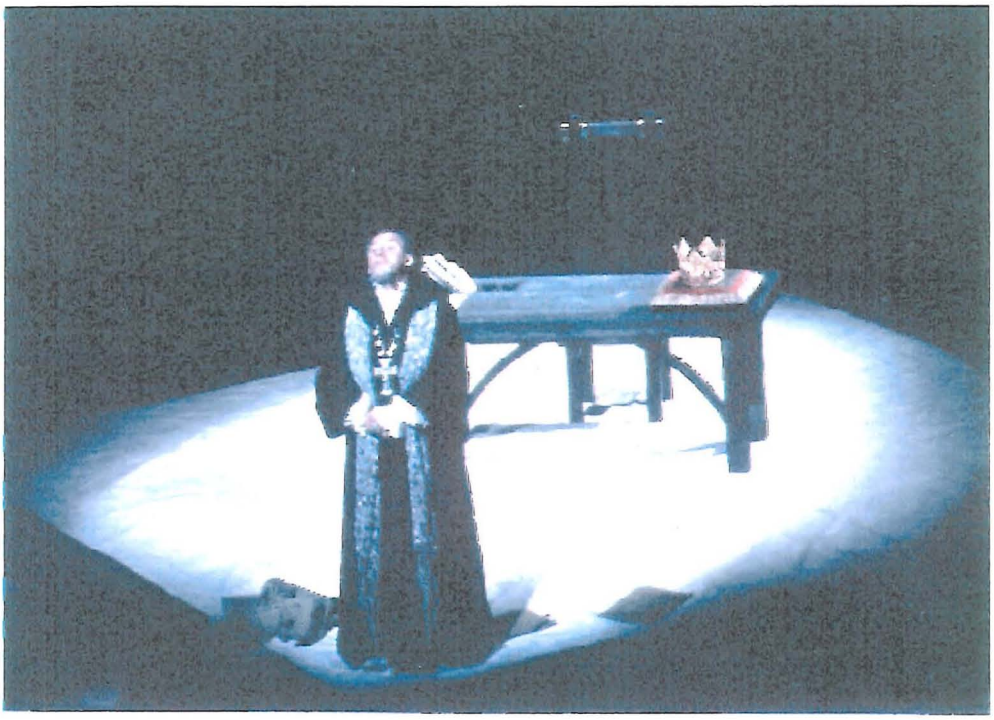
4.6.1 FARRAH'S DESIGN

Pictures showing the scenographic design setting of *Henry IV: Part II* designed by Farrah and Bury reveal various aspects of what the designers had in mind. Farrah, for example, used the following scenographic design elements:

1. The stage floor showed two colours. While in the first instance it was brilliantly white, in the second instance the colour suggests it is made of wood.

2. In the majority of scenes, there are scattered on the stage floor fallen, wilted tree leaves.

3. In one of the scenes, near the end of the play, there are a large number of spears scattered on the middle part of the stage floor and a piece of cloth covering some of these spears.



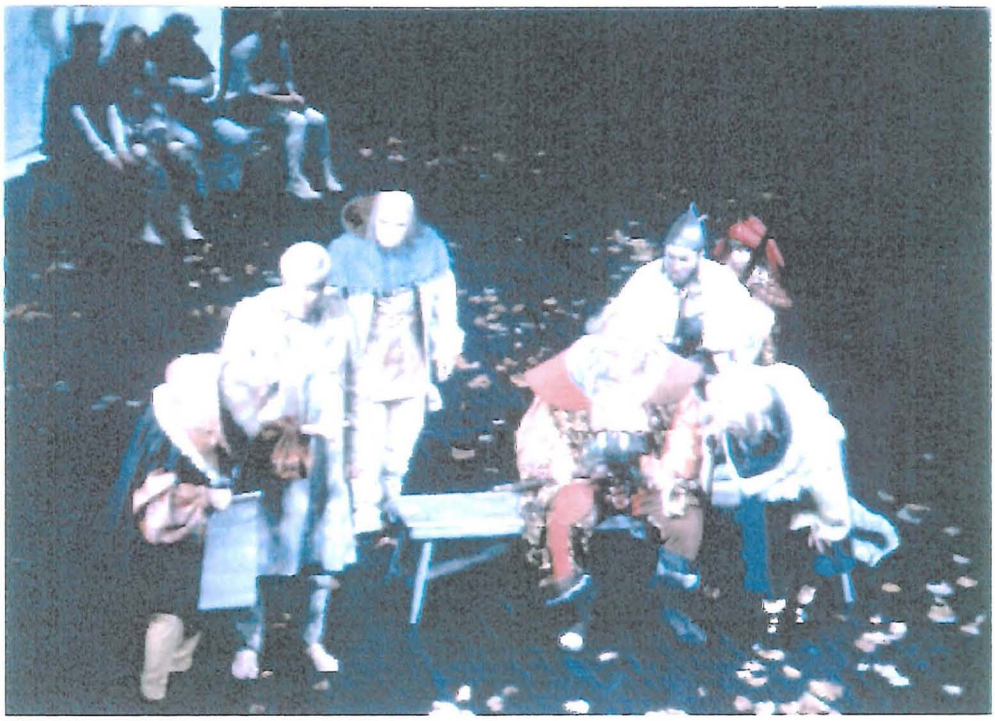


Plate (9)

Scenographic settings of *Henry IV: Part II* designed by Farrah .

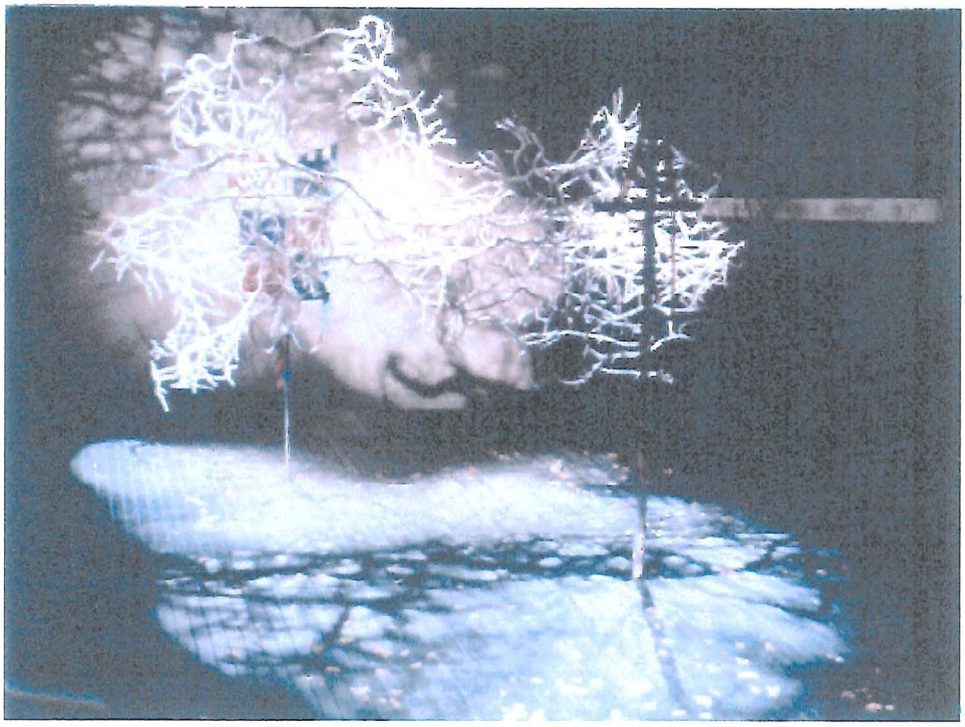


Plate (10)

Further scenographic settings of *Henry IV: Part II* designed by Farrah

4. There is a beautiful tree in the middle of the stage background, which breaks into two huge branches to the right and left (see Appendix 1 for a full range of Plates).

4.6.2 FARRAH'S DESIGN: ANALYTICAL, AESTHETICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL APPROACH

The above elements when subjected to artistic analysis suggest that:

1. while the wooden stage floor indicates the internal space of scenes within a building, the brilliant white floor indicates the closer association with the dramatic concept. It reveals in the end the reconciliation between the two fighting houses as well as fineness and clarity.

2. the wilted leaves express the fall of that period as well as the fall of the palace. The fall is substantiated by the numbers of victims, warriors and the dead of both conflicting parties, who, from the viewpoints of both parties, fell to preserve the British Throne. This is especially so after the rumour, stated by Shakespeare at the beginning of the play, spread. That rumour fuelled the drama from the beginning till the end. It inflamed honest, royal souls while it was more than a fabrication that turned the two houses upside down;

3. at the end of the play, it is now the time when spears which had become weary in the hands of their owners fall and are thrown away, thus bringing comfort and peace to both families. It is not by accident that the designer and later on the director, decided that the place for these silent spears would be in the middle of the stage floor, the focus and the most important place. Then, the

piece of cloth thrown over these spears predicts the end of the conflict period, as if the designer wanted to say to these spears: 'enough! You have appeared a lot during the show and it is your turn now to disappear from the audience's eyes forever'; a strong scenographic expression;

4. the high royal walls, as the design illustrated, were placed confronting each other, exactly like their owners and residents, despite the architectural detail that unite these walls. These two walls refer to the York House and the Lancaster House, in the same forms, sizes and windows. This simultaneous synchronism in their appearance both on the stage inside the scene as if they were one house without division deepens the rumour which after all was the causality and the casualty, on which Shakespeare based his play; and

5. the modern tree in the middle of the scenographic design set-up on the middle of the stage floor, with its two dense branches to the right and the left, reflects in its large number of branches the numbers of the members the royal family. It also expresses the royal roots with its sanguineous red blood, which accepts the call to abandon war and also calls for peace and that God may save the British Throne from future rumours. The designer's ideas are arguably, marvellous ideas and the strategic place Farrah has chosen to place them was brilliant. It can be said that the scenographic design elements, including the palace, trees, wilted leaves, spears that lost their use and time, the church bell and the rest of the scenographic design particulars in the play scenes were an ideal scenography for the English Renaissance.

Thus, it can be seen that Farrah's scenographic design accomplished the ideals of modern aesthetics and scenography. He achieved a harmony with the core of the drama in a calculated way, so that one art does not dominate the other, but rather collaborates with it to serve a modern objective, that is the dramatic content of Shakespeare's play. It is revealed in Farrah's design for *Henry V*, that his aesthetic sensibility has developed beyond artistic expression simply dominated by drawing. In his *Henry IV: Part II* he mobilised fine art principles, which are integrated to the core of the drama in all its respects. The outcome is a drama of fine art in wilted tree leaves on the brilliant white stage floor and the two walls which symbolise the two conflicting houses emphasise the fact that a single English heart in flesh and in blood that should unite the members of the English Royal Family.

4.6.3 John Bury's Design

Bury's scenographic design, on the other hand, reveals from the beginning and in all scenes, the resonance of the Elizabethan era. The scenographic design was closely associated with the appearance of nobility and majesty, with respect to both design and implementation, as well as in all minute particulars of the events (the Royal Palace scene at Westminster after midnight, the large glass window with its many scenographic designations, Chandeliers in their greatness and splendour, the Jerusalem Palace, The Archbishop of York House, then successively in the rest of the play scenes). All depicted a truthful recreation of the period, yet suggested with modern materials by the steel scenographic design, steel nails, steel floor and heavy table. Everything suggested the strong, warring factions among the royalty of the time.

4.6.4 Bury's Design: Analytical, Aesthetical and Philosophical Approach

Photographs of the scenographic settings of *Henry IV: Part II* designed by Bury reveal various aspects and elements that can be summed up as follows:

1. This scenographic design conveyed, throughout the scenes, an authentic representation of that time, but at the same time remained an original representation.

2. In other words, the design aimed at achieving a new 'brutal realism' using materials such as steel in the scenes and stage floor, with only a modest utilisation of modern technology of the 1970s.

3. The scenographic design complemented the scenes to suggest other locations - using in its scenographic design, scenes, furniture and tables in a trace of violence, power and might.

4. Philosophically, it is contrasted to a great extent with forgiveness, pardon, reconciliation and to adhering to religion, all of which are dramatic elements that reveal the most important behaviour of the play, that is the royal virtues, the objective of this Shakespearean drama.

Plate (11)

Scenographic settings of *Henry IV: Part II* designed by John Bury.

4.7 *KING HENRY V*

The subject of this drama, as revealed in the text, was Henry the Fifth's invasion of France in 1414, demanding his rights as heir to the French Throne and its duchies. While Shakespeare presented King Richard III as a tyrant and hated king, he introduced the contrary in the character of Henry the Fifth. Prince Hal of *Henry IV: Part II* was crowned at the end of that play and becomes *Henry V.* The 'erratic' young Hal is transformed as the new king in *Henry V.* Shakespeare showed him here as a valiant king, having all the virtues of this world, in his excellence at war, nobility in intention and sincerity and loyalty to religion, a model of a patriotic English Monarch. The Battle of Agincourt is regarded as the most important event of the play. Shakespeare used a narrator and gives him an inspiring poetic style between the events themselves, like the chorus of the Greeks.

This play is known as one of the war battle plays. All military conflicts between the English and the French take place in each other's camp throughout the third and fourth acts of the play. There is also an intentional dramatic materialisation by Shakespeare to concentrate the military conflict in the camps of the English and the French. Shakespeare, as an Englishman, substantiates his patriotic views as a citizen at least, his loyalty to his country and the right of this country of sovereignty over the French territories, when he says in his Prologue:

> *"Suppose within the girdle of these walls*
> *Are now confined two mighty monarchies,*
> *Whose high upreared and abutting fronts*
> *The perils narrow ocean parts asunder.*

The play is dominated by the military spirit, the English and the French camps, scenes of battlefields, except for some scenes which take place at the French monarch's palace, the Council Chamber in Southampton, a waiting room in the English monarch's palace and one scene in front of an English tavern in London. Faced with the dramatic text in which the military spirit dominates most of its scenes, designers have only one option, to concentrate on old military carriages, war costumes, helmets. The concentration here and the scenographic concern is with costumes, tasks and war machines, in a desire to confirm the military atmosphere in all the fast and urgent moments during which military battles rage.

4.7.1 John Bury's Design

Bury's approach to designing *King Henry V* was similar to that used in *Richard III.* However, he used more gunking in his scenogrpahy. He used a siege tower and cannon and various siege equipment whose appearance was splashed by gunk giving them a different texture. He realised that this technique had a decorative potential and also used it on fabrics, giving a three dimensional effects on costumes. Bury's prevailing style was to use actual raw materials rather than simulating texture with conventional fabrics, as, for example, plastering a wall instead of covering it with stage canvas to make it look real. Its design style is solid and three-dimensional, sculpting the stage space rather than offering something textural and flat, and two dimensional. Bury's scenographic design are quite simple, using a single stage floor, as the photographs reveal, for battle scenes and for other scenes as well. In the background, a black curtain represented a wall or the boundaries of the place, which was devoid of any decoration. This paralleled the austerity and severeness in times of war. He demonstrated this same naturalism in his wooden floor, by using new wood. This

floor represents interiors in the English royal palace and reflects the humble, religious and ascetic King Henry the Fifth. The floor is used again in Act II: Scene IV, to represent the French royal palace, but was less successful there. The ocean which Shakespeare refers to in the quotation above is of course the English Channel and both Farrah and Bury perceived this element very differently (see Appendix I for a full range of plates).

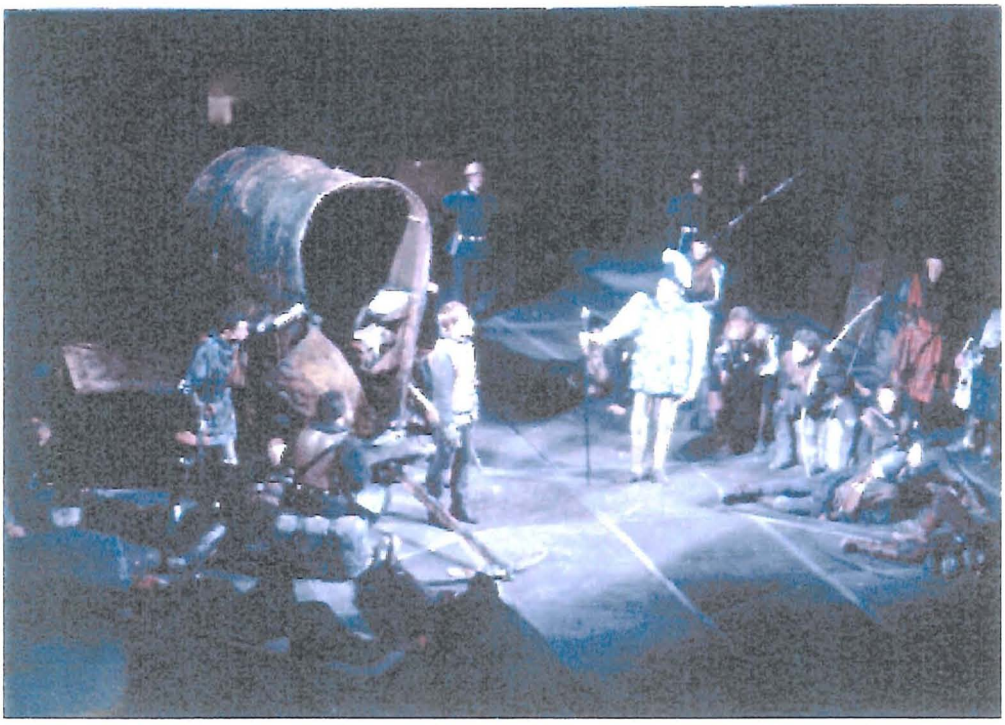
4.7.2 John Bury's Design: Analytical, aesthetical and Philosophical Approach

Photographs of the scenographic settings of *Henry V*, as designed by Bury, reveal various aspects and elements which may be summed up as follows:

1. This kind of play requires the designer to be extremely creative, in constructing a space for swift action, smooth scene changes, without heavy decoration.

2. The art of acting, audience enthusiasm, the voracity for battles, military rhythms, and then speech, dominate the style of this play as represented by the enthusiastic poetry which Shakespeare wrote for it, and was ideally suited to John Bury's talents.

3. John Bury was well aware that the designer has to pay attention to the stage quality, overloading the concept by a personal statement, except within the limits allowed by the places and scenes of the text.



Plates (11 and 12)

Scenographic settings of *Henry V* designed by John Bury

4.7.3 Farrah's Design

Farrah also understood this play as one which does not require any complicated scenographic designs, but allows space for action and movement. The stage floor was similar to that of Bury. However, Farrah invented a symbolic the background curtain , which he used in a beautiful and creative way. He covered the floor with a cloth, that was removed during certain scenes, or became the background curtain facing the audience (see Appendix 1 for a full range of plates).

4.7.4 Farrah's Design: Analytical, Aesthetic and Philosophical Approach

Photographs of the scenographic settings of *Henry V*, as designed by Farrah, reveal various aspects and elements which may be summed up as follows:

1. The floor (curtain), mentioned above, when raised, reveals a background of flags, suggesting the flags of the different military groups, and gave the historical context of the wars.

2. This is a simple solution for a creative idea embodying the military spirit and pointing to an organised, well-commanded and directed English army, exactly what could be expected from the character and behaviour of King Henry the Fifth in his bravery, faith and military skills.

3. The design elements were few but appropriate and their strength of simplicity and visual power helped the drama to achieve the swift moving action necessary to tell the story.

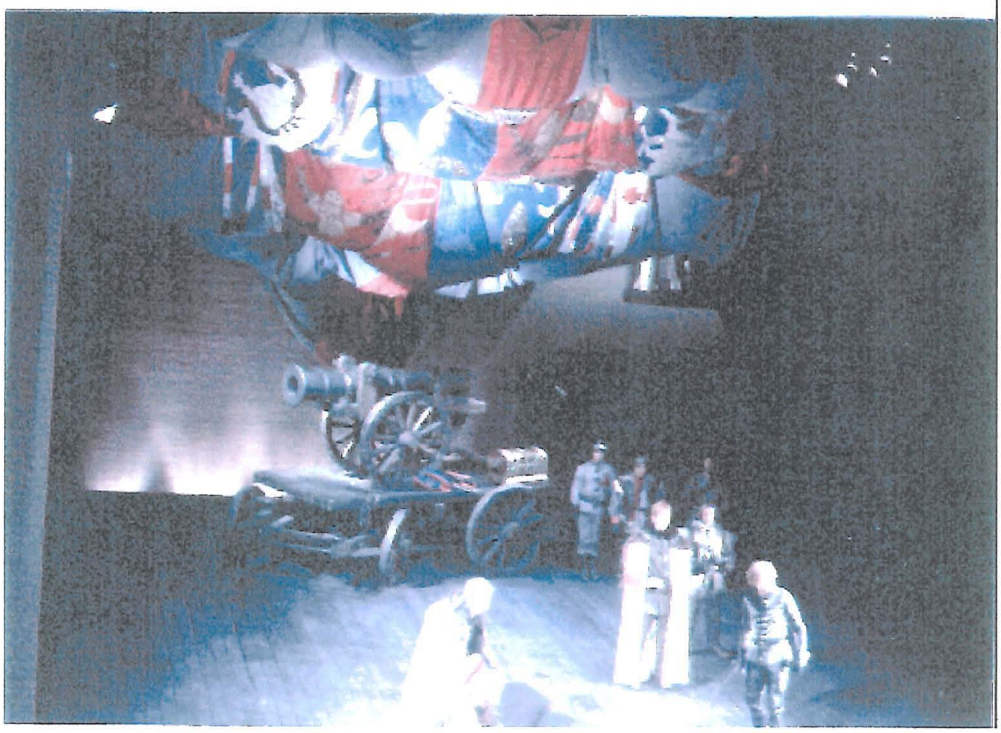
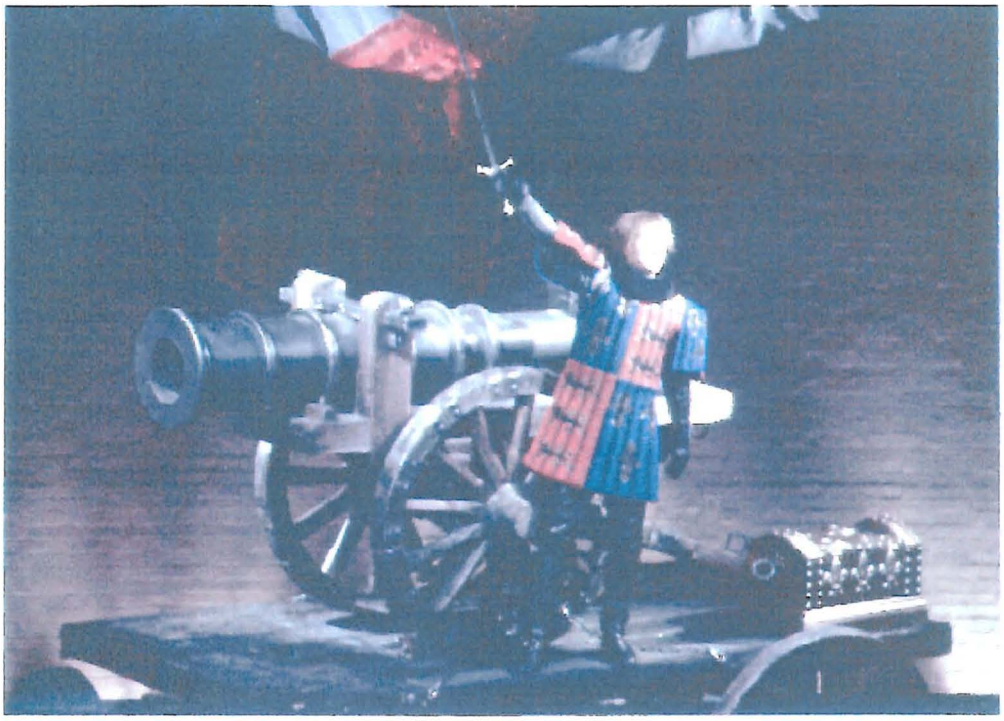


Plate (13)

Scenographic settings of *Henry V* designed by Farrah



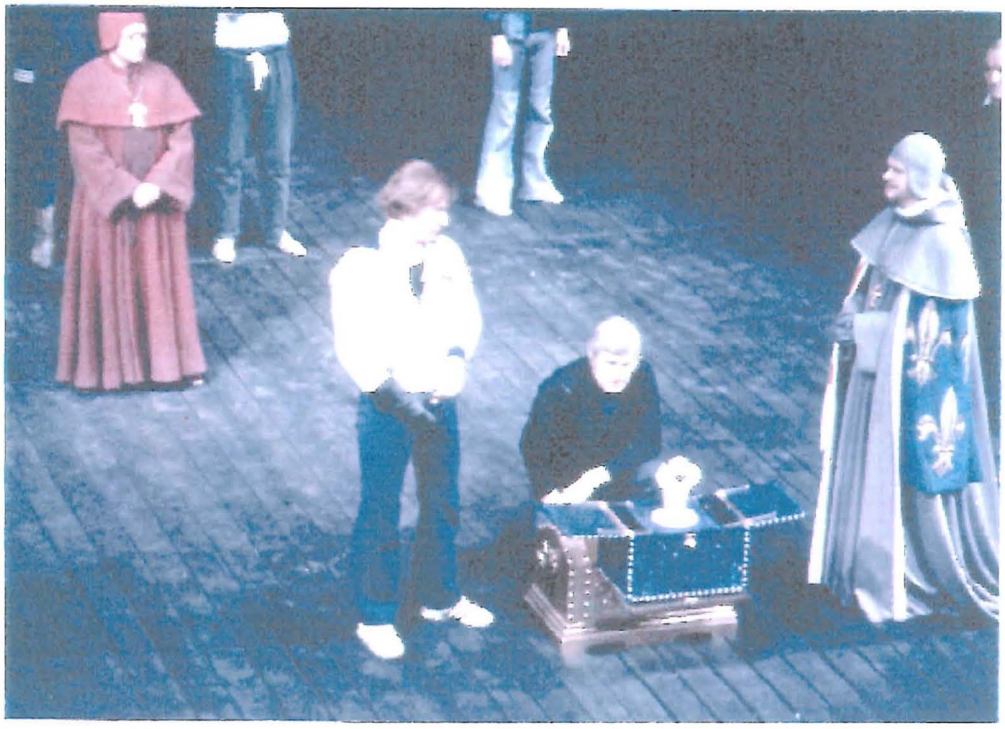


Plate (14)

Further scenographic settings of *Henry V* designed by Farrah

4.8 *THE TEMPEST* AT THE ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY

In this period *The Tempest* was designed twice - first by Abd' Elkader Farrah (2.4.1963), directed by Clifford Williams and secondly by Christopher Morley (15.10.1970), directed by John Barton.

4.8.1 Farrah's Design

In Farrah's scenographic design the staging consisted of a flat floor area, backstage ornamented curtain and surreal formations and lines, which were general and not specific to any one scene. These abstract elements created a fixed and comprehensive setting which served for the majority of the scenes. The drawing on the backstage curtain used by the designer evoked the island and the audience could imagine trees, mountains or rocks. This showed Farrah's personal signature in being able to use abstract lines, as a fine artist, which could be interpreted by the spectator.

Farrah used a cyclorama in the shape of a rock crystal. The floor was the stage, which ended with a cyclorama made up of plastic, about 9 metres high and made up in one piece. The upper part of this cyclorama was made out of cinema screen material. Farrah used two sources of lighting. The lighting scheme was made up of two parts, which were always worked together. The part in the centre, that is, in the acting area, within the cyclorama, was used to give some sort of lighting to the actors or the group. The second part, behind the cyclorama, was a wonderful construction looking like a bridge with rails and projectors with projection discs which were pushed and travelled along the rails. Thus, there were three main areas and three projectors which were fed

with lighting projection discs and were synchronised (see Appendix 1 for a full range of plates).

4.8.2 Farrah's Design: Analytical, Aesthetical and Philosophical Approach

The events in *The Tempest* relate to the disaster affecting the maiden voyage of a fleet of nine ships in 1609 when they were wrecked by a tempest and five hundred settlers under the command of Sir Thomas Gates and Sir George Somers were drowned. One of the ships, The Sea Adventure, managed to reach the shores of Bermuda Island with its crew miraculously safe. In this drama, which Shakespeare wrote in the final years of his productive life, we meet Prospero, the magician with hidden powers who acts to thwart unethical or inhuman evil attempts and to grant happiness to all, whether they deserve it or not. Therefore, *The Tempest* seems to be a play as thin as the air from which Ariel is made. It is a play whose implications are elements of happiness, fertility and mellowness. In other words, magic and charm meet in this drama.

Photographs showing the scenographic design setting of *The Tempest*, as designed by Farrah reveal various elements:

1. The creation of a stage space that allow a metaphysical time, unique to *The Tempest* to be created.

2. In Farrah's scenography there was a fixed background which changed colour continuously, giving light to enhance the dramatic context. The genies and spirits in *The Tempest* created by Prospero's "art", which tend to bring reconciliation and harmony, contrasted with the mischievous genies in *A Mid-*

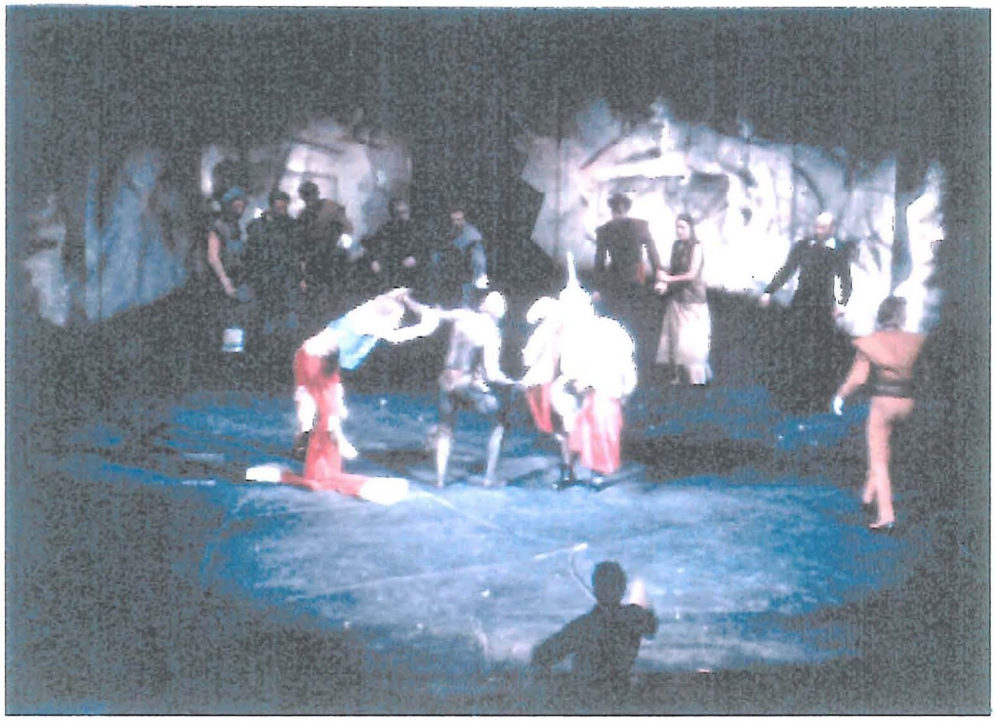


Plate (15)

Scenographic settings of *The Tempest* designed by Farrah

summer Night's Dream, imparting the special tenderness and charm of their own.

3. Farrah's personal ability to create strong scenographic design symbolism, with trees and rocks, matches Shakespeare's symbolic power in *The Tempest*. Imagination intensifies the symbolic power which increases the scope of the dramatist. In fact, symbolism is a dynamic component in the play. It receives the power and then radiates it. The sea is at times charged with a tragic power yielding death and chaos, but in the meantime it is calm, inspiring mildness and peace.

4. The tempest here is a tempest for peace in contrast to the powerful and destructive tempest in *Macbeth*, which is charged with death. It is also a blessed tempest reflecting the thinking of the new philosophical conditions which evolved in the Renaissance – as society moved into a new world which directed people to perceive the challenging of the old philosophical situation as a normal thing to do.

5. Farrah's use of the fixed background, which carries more than one vision in a single meaning corresponding with the plurality of the audience, becomes static like a nail.

6. It is the lighting that assumes the role of moving the audience from one scene to the next. The fixed background does not force the audience to confront a dramatic dynamic with the appearance of each new scene, but rather leads scenographic design to build up the tension afresh, at the beginning of each scene. Focusing light on the coloured spots in the fixed background

demonstrated a new technique which added an aesthetic dimension to the scenography.

Critical Comments

The design, in my view, represented a marvellous fine art portrait but overlooked the role of impact, despite its backstage curtain. In addition, this single, complicated stage scene gives no opportunity for the direction to plan stage movement which tends towards substantiating the dramatic text. Neither this beautiful design, using abstract elements or surrealism in drawing, nor its innovative use of shadow and light from the front and the back, helped the staging.

This same scenographic design also utilised only one level on the stage. It could have provided a variety of stage space, especially with respect to height, as well as suggesting different scenes as the drama progressed. Using a variety of levels on the stage provides two things. The first is the occupation of more spaces and areas and the second is the creation of aesthetic formations in height which emerge from the shadow and light elements. This could have evoked and substantiated the fantasy elements which abound in the play's dramatic content. The plain background, however, lacked the perspective of drawings, and thus lost the chance to create relative dimensions and sizes of space.

It appears that it was difficult for the actors to be crowded on one floor level and to create the impression of stage movement, feelings and emotions when the play demanded differences and contradiction. They found it difficult to enter or exit the stage space, without being hindered by scenic elements. Farrah rarely uses built

scenery or perspective. His vision is primarily hieroglyphic – two dimensional and symbolic

Farrah appears to have concentrated mainly on the accessories and the beautiful background. He seems not to have focused much on what serves the dramatic content of the Tempest, despite what the scenographic design achieved in terms of fantasy in this play. His aesthetics were not sufficient to shake the audience and activate their thinking, because this comes as a result of the interaction between the audience and the scenographic design movement and dynamic scenery from one scene to another.

4.8.3. Christopher Morley's Design

Christopher Morley's scenographic design for *The Tempest* play is completely different from that of Farrah. The scene of the sinking ship was one of the most dramatic and shook the audience. Morley's choice of a three-dimensional ship at the beginning confirmed the emergence of his conception of the scenographic design using a philosophical image as a potential takeoff point. This applies not only to the first scene (the sinking ship) but remained in the spectator's mind throughout the show. Morley saw it as a seed which germinated throughout the following scenes of the play.

Although his design can be described as simple, he also wanted to introduce some ingenuity by using modern technology mainly to liven the play up. Basically, a blue cloth shaped according to the laws of perspective surrounded Morley's set, so that from the width of the proscenium, the whole scene narrowed down to a small opening at the back. Within this on the floor there was also a very tight perspective. A floor was laid down from the front of the stage. This floor was made of planks, strips of wood which also narrowed from front to back and moreover narrowed down to the

entrance of the sub-stage. That was Morley's interpretation of the island. It was a very simple statement of an almost architectural false perspective. Nonetheless, to give it more interest during the storm scene, a lantern suspended from above which was swept across from stage left to stage right.

The narrow triangle that Morley saw symbolised the shape of a boat (the wrecked ship). Hence, the boat scene at the beginning was confined literally to that narrow strip of plank floor, but attached to it by a cable, so that it could lift and undulate in conjunction with lighting, and the swinging lantern.

By building perspective into the ship, the scenographic design gave the audience the ability to see and to observe actors in accordance with their precise relationships. The scenographic design consisted first of a scene on board a large royal ship and through the perspective the audience could appreciate its height, depth and breadth. The shipwreck and the high waves were suggested through stage lighting and a ladder in the middle of the ship to show the height. Wooden slides over the stage floor in the form of a letter V, as well as the lighting, gave the impression of fierce high waves piercing through both sides of the ship during the tempest in the first scene of the First Act. In the middle of the front of the stage there was an aperture going down to the ship's hold. All these units of the scenographic design dramatically combined in a co-ordinated and realistic relationship between the relative dimensions and the size at the general level of vision. This made clear the tragic situation of the characters in *The Tempest* from the very beginning. The huge scenographic design and the sinking ship equated metaphorically with the immensity of the tragedy and the actual power of the event. The players' movements in this scene revealed this relationship. They were

extraordinary movements, almost hysterical amidst the captain's whistle and the fear of the passengers, as well as the attempts at throwing life lines.

However, in contrast to *The Taming of the Shrew*, Morley's designs for *The Tempest* became totally abstract, possibly due to the influence of different directors. (See Appendix 1 for a full range of plates).

4.8.4 Morley's Design: Analytical, Aesthetic and Philosophical Approach

Photographs illustrating the scenographic design setting of *The Tempest*, as designed by Morley, indicate various elements:

1. The elements utilised by the metaphorical scenographic design provided the players with a broad space for their emotions and actions to explode on the stage.

2. The depth of perspective in its three dimensions allowed a strong collaboration and union between the stage and all its elements and the art of acting which allowed the cast to convey the difficult events their characters were experiencing. When the cast used their energy to the utmost, this produced confusion and fear among the audience, which further emphasised its actual manifestation on the stage. This is because the perspective is presented from a definite point, which may increase or decrease, which allows the audience a clear vision.

Plate (16)

Scenographic settings of *The Tempest* designed by Christopher Morley

3. The aperture in the middle of the stage floor suggested the cave which occupies the space in five scenes of this play. It was dramatically used as:

a) a strategic place within the stage floor, as the Prospero's hiding place, from which all evil magic plans emerge;

b) by placing it at the front centre indicated that it is an important and principal focus for the audience;

c) a cave under the ground, it performed the function of a strange, invisible place to the audience which motivated them to speculate and be curious. This effectively achieved the sound relationship between the scenographic design and the audience;

d) by the clever use of the cave spot as a strange place, where genies, spirits and fairies live, representing their special world which they enter and leave;

e) by creating remote contact with the same forms and dimensions of the upper wooden slides in the middle of the stage space the aperture achieved a high aesthetic standard and harmony with the rest of the scenographic design elements.

4. This small aperture gave the feeling of a wide and broad world as well as a sense of the depth of the earth where genies and spirits live. The audience felt and imagined this underground world even though it did not appear on the stage floor.

5. Morley managed without actually creating rocks, a space in the forest and trees to achieve a success and, making a strong impact of his scenographic design in the ship scene and a place near the sea (Act 3, scene 3) reflecting the players' faces on the water surface.

6. Morley's design concentrated on the dramatic elements in *The Tempest*. He also added the vital elements of his philosophical thinking about the psychology and ethics to the Shakespearean text. From the first moment of the production in the ship scene Morley managed to capture the Shakespearean world of lighting, rain, clouds, mist and strong high waves.

7. The scenographic design was rational, belonging to the rationalist philosophy, which maintains that the mind itself, which is more sublime than all other scenes, is the source of knowledge. Therefore, according to this view, the mind is the referee and the final arbitrator in the issue of views and behaviours; it is the ultimate authority.

4.9 PHILOSOPHY AND PSYCHOLOGY OF THEATRE COSTUMES

I have opted, through my research, to analyse the content as an attempt to materialise the meanings in a definite form of pictures that helped me with my research. I also opted to focus on credibility as a style of an academic study, giving the analysis a descriptive priority, with which all descriptive methodology studies and research are concerned.

All costumes and clothes, reveal not only the character of the wearer, but also the psychology and philosophy of the play and Shakespeare is no exception to the general rule. This section considers the theatre costumes of the Shakespearean plays, in terms of their philosophy and psychology.

The Shakespearean art is an art devoted to the theatre; it has never been an art that supported religious, philosophical or sociological aspects. In as much as a sculptor is concerned with his statues and a musician with his tunes, Shakespeare was concerned with language and plays. He created dramatic art with grandeur, power, splendour and atrocities. These contrasted with gentleness, affluence, imagination, love, nobility, happiness and delight.

Although in Shakespeare's time there was little concept of costume, in later times, costumes in Shakespeare's theatre played a prominent role in presenting all these properties and characteristics of the players. The priorities of artistic formation are literary and dramatic, artistic, musical or fine art significances that exist in the design. On the other hand, presentation on the stage has to appear in a united, indivisible relationship. Reality also represents a fundamental and precise criterion of the same artistic formation. In other words, any work should, in the first place, reflect the priorities of existence of humans and society. Reality in this case becomes the only means and the best tool for this task. When real life experience is reflected on the stage, through costumes worn by the characters, dramatic experience becomes real and truthful.

When dealing with the impact of stage psychology and aesthetics, especially in costume, the most important issues in this section, it is noted that social psychology

nowadays is strongly ingrained in the world of art, sometimes depending on psychological theories and other aspects of sociology. The reason is that the topics of social psychology are in fact ingrained in human behaviour. Behind such a behaviour are customs, achievements, cultural and class differences and contradictory situations of social classes and finally, the work of the human being himself. It is natural that these differences influence individuals in society, shown in the theatre by the cast of the play presented on the stage.

The above argument resonates the findings of psychological research, which proved that the behaviour of humans is influenced or shaped by the social circumstances and events they have experienced in their lives, for example, that of F.M. Dostojevski, which may influence their views and have an impact of their decisions at the visible or invisible psychological status.

Despite the paucity of research relating to the relationship between socio-psychology and arts or artists at the global level, the stage artist is committed to pay attention to this relationship and attempts to present them within the material context of the play, that is the stage movement, costumes, lighting and props. Any modern dramatic concept or content should include the aesthetic quality that is charged with feeling, emotions and harmony, filling the play with aesthetics and poetics. The stage is a part of reality rather than reality itself. Aesthetic qualities are manifested in distortion and deformation, comedy, sadness, compassion and grief, all of which are elements or thin lines referring to the aesthetic characteristic of the artistic work. They adjoin this work with the aesthetic feeling and arm it with grandeur and splendour, or abnormality, satire or grotesque.

Style emerges as one of the most important means of artistic expression. An abstract painting for example, a picture, unlike a traditional painting, may seem to be without structure and form and may it therefore be more difficult to define its aesthetic. By contrast, in Rembrandt's paintings, the aesthetics are clear – the light and shading on a figure carries its meaning. In abstract art the viewer has to search into the painting to find the meaning.

The appearance of people in their costumes on the stage in a drama is one of the factors of influence created by the art of acting and stage costumes help to create a complete person in front of the audience. This provided 'humanity', in the sense of ideology, arts and literature discipline rather than formal disciplines. One of the definitions of humanity is the "study of literature, philosophy and the arts".[7] This term is extended to involve all people. The total role of actors represents the group of people performing the stage text. R. Erasmus of Rotterdam (1469-1536) was the first pioneer in the road to humanity, which paved the way for the emergence of people such as Martin Luther. The concept of humanity changed according to the historic and social situation. While it meant the final stage of education for Aulus Gellius in ancient times, the Romans designated it as an attribute of the educated class. During the medieval ages, humanism denoted forgiveness and repentance in the ideology of the Roman Catholic Church. After all those centuries, the term 'humanity' was launched in the literature and disciplines of the European Renaissance period, when it specified the association with morals of sociology and pedagogy. Shakespeare reflects this in his dramas, which are full of the history of English Kings and the philosophy of life in

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[7] see The Collins English Dictionary (1989).

Britain. All those characters appeared – humanely – on several stages, including the Globe, the Curtain and the Rose.

Although the Shakespearean stage was bare of scenes and decors, great attention was paid to the symbolic effect of stage costumes. The king in the dramas was always shown with the royal crown on his head and fat men and foreigners were always comic characters, with idiosyncratic clothes.

The above examples lead to the extent of the philosophy of expression within the artistic work. Philosophy means searching for the truth through logic thinking rather than pragmatic observation. It is a discipline which includes logic, ethics, aesthetic, knowledge theory and metaphysics. It is also a system of philosophical concepts and a set of principles on which a branch of knowledge, a religious system or any field of human activities are based. In short, philosophy is the individual's or group's situation. The philosophy of arts during the Renaissance is that it became a non-functional art, that is independent and free, an event that created a deep-rooted change from the social perspective. Consequently, the idea of aesthetics for the Renaissance man emerged as an independent value that did not observe any specific ideology and was not bound in advance by any conditions. Man emerged during the Renaissance exalted with the fullness of reality and its heritage and aesthetics. In this sense, man discovered the tangible world around himself, new countries such as America, boundaries, that were reflected in painting and fine art. It was a world full of possibilities. This vividness that appeared in the innovations of free mental arts led to the emergence of the self-individual tendency in artistic work. The beginnings of the acceptance of aesthetic values by all classes, not in the arts alone, but also in the field

of philosophy and science, an inclination that humanity supported later on was part of the new Humanism that was beginning to influence all Europe.

An important question may be raised here to this effect. If Hamlet, Prince of Denmark, exchanges clothes with the gravedigger in *Hamlet*, or as it happens to the two lords and two servants in *The Comedy of Errors* - does that exchange help the audience understand the stage character and its psychological and social dimensions? Does it greatly disturb and confuse the audience? It is here that the importance of costumes emerges for the stage character, wherever its place and whatever it significance on the stage and aids the spectator to understand the complexities of the plot.

4.10 COSTUMES IN THE PLAYS DOCUMENTED IN THIS STUDY

In this study, the 'scenographer' means one person designed the scenery and the costumes, giving total unity of concept and aesthetics. It is possible that the character, its behaviour, ethics and ideals gives the costume designer a good opportunity and determines the starting point in costume design. The choice of colour also determines many of the priorities in this aspect. In addition, one designer's eye over the whole production gives the costume a relationship with the style that helps to reveal the characteristics and properties relevant to the costume. They might refer to the character's seriousness and keenness, or, can emphasise the comic characteristics, as in costumes for Falstaff or the clown.

Without question on the contemporary stage, costumes, make-up, accessories and others are all important tools leading to the key understanding of stage characters, from the moment they present themselves on stage, before even starting their dialogue or action.

There is a convention in theatre costume that warm dark colour costumes, few decorations and ornamentations, and strong simple lines are often used in tragedies, whereas bright, shining colours, that may be comical because of their shape are often used to signify comic dramas. The weight and texture of different kinds of cloth or fabric, their thickness or thinness affect the actors' movement on the stage. All these special qualities have a psychological effect on the actor wearing the costume, helping to externalise the character in the context of the drama, be it comedy, tragedy, historical, or metaphysical.

Personal details of silver belts, buttons, collars and other additions of clothes are characteristics of the Elizabethan time, the topic of the present study. Since all this information is considered important in adding significance to the costume, fashion of the times also plays an important role in the actors' external appearance on the stage.

4.10.1 *The Taming of the Shrew*

When costume elements, designed by Farrah, are analysed, photographs reveal that he played with sizes and shapes of costume elements - by exaggerating the collar of certain characters to enhance the popular comic aspects of the character (Photograph No. 1). It is also evident from the many colours Farrah used in the designs of the plays that costumes can be likened to a flower garden of various colours. These colours helped to present an atmosphere of joy and laughs, which dominated the majority of the stage text of this dark comedy, *The Taming of the Shrew* (see Plate No. 17).

Plate (17)

A scene from *The Taming of the Shrew* designed by Farrah.

Morley's 'Taming of the Shrew', also used many colours in the costumes, but they were more controlled, using a palette of warm colours: red and orange, as well as blue. His use of black colour was very limited and gave a sharp accent to the lighter colours. His use of necklaces in the accessories was used to reveal the importance of major characters of the play (see Photos 18 and 19). He used a cloak on the costumes to refer to a wealthy character and its social status. It raised the prestige of the character wearing it, in relation to its impact on the audience. It also refers to the character's respect and dignity, as well as elements of power and authority. Costumes with such a level of well rehearsed design and implementation prompt the actor representing the

character to feel the greatness of the character and add extra internal influences to his feelings.

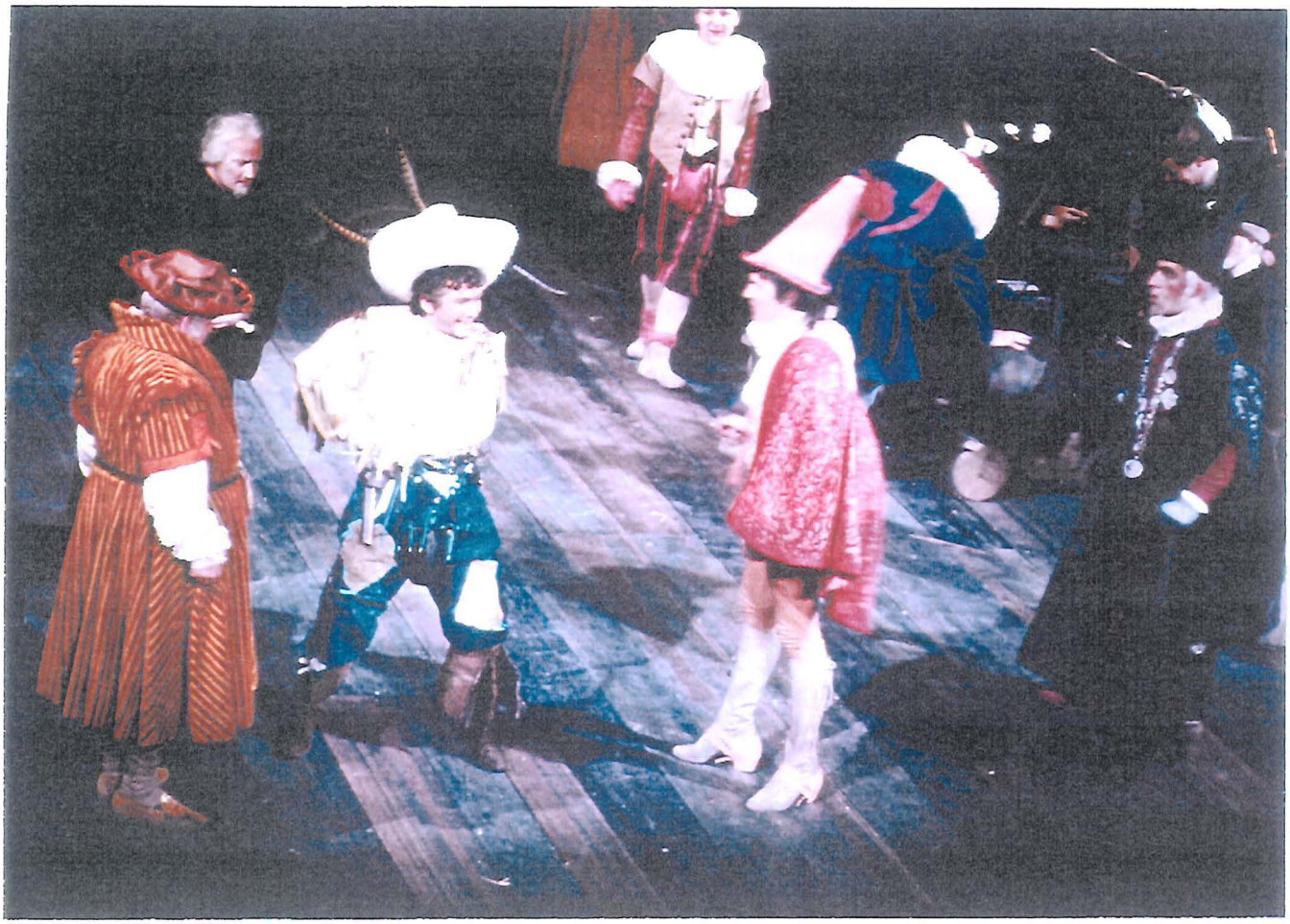

Plate (18)

A scene from *The Taming of the Shrew* designed by Morley

4.10.2 *Richard III*

Farrah's costume design uses head dresses extensively. His head-dresses have an individuality that is reminiscent of people in the Gulf wearing the Yashmak and headband as a complementary part of the traditional clothes, the Dishdasha (see Plate 19). Farrah of course translates this into European style hats, but by this head covering Farrah adds individuality to the character through design and form. The white colour implies purity, righteousness, blessing, modesty and calmness of the character. They also point to the saintly religious character. The use of similar head covering for the same play, also in white, by another designer, John Bury, was different in its design and particulars. Bury used thin, transparent fabric, but in this case did not convey elements of purity, righteousness and modesty. Often costume design concentrates on the literal drama concept interpreted by the designer's tools and means available to him and is possibly limited by quality of fabric, fashions and also colour, that form part of the costume content of the play (see Plate 20).

Plate (19)

A scene from *Richard III* designed by Farrah

Plate (20)

A scene from *Richard III* designed by Bury

4.10.3 *Henry IV: Part II*

One of the costumes in particular, designed by Farrah (Photograph No. 5) illustrates a character wearing a floor length coat made of thick heavy fabric. It immediately suggests the wealth of the character and how much he would have paid to possess this kind of fabric. The quality of the costume fabric is capable of showing or informing us of the class and social standing of a character and its position in public life. This gives the costume designer the chance to add several dimensions to costuming and clothing actors, for all these choices speak visually to the spectator.

In the same drama, *Henry IV: Part II*, Farrah was able, through the costumes, to change the size of one character (Falstaff) and to present clearly this character between power and authority (see Plate 21), on the one hand, and between weakness and

decline (see Plates 22 and 23), on the other hand. By the effect of costume design it is possible to point to the extent and influence of power and authority. The colour was pure red, co-ordinated ornamentation on both shoulders, with wide and long sleeves. It is possible that the designer added some stuffing (small cushions) under the cloak so that the costumes exaggerated the character. In addition to the designer, there was the hair stylist, who created a characteristic wig, in harmony with the image of the character on the stage in the work of both Farrah and Morley (see Plate 23).

Plate (21)

A scene from *Henry IV: Part II*, designed by Farrah showing powerful Falstaff.

When Plate 21 is examined, the skills of the costume designer are clearly visible. Discrepancy and contradiction, difference in colour palette, moving from bright towards lightness, so that the costume reveals to us the wasting of the character. Adding specific accessoires such as 'the third leg', that is the stick, on which the feeble and the elderly lean also helps the character to portray the moment of shrivelling, as he

falls surrounded by yellow leaves. It is the autumn of life of this strong King, who radiates warmth and his face is fully rounded and now he enters the autumn of his royal life.

Plate (22)

A scene from *Henry IV: Part II*, designed by Farrah showing weak Falstaff

Plate (23)

A scene from *Henry IV: Part II* designed by Farrah.

The success of the production depends on the ability of the costume designer to co-operate with other people involved in the stage play presentation in order to realise the idea of costume design. The state of decay in the vision of this production has been signified by several elements, costumes, fallen autumn leaves and the walking stick, helped by the special effects of the light and music.

4.10.4 The Spirits of *The Tempest*

The Tempest illustrates two different styles in costume philosophy and light philosophy by both Farrah and Morley's, as the set and costume designers. Both styles point to a special way of thinking by Farrah (Plates 24 and 25) and Morley (Plate 26). Both costume designs for the same play employed two types of different vision. One illustrates a philosophy pertinent to the costume and the other pertinent to lighting.

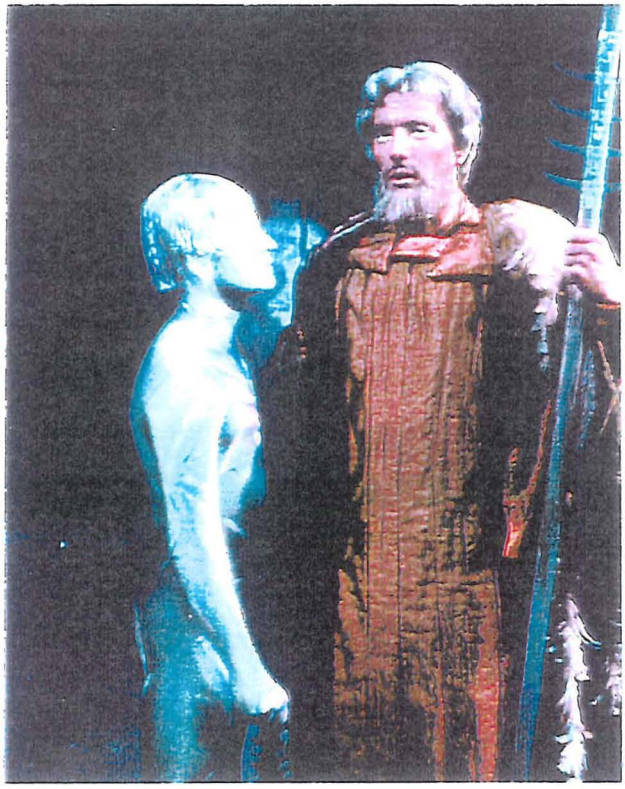

Plate (24)

A scene from *The Tempest* designed by Farrah

Plate (25)

Another scene from *The Tempest* designed by Farrah

Plate (26)

A scene from *The Tempest* designed by Morley

The spirit's costumes by Farrah were made of transparent fabric, different from those of ordinary humans in this play. The costumes revealed peculiarity in design and implementation and character alienation. In the third photograph it shows an abnormal, a fascinating and excited character that creates in its behaviour a strange magnetic activity, far from the image of human characters on the same stage floor.

Farrah's costume for Ariel revealed a spirit character from an invisible world and a spiritual world. As for the stage lighting, lighting linked between the blue light targeting the character and the other blue light at the back stage. So, what does this lighting imply? This spirit character is far removed from humans and comes from a special space between the back stage and the proscenium. The lighting also revealed that Farrah used a pattern of lines for the costume design for Ariel, scattered in the upper area of the costume design and this was enhanced by the use of light. Through the costumes the audience understood the character, what was and where it came from, anticipating what would it present in the scene (see Plate 26). Even if the audience might not understand all the dimensions of the character, the costume helps to focus their attention on the dialogue to reveal the role of the character in the Shakespearean text.

From the first moment of the arrival of the spirit onto the stage floor, the costume made reference to the fig leaves used by Adam in Christopher Morley's design depicted in early medieval painting – Morley's style is very different from that of Farrah and succeeded from another point of view in showing the costume once more in a manner likely to involve alienation. To exaggerate the alienation of the character and its remoteness from the rational world and throwing itself into infinity, the character

comes out from a pit at the front of the stage floor, from a stage place belonging to strange and mystical characters.

The costumes of the spirit character was shown in a primitive manner so that the audience could understand how Prospero, the commander viewed the island's strange creatures. The other human characters in the play convinced the audience that they were aware of the spirits. The contrast between the costumes of the spirit and the other human characters is the central challenge of the design and implementation of the staging. The costume substantiated in these two designs (spirit costume and costumes of other human characters) echoed the wide and remote gap between the human world and the world of miracles, a dramatic tempestuous world of humans and spirits, where spirits take orders from humans, but humans are also ruled by the spirit forces.

In summary, while Farrah was artistic in his approach to designing the scenography of the plays concerned, using paintings, three dimensional objects and pictorial images, in addition to having a vision in his mind, both Morley and Bury used only three dimensional approaches. Morley was mechanistic in his approach, whereas Bury heavily used textured, rusty metal cladding and solid objects rather than curtains, screens or similar flat objects.

With regard to the costumes created by these three designers, it can be concluded that all revealed the properties and characteristics of the selected plays, from a philosophical perspective relating to the design, and from the aesthetic choices of colour, texture, line, decoration, and fabric that successfully realise the implementation of a design from a drawing, into a solid artefact to be worn on the stage.

CHAPTER FIVE

FINDINGS OF THE INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports the findings of the analysis of the interviews given to the researcher by a sample representing academics, actors/directors, theatre managers and designers. The interviews were transcribed in full and then coded and categorized (Miles and Huberman, 1994).

Findings reported in this chapter are categorised into groups to facilitate comparison with the researcher's own analysis - reported in the next chapter - of the scenography of five Shakespearean plays during the 1960s and 1970s by three designers.

5.2 HISTORICAL CHANGES AND THEIR IMPACT ON THEATRE

As indicated in Chapter Two, Britain and many other countries in the world have witnessed major changes in their social, political and demographic structure since World War II. These changes have affected various aspects of life in these countries, in particular, Britain. The arts in general and theatre in particular have in turn experienced much change as a result of these social, political and demographic changes. Interviewees gave varied responses concerning the influence of these changes on theatre in Britain and what sort of influence they had on the theatre.

For example, Roger Howells, ex-Production Manager of the Royal Shakespeare Company, has witnessed many changes in theatre in relation to design and scenography during the 1960s and 1970s, the period relevant to the present study. Describing the influence of political changes, Howells said,

> *"In a sense, political changes were certainly influential in the concept of the John Bury/Peter Hall history as the Wars of the Roses built up, because, one has heard Peter Hall say very frequently that his feeling about the whole of those plays together is the strength of Realpolitik."*

Howells also thinks that Hall looked on the time being covered, overall, as a fairly brutal period, historically speaking, and this in a sense, is very much echoed in John Bury's use of materials, particularly in the Wars of the Roses series. He adds,

> *"As you've probably discovered already, the use of what appeared to be metals, a lot of metal, a world of metal which they go on about – John and Peter – a great deal, were from the background to the world of the histories and the way that those materials, as it were – I quote 'real materials' as opposed to artificial scenic materials - were important to create that real, brutal world. The feeling was, I know, that traditional methods of scenic presentation used in this country beforehand, were things like canvas and wood and they tended to be seen as being lightweight and flimsy."*

John Bury's background and his history, before he came to work on these particular plays with the RST, was experience in the theatre, the old Victorian Theatre Royal at Stratford East, directed by the indomitable Joan Littlewood. His ideas came from working in a poor world where economics ruled how much you could afford to put on stage. So, politically and philosophically, it was a left wing, socialist, realistically orientated theatre. Consequently, if they had a brick wall on the stage, it was not a painted brick wall; John got real bricks from a building site outside the theatre, or an old bombsite and built a real brick wall and this was dictated partly by economics – what they could afford - and partly by the attempt to represent reality on the stage. This outlook, obviously, coincided with Peter Hall's new ideas about the histories and about the period of history, which they describe.

Brick walls were not called for, but certainly, it was seen to be a strong, brutal world of metal and men wore armour, to get their ideas over – they were going into war and they were going to be large, tank-like individuals. Howells reports,

> "*And the way people wore what they wore and the way they lived and the fact they lived in castles, that people were influential, politically, obviously dictated how they saw that world. So you end up with castle-like structures - big, solid, dominant structures, apparently covered with metal plates and rivets and studs and wire-expanded steel mesh, which would respond, not merely visually, but when struck would sound like metal, so that swords which were drawn across a metal grill floor, would present this harsh grating sound and sparks would be thrown up and there was a brutality of that which, I can see, John was trying to do. When it came to feeling that it would be too static, just to have a background of that sort, then of course the problem arose of providing some sort of flexibility in the stage and then one moved into the sort of mechanistic look of huge walls which swivelled or rotated into three different sections and different permutations could be used on them.*"

Instead of using steel alone, which was too limiting in practical terms, he moved from steel to copper colours, to brass colours. Brass, again, had a hint of gold, so you could express the French Court, which was seen as being a gaudy, more colourful court with the fleur-de-lys of the French being picked out, particularly in brass sheeting. Where they wanted to express the countryside, where things were maybe more autumnal, in *Henry IV,* they would use steel, but steel had to be rusted down so that it had the autumnal colours of the English countryside, when Falstaff goes to Gloucestershire, for instance. These metallic materials could be seen to echo certain natural features such as autumnal colours; or wire mesh or expanded metal meshing could be imitated on a large scale, blown-up to twenty times its normal dimensions and used as borders that would give the impression of being intertwined branches and foliage and so on. Leaves could then be imposed on them, made of sheet metal. So the whole of John's

feeling about these sorts of materials in the histories obviously dominated their thinking.

As for Abd' Elkader Farrah, Howells commented,

> *"Now, Abd'Elkader Farrah, interestingly enough, I do think he did bring a different vision. Working with a different director too, that I'm not sure what Terry Hands's motives were for doing Histories at that time – there were many motives for choosing which plays are done at Stratford at a different time. I mean, maybe because they haven't been done for a number of years. Maybe because they felt it was time to look again through different eyes. Maybe, if I just divert for a moment, when it came to the Histories, Terry wanted to do the whole run of the Histories and for instance, he wanted to do the Henry VI plays in all three original parts."*

When John Bury and Peter Hall had done the three *Henry VI* plays, they had actually edited and re-written them so that they were only done in two parts. Terry wanted to do the whole lot. It started initially with the *Henry V* production and Howells is not sure when Hands and Farrah worked together on *Henry V*. Howells also could not remember whether they conceived at that time the idea of doing the complete run of the Histories, which they were to do over the next few years.

But the economics, that is, the state of the economy in Britain, made an enormous difference to the *Henry V* designs, as opposed to the John Bury/Peter Hall Histories. The fact was that the Royal Shakespeare Theatre was less financially secure than before and they were trying to do things economically at that time, for example, having smaller casts. The Wars of the Roses – the Peter Hall/John Bury season - was marked by the fact that there were so many actors in the company playing small parts that they could afford fairly large armies. By the time Hands and Farrah did *Henry V*, these forces were quite small. Howells adds,

> *"My remembrance of discussions was that an impact needed to be made on the audience using as small resources as possible, not to look as if they were cut-down or reduced programmes, but to be very flamboyant, to let the audience feel that they were getting their money's worth and not having reduced production in any way. I think I'm correct in saying that when they did the Henry IV/Henry V together that season – they only did four plays that season, the so-called Falstaff plays, the two Henry IVs the Henry V, which mentions Falstaff, although he does not appear in it and they also revived The Merry Wives of Windsor, that was the fourth play which was designed by Timothy O'Brien, again Terry directed – it was Terry Hands' season."*

That, according to Howells, was a revival of a previous production by these people, so that it was not redesigned. Economics, in that sense, were at the time a very important factor. They wanted to do things economically, but at the same time, make a brave display, very much influenced in particular by the flamboyant look of the *Henry V* production. There were other factors involved artistically in *Henry V*. Terry Hands wanted to make an enormous contrast between the splendour of the heraldic images, to get away from the metallic but not very brightly coloured view that John Bury and Peter Hall had. They wanted to be drab and down-to-earth, realistic and brutal. In the war scenes, Hands and Farrah, between them, certainly wanted to portray the ugliness and drabness of war, but contrast it with the heraldic background and that world of the aristocracy which was very colourful and filled with the bright medieval costumes which we are familiar with from pretty picture books. Howells adds:

> *"In the 1960s and 1970s I was not sure what was the social and political change, but in terms of theatre audiences, it was felt that when economics in 1975 dictated that we should cut back on expenditure in theatre. We were always complaining that there was not enough money in the theatre. The directors were always going to the government and the Arts Council and so on."*

Cherry Morris, an actress, who was interviewed by the researcher, also described the set as being simple, as will be discussed in further detail in Section 4.3. Howells also

maintained that in the 1960s, there was the basic brown cloth called moderate grey, a white box, a grey box again; they were all boxes until 1972,

> *"we had a basic stage during the Roman Season. 1960s and 1970s: we called Abdel's great floor the 'Aircraft Carrier', by the way, and only in 1976 when we had a totally different season, which was unlike Elizabethan Theatre, which we called 'the wooden O'. The whole of that period we were working every season within what we called the 'basic staging'. In other words, the beginning of these seasons at Stratford, a designer or a group of designers were asked to design the basic stage, which meant all the basic floor, basic wall and masking."*

Howells indicates that within this they could do all sorts of things and inevitably what emerged was, for a variety of reasons, economically determined as much as anything. One would say, I would stick to that and do something very simple. By this time, however, as the season progressed with the basic setting, designers revolted sometimes and said, I cannot go on like this, I am going to be myself and present my concept of what I want to show in terms of this play. So, it oscillated, as far as the audience's inclination, or their expectations were concerned. According to Howells, the audience were always led; the audience were thought to have been given what they wanted, but they were given what the designers, directors and others involved in the production thought was right for them, consequently, "except in terms of that you do not want to do them down, so I think that those are my feelings about expectations at that time".

Robert Gordon, Head of Drama Department, Goldsmiths University of London, approached this issue from an academic point of view. He maintained,

> *"I think that the designs of Shakespeare's plays in the period during the 1960s and 1970s, the simplified set design, the economic changes and the new concept of history, I think to take the first one, the set design ..."*

In Robert Gordon's view, there are two aspects to this. One is the British tradition of minimalism in theatre design, which is a tradition which very specifically comes from the director and acting teacher, Michel Saint-Denis, who is the subject of a chapter in Gordon's new book on British Acting Theory. He was the nephew of Jacques Copeau, a French director, and came to England in the 1930s, first with a production in 1932 of *Noah*, by André Obey; the British theatre people at that time were very much moved by this production. They were deeply impressed by it, because he used Copeau's idea of the *plateau neuf*: a bare, empty stage, like Brook's empty space. Copeau spent many years working with actors to present Molière and other classical writers and Shakespeare very simply with bare boards for a stage. This had also become the practice at the Old Vic Theatre, not only because the Old Vic was very poor, but also because the directors were searching for a new simplicity. Gordon does not think that the Old Vic originated the idea; they used a simple set design, because it was the aesthetic of the time. Robert Gordon adds humorously:

> "*But, I think they did it because they had no money, so it was a new idea, but also of course Granville Barker had created very beautiful, but quite simple design. I think what they were doing at the Old Vic was they were partly influenced by Granville Barker, partly because they did not have the money, they have to have simple sets and so it became a part of the English tradition to play Shakespeare in quite simple sets from the 1920s onwards.*"

In the nineteenth century, productions of Shakespeare in England had been extremely elaborate, with very lavish scenery. So, one reason why the simplified set design was employed in the 1960s and 1970s was simply that the reaction against it became a major part of the English tradition.

Michel Saint-Denis brought this idea from France in 1932. The English were so impressed by him that John Gielgud, who was the leading star actor at that time in the

serious theatre, invited him to come back in 1935 and to do the same play, not in French as he had done the first time, but in English. Gielgud wanted Saint-Denis to do a production with himself playing *Noah*. Hence Saint-Denis directed an English company for this production at the famous nineteenth century Old Vic Theatre.

From 1935 onwards, Saint-Denis worked in England, living here for a large part of his life. Many famous actors, such as Sir John Gielgud, Lawrence Olivier and Peggy Ashcroft were very much influenced by him. He set up a theatre studio in 1935 called 'The London Theatre Studio' and worked with George Devine, then a young actor who became his deputy and right-hand man. George Devine was the man who established the English Stage Company at the Royal Court Theatre in 1956 that became very important in staging new plays: Shakespeare was produced there too, but new plays came first. George Devine used the ideas of Michel Saint-Denis, which had come from Copeau - the idea of the empty stage. Their designer at the Royal Court was Jocelyn Herbert, who worked very closely with George Devine. The two of them were the first to produce John Osborne's plays beginning in the late 1950s and the early 1960s. People discussed the production of *Luther*, by John Osborne, in 1961, and how in this production the designer, Jocelyn Herbert, made use of the small stage of the Royal Court. Though it was a historical play, she made very clever use of painted screens contrasting with real furniture and some real props, but kept everything very simple. Gordon adds,

> *"I think that because the Royal Court was so famous and the productions there were very, very famous of the new place. Everybody was influenced by the Royal Court. So, all young directors like Peter Hall, when he was starting at the RSC in 1959. At that time they were all impressed by what Jocelyn Herbert was doing and what the Royal Court was doing. I think that was a very important influence, so it was not, I think, only a social and cultural idea, I think it was an aesthetic idea that was very important in the English Theatre generally."*

This was an idea that Jocelyn Herbert developed from her interest in Bertolt Brecht, and is where a relationship can be found between social changes and new ideas. In 1956, Brecht died two weeks before his company, the Berliner Ensemble, came to England. They had a season in London at the Palace Theatre, and all the young directors, actors, writers and designers who were at the Royal Court and other theatres, including Peter Hall, went to see the Brecht productions and were astonished. They were deeply impressed by what they saw Brecht doing. Gordon went on to say,

> *"Now, you see that Brecht was doing the same sort of things to the Royal Court Theatre, but he was doing it for political reasons. He had a political ideology for why his settings were simple. He liked the idea that you have a simple set. But you have some real objects on the stage. So, in 'Mother Courage' you have real carts on the stage, although you have a fairly bare stage, you have a revolve, very little scenery, a few little painted things on the set, but otherwise mainly just props and a cart, but everything in the cart had to be real. You know how Brecht liked everything to look old, if it was not an old belt, it has to look old. The thing had to be really nice, nice fabric, nice material, but he made them look old, really old."*

This also influenced the Royal Court, so there was a double influence; that of Brecht, together with that of Michel Saint-Denis. The English already had the taste for simplicity, but Brecht gave that a particular political slant. Brecht advocated the use of real things on the stage. The Marxist view of the world represented on the stage is a material world. The material reality of objects, money, coins, cutlery, dishes and the clothes that "Mother Courage" was selling must all be real, because the play was talking about a material world and a business world. So, a Brechtian production had a double meaning. In the English theatre sometimes they picked up the look of the set without wanting to underline a political meaning, because the English theatre was not particularly political until Brecht arrived. Gordon added,

> *"I think it took the English, some of the designers, like Jocelyn Herbert, they understand Brecht' politics, so I think, they knew whet they were doing. I think*

it is even specific. You might find some details in some writings about Jocelyn Herbert and some interviews with Jocelyn Herbert, where she tells how she was influenced by Brecht. But I think, in general terms the theatre at that time was influenced aesthetically by Brecht and they were curious about Brecht's politics, but may be the minimalism just coincided with their own taste for minimalism in theatre anyway. So I think in any case that was there."

Social and political changes coincided with the aesthetic change at this time. Probably the aesthetic change came first. When Peter Hall was in Stratford he had the idea that the Royal Shakespeare Company must be sensitive to modern day influences, as well as to Shakespeare. So, the whole idea from the beginning, he said, was that the Royal Shakespeare Company must produce new plays and Shakespeare's plays together. This is why Hall did not want a theatre only at Stratford; he wanted one also to play at the Aldwych in London, so that the actors could have the experience of playing in two houses. The result would be that they could perform Shakespeare as though he were a modern writer. This would make it relevant to the modern audience. Several ideas were coming together at the same period, sometimes by chance, sometimes by plan, but Hall was very aware of what was going on, although he was not political himself, as Brecht had been. Looking at the early productions, even in the early 60s, before the period specifically studied, the 1970s or the late 1960s, the sets and costumes of the Royal Shakespeare Company had started to be very simple. Gordon adds,

"It was the first time in the English Theatre for Shakespeare that we ever saw costumes becoming like real clothes. If you look at Gielgud's production, or Olivier's production, or the production of Stratford in the 1950s, they were all wearing costumes, all the actors were wearing obviously like theatrical costumes, but if you look at Peter Hall's production, 'The Wars of the Roses', immediately you could sense an immediate shift, they were in leather, wearing real armour, they were wearing real clothes real soldiers wear and the historical period carefully observed, not spectacular, but realistic, sometimes quite dull, sometimes dull costumes, but I think, this is an idea, I think they borrowed from Brecht."

Then the whole culture began to be rather more political, because of the victory of the Labour Party in 1964, with Harold Wilson as Prime Minister; this was a very successful government. London became known as Swinging London in the 1960s, with a huge and powerful youth culture - Harold Wilson had a very powerful arts policy, which was administered by the Arts Council, and under the Minister for the Arts, Jenny Lee, was well subsidised. They had a very specific agenda for the arts and the arts policy of socialism in that period was to make the welfare state important and relevant for people working in the arts, as well as commerce. The government also increased subsidy for the arts and developed a socialist attitude towards the arts. Hall and his contemporaries may have been urged to follow a more political agenda in the theatre than before, because the new Labour government was modern and almost aggressive in its policies. It was therefore natural that the Theatre at Stratford-on-Avon began to look more political, though their productions were not always as political as they looked. Sometimes it appeared that they wanted to have the style, the fashion of seeming political, but without the content. Robert Gordon remarks:

> "*I think maybe the designers were the ones who created the look that was closer and more influenced by Brecht than the actual production was. Every one talked, I think, about this modern day approach. The critics did not like the language the actors spoke, they said they chop up the verse and they speak it badly, but I think that the visual appearance of the production was very, very exciting to people in those days, because it took them out of the old style of velvet and beautiful clothes and long medieval garments, into something much more realistic, something much more genuinely historical and old looking costumes like had been used, more practical.*"

These costumes had a strong relationship to the new simplified stage settings. The simplified stage setting, which started in the 1930s and 1940s was developed by St. Denis in the 1950s; became in the 1960s almost fashionable, indeed almost

glamorous, the style of choice, and today it has become part of the aesthetic, without needing justification. The British theatre became modernised through the influence of Brecht.

In 1963 John Bury designed *Richard III*. Bury used to work at the Theatre Royal at Stratford East, which was a very politicised theatre. Accordingly, he picked up influences partly through what was going on in the Royal Court and partly through the formidable and unique woman director Joan Littlewood. She had produced Brecht plays, and found they spoke strongly to her audience in the East of London that was a mixture of fashionable people and local workers. All Terry Hands' productions in 1976, including *Henry IV: Parts I* and *II*, *Henry V*, *Henry VI* and other productions were very distinctive. Terry Hands, with the designer Farrah for the first time, rethought the political history plays of Shakespeare. Theirs was a wholly different individual design concept, neither wholly Brechtian design concept, nor conventional, almost belonging to that other world of opera.

> "*Maybe much closer, maybe he, I did not know at the time where Farrah had come from, I thought, Farrah may be an exotic name, may be just a stage name. So, I did not know that he had any Middle Eastern connection, but now I understand, when I met him, because he came to the seminar, his whole aesthetic is very different to the English aesthetics. Now, I can see that his influence must have been enormous on Terry Hands, because I think he changed the Royal Shakespeare Company. I think that season was very revolutionary in that these productions, I loved the productions, I loved also Alan Howard who was the main actor in the production*" (Robert Gordon).

Many critics did not like Alan Howard, maintaining that he was too mannered, too operatic. The whole conception of Terry Hands and of Farrah was like opera. They staged Shakespeare in an operatic way and although this idea was behind the production, the stage was very bare, with few things on it. Through the texture and colour of the set, it was very sensuous, very beautiful and very textured. And the

costumes, although many of them were in leather, they were not like Brecht's costumes; they were not made to look very old, but they were beautiful.

Barrie Rutter, a director and actor during the 1970s, approached this issue from a different perspective. As an actor who experienced the impact of the changes in theatre during the 1970s, he maintained that

> *"The 1970s, yes there was a little money in the arts. The history plays that I did in the 1970s at the ROYAL SHAKESPEARE COMPANY, with Terry Hands and Farrah, part of that deliberate choice of Henry IV, Part I and Part II, Henry V and Merry Wives, was because we could use the same set for all the four plays. That was a restriction, but within that restriction, of course, the imagination can soar. Although Henry V was a very simple set design, it had one or two big features within it, which were these wonderful clothes. As Farrah, who is of course an Arab, once we saw the set design, we went 'O, Abdel, that is wonderful and he said "the Bedouins do it every day". So, what looked wonderful on the stage in the middle of the English countryside, men and women of the tribes in the desert are doing it every day. So, that where he got it from."*

Barrie Rutter, however, was not sure about the new concept of history. He is also quoted as saying;

> *"If you trim, if you cut the text of Henry V, you could make a complete warmongering play. If you cut it another way, you can give him a real conscience and I think they idealise him in the two, but Shakespeare does not come down on either side, but all aspects of war are in it ... The horror plus the actual celebrations of it, so, the English history is always a play and the English history is always discussed within Henry V. Every age will discuss it differently and see it as they want to see it."*

Terry Hands also talked extensively about the changes during the 1960s and 1970s. He maintains that at this time there were political, and, more importantly, psychological changes. The Second World War had left a period of hardship and recuperation. The country needed to be rebuilt. But it was rebuilt with a degree of

optimism because, unlike the First World War, the Second World War was regarded as a just war. He adds:

> *"I think many, many people would have refused to fight in the First World War because it was a silly war, it was not a just war, it was ridiculous. It was the death throes of the 19th century and that 1914-1918 conflict left us with a demoralised public and because our beliefs in the church, in the state and the family were nineteenth century beliefs have finally been destroyed. It is not the case in the 1939-1945, it was a war to combat a form of evil, a form of political cancer, so the people who were emerging from it were optimistic. They wanted to do something. They have the feeling that it was their war, the chosen war for ordinary people. So, my generation which was born in the war, a sort of boom generation. Everybody has babies when there is a war. They were excited by the idea of making the new world as some of the old world's ideas have been purged, fascism, extreme leftism. That meant that everything in the 1960s and 1970s, in theatrical terms, because our particular generation has nonetheless been influenced by the past and we were an imperial generation. We were brought up within an Empire."*

Hands also mentioned that the British Empire had entered the 1939-1945 War and emerged triumphant. Power had not been given away, but the world had changed. It was very much this spirit which motivated his generation of university students of which Peter Hall was part, with a desire to build a substitute for a lost empire.

> *"Our first impulse was to go and run a colony, look after an Island in Borneo, whatever. We still have that adventurous spirit. There wasn't an empire any more, there was the possibility of it. Our finest and wisest Prime Ministers had already started the process of restoring lands to their rightful owners."*

Here, the theatre became the arena for this spirit. New ideas could be imported from all over the world and involved in the work. The work itself could be built into an empire. The Royal Shakespeare Company began with one theatre, then two, then three, four and then five. The whole idea of the aesthetic of the stage was a passionate debate about the moral ideas carried by the great place. Hands went on to say:

> *"For us the debate was central and the place was serious, not the escapist drama of the war years, it needed to be post-war. What people wanted was not to live the turbulence. They went through that. Now, what we were saying the 1960s and 1970s was, this debate must be paramount: who are we? what are we? what are the political circumstances in which we found ourselves in a world changing rapidly in Europe? Germany was rapidly rebuilding, France was rebuilding. It was turbulent worldwide because colonies were given their freedom, whether ready or not. When they were not ready for it, in what way is breaking up? Religion was starting up again and by that I mean a political crescent fighting for power, whether it were Moslem or Christian. If Christian, which sect, Orthodox or Catholic? and so on."*

The design had to become naturally reduced instead of becoming pretty or a camouflage. It was to be reduced to be a support to the actor, to the idea and to the debate. This was fuelled by the tremendous developments in the cinema, where they could incorporate better scenic effects than any theatre could ever think of doing and, of course, by the development of television, which brought these images into every home. Hence, the first idea was like-minded university graduates coming together with an imperial training and an empire to express, with the result that they created their own. Hands adds,

> *"The designers that we attracted were not the high society light entertainment designers They had many skills, like John Bury coming from Stratford East,; Farrah, who had come to England by way of France, having originated in Algeria, an Arab and a new group in the great revolution in the 1960s in England. It was a good time, the 1960s. It was not just the best out in scenes but also in fashion, maybe in what we called the 'Art School Revolution'. We were not imperial impetus; it was social classes, which were strong those days. But it was art school. The Rolling Stones was a group formed in Art School. The Beatles were influenced by the Art School. These, of course, produced designers like Christopher Morley, where the idea of becoming three-dimensional, becoming mobile, becoming three-dimensions and working with this very high pressure, a sort of university graduate group, who had never played in fields because many inner cities have been bombed and destroyed and are to be rebuilt and so on. It produced a tremendous melting pot, a great sense of optimism, a great sense of freedom and a good scene that we have eradicated."*

This coincided also with a leader of world design, Josef Svoboda, a Czech, who, in the opinion of many of people such as Terry Hands and his contemporaries, was one of the great designers from Eastern Europe. Josef Svoboda was in turn influenced by the architect of the turn of the century, Adolphe Appia, a Swiss architect with a deep understanding of proportion and space, who in turn influenced Edward Gordon Craig. Many British designers of this period knew of his heritage and learned from it.

5.3 SCENERY

Scenically, Farrah came up with brilliant ideas. The seasons at Stratford were all conceived with a very simple basic staging for the whole season. Farrah came up with a very acutely raked, angled stage, and psychologically, the intention of this was to give an idea of thrusting the production forward into the auditorium. The other advantage of a very raked stage was that it could suggest different levels without having to build them up with various rostrums to different heights. Upstage, actors were not masked by the ones downstage because they were already higher. The designers also wanted to open out the stage, not to give the impression of penny-pinching and of the stage being narrow and little. Roger Howells comments:

> "*Consequently, we opened out the stage at the theatre, right to the very back wall of the stage and not to have a painted backcloth or anything of that sort. At the back of the Royal Shakespeare Theatre's stage is a brick wall. Now it had on it, originally, because one never saw to the very back wall of the stage in the early days of the theatre, it had a series of steel hooks on the wall which had been used for storing rolled-up backcloths, so one of the first things we did, we went right to the back of the stage, we cut off all those steel support-hooks and painted white the back wall, so the feeling of space was tremendous. Then, down either side of the stage, there was a platform, about twelve to fifteen feet up, an upper platform running up and down the stage on either side – two parallel platforms, which were accessible by the actors, who could be up there during certain scenes and they formed the walls of cities they brought down. But also, it was useful as a technical platform. These two platforms or runways on either side were supported by buttresses, but not leant backward like a buttress, but leant forward.*"

The base of these platforms was further back than the front, so they projected outwards. In other words, they cantilevered out. This, and the fact that this long plank stage ran from virtually the back wall, allowed that white back wall either to be, symbolically, a blue sky, or to be painted different symbolic colours to express the feeling of any given scene. The long plank stage ran smoothly, apart from a little dip at the back, which could be reached via a reverse slope at the back of the stage, beneath which there were lights which lit up the back. The stage then ran down the rake and thrust, again, as deeply into the auditorium as the sightlines would allow. So the whole stage conveyed a very strong psychological feeling, a dynamic feeling, as result of these angled lines. But the masterstroke for *Henry V* was in the early scenes. Howells goes on to describe one of them:

> "*We worked this out with the Chief Stage Technician at the time, as to how this was done. A large bundle hung upstage from the flies, a sort of grey bundle of cloth, which I was not quite certain what it was to start, it looked like an enormous artichoke, suspended there and cords ran out from it in different directions to these gangways I mentioned, either side. It was an anonymous sort of set. Nothing clearly belonging to any period at that point and indeed, because it was anonymous, the production started in a strange, anonymous way. The chorus was in modern dress.*"

The actors who came on in the opening scenes were in a mixture of rehearsal clothes and partly costumed; some wore tracksuit trousers. After two or three scenes, the change was made into something which was clearly a play, echoing the words of the chorus about the audience using its imagination. The next step was taken when actors began to appear fully costumed and then, by a trick release, worked from above, this grey bundle fell apart. Cords were pulled off to either side to stretch out what appeared as an enormous canopy with heraldic arms, red lions, and gold lions against a red background, with the fleur-de-lys, the modern coat-of-arms of that period. With

an enormous canopy like this over the whole stage, Farrah showed his interest in using materials, which was very original at that time. He was certainly in the forefront of using interesting, new, synthetic materials. The fabrics which he used reflected a lot of light, with a metallic feeling, so that the heraldic images were not simply colourful, more colourful than in the past, but also had threads of metallic colour in them. This image persisted all through the first half of the play until the battle-scenes and then the *coup de théâtre* took place. The side cords were released, the canopy was lowered from above, so that it lay flat on the floor and the reverse side appeared as grey, grubby canvas, marked and spotted, covered with little peaks which were still suspended by cords from above, so as to create a little landscape on this surface. It remained there all through the battle-scenes. More than anything in this period was Farrah's exotic use of colour, which seemed to be different from most English or European designers.

> *"I'm not saying that...that's a great generality I know, but certainly the influence of his work here, at this theatre, in Stratford, seemed to me, to come very much from...I mean he's lived in this country many years, but I think he's still retained, in his mind, the feeling of the light, the culture, the colour, the different sort of light source that he would have been used to in North Africa. I do think that that permeates his work all the way through."*

But, apart from this, Farrah is also innovative in terms of the textures of materials. The great canopy described above was a very strong image. These metallic materials did not include only smooth materials; some of them were almost like fur, with a slightly three-dimensional quality. So, there was body in the material as well. Farrah was also very fond of using a certain material available at the time, which was fashionable material and was seen then as being somewhat vulgar. Numbers of rugs were made of this synthetic substance which looked like an artificial bear or fox fur

dyed in very bright colours: purples, bright greens, reds and also white. Farrah loved to use scraps of it on costumes and also scattered it on the floor. In *The Taming of the Shrew,* for instance, the whole floor was covered in that fake fur material.

Cherry Morris, an actor interviewed during the study period, maintains that the set did take on a simpler appearance, because the front curtain flap and the curtains disappeared, so that when the audience came in, they saw a lit set and did not know if it was going to change or not. It was a refreshing change for the actors not to have to dodge scenery and curtains! She reports, however, that she does not know if this reduces the 'mystique' of the theatre, because "always it is something wonderful when the curtain parts". She adds:

> "*Economic changes, yes, I expect to have had something to do with it. It was cheaper as the thing became more expensive. Certainly a new concept of history - that could come into it. The way we present history is possibly a simpler version, except you have to play Shakespeare's as he has written it. Now, I do not know about it, what the impact was on Henry IV and I do not know about history, by Terry and designed by Farrah.*"

In 1963, *Henry VI* and *Richard III,* designed by Bury, had an undeniable impact both on design and on the audience. This was a watershed in design itself and theatre. The actors remember this Shakespeare play being treated as if it were Chekhov's. *The Cherry Orchard,* realistic and fruitful, and being very comfortable wearing the costumes. Cherry Morris explains:

> "*Yes, acting in Shakespeare in a modern context of design and scenery. It does give you an enormous range of style in a way because you are not bounded by exact design, as it were. Obviously within playing a part you have to remember is the constraint of a costume of certain designer of a period would be now. Often, it is not absolutely correct design of the period, so that freedom perhaps gives you more elasticity and breadth that if they were absolutely indeed medieval of a period is, well I can say a little bit about the*

Wars of the Roses. Later on, I mean, I have been in a further two productions of Richard III, which carried that theme of costumes and sets, being not rigidly set within the period that it was written. It works very well actually. I think the audience does accept that because once they have some indication of when and in what period the play is set they will accept it, unless the costumes or the design are really extreme. The language of the play also helps."

The biggest difference between the *Henry IV* productions of 1963 and 1975 related directly to what had happened during the 1960s; the contrast was effectively a minor revolution. Instead of beautiful scenery and a chandelier that had to be blown away, the acting was poor, in style though not in practice. The theatre was not simply escapist, like the theatre of the 1950s. Those who came in the 1960s were the revolutionaries who often started, as most revolutionaries do, by opposing the original enemy, which were the conventions of the 1950s. The work of Peter Hall and John Bury was different in its use of heavy tactile pieces for these history plays. With huge pieces of real timber which added to the effect of great epic scenes, they attempted to recreate the medieval period, but with modernist aesthetics. It was a strongly political statement visually supported by the way it was played. Emotional relationships were less important, because the characters were face-to-face, and united against the enemy they were overthrowing.

The major difference is to be found in the next important productions of *Henry IV: Parts I* and *II*, directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd'Elkader Farrah, ten to twelve years later. This was the second wave, the main revolutionary one. The plays could now be re-examined in terms of their character relationships. They were very heavily slanted towards the father-son relationship, and in particular the scenes showing the politics of managing the kingdom, rather than the grandeur. Illuminating through the direction of Peter Hall, politics was a kind of power game.

> *"Our generation saw them very much more like Richard Nixon. Somebody with a shirt opened and two days of beard laying his feet on the table - ; Watergate; whereas John Bury and Peter Hall saw them as power, tall, strong, depending on people ruling the world, through oil companies, it was Churchillian in a sense. The world politics as we saw it was easier, more ordinary and therefore we took the history plays as an examination of the country, through the relationship between Hal and his father and his surrogate father, Falstaff."*

The first play, *Henry IV: Part I* is about aspiration and the second play, *Henry IV: Part II* is about sickness. The whole country is to some extent sick through corruption, politically and emotionally. The old has to give way to the new. The first group of plays concentrated on the politics of dominance. The difference between Farrah and Bury as designers is that John was a great realist, sometimes brutal. It is extraordinary that in some scenes of the epic he could suggest an English courtroom, with his control of space and time. In some ways, it is much more like an Appia design, in that Appia believed that light was the supreme scene painter and light alone defined and, at the same, revealed.[1] Farrah, the wisest and most reflective of the designers, probably with more richness and experience of art than any of them. Designers may come to the theatre from different disciplines: an architectural background, as did Christopher Morley, fine arts, such as Farrah, a painter with a background in calligraphy and decorative lettering, or from a building construction experience such as John Bury.

5.4 COSTUMES AND MATERIALS USED

At this period in the Royal Shakespeare Company there was a tendency to present plays in basic costumes which were almost modern, to move away from tights, to

[1] Roose-Evans, J. 1989. *Experimental Theatre from Stanislavsky to Peter Brook.* Revised and updated Fourth Edition. London and New York: Routledge. pp. 48-49.

tight trousers and from doublets to modern jackets and sweaters. This approach found its way into the sets as well; there was a sort of simplification and reduction to very simple structures, with the result that there would be virtually no set at all, or something so neutral that it was merely a series of plain panels on the walls, which might have had some openings for doors and windows. Into this rather severe aesthetic Farrah reintroduced a feeling of colour. This enabled him to evoke a historical period that was not a slavish historical carbon copy of what one has seen, for example, in Elizabethan or medieval paintings of that period, but something unique to Farrah's own culture and his cultural background.

> *"I do feel that is very, very strong indeed. But, not slavishly attached to that culture, bringing a modern aesthetic to it, because he is a man of the twentieth century and consequently materials which were now becoming available, which other designers were doing as well, he was not alone in that, but he certainly very much believed in using synthetics, for example – plastics, clear plastics, polystyrenes which could be carved, as I say, fabrics, which had modern, chemical colours, as natural dyed colours, and synthetic colours which had texture different, sometimes very different and sometimes subtly different from what it was before"* (Roger Howells).

Farrah would look at what was available in the catalogues of synthetic materials. There were a number of people who provided materials commercially for scenic work. Some of them produced colour and mediums for lighting, plastics of that sort, but they would also come up with strange textured materials, which they had no specific idea about using, in their own minds, but it was very interesting material for a stage designer. He was open-minded about using this sort of thing.

> *"... if he found a strange, modern sort of plastic netting, which was irregular in its shape, not separated into squares, he would look at that and say 'ah, that would be a fine, interesting texture that one could use, one could light through from behind, one could hang it and it would take the place of foliage if we had a forest scene, or something like that"* (Roger Howells).

Producing Shakespeare's plays within the modern context, in terms of scenography of the five plays is a healthy way of doing them. Having worked over 32 years with the Royal Shakespeare Company, generally speaking, Howells very much believes in the overall trends which have taken place during that time, which these designs are very much an integral part of the production.

> "*And I suppose what I think about them, as somebody who has worked on the stage management and production management side and somebody also who has been coming to Stratford for much longer - I mean, I came as a schoolboy in 1947, that was the first time I came to Stratford. I've been coming and seeing them all that time as well as other plays in London, at the Old Vic and the National and so on. I belong to that generation which believes in the way we are going. And it is of course, as I say, a reaction against the very scenic, historical way of looking at the theatre, which the Victorians had in this country and which persisted way into the first half of the last century.*"

The philosophy of simplifying Shakespearean presentation allowed the audience to participate by using and sharpening its imagination. This was stimulated by the designers, who, rather than feeding everything to the audience, leaving them nothing to think about, challenged them to use their power to believe. The swiftness and great fluidity of the performance and that sets had to provide either a permanent setting, or one which was flexible and moved itself carrying the story or plot forward. Anything which made the plays more comprehensible clarified the play and was used to advantage. What the play and the text are saying is the prime concern, and the carefully controlled modern dress productions helped the productions to achieve this aim.

There is always a danger that what is being said is countersaid by what one sees, and anecdotal reporting of *The Tempest* indicates how difficult the process can be. Sometimes even a brilliant design fails to achieve the best results, and Shakespeare above all, needs to be based on a harmonious team effort.

The director of *The Tempest* was Peter Brook, co-directed by Clifford Williams, with Farrah as designer. The production made use of what were certainly innovative materials at the time – clear plastics, which could be projected on and lit from different ways, and a travelator, which could move actors speedily from one side of the stage to the other. However, the received opinion and research reveals it was not a successful production, however, as Roger Howells explained,

> "*My belief is that this all goes back to the crucial and vital thing about communication between the various people who are involved in the creative process of putting a play on. Peter Brook, the original overall director of it, was obviously brought in to do the direction and to create and decide on the casting in the first place. It was clear, however, for whatever reasons and I don't know what they are, he was not able to give all his time to the production and, therefore, called upon a co-director, being Clifford Williams, who had done a number of other successful productions with the Royal Shakespeare Company and the idea was that they were to work together and discuss what was happening and, of course, discuss with Farrah, the whole physical context of the world which they were presenting in the play. As I understand it, Peter Brook began the rehearsals and then was away, for one reason and another.*"

Much of the preparation was left in the hands of Clifford Williams and then, at a later stage, Brook came back for the technical rehearsals and the dress rehearsals. He was dissatisfied with the way things had gone and wanted to change things. Consequently, the technical rehearsal period was "very messy and unhappy". Tom Fleming, who was the leading actor playing *Prospero* was very unhappy about the whole production, had not agreed with the way the rehearsals had gone and found that the two directors had different ideas was unhelpful. The use of the set appeared arbitrary. Rather than feeling that it was integrated into providing a genuine context for the play, it seems to have been used, as a sort of background. The principal technical problem was the clear plastic cyclorama, was made in two sections, an upper and a lower. The lower section was constructed in such a way that when it opened the

spirits could break through. These technical elements did not always work properly, this was in fact a fault of liaison as much as anything, which was all part of a lack of communication within the creative team. Within that team, actors such as Donald Sinden documented this in one of his books of autobiography. He describes his involvement in the production and tells how he was persuaded by Peter Brook to take the role of one of the Duke's attendant lords - the villains of the play. He was not very keen on doing it because he felt that they were not challenging characters and he would have liked to do something more appealing during this season. Peter Brook, however, persuaded him by saying that these characters are, in fact, central to the production and gave him one or two brief notes as to how it should be done. Then Brook was absent for the rest of the rehearsals. Those scenes were then rehearsed by Clifford Williams, it became clear that in his view those characters were not central to the production, although they had an important part in the plot. Donald Sinden made the best of it, but by the time the play went on, he was obviously only a subsidiary character. This was symptomatic of the lack of full communication, discussion and dialogue, all of which should have taken place within the artistic team. Roger Howells further commented:

> "*I think this, although to an extent, I am more of an outsider with regard to this production than to any of the other productions we are talking about, I am fairly clear, in my own mind, that's why it did not work, as I say. There were ideas, concepts, about Ariel having a series of similarly dressed alter-egos who follow him around, but there were ideas that I don't think were thought through, other than being thought of as a good idea in the first place. A proper creative process did not take place during the rehearsals and I have to say this, en passant, that it is important that during the rehearsal period notes of what's happening day by day continue to come from that process and are available to everybody, including the designers. This is because what happens at that part of the process, is as important as the initial sitting down with the director and working out the initial ideas.*"

Two other plays were created in a **modern context** –Farrah designed *The Taming of the Shrew*, directed by Clifford Williams. It was a great landmark in the world of design, being rather simplistic and perceived as a "nice and jolly" concept. The use of modern materials was however interesting, because the whole floor was covered with a synthetic fabric, which looked like grass covered by snow. The overall design started with a grassy area surrounded by a crescent shaped mound on the floor, which formed a little arena. People made their entrances by climbing over and sliding down at the front. In fact, as the play moved on to 'the play within a play', to the interiors, this mound was lifted into the air on winches and then looked like a thatched roof, which enclosed three sides of a courtyard. Consequently, what was an exterior became something reminiscent of an Elizabethan courtyard theatre.

Most actors, indeed all actors, are very interested in the costumes which are designed for them. Sir Laurence Olivier always had to have his shoes first, because he said these were what helped him with his walk. Clothes help not only to suggest the history of the character whom the actor is playing, but also contribute to the design, the weight, the sort of movement they call for - all these things deeply concerned actors. When actors meet the designers, they see the drawings, and are sometimes shown little sample swatches of the fabric which the designers are hoping to use in the costumes. The actor goes in for the first fitting and if he has not worked with the company before all his/her measurements are taken. At this point the actor may have the opportunity to discuss materials with the designer, who explains to the actor the choice of the shape which will go well with the character.

It is up to the designer to convince the actor that the designer is right in his interpretation, and as the actress Cherry Morris said: "*if he can win the actor over, to*

say, "Look, this is what I feel, this is why I design it like this, can you see what I am getting at?" Then the actor may say, "Oh, I see, I didn't realise that this is why you have done that mathematics"; or he may say "Oh, that is great!" and say straight away, "I like those sharp edges, because that is very important." Conversely, he may not understand; or he may say, "I do not like that" or "What is that?" Sometimes designers make a sample costume, not in the right material but in something else to give the actor an idea of the costume. If the actor is unhappy, saying, "Each time I turn my head, this collar is cutting into my neck and I cannot speak. It is really uncomfortable", the designer will say, "OK, we will cut it just a little bit lower, or we will line it with some soft material, so it does not chafe your neck." There is always a way out or a compromise; but there is a famous story of an actor at the Royal Shakespeare Company who at the end of the season threw his costume out of the window into the river, saying, *"Thank God I don't have to wear that any longer!"*

However, the costumes of both Farrah and Bury were different from previous designers. Farrah did not try to construct medieval costumes, but took his costume ideas from modern military dress - First or Second World War uniforms. Through the design and demands of the production, the costumes changed and evolved, to become timeless, with their own individual signatures.

5.5 SCENOGRAPHY

Barrie Rutter also provided some views about the scenography of plays concerned during the period under study. He indicated that

> *"Producing Shakespeare plays within a modern context in terms of scenography, Henry IV, Henry V, Richard III and The Shrew, I do not think it matters. There is a phrase that 'Shakespeare stands for all time and all'. If you set it in a sort of never-never-never land, without being too specific, which*

I prefer, then the resonances are there for anybody who wants to pick them up. Constantly we read reviews of Shakespeare plays that say 'I did not realise how relevant it was to today, but you do not have to shoot Coriolanus with a machine gun to make relevant to today. Those really absolute attempts of modern design where you have telephones, you have all that sort of thing, I just do not like, because if I have a telephone in Romeo and Juliet, why the hell did she not phone him?"

The scenography for *Henry IV: Parts I* and *II* was too complicated when it came to the first performance. Things had to be taken away, because they proved to be too cumbersome in performance, and were not needed, and were not right for both plays. The production became simplified in *Henry IV: Part II* particularly, the walls came up off the floor to represent the Tavern walls for the Boar's Head Tavern, just as the stage came up in *Henry V* for the Ram. In *Henry IV: Part II*, a big white cloth came down and there was some latticework shown by a shadow for the country scene in Justice Shallow's orchard that created a beautiful atmosphere with very little scenery.

Farrah's viewing of the very traditional, Elizabethan, English theatre, and what he did within it, which is important in terms of modern scenography. He pioneered flexibility and smoothness of transition from scene to scene, using a very simple, basic setting, to facilitate the very simple multiple scene changes required for the action. For instance, an upper level was provided by people simply carrying on two sets of stepladders, with a plank across the top. For another, drawn from one side of the stage to the centre, to provide a lower level as well as an upper level was an enormous cart, which the properties workshop made. Farrah was very keen on using this again – it was used in *Henry V,* with an enormous cannon on it. Seven years later, when the Royal Shakespeare Company did *Henry V* again, Farrah asked, '*Where is my cart?'* for he was always very economical and wanted to use things which he has used before. His economy and simplicity of style was evident as one of the most

important factors in the new design concept of this period of the re-evaluating Shakespeare.

Christopher Morley's design for *The Tempest* (October 1970) again showed another kind of simplicity. Not only was this a play which Christopher wanted to do and produce, but it also showed ingenuity in his use of fragments of modern technology, particularly in the storm scenes. These used a set surrounded by a blue cloth, which was shaped in perspective, so that from the width of the proscenium the whole scene narrowed down to a small opening at the back. It was not a cyclorama as such, but two blue cloths stretched very tight across the full width of the back of the stage.

In an extremely tight perspective and from the front of the stage, a plank floor was laid down, made up of strips of wood, each one shaped and cut in perspective, which from the front narrowed back to the central entrance upstage. This represented the island, a wholly simple statement of an almost architectural false perspective. To give it more interest and atmosphere during the storm scene, a lantern swung from above accompanied by a sound track. Morley saw that the narrow triangle was also suggestive of the shape of the boat. Thus, the boat seen at the beginning was confined literally to the narrow strip of planks, but then attached to a cable to make it lift and fold and undulate in conjunction with light. This was the basic concept. Morley was paring his designs down to very basic elements. He had done *The Tempest* before using the Basic Stage Concept, which has become known in theatre history as the 'White Box'. This was a box made up of panels covered with an off-white fabric, rough in texture that could be lifted up and down and frames the action of the plays with an extreme clarity.

5.6 LIGHTING

Roger Howells also talked about lighting and how the three designers approached this issue. He commented

> *"I think I have said something about the lighting, because it is interesting that the particular relationships show very specifically that for our productions [it was] mainly Terry Hands and Terry Hands was a great believer in doing his own lighting. Therefore, Terry Hands and Abdel's relationship is very strong there. So, the lighting that comes off is also something they did talk about and discuss when they were at that production desk during the tactical rehearsals sitting in the front. It comes out as a process of collaboration, as 'How are the things seen?' That is not to say that Terry does not produce an idea occasionally, which maybe Abdel has not thought of. I'd say that Terry does the lighting, he works very closely with the technical side of it, the man who was there, our chief electrician who is no longer there, Clive Lawrence and you see in the programmes: Lighting by Terry Hands with Clive Lawrence. But Terry is a concept man, the 'ideas man' and that very much fits with others."*

By contrast John Bury belonged to the school which used primarily white light and not much coloured light. Christopher Morley, with his hands-on lighting, contributed rough ideas about lighting even though he was not a trained lighting expert. All three designers needed light to fill in the empty spaces they had created.

5.7 FARRAH'S IMPACT ON SHAKESPEARE PLAYS

Barry Rutter thinks that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had an impact on British design, which he would call a major influence.

> *"We ran up those ladders and ran down the stage and the whole stage was one wonderful rake, just bare wood. I loved it. I loved that big open thing and that was all made of Piranha pine, I remember. We toured the production in Europe and America. The design was very simple -, as you know, simplicity is never easy, or simplicity does not denote easiness. But the real impact of black walls and black stage and when you hit it in a massive amount of colour in one cloth and suddenly [it's as] if you are in the cinema, the amount of colour".*

The effect of the hanging, falling cloth in *Henry V* and the clothes which changed during the interval, surprised the audience. When they returned, the scene was gold, changed from the one with the design of the English Flag on it, up to the golden fields. The stage, or rather, a feature in the middle of the stage which came up to suggest the breach at Harfleur - "once more into the breach, dear friends" - and the ladders which went up through the breach, were very fitting.

Roger Howells also believes that Farrah had some influence on coloured light and remarks:

> "*...but it's difficult to know how much he influenced other people because all designers, as we know, are individualists and have very strong personal feelings about things. His impact on British Theatre in the sense of how we see Shakespearean plays done here at Stratford is very strong, because he did an awful lot of plays here. His impact was, in a sense, I think it revived people's enjoyment of seeing colour, because, apart from John Bury, whose colour range tended to be a limited one, I feel the same way about Christopher Morley. What I'm saying is that I think Abdel, in a sense, epitomised a reaction against a number of productions that we've done here, when we had only a monochrome, or limited palette to look at - how these plays were to be presented.*"

There had been a tendency to simplify, to an extent. It was said that certain directors were complaining that the visual side of a presentation had become too strong over the years and they were reacting against it and presenting settings and costumes which they wanted to draw away from what they felt was a cliché Elizabethan look.

5.8 AESTHETICS

Aesthetically Farrah expresses himself more than other designers do. He paints and draws sketches, expressing his ideas almost in a painterly way, although he produced three-dimensional models as well. In contrast with Farrah, John Bury and Christopher Morley work primarily in three dimensions. Farrah sees things as pictures, and the

paintings and the background he supplies for all his work are almost a cinematic storyboard. He aims to design a scene, showing not the set alone but also the figures inside it.

A designer Farrah has a clear vision of his own of how things should look. Moreover, he can implement this vision. Sometimes, it produces something which is fairly elaborate, but at other times, in the course of conversation, especially in dealing with properties or three-dimensional objects to be used in a performance, he goes to the workshop and uses the notes taken at the rehearsal. He does it instantly, because he knows what he wants and how to express it and he is able to give instructions in a simple form. Roger Howells reports that:

> "*I always think of Farrah in terms of colour, which is not an uppermost in my mind, but I think of other designers. This is the strongest part of how he expresses his aesthetics in that way. I see that bold use of colour, again that is part of his culture, I see, may be because of being a citizen of Britain - I am not English, I am Welsh - but from Britain. He is slightly exotic to me and he always has been. His sense of humour is delightful and we joke a great deal. I think of him as having an English sense of humour, because he is not very ironic, nor sarcastic - that is the word, ironic - and teases a great deal. He is great fun, but, nevertheless carries a certain special aura of exotism, I think this has come through his work on stage, because both in colour and in shape, the cut of the costumes, that expresses everything.*"

Aesthetics in *Richard III* and *Henry IV* were expressed in the way in which Farrah used his basic concept and what he added to it. Farrah improvised on structures to give a different sense of locality to different places. He created one which was not exactly banners, but strips of cloth to suggest a certain locality in greens or blacks or whatever was needed. The aim was to give the different atmosphere each time. Farrah designed a cloth or carpet unrolling diagonally on the stage in one of the *Henry VI* plays and this was remarkable and unforgettable. It was an obvious extension of the thinking of his decorative approach. Farrah is unlike other designers who seem to

be more concerned structure, form and the colour of the object rather than with adding another dimension of decoration.

John Bury was different as he was a practical worker and not a painter at all. However, he said of himself that he saw things in the form of pictures, but he saw them in three dimensions, and it was this three-dimensional quality and texture of material that he was particularly keen on presenting to the audience. Bury felt that he wanted to stretch up and touch everything. He was interested in developing techniques with the basic metal sheets he used as scenery. He would look at the whole process of tarnishing the metal so the surface looked and felt different - for rusting metal, sheets of metal would be put in the river to rust and brought back again by people in the paint workshop. When he used wood he would make sure that it was old and used and be often had it sand blasted. He became an advocate of the process which he called 'gunking'. He described this process as: "*You mix up a material, usually involving the use of dyes of different colours, but in a rubber solution.* No-one knows how and where the famous RSC gunking started, perhaps in costumes, people coming on the stage, covered with mud because they had ridden up horseback, their boots spread with mud, synthetic mud splashed on them. From this, Bury moved on to use it in *Henry V*, where he used a siege tower and cannon and siege equipment; this was meant to have been dragged through hay fields which stuck to it all over and gave it a particular texture. At that time he also used it on fabrics, so there was a three-dimensional effect on costumes as well and then extended it, so that it became part of his aesthetic. He splashed and dribbled it from plastic bottles used for washing up liquid, dribbling it to create circles or spirals. Farrah used similar techniques in his costumes for *Richard III*, but John Bury initiated it. Farrah was more open to ideas, but like any innovative artist, he adapted good ideas for his own use. John got the

idea of adding to texture by not merely using the gunk, but actually flinging on to its sticky surface little bits of gravel and little bits of beads, achieving a very rich texture. Howells adds;

> "*I think that, again, John, apart from using raw material, if he has got a wall he does not use canvas, he uses a wooden flat and plasters it, or what ever material he uses, it's got to look like the real thing; solid, three-dimensional, seen in space rather than flat and with texture, awful lot of texture. I think that is his dominating style and he persisted when he moved on to the National Theatre and worked with Peter Hall in the Opera House, that is how he approaches things. His wife, who worked with him, Liz, works in the same style, because they worked as a team, although she does the costumes more frequently for him nowadays, where he used to have somebody like Ann Curtis.*"

As for Christopher Morley, Roger Howells indicates that he had a wholly different visual style. It is very difficult to define Christopher Morley's work, because he is always changing. The one thing that Morley believed in was to use mechanical means to create an effect. He used straight architectural lines and passed his ideas to the draftsmen in the workshop, or to an assistant to work from. As far as costumes are concerned, he would draw out on a chart a series of basic figures, all exactly the same, in the form of outlines and then simply add things on to the basic details just to alter them slightly. In this sense, his work has been criticised as mechanical, and sometimes cold and unemotional. However, there was a difference between *The Taming of the Shrew* and *The Tempest*. His work for 'The Shrew' was very different from his usual style. His inspiration was something he had seen in the English Midlands, the countryside and numbers of old barns. It was a world he knew well, very much part of the Warwickshire countryside that Shakespeare knew and is so much part of the plays. Roger Howells said:

> "*Where I live in the house, the cottage I live, it used to belong many years ago, it was a wheel carter's cottage, a man who made wheels for carts and so on.*

Attached to it is his workshop, in fact, a large wooden shed, wooden frame structure inside it and big door in front of it, now I am using as a garage. It is a wooden structure and its boards are nailed onto it horizontally and vertically and thick door. A lot of barns are like that and when there is a light inside it particularly, light coming between the cracks in the boards. The material which we said was basically the face of a barn set back a little on the stage and it was exactly like that, it is a façade of a barn with a series of planked faces, panels, door, windows, so that for the various changes of location of the scene, a big double door would open and a cart be pushed out, or a sledge pushed out, or tables run out by the actors. So, the impression was of improvised production, given by the story, players in the 1600s or whatever."

Christopher Morley was very production-conscious. He aimed to create a modern impression of Shakespeare's Elizabethan world of the past and the present that one can find in similar locations today. When the setting for *The Taming of the Shrew* was lit from inside, it acquired a greater impact and was not just a façade, but became three-dimensional, with depth. People emerged from it, opened a window and in the scene at the end of the play the father of one of the protagonists stuck his head out of a window, showing the practical nature of the setting. It was a flexible set and what Morley was using was an observation of what was part of countryside anywhere around Stratford at that time and which people would recognise.

In *The Tempest*, Morley's design became totally abstract. This may well have been in response to the director, and also because *The Tempest* is a metaphysical abstract play. In his early days as the director of *The Shrew*, Trevor Nunn was very much an actor-friendly director, very good at working with actors and had a good relationship with them. Trevor Nunn worked in co-operation with the textual expert and director John Barton. Howells reports:

"The Tempest, as I remember, was a John Barton production. John is much more a text-oriented person, who is always driving to greater simplicity. He thinks clarity comes in terms of simplicity. I can see his influence on Christopher in The Tempest in that sense, paring down the scenic side. John

notoriously, I cannot separate the two, when costumes came up he would always say 'Oh, I wanted black, I wanted Brown' and John's range of colour was that. I think Farrah might have found it difficult, but other designers found it more easy to come to terms with that."

Roger Howells notes that all designers develop an individual style and signature, through which their work is recognised, but in Shakespeare, the play and the text, is always paramount.

"*I believe that in Shakespeare the play's the thing and this is the way to achieve it. When you say liberating perspective in designing to match current production shows, do you mean current productions in the rest of other plays in theatre generally? I think one should be open to influence all the time. As I said, I do believe that the first thing is the play and the actors and achieving the production by the décor. I have spoken to a number of designers over the years who feel that too much emphasis in the theatre is placed on the text and not enough is placed upon the visual. To my mind, it might be true to certain aspects of theatre, but it cannot be for Shakespeare. Shakespeare has to be text-orientated and in as much as it liberates the designer, that is, giving him ideas, that is a good thing.*"

Barry Rutter, then an actor in the productions, and now a director, does not address these plays in terms of dramatic objectives than can be conveyed by décor and realistic or the design, whether semi-realistic or not. He has no such specific objectives. The last *Henry V* that he saw showed a newsreel, with an actual screen and had a camera showing war scenes from the First World War, to which his reaction was, 'What a load of nonsense!' He thinks 'the specific sometimes hangs you'. When he directs, he thinks much more in terms of the emotional and passionate journey. The Director has to say what is right or what is wrong and has to be the person to make a decision, even though Rutter does not think that Shakespeare always made his intentions clear, and many plays are open to interpretation. Rutter adds:

"*He gives you about four possibilities for each scene. I think the more passionate the argument is and the more passionately everything matters to*

those who say it, so the audience are left with the ability, much more fertile ground, to make their mind up. I often do not think that the décor, obviously if you set Henry V in a bull ring, then you will get bull ring imagery and you will get discussion that says, 'Oh, yes the imagery of the bull ring really gave ..' and you know, by amplification and extension they can write, similarly if you set it in a 'white box', or a white room and play it for three people, you get another aspect of Henry V. Often the fact if you play them in different theatres, like we make a part of our - well, we travelled and we played in cattle markets, we played in castles, we played in the Tower of London right in the middle, we played Richard III inside the Tower of London, we played in the Mill here, which is downstairs and in a viaduct room where railway engines used to come, we played in a railway shed, we played in a boat shed on a marina and so all of that gives us a new and different experience to the experience of the play. You can imagine all those places that I have designed, if I took in those places a sort of 1914 England version of Henry V, well, it would be dumped."

Rutter commented that it would be "absolutely stupid" to be too specific with Shakespeare, and tends to make more general statements, for example, setting *The Merry Wives of Windsor* vaguely in the 1950s. Cherry Morris also commented on John Bury's designs. She states,

"*John's designs were so extraordinary, I think, it took our breaths away when we first saw it because the immensity of the set up of these moveable walls and this huge - everything was huge in one way once thought. Yes, one was like the puppet has moved around with a huge construction of the history and the immensity of the walls, how people were belted about, you know from these, the history of so panoramic and getting in into these costumes which were so heavy, I mean when I first put mine on I remember, I tottered sideways in a crab like movement towards the footlights, no longer had of course the feeling that I was going to topple off the stage, because everything was so heavy, but then, of course, you thought to yourself, this is how it would have been, they would not have tolerance and man made fibres, which would have been so easy and light to work in, they would have had this long hair which would have been braided up and sewn. They were heavy and the floor, this iron floor, that it was so like grey slates in a kind of diamond shape.*"

5.9 *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW*

The Taming of the Shrew, designed by Farrah for Clifford Williams's production, was basically very simple and very atmospheric. In order to create the opening

atmosphere of the play when Christopher Sly is drunk and thrown out of the inn, was found lying on the ground creating an open space, a frosty grassy space and a tangled, shaggy surface ground area. It looked like an old pit, or a field in late evening with the setting sun. Howells described it:

> *"It is pretty dim and grim grey and the grass covered the whole stage area. So, there are wheel tracks cutting into it. The colour of the grass has a tinge of green in it, but mostly overlaid by a feeling that there has been a faint sprinkling of snow. A little frost started but it is dirty ground, not beautiful and where it was walked on a great deal, there were patches of mud. To obtain that effect, we had a huge synthetic shaggy carpet in those colours and our painters worked on that to produce the details, as I say, cutting into it and shaving in to it and made the tracks in the snow and scraping bits up and putting stuff down which looks as it if mud was wearing through. Dimly seen at the back of the stage, because the whole of the area around was lost in darkness, was a very neutral greyish, blackish sky. But, right up the front stage was a rough grassy mound, which was in the shape of an inverted V, two large bags of muddy earth covered with scrappy grass. Something quite neutral came up on either side of the stage from behind the proscenium on either side, taken up towards the centre of the stage at the back. It did not meet at the point, but was joined by a short bar, as if it were an extension of the lawn mound, which was probably six feet high. After the opening scene, in which the drunken tinker is found lying on the inhospitable ground, the players actually appear by coming over the brow of the mound on either side and sliding down as if they have just come from another part of the field. The opening scenes then took place within this area, but once the play within a play was set up, to create the illusion of strolling players, who traditionally set up in those days; they set up the yards. These mounds were upstage and fairly dimly seen, were winched up into the air and became the thatched roof of the courtyard, floating unsupported by walls. The dirty grass was actually also suitable for depicting the strands of old, worn rather dirty thatch. So that formed an arena, where people could come in below that roof as if they were coming from inside the inn into a courtyard where the main action of the strolling players' performance took place. Because it was a group of improvising actors the scenic elements were also improvised. In other words, somebody appeared at an upper area, that was created by actors carrying on a pair of ladders and putting planks between them at the top where people could sit and observe from, or walking between them as if it were a gateway and even more specially if they wanted an elevated acting area, these were pulled on under the roof from one side of the stage, from the right of the stage as seen by the audience. An extremely old farm cart was built, which was brought in from the side and could be seen to be following the tracks on the stage. One had the impression that this was an area where carts frequently moved back and forwards on the farm. So, that, plus some old barrels and boxes, which could be used for stepping on, were basically all it contained.*

The courtyard of an inn was established by adding a sign on top of a long fourteen or fifteen foot long pole, in the middle of the courtyard or the stage."

The colours were subdued, but that was offset by the fact that the costumes of the strolling players were quite gaudy. Apart from small props such as lanterns, dotted around the base of the pole, again simplicity was at the core of this production.

By contrast with Farrah's interpretation of *The Taming of the Shrew*, designed by Christopher Morley, was very different. The scene first appeared to be the exterior of a barn, an old wooden building, made up of planks nailed up to a wooden frame. The structures are typical of farm buildings in this part of the world. The exterior façade of this building was set a little way upstage above the proscenium and running forward from it to the front edge of the stage, was a wooden platform of planking again. The structure was of the same style of natural, brownish stained wood, quite roughly cut, textured to look rustic and old. On either side of this wooden platform, which became the principal acting area, was the uneven ground with apparently an indication of a snow drift, made of cut and moulded polystyrene shapes with a little bit of contouring to the side. The end of the exterior of this barn, or wooden building, as it were, showed the inverted V-shape of the roof and there were a number of openings, a double barn door, another door, a window, various apertures of this sort, which were closed.

When the play within the play began, which takes place after the opening scene, where the drunken tinker is found lying on the ground, the house frontage opened. Large flaps, acting as doors, opened, part of the roof opened up, or part of the end of the roof opened up, so there was an overhanging space and one was able to penetrate into the interior of this building, where there were a series of pieces of furniture, roughly put together, saddles, tables, benches and stools piled up inside. As the

scene progressed, the actors brought forward the items of furniture which they required for each scene, settled themselves and played them in very much the style of a group of story-tellers, who were to some extent improvising.

The visual structure of this barn end was attractive not merely because of the naïve quality of the structure, of simple planks knocked together, but also because there were gaps between the planks so that light that could penetrate from behind. This gave extra dimensions when the walls were shut, providing an attractive variation of warm light in warm plain wooden surroundings, set against a snowy exterior, cold against the blue. This added to the atmosphere of the piece by creating visual interior warmth corresponding to the warmth of the story, including its comedy and playfulness. However, there were perhaps too many pieces on the stage. The actors had to move them back when they did not need them. It was very highly choreographed. Object, furniture, and props were piled up inside and there was a sort of sledge which could be pulled onto a platform and a beer barrel placed on top of it.

There was no fear of the actors being restricted. What this set did was to define a space which it was quite possible to spill out of at the edges. It was a very practical production and warmly appreciated by audience and critics.

5.10 *HENRY V* DESIGNED BY FARRAH

Farrah designed the basic stage for that season (January 1976); it was a neutral grey box. There was no attempt to disguise the surroundings, the environment of the set. He designed it for the whole season of the Falstaff Plays, including *Henry IV: Parts I* and *II* and *Henry V*, where he is not seen, but only referred to.

This basic set to accommodate all three plays. The back wall of the stage was stripped down completely. There had been a certain amount of metal work attached to it, never in fact revealed before, but every intervening bit of scenery was removed and the stage was open as far as the back wall of the building itself; this was brick but painted white. From just in front of this wall a rectangular stage lined with greyish planking started fairly high up. It was on a rather steep rake to start with, as much as 1 in 20. The width of this rectangular stage thrust as far into the auditorium as was possible, within the sight lines from the back of the circle. It was a wide as the proscenium arch. To get on from the wings and other sides, the stage had to be masked. The stage extended upstage but did not go beyond about eight feet from the back wall.

Actors entered from slightly upstage to come down stage. At the base of the back wall was inserted a cloth for lighting, so that the back wall could be lit brightly in different colours. Inserted within the grey wall there was another rectangular area, hinged at the front, starting just upstage of the proscenium and about fifteen feet in front of the back wall. It was not the full width of the planking, so actors could walk on the stage on both sides of it and come round it. This section was hinged at the front and could rise at the back and form an even steeper rake. It was used for the walls of Honfleur when the siege took place and ladders could be laid along it. The famous speech, once the breach in the defence had been made, was given by Alan Howard (playing Henry V) from a ladder or hanging from a rope half way up, which was raised hydraulically. Another permanent part of the setting were the side walls of the set upstage of the proscenium, which were set fairly far back from the edges of the proscenium, in fact, as far back as the brick-work structure of the theatre allowed on each side. Instead of there being only straight walls running up and down the stage, there were gangways or walkways, with a hand-rail running up and down stage, which

could be used by musicians, by actors or by stage staff wearing costumes when necessary to perform certain scenic functions.

The interesting thing about the dynamic of the stage is that these walkways were supported by a buttress, except that, unlike normal conventional buttresses, which are broader at the base, these buttresses were broader where they supported the walkway and then tapered back to a point. They were in fact inverted triangles, sitting on their apexes. These were echoed by structural elements, the first triangles above the walkway; and a reversed triangular panel was imposed on the proscenium on either side. Thus there were very dynamic, jagged tips, which took away from what might otherwise have been the bland look of straight lines or right angles. The other large scenic element, shown at the beginning of the play, was an enormous grey canvas bag suspended in the centre. This rather mysterious object hung there at the beginning of the performance until a particular moment, when by the use of a trick release cord, the bag dropped open and was revealed as a large cloth which had been folded in upon itself. When stretched out to either side of the walkways it was revealed as an enormous heraldic canopy/banner with lions and fleur-de-lys and very richly coloured metallic reds, golds, blues and silvers, making for a feeling of great richness. This was used for a large part of the first act before the interval. For the battle field scenes the canopy was lowered in so that it was face down to the floor and the reverse side was revealed. It was very grey, grubby, giving the impression of a dirty battlefield, something which symbolised the mud fields of the first 1914-1918 battles in the First World War, when everything was reduced to dirt and dreariness, greyness and mud. This huge canvas (tarpaulin in this colour) was picked out here and there by one or two lines to create some sort of geography, little hillocks here and there which formed the greater part of the battle scenes. During the interval, when the steel fire curtain

was down, at the front of the stage, the white back cloth which the audience had seen was replaced by another one, so that when they came back after it they saw the grey cloth.

At the end of the play the scene in the French Court in which the reconciliation takes place between the opposing factions and the marriage is set up between the King and the Princess of France, the canopy was raised again and this time the scene was totally different underneath. The designer set a pure golden canopy. It had a glittery, furry metallic quality to give the feeling of richness and moved away from the factionalism of the heraldic shapes. It was certainly a strong scenic feature, creating a very strong visual focus in the middle. Howells adds,

> "*We controlled on from one side of the stage from the wings a very large cart, indeed, the same cart they had used in our previous production of The Taming of the Shrew and sitting on top of that was an extremely large cannon sideways on to the audience, which was used by the King as a point which he could mount to address the servicemen down below, so it became a focal point for those scenes. Indeed, there were other elements, a cart or something. That was a very striking vision.*"

Terry Hands indicates that what he and Farrah did was create a rather glamorous *Henry V*, but the men looking for hope took it as a war where the underdog wins. He adds,

> "*We concentrated on the play as an image of the unification of England, which I think is what it is, that the war has a bit of a happy ending to it all. It was a silly war and they have done it for political reasons and everybody wants to go home and nobody wants to fight it. The French were hopelessly out of date and obsolete and had to change and the rest of it.*"

5.11 *HENRY IV: PART I* - DESIGNED BY FARRAH

There was not really a great deal to alter the basic stage concept in *HenryIV: Part I.* The floor of the stage and the sides and the back wall were exactly as were described for the other plays, as they were intended to serve for the whole of that season. For this play, there was a strong visual icon that looked like a rope lying across the stage. There have been many different interpretations as to the symbolism of this 'rope', that visually created a pattern, to break up the dullness, or greyness, of the floor. The different settings were created by carrying on small items. There were no banners used. A great deal of furniture was used, made from barrels, cut out to form an enormous chair for Falsatff.

The colour was dark with light patches, the general colour range, using off-whites and dark grey, with a little brown, muted colours suiting all the scenes. The scenes in the Boar's Head Tavern were particularly dominated by the image of big barrels, small barrels, barrels cut as seats and straw scattered all over the floor – the whole atmosphere was created out of a natural earth tones.

There was also a table, pushed on top of a barrel, old and worn, and very much an item which everyone in the inn used. Individual furniture was campaign furniture for the battle, carried out there. There were a number of drapes for the court scenes, and on them emblematic objects such as ... to indicate the many locations.

To differentiate Part II from Part I, Farrah used a wonderful gold wintry tree shape, which was suspended near the back wall, and which could be lit from behind and through, creating a silhouette. It was symbolic of the atmosphere of Part II, which is less dynamic than Part I. Part II has many long discursive passage, diffusing the

changing political situation, and has less action than Part I. For Part II, Farrah created very striking shapes. A cloth was stretched diagonally upstage from one corner, giving a domestic feeling as a background for the actors, contrasting with the tavern world of Part I. Here was the same basic floor of grey planking, but to give it more life and excitement; leaves were dropped from above, breaking up some of the floor surface. At the very end, in the last scene of the play, when Henry is actually crowned, in order to give a feeling of optimism and to light up the whole stage, a large white cloth was drawn up to cover the whole stage surface. When Prince Hal appeared as the King, wearing an extraordinary glittery costume which covered him, he drew a musket. This great glittering figure in the middle of a wholly white surround made everything seem very bright and optimistic, with rushes being thrown down in his path in a triumphant array. That was the big visual, dramatic moment required at the end of the production, in which Shakespeare meant to symbolise a change in the fortunes of the nation with a new, triumphant king. With the brightly back lit wall, a feeling of celebration is brought about. All these plays are examples of how a basic setting can be used to give three different atmospheres.

John Bury's designs for the histories (see p. 45) have become known as the World of Metal and Steel. They were presented on a metal floor divided up into large rectangles of steel, with a fairly fine wire mesh filling them in, but split up into rectangular panels. They were capable of being lifted, and between them there was a favourite mechanical tracking system of the Royal Shakespeare Company. There were a number of inserted tracks in the floor so that the throne would come down the stage on a rostrum or a truck, four or five steps up to a higher level. The main part of the set consisted of two walls running behind the proscenium, running up and down the stage but pivoting on the edge of the down stage. Hence, they could swing in at

any angle from 90° to zero across the stage on either side. They were both capable of pivoting and could provide different permutations of angles. They could remain running up and down the stage on either side, exposing a back wall, which was again a series of vertical panels, apparently filled with a steel mesh. In fact this was not a steel mesh, but a copy of a type of expanded steel mesh, made by slits cut into the metal and then pulled apart.

The panels filled with this metal mesh and the central one was able to be raised and lowered to form an opening in the back wall. People could appear, and the throne could be brought in from upstage to downstage. There were masked borders above the stage, made of the same simulated expanded metal mesh. The surface of the wall on either side was made of large sheets of overlapping metal, held in place by what looked like enormous rivets, so that where the plates overlapped, the thickness of the 'metal' was revealed. The rivet heads were especially manufactured and fixed on, giving the feeling of plate armours, but vastly enlarged, and the metal was simulated by wrapping thin metal sheets around sheets of plywood. There were octagonal metal plates on one side of the stage, and rectangular, or square, plates on the other. The walls were not absolutely square; the upstage edge being lower than the front edge. The two walls pivoted in so that they met on the centre line, giving a strong feeling of perspective. The walls had a thickness; and there were solid trucks, with doors of metal plate on them for through entrances and exits. On the stage left side, there was a large double gate and a wooden double door. It was possible for actors to climb to the top of the wall behind them on either side and look over the top, as if over a parapet. These moved back and forth and by flying in one or two other pieces at the back and again by using the mesh in a profile shape, the foliage of a tree was suggested. To create an exterior a plain back wall was revealed and the tree shapes

were then lowered in. From this point, it was merely a question of achieving an extraordinary number of permutations. This was the Steel World of John Bury and *The Wars of Roses.*

In order to allow greater variety in the different plays, the sidewalls were reconstructed into a triangular shape. Each of its three surfaces had a different texture, steel on the first, brass on the second and rusty steel on the third. They then moved on a track on either side, so that they could either follow the same lines as the pivoted wall or pivot around the centre part to present any one of their three faces. This gave much greater flexibility. In addition, they were made in such a way that between one play and the next, to provide greater variation, large sections of the metal plate surfaces could be lifted off and replaced with a different metal. This style, synonymous with John Bury, was developed and became more technically complicated. The technology was extraordinary simple, using quite traditional methods and was able to move, transfer and adapt to the other, smaller, stages in London. All the staff and all the actors were involved in the scene changing, and they achieved a great flexibility of movement. In the great court scene, the staff would be flying the centre shutter at the back of the stage, while two actors pushed down the throne, other staff at the side stage would be pushing in sidewalls to the appropriate angle and other actors would bring in the final elements. This become a great feature of these productions, that contained many council scenes; councils of war; and meetings of politicians. The furniture was individually made so that actors could carry on pieces from the wings. A strange table with pointed ends rather like a two-ended kite; would turn it be dropping the legs, create a council table, with the actors moving on stage to sit around it and the throne placed above. After repeated practice this was done very swiftly, very smoothly. When the series was developed later, it

became more sophisticated because the table was set below the stage floor and rose up on the left from underneath.

The triangles moved on a semi-circular track on the stage, rotated but also pivoted along with the track, so the permutations were enormous. Basically, different worlds were created, by changing the textures of the materials, and exposing their different sides; for instance, the Tavern scenes were created by exposing the wooden surface. The palace scenes were the steel scenes, using steel walls and an occasional floor piece. In addition to the palace scenes, there was the table which could be carried on and was symbolic of the council chamber of the King. The scenes involving Gloucester in the countryside tended to use rusty colours, rusty metal, to give it an autumnal feel and the same ones were used for the scenes in Wales with Glendower. The same surface was used for this, but laid in a very different way with less emphasis on the walls and a great chandelier was dropped in. The gallows were flown in and contemporary photographs of the production dimly indicate the changes that took shape as the production evolved.

5.12 *THE TEMPEST* – CHRISTOPHER MORLEY

Visually, the set for *The Tempest* was an experiment in an exaggerated false perspective. The breadth of the stage at the front receded to a vanishing point up stage. The floor, made up of slabs, were set horizontally to the audience, becoming smaller and smaller, as they disappeared into this narrow triangle. Echoing it above was a slanted ceiling of the same shape. This is an extension of a design feature, which Christopher Morley had used before in a production of *Twelfth Night*, which was again an exaggerated false perspective. This was a brown slanted room, starting from the full width of the stage and becoming narrower and narrower up-stage ending

in double doors. The walls of the room and the door were semi-transparent, made of slats with gaps between, like Venetian blinds, and the whole interior was covered in brown gauze, which could be lit from behind. Morley also used this technique for a production of Hamlet, which was a white set, with an acutely sloping ceiling, high in front, lower at the back, this time made of actual mechanical Venetian blinds, which could be operated with a mechanism allowing the white side or the black side to show, thus changing the scene quickly and easily. The production of *The Tempest*, in October 1970, carried through the same theme of slats, which allowed light to come through them flexibly and create a geometric quality, which is typical of Morley's work. Enclosing this floor and ceiling, a dark blue fabric wall also came in from the sides, giving the effect of looking down a sharply-edged tunnel. In the front of the stage there was a large crypt door, which revealed steps below. The floor and the ceiling were made to be flexible, so that it was possible to change the scene by working lines from above. In the storm scene at the beginning of *The Tempest*, the ceiling could undulate almost like the sail of a ship. The floor at the back, which was also flexible, rose to give a slight feeling of vertigo, raising and lowering, like a ship at sea. In addition to this, for the storm scene only the trap-door was lowered and steps came from below as if from a ship's hold which the actors playing sailors could go up and down. Strong lights oscillated from the back of the stage coming through a silhouette and with the use of props such as ropes it all created the stylised illusion of a ship in motion and about to be wrecked. When the storm scene came to an end, the lights were dropped, the trap door was cleared, the actors were cleared and everything became still. What was left was a stylised room reduced to the minimum, a floor and a ceiling; the side walls disappeared almost into a dim blueness. The ingenuity in terms of theatrical mechanics and effects were concentrated in this ceiling. For

everything else the production relied upon actors on the bare stage, simple properties and not much else in the way of scenic effects. It was a striking opening image, but sadly, on the first night there was an unfortunate incident. An actor failed to come in on time and the opening was delayed. The director had agreed to have a 'tick-tock' sound, which was to accompany the movement of the ship on stage and the stage manager decided to start this noise two minutes before the performance started, even though the actor could not be found. The delay made the audience very restive and unhappy and in consequence the play did not start easily. However, when it did start, the striking theatrical effects made up for the delay, and became one of the strong memories of the production.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

When Farrah came to England in the 1960s, he quickly became a phenomenon in the British theatre scene. This has been the only time that a foreign designer, let alone a Middle Eastern designer, became part of a national British establishment. The question raised here is: How did this young man succeed in penetrating a national British establishment, the Royal Shakespeare Company, while others failed to do so?

Farrah's origins in the theatre go back to France, where he worked as a designer-painter in the French theatre. He was one of a generation of designers who attempted to change the theatre movement between the mid-1960s and the mid-1970s, through their perception of scenography. Farrah and his contemporaries incorporated the fine arts, plastic arts, applied arts, scenery and costumes in their innovative approach to scenography. While Morley used an architectural, three-dimensional approach to scenography, and Bury was mechanistic in his approach, Farrah used paintings combined with a three-dimensional approach.

Farrah's colleagues saw him, and also his work, as having an innovative approach to scenography. His introduction of symbols and hieroglyphic script into his designs was unique to him. They represent the influence of, and also his reflection upon his Middle Eastern cultural background. The shapes and designs which Farrah used were strange to the British Theatre. In this sense he is regarded as an exotic designer/painter/artist, especially when one takes into account his designs presenting scenes of such "otherness" to the British traditions .

As an outsider, Farrah was less aware of British customs and traditions in designing Shakespeare, and was therefore not afraid to make his individual and innovative voice heard. Accordingly, his approach to costume design was totally different from that of his English counterparts. His approach to design indicates that he was not a disciple of any other designer, nor was he adopting anyone else's approach in design. He was not reluctant, or hesitant, to use and implement his ideas in producing costumes and designs like those of no previous British designer. For example, instead of using a crown for the head of King Henry IV, Farrah signified royalty by dressing him in a kind of a turban-like headdress, similar to those of kings or chiefs in Africa or the Ottoman Sultans, something which no designer had ever thought of. This again reflects his view of things and reveals another way in which Shakespeare might be presented. In contrast, Bury dressed Kings *Henry IV* and *Henry V* with the historic crown or cap which has always been the symbol of English Monarchy. This again reflects the influence of the context in which the designer is brought up and culturally fed to create the approach adopted in his/her production. The significance of this is that Farrah, though living and working in a foreign country, had an approach to designing Shakespearean theatre which is very much based on his own cultural tradition and is adapted not to the culture of the audience but to that of the producer and of the designer, in his case.

Farrah came from a different society and environment where there is less concern with the historical accuracy of the characters than with the power which they represent. He developed the characters through their costumes, scenography and accessories, differing from Bury and Morley who were primarily concerned with finding new forms to express the historical context of the plays, which of course were more familiar to them, as being part of their own cultural background.

With this examination of the work of these designers, it is clear that each has distinguished artistic characteristics. In addition, each has a relevance to the others. For example, Christopher Morley's designs are based on the principle rules of scientific academic methodology, and reflect an artistic doctrine based on philosophical movements and their impact on the arts. This becomes evident in his use of perspective, in theory and in practice, to help the dramatic content of each individual drama. Morley's concerns are with the objectives of the dramatic work, the philosophy of the plays, the unfolding of the drama and the development of the characters. It is only after such academic research that Morley creates his scenographic design in a way which is appropriate to the time, era and the sequence of scenes and acts. Accordingly, his designs are closer to achieving the dramatic concept of each play for the players, director and audience alike. Although he does not give much consideration to using technology, especially that used on the stage floor, nonetheless his scenographic design and scenes are a very effective transmutation of academic research to theatrical ideas.

Farrah's many works, in contrast, reveal his outstanding practical and artistic experience which was preceded and consolidated by a comprehensive study of the fine arts. He knows how to use to his advantage and exploit the various movements in the fine arts, especially those of the twentieth century. Most of his creativity centres around a progression from the elements of fine art, such as drawing, painting, surrealism and the avant-garde, to its ultimate scenographic designation. He also utilises external forms to make them the basis of his design, without much concern for stage perspective.

Farrah is undoubtedly a fine artist, as demonstrated in his line drawings which are related in some ways to hieroglyphic drawings, that is, two-dimensional artwork. He

utilised this approach, influenced by the late nineteenth century Symbolist painters in his scenographic philosophy. Even when he distributed fragments of accessories over the stage floor, his scenography looked like a fine art drawing. Farrah's designs and viewpoint facilitated easy movement from one scene to another, without long pauses to change the stage location, which in the past so often held up the action of the play.

For his part, John Bury produced designs which are primarily concerned with starting his design at the level of the stage floor. He launched the basics of his design from the stage floor itself, as the focal point from which he moves to the other dimensions and spaces of the stage. In this sense, he proceeded from design to execution to materialisation.

In most of his work, Bury depended heavily on colour. He also mastered the new requirements for fast and flexible scene changes, altering, omitting and adding pieces of scenographic design and accessories only where necessary to clarify the story or plot. He seldom used different levels on the stage floor, and rarely built into the stage space. Although filling in level spaces is one of the developments of the modern stage, John Bury often used a raked floor to give a new dramatic perspective which added to Shakespeare's perspective, and very much helped the director.

The critics who wrote about the five plays under investigation in this study showed a mixture of responses and attitudes. The production of *Henry IV: Parts I* and *II* was deemed successful in terms of direction, scenography and acting performance. The 1964 and 1975 productions were highly successful, though the 1975 production was much shorter than the 1964 production. This indicates that a good deal of the original play had been cut in the later production, undoubtedly revised with the benefit of hindsight.

As a rule, not many critics reviewed the scenography of *Henry V*, *Richard III* and *The Taming of the Shrew.* Most of them focused on the directors and/or the players, especially the main characters of the play. However, there was a critical consensus that the production of *Henry V* succeeded in establishing the Hands/Farrah style as the dominant one for the Royal Shakespeare Company throughout the rest of the 1970s.

Critics who wrote about the scenography of *Richard III* were not very much impressed. One critic described Farrah's setting as "spare and bare as anything goes a spare and bare production."

However, with regard to *The Taming of the Shrew* it should be remembered that at this time in the history of theatre, the designer/scenographer was only just beginning to be publicly acknowledged as an equal part of the creative team. It was quite usual for the director to be given all the credit for the scenic ideas, under the umbrella of "the production." By and large, designers in this period simply accepted the 'status quo' as it was. John Bury in particular voiced the general view that it did not need a critic to tell him if his work was good or not. Most critics and writers were not in favour of either the 1963 and 1970 productions or their scenography.

Farrah introduced a new thinking and a new approach to costume design, which had not been in circulation before. He found a loophole in the English theatre through which he succeeded in introducing elements of the fine arts and their implementation in this theatre, in a totally individual and recognisable style.

Farrah developed historical costume without infringing the structure of the historical characters of the plays. He used colours and lines in these costumes and experimented with textures and fabrics including fur. He often exaggerated the shapes of the

headdress, and developed jewelled necklaces imparting another aesthetic and meaning to the psychology of characters.

In this way Farrah was able to bring a truly individual point of view to Shakespeare – perhaps it needs an outsider to see the works of Shakespeare more clearly than some English designers. During this period of change at the Royal Shakespeare Company, there was a move from the end of the post-war illusionistic theatre to the new brutalism of the post-war years. The change from painted scenery to real engineering had a profound effect all over the British Isles and Europe. Yet there was little prospect of an artist, a painter, and an intellectual making a significant change to the British national theatre at that time. The British treasure their institutions, and often do not take kindly to change or the influence of foreigners. Theatre, however, is thankfully one of the most open and enlightened disciplines.

Farrah has an intellectual outlook, and is extremely well read. He has absorbed the cultures of both the East and the West. He is interested in nature, science, religion, culture and the politics of the productions. This indicates that Farrah was more inclined to present human experience and inclined to do so not in a solitary or fragmented fashion, but rather in a collectivist and comprehensive fashion.

Farrah's designs for Shakespeare give small hints of something different, particularly in his use of calligraphic lines, colour, interest in fabric and emblematic design rather than location design. Oddly, he appears to have become more English than the English, though freed from the heavy burden of traditions. From this deep-rooted background, mixing a Middle Eastern context and a European context, namely, with one foot in the East and one foot in the West, he has been able to produce a new approach to scenography which has not found in the English theatre until his arrival.

Nowadays, multiculturalism in art, music, food and restaurants is a desirable way of life. Perhaps, there is a time and place, and Farrah was perhaps a phenomenon before his time. Had Farrah come to England 20 years later, when these great changes had happened, the theatre might have been more receptive to his painterly and artistic approach. However, what Farrah brought earlier might already have been achieved and his new ideas would not have had the impact which he exerted between the mid-1960s and mid 1970s.

He undoubtedly must have felt some sense of frustration because, having achieved an entry into the RSC, he nevertheless failed to make a lasting impression – maybe this is the fate of all scenographers – since we are only over as good as the last show we do. It can yet be argued that no scenographer has made as profound an impression on the British theatre as a whole, and on the Shakespearean theatre in particular, as Farrah did.

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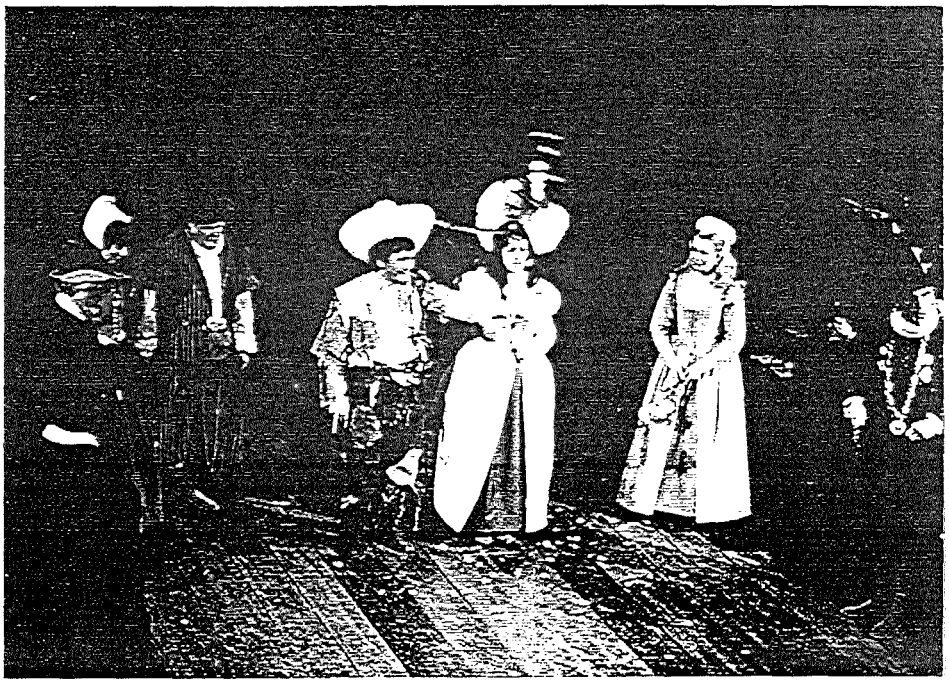
APPENDICES TO THE STUDY

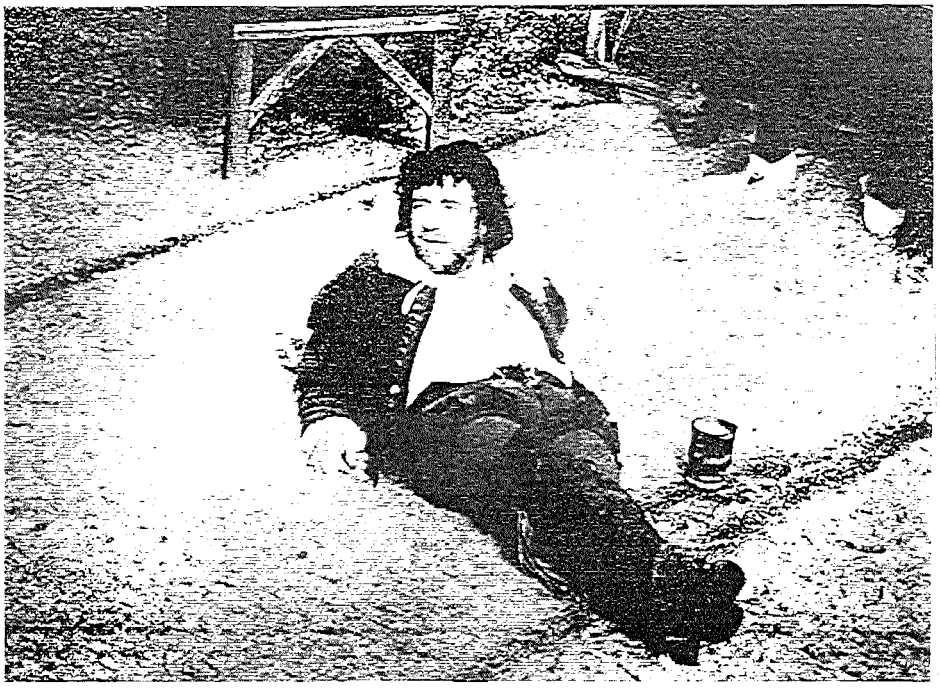
APPENDIX No. (1)

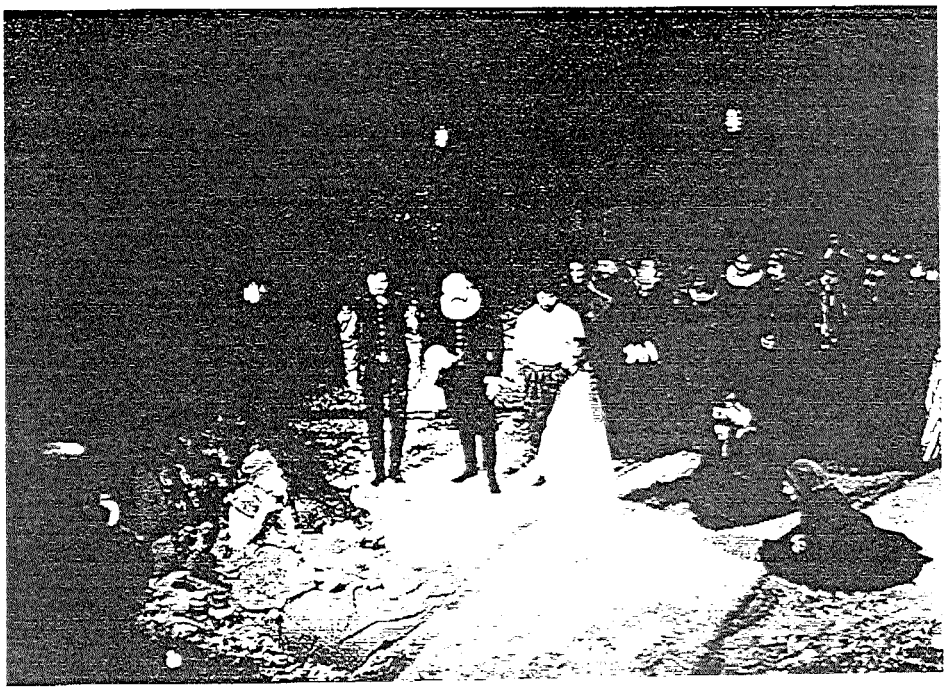
Plates from the five Shakespearean Plays by the Three Designers

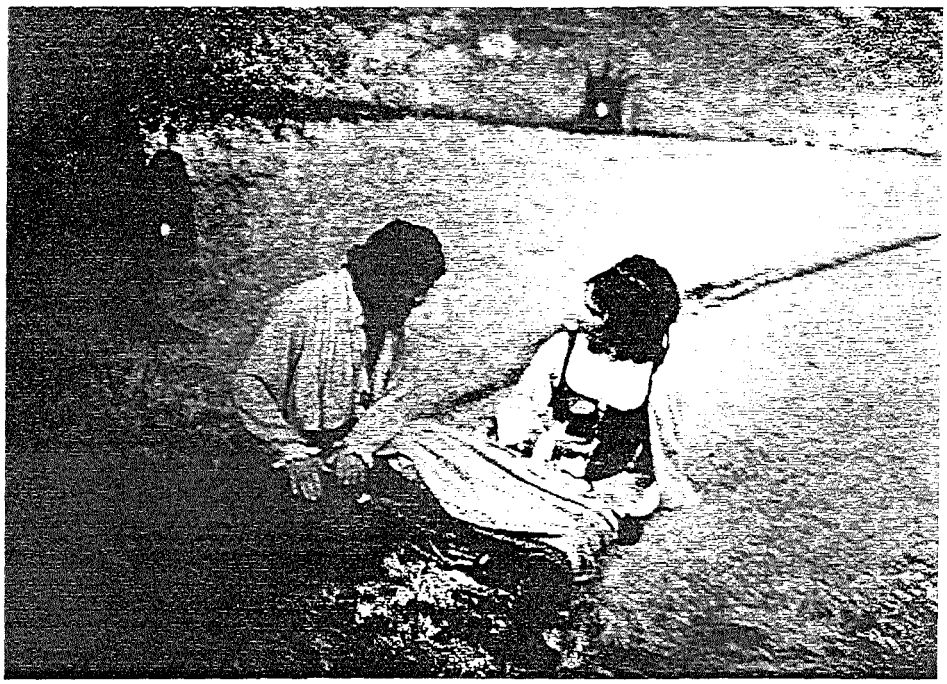
Christopher Morley's *The Taming of the Shrew* (1966)



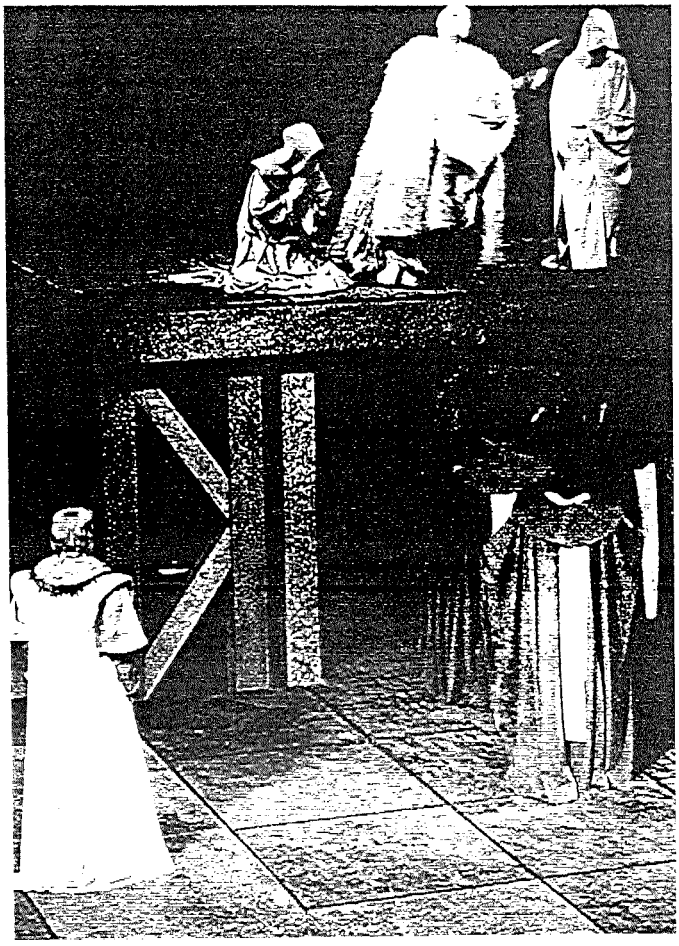
Farrah's *The Taming of the Shrew* (1973)

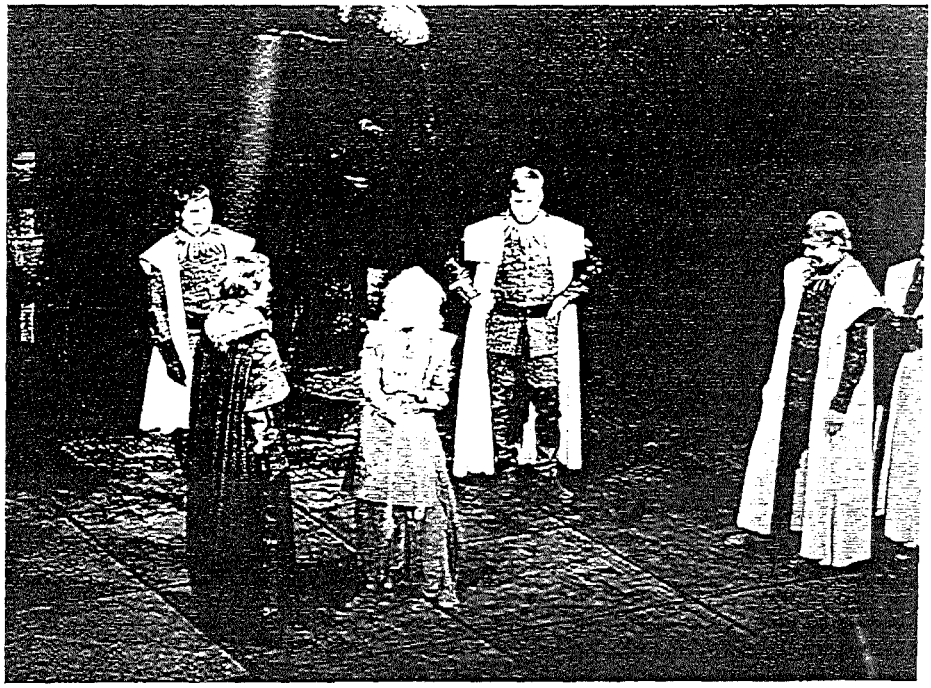


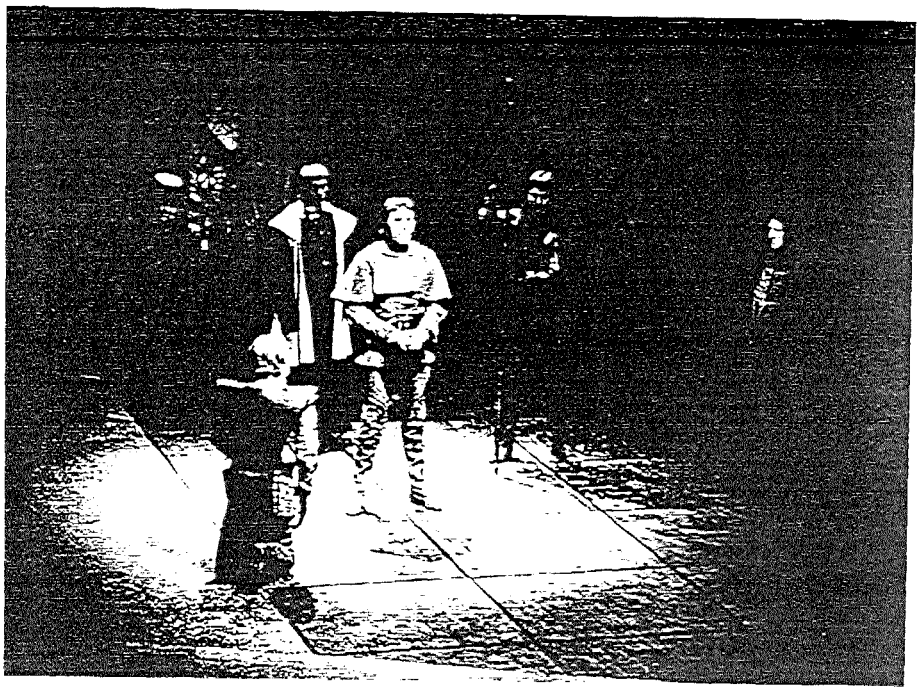




Farrah's *Richard III* (1970)

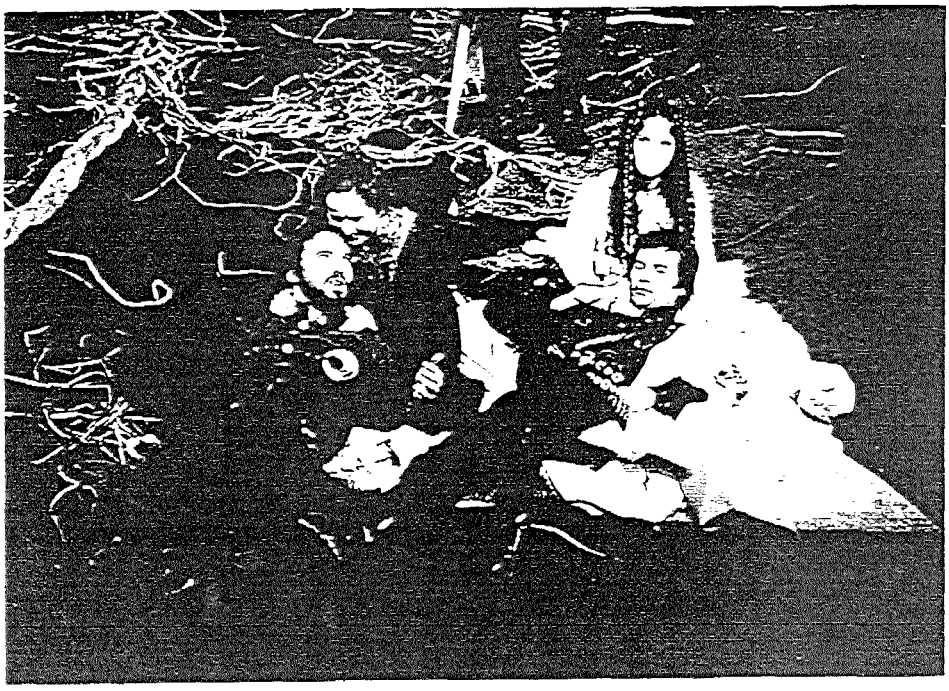


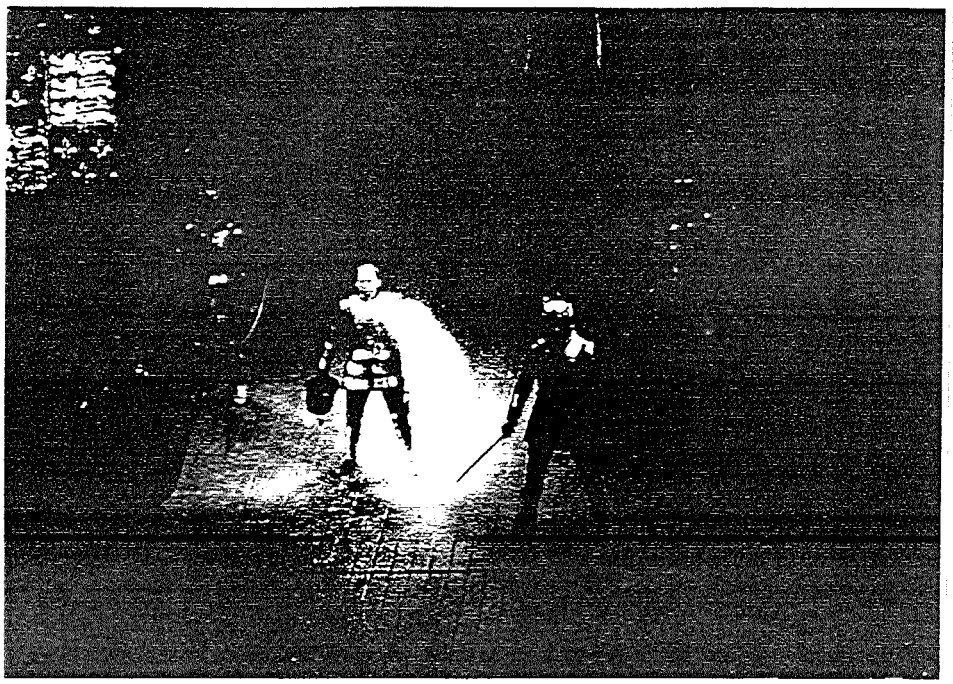




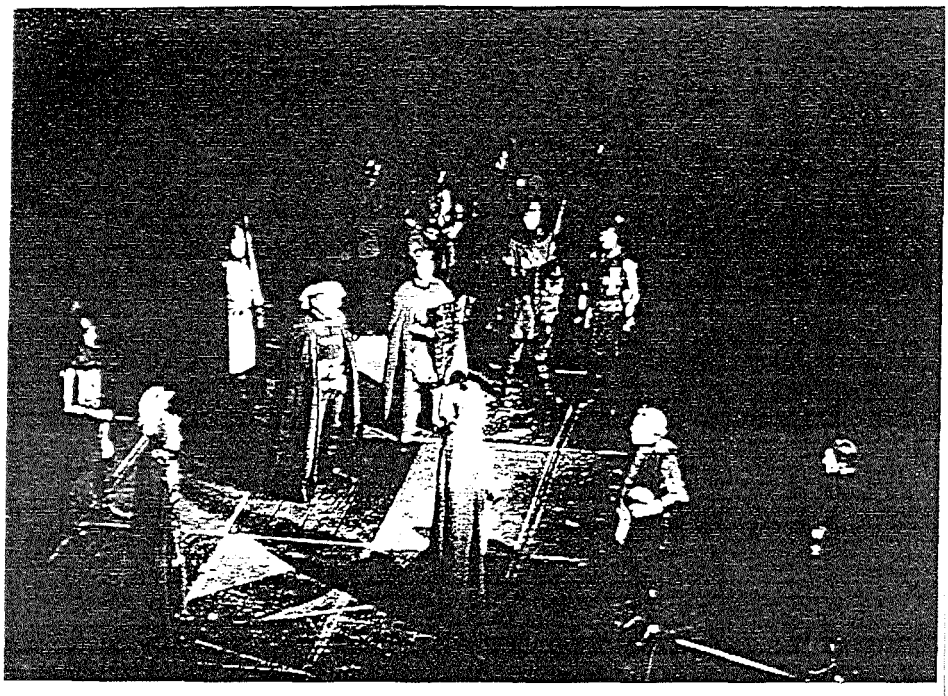
John Bury's *Richard III* (1963)

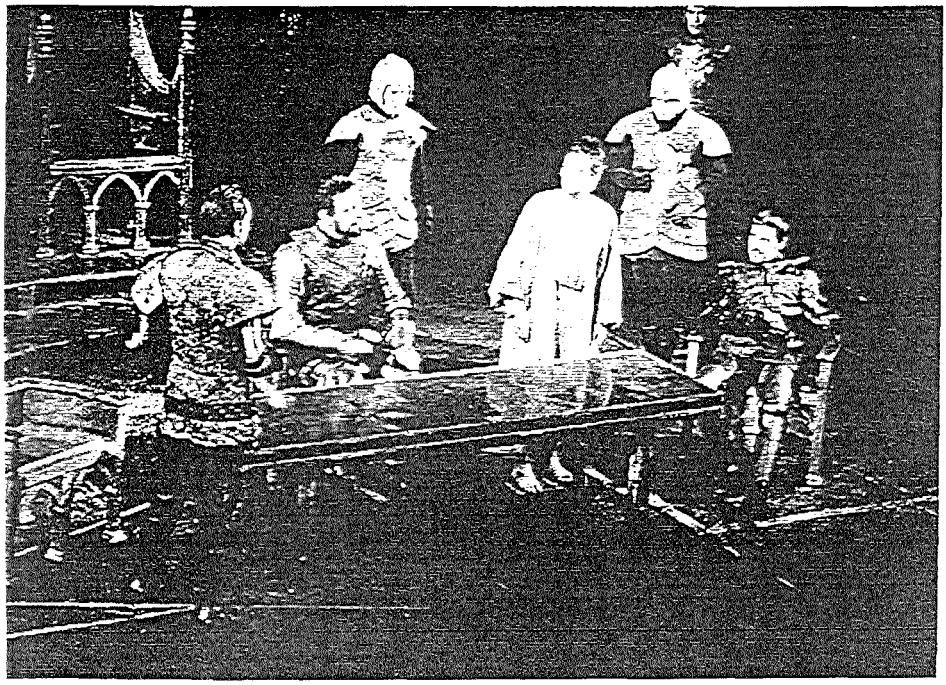
Farrah's *Henry IV: Part I* (1975)

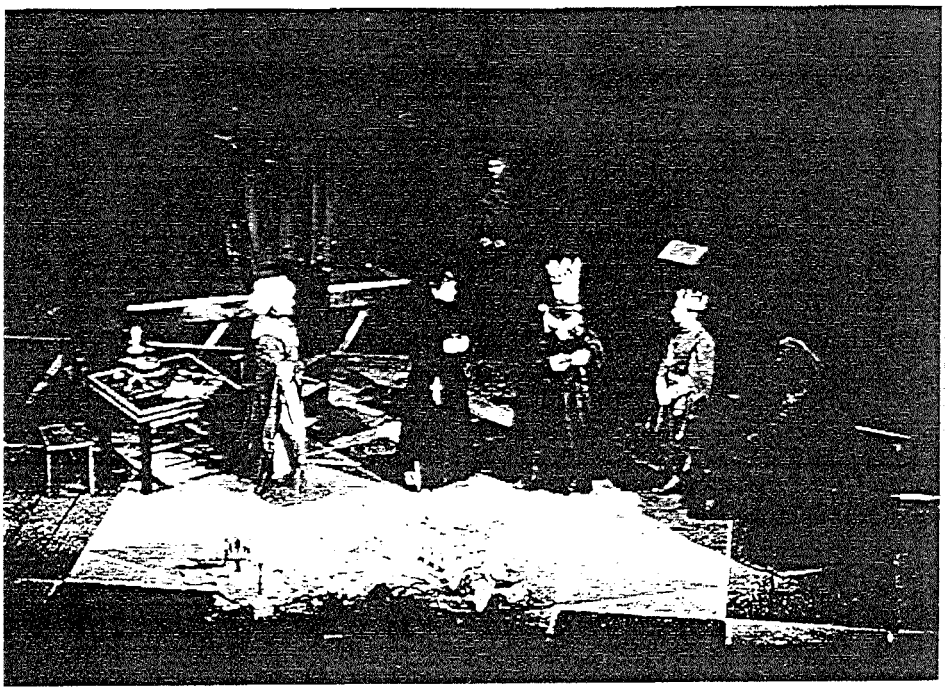




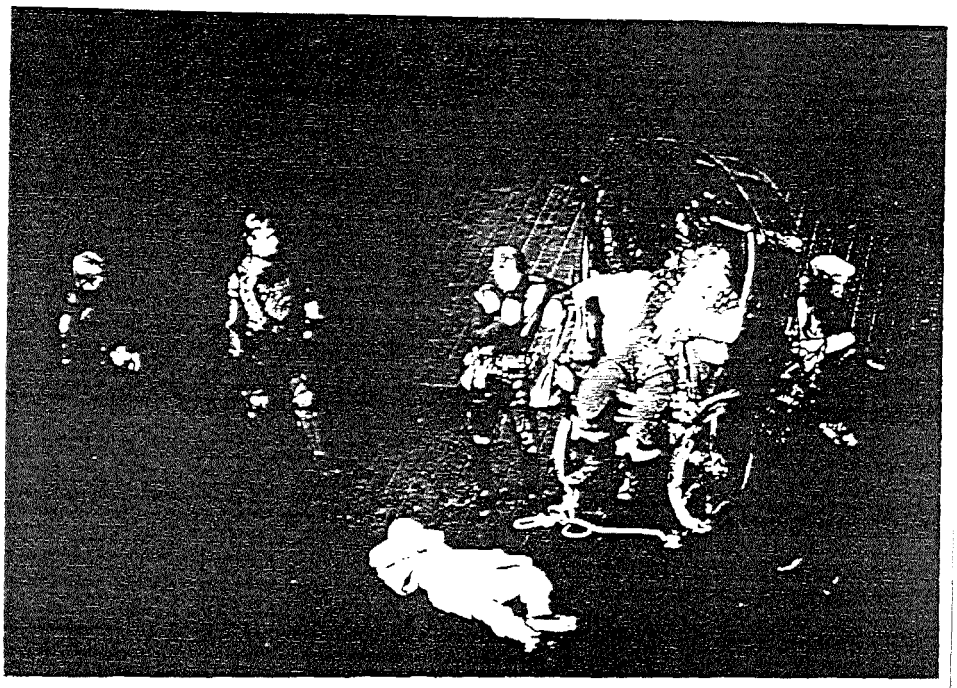
John Bury's *Henry IV: Part I* (1964)

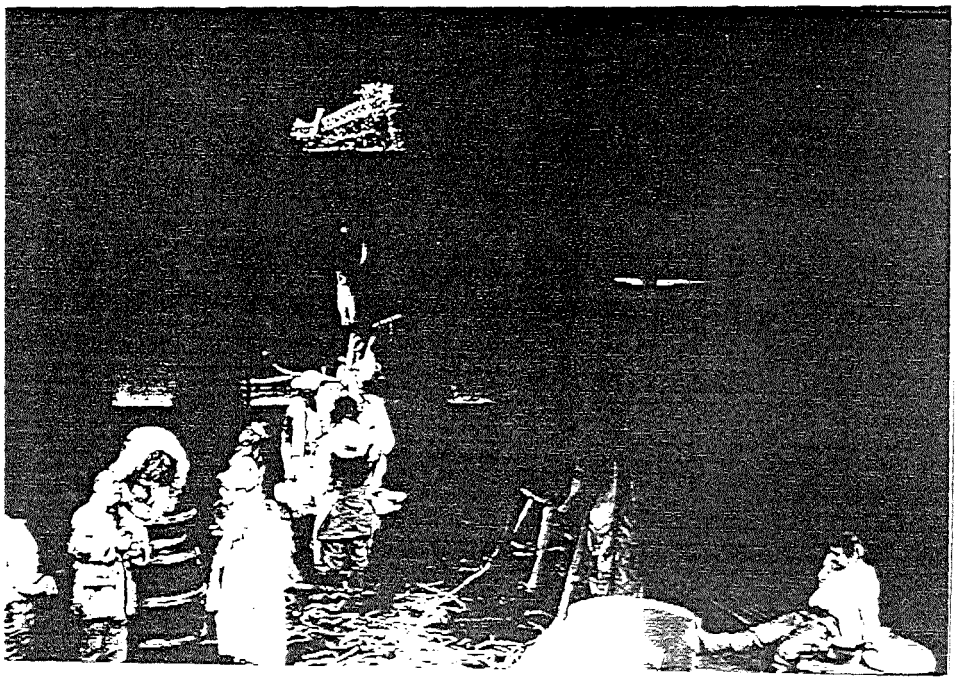


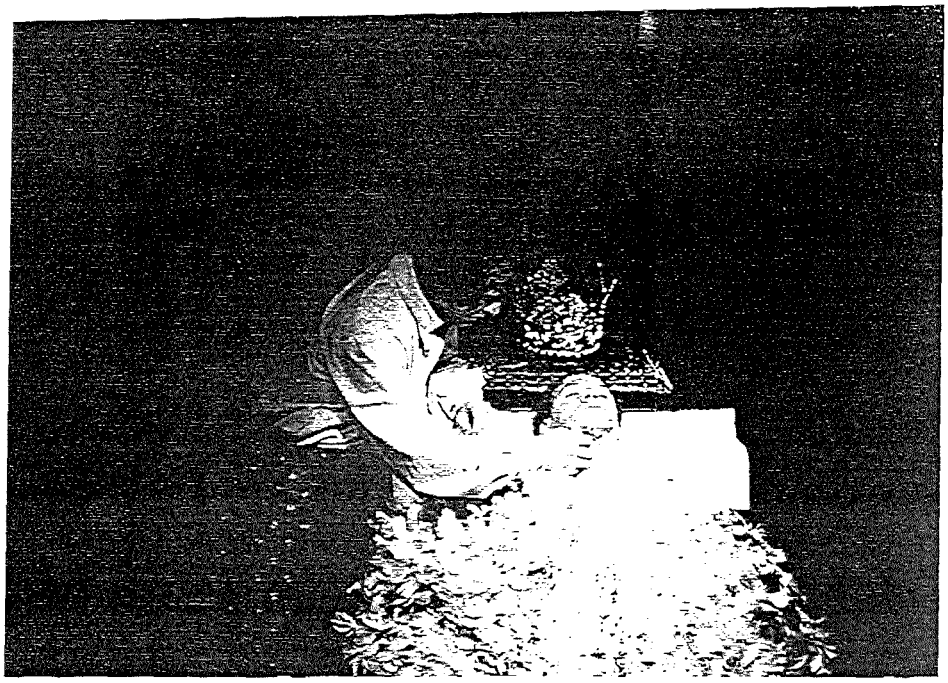


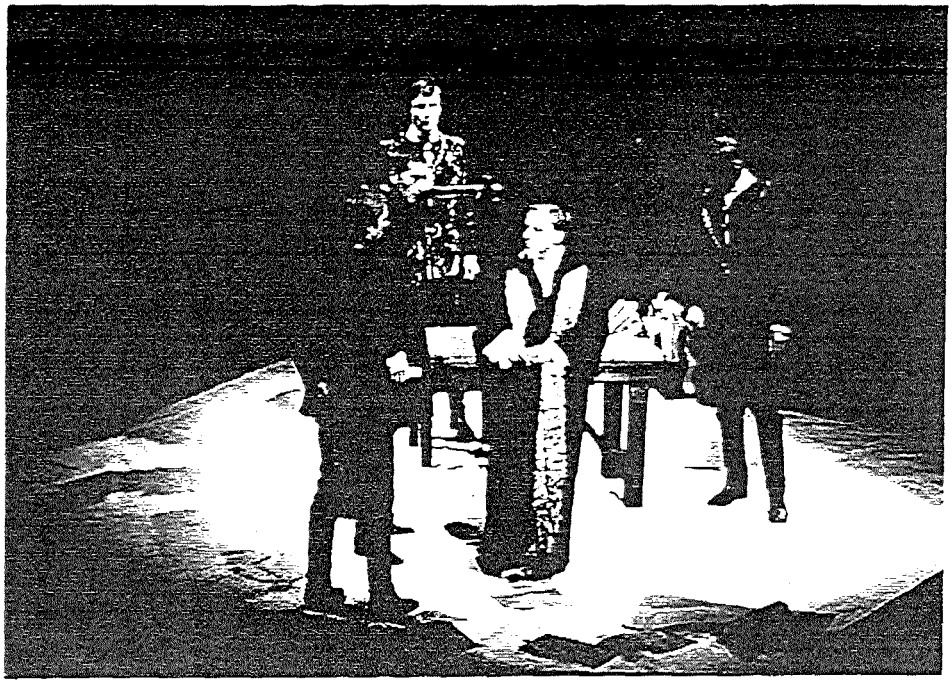


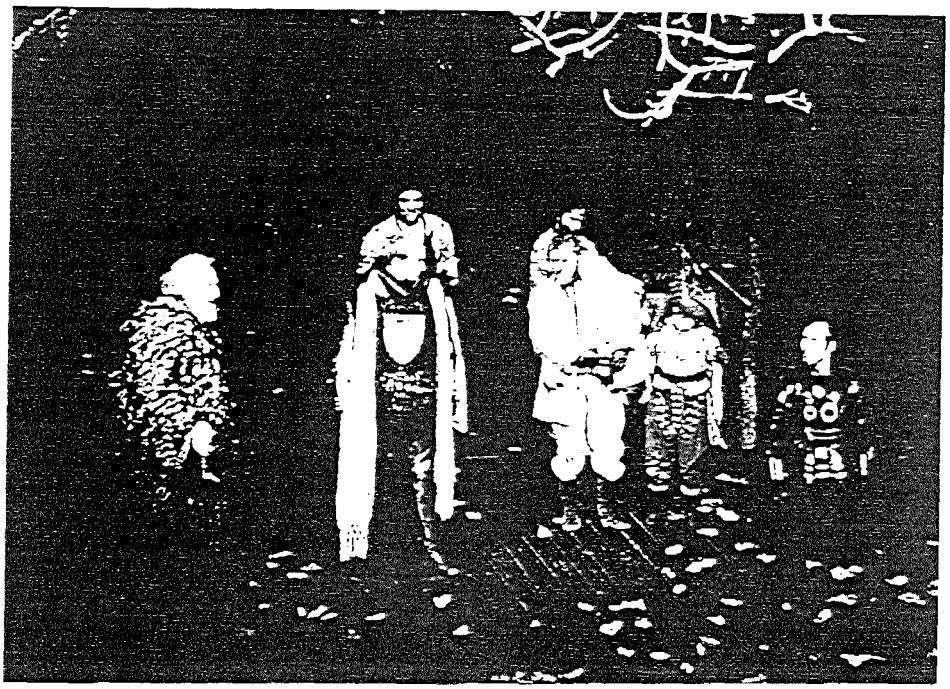
Farrah's *Henry IV: Part II* (1975)

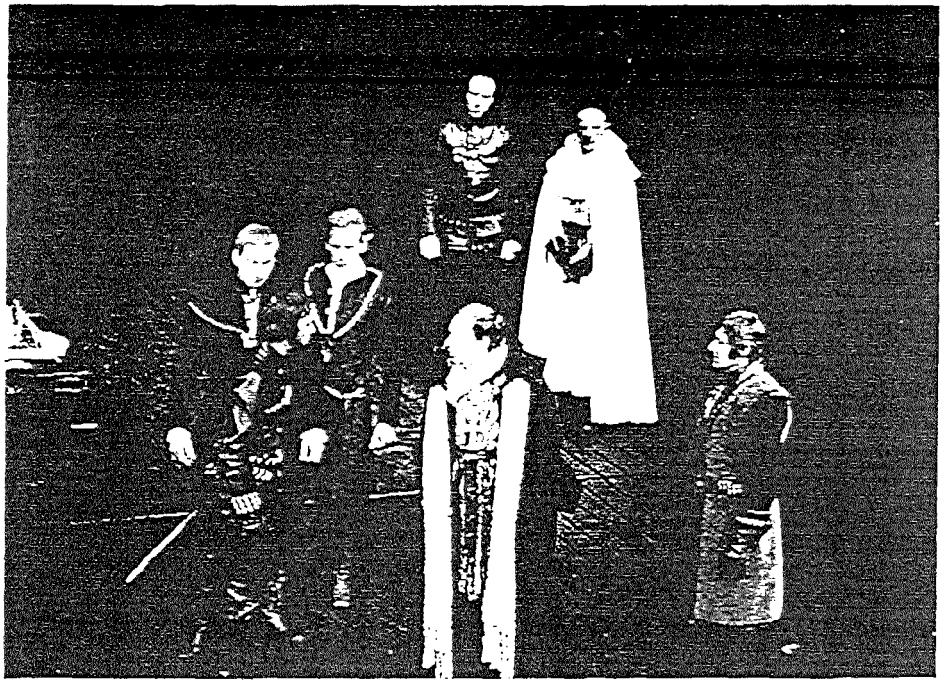


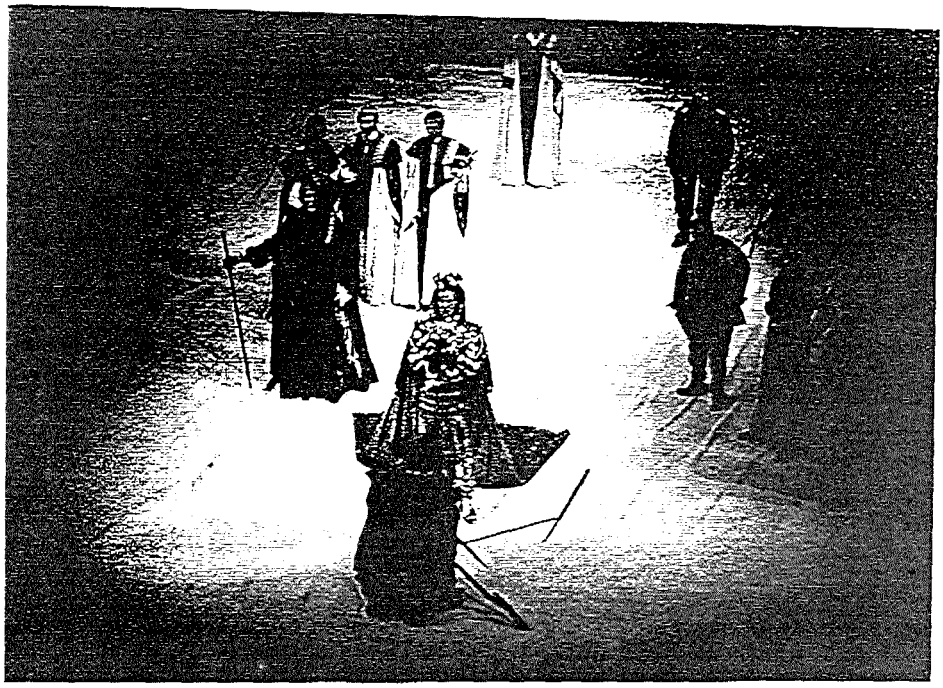


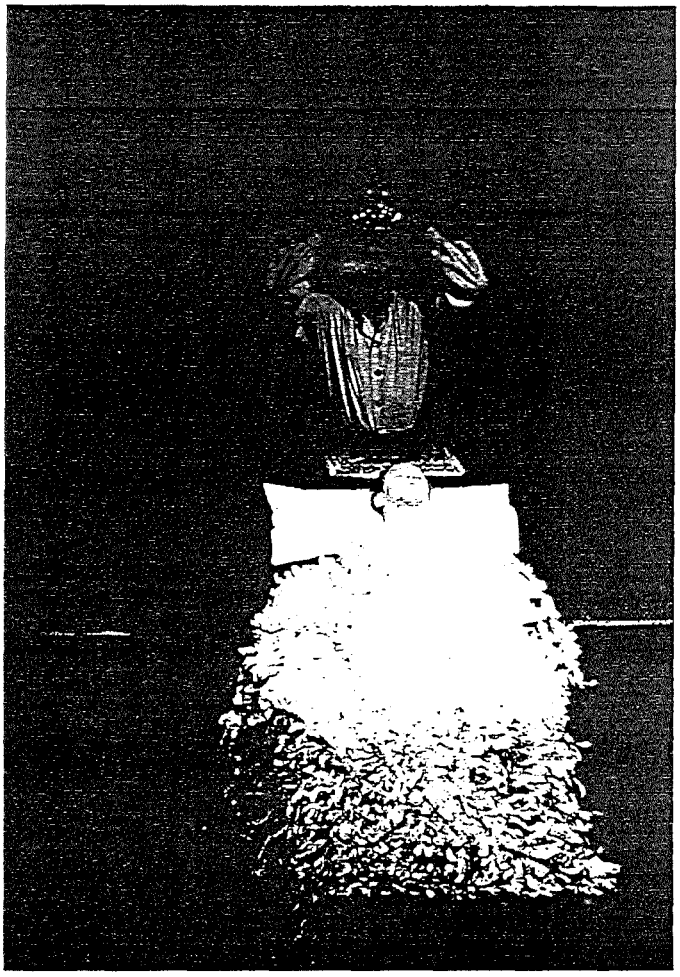


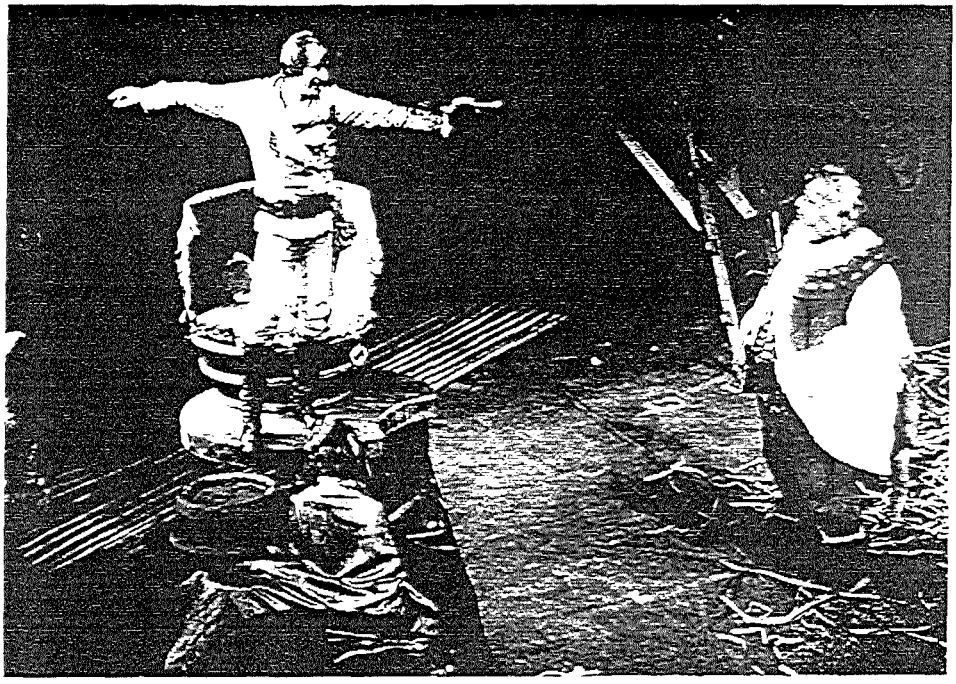


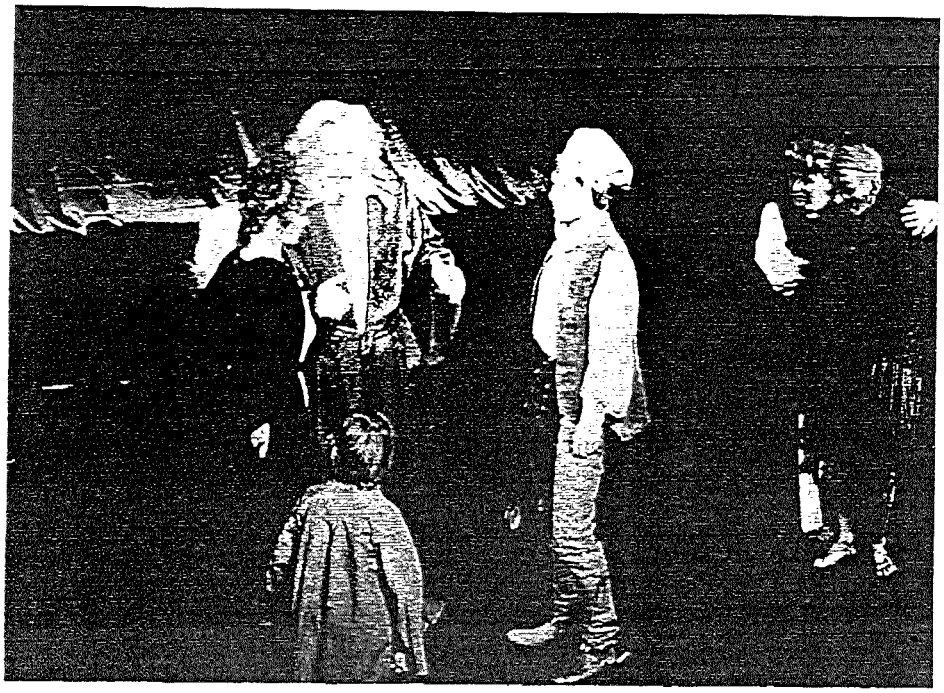


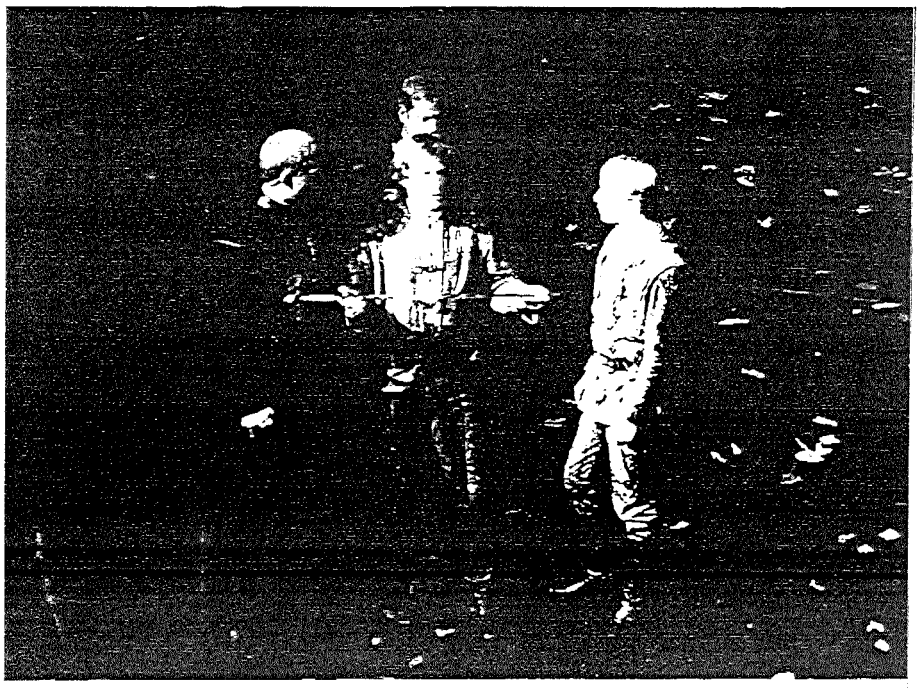




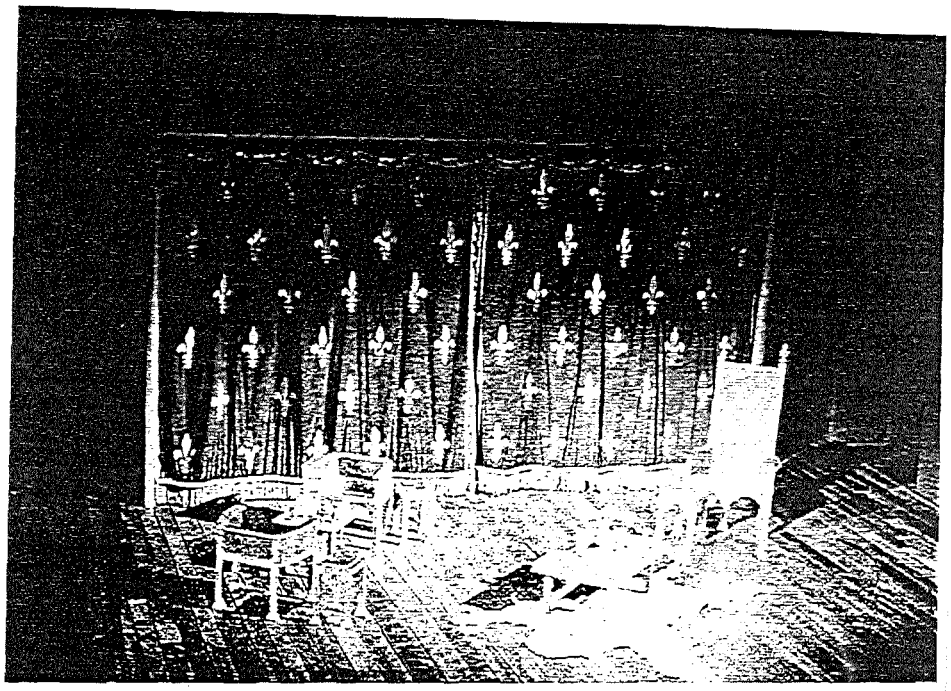


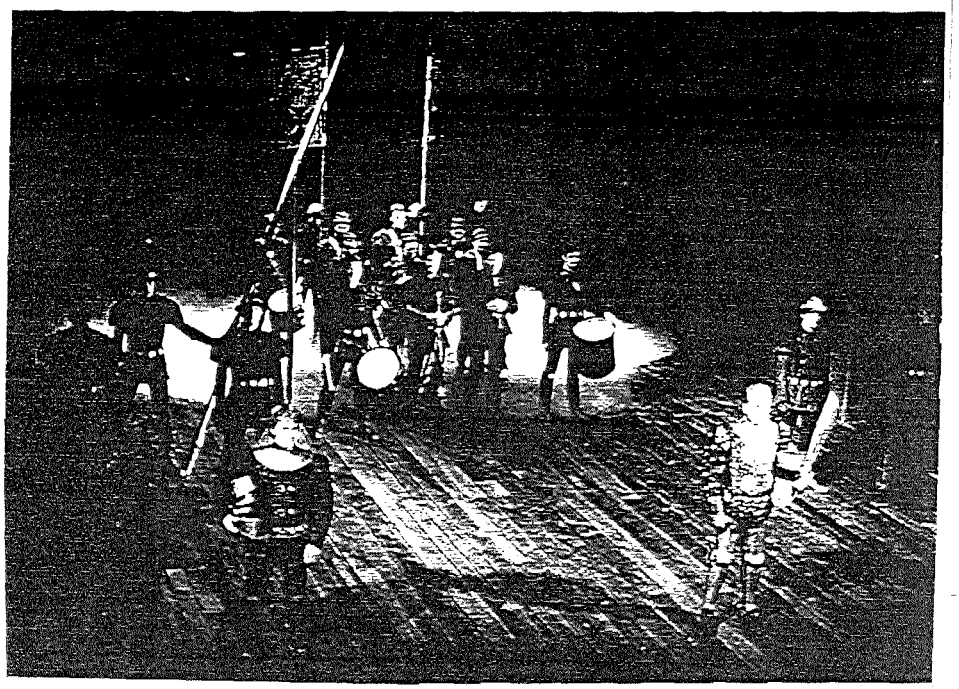


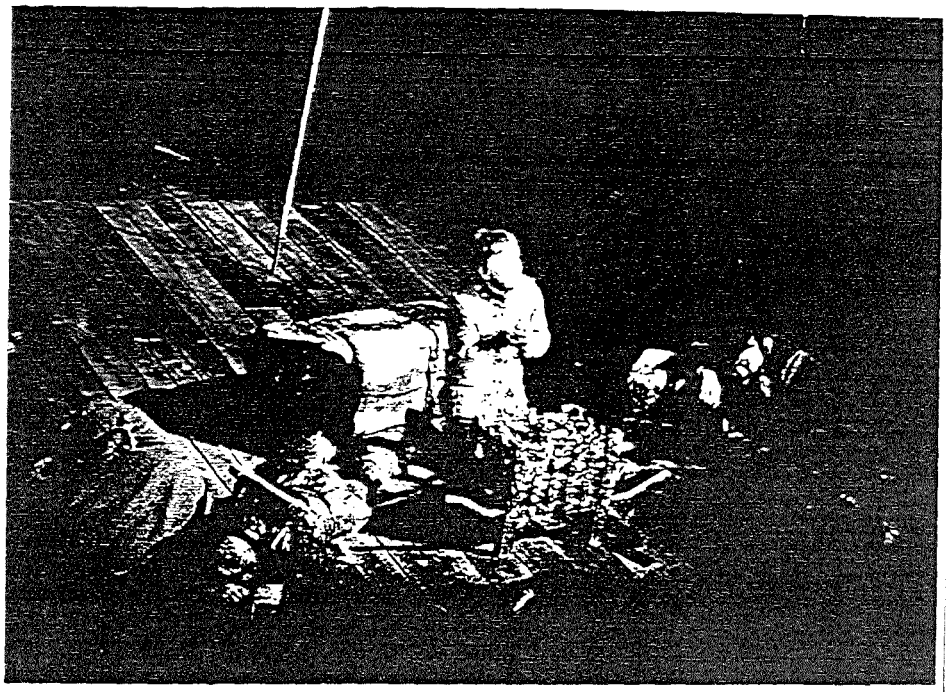


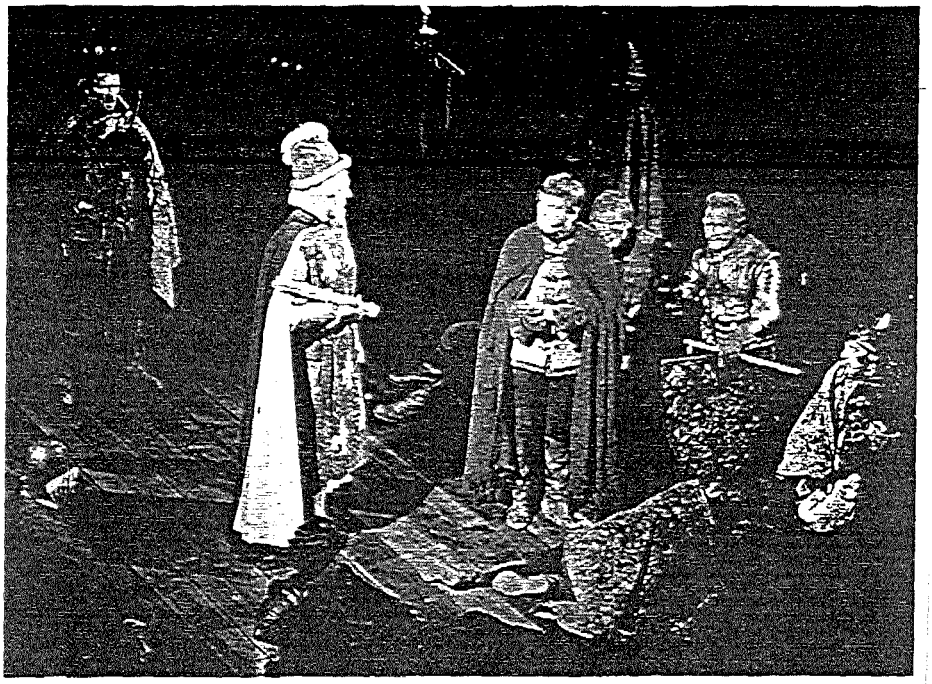


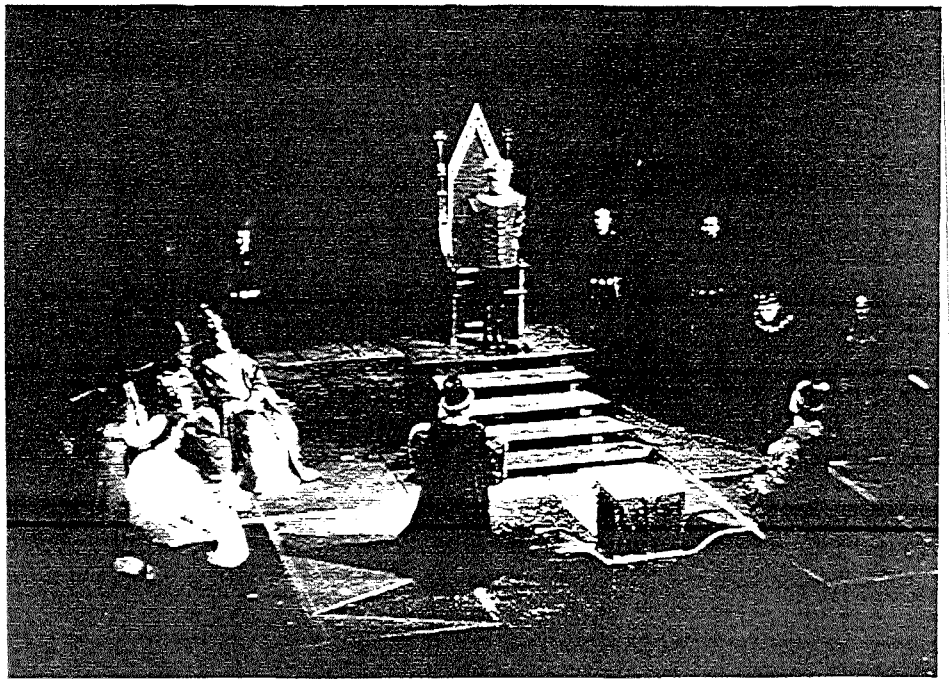
John Bury's *Henry V* (1966)



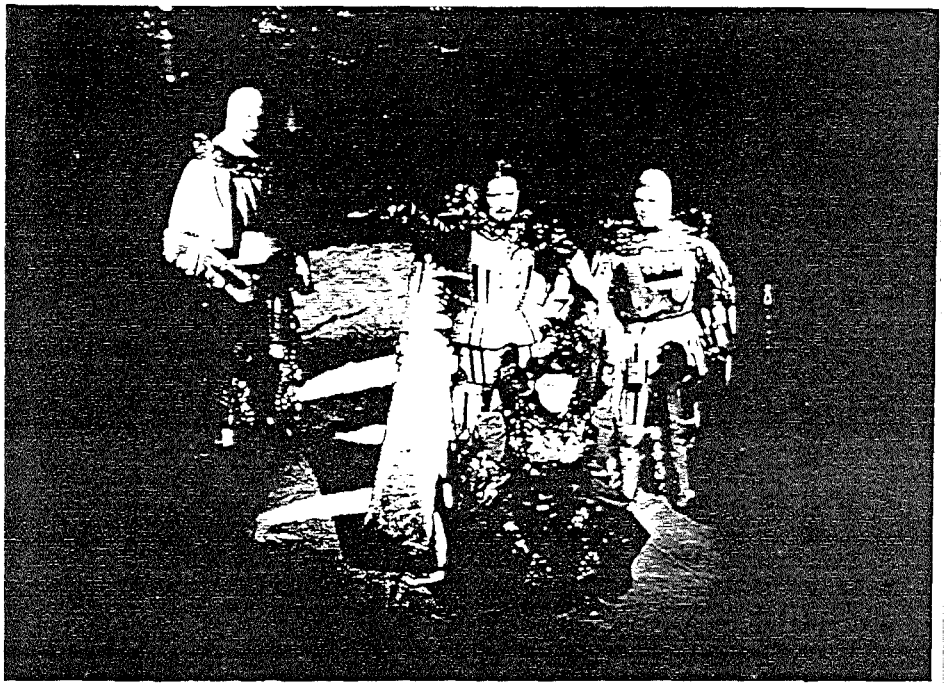


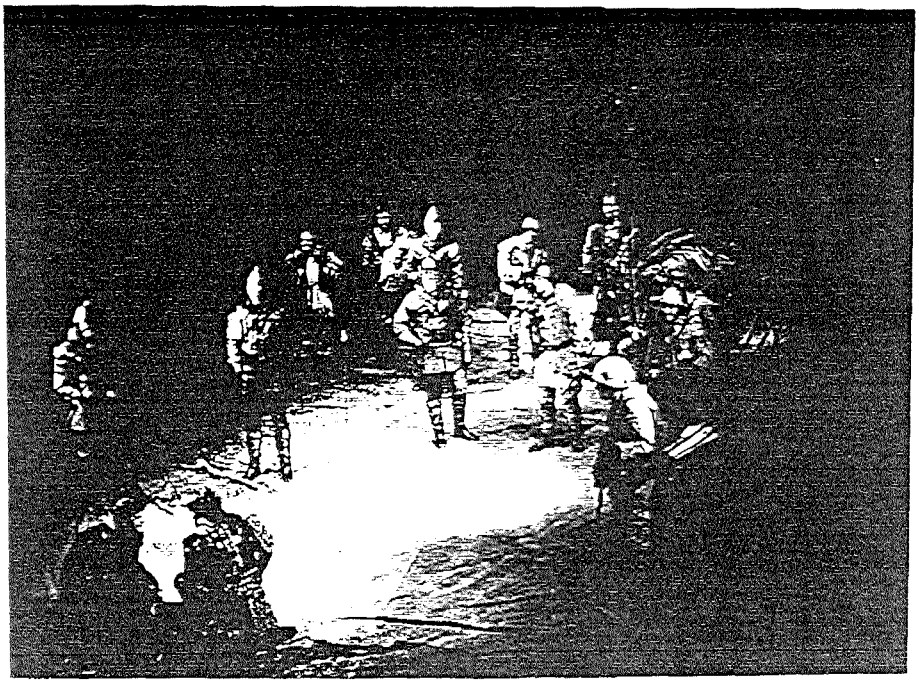


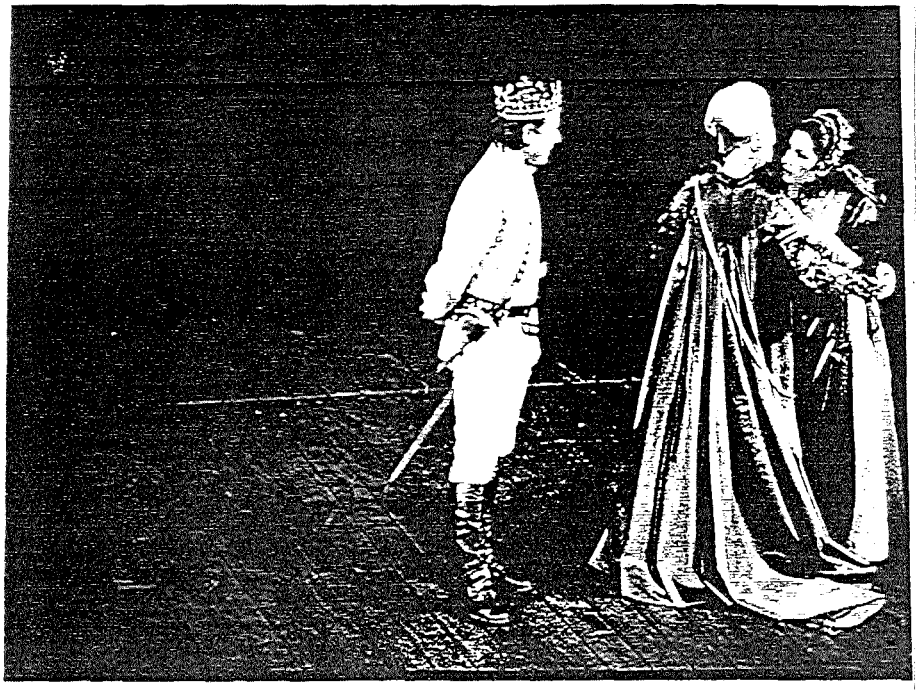


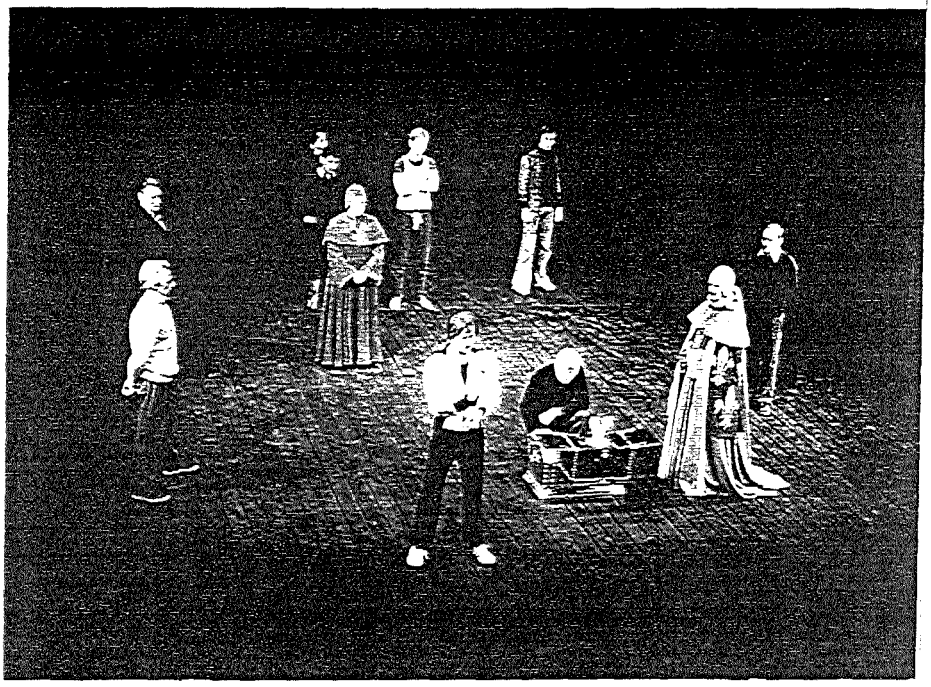


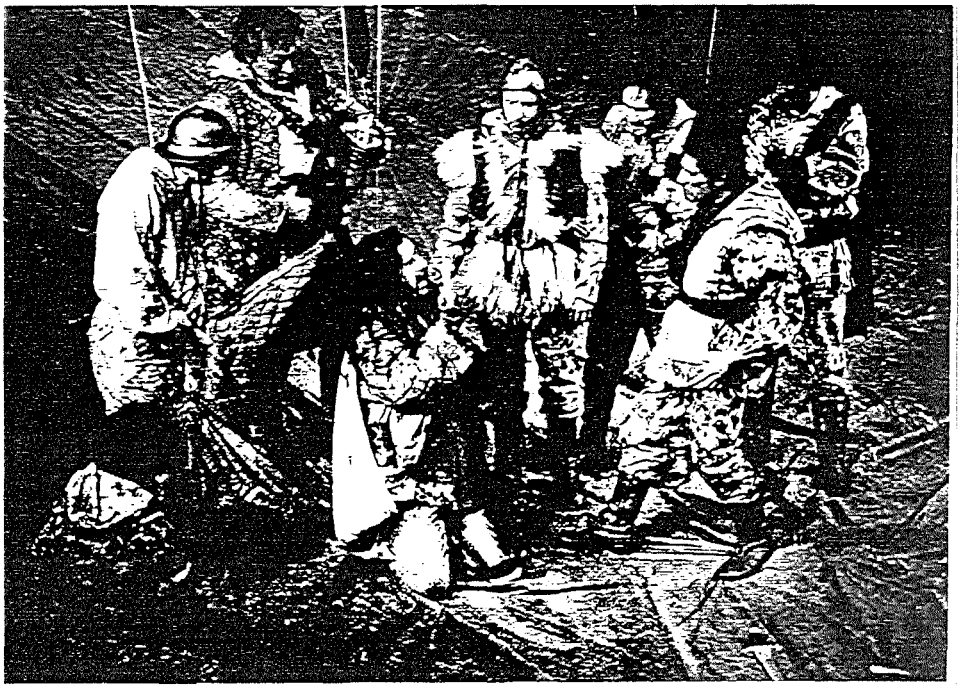
Farrah's *Henry V* (1970)



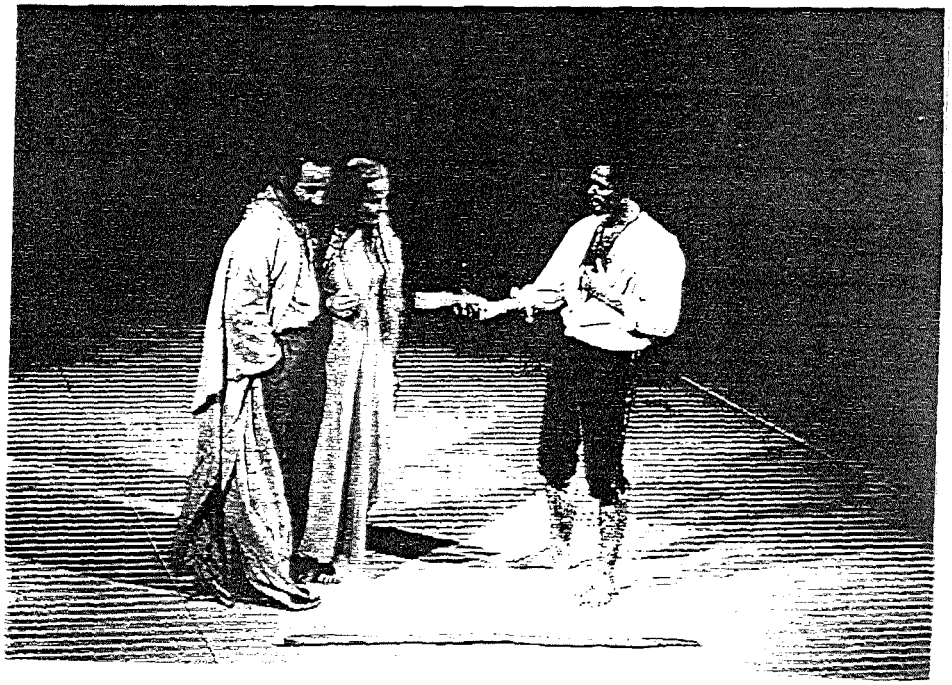


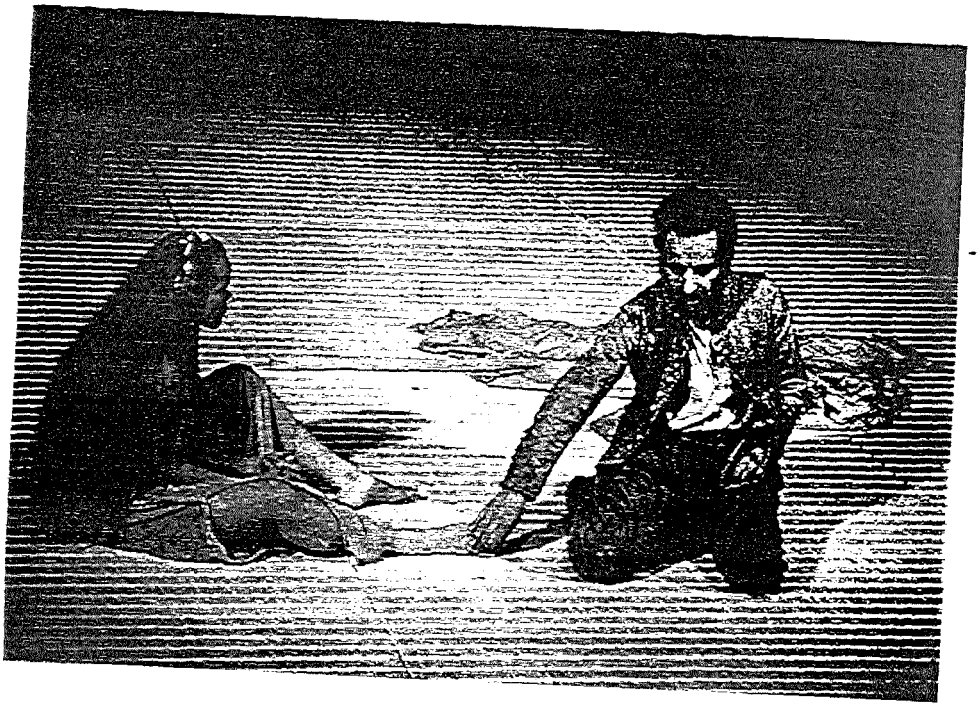




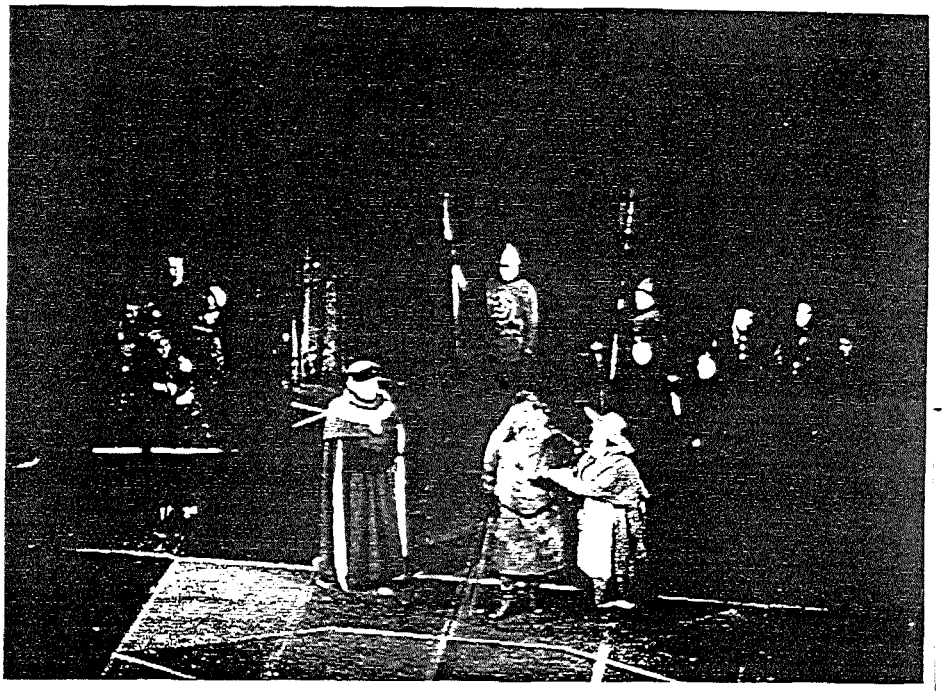


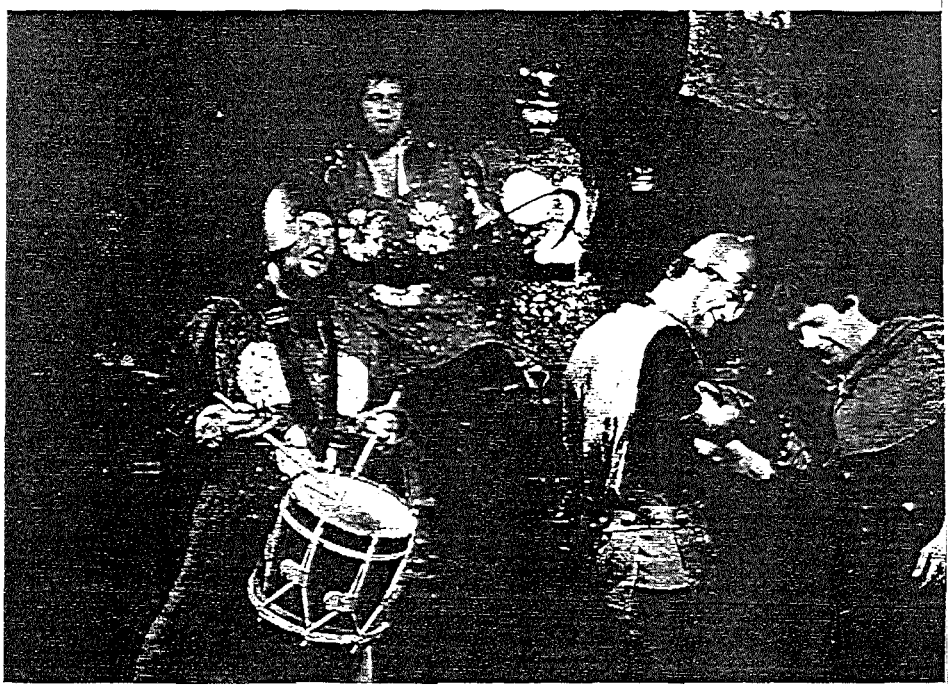
Christopher Morley's *The Tempest* (1963)

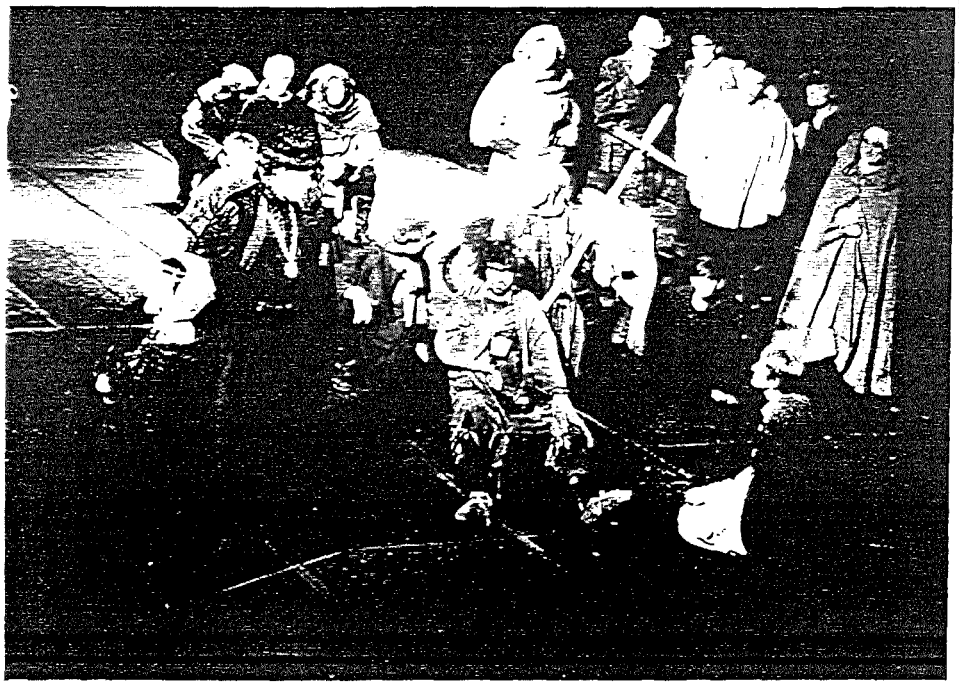




John Bury's *'Henry IV'* (Part 2) (1964)







APPENDIX No. (2)

List of Interviewees

1. Roger Howells, ex-Production Manager.
2. Robert Gordon, Head of Drama Department, Goldsmiths University of London.
3. Barry Rutter, Director and Actor during the 1970s.
4. Terry Hands, Director.
5. Cherry Morris, Actress.
6. Ann Curtis, Costume Designer.
7. Clive Swift, Actor.
8. Abd'Elkader Farrah, Designer.

Appendix (2A)

Interview with the informants of the study

(A) Interview for Academics

(to be spoken and recorded where possible)

1. Britain in the 1960s and 1970s witnessed massive social, political and demographic changes. As an academic , did these changes have any impact on the design of the Shakespeare's plays produced during that period f contemporary British history, in terms of:
   - simplified set design?
   - economic changes?
   - new concept of history?

2. What are these impacts as perceived in the two productions of Henry IV of 1963 and 1976? As you may know, the 1963 production was directed by Peter Hall and designed by John Bury, and the second production was directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd Elkader Farrah.
3. Do you think that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Henry V? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
4. Do you think that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Richard III? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
5. As an academic, what do you think of producing Shakespeare plays within a modern context in terms of scenography of the five plays involved in this study?

- Henry IV, Parts I & II;
- Henry V;
- Richard III;
- Taming of the Shrew; and
- The Tempest

6. Do you think that these new designs bear any consideration for contemporary theatre audience's inclinations in the light of social and political changes in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s?
7. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Farrah's designs of

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (April 1975 & June 1975)?;
- Henry V (1970)?;
- Richard III (1970)?;
- Taming of the Shrew (1973)?; and
- The Tempest (1970)?

8. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Bury's designs of:

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (1964)?;
- Henry V (1966)?;
- Richard III (1963);

9. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Christopher Morley's designs of:
- Taming of the Shrew (1973); and
- The Tempest (1973).

10. As an academic, do you prefer to take part in these plays by adhering to drama objectives and achieving these objectives by décor and realistic or semi-realistic scenes? Or by liberating this perspective and designing the décor to match current production shows?
11. If you have any further comments relating to these designers and their designs, please indicate them in the space below.

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(B) Interview for Historians

(to be spoken and recorded where possible)

12. Britain in the 1960s and 1970s witnessed massive social, political and demographic changes. As an historian , did these changes have any impact on the design of the Shakespeare's plays produced during that period f contemporary British history, in terms of:
    - simplified set design?
    - economic changes?
    - new concept of history?

13. What are these impacts as perceived in the two productions of Henry IV of 1963 and 1976? As you may know, the 1963 production was directed by Peter Hall and designed by John Bury, and the second production was directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd Elkader Farrah.
14. Do you think that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Henry V? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
15. Do you think that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Richard III? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
16. As an historian, what do you think of producing Shakespeare plays within a modern context in terms of scenography of the five plays involved in this study?

- Henry IV, Parts I & II;
- Henry V;
- Richard III;
- Taming of the Shrew; and
- The Tempest

17. Do you think that these new designs bear any consideration for contemporary theatre audience's inclinations in the light of social and political changes in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s?
18. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Farrah's designs of

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (April 1975 & June 1975)?;
- Henry V (1970)?;
- Richard III (1970)?;
- Taming of the Shrew (1973)?; and
- The Tempest (1970)?

19. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Bury's designs of:

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (1964)?;
- Henry V (1966)?;
- Richard III (1963);

20. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Christopher Morley's designs of:

- Taming of the Shrew (1973); and

- The Tempest (1973).

21. As an historian, do you prefer to take part in these plays by adhering to drama objectives and achieving these objectives by décor and realistic or semi-realistic scenes? Or by liberating this perspective and designing the décor to match current production shows?
22. If you have any further comments relating to these designers and their designs, please indicate them in the space below.

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(C) Interview for Actors

(to be spoken and recorded where possible)

23. Britain in the 1960s and 1970s witnessed massive social, political and demographic changes. As an actor, did these changes have any impact on the design of the Shakespeare's plays produced during that period f contemporary British history, in terms of:

- simplified set design?
- economic changes?
- new concept of history?

24. What are these impacts as perceived in the two productions of Henry IV of 1963 and 1976? As you may know, the 1963 production was directed by Peter Hall and designed by John Bury, and the second production was directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd' Elkader Farrah.
25. Do you think that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Henry V? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
26. Do you think that Farrahm, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Richard III? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
27. As an actor, what do you think of producing Shakespeare plays within a modern context in terms of scenography of the five plays involved in this study?

- Henry IV, Parts I & II;
- Henry V;
- Richard III;
- Taming of the Shrew; and
- The Tempest

28. Do you think that these new designs bear any consideration for contemporary theatre audience's inclinations in the light of social and political changes in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s?
29. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Farrah's designs of

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (April 1975 & June 1975)?;
- Henry V (1970)?;
- Richard III (1970)?;
- Taming of the Shrew (1973)?; and
- The Tempest (1970)?

30. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Bury's designs of:

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (1964)?;
- Henry V (1966)?;
- Richard III (1963);

31. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Christopher Morley's designs of:

- Taming of the Shrew (1973); and

- The Tempest (1973).

32. As an actor, do you prefer to take part in these plays by adhering to drama objectives and achieving these objectives by décor and realistic or semi-realistic scenes? Or by liberating this perspective and designing the décor to match current production shows?
33. If you have any further comments relating to these designers and their designs, please indicate them in the space below.

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(D) Interview for Directors

(to be spoken and recorded where possible)

34. Britain in the 1960s and 1970s witnessed massive social, political and demographic changes. As an director , did these changes have any impact on the design of the Shakespeare's plays produced during that period f contemporary British history, in terms of:

- simplified set design?
- economic changes?
- new concept of history?

35. What are these impacts as perceived in the two productions of Henry IV of 1963 and 1976? As you may know, the 1963 production was directed by Peter Hall and designed by John Bury, and the second production was directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd' Elkader Farrah.
36. Do you think that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Henry V? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
37. Do you think that Farrahm, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Richard III? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
38. As a director, what do you think of producing Shakespeare plays within a modern context in terms of scenography of the five plays involved in this study?

- Henry IV, Parts I & II;
- Henry V;
- Richard III;
- Taming of the Shrew; and
- The Tempest

39. Do you think that these new designs bear any consideration for contemporary theatre audience's inclinations in the light of social and political changes in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s?
40. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Farrah's designs of

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (April 1975 & June 1975)?;
- Henry V (1970)?;
- Richard III (1970)?;
- Taming of the Shrew (1973)?; and
- The Tempest (1970)?

41. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Bury's designs of:

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (1964)?;
- Henry V (1966)?;
- Richard III (1963);

42. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Christopher Morley's designs of:

- Taming of the Shrew (1973); and

- The Tempest (1973).

43. As a director, do you prefer to take part in these plays by adhering to drama objectives and achieving these objectives by décor and realistic or semi-realistic scenes? Or by liberating this perspective and designing the décor to match current production shows?
44. If you have any further comments relating to these designers and their designs, please indicate them in the space below.

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(E) Interview for Costume Designers

(to be spoken and recorded where possible)

45. Britain in the 1960s and 1970s witnessed massive social, political and demographic changes. As an costume designer , did these changes have any impact on the design of the Shakespeare's plays produced during that period f contemporary British history, in terms of:

- simplified set design?
- economic changes?
- new concept of history?

46. What are these impacts as perceived in the two productions of Henry IV of 1963 and 1976? As you may know, the 1963 production was directed by Peter Hall and designed by John Bury, and the second production was directed by Terry Hands and designed by Abd Elkader Farrah.
47. Do you think that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Henry V? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
48. Do you think that Farrah, as a Middle Eastern designer, had any impact on the British Theatre? What are the impacts that changes had on the production of Richard III? Henry V was produced in 1966 and 1970, the first was designed by John Bury and directed by Trevor Nunn and John Barton, while the second production was also designed by Farrah and directed by Terry Hands.
49. As a costume designer, what do you think of producing Shakespeare plays within a modern context in terms of scenography of the five plays involved in this study?

- Henry IV, Parts I & II;
- Henry V;
- Richard III;
- Taming of the Shrew; and
- The Tempest

50. Do you think that these new designs bear any consideration for contemporary theatre audience's inclinations in the light of social and political changes in Britain during the 1960s and 1970s?
51. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Farrah's designs of

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (April 1975 & June 1975)?;
- Henry V (1970)?;
- Richard III (1970)?;
- Taming of the Shrew (1973)?; and
- The Tempest (1970)?

52. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Bury's designs of:

- Henry IV, Parts I & II (1964)?;
- Henry V (1966)?;
- Richard III (1963);

53. What is the extent of scenography and aesthetics in Christopher Morley's designs of:

- Taming of the Shrew (1973); and
- The Tempest (1973).

54. As a costume designer, do you prefer to take part in these plays by adhering to drama objectives and achieving these objectives by décor and realistic or semi-realistic scenes? Or by liberating this perspective and designing the décor to match current production shows?
55. If you have any further comments relating to these designers and their designs, please indicate them in the space below.

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