Farewell, king! staging the Middle Ages in nineteenth-century London performances of Shakespeare's "Richard II"

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Chapter 4

Shakespeare Illustrated: The Play on the Page

Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

(*Hamlet*, Act I, Scene 1)

The nineteenth century was the period in which Shakespeare's plays first began to be "engaged with on the page rather than on the stage" (Hollingsworth 44). The increase in the publication of critical and commercial editions of Shakespeare's works contributed to the establishment of a larger reading audience with access to the author's plays and poems. This information sheds light on how substantial Shakespeare's presence was in the print culture of nineteenth-century London, on who had access to Shakespeare's edited texts, and, especially, on which texts were available on the market for the stage adaptors of Shakespeare's plays. Furthermore, this was also the moment when Shakespeare's printed texts received illustrations, adding a new layer of visual interpretation of Shakespeare's characters and – in the case of *Richard II* – of Shakespeare's Middle Ages.

In this chapter, I navigate through the scholarly and more popular editions of Shakespeare's text, since Samuel Johnson's in 1765 until James Halliwell's 1850 edition, which includes daguerreotypes of the main actors of the time in Shakespearean character, shedding light on the theatrical practices common then. My

goal is to investigate how the relationship between Shakespeare on the page with the stage has changed throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, as his plays become more readily available to a wider audience, by means of cheaper and illustrated publications. These illustrations demonstrate that the past was gradually understood as different from the present, and therefore more alluring and mysterious – hence the growing interest in knowing about the past and the preoccupation with historical accuracy in visual representations of the past. Simultaneous to a desire to understand the past, there emerges a desire to connect with it. Art draws an illusionistic bridge between past and present. The illustrations analysed in this chapter indicate that the essential connecting element between past and present is human emotion. Although emotions find different expressions in different social and cultural contexts, the manner with which *Richard II* depicts loss and vulnerability, for instance, has the capability to move both an Early Modern as well as a contemporary audience. In this manner, the Middle Ages became simultaneously – and paradoxically – foreign *and* familiar.

Christopher Decker indicates that four collected editions of Shakespeare's works were published in the seventeenth century; in the eighteenth century, they were more than 80; and in the nineteenth century, over 800 collected editions, around 2,700 single plays and 150 editions of the poems were produced (16). The numbers illustrate how Shakespeare became an increasingly significant name in the prospering publishing business of the time. According to Decker, the early-nineteenth-century editions of Shakespeare's works that appeared on the market were still indebted to eighteenth-century editors. *The Plays of William Shakespeare* (1765) in eight volumes, edited by Samuel Johnson, laid the groundwork for the majority of editors that followed suit. George Steevens (1736-1800) published *The Plays of William Shakespeare* in 1773. Steevens used Johnson's text, to which he added more material written by himself and other contributors. Edmond Malone (1741-1812) extended Steevens's 1778 revised edition, writing a *Supplement* in 1780 and adding an appendix in 1783. In retaliation, Steevens published another revision of his earlier work, expanding it into fifteen volumes in 1793. This, in turn, served as the foundation for the work of Isaac Reed (1742-1807), published in twenty-one volumes in 1803, an edition that is known as the 'first variorum'. After Reed died in 1807, a reprint was published in 1813 (Decker 16–17). This variorum offered an immense amount of commentary on Shakespeare's play, being the lengthiest edition of Shakespeare up to the present day. For the reader to have an idea of the amount of paratextual material added to Shakespeare's dramatic text, Decker explains that

"readers of the 1803 variorum had to contend with three volumes, amounting to 1,455 pages, before they made landfall on the first play, *The Tempest*" (18). This extra material no doubt played a part in the reading experience and in how Shakespeare was perceived by the printing culture of the period: mainly as an intellectually demanding author who required a specialised type of reader.

Reduced versions of the massive tomes began to circulate in England at the beginning of the nineteenth century. These editions challenged the scholarly characteristic of the variorum and aimed at a broader – although still exclusive – public. Alexander Chalmers (1759-1834) published in 1805 a reduced version of the 1803 variorum, cutting the first three volumes to under 120 pages (Decker 18). Another (more successful) attempt to popularise the editions of Shakespeare's text was undertaken by Manley Wood the following year. Wood chose to add a small selection of prefatory material, but innovated in removing all the annotations and footnotes to the end of each play, not disturbing the reader with scholarly commentary during the reading experience. Finally, another novelty of the beginning of the century was the publication of Shakespeare in pocket formats, which could be moved around significantly easier than the variorum tomes that rather belonged in libraries and studies. William Pickering (1796-1854) in association with the printer Charles Corrall produced the *Diamond Classics* pocketbook series. It began in 1820 and consisted of reprints by Latin, Italian, Greek and English authors, such as Cicero, Dante, Homer, Petrarch and Milton. Shakespeare was published in nine pocketbook volumes during the year 1823. These publications demonstrate the path taken by Shakespearean editors in the first half of the nineteenth century, detaching Shakespeare from an academic book culture and introducing his work to a more general reading audience.

Two other features of early-nineteenth-century Shakespearean editing business are worth mentioning, since they started to make an impact before 1815, the year in which Edmund Kean's *Richard II* premiered on the Drury Lane stage: Therefore, they are editions that would have been known by Richard Wroughton (1748-1822), the adaptor of the Shakespearean text for the 1815 production, but also by the audience attending the performance. In 1807, Henrietta Maria Bowdler (1750-1830) and her brother Thomas Bowdler (1754-1825) published anonymously[21] *The Family*

[21] The first edition in 1807, published anonymously, contained mainly Henrietta's work. The second expanded edition was carried out by her brother, Thomas. It was published in 1818 and featured only Thomas' name as the editor.

Shakespeare, which was intended to offer a morally and religiously suitable version of Shakespeare's text for the English family. The edition altered or omitted several passages regarded as vulgar or indecent, and eighteen plays were completely excluded from Henrietta Bowdler's selection of the canon for being considered inappropriate (Decker 19).[22] Bowdler's project illuminates one of the trends of nineteenth-century Shakespearean editions: that of expurgated versions, a consequence of the evangelicalism and revival of Protestantism in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. However, as Decker points out, unexpurgated editions still exceeded the number of expurgated ones (20).

The second aspect was the printing of cheaper facsimile versions of the First Folio of 1623, allegedly exact copies of the original seventeenth-century document, produced by letterpress, pressing paper against inked movable types to create the imprint.[23] The first facsimile of the Folio was published by Vernor and Hood in 1807, the same year as *The Family Shakespeare*. It was marketed at £5 5s, a substantially lower price than the £38 requested for the Folio itself at the time.[24] Still, it would only have been affordable to a small parcel of the population. At that time, £5 5s would correspond to the price of one cow, or five stones of wool.

Facsimile editions provided 'authenticity' without the intervention of scholarly commentary, promising "the most direct contact with pure Shakespeare" (Decker 20). The access to a facsimile of the First Folio would allow the nineteenth-century reader to feel closer to the 1623 context of publication of the first collected works of Shakespeare. In this manner, the facsimile functions as an illusion in two ways.

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[22] The first edition of *The Family Shakespeare* contained the following selection of 20 plays: *The Tempest*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Much Ado About Nothing*, *As You Like It*, *The Merchant of Venic*e, *Twelfth Night*, *The Winter's Tale*, *King John*, *Richard II*, *Henry IV – Part 1*, *Henry IV – Part 2*, *Henry V*, *Richard III*, *Henry VIII*, *Julius Caesar*, *Macbeth*, *Cymbeline*, *King Lear*, *Hamlet*, and *Othello*. The second edition of 1818 included 16 more plays: *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, *Measure for Measure*, *Love's Labour's Lost*, *All's Well that Ends Well*, *The Taming of the Shrew*, *The Comedy of Errors*, *Henry VI – Part 1*, *Henry IV – Part 2*, *Henry VI – Part 3*, *Troilus and Cressida*, *Timon of Athens*, *Coriolanus*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Titus Andronicus* and *Romeo and Juliet*. The 1818 edition thus presents 36 plays by Shakespeare. When Decker refers to 18 plays that were not part of the 1807 edition, the author probably refers to *Pericles, Prince of Tyre* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen*.

[23] Only in 1864 was photolithography used to reproduce the original First Folio in an edition by Howard Staunton, a volume which completely overshadowed the early letterpress facsimiles (Decker 21).

[24] According to an advertisement published at the Edinburgh Review from 1808 (Decker 20). For the sake of comparison, the First Folio was originally sold for 20s in 1623 (St Clair 146). This information indicates that the value of the Folio had increased significantly in the period between 1623 and 1808.

First, as a fake antique, since it was not a document printed in 1623, but a copy printed in the reader's present time. Second, and most importantly, as a bridge between past and present, connecting Shakespeare's nineteenth-century readers with their seventeenth-century counterparts. Moreover, copies of the First Folio allowed the readers certain freedom to engage with and annotate the text, which the antique value of the authentic Folio would not allow. For example, the poet John Keats (1795-1821) owned one such facsimile copy, acquired in 1817. According to R. S. White, Keats copiously marked and annotated it, comparing the Folio text with other editions published in his own time. As White puts it, Keats' "interest reaches from the technicalities of textual criticism to the most wide-ranging admiration for Shakespeare's thought and linguistic craft" (147). His engagement with the Shakespearean text had a major effect on Keats's craft as a poet. The Folio facsimile did not function as a simulacrum of Shakespeare for Keats, it was not an object to be admired from a distance, but a text to be read, re-read, and with which Keats interacted.

Keats's understanding of the act of reading Shakespeare emphasises that it should not necessarily be an individual practice, but "paradoxically, a simultaneous continuum between passivity and active creation, between self-annulment and self-absorption" (White 21). The poet comprehended reading as a co-operative process, an experience that could be shared between "like-minded readers of the same text" (White 22). White adds an interesting example of Keats's reading practice, implied in a letter written to his brother George Keats: "You will remember me in the same manner – and the more when I tell you that I shall read a passage of Shakespeare every Sunday at ten o Clock – you read one at the same time and we shall be as near each other as blind bodies can be in the same room" (White 22). Although apart from each other, reading Shakespeare at the exact same time would connect the two brothers' experiences, binding them. In this sense, Keats's suggestion of a communal reading of Shakespeare's text resembles the experience of the spectators joined to watch the production of the play. During that moment, they share feelings elicited by the actions on stage, which also creates a powerful bond among audience members.

The rising number of Shakespearean editions mentioned above demonstrate that Shakespeare was a popular name within the early-nineteenth-century cultural scene. The newly available editions were striving to break loose from the restraints of scholarly texts and to reach a broader audience. Smaller and cheaper publications of the plays invited readers to try Shakespeare for themselves, without

the erudite language of his commentators. Catherine Morland, the protagonist of Jane Austen's novel *Northanger Abbey*, probably completed in 1803 but published only posthumously in 1818, exemplifies the extent of Shakespeare's presence in the English cultural scene at the time. The narrator describes the reading habits of the young woman as follows: "But from fifteen to seventeen she was in training for a heroine; she read all such works as heroines must read to supply their memories with those quotations which are so serviceable and so soothing in the vicissitudes of their eventful lives" (Austen 17). She read Alexander Pope, Thomas Gray, James Thomson, and Shakespeare, with whom she learned that "Trifles light as air / Are, to the jealous, confirmation strong, / As proofs of Holy Writ" (*Othello*, 3.3.332-334), that "The poor beetle, which we tread upon, / In corporal sufferance feels a pang as great / As when a giant dies" (*Measure for Measure*, 3.1.84-86) and that a young woman in love always looks "like Patience on a monument / Smiling at Grief" (*Twelfth Night*, 2.4.112-113). Austen's character, a young woman from a family of ten children in the county of Wiltshire, who did not have access to higher social circles or sophisticated cultural venues until she travelled with the wealthy Allen family, illustrates how printed Shakespeare became available to different social classes. Although Catherine had never been to Bath, never attended a ball in Tunbridge, was unfamiliar with the fashion of London, and – to the extent of the reader's knowledge – had never seen a performance of Shakespeare's plays on stage, she had read Shakespeare on the page.

Catherine also read the popular Gothic tales of Anne Radcliffe (1764-1823) that infused her impressions of the medieval abbey, home of the Tilneys, with feelings of foreboding and terror. Catherine's perspective on the medieval past was influenced by her experience reading late-eighteenth-century Gothic fiction, in which the Middle Ages were evoked to convey powerful emotions, especially those connected with terror and a sense of sublime. The pathos induced by such a representation of the medieval past is significant to understanding medievalism at the turn of the century, as I will argue in Chapter 5 in relation to Edmund Kean's production of *Richard II*.

As Catherine Morland demonstrates, engagement with Shakespeare was not exclusive to middle and upper classes. In fact, Jonathan Rose explains that certain members of the working-class also felt a connection with the Shakespearean text. He writes that "in mid-century London newsboys spent their odd 6d. on *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*" (122). Throughout the century, Shakespeare was both read and seen by the working masses, who filled the pit and galleries of the playhouses, com-

mented on the action on stage, drawing comparisons with previous productions and amongst actors, and knew passages from Shakespearean poetry by heart. The poet was hailed by many as "a proletarian hero who spoke directly to the working people" (Rose 122–23). Rose's commentary on the social domain of theatre exemplifies the way the critic William Hazlitt (1778-1830) understood the theatrical public sphere, namely as a means for personal experience and for definition of the self. It was through cultural exchange that one became conscious of their own opinions. For instance, Rose adds that a weaver's son translated *The Merchant of Venice* into Lancashire dialect (123), adapting Shakespeare to his own reality. Furthermore, the working class was aware of the political language and tone in Shakespeare, which could be used to forward their own ambitions. One example is the Irish trade unionist John Dougherty (1798-1854), who spoke a manifesto to ally all trade unions in a National Association for the Protection of Labour in 1830, in which he included military extracts from *Julius Caesar* (Rose 123). Dougherty was doubtless moved by Shakespeare's words, which led him to reflect on his own self and social role.

As the examples above confirm, Shakespeare was present almost everywhere in the first half of the nineteenth century – from the expensive voluminous critical editions of his complete works, to the reading room of a countryside young woman, to the political manifesto of a trade unionist. These are instances in which the Shakespearean text was engaged with on the page, and the reader relied on their own imagination to envision the sets and characters. In the following section, I look at how Shakespeare's text was visually received and reinterpreted in this period of time, especially how *Richard II* and its medieval setting were recreated in illustrated editions of the play.

4.1 Early-Nineteenth-century Romantic Imagination: Shakespeare and Visual Culture

The page and the stage were not the only channels through which Shakespeare's presence was felt in the beginning of the nineteenth century. Shakespeare's characters and poetry gained different forms and interpretations in visual art. Illustrated editions helped to broaden the literary culture in England and to visually materialise imagined characters and plots. Since the first illustrated edition of Shakespeare's works edited by Nicholas Rowe (1674-1718) in 1709, the characters in *Richard II* had been visually recreated in at least nine different projects until

Edmund Kean's production of the play in 1815. The illustrations went through significant change, from a depiction of the characters in contemporary eighteenth-century clothes to a stricter concern with historical accuracy, as well as a keener interest in the victimised Richard instead of Bolingbroke.

The last decades of the eighteenth century witnessed an increasing fascination with emotions, as exemplified by the picturesque aesthetics of the Boydell Gallery and the engravings of Henry Fuseli (1741-1825). There was a rejection of didacticism of art in favour of a fusion with the imagination: an art that speaks "to the heart as well as the eye" (Dias 124).

Hazlitt's understanding of the role of poetry is very much linked to the conveyance of emotions. He explains: "The best general notion which I can give of poetry is, that it is the natural impression of any object or event, by its vividness exciting an involuntary movement of imagination and passion, and producing, by sympathy, a certain modulation of the voice, or sounds, expressing it" (Hazlitt, Vol. V 1). This extract brings forth some of the essential arguments in Hazlitt's appreciation of art, and, particularly, poetry: above all, it should be able to incite feelings of passion and sympathy in the reader. Moreover, it should be done naturally, not an artificial demonstration of emotion. In Hazlitt's words, "poetry is the universal language which the heart holds with nature and itself" (Hazlitt, Vol. V 1). In this sense, Hazlitt's understanding of poetry parallels Diderot's statements on acting, discussed in Chapter 1. A good actor should avoid artificiality, extreme contrasts and exaggerated demonstrations of feelings.

In another essay, Hazlitt discusses the concept of *gusto* in art, which he explains as the "power or passion defining any object" (Hazlitt, Vol. IV 77). Any object has a degree of expression, associated either with pleasure or pain, "and it is in giving this truth of character from the truth of feeling, whether in the highest or the lowest degree, but always in the highest degree of which the subject is capable, that gusto consists" (Hazlitt, Vol. IV 77). Hazlitt exemplifies with the Venetian artist Titian (c.1488-1576). According to Hazlitt, through Titian's use of colour, the persons depicted on the canvas not only seem to think but to *feel*. The colour of the human flesh as he paints it seems "sensitive" and "alive all over", having not only realistic texture, but conveying emotion – of pleasure, lust, fear, etc. – to the beholder. White draws attention to the fact that Hazlitt is not always consistent in his use of the word *gusto*. Nonetheless, Hazlitt managed to give name to a very complex experience: "a quality which is active at each stage of the whole *process* which brings together the artist, the work of art, and the one who receives the work as reader

or observer" (White 38). It is not only what the art object expresses that matters, but its combination with how the beholder receives it and manifests the reaction.

This period of primacy of feeling demonstrated an ambiguous attitude towards *Richard II* and its leading role. At the same time that Bolingbroke's victory is celebrated and Richard's unjust behaviour is despised, Richard's character receives sympathy as a suffering victim. There is an increasing interest in depicting the king's soliloquies in the scene at Pomfret Castle, in which he compares his prison with the world, reflecting on his own mortality. On the other hand, there is a growing preoccupation with historical authenticity, adding details of clothing, architecture and decoration that display the medieval past. I thus argue that the Middle Ages are not visually represented as merely a means to materialise the past, but, mainly, to evoke emotion and pathos.

Hazlitt censures the extreme dedication to historical accuracy on stage when it interferes with the flow of emotions. In his review of the adaptation of Scott's *Ivanhoe* at Drury Lane in 1820, Hazlitt criticises that the actor playing Ivanhoe was in full armour. With the heavy garments, he had difficulties in moving around the stage, which affected the flow of the production. If the props, costumes and settings that convey historical authenticity are added at the expense of feeling, they should not be included.

4.1.1 1709-1800

According to Richard Altick, the bookseller Jacob Tonson (1655-1736) published in 1709 the first illustrated edition of Shakespeare's plays, edited by Nicholas Rowe. Tonson published other illustrated works at the time, including editions of *Paradise Lost*, and works by Francis Beaumont, John Fletcher and John Dryden. Altick asserts that these editions "found an audience composed not only of the well-to-do and presumably cultivated persons who could afford the collected works of a dramatist but of the larger body of ordinary playgoers as well" (37). The plates used for the illustrations in Tonson's Shakespeare, for instance, were also used in other publications, from cheap printings of individual plays to expensive mezzotints[25] (Altick 37).

[25] Mezzotints are a type of engraving on copper or steel, done by scraping or burnishing a roughened surface to produce light and shade, creating half-tones.

The illustrations were made by the French artist François Boitard (1670-c. 1715), who chose to illustrate scenes with a more general appeal, focusing on main themes of the play in question. Interestingly, Boitard's frontispieces for the comedies had a general eighteenth-century style, with the characters wearing wigs and tricornes – distant from the Shakespearean Renaissance context. The frontispiece for *Measure for Measure*, for instance, shows Deputy Angelo wearing the three-cornered hat, a knee-length coat, knee breeches and medium-heeled shoes (See figure 10)[26]. The illustration is relevant for shedding light on the theatrical conventions of the time and the use of contemporary clothing on stage.

Figure 10 - The frontispiece for *Measure for Measure* in Rowe's 1709 edition

The frontispieces for the history plays showed a more specific style related to the time period in which each play was set, although they do not demonstrate a strict concern with historical accuracy. *Richard II* was included in the third volume

[26] Shakespeare, William, and Rowe, Nicholas. *The Works of Mr. William Shakespear : In Six Volumes. By N. Rowe*. 1709. Print.

of Rowe's edition, along with *King John*, the two parts of *Henry IV*, *Henry V* and the first two parts of *Henry VI*. Rowe obviously followed the chronology of the succession of British monarchs, adopting the order in the First Folio instead of the chronology of Shakespeare's writing.

Boitard's engraving for *Richard II* depicts Richard's assault by Exton and his men in the prison scene. Two bodies are on the ground, the chair is turned, a fallen plate of food is on the floor, and the assaulters hold axe-like weapons. The king, also holding an axe, is surrounded by his enemies. All the men have similar features, wearing breeches, hose and doublets, which indicates that the artist historicises the image in relation to Shakespeare's lifetime instead of Richard II's medieval past (See figure 11). Although there is no clear visual reference to the Middle Ages, there is an implication of brutal violence and imminent death, incited by the weapons held in the position to attack. This examples evokes a perception of the Middle Ages as the Dark Ages. As Matthews explains, and the following illustrated editions of Shakespeare's plays exemplify, it was only in the late eighteenth century that the medieval past was re-evaluated in a positive light (22).

Figure 11 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Rowe's 1709 edition

Lewis Theobald commissioned completely new images for the second edition of *The Works of Shakespeare*, published in eight volumes in 1740. They were designed by the French artist Hubert-François Gravelot (1699-1773), who became known in England for his book illustrations. For example, he designed iconic illustrations for Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740). According to Stuart Sillars, Theobald's edition promoted the illustrations of Shakespeare's works to another level of conception and style (73). Gravelot's style brought the influence of the French Rococo to British engraving art. As Sillars explains, his illustration "concretises the moment through sensuality of texture, frequently heightened by an erotic charge beneath the finely rendered surfaces of fashionable costume and discourse within which Gravelot reconfigures the plays" (75). It is a highly ornamental style, devoted to capturing feeling through minute detail and texture. Originating in the eighteenth century, the style reflects the period's imagination; however, it had never yet been used to interpret the Shakespearean imagination.

Sillars points out that there emerges an anachronistic matter in applying an eighteenth-century style to a Renaissance text, but that it is not necessarily detrimental to the reader's experience. The illustrations "for the plays translate character and action into settings contemporary with their reader, not with their writer. The result is the implementation of an aesthetic difference which, like the use of contemporary costume on stage, paradoxically stresses both the immediacy and the artifice of the form" (Sillars 76). The Shakespearean characters illustrated by Gravelot would look contemporary to the eighteenth-century readers, although not to Shakespeare. That would bring the Shakespearean imagination closer to Theobald's contemporaries, but it would also emphasise the artificiality of these illustrations for a late-sixteenth-century text because of its anachronistic incongruence. Sillars sees "this equation between artifice and naturalism" at the centre of Gravelot's work (76).

Gravelot demonstrates a concern with specific moments in the play, with the articulation of the human body, with the flow of fabrics and clothes, and facial and body expression. For *Richard II*, the French engraver chose the garden scene in Act III, the most bucolic scene in the play (See figure 12).[27] There is a contrast of light and darkness in Gravelot's interpretation of this symbolic scene. The castle tower

[27] Shakespeare, William. *The works of Shakespeare: in eight volumes. Collated with the oldest copies, and corrected: with notes, explanatory, and critical: By Mr. Theobald*. Vol. 4, Printed for C. Hitch and L. Hawes, H. Lintot, J. and R. Tonson, J. Hodges, B. Dod, J. Rivington, M. and T. Longman, J. Brindley, C. Corbet and T. Caslon,1757. Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

is visible in the background, overlooking the garden. The queen is seen in the foreground, surrounded by two ladies, all dressed in flowing gowns and tight corsets. The gardener talking to the queen is overcast in darkness, while the two servants in the back almost fade into the backdrop of trees. The tree branches and leaves on the right side tower above the queen and ladies, threatening to expand their dark limbs. As Sillars points out, Gravelot uses "visual metaphors [...], exploiting the contrast between elegance of style and violence of event" (78). The gardener in the shadow gives the queen the bad news about the state of the realm consequent to her husband's lack of care with the garden of England. The queen is still covered with light, but the threatening tree arms above foreshadow the approaching darkness if the rotting weeds do not get plucked away. Gravelot's representation of the medieval in this illustration is quite ambiguous: it combines a romanticised atmosphere, characterised by the light spots and the female characters, with the haunting approach of darkness. Gravelot already anticipated certain elements that would define Gothic imagery in the second half of the century.

Figure 12 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Theobald's 1740 edition of the play

Four years later, Thomas Hanmer (1677-1746) commissioned a new illustrated edition of Shakespeare's works. He gave specific directions for twenty-seven of the thirty-one illustrations undertaken by the artist Francis Hayman (1708-1776). Hayman follows the trend initiated by Gravelot in focusing "on the naturalism of the setting and the presentation of characters as human individuals within it" (Sillars 86). At this point, the emphasis is still on character, not on setting. As Sillar explains, historical accuracy was then a concern mainly for the Roman plays. However, in Hanmer's instructions for Hayman's illustration for *Richard II*, the reader perceives an interesting approach to the depiction of the medieval past.[28] The scene chosen for the frontispiece was Act I, Scene 4, the lists at Coventry. Hanmer is precise in instructing the moment he wishes to be engraved: "The king throws down his warder or ward-staff to prevent their engaging" (Allentuck 307–09). It is the precise moment in which Richard interrupts the medieval ceremony. Hanmer is also specific about costume: Bolingbroke and Mowbray are "completely armed on horseback and ready for the combat", and the king "is seated in state surrounded with his nobles" (Allentuck 307–09). Furthermore, the editor suggests a particular historical text as the source for Hayman to follow: "This Print representing the ancient ceremony of combat, if it be truly and justly set forth, will be valued as a curiosity upon that account, and it may be taken from one done with great exactness in Dugdale's Antiquities of Warwickshire publish'd 1730. Vol. 1. p. 110" (Allentuck 309). The source is not a medieval text but an eighteenth-century study of the Middle Ages. Dugdale's book is based on records, manuscripts, charters, evidences, tombs and arms, "beautified" with maps, prospects and portraitures. Significantly, Dugdale uses the word *beautify* to describe his interpretation of the medieval archive, which reveals his role in manipulating the material in order to offer a romanticised image of the period.

According to Hanmer, the frontispiece would be a "valued curiosity" to his contemporary reader, since it would provide them with a visual representation of "the ancient ceremony of combat". The print in Dugdale's book portrays different events: a combat in Paris in August 1438, fought by two knights in armour on horses, holding lances; a combat in Smithfield in January 1441, where the two contenders fight each other with swords on foot; and a sequence of individual smaller

[28] Marcia Allentuck describes the instructions written by Hanmer and copied by Charles Roger (currently part of the Cottonian Collection in Plymouth) in her article "Sir Thomas Hanmer Instructs Francis Hayman: An Editor's Notes to his Illustrator (1744)", published in the *Shakespeare Quarterly* in 1976.

tableaux on the left and right sides depicting the traditional procedure: the king grants the knight license to perform the combat, the knight takes the oath in the presence of the Constable and the Marshal, swearing that he has no charm or enchantment upon him, he is then conducted to the lists, where he pierces the other combatant's helmet with the spear, he thanks God for his victory, he presents the adversary's helmet to his lady, the king girds him with the sword of knighthood, and, finally, the knight is invested with the robes and Order of the Garter in the last tableau (See figure 13).[29]

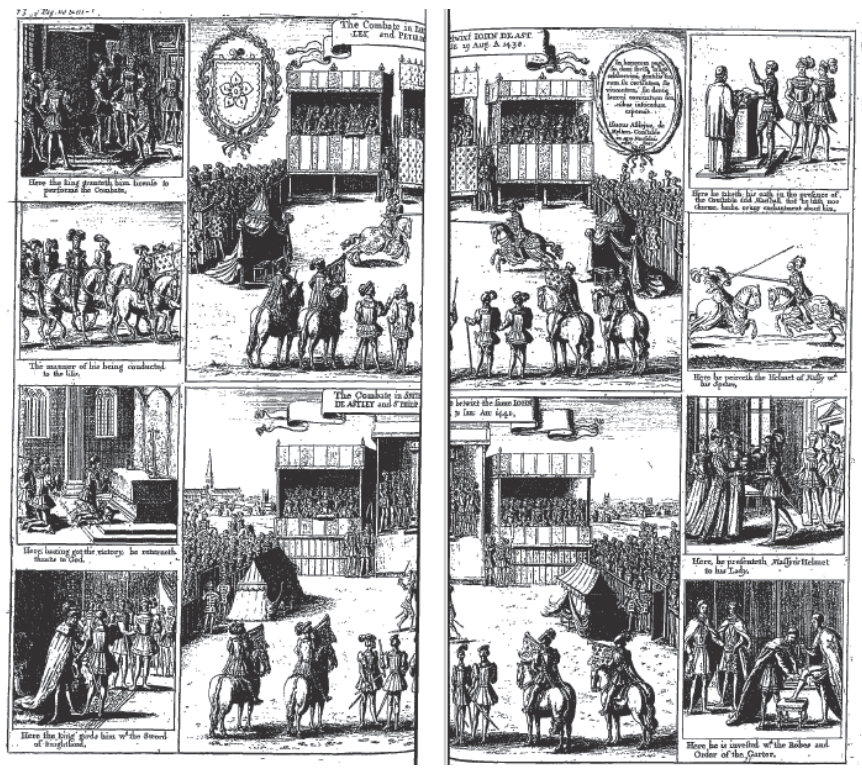

Figure 13 - Print showing a medieval tournament in William Dugdale's *The Antiquities of Warwickshire Illustrated* (1730)

[29] Dugdale, William. *The antiquities of Warwickshire illustrated; From Records, Manuscripts, Charters, Evidences, Tombes, and Armes: Beautified with maps, prospects, and portraictures. By Sir William Dugdale.* Vol. 1, printed for John Osborn and Thomas Longman, 1730. Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

Hayman reinterprets the print from Dugdale's book, adapting the illustration of the combat in Paris, which is the scene in the top part of the central piece. Bolingbroke and Mowbray are both clad in armour, each riding a horse and holding a lance. The king takes the central position, sitting on his throne in the royal platform (See figure 14)[30]. In the lower foreground, two horsed heralds with trumpets stand on each side, accompanied by other lords. Hayman's illustration captures the moment when the king is dropping his ward-staff, causing the spectators on the platform to look puzzled with the interruption. Sillars points out that Hayman's version shifts "the image from one of ceremonial to one of dramatic engagement" (97). Although Dugdale's print indicates movement, especially in the middle with the two knights on horseback, the ensemble is quite static. Conversely, Hayman's adaptation is not a fixed tableau to explain the etiquette of a ceremony; rather, it portrays the moment of one specific dramatic action, the drop of the warder, with focus on the king, who takes the centre of the image. Hayman's other engravings for Hanmer's edition were generally directed at depicting individual characters and dramatic movement. However, the illustration for *Richard II* exhibits an unprecedented attention to setting. Different from Gravelot's emphasis on violence, Hayman's reconstruction of the Middle Ages is centred on knightly pageantry, offering a more idealised image of the medieval past.

Hanmer's instructions to Hayman for the frontispiece of *Richard II* confirm an awareness of the historical moment depicted in Shakespeare's play. According to Sillars, "it is probably the earliest example of such an extreme concern with historical accuracy, and certainly the first image that expresses it by imitating an engraving from the period it intends to establish" (97), even though that image is itself an eighteenth-century construction. Hanmer's *Richard II* proposes a mixture of concern for historical authenticity with description of action, movement and character. Furthermore, it is a moment in the play that incites emotion, emphasised by the puzzled faces of the spectators at Coventry. This combination is what incites sympathy in the reader, who can recognise the emotional reaction framed in the illustration.

[30] Sillars, Stuart. *The Illustrated Shakespeare, 1709-1875*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008, page 98.

Figure 14 - Frontispiece to *Richard II* in Hayman's 1744 edition

As the second half of the eighteenth century unfolded, the publisher John Bell (1745-1831) commissioned new illustrations for Shakespeare's plays. He was in charge of publishing an "Acting" edition of Shakespeare's works, based on the promptbooks used at Drury Lane and Covent Garden. *Bell's Edition of Shakespeare* consists of the twenty-four plays that were part of the theatres' repertoire at the time, and included frontispieces, illustrated scenes and characters, and portraits of actors. It was published by subscription in 1774, followed by a 'continuance' in the following year with the remaining plays and poems in the Shakespearean canon (Sillars 113–14). The weekly edition cost 6*d* each, making it affordable to a good parcel of the population and greatly contributing to the visual understanding of the plays. Furthermore, the illustrated scenes and portraits were also sold separately, which gave the purchaser the opportunity to keep a visual record of the play

without textual interference. An edition with only the engravings of the actors was published in 1776, which suggests that these images were commercially appealing. It could also indicate that theatregoers kept these illustrations of actors as fans collect celebrity photographs nowadays, or even as souvenirs of a particular play.

Bell's edition of *Richard II* brings two engravings, designed by Edward Edwards (1738-1806). Edwards' designs usually depict two or three figures in a naturalistic setting during one specific moment of the play, normally moments of intimacy and not pageantry, partly due to the small-scale nature of the format. Edwards chose to portray Act V, Scene III (although the plate refers to a non-existent 'Scene VIII') (See figure 15).[31] It is the scene in which the Duchess of York asks the newly kinged Bolingbroke forgiveness for her son, Aumerle, who had conspired in favour of Richard. Bolingbroke's line is transcribed on the engraving: "I pardon him, as God shall pardon me" (5.3.130). The illustration shows Bolingbroke holding Aumerle's treacherous papers and pointing at the boy, who kneels next to his mother, the Duchess. The Duke of York is standing and looks at the new king as he forgives Aumerle. This is an interesting choice, since it is one that is commonly deleted from productions for the sake of time limitations. However, the single line accompanying the image is significant: Bolingbroke forgives the 'wrongs' of Aumerle in the hopes that God would forgive his own crimes. Edwards highlights that Bolingbroke's choice for forgiveness is not selfless, but a way to secure his own absolution. In this manner, Bolingbroke's character is depicted as dubious: aware of his own crime, but only repentant for fear of God's punishment.

Edwards' depiction of the past combines the setting of a medieval castle, with ogival arches, a heraldic shield decorating the wall, and a cross over the main door – a reference to the Middle Ages Catholic past, although the characters' clothing have a Renaissance style. Bolingbroke, for instance, wears a hat with a feather, a shirt with bulgy sleeves and a trunk hose. The characters are thus depicted in the fashion of the playwright's time, associating them with Shakespeare's creations. On the other hand, the reconstruction of the medieval setting indicates a higher concern with historical accuracy, raising awareness to the historical Bolingbroke's own lifetime.

[31] Shakespeare, William. *Bell's edition of Shakespeare's plays, as they are now performed at the Theatres Royal in London*. Printed for John Bell, 1773-76. Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

Figure 15 - Edward's engraving for *Richard II* in Bell's "Acting edition" of 1774

Figure 16 - Francis Aickin as Henry IV in Bell's "Acting edition" of 1774

Bell's 1774 edition also includes a portrait of Francis Aickin (?-1805) in the character of Bolingbroke (See figure 16).[32] According to Kalman Burnim and Philip Highfill Jr., Aickin never played the role of Bolingbroke, as *Richard II* was not performed during the time the Irish actor remained in London (1765-1792). However, he played the role of Henry IV in the two parts of the eponymous play (Burnim and Highfill Jr. 39). The engraving is thus a depiction of Aickin as he would have played Henry Bolingbroke in *Richard II*, based on his other performances. It portrays a Bolingbroke in an eighteenth-century wig tied back in a ponytail, knee breeches, long waistcoat, a shirt with frills, and holding a hat with an upturned brim, decorated with a feather. This is very likely how the character would have been seen on an eighteenth-century stage. Interestingly, Aickin's Bolingbroke starkly differs from Edwards' conception of the king, as seen above. Moreover, the portrait of the actor in costume has no resemblance at all to the medieval Henry IV. There were historical sources available at the time which could assist in a more plausible reconstruction of the appearance of Henry Bolingbroke, such as the 1618 engraving, now part of the National Portrait Gallery collection.[33] Alternatively, the engraving in Bell's edition shows an adaptation of the character to his readers' contemporary fashion. The line transcribed on the print reads: "Go some of you, convey him to the Tower" (4.1.315). It is the confirmation of Henry's victory over Richard, who, deprived of his crown, must be conveyed to the Tower, where he dies. The accompanying quote advances a perception of Bolingbroke as the victor over the defeated Richard.

Bell published another edition of Shakespeare's works in 1788 with added commentaries. It was a more scholarly edition, and that is why it is commonly referred to as the "Literary" edition, in contrast with the "Acting" one mentioned above. As Sillars explains, each play in this edition had at least two images: a 'Vignette' and a character portrayal (129). The vignette for *Richard II*, designed by Edward Burney (1760-1848), depicts another instance from Act V, Scene III (the same scene chosen for Bell's Acting edition): the moment that Aumerle kneels before the new

[32] Shakespeare, William. *Bell's edition of Shakespeare's plays, as they are now performed at the Theatres Royal in London*. Printed for John Bell, 1773-76. Eighteenth Century Collections Online.

[33] *King Henry IV*, probably by Renold or Reginold Elstrack (Elstracke), line engraving, 1618, 6 7/8 in. x 4 3/4 in. (176 mm x 121 mm) paper size, 1931. Reference Collection: NPG D2373.

king (See figure 17).[34] The image is framed within a circle, and below the quote from the play reads: "Forever may my knees grow to the earth" (5.3.29). This is a moment of Aumerle's complete submission to the new king. Both of Bell's editions convey an image of Bolingbroke as the victor, of a superior (although of a dubious character) being, inspiring submission.

Figure 17 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Bell's "Literary edition" of 1788

[34] Shakespeare, William. *The Dramatick Writings of Will. Shakspere,: With the Notes of All the Various Commentators; Printed Complete From the Best Editions of Sam. Johnson And Geo. Steevens*. London: Printed for, and under the direction of, John Bell, 1788.

The two characters are apparelled in an overall imagined version of Renaissance style. Henry does not wear a crown, but a hat decorated with feathers – similar to the one Aickin wore for the part. The expression on the new king's face is different from how Edwards had depicted him. Burney gives an air of compassion and candour to the new king. However, above the framed image there is a symbol: a dagger stuck on a piece of paper, probably the proof of Aumerle's treason. On one side of the dagger there is the head-side of a snake, agonizing in pain, a possible reference to the fact that Bolingbroke achieved his victory by means of treachery. The middle of the snake's body seems to be pierced by the dagger as well, and, on the other side, the tail of the snake comes out of a Medusa-like head. The image represents renewal and rebirth. Just as the snake disposes of its old skin in order for new skin to grow, the old king Richard had to be disposed, so a new monarchy could arise, personified by Henry Bolingbroke. Although the new king is depicted in a positive light in the drawing within the circle, the symbol of the agonising snake above sheds light on Bolingbroke's deceitful way of conquering the crown, exposing the artifice in Bolingbroke's demeanour. There is a noteworthy contrast between a romanticised illustration of authority and loyalty, and the grotesque depiction of renewal through betrayal and death.

The second illustration of Bell's 1788 edition for *Richard II* portrays the actress Elizabeth Farren (1759-1829) as the Queen (See figure 18).[35] She is alone in the garden, one hand holding a white handkerchief and the other pointing at the plants. The queen's contemplative expression suggests that she is reflecting on her separation from her husband. She also melancholically meditates on the state of England, after her conversation with the gardener, comparing the kingdom to the garden where she stands. The actress wears a mantua with a low-cut square neckline, trimmed with lace to cover her bust, and a veil covers part of her hair. This 1788 edition thus reinforces the eighteenth-century clothing style for the illustrations, already present in Bell's "Acting" edition. However, different from Aickin's artificial posing, Farren is depicted in a moment of intimate meditation. Although the actress embodies the queen, and the setting frames her melancholy, the character is the focus of the illustration. It is the queen's deliberation on her

[35] Shakespeare, William. *The Dramatick Writings of Will. Shakspere,: With the Notes of All the Various Commentators; Printed Complete From the Best Editions of Sam. Johnson And Geo. Steevens.* London: Printed for, and under the direction of, John Bell, 1788.

uncertain future that raises the sympathy from the viewer, who is invited to share the queen's plight.

Figure 18 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Bell's "Literary edition" of 1788

At the turn of the century, the engraver and publisher Edward Harding (1755-1840), also librarian to Queen Charlotte, offered a new approach to Shakespearean illustration. His edition was comprised of thirty-eight parts, sold at 2*s* each, published between 1798 and 1800, and later in duodecimo volumes (Sillars 149). Each play's title-page includes the note 'Ornamented with Plates' in a black-Gothic font, establishing a connection with the Gothic tradition in literature at its heyday in the 1790s. Sillars sees the characters depicted by the engraver William Nelson Gar-

diner (1766-1814) as grotesque, "hampered by weak design and poor reproductive technique" (151). Harding's *Richard II* was released in 1799 in the fifth volume, which also contained *Macbeth* and *King John*, therefore following a different sequence than the Folio. The first illustration is inserted in-between the end of the first act and the beginning of the second act (See figure 19)[36].

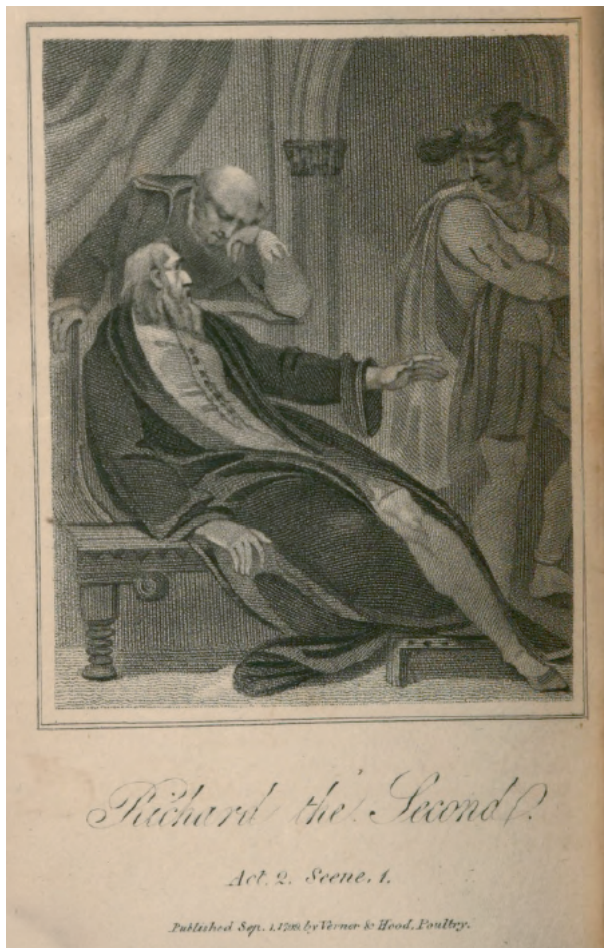

Figure 19 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Harding's 1798-1800 edition

[36] Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616. *The Plays of William Shakspeare*. Harding's edition. London, E. Harding, 1798-99.

It refers to Act II, Scene 1, in which the dying Gaunt gives his nephew his final warning, nostalgically evoking the England from the past. Old Gaunt reclines languidly on an armchair, and a figure stands behind him, most likely York, leaning his elbow on the upholstery of Gaunt's chair. The figure on the right, partially concealed by shadows, is the king. He glances at his dying uncle, but his body is turned away. He is dressed in tight hose, short breeches, a doublet, cape and a hat, which gives him an overall Renaissance style. Behind the figures it is possible to notice one of the two columns that hold an arch, setting the scene within a castle. However, the setting works as mere backdrop for the illustration of the characters as individuals. Despite Richard's central prominence in the play, he is the most obscure figure in this image. The focus is on dying Gaunt, the father of Bolingbroke. In contrast, Richard is depicted in a childish and stubborn posture, disregarding his uncle's suffering. Given this image, the viewer most likely turns his compassion towards Gaunt – and, consequently, Bolingbroke – and away from the king.

The second illustration is interleaved within Act III, Scene 4. It portrays the queen, accompanied by ladies in waiting, listening to the gardeners' conversation (See figure 20).[37] Different from the eighteenth-century-style queen from Bell's edition, Harding's queen wears clothes that are associated with a medieval tradition: a floor-length tunic with a high collar at the back, covered with a cape with loose sleeves, pointy shoes, and her hair is fastened in a coronet braid. She stands in front of a thick pillar, looking at the blurred gardeners in the back. The queen and her reaction to the gardeners' conversation are the focus of this image. Her face is the only one visible to the viewer, and it demonstrates a fierce expression. While Burney's queen displays a calm inner meditation, Gardiner's is in a tense position, attentive, perhaps thinking of a way to help her husband. The former combines a passive romantic femininity with an eighteenth-century style, whereas the latter emphasises the medieval context and female agency.

[37] Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616. *The Plays of William Shakspeare*. Harding's edition. London, E. Harding, 1798-99.

Figure 20 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Harding's 1798-1800 edition

Finally, the third illustration by Gardiner depicts the death of the king, inserted at the end of Act V, Scene V (See figure 21).[38] Richard agonises in pain, leaning on a stool as if falling to the ground. He wears white, while his assaulters, concealed in the background, wear dark clothes. One man with the spear that fatally wounded the king has his head down, as if in regret, his left hand hides his face.

[38] Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616. *The Plays of William Shakspeare*. Harding's edition. London, E. Harding, 1798-99.

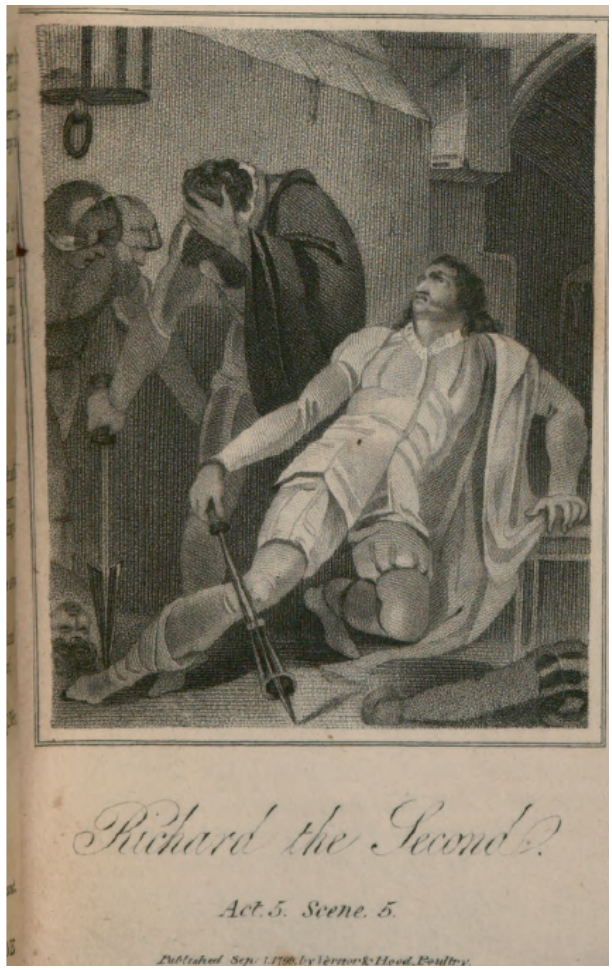

Figure 21 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Harding's 1798-1800 edition

Richard is featured with loose long hair and a beard, and the small dark wound on his body contrasts with the lightness of his clothes. The scene conveys a tragic feeling of irreversibility and regret. This is the first occasion since Boitard's 1709 engraving in which the king's death is portrayed. Unlike Boitard, however, Gardiner does not focus on the brutality of the attack, but rather on the poignancy of Richard's death – a moment of sentiment and sensibility. The Richard from the third illustration awakens in the viewer a completely different feeling from the first illustration, in which the king shuns from Gaunt's agony. Now it is himself who is in agony, exposing his human mortality, symbolised by the dark stain on his clothes.

Boitard's engraving illustrates the dissolution of the monarch's 'body natural' as it succumbs to death. Although arguably lacking in technique, the depiction of Richard's almost lifeless face and the intense suffering from the killer hiding his face creates an image infused with the consequences of betrayal, reallocating the viewer's sympathies towards Richard as the play draws to an end. As we have seen, Tonson and Bell's editions favoured images of Bolingbroke, even though he can be considered the antagonist of the play, since the text is, of course, named after Richard. Hanmer, in his turn, manifested a keener interest in historical authenticity, emphasising the setting in the medieval combat. But, he also favoured the Duke of Hereford, choosing to depict a moment of Richard's fickleness contrasted with Bolingbroke's knightly aura of honour. It is only with Harding, in the very beginning of the nineteenth century, that the king receives more attention.

4.1.2 The Boydell Shakespeare Gallery and the National Project of Historical Painting

Another late-eighteenth-century project to materialise Shakespeare's characters, and which is worth examining as it paved the way for understanding Shakespeare visually at the turn of the century, was the iconic Boydell Shakespeare Gallery, which opened in 1789 at the Pall Mall. It initially exhibited 34 paintings of Shakespeare's works, and more were added each spring, resulting in a total of 167 canvases by 33 artists (Altick 43). The paintings were later adapted into engravings that composed two edited volumes with a hundred prints each. A new edition of the plays was especially commissioned to accompany the engravings. According to Sillars, the serial parts began to be advertised in 1791, but the engravings began to appear in print only in 1794. The whole *Collection of Prints* was published in its complete form in 1802 (181).

Sillars writes about the significance of Boydell's large-scale project in establishing a connection between Shakespeare and the Picturesque. There was an increasing focus on the portrayal of emotions, in keeping with the aesthetics of the time. In the 1789 Preface to *The Pictures in the Shakespeare Gallery Pall-Mall*, a description of the paintings to be displayed at the exhibit, Boydell writes that "to advance that art [of historical painting] towards maturity, and establish an *English School of Historical Painting*, was the great object of the present design" (iii), associating Shakespeare's name with the tradition of painting scenes of history on canvas. Furthermore, Boydell wanted to foster the contribution of English artists

to the engraving business, until then dominated by France. He claims that the best English painters had been formerly engaged in "painting Portraits of those who, in less than half a century, will be lost in oblivion" (v). Therefore, Boydell committed to employing those he considered to be the best English artists of his age to contribute to the dissemination of historical painting in the country. He believed it to be "an undertaking where the national honour, the advancement of the Arts, and their [the artists'] own advantage, are equally concerned" (Boydell vi). It was thus a national project to promote England in the European artistic sphere. It is no wonder that the subject matter chosen for such a project was the work of the national poet, although Boydell admits that "it must not, then, be expected, that the art of the Painter can ever equal the sublimity of our Poet" (vi). Boydell's approach to the Shakespearean text parallels Hazlitt's: they both believed that neither performance nor visual representation of Shakespeare could parallel the 'sublimity' of the poet's language – this could only be fully appreciated with our mind's eyes.

Figure 22 - A printed reproduction of Brown's painting of the deposition scene in *Richard II* for the Boydell Gallery

Boydell commissioned two paintings to illustrate Shakespeare's *Richard II*. The first, painted by Mather Brown (1761-1831), depicts Act IV, Scene 1 – the deposition scene (See figure 22).[39] Brown is the first person to illustrate the most politically charged scene of the play, choosing a moment of loss and weakness in the aftermath of the French Revolution, perhaps a reminder of the fragility of monarchy. Bolingbroke takes the centre of the image, all dressed in light clothes, which distinguishes him from the other persons in the frame. What is different in Bolingbroke's depiction is that he wears a chaperon on his head (and not a hat with feathers), which is in accordance with the oil painting by an unknown artist from the turn of the seventeenth century, which was likely available during Brown's lifetime.[40] Brown demonstrates a stricter concern with historical authenticity, dressing the lords around Henry and Richard in medieval garments or armour. Henry is placed standing in front of Richard's throne, identified by the 'R' embroidered on the flag and on the panel over the throne. The new king stands in a position of authority with the hand outstretched to receive the crown from a submissive Richard. The repetition of the 'R' in the image reinforces that Henry has taken the former monarch's place, a visual representation of Bolingbroke's victory. The throne room features a large window framed by columns supporting an arch. Through the window it is possible to see an extensive field on the outside, as well as soldiers, riders, and a church with a cross on the tower and a round stained-glass window. The clouds are dark in the sky, mirroring the political conflict within. The large-scale canvas allowed Brown to explore both characters and setting – including the landscape outside of the castle. There is an astounding amount of detail (in texture, clothing, decoration, facial expressions, amongst others), but the focus is undoubtedly on the glory of Bolingbroke's victory. He is the only figure who has space around him, which distinguishes him from the people in the crowd. Furthermore, all faces are turned to him, with the exception of one old man in the bottom left corner, probably the Bishop of Carlisle, the only one who remains against the usurpation of the crown and against the defiance of Richard's divine claim to the throne. Brown's *ensemble* is a combination of pageantry and feeling.

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[39] Ayling, Stephen, Josiah Boydell, and John Boydell. *The Shakespeare Gallery: a Reproduction In Commemoration of the Tercentenary Anniversary of the Poet's Birth*. London: L. Booth, 1864.

[40] King Henry IV by Unknown artist. Oil on panel, late 16th or early 17th century. 23 1/8 in. x 18 in. (587 mm x 457 mm). Purchased in 1870. Primary Collection: NPG 310.

The second canvas was painted by James Northcote (1746-1831), and refers to Act V, Scene 2, the moment in which the Duke of York describes to the Duchess Richard and Bolingbroke's entrance in London (See figure 23).[41] In the Shakespearean text, the Duke recounts what he saw, but Northcote recreates the entrance of the new and former kings: Bolingbroke "mounted upon a hot and fiery steed", wearing armour and received with flowers by the infatuated ladies on the right side of the image; and Richard, "his face still combating with tears and smiles, the badges of his grief and patience" (Shakespeare 5.2.32-33), looking down and avoiding people's eyes, riding a brown horse scared by a dog, and shunned by the men on the left side of the picture.

Figure 23 - A reproduction of Northcote's painting of Richard and Bolingbroke's entrance in London for the Boydell Gallery

[41] Ayling, Stephen, Josiah Boydell, and John Boydell. *The Shakespeare Gallery: a Reproduction In Commemoration of the Tercentenary Anniversary of the Poet's Birth*. London: L. Booth, 1864.

The painting represents the public approbation of Bolingbroke as the new king and their satisfaction with Richard's fall. Rosie Dias explains that, although historical painting was still dependent on objectivity and authenticity, Northcote's aesthetics allowed a fusion with imaginative literature, creating "a vivid and affecting narrative which speaks to the heart" (123–24). Historical painting should not be exclusively political or didactic, but should convey emotions, "speak[ing] to the heart as well as the eye" (Dias 124). In this way, Northcote's approach to art parallels Hazlitt's and Keats's ideas against the didacticism of art, and in favour of an artistic experience that moves the reader, observer or spectator.

Hazlitt recorded some of his conversations with the artist Northcote, over 80 years old at the time, published in *Conversations of James Northcote* (1830). In one of these talks, the two discuss the painting of portraits and history. Northcote affirmed that there is one thing that connects the two art genres: conveying expression. Hazlitt transcribes Northcote's thoughts: "The great point is to catch the prevailing look and character: if you are a master of this, you can make almost what use of it you please. If a portrait has force, it will do for history; and if history is well painted, it will do for portrait" (Hazlitt and Northcote 18). What was important for Northcote was to capture the character's expression while engaged in action. However, that is not an easy task, since "it is not enough that it [the action] is seen, unless it is at the same time *felt*" (Hazlitt and Northcote 19). Northcote argued that there is no story without expression. Hazlitt then connects the task of the artist in conveying feeling through expression with the role of the actor, making a distinction between good and bad acting: "That is, between face-making or mouthing and genuine passion? To give the last, an actor must possess the highest truth of imagination, and must undergo an entire revolution of feeling" (20–21). Natural sensibility was required from the artist, such as Northcote, to paint the instances of emotion on canvas, and from the actor, such as Edmund Kean, to embody feelings on stage.

Dias associates Northcote's preoccupation with the feelings excited by the paintings with the 'picturesque', a culture of sensibility and passion. She identifies the painter's predilection for English history paintings, especially from the fifteenth century, as offering picturesque opportunities: "for Northcote, the 'picturesque' qualities of the era do not merely reside in the profusion of armoury and horses it allows the artist to deploy but, rather, in the numerous 'tragic' and 'sad' episodes it encompasses" (Dias 124). It is the feeling evoked by the events in the play that fascinated the artist. Conversing with Hazlitt, Northcote said that the art of the

painter "depends on seizing the nicest inflections of feeling and the most evanescent shades of beauty" (Hazlitt and Northcote 163), emphasising the connection between art and emotion. The medieval past is thus recreated not merely as a background for historical action but mainly as a means to convey emotion. Brown chose to depict the tragic scene of a king's de-coronation while Northcote painted the sad entrance of the vanquished Richard next to the winning opponent, both instances of intense pathos in the Shakespearean play, highlighted by the profusion of details and facial expression on the canvases.

4.1.3 1805-1815

After the success of the Boydell Gallery, Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), another painter employed in Boydell's project, was engaged by the publisher Alexander Chalmers to illustrate a new edition of Shakespeare's works in ten volumes, launched in 1805. According to Sillars, "Fuseli turned to advantage the unusually elongated format of the edition by adapting the mannerist emphases of his figure painting and exploiting the space to produce a series of situations of conflict, enclosure or concentration" (157). After painting in large scale for the Gallery, working with a limited space to fit the paper could be challenging for the artist. However, he took advantage of the minute space by concentrating on detailed parts instead of offering a general depiction of the whole. For *Richard II*, Fuseli chose to depict Richard in prison at Pomfret Castle, alone with his thoughts (See figure 24).[42] This scene had been illustrated before, but with different points of attention: Boitard's 1709 engraving shows the assault on Richard, and Gardiner at the end of the century portrayed the former king's death. Fuseli, however, chose a moment of intimate reflection of the deposed king, on his own, and waiting for his fate to be decided by others.

[42] Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616, Henry Fusell, and George Steevens. *The Plays of William Shakespeare: Accurately Printed From the Text of the Corrected Copy Left by George Steevens: With a Series of Engravings, From Original Designs of Henry Fusell, And a Selection of Explanatory And Historical Notes*. London: Printed for F.C. and J. Rivington [etc.], 1805.

Figure 24 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Chalmers' 1805 edition

The print refers to a non-existent Scene 5 of Act IV; it is, in fact, Scene 5 of Act V. The words from Shakespeare's text that accompany the image are the following: "I wasted time and now doth time waste me. For now hath time made me his numbering clock" (5.5.48-49). Richard is depicted in a thoughtful position, in front of an open book, sitting on a chair with crossed legs, the left elbow touching his knee, and the left hand holding his chin. The hat with a decorative feather gives him a noble look, emphasised by the cape that hangs from his shoulders onto his knees. In a way, Fuseli makes Richard a proto-Hamlet. He looks at a clock, managed by an angel of death, who has control of one of the clock pointers. The skulled angel stares back at Richard, who, the reader knows, is at this moment thinking about how he no longer has control of his life time. The death creature seems to be on the verge of changing the time on Richard's clock, foreshadowing his death in the same scene. Through the barred window, it is possible to see the face of a man in helmet, who looks inside to check on the prisoner. It is most likely Sir Exton who arrives to commit the murder, stopping Richard's clock forever. The way Fuseli has captured the puissance of this moment in this compressed frame is remarkable. The posture of King Richard resembles more a philosopher in contemplation than a medieval English monarch – perhaps a way to highlight the tragedy of Richard's journey. Nonetheless, it confers a different approach to the character of Richard, depicting the inevitability of his fate, re-evaluating his role as a villain. Fuseli takes to another level the attention to Richard's tragic suffering initiated by Gardiner.

Thomas Tegg's (1776-1845) *The Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare*, published in twelve volumes from 1812 to 1815, was the last project to contribute to the visual imagination of Shakespeare's characters before Edmund Kean's premiere in 1815. *Richard II* features in the sixth volume, along with parts 1 and 2 of *Henry IV*, published in 1813. It was therefore available for Kean's theatrical conceptualisation of the play.

Richard II opens the volume with two illustrations, designed by John Thurston (1774-1822) and engraved by Richard Rhodes (1766-1838). The first is a vignette for the play, showing Bolingbroke clad in armour being led to exile by his old father (See figure 25).[43]

[43] Thurston, John, 1774-1822, and Richard Rhodes. *Illustratio[ns] of Shakspeare.* [London,: T. Tegg, printed by Dixon & co., 1812-1817.

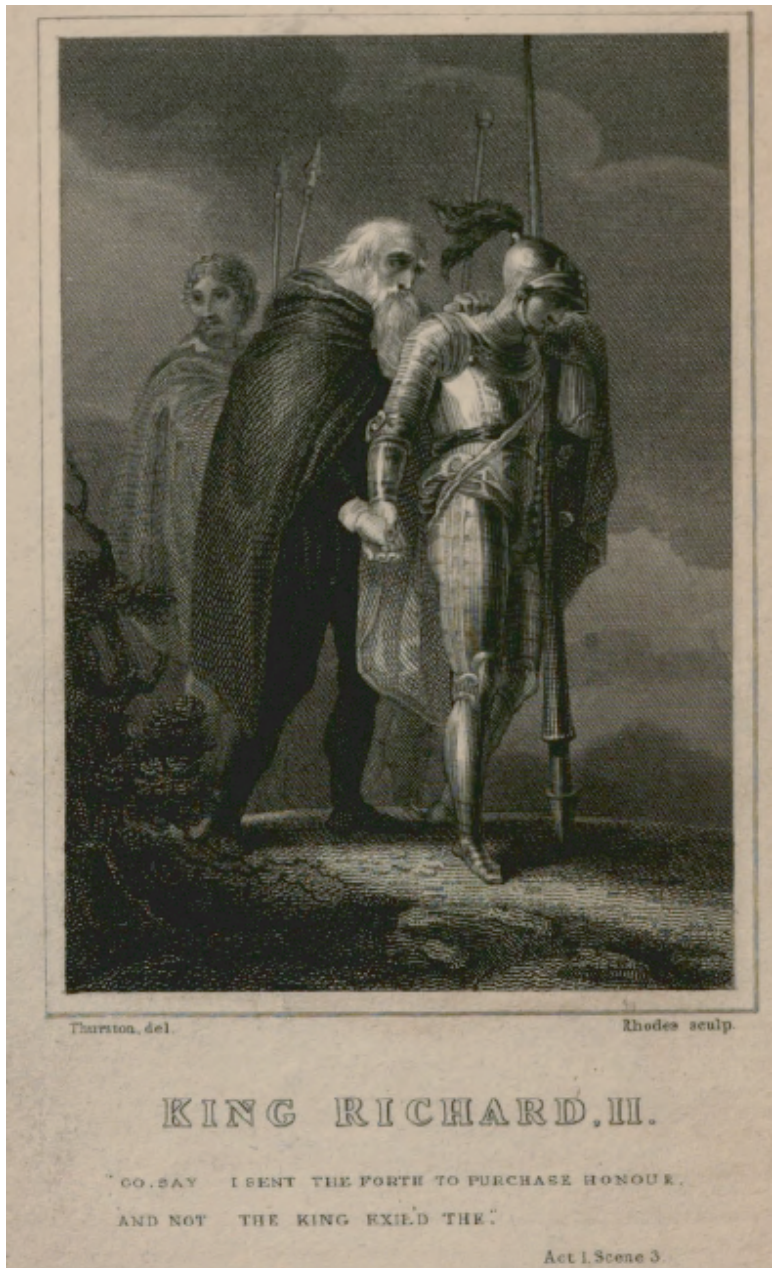

Figure 25 - Title-page of *Richard II* in Tegg's 1812-1815 edition

Gaunt leans on his son and holds his right hand, demonstrating suffering, while Bolingbroke looks down. The latter's armour is covered by a surcoat, which emphasises his nobility. In addition, he wears a helmet adorned with a feather, and carries a lance. They are both followed by a guard, who looks away, as if concerned with the suffering he is witnessing. The vignette is accompanied by a quote from Act I, Scene 3: "Go. Say I sent thee forth to purchase honour. And not the king exil'd thee" (1.3.281-282). It is Gaunt's solace to Bolingbroke, telling him to look at banishment not as an order from the king, but as a way to seek adventure and honour. The connection between Bolingbroke and the medieval knight's code of honour is clear in this depiction. Furthermore, Gaunt's suffering emphasises the king's injustice in sentencing Bolingbroke. The reader would recognise such feelings, identifying with Henry's plea against Richard. It is thus a shift from Gardiner's second engraving and Fuseli's illustration, who had re-evaluated Richard's role as the villain. The medieval imagery is emphasised by Bolingbroke's armoury, whose obedience to royal authority and fortitude to accept his sentence of exile romanticises the figure of the medieval knight.

The other illustration is part of the volume's title-page. The image has a Gothic atmosphere, depicting the queen, wearing a long gown, a cape, a crown and loose hair, as she approaches the old gardener, who is tending a tree (See figure 26).[44] The atmosphere is sombre, and the vegetation is on the verge of engulfing the characters in darkness. The image is full of foreboding as it anticipates the fall of Richard, foretold by the gardener. It poses a stark contrast to Gravelot's depiction of the garden scene in Theobald's edition from over a century before. Gravelot's portrayal of the young gardener in the shadows and the dark tree branches on the right side of the image convey an ominous feeling. However, the unaffected manner of the queen and her ladies dressed in rococo style clothes conveys a lightness to the ensemble. Thurston's, on the other hand, enhances the darkness of the vegetation, ages the gardener, who looks even scared of the queen's approach, and frames the image within a circular shape, conferring an oppressive feeling to the reader.

[44] Thurston, John, 1774-1822, and Richard Rhodes. *Illustratio[ns] of Shakspeare.* [London,: T. Tegg, printed by Dixon & co., 1812-1817.

Figure 26 - Title-page of Tegg's 1812-1815 edition

Thurston adds a Gothic sombre tone to Shakespeare's garden scene, reminiscent of the symbolism present in late-eighteenth-century Gothic fiction. This literary genre reimagined the medieval past as a way to prompt emotions, mainly that of fear, mystery and terror. Chandler refers to Radcliffe's *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794) as an example of the use of medieval imagery to explore "the irrational terrors of the mind" (21). The aforementioned Catherine Morland, Austen's protagonist in *Northanger Abbey* and a reader of Radcliffe's novel, exemplifies such

irrational terrors of the mind with her fanciful fears concerning the death of Mr. Tilney's wife. In *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, the heroine Emily leaves the banks of the Garonne for an ancient Italian castle, where her perception of the medieval surroundings mirrors her state of apprehension. The ruins, the castle tower and the oldness of the Alps intensify her fearful meditations. Radcliffe's fiction thus evokes the Middle Ages not in an attempt to reconstruct the historical past, but as a locus that stimulates feeling. The connection of the medieval past with the enhancement of feeling resides at the core of medievalism at the turn of the eighteenth century. This medieval ideal affects the way with which Shakespeare's medieval Richard II was visualised at the time – on print and on stage, as has been demonstrated by the example of Tegg's edition above, and as I will argue in Chapter 5 in relation to Edmund Kean's production of the play at Drury Lane in 1815.

4.1.4 1838-1857

After Thurston's illustrations for Tegg's *The Dramatic Works of William Shakespeare*, the early Victorian period added new interpretative layers to the materialisation of Shakespeare's characters and medieval past in print. The examples in the previous section indicate that the past and its exoticness stimulate an emotional reaction from the observer. As the nineteenth century unfolded, the attention shifted from stimulating feelings towards a stronger didactic preoccupation with the role of art as instruction. According to Stuart Sillars, there were two main illustrated editions of Shakespeare in the early-Victorian period prior to William Charles Macready's production of *Richard II* at Haymarket Theatre in 1850, and Charles Kean's at the Princess's Theatre in 1857. The first one was by Charles Knight (1791-1873), followed by Barry Cornwall[45] (1787-1874). These two works were thus available material for Macready and Kean in their visual reinterpretation of Shakespeare's *Richard II*. Knight's and Cornwall's editions were both published in a serialised manner, and later collected in an individual edition. Sillars draws attention to the cheapness of the serialised editions of the plays, which could imply that their target audience were not experienced readers or frequent spectators of Shakespeare, but rather an audience approaching it for the first time (253). In this way, the illustrations in

[45] The pseudonym of the poet Bryan Waller Procter, who had written one of Edmund Kean's first biographies, *The Life of Edmund Kean* (1835).

these editions had an essential role in shaping the readers' experience and mental visualisation of the plays and its characters. According to Sillars, the various (illustrated and not-illustrated) Victorian editions of Shakespeare had specific aims that varied from a concern with the moral and religious education of its readers to offering a literary entertainment as an alternative for drinking and other types of 'vulgar' diversion. The idea of literature and art as a means to educate oneself reflected "the Victorian ethos of social mobility through self-improvement" (Sillars 254). What Shakespeare's history plays could offer the Victorian reader or theatregoer was the possibility not only to learn about their nation's history through page or stage, but also to foster an awareness of their own communal past.

Knight's *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere* [sic], also commonly known as the *Pictorial Shakespeare*, was published in fifty-six monthly instalments from 1838 to 1843. It was later published in seven volumes with a supplementary eighth book on the life of Shakespeare. Knight, a member of the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge (SDUK), had a clear view regarding the objective of his publications. He understood them as a means to circulate useful knowledge to a wider public, where the comprehension of the written text was aided by the addition of illustrations. The *Pictorial Bible* (1836), the *Pictorial History of England* (1837-44) and *London Pictorially Illustrated* (1841-44), for instance, "all display Knight's concern with Christian education coupled with self-advancement" (Sillars 254). For the *Pictorial Shakespeare*, Knight included images and descriptions of the historical context of the events in each play, even in plays set in no specific time, such as the comedies. However, in addition to being simply a tool for the education of history, Knight's images, especially the ones in the frontispieces, also offered an imaginative interpretation of the play in question (Sillars 254), proposing a combination of history and fantasy.

In Knight's autobiography *Passages of a Working Life During Half a Century with a Prelude of Early Reminiscences*, originally published in 1864-5, he reflects on the illustrations for Shakespeare's editions published in the previous century, before his own project. He had been looking at these artistic materials as inspiration to create his own pictorial edition of Shakespeare since 1837, which gave him a grounded knowledge on the subject. He concludes that "there were embellishments to various editions from the time of Rowe, chiefly of a theatrical character, and, for the most part, thoroughly *unnatural*"[46] (*Passages of a Working Life* 283–84). As we have

[46] My emphasis.

seen, Rowe's was the first illustrated edition of Shakespeare's plays in England, with the images designed by the French artist Boitard. They have little concern with historical authenticity and depict the characters in rather static and artificial poses, and Knight perceived the unnaturalness of the ensemble in these early illustrations. Furthermore, Knight was not altogether positive about the Boydell Gallery project and its "grand historical pictures" either: they "were not in a very much higher taste [than Rowe's], furnishing a remarkable example of how painters of the highest rank in their day had contrived to make the characters of Shakspere [sic] little more than vehicles for the display of false costume" (*Passages of a Working Life* 284). The fact that the paintings lacked historical plausibility bothered Knight, who wished to represent "the Realities upon which the imagination of the poet must have rested" (Knight, *Passages of a Working Life* 284), placing great emphasis on historical authenticity in his *Pictorial Shakespeare*.

Knight's aim was to take into account "the localities of the various scenes, whether English or foreign; the portraits of the real personages of the historical plays; the objects of natural history, so constantly occurring; accurate costume in all its rich variety" (Knight, *Passages of a Working Life* 284). Knight recounts how he had borrowed the notebook of the antiquarian Frederick William Fairholt (1814-1866), where its owner had written down a list of archaeological subjects. With the help of this list, Knight got in contact with Ambrose Poynter (1796-1866), one of the founding members of the Institute of British Architects, who provided Knight with "a series of the most beautiful architectural drawings, which imparted a character of truthfulness to many scenes, which upon the stage had in general been merely fanciful creations of the painter" (Knight, *Passages of a Working Life* 284). It is interesting how Knight compares the truthfulness of setting on the illustrated page with the stage, the latter being hitherto the result of an artist's imagination and less bound to the restrictions of reality. The artist William Harvey (1796-1866) was in charge of producing the frontispieces, which, "embodying the realities of costume and other accessaries [sic], would have enough of an imaginative character to render them pleasing" (Knight, *Passages of a Working Life* 284–85). Knight's project thus differs from his predecessors in that he makes explicit his concern to offer the reader a truthful representation of reality, especially with the history plays, but without neglecting the reader's enjoyment.

The plays in Knight's *Pictorial Shakespeare* are supported by extra material and critical texts, including an 'Introductory Notice' with information concerning the time period, setting and costume, a list of characters, and glossarial and textual

notes. According to Sillars, "the swerve towards the annotative and explanatory, coupled with the breaking of the play's continuity, defines the reading experience as more analytic and historicist than empathetic, an approach quite in accord with the objectives of Knight's other publications" (256). In this manner, the extra scholarly information, placed in-between acts, interrupts the reader's aesthetic engagement with the text. In fact, it would constantly remind the reader that they are reading an annotated edition of the play, breaking the illusion of immersion within the medieval world of *Richard II*, for instance. This textual interruption would not happen on stage, where the action is not interwoven with historical explanation or critical commentary.

Another consequence of the scholarly material added to Knight's edition is the inevitable didacticism of the art. As we have seen in the previous chapter, William Hazlitt and John Keats were strong opposers of a didactic and moralising approach to art. Fuseli's paintings for the Boydell Gallery also exemplify the distaste for exclusively political or didactic art, in favour of an art that would awaken feelings in the beholder. It is evident then that as the nineteenth century unfolds, there is an increasing interest in historical accuracy and a disdain for exaggeration and artificiality in the display of emotions. Nonetheless, the reader's or playgoer's aesthetic experience is not fully overlooked, as the extract from Knight's autobiography mentioned above demonstrates.

The first illustration in Knight's *Richard II* is placed on the frontispiece, where Sillars identifies the more imaginative visual representation of each play, while the other in-text illustrations have a more practical and didactic function. There are in total thirty-three illustrations decorating and commenting Shakespeare's *Richard II*, a much more substantial number than in the previous illustrated editions. The frontispiece, designed by Ebenezer Landells (1808-1860), combines two significant moments in the play (See figure 27)[47]: in the background, there is a depiction of the interior of Westminster Abbey with its Gothic arches and stained glass window, where Richard is seen in a humble position, bowing to Bolingbroke, who stands in front of the throne, and yielding the crown to the usurper. Richard is dressed in simple white clothes, symbolising his role as the sacrificial victim, while Bolingbroke wears dark garments, a possible allusion to the distinction between good and evil. In the forefront, Richard's dead body lies on the ground, dressed in royal

[47] Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616, E. H. (Edward H.) Thomson, and Charles Knight. *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere*. London: Charles Knight and Co., 1839-1843.

clothes. His head rests on a pillow, and one hand still holds an axe, reminiscent of the deadly encounter with Sir Exton. Bolingbroke kneels beside the former king's body, and he is depicted in the act of closing Richard's eyes and covering his body with a blanket. Next to him, a man looks at the scene with disdain, probably Northumberland or even Exton, since the man carries three weapons: a dagger, a sword and a mace. There is a predella with the title of the play *King Richard II*, dividing the two scenes. However, the predella is also part of the scenes, since the characters in the foreground conceal part of the title, interweaving the text on the page with the historical events, emphasising the combination of fact and fiction. Sillars points out that the pairing of these two events in the play represent a moment of duality at the end of the final act, when Bolingbroke regrets his actions at the sight of the brutality of Richard's death: it is "a graphic statement of a moral issue crucial to the play" (Sillars 265). The depiction of Richard as Bolingbroke's victim is emphasised by the above-mentioned opposition between light and dark, and, as Sillars notices, by the dead monarch's appearance – with long hair and beard – that resembles an image of Christ (267). The association of Richard with Jesus Christ elevates him to a position of martyr, as someone who wrongly suffered at the hand of others and whose sacrifice culminates with death.

The frontispiece is followed by an 'Introductory Notice', in which the editor writes about the chronology of the text, accompanied by an illustration of knights entering a list during a medieval tournament. This image is reminiscent of Dugdale's print, which served as foundation for Hayman's illustration for Hanmer's 1744 edition. Interestingly, Knight emphasises in the introductory text that the deposition scene in the play was only printed in 1608, making it clear to his readers that "all that part of the fourth Act in which Richard is introduced to make the surrender of his crown, comprising 152 lines, was never printed in the age of Elizabeth" (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 81). In this manner, Knight calls his readers' attention to the pre-1608 omission in print of this politically charged scene, inviting them to consider the reasons for this absence. Knight's readers would without a doubt peruse the 152 lines indicated by the editor with extra attention and curiosity.

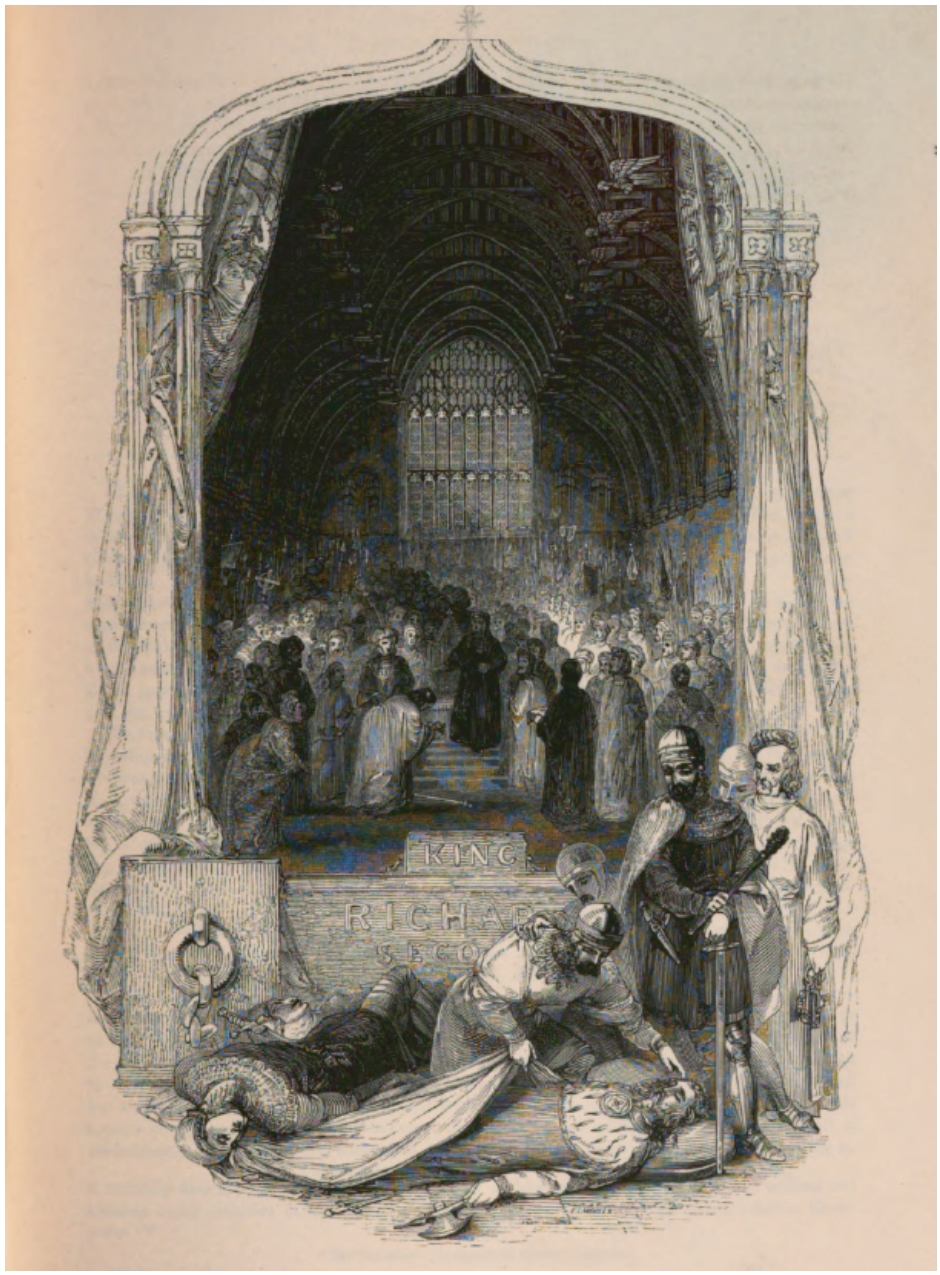

Figure 27 - Title-page for *Richard II* in Knight's Pictorial Shakespeare

Further in the Introductory Notice, Knight writes an account of the credibility of the representation of setting and costume in his edition. As we have seen, the architect Poynter was hired to make historical drawings of the architecture of the period, which were used to support the illustration of the edition. For instance, for Act I Poynter drew a palace that, although imaginary, "presents an example of the architectural style of the period. The interior is represented as tapestried, with the well-known cognizances of Richard II, the sun and the white hart" (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 85) (See figure 28). Interestingly, the illustrations in the *Pictorial Shakespeare* commonly depict the scene from a distance, which resembles the perspective the audience would have of the theatre stage.

Figure 28 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Knight's Pictorial Shakespeare

The attention given to the symbol of the white hart, Richard II's personal badge, is also seen in Richard's robes. According to Arthur Charles Fox-Davies, "although some have traced this badge from the white hind used as a badge by Joan, the Fair Maid of Kent, the mother of Richard II., it is probably a device punning upon his name, 'Rich-hart.'" (467). The colour of the hart evokes Richard's innocence and purity, crowned king when just a child at the age of ten. Furthermore, the white hart also elicits the image of the white stag, traditionally associated with Christ. In this manner, Richard's display of himself, connecting his royal persona with the symbolism of the white hart, creates an idealised perception of kingship, as the virtuous saviour.

Knight explains that he went through a process of historical reconstruction for the depiction of Westminster in Act IV in the attempt to depict the palace as it must have looked at the end of Richard's reign. He took John Thomas Smith's *Antiquities of Westminster* (1807) as historical source (See figure 29). The effort with which Knight and his companions strove to represent reality on print demonstrates the importance the publisher placed on historical authenticity grounded on documentary evidence. The *Pictorial Shakespeare* was not an edition for pure entertainment, but with the aim of offering knowledge to its reader.

Figure 29 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Knight's Pictorial Shakespeare

The depiction of costume was also thoroughly researched. Knight explains that the illustrations for the lists at Coventry in Act I, for the meeting of Richard and Bolingbroke in Act III, and for the entry of Richard and Bolingbroke in London in Act V, "are designed with a strict adherence to the costume of the period" (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 85). The design was made by Robert William Buss (1804-1875), famous for the unfinished watercolour *Dickens' Dream* (1875). The costume study was based on authorial evidence, such as Richard's portraits and effigies, and medieval illuminated manuscripts and anecdotes that illustrate "the dress and armour of the people at large" (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 86). Furthermore, the artist and editor perused the descriptions of clothing in other sources, such as Chaucer's poems, Froissart's chronicles and the French document *Metrical History of the Deposition of Richard II*, written by Jean Creton (1386-1420), a member of the French court of Charles VI who had visited England during the time of Richard's reign and who could thus provide first-hand description of the clothing style of the time. Knight explains that "the foppery of dress" was prevalent during Richard's reign, something that was "the universal theme of satire and reprobation amongst the poets and historians of the day" (*The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 86), who condemned such vanity. For instance, Richard owned a coat adorned with precious stones that was estimated at thirty thousand marks (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 86). Richard's high expenses to support his narcissism, illustrated in these images, is one of the reasons that led the public to rise against their monarch.

Each act in the *Pictorial Shakespeare* is followed by the section 'Historical Illustrations', which explain in detail the historical events depicted in the Shakespearean drama, providing a lot of contextual information to the reader. After Act I, for instance, there is general information about the origins of a trial by combat, an illustration of the back and front of one golden noble,[48] an illustration of the Savoy Palace – inherited by John of Gaunt through marriage, an illustration of the Duchess of Gloucester in the habit of a nun of Barking Abbey,[49] an explanation of the genealogy of the seven sons of Edward III, amongst other curiosities and relevant information. The author even suggests a comparison between the description of Mowbray's sins with the fall of the guilty Templar without a blow in Scott's

[48] The coin in use at the time of Richard's reign.

[49] This is the abbey where the Duchess retired after her husband's death.

Ivanhoe (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 110). This demonstrates that the period's imagination concerning the Middle Ages was still highly affected by Scott's medievalism, even though *Ivanhoe* had been published almost twenty years before the the first volume of Knight's *Pictorial Shakespeare*.

Succeeding the general illustrations, there is a more academic section of historical illustrations, which contains, for instance, a copy of Richard II's portrait in the Jerusalem Chamber, a portrait of the Duke of York, and an illumination of Richard in full armour as printed in the *Metrical History of the Deposition of Richard II*. In addition to the images, there is also a lot of written information. For example, Knight writes about Shakespeare's task as a poet, who followed a different approach to history than his contemporary chroniclers. Knight writes:

> The scenes which this play presents, and the characters which it develops, are historically true to the letter. But what a wonderful vitality does the truth acquire in our poet's hands. The hard and formal abstractions of the old chroniclers – the figures that move about in robes and armours, without presenting to us any distinct notions of their common human qualities, – here shew themselves to us as men like ourselves, – partaking of like passions, and like weaknesses. (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 101)

Knight's words indicate that the editor took Shakespeare's scenes in *Richard II* as "historically true to the letter", although that was not strictly the case. However, this extract also exemplifies how Knight *experienced* the past through Shakespeare. Shakespeare took facts from history chronicles and breathed life into them, making it possible for the reader to connect with the people from the past, knowing that, although living in completely different contexts, they could potentially feel the same emotions. The belief was that the knowledge of a shared element with the past, that is, human feelings, rendered Shakespeare's play more impactful than the words in a history book. Knight expresses his trust in Shakespeare as a medium for education, but, what is more, his trust in Shakespeare as a powerful poet.

It is clear that Knight does not look back at the past with a sense of superiority or disdain, but, rather, curious to understand the people that lived in those days. Knight demonstrates his enthusiasm in investigating "all the gorgeous array of chivalry, as it existed in the age of pageants" (*The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 102), paying close attention to behaviour, clothing, architecture

and human relations. The rich illustration of the opening of Act III, where the king meets Bolingbroke outside Flint Castle, exemplifies the attentive craft of the artist. This is a moment of confrontation between the current king and the contender of the crown in the middle of the play. After this moment, Richard's prospects become darker as Bolingbroke's ambitions imbue him with increasing power. In Shakespeare's text, the king is forced to descend, leaving the castle and joining Bolingbroke outside, a symbol of Richard's loss of power, since it is he who must walk to Henry, and not the other way around – as royal deference would require. The illustration in the *Pictorial Shakespeare* undermines the symbolism of Richard's debasement by depicting a humble Bolingbroke on his knees, bowing to his sovereign, not daring to look him in his eyes (See figure 30).

Figure 30 - Act 3, Scene 1, Knight's *Pictorial Shakespeare*

Shakespeare's text emphasises the falseness of Bolingbroke's deference when Richard states: "Up, cousin, up. Your heart is up, I know, / Thus high at least, although your knee be low" (3.3.193-194). Shakespeare's Richard is aware of Bolingbroke's proud ambitions, whereas the Bolingbroke in Knight's edition shows a more genuine display of courtesy and obedience. Furthermore, Richard's regal clothes, his ermine cape held by a servant, and the crown on his head magnify Richard's majesty.

The encounter takes place in front of a medieval castle with turrets, battlements and a bastion. The two men are surrounded by people watching the scene, including soldiers clad in armours on horses and holding banners. Knight refers to Creton's *Metrical History of the Deposition of Richard II* for archival evidence to depict this scene. In the Historical Illustration section after Act III, Knight writes that, according to Creton, Bolingbroke entered the castle and, perceiving the king at a distance, "bowed very low to the ground; and, as they approached each other, he bowed a second time, with his cap in his hand" (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 127). Therefore, the drawings in Knight's edition do not illustrate Shakespeare's dramatic text, but reconstruct the events of the play in a more 'authentic' way, turning to historical records as authorial support over Shakespeare's dramatisation. Furthermore, Knight's selection of sources and enhancement of Richard's display of majesty indicate his position as favouring Richard, the legitimate holder of the crown, over the usurper Bolingbroke, depicted mainly in submissive or repenting poses.

Knight also adds an illustration of the remains of Flint Castle in 1840 made by G. F. Sargent, with the following message to the reader: "Go to the rude ribs of that ancient castle" (See figure 31). The effect of this engraving is the interweaving of past and present, linking what the reader sees on the page with their own present. Although Flint Castle as Richard and Bolingbroke saw it no longer existed, a nineteenth-century visitor could look at its remains, imagining the past in their minds. Knight encourages the reader to take the aesthetic enjoyment of history beyond the page, encountering its vestiges in the "rude ribs" of Flint Castle. In a similar manner to the two figures observing Bramber Castle in Lambert's 1782 watercolour (See figure 4), as I explain in Chapter 2, the reader of Knight's edition is invited to look beyond the fragmented stones of Flint Castle in 1840, using their imagination to reconstruct it to its fourteenth-century grandeur, and peopling it with Shakespeare's characters.

Figure 31 - Remains of Flint Castle (1840), *Pictorial Shakespeare*

After the encounter between Richard and Bolingbroke in Act III, the old and the new king return to London, although Shakespeare does not dramatise their entrance into the city. Knight's edition supplies the reader with a visual representation of York's words, depicted from quite a curious angle (See figure 32). The parade is viewed from within a wooden structure, where a few other people stand to watch the procession – the ones on the left cheering, while the woman on the right side cries, supported by her husband. There are more of similar wooden houses on the other side of the street, also filled with people watching the event. In this perspective, the viewer could potentially feel as part of the audience looking on at Richard and Bolingbroke.

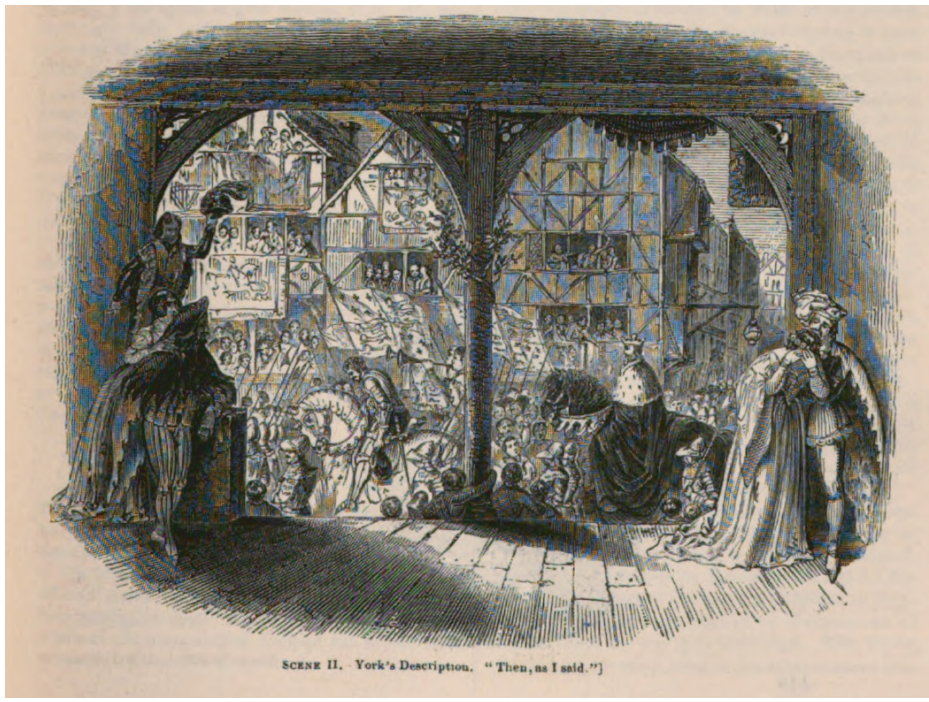

Figure 32 - Act 5, Scene 2, Knight's *Pictorial Shakespeare*

Richard leads the parade, mounted on a white horse, but his head is down in embarrassment and humiliation. Bolingbroke follows in the rear on a dark horse, dressed in the royal ermine and wearing the crown. The banners carried by knights in the parade display Bolingbroke's coat of arms, not Richard's anymore. This is an interesting example of how Knight goes beyond the Shakespearean text to offer the reader as much truthful information as possible. The choice of a white horse for Richard and a dark one for Bolingbroke is not random (although Northcote had given Richard a dark horse, and Bolingbroke a white one), emphasising the opposition between light and dark as symbolic of the opposition between good and evil. Moreover, Richard's defeat and Bolingbroke's victory are seen from afar, diminishing their power and keeping Richard's humiliation out of the spotlight. Different from Northcote's 1793 painting, Bolingbroke is not received with admiring eyes. Au contraire, the people seem disapproving of or at least indifferent to his triumph.

Knight ends *Richard II* with a 'Supplementary Notice', in which he writes about the state of the play during his time. He writes that the play was generally considered unable to affect the passions of the viewers or to offer historical instruction, but the editor disagrees: "we think it [the play] might somewhat 'affect the passions,' – for 'gorgeous tragedy' hath there put on her 'scepter'd pall,' and if she bring not Terror in her train, Pity, at least, claims the sad story for her own" (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 149). Similar to Hazlitt a few decades earlier, Knight understands Shakespeare's *Richard II* as a play that affects the reader by inciting pity. He affirms that Richard is not a character of "passive fortitude", as Samuel Johnson had described him, but a character of "passionate weakness", hence the public's sympathy for the monarch's fall (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 152). The illustrations compiled in *The Pictorial Shakespeare* clearly depict such sympathy for the king.

Furthermore, the editor also believes that the play enlarges the reader's mind, since it discloses "the moral and intellectual strength and weakness of humanity" through "a splendid frame-work of the picturesque and the poetical" (*The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 149). Knight sees didacticism in the play, but framed by beautiful poetry. The reader is "plunged into the midst of the fierce passions and the gorgeous pageantries of the antique time" (*The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 149). The editor does not use the word *medieval*; he merely refers to the past generally as "the antique time". However, the way he describes this time period makes it evident that he envisions the medieval past: "the halls and galleries, where is hung 'armoury of the invincible knights of old'", the spear, the steel, the banners, trumpet sounds, heralds, marshals, and dungeons (*The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 149). These elements are not simply decorations to the story, but they are the setting of human victory or defeat, triumph or mortal rage.

Knight's statement suggests that *Richard II* was not a favourite in the Shakespearean repertoire in the early-Victorian period. In fact, after Edmund Kean's production at Drury Lane in 1815, perhaps fostered by the recent deposition of Napoléon Bonaparte in France (see Chapter 5), *Richard II* was rarely seen on the English stage. There was a revival of Kean's production at Drury Lane on specific occasions: 23 October 1816, 20 April 1818, 8 September 1820, and 21 February 1822; it was performed in benefit of the young actress Clara Fisher (1811-1898) on 1 March 1824 at Drury Lane, and on 12 January 1829 Kean reappeared in the title role at

Covent Garden.[50] After that, the play went to rest, only to be revived by William Charles Macready, who played the title role in December 1850 at Haymarket Theatre, and later by Charles Kean, who played the king in March 1857 at the Princess's Theatre. According to the extensive research done by Janice Norwood, those were the only productions of Shakespeare's *Richard II* at the main theatres in London in the first half of the nineteenth century. The number is very little in comparison to *Richard III*, for example, which was constantly performed in a variety of theatres. In this case, Knight's affirmation of the play not being truly appreciated by the people at his time is reflected on the stage.

Political potency may be one of the reasons for the omission of the play on the London stages. As the Essex Rising has demonstrated, the play could be used to foster certain political ideologies. However, Knight sees Shakespeare's depiction of the Lancaster usurpation of the crown in the dramatic text as politically impartial. According to Knight, Shakespeare is "elevated far above the temporary opinions of his own age, or of succeeding ages. His business is with the universal, and not with a fragment of it. He is, indeed, the poet of a nation in his glowing and genial patriotism, but never the poet of a party" (Knight, *The Pictorial Edition of the Works of Shakspere: Histories* 151). In his ambiguous representations of both Richard and Bolingbroke, the playwright does not take evident sides. However, Knight was aware that the play had been used for certain political purposes, bending Shakespeare's texts towards either a legitimation of the divine right of kings or towards the right to disrupt the hereditariness of the crown if the monarch fails to fulfil his/her obligations. For example, Knight writes that the play had been a success in 1738, during the administration of Prime Minister Robert Walpole (1676-1745), when it was commissioned by the Shakespeare Ladies Club. According to Knight, the play "had an unusual success, principally because it contained many passages which seemed to point to the then supposed corruption of the court" (150). Although Knight exposes the ideological purpose behind the 1738 production of *Richard II*, and despite his acknowledgment that the play had been used to foster certain political ideals, he does not make his own approach explicit. In any case, the illustrations in his edition present a rather optimistic interpretation of Richard, creating sympathy for his suffering, diminishing the force of his defeat by depicting it from afar, and mainly representing Bolingbroke in postures of submission or regret.

[50] This information is retrieved from Janice Norwood's "A reference guide to performances of Shakespeare's plays in nineteenth-century London in *Shakespeare in the Nineteenth Century* (2012), edited by Gail Marshall.

At the very dawn of Victoria's reign in 1838, when the first volume of *The Pictorial Shakespeare* was published, Knight is careful not to challenge the hereditary principle of royal succession, since Victoria inherits the crown after the death of her uncle William IV (1765-1837), who died without any legitimate children – although he had fathered ten illegitimate children by the actress Dorothea Jordan (1761-1816), his open mistress and herself a Shakespearean actress, having played remarkable roles such as Ophelia, Imogen and Viola.

Following a different approach to Knight's, Barry Cornwall edited his *Illustrated Shakespeare*, published in serial parts between 1838 and 1840, simultaneously to Knight's edition.[51] The artist assigned for designing the illustrations was Kenny Meadows (1790-1874), who offered an innovative graphic representation of Shakespeare, no doubt influenced by his career as a caricaturist. He contributed drawings to the weekly magazine *Punch*, and illustrated the project *Heads of the People* (1840), which contained caricatures of English types and character sketches written by Douglas Jerrold (1803-1857), William Makepeace Thackeray (1811-1863) and Leigh Hunt (1784-1859).[52] Furthermore, Meadows also had experience in historical drawing, having contributed with illustrations for James Robinson Planché's (1796-1880) study on Shakespeare's historical costumes, published in 1843. I will return to Planché in Chapter 7 when I briefly discuss his production of *King John* at Covent Garden in 1823, which is known for starting the preoccupation with historical accuracy on stage, and to explain his participation in the scene of popular entertainment in London.

Whereas Knight's edition focuses on setting and explicatory images, Meadows uses techniques of grotesque exaggeration to convey a focus on character (Sillars 273). This approach to visually interpreting Shakespeare is embedded within a Gothic representation of the grotesque, at times tending to bizarre exaggeration. His images are also emblematic, offering a myriad of possible meanings through symbols. According to Sillars, Meadows "is the maverick voice of violent, corrosive sensuality, developing in the eccentricity of his symbolic images an extreme extension of the half-comic, half-satiric grotesquerie fashionable in the illustrations

[51] *The Works of Shakspere revised from the best authorities with a memoir, and essay on his genius, by Barry Cornwall.* London: R. Tyas, 1843.

[52] Some of the character types include "the dress-maker", "the 'lion' of a party", "the old housekeeper", "the theatrical manager" and "the factory child". Meadows' drawings are sharp and critical, highlighting the character's flaws in a satirical manner.

of novels by Dickens and Harrison Ainsworth" (Sillars 287–88). Meadows had, for instance, designed some of the illustrations for Dickens' *The Life and Adventures of Nicholas Nickleby*, which are also filled with symbolic images.

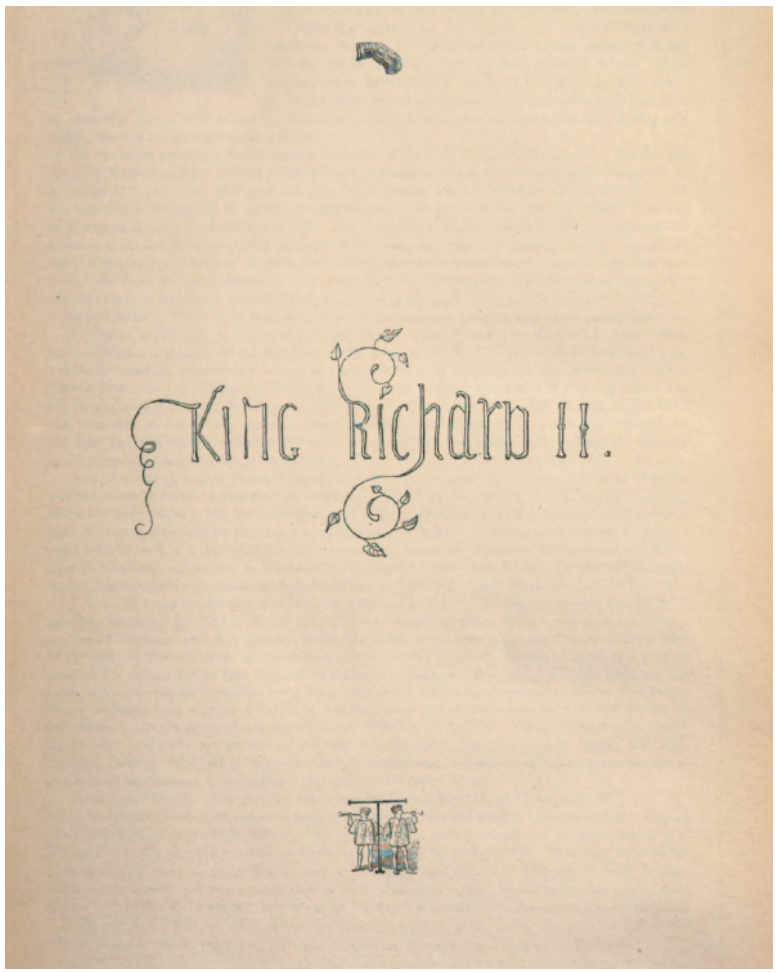

Figure 33 - Title page to *Richard II* in Cornwall's edition

The reader of Cornwall's *Richard II* immediately notices that the frontispiece bears a mysterious and emblematic tone, with the title printed in letters that darkly resemble thin tree branches or human bones (See figure 33). The title of each play is also generally accompanied by one or two small images that function as

symbols for the play. For example, the headpiece to *Henry VI – Part 3* opens with the title enclosed by two long swords. Each sword has a snake wrapped around it, holding a rose in its mouth. The snakes are facing each other, and the flowers touch in the middle. At the bottom, there is a crown resting on a box or tile, on which the words 'Act I' are written. The meaning is powerfully clear: it is a story about two households fighting for the crown, a strife that would initiate the Wars of the Roses. The roses in the serpents' mouth thus acquire emblematic meaning, each symbolising one of the contending Houses: York and Lancaster. According to Sillars, Meadows "uses the emblem to delineate character and idea in Shakespeare through the emotional temper of the Gothic, in the process acquiring a reputation for grotesque, if not bizarre, exaggeration" (275). The size of the swords and snakes in comparison to the crown and the title gives them an unrealistic proportion, but it also emphasises the importance of confrontation and battle in the fight for the crown, the core theme of the play.

In the case of *Richard II*, above the title there is a small dark gauntlet, which will undoubtedly remind the careful reader of the beginning of Act IV, when the lords throw their gloves in a chain reaction to Aumerle's denial of the accusation of conspiracy to kill the Duke of Gloucester. The gauntlet signifies that the themes of conflict and medieval honour are key in this play. The second symbol on the frontispiece is the small image of two heralds at the bottom of the page. They are both blowing trumpets, but each one to a different side, which could allude to the clash between Bolingbroke and Mowbray that opens the play, but also to the clash between Bolingbroke and Richard, which is the core of the drama. As Sillar points out, "it is with more static images that Meadows is at his most effective in his Shakespeare visualisations, and which constitute his most original contribution to Shakespeare imaging: a highly idiosyncratic use of emblematic images to enfold in single statements facets of language, character or plot" (275). The example of the gauntlet and the pair of opposed heralds in the frontispiece of *Richard II* demonstrates Meadows' powerful use of emblematic images, which convey substantial meaning through minimal expression.

The only textual information added by Cornwall for each play consists of a section called 'Introductory Remarks', and another called 'Notes' at the end of the play. Therefore, the edition is not as preoccupied as Knight's project in providing the reader with extra historical information. The text in the introduction to *Richard II* comments on the existence of a previous play on the reign of that monarch during Shakespeare's time, but it adds that the editor does not believe

that Shakespeare was in any way indebted to such play. As a confirmation of this hypothesis, the editor recalls the events surrounding Essex's "ill-advised incursion" in 1601 (Cornwall 45). He believes Shakespeare's text was *not* the one performed by Essex's followers on the eve of the rebellion. Cornwall states that Augustine Phillips, one of the actors at the Globe, when requested to put on the play, had answered that the text was old and that the group would therefore lose money in staging it. Essex's followers thus offered the troupe forty shillings, a great amount, which sealed the deal. Cornwall explains that "this term *old*, sufficiently indicates that it was not the work of Shakspeare, which had not been written more than three or four years" before (Cornwall 45). There was, in fact, another text about Richard II's deposition in circulation at the time. It was John Hayward's *The First Part of the Life and Raigne of King Henrie IIII*, published in 1599. Hayward's is not a dramatic text, but a historical account of the fall of Richard II. The subject of royal deposition was no doubt sensitive, since Hayward was taken as a prisoner to the Tower of London. Cornwall, however, believes that the author's imprisonment was not due to the content of the book, but to its dedication to the Earl of Essex at a time when he had fallen from the queen's grace.

Cornwall's conclusion is that the play requested by Essex's followers in 1601 "was written in a totally different spirit from Shakspeare's tragedy and from Hayward's history" (45). The only possibility for Cornwall is that a play previous to Shakespeare's existed and was the object of treason during the Essex Rebellion. Cornwall is adamant in making it clear to his readers that Shakespeare's *Richard II* is free from blame: "From a play like the older one, thus fallen into discredit, and fraught probably with pernicious sentiments, Shakspeare can have borrowed little more than the subject. *His* production is adapted to no such purpose as the other. True to his design of representing history, and of revivifying its personages, he has been neither unjust to Richard, nor partial to Bolingbroke" (45). Cornwall is right in pointing to Shakespeare's relative balance of power between Richard and Bolingbroke in the play; however, his dismissal of Shakespeare's *Richard II* in the events of February 1601 seems to result from a desire to acquit the Shakespearean play of political propaganda. He is mistaken when he affirms that the scene of Richard's deposition was withdrawn from the first publication of *Richard II*, but that it appeared in the second, therefore Q2, in 1598. As we have seen, only Q4 from 1608, after Elizabeth's death, includes the deposition scene. Cornwall expects to convince his reader that the queen would not be threatened by the appearance of the deposition scene in print:

> Queen Elizabeth seldom strained at a gnat or swallowed a camel; and to have objected to the scene of Richard's deposition, while she permitted the scene of his murder, his deposition being recognised in the play, and, accordingly, perfectly well known to the audience, is to suppose a degree of squeamishness in that great princess not only foreign to her character, but absolutely absurd and irrational. (Cornwall 45)

Whether Cornwall's addition of erroneous information is on purpose or not, one can only speculate. Could he have suppressed the information of the absence of the deposition scene in Q2 only to confirm the idea that the queen was not threatened by it? Or was it an honest mistake which led him to assume as much?

In any case, Cornwall emphasises the beauty of Shakespeare's poetry in the play, affirming that "few of his [Shakespeare's] dramas contain finer things, both of poetry and passion", adding that "no man could have imagined that *this* play would help the cause of treason: that the semblable presentment, on a public stage, of this weak and wilful, this dejected and yet majestic creature, Richard, could steel men's hearts" (45). Cornwall highlights the poetic achievements of the play in order to undermine its political potency. That would be in accordance with the overall censoring disposition of the theatrical sphere at the time, still under the 1737 Licensing Theatre Act, which would only be dissolved in 1843.

Despite Cornwall's praise of the poetry and passion within the play, the head-piece to Act I, designed by Meadows, creates in the reader a darker expectation (See figure 34). The words 'King Richard II' are written on a banner, placed in front of a dark prison cell. On the wall, the words "The life and death of" are added to the title's words. Behind the bars of the prison cell, there lies a skeleton, already foreshadowing the death of the king that gives name to the play. The size of the banner is disproportionate to the skeleton, creating the illusion of a massive royal banner. This opposition between royal majesty and mortality is brought forth by Meadows' organisation of the ensemble.

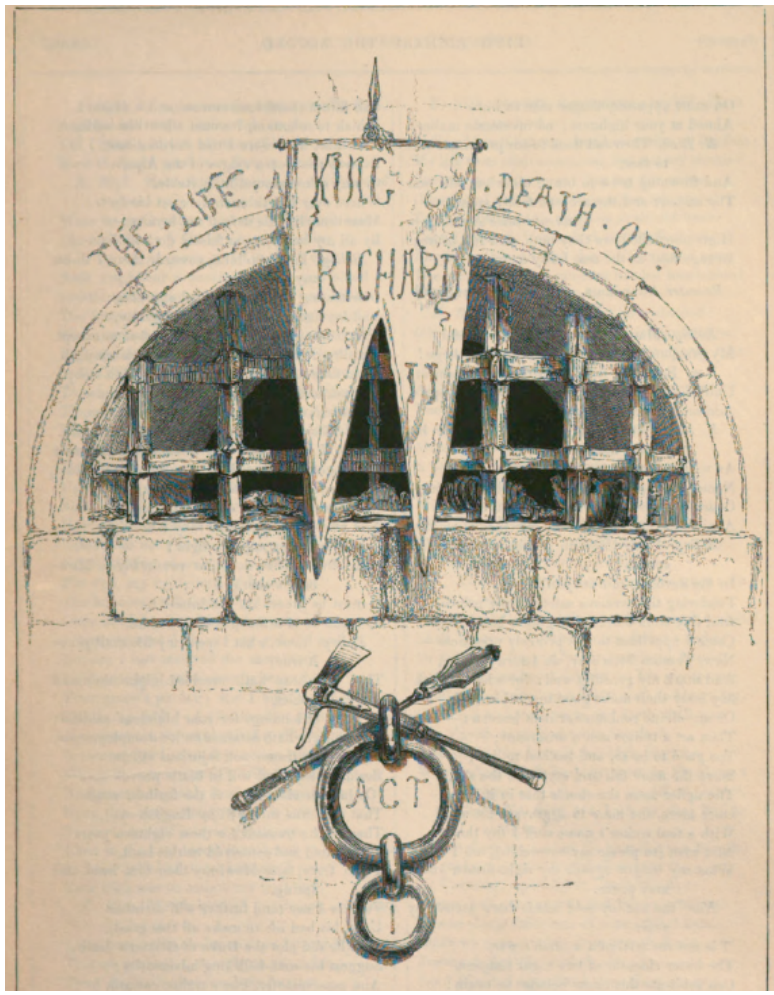

Figure 34 - Title-page for Act 1 of *Richard II* in Cornwall's edition

The headpiece to Act II is also emblematic, with its title written on the arch of a Gothic construction (See figure 35). Three or four hunched hooded figures, faces covered and looking down, stand on each side of a big hourglass. In this act, Richard decides to take possession of the property and titles of John of Gaunt, denying Bolingbroke his rightful inheritance. This decision is what starts Richard's own hourglass, which speedily leads him to his fall from power and towards death. The hooded figures function as harbingers of death, waiting for Richard to make the wrong decisions so that they can strike their blow and collect his soul.

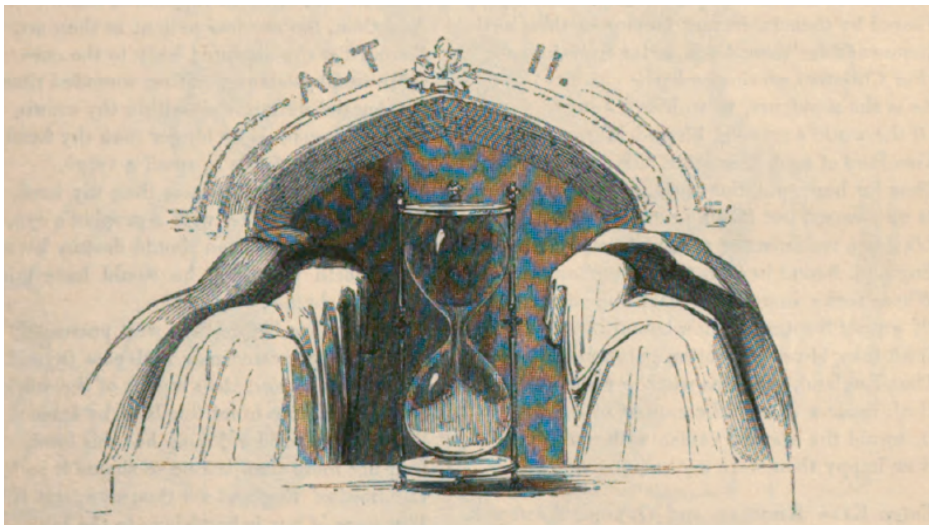

Figure 35 - Title-page to Act 2 of *Richard II* in Cornwall's edition

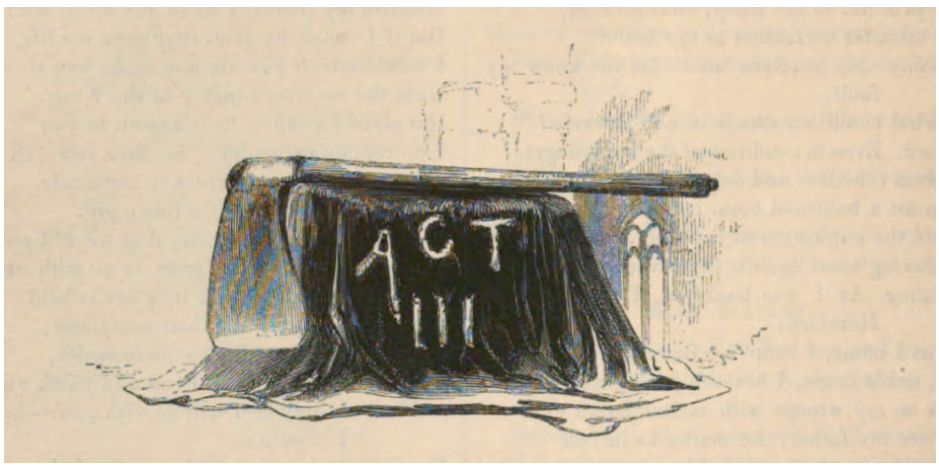

Figure 36 - Title-page to Act 3 of *Richard II* in Cornwall's edition

The image that opens Act III also reinforces the imminence of death, not only for Richard but for those that support him (See figure 36). The execution block is covered by a black cloth, on which the words 'Act III' are written. The axe, in disproportion to the size of the background arched window, rests on the cloth,

ready to be used, anticipating the deaths that occur throughout the play. In this specific act, for instance, Bushy and Bagot are sentenced to death by Bolingbroke, Salisbury's army flees from Wales believing the king to be already dead, and the queen overhears the gardeners' prophetic conversation.

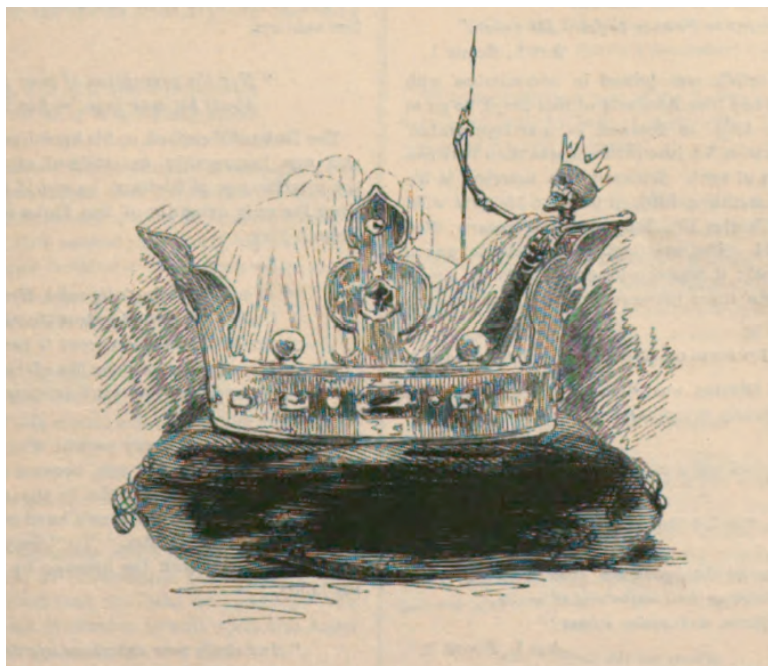

Figure 37 - Engraving for *Richard II* in Cornwall's edition

Meadows' illustration at the end of the play emphasises the curse that will follow the new king, Henry IV (See figure 37). Albeit the crown has been secured by Bolingbroke, it brings with it the shadow of a murdered king, represented in the image by the small crowned skeleton resting within the hollow crown. The skeleton is reminiscent of the headpiece to Act I, where a skeleton lies behind prison bars. Furthermore, it is possible to see on the left side of the crown a faint sketch of the hunched hooded figures from the headpiece of Act II, subtly inferring that Henry IV will also encounter conspiracy and opposition in his reign, and that these figures will follow him, ready to collect his soul as well. In Shakespeare's *Henry IV – Part 2*, the new king will justly complain: "uneasy lies the head that wears a crown" (3.1.31), especially if it is such a crown as the one devised by Meadows.

In relation to historical accuracy, Meadows creates a medieval atmosphere by incorporating in his drawings features of Gothic architecture, such as the pointed arches and ribbed vaults, and by depicting the characters in medieval clothes – different from the artists of the previous century, who, as we have seen, had represented Shakespeare's characters from the history plays in contemporary eighteenth-century attire or a general Renaissance style. For instance, for the illustration of Act I, Scene 2, Meadows depicts the Duchess of Gloucester in a flowing medieval gown, elaborate headwear and a wimple to cover her hair, while John of Gaunt is represented wearing a long tunic and a headdress in the form of a turban (See figure 38). By means of this more accurate depiction of setting and costume, Meadows creates a more concrete link between Shakespeare's play and the historical Middle Ages, although inevitably filtered by his nineteenth-century imagination.

Figure 38 - Act 1, Scene 2, Cornwall's edition

Finally, the three-page-long section called 'Notes' at the end of the play brings succinct contextual historical information, such as details about locations mentioned in the text, a description of the ceremony expected from the participants and spectators of a public challenge, and general facts about Edward III's family tree. In his final paragraphs, Cornwall returns to the critical reception of Shake-

speare's *Richard II*, putting together extracts from the works of other scholars. By means of this selection, the editor presents two starkly opposing views on Richard II as a king. The first demonstrates a clear idealised understanding of the royal body. Cornwall quotes from August Wilhelm Schlegel's (1767-1845) *Lectures on Dramatic Art and Literature* (1809-1811): "in 'King Richard II.,' the poet exhibits to us a noble kingly nature, at first obscured by levity and the errors of unbridled youth, and afterwards purified by misfortune, and rendered more highly splendid and illustrious" (Cornwall 88). Richard's tyranny is dismissed by Schlegel as "the errors of unbridled youth", while his royal characteristics – noble, kingly, splendid and illustrious – come forward only after his purifying experience of misfortune, associating Richard with the figure of the martyr. Schlegel's words emphasise that Richard's royal features were always present, as befits all royalty, but concealed by the acts of his immaturity. According to the author, when Richard faces the threat of losing his throne, "he then feels, with painful inspiration, the elevated vocation of the kingly dignity, and its prerogatives over personal merit and changeable institutions" (88). Even bereft of his crown, the earthly symbol of royalty, Richard's kingliness does not leave his body, since he possesses "innate nobility no humiliation can annihilate" (88). For Schlegel, there is no doubt that Bolingbroke *usurped* the crown. On the other hand, Bolingbroke's father, John of Gaunt, is for the German poet and critic "a model of chivalrous birth: he stands there like a pillar of the olden time which he had outlived" (88). Schlegel sees in Shakespeare's depiction of Gaunt a reminiscence of the grandeur and nobility of the past. Although Gaunt does not refer to this past as *medieval*, since that would be an anachronistic use of the term, his speech is, in fact, an idealisation of the period before Richard II's ascension to the throne, a period we now understand as the Middle Ages. In this manner, Schlegel has noticed the medievalism in Gaunt's words.

Cornwall also adds extracts from Augustine Skottowe's *The Life Of Shakespeare: Enquiries Into The Originality Of His Dramatic Plots And Characters* (1824), which provides a completely opposite understanding of Shakespeare's king. Whereas Schlegel emphasises Richard's innate majesty, Skottowe brings forth Richard's "violence, rapacity, and tyranny" (Cornwall 88). The author praises Shakespeare's poetry, but concludes that, as Richard "pusillanimously yielded to despair, our sympathy is but slight, and Richard is upbraided and forgotten" (Cornwall 88). Schlegel and Skottowe's criticisms demonstrate the two poles of approaches to the medieval past: on the one side, the idealisation of the past, a sense of shared honour, and the ennoblement of the royal body; and, on the other, its association with tyranny,

violence and greed. Cornwall adds these selected texts to his 'Notes' on *Richard II*; however, it is not clear how he stands in relation to these two opposing views of medieval kingship.

Knight's and Cornwall's editions commented here provide an insightful look into how *Richard II* was received in England in the third and fourth decades of the nineteenth century, right before the staging of Macready's production at the Haymarket in 1851. Knight endeavours to offer his readership education through art, presenting Shakespeare's history plays as a means to understand England's history. Knight's curiosity and fascination about the past leads him to think of ways with which he could associate the past with his own present. He concludes that this link is the human emotions that all people share, in the past, present or future. Knight's Middle Ages are thus the setting for human victory or defeat. By contrast, Cornwall's publication of *Richard II* includes ambiguous editorial material, which directs to both compassion and condemnation towards Richard, as well as to an understanding of the medieval past as either idyllic or brutally repressive, leaving it to the reader to reach their own conclusions.

Sillars mentions only Knight's and Cornwall's illustrated editions of Shakespeare in the first half of the nineteenth century. However, there is one more edition that should be taken into account in order to understand how Shakespeare's *Richard II* was visually reinterpreted at the time. I refer to James Halliwell-Phillipps' (1820-1889) *The Complete Works of Shakspere* [sic], printed by John Tallis (1817-1876) in 1850. The images in this edition circulated to a wide audience, which means that Macready and Charles Kean could have seen them before offering their own visual interpretation of the play on stage. Sillars mentions a rare 1853 reprint of Halliwell's edition, held at the Folger Library, but does not offer an analysis of the material.

The title page promises the reader an edition "elegantly and appropriately illustrated by portraits engraved on steel, from daguerreotypes of the greatest and most intellectual actors of the age, taken in the embodiment of the varied and life-like characters of our great national poet". Halliwell's project is similar to Bell's Acting edition from 1774 in the sense that it depicts actors performing Shakespeare's character. The change in approach to historical drama is visible in these prints, which shed light on the theatrical conventions of the mid-nineteenth century. Different from Francis Aickin in his eighteenth-century clothes to perform Henry IV, the actors' costumes in this production demonstrate a concern with historical accuracy. For *King John* there is a print of Henry Betty as Falconbridge, of Miss Glyn as Constance, Macready as King John with Mr Cooper as Hubert, and

another of Mr Bennett as Hubert;[53] for *Richard II* there is only one image, that of Macready in the title role (See figure 39)[54]; for *Henry IV – Part 1* there is a print of Mr Creswick as Hotspur (See figure 40), Mr Hackett as Falstaff, and one of Mr H. Marston as Hotspur with Mr F. Robinson as Prince Hal; for *Henry IV – Part 2* there is a print of Macready as Henry IV; for *Henry V*, we see a print of Madame Celeste as Princess Katherine; there are no images for *Henry VI*; for *Richard III*, there is a print of Charles Kean in the title character, one of Mr J. W. Wallack as Gloucester, Mr Couldock as Richard III, two very interesting images of the sisters Ellen and Kate Bateman as Richard III and Richmond, respectively, and one of Garrick as Richard III. Finally, for *Henry VIII*, there is a print of George Bennett as the title character, Macready as Cardinal Wolsey, of Miss Glyn as Queen Katherine, and the only group image, depicting Cardinal Wolsey seeking shelter at the Abbey of Leicester, after he fails to obtain a divorce for the king. This print is based on Richard Westall's painting for the Boydell Gallery.

[53] The fact that the prints illustrate two different actors playing the same part of Hubert (Cooper and Bennett) indicate that the artists working for Halliwell's edition based their work on more than one production of each play (when available).

[54] Shakespeare, William, 1564-1616, Henry Tyrrell, and J. O. (James Orchard) Halliwell-Phillipps. *The Complete Works of Shakspere: Revised From the Original Editions*. London: Printed and published by John Tallis and company, 1850.

Figure 39 - William Charles Macready as Richard II

Figure 40 - Mr Creswick as Hotspur

The number of prints available indicate the popularity of each play on stage at that given period, since the more productions available, the more options there were for the artist to use the new technology to imprint the actor in costume on the page. For instance, the absence of plates for *Henry VI* is a consequence of the play being rarely performed at the time. According to the reference guide by Norwood, it was only staged twice in the period between 1800 and 1899: *Henry VI* (mainly Part 2) was staged at Drury Lane in December 1817, advertised as *Richard Duke of York, or the Contention of York and Lancaster*, with Edmund Kean as York; and *Henry VI – Part 2* was performed for Shakespeare's Tercentenary at Surrey Theatre in April 1864. The scarcity of productions of *Richard II* at the time also justifies the fact that there is only one print for this play in Halliwell's 1850 edition. As we have seen, after Edmund Kean's production in 1815 and its few revivals, *Richard II* only returned to the London stage in December 1850 with Macready. As Macready is depicted in the title role, the third volume of Halliwell's edition, "Dramas on English History", could only have been printed after the production at Haymarket in December of 1850. It could be that the third volume was printed at a later date than the first two volumes on Tragedies and Comedies, or that certain images were only included in later reprints.

What is significant for this study is the way Macready embodies the medieval Richard II, and how the setting reconstructs the medieval past. The king is a prisoner at Pomfret Castle, as the added extract from the play makes clear: "I have been studying how I may compare this prison where I live unto the world". He is dressed in plain black clothes, but the ermine collar around his neck and wrists indicate his royalty. His face has a contemplative expression, his body is relaxed, but his right finger is raised as in the middle of an important thought. The actor is in a still pose, but not in an unnatural position. On the contrary, it conveys the idea of the movement of thoughts within the king's head. Finally, in relation to the setting, it is possible to identify symbolic objects – such as the loose chain on the bottom left – and the details of medieval architecture, like the stone floor and the pillars sustaining the arched ceiling. This is a concern not only apparent in the print of *Richard II*, but in all histories. See, for instance, the print of Creswick as Hotspur above. The actor is dressed in tight hose with leather soles, short doublets and a belt – the result is visually different from the eighteenth-century apparel of earlier productions. Instead of approximating the action on stage to the audience's contemporary time, the use of different clothes created a distance between the

people on and off stage, fostering an illusion that the actors walking on the wooden platform really belonged to another age.

Macready's body position is vaguely reminiscent of Fuseli's depiction of the king meditating in the prison just moments before his own death. In addition to the preoccupation with adding historical accuracy by means of costume and setting, the print in Halliwell's edition demonstrates a combination of historical plausibility and emotion. Finally, the use of a modern technology such as the daguerreotype in order to recreate the medieval past visually results in a complex anachronistic overlapping of history and modernity, one that would be taken to another degree with the use of photography in the works of Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-1879), as I explore in Chapter 7.

Conclusion

The *visual* representation of the Middle Ages and of Shakespeare's *Richard II* went through a significant change, as the examples in this section demonstrate. I have analysed the illustrated editions of the play since Rowe's 1709 edition with engravings by François Boitard, until Halliwell's 1850 compilation of portraits of actors engraved on steel from daguerreotypes. In the beginning of the century, the characters of the play were depicted in print in contemporary fashion, which caused an anachronistic incongruence, since the characters represented would not have been historically familiar with that way of dressing. Editors at this time bridged the gap between the reader's present and the story's past, perhaps in the attempt to draw the reading audience closer to Shakespeare's work. While Boitard emphasised the violent side of the past, exemplified by the brutal attack on Richard, Gravelot in 1740 offered a more ambiguous representation of the past, using oppositions of light and darkness to contrast the fluidity of the Rococo style and its sensual texture with the foreboding darkness of the tree branches in the garden scene. From there, Hanmer was the first to put forward an explicit concern for historical authenticity in 1744. In his instructions to the artist Hayman, Hanmer referred to a specific scholarly source (although an eighteenth-century reconstruction of a medieval tournament) as basis for the illustration of the lists at Coventry. Hayman adds unprecedented attention to setting, emphasising the pageantry of the medieval chivalric tradition, but without forfeiting the depiction of dramatic action, inciting an emotional reaction from the reader.

The stage and the page became intrinsically intertwined in Bell's Acting edition of Shakespeare, based on the promptbooks used at Drury Lane and Covent Garden at the time, and including portraits of actors in character. This edition provides valuable insight on how Shakespeare's history plays were performed on stage, generally in eighteenth-century fashion, as the portrait of the actor Francis Aickin as Henry IV wearing a long wig and holding a tricorn hat exemplifies. Both Bell's Acting and Literary editions give prominence to Bolingbroke's character and his victory over Richard. In 1798-1800 Harding's edition engraved by Gardiner reallocates the viewer's sympathy towards the usurped king, who is depicted as the victim of Bolingbroke's oppression. The focus is once more on character, and not on setting, emphasising the tragedy and suffering by means of Gothic imagery. Characters are depicted in more spontaneous poses, different from the unnatural static positions of previous illustrations.

The Boydell Gallery in 1789 was a decisive moment in the visual representation of Shakespeare, associating the poet's name with a national project of historical painting. The big format of the canvas allowed artists to explore more details and to expand the depiction of setting, such as Brown's composition of the deposition scene and Northcote's interpretation of the entrance of Richard and Bolingbroke in London. These canvases offer a combination of pageantry and feeling, objectivity and imagination. The exhibition opposed the didacticism of art, placing art's power in its ability to move the viewer – a goal painters and actors should likewise strive for. Fuseli, an artist that contributed to the Gallery, created the design for Chalmers' edition in 1805. Instead of the extensive space available on a canvas, Fuseli adapted his style for the constraints of the book illustration, choosing to focus on specific moments of intimate reflection, for instance, Richard's thoughts as a prisoner in Pomfret Castle. While Fuseli emphasises the dignity of Richard's contemplations before death, Thurston romanticises Bolingbroke as the honourable medieval knight in Tegg's 1812-1815 edition. At this point, the Middle Ages are explored as a way to awaken the irrational fears of the mind, in a similar manner as the novels of Anne Radcliffe at the turn of the nineteenth century.

As the century unfolded, the preoccupation with engaging the viewer's feelings remained, but in combination with an idea of art as a means of instruction as well as entertainment. Knight's *Pictorial Shakespeare* 1838-1843 offered the reader extensive extra material, using images to aid the historical explanation. However, the information in-between acts interrupted the flow of the dramatic text, breaking the reader's illusion of immersion within Shakespeare's medieval world.

Richard receives more attention than Bolingbroke, who is mainly depicted in submissive positions. Knight also draws renewed attention to setting, including comparisons between the appearance of a historical site as it would have looked to fourteenth-century viewers, and how it then looked to a nineteenth-century visitor. Cornwall's 1838-1840 edition took an opposite approach. The artist Meadows gave priority to emblematic images and the use of symbols to offer a myriad of meanings through minimal expression. Historical authenticity is put to the background, favouring instead imaginative reinterpretations of the characters and settings, and using non-proportional scales to highlight the grotesqueness of the medieval past.

Finally, Halliwell proposes an updated Acting edition in 1850, illustrated with engravings based on daguerreotypes of the most prominent actors and actresses at the time in Shakespearean characters. This edition elucidates how the theatrical conventions had changed since Bell's Acting edition of 1774. Instead of approximating the historical characters on stage to the audience's contemporary time, the theatre in the mid-nineteenth century enhanced the illusion of the past being visually different from the present by the use of historically plausible costumes and setting. The daguerreotype as a new technology offered unprecedented possibilities to 'freeze' time and reproduce it more objectively than in a painting or drawing. However, the prints in Halliwell's edition do not show the actors in static unnatural poses, as Bell's Acting edition does, but they are shown in dramatic action, as the print of Macready as Richard II exemplifies.

These visual representations of Shakespeare's characters in *Richard II* and visual reinterpretations of Shakespeare's reconstruction of the Middle Ages help us understand how the people at those different time periods engaged with and understood the past. It becomes clear that the past was gradually understood as different from the present, awakening the curiosity to understand how those people from the past lived. Hence, the increasing preoccupation with historical authenticity in the depiction of the Middle Ages. At the same time, there was an expanding desire to cross the imaginary bridge that connects present and past, by establishing connections with the people from the past, mainly through the arousal of emotional response from the reader or spectator. By understanding how the people from the past (brought to life by art) felt similar emotions as we do today, the past becomes more inviting. Although different and exotic, the past can also be home.