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Journal of Global Theatre History

Theatrescapes
Global Media and Translocal Publics (1850-1950)

Editors

Christopher Balme and Nic Leonhardt

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Editorial

The decades between 1850 and 1950 are characterized by the emergence of new technologies and communication media, as well as the development of infrastructure for transnational travel and trade. Theatre benefited from and contributed to this transnational interconnectedness in all its artistic and business dimensions. Not only were new theatres built in almost every corner of the world, but genres, plays and performers travelled globally and led to the emergence of new theatrical public spheres and forms of spectatorship.

This special issue of the Journal of Global Theatre History proposes that we could usefully borrow Arjun Appadurai's well-known notion of -scapes (mediascapes, econoscapes, ideoscapes, etc.) that he uses for describing the dimensions of global flows in contemporary globalization. By adding another *scape*, namely 'theatrescapes', we can describe the dynamics and flows of theatrical expansion in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Indubitably, theatre and its infrastructures interacted intensely and strategically with the new global media of the time: the (illustrated) press, advertisements, photography, cinema, radio. The dislocation of people engendered by migration created new theatre publics that might be termed 'translocal' audiences: geographically separated from their homes, immigrants longed for cultural entertainment familiar to them; European spectators in India or China, for instance, remained mentally or imaginatively aligned with their home countries, whereas local publics needed to accustom themselves to the new medium of theatre. At the same time, the increasing interconnectedness and knowledge about the world evoked a major interest in foreign peoples and their forms of cultural entertainment.

This second number of GTHJ grew out of a conference of the same title that took place in 2014 funded by the Fritz Thyssen Foundation and collects a selection of papers discussed there. The contributors interrogate various facets of the intersections of global media and translocal publics as a consequence of migration, and discuss their impact on theatre and vice versa between 1850 and 1950. The following questions form the shared agenda of the papers:

1) Interaction between theatre and global media: How did performers, entrepreneurs, and directors employ global media, and by what means did media and modern marketing facilitate the global dissemination of theatrical forms and formats?
2) Translocal publics: What can we learn about the emergence of theatrical public spheres in situations of cross-cultural contact?
3) The press and globalized theatrical reading publics: How did the (international) press and theatre mutually condition one another and impact on their respective audiences?

4) Networked stages: What can we say about the transregional and even transnational interconnections and collaborations of theatre entrepreneurs, producers and agents?
5) New urban centres as theatrical contact zones: What role did urban life play in the context of *theatrescapes*?
6) Theatre-building as a (inter) cultural act: What role did theatre architecture play in the framework of theatre and the early phase of (cultural) globalization?

In her paper "Sarah Bernhardt in Brazil (1886-1893)", Monize Oliveira Moura follows the routes and itineraries of the popular French actress in the late nineteenth century. Bernhardt's theatrical trade routes led from Europe to the Americas and back and fostered the intensification between French and Brazilian theatre culture in particular. Moura highlights Bernhardt's impact on local audiences and their theatrical taste in Brazil and thus demonstrates how theatre could become global by touring stars.

Catherine Vance Yeh links Peking Opera, Kabuki and the famous tour of the Denishawn company in her essay "Experimenting with Dance Drama: Peking Opera Modernity, Kabuki Theater Reform and the Denishawn's Tour of the Far East". Focusing on the first two decades of the twentieth century, she sheds light on the transformation of Peking opera by focusing on the three main areas of contact, namely Paris, Japan and the U.S. By doing so, on a macro level Yeh advocates a reconsideration of artistic modernity understood as a global rather than as a mere European phenomenon.

The circus jockey Rosita de la Plata, born in Buenos Aires, is the protagonist of Johanna Dupré's paper "'Die erste Jockey-Reiterin der Welt, aus Süd-Amerika': Rosita de la Plata, Global Imaginaries and the Media". Based on hitherto under-researched and rich source material Dupré discusses how subtle public relations strategies fostered the international career of circus jockey Rosita de la Plata, and how they contributed to and shaped her public image and artist persona.

German Shakespeare actor Daniel Bandmann and his truly international touring activities are showcased and discussed in Lisa J. Warrington's paper "Herr Daniel Bandmann and Shakespeare vs. the World". In her examination of Bandmann's acting in the role of Hamlet (as a German performing in English) and his controversies with theatre critics, she foregrounds the challenges of language and translation as an important factor that was part and parcel of theatrical globalization in the late nineteenth century.

Nic Leonhardt, Munich, December 2016

NB: *Theatrescapes* is also the name of a digital research tool that we have developed in the context of the Centre for Global Theatre History. It helps us to map the worldwide emergence of theatrical venues as well as follow the traces and routes of performers in the nineteenth and twentieth century. Check it out and help us increase our knowledge of global theatre. http://www.theatrescapes.gwi.uni-muenchen.de/

Monize Oliveira Moura

Sarah Bernhardt in Brazil (1886-1893)

Abstract

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Sarah Bernhardt helped to establish theatrical connections between Europe and the Americas as a result of her international travels. Her tours in Brazil intensified the exchanges between this country's theatrical scene and the French theatre, and the presence of this famous actress indicated the inclusion of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in the "global" theatrical circuit of great stars that was then being formed. While revisiting this process, this article investigates its symbolic meaning and its impacts on a local level (Brazil): how these tours connected Sarah Bernhardt to foreign audiences (thereby helping to shape a global cultural space), and to what extent foreign audiences' expectations had an impact on the aesthetic features of these productions. From a broader perspective, in this sense, cultural globalization and translocal audiences are essential to assessing the production of French theatre in the nineteenth century.

Author

Monize Moura is an actress who graduated from the Federal University of Bahia, Brazil. She holds a Masters' degree in Performing Arts from the University of Strasbourg, France, and a PhD in History and Performing Arts from the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, France, and the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. In 2015 she defended her thesis, entitled "*Sarah Bernhardt vue du Brésil (1886-1905)*" under the guidance of professors Jean-Claude Yon (UVSQ) and Angela Reis (UNIRIO), thanks to an agreement of joint supervision and research scholarship provided by the Brazilian government through the Coordination for the Improvement of Higher Level - or Education - Personnel (CAPES).

During the second half of the nineteenth century, Sarah Bernhardt helped to establish theatrical connections between Europe and the Americas as a result of her travels through several countries. Having visited Brazil on three occasions – 1886, 1893 and 1905 –, her tours definitely intensified the exchanges between Brazil and the French theatre. Moreover, the presence of this famous actress in the country indicated the inclusion of Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo in the "global" theatrical circuit of great stars that was being formed. In this article, I would like to revisit this process, while questioning its symbolic meaning and its impacts on a local level, specifically in Brazil, as well as how it affected this artist's career. Regarded as one of the greatest theatrical stars of the nineteenth century and as an important representative of the illustrious French traditions of dramatic repertoire, Sarah Bernhardt and her career are great examples of

the process of internationalization of French drama, which was only made possible by the emergence of urban culture and the creation of "theatrical markets" in different cities around the world, and also due to the remarkable Francophile sentiment of that period. In other words, beyond analyzing the *impact* caused by the dissemination of French theatre in the Brazilian context of the nineteenth century, this article also seeks to question, through the case of Sarah Bernhardt, to what extent the process of cultural globalization developed at that time also affected the theatrical economy in France, thus *structuring* scenic creation and Parisian dramaturgical literature itself during that period. How did these tours connect Sarah Bernhardt to foreign audiences by bridging the gap between Brazilian viewers and audiences from different locations, thereby helping to shape a global cultural space?

In order to investigate these questions, this article is divided into three parts. In the first section, we briefly examine how Sarah Bernhardt's career underwent a process of internationalization after her departure from the *Comédie-Française* in 1880. Next, we will recall this artist's first Brazilian tour, in 1886, and, finally, we address the circunstances related to the acting and the reception of the great spectacles written by Victorien Sardou and starred in by Sarah Bernhardt during her second tour of Rio de Janeiro, in 1893. As mentioned before, the examination of these matters must take a broader process into consideration, the age of an emerging globalization[1] that is linked to the creation of theatrical exchange routes and translocal audiences. The main sources consulted regarding these travels are the narratives published by the Brazilian and French presses of that time.

1. Sarah Bernhardt (1844-1923), international star: "The Great French Theatre" on tour

As a child of the great institutions of Parisian theatre, the epithet "an actress of the people" would certainly not characterize Sarah Bernhardt, despite the fact that fame made her popular in many countries. After starting her career in the Conservatoire de Paris[2] in 1860, and then working in prestigious national theatres such as the *Odéon*[3] (1866-1872) and the *Comédie-Française*[4] (1872-1880), where she emerged as a big star, the actress had her image linked to the great theatre of the French repertoire. In charge of preserving France's illustrious dramatic repertoire of literary theatre, both the *Odéon* and the *Comédie-Française* offered important roles to Sarah, which made her a favourite among the critics. It was also as a member of the *Comédie* troupe that Sarah first toured London, where she was hailed as a brilliant *vedette* of the *Théâtre-Français*.[5]

When Sarah Bernhardt became one of the leading figures in the most important national theatre of her time and country, she could finally contemplate an independent career for herself, as this gave her more leeway for creating art according to her own ideas. In 1880, after several disagreements with the administration of the *Comédie-Française*, the actress sent in her resignation, choosing instead to develop an autonomous career, which began with presentations in Europe (London, Brussels and

Copenhagen), followed by her first tour in North America. Later, back in France, the artist would own her own theatres[6] and also become the leader of a theatre company.

Despite her prominence as the main actress in the most important French official theatre, the new directions that Sarah Bernhardt set for herself were not immediately supported by theatrical critics. Many of them thought that an independent career would interfere negatively with her performance as an actress – that by living on her own acting paychecks, without the stability provided by the *Comédie-Française*, she would be forced to seek new audiences outside France, thus giving up art in exchange for profits:

> [...] she should make no mistake; her success will not be long-lasting. [...]. Those artists, who, relying on the buzz of their fame, abandon the *Comédie-Française* to travel the world in search of adventure, see their reputations weaken little by little and their gains diminish. They have nothing else to hang on to. They exploit their acquired success and cannot renovate it [...] One should not compare dramatic or comedic artists to male and female singers. Singing is a cosmopolitan art. Mlle. Patti and Mlle. Nilsson[7] can tour Europe with half a dozen operas. They will find in every capital an audience ready to applaud them and pay for them – even enthusiastically. But French tragedy is an eminently national plant, one that can only find in Europe and the New World the rare greenhouses where it can acclimatize to the environment and flourish. Our comedy, even more so: despite being more intelligible to other audiences, it would not know how to put down lasting and multiple roots. We have to admit it: in foreign countries, our great actors are no more than brilliant eccentricities or, if I dare say it myself, picturesque animals. There are exceptions to this, I know. London, Amsterdam, St. Petersburg; but, anyway, even in big cities, the international audience that understands our language and is interested in the products of our literature is rare and handpicked, and its curiosity will run out quickly. [...] **Fehler! Textmarke nicht definiert.**This is, therefore, a very dangerous game that Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt is playing in a moment of anger. Unfavourably dangerous to her, one might say, because she will only hurt herself. She is not, in any way, one of those actresses that can carry the weight of an entire play on their shoulders, neither one that does not need to be surrounded to enthrall the audience. [...] One after another, look at all the roles of Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt and notice how they cannot be separated harmlessly from the rest of the ensemble they embody. [...] Plays were written for Déjazet, Bouffet, Lafont and Arnal.[8] Nobody writes for the associates of the *Comédie-Française*. Those who try to make it in the provinces are forced to look, outside the repertoire, for fantasies, monologues, *saynètes* [comedy sketches] for two or three characters, a handful of little plays whose success is always ephemeral and questionable. Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt is, therefore, assuming the great risk of not finding the benefits promised to her in that place where her hard head takes her.[9]

While recalling the importance of the *Comédie-Française* to French theatre, the renowned critic Francisque Sarcey sought to demonstrate that Sarah Bernhardt had made a bad decision when she decided to leave the *Maison de Molière*. Accordingly, he stressed the difficulties of launching an independent career, especially pointing out the characteristic composition of theatre companies outside the *Théâtre-Français* and, in the case of touring, how difficult it was to perform before foreign audiences. The chronicler already knew that Sarah Bernhardt was leaving for London in the coming months and, perhaps even that she had signed a contract that would take her to North America that same year. A keen observer of his time, Sarcey was not far from the truth. In fact, the possibility of touring outside of France seemed promising (Americans, for example, were known for their big acting paychecks).[10] However, the star-crossed travel narratives of other French artists, such as Rachel's,[11] also made it clear that conquering foreign spectators and succeeding triumphantly outside Paris were hard endeavours.

Even if the texts produced in France – "intelligible to other audiences" – had become well known in many countries around the world through translations and adaptations, it was still very difficult, according to Sarcey, to adapt the French dramatic repertoire to conditions outside of France. Indeed, how could one expect that foreign audiences would *understand* all the works, or that they would know how to appreciate the refinement and subtlety of the texts without fluently speaking the French language? Of course, despite all his pretentious jingoism, Sarcey exposed real and inherent difficulties of touring abroad. It was clear that, in order to conquer foreign audiences, Sarah Bernhardt would need, first of all, to redefine her repertoire.

As the critic explained, the difficulty in putting together a travelling troupe implied, for the stars on the road, the composition of a distinguished repertoire. In other words, it was convenient to prioritize plays that were dependent on the great *vedette*, instead of relying on the theatre company. According to Sarcey, until that moment, Sarah Bernhardt's success had been earned performing roles that could not be "separated harmlessly from the rest of the ensemble they embody". Thus, throughout her independent career, the actress would need to constantly renew her repertoire, turning to roles that had already been made famous by other actresses and roles written specifically for her.[12] Furthermore, touring itself would play a crucial role in the way the artist would come to use her own image as part of an advertising strategy.[13] Finally, in order to succeed in her international venture and still keep her Parisian audience, Sarah Bernhardt would need to rethink her acting career.

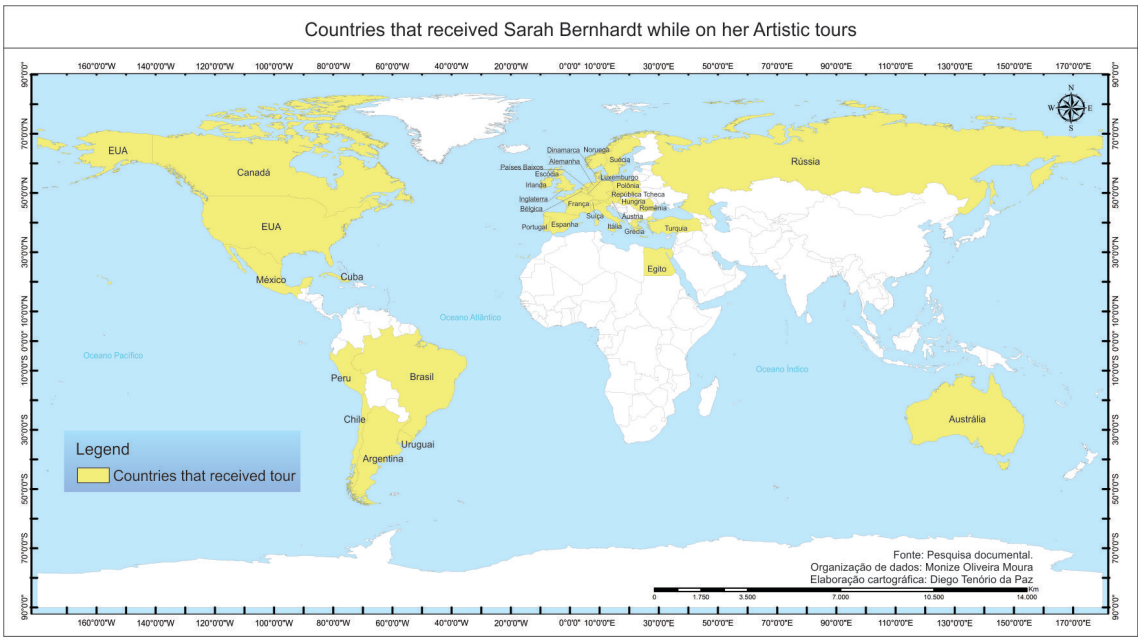
From the point she became solely dependent on her acting paychecks, Sarah approached other authors, putting aside notions of a purely literary theatre. All these circumstances made an impact on her stage performance. In this sense, her collaboration with Victorien Sardou was decisive. Beloved by the public, he wrote many roles that were tailor-made for the actress, in grandiose and spectacular stagings. Sometimes, their shows were criticized and accused of being "*à effets*", meaning too easy or feeble, from a "literary" standpoint. Six years after Sarah Bernhardt's departure from the *Comédie-Française*, Sarcey reaffirmed his disappointment:

> I quietly lament over the time when she was a living harmony, when everything in her – the gestures, the voice, the performance – was fused into a gracious ensemble, when she was modern, while remaining classical; but what is the point of complaining? We must accept Mlle. Sarah Bernhardt as did the tours in the provinces, the travels abroad and Sardou, this great enchanter, who is the first culprit.[14]

The actress, however, seeking to overcome such criticisms, alternated her theatrical performances between spectacular presentations and renowned literary plays. Alongside the heroines of Sardou and reruns of big hits, she also performed plays written in dramatic verse, as those would always be complimented from the artistic point of view.

Within the context of an independent career, touring was a decisive factor. Sarah's many trips abroad demonstrate not only a willingness to conquer new audiences, but also the need to ensure the necessary income to maintain her expensive life in Paris. Examine all the years of her career, and it will become clear that touring turned into a structural element in her work, as the performances encompassed an increasingly larger number of

destinations, especially during its first period (1880-1893). Beyond that, it is fair to say that, despite the management of her own theatre, Sarah Bernhardt never ceased touring abroad in favour of devoting herself exclusively to the Parisian audience. Indeed, her independent career was characterized by her many tours, especially in European countries. Even if those trips were short, their almost annual regularity seems to show that Sarah Bernhardt built her sphere of influence and work relations beyond Parisian frontiers.



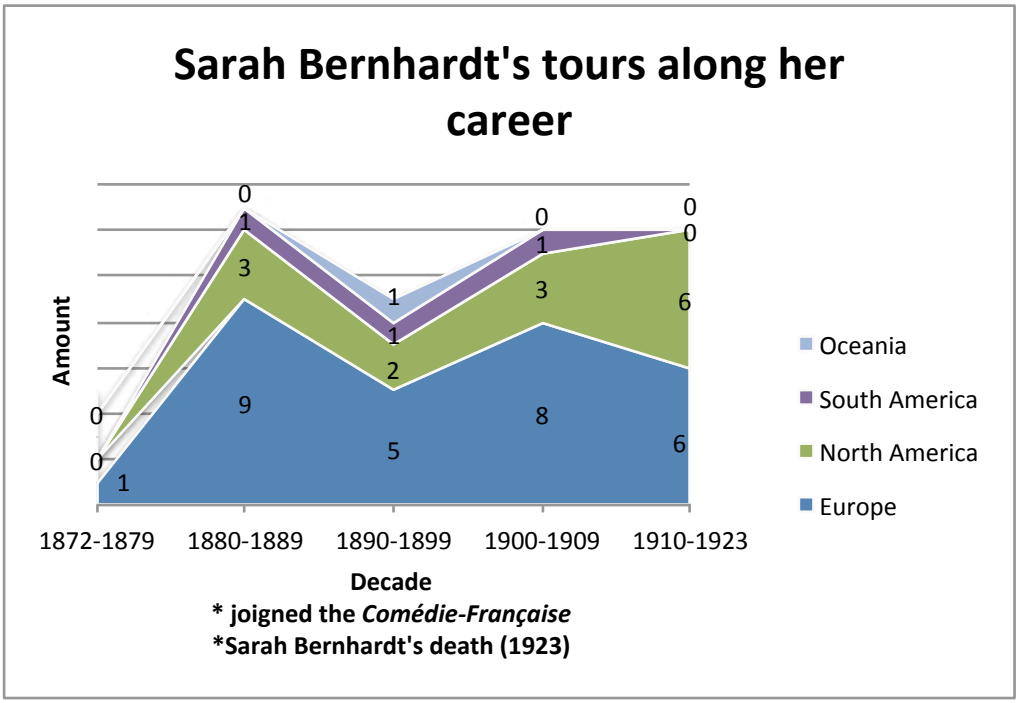
Map showing the countries in which Sarah Bernhardt toured.

Likewise, the frequency of her visits to North America seems to indicate her "internationalization" as an actress. Sarah stayed for long periods in the United States, particularly at the end of her career, where she performed not only in theatres but also in improvised spaces.[15]

In addition to anglophone spectators, other audiences were also essential to the strategy of her international career as a *vedette*. Indeed, her tours encompassed a large number of countries whose importance was not negligible. In this context, Latin America emerged as an attractive space for artists of the nineteenth century, despite the long travel time from Europe and even the risk of contracting diseases.[16] From the 1850s onward, despite lacking the touring infrastructure available in the United States, countries like Brazil started to seem interesting to foreign managers and tour producers. Due to its recent economic development and to urban and technological transformations, Brazil's main cities, especially its capital at that time, not only had theatres for welcoming big artists, but also offered a potential audience.[17]

Indeed, similarly to what happened in some European capitals (although to a lesser degree), Rio de Janeiro had also witnessed a transformation of its urban and cultural space. Clearly, in the course of the nineteenth century, a kind of entertainment industry assembled itself specifically in the country's capital. With the opening of entertainment venues and new forms of recreation, in addition to the influx of foreign companies and

plays, theatre, as a business, also imposed itself in Rio de Janeiro – and, to a lesser extent, also in other urban centres of Brazil.



French artists, in particular, found in the Brazilian capital a very fertile and welcoming ground, and this was mostly due to the accentuated Francophilia that characterized the local intellectual and economic elites. Indeed, to Brazilian artists and theatre critics, France and the French theatre represented some sort of model to be followed for the construction of Brazilian national theatre.[18] More than its theatre, French culture itself fascinated the Brazilian elite,[19] dazzled by the modernity that Paris symbolized – "the theatrical capital of the nineteenth century", as Christophe Charle[20] called it.

2. "She comes to us as Sarah Bernhardt and comes to us as France". The 1886 tour

By the time she held her first tour in Brazil, Sarah Bernhardt had already travelled to many other countries, including the United States and Canada, between 1880 and 1881. First of all, it is necessary to note that Sarah Bernhardt was not the first *vedette* to visit Rio de Janeiro, then capital of the country, and São Paulo, a city undergoing economic development at the time (thanks, mainly, to the thriving coffee industry of the late nineteenth century). It is true that, by the time the French actress's tour arrived in Brazil, these cities already figured in the itinerary of other greatly renowned artists, such as Adelaide Ristori and Eleonora Duse.[21] However, regarding the French theatrical presence in the country, the *Divine*'s tour may be considered a landmark event, for Sarah Bernhardt's theatrical company was considered to be the most important and respected act to have ever visited the nation. So, on the one hand, her visit contributed significantly to the consolidation of the principles of the *star system*,[22] namely the cult of celebrity,

given that, by this point in time, Sarah was one of the most important media stars of the nineteenth century. On the other hand, the 1886 tour constituted the first direct encounter between the local public and the great French theatrical repertoire.[23]

Furthermore, as mentioned above, in addition to the Francophile culture that was being intensely nurtured by the Brazilian elite of that period, the theatre performed by Sarah Bernhardt, the "daughter" of *Comédie-Française*, the most important French theatre, was perceived as a kind of model for artists and local authors. Because of that, Sarah Bernhardt's tour acquired a unique importance. On May 27, 1886, the important politician and journalist Joaquim Nabuco published in one of the most distinguished newspapers of the time a long welcoming article addressed to the French actress, notably evoking the importance of the occasion for the country.

> We, however, will praise her twice: because she comes to us as Sarah Bernhardt and comes to us as France. For the first time in our history, we have the honour to welcome French glory in our country. The actress [...] is the ambassador of the French spirit in its most elevated character. She represents the pinnacle of that nation's theatre, [France] being the only nation in our time to have a theatre, and the only nation to have in its theatre a tradition, a school, an education.
>
> This is the art that Sarah Bernhardt comes to present us with its most perfect model, and we owe her a debt of gratitude, for thus allowing our people to see the original of the great French creations, of which they had only seen pale copies.[24]

Already familiar to hearing stories about the *vedette*, of both her talent and personal life, the Brazilian elite would finally see the greatest French star *with their own eyes*. Indeed, if Sarah's first tour in Brazil was a landmark, it was not unprecedented at all. The repertoire staged by the artist was already, to a great extent, widely known to the audience, thanks to translations, adaptations, and also tours by other companies performing the same plays.

Besides, the press, in general, had long been helping to publicize the artist's fame in Brazil, spreading rumours regarding her personal life or her work while still a member in the *Comédie-Française*, and even publishing lithographs featuring the artist.

The supposed lack of originality, far from driving away the French actress's audience, was not a deterrent factor to the success of her first tour. On the contrary, by announcing the coming of Sarah Bernhardt years before, the press created a favourable environment to welcome the actress in Rio de Janeiro.

The internationally publicized image of the woman and the artist, printed in postcards and newspapers, helped to create a place for Sarah Bernhardt in the imagination of her potential Brazilian audience. These mediatic and artistic flows, regarding both Sarah Bernhardt and her repertoire, acted, therefore, in the sense defined by Arjun Appadurai for the concept of mediascapes: "providing a large and complex repertoire of images and narratives to viewers throughout the world."[25] In fact, the circulation of newspapers was crucial for the success of the tours undertaken by the French celebrity, also because they helped to form an audience capable of understanding her performances.

After all, the transatlantic circulation of theatre reviews in France favoured the assimilation, by the Brazilian intellectual elite, of the principal theatrical ideas trending in Paris. That being the case, Joaquim Nabuco declared, in his welcoming article for Sarah Bernhardt, a response to the Parisian critic Jules Lemaître:

THEATRO LUCINDA.

NOVA EMPREZA

Companhia dramatica dirigida pelo artista Furtado Coelho

DA QUAL FAZEM PARTE O MESMO ARTISTA E A 1ª ACTRIZ PORTUGUEZA

LUCINDA FURTADO COELHO

HOJE Quinta-feira 10 de julho HOJE

2ª recita de assignatura — 7ª representação da primorosa peça em 4 actos, original de V. Sardou (inedita), intitulada

FÉDORA

O papel de Fédora é desempenhado pela 1ª actriz Luciana Furtado Coelho; o de Loris Ipanoff pelo artista Furtado Coelho

Tomam parte igualmente todos os artistas da companhia

Scenario do notavel artista Claudio Rossi. Mobilias e tapeçarias feitas expressamente em Paris.

MISE-EN-SCÈNE DO ARTISTA FURTADO COELHO

Terminará o espectaculo com a comedia em 1 acto, original de Baptista Machado

NÃO TEM TITULO

Começa ás 8 1/4 horas em ponto

O resto de bilhetes á venda na bilheteria do theatro.

AVISO. — As encommendas respeitam-se até á uma hora da tarde; sem excepção de pessoa. Preços do costume.

Amanhã, sexta-feira — Recita extraordinaria — FÉDORA. Os bilhetes estão á venda.

No principio da proxima semana, 3ª recita de assignatura com a comedia em 3 actos — DIVORCIEMO NOS.

A seguir — O MESTRE DE FORJAS, peça em 5 actos de G. Ohnet.

— Celestino da Silva, empresario.

Announcement published in the newspaper A Gazeta de Notícias *about the performance of* Fédora*, by* Victorien Sardou*, in Rio de Janeiro, by the company of the Portuguese playwright Furtado Coelho, on July 10, 1884, two years prior to the first performance of the same show by Sarah Bernhardt in Brazil.*

[...] A French critic reminded her that she left for countries lacking art and literature, where the audience appreciates the talent according to the price of the seats, and demanded – prescribing, in other words – that, upon her return to Paris, she should not leave behind anything of hers to these barbarians. Venerators of French talent admire it enough to forgive this weakness in some writers, that is, believing Paris is the world's entire thinking matter. [...] In Brazil, the great artist will certainly not meet the critics of her "premières", but will meet the type of audience that makes great actors: the audience that understands them.

> During her tour, she will see more wealth in the audiences of Buenos Aires, more aristocracy in those of Santiago, more Parisian imitation in those of Havana; therefore, nowhere will she find, besides an audience so passionate about theatre, a minority that holds so much of the French talent. She may debut as such, certain that in this country she is still in her own country's intellectual territory. Nowhere else will she better attest to the accuracy of the verse so often heard on stage – *Tout homme a deux pays: le sien et puis la France.*[26]

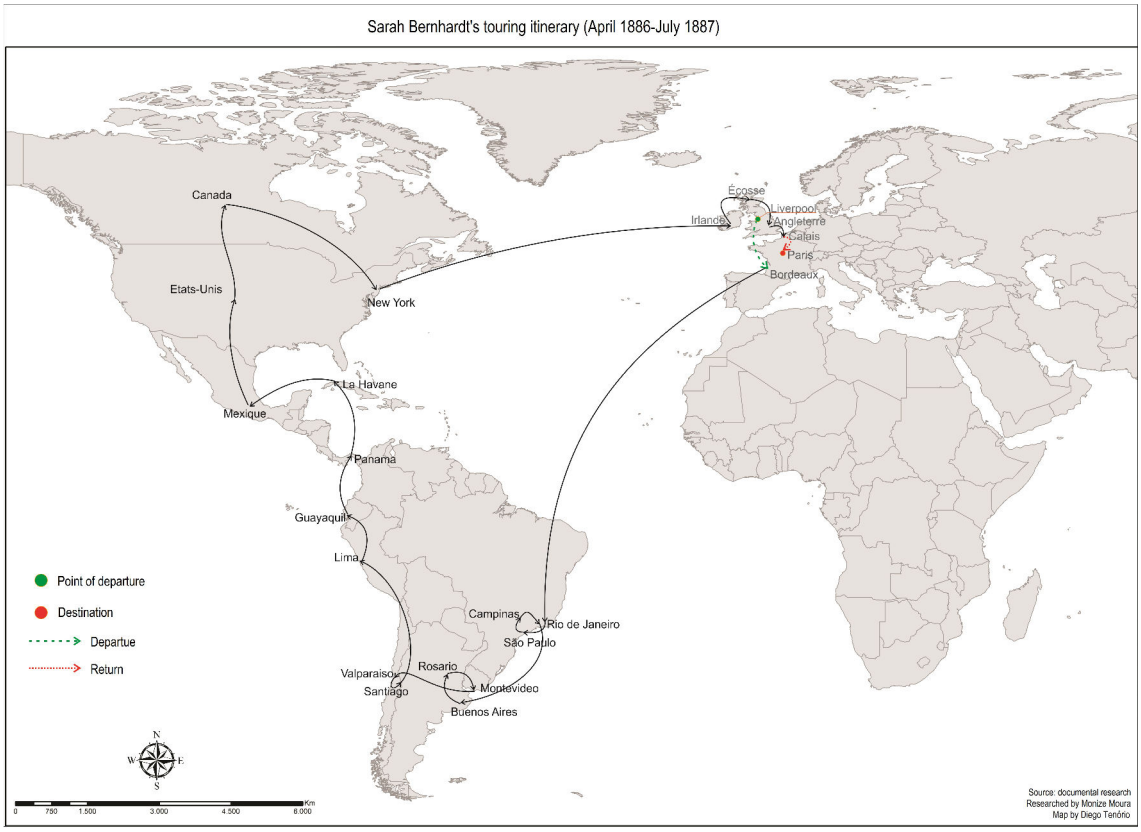
As noted by Joaquim Nabuco, Sarah Bernhardt's passage through Brazil was actually part of a broader itinerary, which included several cities of South and Central America, besides the United States and Canada, according to the following map.

In this sense, integrating the route travelled by the celebrated artist was, for the Brazilian intellectual, something to feel proud about. The occasion also served as an important confirmation: the identification of the elite with French culture and their

desire to definitively integrate the *space* through which the main world stars would transit. On account of this, for Joaquim Nabuco, Sarah Bernhardt's performance in Brazil was just as important as the positive reception that should be offered to her. After all, to the Brazilian Francophile elite, the 1886 tour was a matter of showing to the "*centre of the world*", Paris, that Rio de Janeiro was not the capital of a country of barbarians or enriched savages. On the contrary, in this city, Sarah Bernhardt would feel comfortable, almost as if she was in France, at least on an intellectual level, given that the Brazilian people – at least its elite, having been educated in French – had incorporated the values and the literature of their guest's country. Therefore, far from the exotic or wild imaginary, the Brazilian elite had a double identity, according to Nabuco: it belonged to Brazil, due to a geographical circumstance, but equally to France, due to its intellectual foundation. This was the reason why, the author ensured, the Brazilian audience *would understand* Sarah Bernhardt, and, through her, the French spirit itself.

Lithograph with the image of Sarah Bernhardt, published in Brazil in 1882.[27]

For a young country[28] far from the centre of western culture epitomized by London and Paris, Sarah Bernhardt's visit was just like the great sports competitions of today, if I may dare to make this comparison:[29]



Map of Sarah Bernhardt's touring itinerary between 1886 and 1887.

the echoes of events being broadcast all over the international media and putting the country that is hosting the competitions under the spotlight. It was, and that is what Nabuco's words single out, a moment when the *World's Eye*, or the *centre of the world*, would turn to the periphery, to Brazil. And this was not all. For him, the occasion of the tour turned Rio de Janeiro into the very centre of the world: In this moment, the first of 'French theatres' is not *House of Molière*, it is *São Pedro de Alcântara theatre*".

Thus, the presence of Sarah Bernhardt in Brazil acquired a symbolic meaning that exceeded the individual dimension of the artist's success. The honourable artist, according to Nabuco, was coming to Brazil as Sarah Bernhardt, but also representing France. This way, going to the theatre to watch her plays was having the possibility to go to Paris, or as if France itself came to Brazil, incarnated by the actress.

The honourable actress would have the power, through her presence, of elevating the country to the same status as the great *civilized* nations:

> [...] Paris, London, Saint Petersburg, New York, all these great capitals tried to exceed each other in the admiration that was given to them. [...] In Brazil, as in all places, Sarah Bernhardt finds the uniformity of her celebrity. Nature has changed; the buffered sun of the north was succeeded by the burning sun of the tropics, but the meridian of glory is always over her head, the road she walks is the same in Rio de Janeiro and in Moscow: it is the triumphal road that the

> artistic royalties of our century find anywhere fantasy takes them, embroidered by the eternal human crowd, which seems to be another, but is always the same.[30]

According to Nabuco's logic, Sarah Bernhardt's visit would be a decisive event because it would somehow mark the entrance of the country into the circle of nations used to receiving great artistic personalities. It is interesting to see the same reasoning in Australia, on the occasion of the actress's first tour of the country. According to Fraser:

> Australians, in the lead-up to Federation, were desperately seeking recognition as a unique and significant nation and Sarah's visit was seen as an element of this; to the *Age* it was 'a compliment paid by her to the taste and judgement of Australian audiences; her coming marks the progress we have made in wealth, and perhaps in culture... the favourites of our kinsfolk in the northern hemisphere are beginning to reckon Australia amongst the countries which count'. The *Argus* agreed that 'her advent marks an epoch in the dramatic annals of Australia' and that it 'is precisely by our appreciation in such matters that we proclaim our intellectual fellowship or otherwise with the rest of thinking world... for while we have had several who rank in the front rank, this is the first opportunity of welcoming one who is incomparably the greatest in her own branch of art, whose sole supremacy is unquestioned by followers of her own calling, and whose queenship is universally acknowledged.[31]

Joaquim Nabuco, similarly to the Australian newspaper, thought that Sarah Bernhardt's visit would include Rio de Janeiro in the ranks of other important capitals, such as Paris, London, Saint Petersbourg, New York and Moscow – that is, inside a "*Civilization*" network: "the triumphal road that the artistic royalties of our century find anywhere fantasy takes them".

The image of the *road* employed by Nabuco evokes quite convincingly the process of building a global space in the nineteenth century, more precisely in relation to the role played by theatre in this phenomenon. In other words, the path taken by great artists would inevitably outline a sketch of a common space, *Civilization*. Built through a selective process, this *Civilization* constituted then a kind of community that shared western values. This explains the observation made by Nabuco: "all the great capitals tried to outdo each other in the admiration that was given to them". Well, if Sarah was praised everywhere she went, this did not happen only because the audiences yielded to her stage presence or even because they deeply understood the roles performed by her, but because applauding Sarah Bernhardt (even without understanding a single word in French) had become a kind of commonplace. So, glorifying the artist already anointed by the French and English press was also to state a belonging to a community of readers and viewers: to be part of the "eternal human crowd, which seems to be another, but is always the same". In other words, more than understanding the language, or the *génie français*, what these viewers and readers had in common was the culture of a manner of theatrical production where the *star system* was one of the main ingredients.

In this sense, the international enthusiasm for Sarah Bernhardt is also explained by common social, economic, and urban changes, albeit at different levels, occurring in the different countries visited by her. In order to admire the actress, it was necessary to know the basic vocabulary that would allow an understanding of her: the culture of *stars*, the *star system*, this being the result of an increasingly consolidated urban culture, notably in major European cities. Therefore, admiring Sarah Bernhardt also meant sharing the

values of an urban culture associated with progress that transcended the limits of Francophilia. In summary: it was a question of being modern in the sense observed by Portuguese writer Eça de Queiroz, in 1880.

> Little by little, the word becomes a falsification of the Boulevard and Regent Street. And the model of both cities is so invasive that, the more a race loses its originality and gets lost under the French or British standards, the more it considers itself civilized and worthy of applause by the *Times*.[32]

Note that, when I speak of Sarah Bernhardt's potential Brazilian spectators, I refer to a very small portion of the local sphere, which was the intellectual and economic elite, mainly located in major Brazilian cities. The international theatrical routes were selective, for select translocal audiences. The desire, by a portion of the Brazilian elite, to be modern and also part of the global imaginary, also responded to the interest of breaking away from the rest of the population, mestizo or black, referring to the old colonial past. Certainly, the theatre of Sarah Bernhardt travelled and was propagated, spreading reception and production codes that became internationalized, but this does not mean that it was a democratic process. Quite the opposite, by the way, as these global and local cross-overs resulted from a series of disputes, true cultural battles, reminding us of the writings of Edward W. Said[33] about centre-suburb clashes, from which the "Brazilian national identity" was forged.

3. The reception of Sarah Bernhardt's great performances in Brazil during the 1893 tour

The development of an urban culture, technological processes, and the press *boom*, through the circulation of newspapers, were some of the main factors that enabled the multiplication of artistic tours. This new reality, developed throughout the nineteenth century, which concerned the construction of a global imaginary space, has, without a doubt, strongly influenced the artistic creation of the time – be it with regard to the performance of travelling actors, or the exhibition of the spectacles, or even concerning the very dramaturgical writings of certain authors, who saw their plays travelling the world through tours or adaptations and translations to other languages. The example of Victorien Sardou, author of great success in Paris during the late nineteenth century, is, in this sense, emblematic. When Sarah left the *Comédie-Française* to pursue an independent career, he became one of Sarah Bernhardt's most important contributors, having written plays tailored specially for her,[34] which ensured several triumphs in the French capital.[35]

It is curious to notice that, although he was a revered author, who frequented the French dramaturgical elite and had his plays performed in renowned theatres of Paris, Sardou was, as mentioned above, repeatedly targeted with harsh criticism for the dramaturgical quality of his plays, some of them accused of being "export commodities". For example, Francisque Sarcey has made the following comment with regard to *La Tosca*, which premiered in 1887, in Paris:

> [...] International audiences are crazy about beautiful spectacles. It was necessary that the action of the play, being fast and brutal, served as a pretext for luxurious performances; and that these actions were not to be essential to the drama, so it was not impossible, if necessary, to suppress, reduce, or modify them. (...) It was, in fact, necessary that *La Tosca* achieved success in Paris, if we wanted it to triumph in New York or Valparaiso. It was necessary then, when writing simultaneously for spectators from both worlds, to appear to think only about the Parisians, in order to avoid irritating the crowds [36].

Reacting to the marketization of Parisian theatre, Sarcey largely attributed to the tours the cause of the dramaturgical choices made by Sardou, who, according to him, transformed his dramas into fragile plays, made more for the eyes than for the ears. Consequently, this would have influenced the very form of acting of Sarah Bernhardt: the attention of non-Francophone audiences demanded, to Sarcey, not only an agile theatre (full of action), but also a visual theatre (where pantomime was fundamental).

I mean, besides her qualities in declamation, for which she was duly recognized, it was necessary for Sarah Bernhardt, who was known for her "golden voice", to attribute a preponderant role to gesture in her way of acting. In summary, moving between several cities, the actress had to shape her work for a multiple, more heterogeneous and transnational audience.

In 1890, the reception to *Cléopatre*, by V. Sardou and Emile Moreau, in Paris, was no different. The play, which had been long awaited by the press, was greatly celebrated for the beauty of its scenarios and costumes, but heavily criticized from a dramaturgical standpoint.

Noël and Stoullig refrained from commenting on the subject: "Not much, in fact, it is best to say nothing: this is the drama devoid of action which was exhibited in Porte-Saint-Martin."[37] Sarcey, in an even harsher tone, compared the play to a pseudo-historical magic show, strongly criticizing the Sarah-Sardou partnership:

> And *Cléopâtre* is nothing but a pseudo-historic magic show, with a pinch of bravado in each sketch for the prima donna. When Victorien Sardou works for Sarah Bernhardt, he reduces his ambitions. He resigns himself to simply be the one to put his talent at one's disposal. He sculpts scenes for her, taken from a certain theme, in which she can perform alone or with the assistance of some insignificant colleague. When she is abroad on a tour, she puts these scenes in her luggage, this is possible, along with her costumes and the ones used by the extras; then, she adds whatever can be carried from the scenarios by train or ship, and advances above the waters.[38]

To Sarcey, therefore, the association between Sarah Bernhardt and Sardou did not provide good results, *Cléopâtre* being a play with no great literary merit, written especially for the actress's tours (scenes that did not demand other extremely talented supporting actors, and that were also easy to adapt on tours). Likewise, Gilbert Augustin-Thierry considered the play an "export commodity" and its performances in Paris to be nothing but an advertising strategy on a global scale:

> Oh, I know, the new play belongs to this special genre that the Parisian trade calls "export commodity". In no less than two months, this *Cléopâtre* will have emigrated (it has already been sold for *a great deal of money*), it will exhibit its beauties, which are still a secret to us, to the eyes of the most gullible citizens of Chicago [...] Without a doubt, in Paris, the authors just

wanted to perform a preview, and perhaps ask us to help them by advertising the play. Imagine how guaranteed the triumph for *Cléopâtre*'s *barnum* would be if, from New York to San Francisco, if, in every corner of the "young nation", an advertisement would be seen: "The extraordinary French hit! The wonder of wonders of the ancient world! CLEOPATRA!!!... SERPENT VIVANT!!!..." Yes, it has to be said, I am afraid that our audience will lend itself to this combination.[39] In fact, to the eyes of most Parisian critics, the magnificence of the scenarios and costumes, the presence of music, of a *corps de ballet* and extras did not ensure the quality of the recent production of the Sarah-Sardou partnership back then. From their perspective, the elements that made *Cléopâtre* a drama *à grand spectacle*, in addition to experimenting with peculiarities borrowed from variety shows (e.g. the presence of a live serpent on stage), had the main purpose of capturing the admiration of the foreign audience, as the play would soon tour outside of France. In fact, in early 1890, after performing several tours in Europe, two tours in North America and one in South America, Sarah Bernhardt prepared for another long enterprise. In her first world tour, between 1891 and 1893, the actress visited numerous locations and clearly exhibited a repertoire that was broader than the one staged in the previous decade.[40]

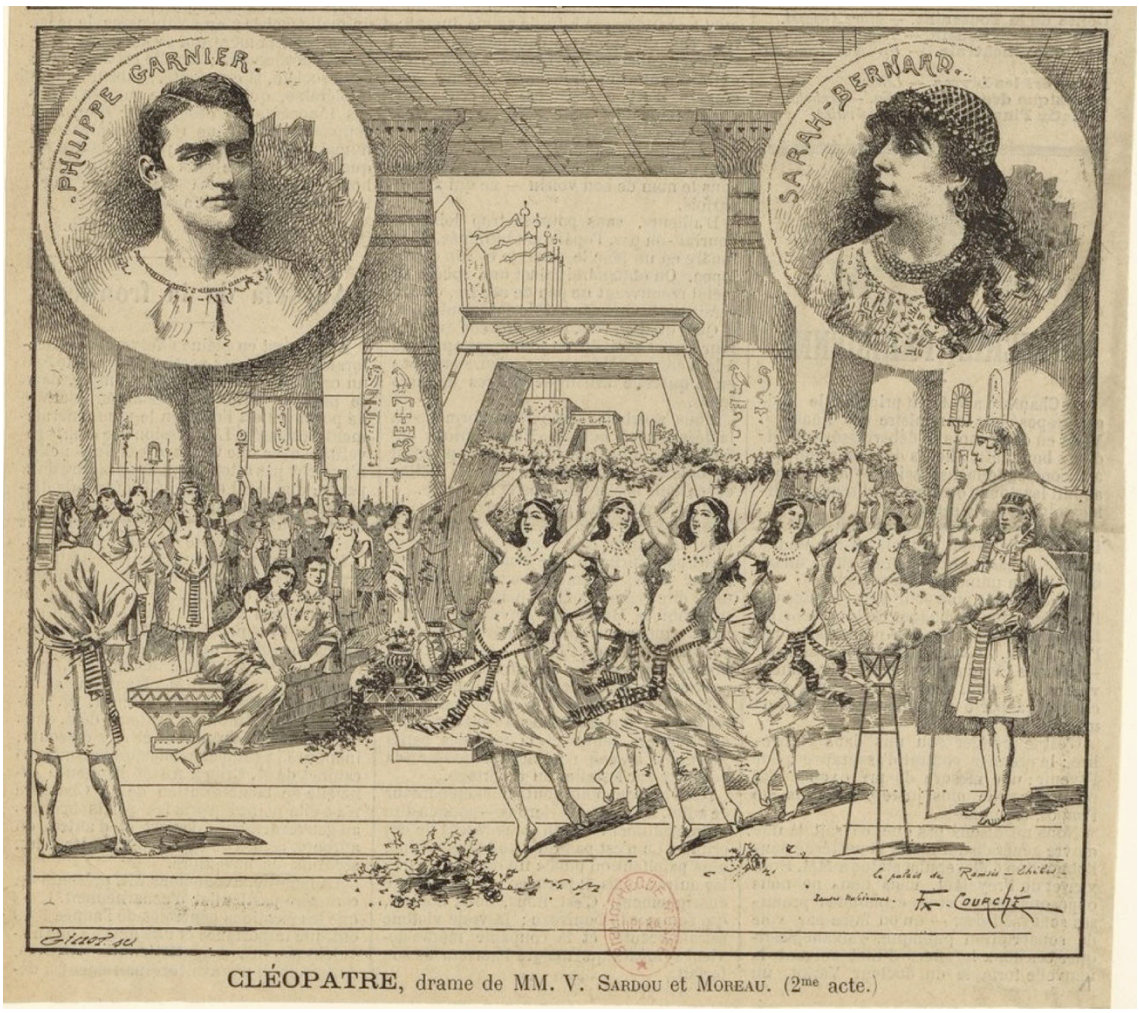
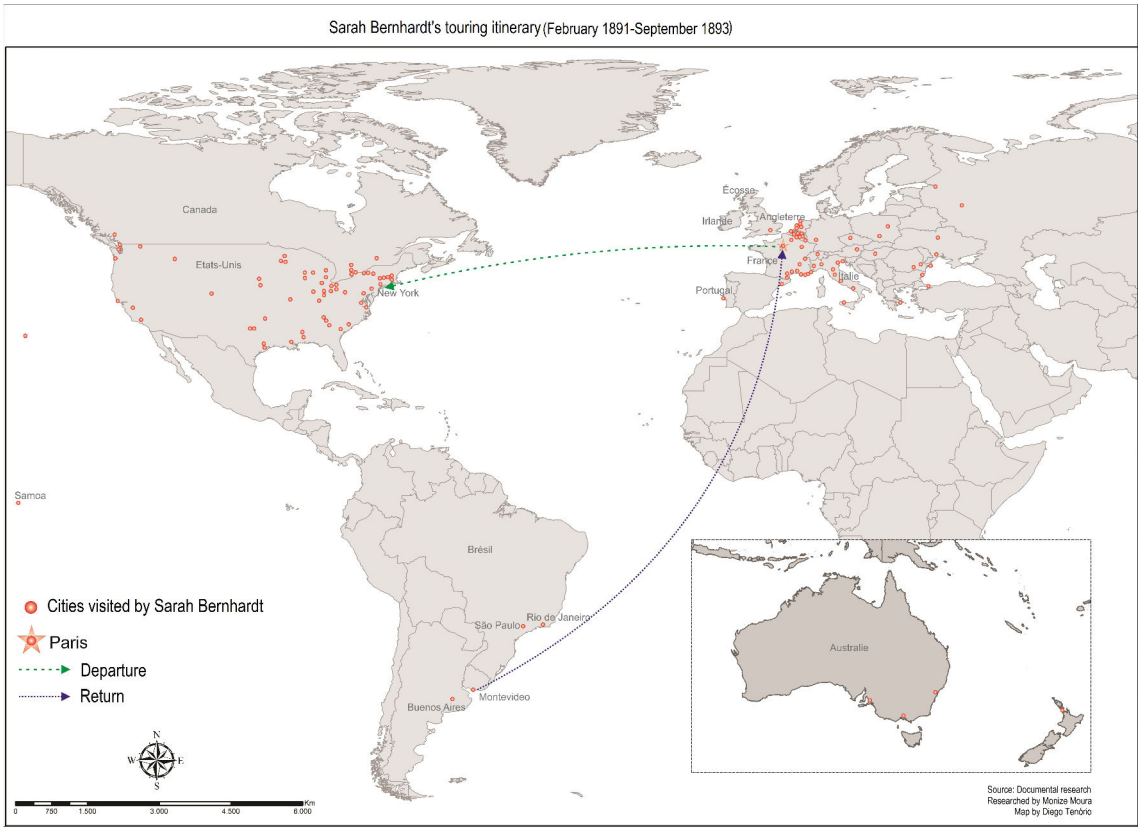


Illustration of the show Cléopâtre *published in the newspaper* Le Petit Messager parisien *on November 4th, 1890.*



Map of Sarah Bernhardt's touring itinerary between 1891 and 1893.

Considering the length of travel and the vast itinerary mapped out for the tour, it was natural that Sarah Bernhardt tried to offer a varied repertoire that was capable of conquering non-Francophone audiences. It is curious, in this sense, to notice that plays written by Sardou, indeed, occupied an important place in the 1893 Brazilian tour. In fact, Sarah Bernhardt premiered both in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo playing the role of Floria Tosca, in *La Tosca*. It seems evident that, for Brazilian audiences, the awe of spectacle was a major attraction and that a triumph in Paris would guarantee, at the least, international interest in the play. This way, the analysis made by Parisian critics, who were very skeptical about the artistic quality of the tours, seemed to be correct in the sense of realizing that the internationalization of Sarah Bernhardt's career had started to influence her new creations, Sardou's writing, and even the performance of the actress.

However, a closer examination of the response to the performances abroad raises questions that could complicate, if not contradict, the assessment made by Parisian critics of the influence of the opinion of foreign audiences over Sarah Bernhardt's work. To begin with, a very basic question about the play *Cleópatre* attracts my attention. How much of this majestic show – composed of dance routines, numerous extras moving on stage, rich costumes, and panoramic scenarios that required efficient theatrical machinery – was actually performed during the 1891-1893 world tour?

The examination of the *Cléopâtre* poster, produced for the Rio de Janeiro tour in 1893, raises important questions in this sense.[41] Notice that the poster tries to list the six sketches that compose the show: *La barque de Cléopâtre*. *Une salle du palais à Memphis*, *Le messager, Actium*, *Marc Antoine et Cléopâtre* and *La mort de Cléopâtre*.

Besides providing a sort of libretto of the play for the uninformed viewer, the featured pictures clearly show the extent to which they were supposed to seduce the Brazilian audience, just as they had seduced the Parisians.[42] It is also interesting to notice that the advertisement for *Cléopâtre* sought to make it clear that the spectacle would be exhibited with the same costumes and accessories used at the *Théâtre de la Porte-Saint-Martin*, where the play had premiered. Furthermore, according to the poster, the spectacle would present new scenarios, this time designed by the Italian Rovescalli, from Milan.[43] The change to the original scenario, should not, in principle, have harmed the quality of the show, given that Rovescalli was, then, well known for his work in the *Scala* theatre, in Milan. Thus, his name's presence on the poster implied that the *mise-en-scène* showcased in Brazil would be well taken care of, including new scenarios, instead of pieces that had been worn out by the coming and going of the numerous tours performed by Sarah Bernhardt between 1891 and 1893. However, according to the critics below, this does not seem to have been the case.

With regard to *Cléopâtre* in Rio de Janeiro, *Jornal do Brazil* observed, for example, the richness of the costumes, while stating the mediocrity of the scenarios:

Sarah Bernhardt, admirably seconded by her aesthetic identity [...] dazzled the audience with her *toilettes*, in which precious stones and golden gem necklaces sparkled [...] Even if the scenarios were not sufficiently sumptuous as they should be, in order to somehow portray the land of pharaohs, they had a local appearance just the same.[44]

The critic Chrispiniano da Fonseca was even more severe when considering that *Cléopâtre*'s *mise-en-scène* in Brazil was below the level of the spectacle created by Sardou and Moreau, performed in Paris.

> The *mise-en-scène* of *Cleopatra* in Rio de Janeiro is, as said before, not enough; scenarios are not as they should be, the furniture is often apologizing to the audience for appearing on stage like this – what a bizarre irony of destiny! –, creating the setting for a time when this furniture had not yet been invented. It happens, for example, with the bed where Cleopatra hides, which was used in the *Dama das Camelias* the day before yesterday, and even the drapery was the same.[45]

Considering the opinion of Chrispiniano regarding the visual aspects of the rendition of Sardou and Moreau's drama in Brazil, it is appropriate to question whether the information announced on the poster of *Cléopâtre* concerning new scenarios, created by the Italian Rovescalli, was really plausible or if, on the contrary, it was simply false publicity created by Sarah Bernhardt's entrepreneurs.[46] It is also interesting that Chrispiniano da Fonseca's article has more mentions regarding, for instance, the beauty of the music that was composed for the production by Xavier Leroux – without, however, evoking the way it had been performed in Rio de Janeiro: "To the sound of zithers, gong-tubas, and tambourines that played a very typical and cut-up composition by Leroux, Clopatra arrives deliciously in her faded blue robes".[47] Whether Leroux's music was actually performed by anyone or not is, as yet, unknown. Were there musicians especially hired for the tour, just like the actors? Or was it a Brazilian orchestra, recruited for the occasion, that played the music for the production, or even one that belonged to the local

theatre (and that being, perhaps, such a common practice in those days that journalists such as Chrispiniano did not consider mentioning this in their critiques)?[48]

It is, therefore, curious that the shows that had been, according to the Parisian verdict, created *for the foreigners*, disappointed so many Brazilian journalists, especially with regard to aesthetic essence of the enactment. Instead of being captured by the beauty of the scenarios, the attention of Brazilian critics had been focused mainly on Sarah Bernhardt's performance, her delivery of the text, using her vocal attributes, as well as her dramatic pauses.[49]

Ultimately, much more than the sumptuousness of the scenery adapted to her tours, it was Sarah Bernhardt's stage presence – beautifully wrapped in dazzling costumes – that brought in Brazilian audiences and favoured the good reception of Sardou's plays as performed by the actress in Brazil. Of course, it is difficult to find out exactly to what extent these critical reviews expressed the opinion of Brazilian spectators of that time.

However – considering that newspapers did not mention the *mise-en-scène* and, in fact, that there were numerous negative allusions to the mediocrity of the scenery –, it seems very unlikely that the visual aspects of the 1893 performances appealed to Brazilian audiences, except for the costumes donned by the *vedette* (which were widely discussed in the newspapers).

Thus, one must question whether it was indeed appropriate to designate such plays as "export commodities"; due to the importance they would have given to the aesthetic nature of the performance or the rhythm of the action, seeking to seduce the foreign spectator. Regarding these elements of the production, it seems fair to say that such plays pleased the Parisians more than the Brazilians. The French could watch the imposing original performances, while non-Francophone audiences proved to be disappointed by the mediocrity of scenarios and the scene accessories adapted for tours.

As we have seen, it is evident that Sarah Bernhardt's tours influenced the writing of an author like Sardou and that he probably conceived some of his plays with a view to them being "exported" from France. However, this was a much subtler process. For example, the aforementioned *La Tosca*: a captivating play of intrigue that should be performed as a dynamic show, able to lead the average spectator – who is not necessarily attentive to the complexities of the text or to its literary aspects – by the hand. However, perhaps plot comprehension was not that essential when trying to grab the attention of non-Francophone audiences, especially because there were no handouts or booklets with the translated text.[50]

Evidently, the plot summaries published by newspapers were very important in this regard, as they unravelled each drama's intrigue. However, everything indicates that Brazilian spectators cared less for the rhythm of the show, driven by its chain of actions, than for Sarah Bernhardt's performance in key moments of the play – these were, in fact, already highly anticipated by the audience. Notably, in this sense, the *Diário de Notícias* newspaper published that, during the tour of 1886, most spectators had attended the theatre just for a few moments of the show (those when the great star was onstage), leaving the room at several points of the presentation:

Confident as it is that one only attends the S. Pedro [theatre] to admire the talent and art of Sarah Bernhardt, the audience is not bothered by any missing part of the drama or the comedy; it waits until the last moment and watches only what is deemed worthy; that is, the main scenes, usually the endings of final acts.[51]

THEATRO [illegible]RICO

(TEMPORADA 1893)

Empreza LUIZ DUCCI

TOURNÉE

SARAH BERNHARDT

Direction M.rs E. Abbey et Maurice Grau

ADMINISTRATEUR GENERAL : MR. VICTOR ULLMANN

Segunda-feira 19 de Junho de 1893

Terceira recita de assignatura

Primeira e unica representação do afamado drama em 5 actos e 6 quadros de Mrs. Victorien Sardou e Emile Moreau, musica de scene de Mr. Xavier Leroux.

O ultimo grande successo de Pariz

CLEOPATRA

Protogonista Sarah Bernhardt

PERSONAGENS

Cléopâtre	Mme. SARAH BERNHARDT.	Marc Antoine	MM. ALBERT DARMONT
Octavie	» Jane Méa.	Kephren	» Rebel.
Charmiane	» Valdey	Demetrius	» Piron.
Iras	» Seylor.	Dellius	» Deneubourg.
Un Esclave	» Durand.	Un Esclave	» Munié.
Olympus	MM. Hems.	Dercetas	» Angelo.
Juba	» Cartercau.	Thyrseus	» Decor.
Le Secretaire	» Movel.	Le Gouverneur	» Lemer.
Strepsiade	» Duberry.	Octave	» Deval.
Un officier	» Dinard.	L'intendant	» Libert.
		Le Notable	» Albouy.

Costumes et accessorres du theatre de la porte Saint Martin de Paris
Decors nouveaux de Mr. Rovescalli de Milan.

1.° Tableau: La barque de Cléopâtre
2.° Tableau: Une salle du Palais à memphis
3. Tableau: Le messager
4.° Tableau: A Actium
5.° Tableau: Marc Antoine et Cléopâtre
6.° Tableau: La mort de Cléopâtre

PREÇOS AVULSOS

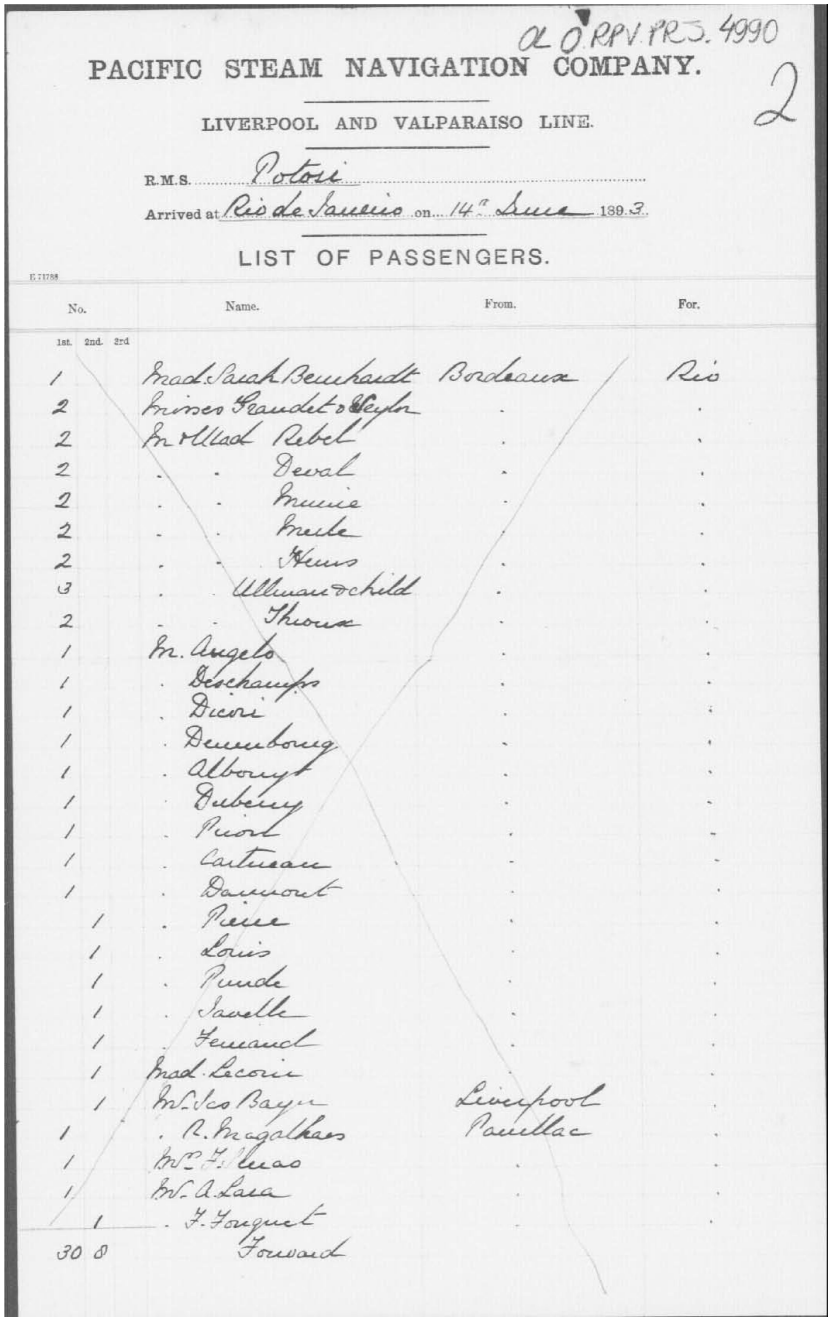
Camarotes de 1.ª ordem com 5 entradas	60$000	Cadeiras de 2.ª classe	7$000
Camarotes de 2.ª ordem com 5 entradas	50$000	Galeria numerada de 1.ª fila	4$000
Cadeiras de 1.ª classe	14$000	Dita de 2.ª e 3.ª fila	3$000
Varandas	14$000	Entrada de camarotes	4$000

Os bilhetes a venda no escriptorio da empreza na Rua do Ouvidor n. 107 e na bilheteria do theatro depois das cinco horas da tarde.

Principia ás 8 1/4.

Typ., rua Sete de Setembro 171

Poster of Cléopâtre, *Sarah's tour in Brazil in 1893.*
Source: Museu dos Teatros, *Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.*



PACIFIC STEAM NAVIGATION COMPANY.

LIVERPOOL AND VALPARAISO LINE.

R.M.S. Potosi

Arrived at Rio de Janeiro on 14th June 1893.

LIST OF PASSENGERS.

No. 1st.	2nd.	3rd	Name.	From.	For.
1			Mad. Sarah Bernhardt	Bordeaux	Rio
2			Princes Baudet de Ceylon	.	.
2			Mr Allard Rebel	.	.
2			. . Deval	.	.
2			. . Brunie	.	.
2			. . Brule	.	.
2			. . Hems	.	.
3			. . Ullmann & child	.	.
2			. . Thoux	.	.
1			Mr. Angelo	.	.
1			. Deschamps	.	.
1			. Dicori	.	.
1			. Demmborg	.	.
1			. Albouy	.	.
1			. Dubeny	.	.
1			. Picot	.	.
1			. Cartusan	.	.
1			. Dumont	.	.
	1		. Pierre	.	.
	1		. Louis	.	.
	1		. Pinde	.	.
	1		. Savelle	.	.
	1		. Fernand	.	.
	1		Mad. Lecoin	.	.
	1		Mr. Jos Bayen	Liverpool	.
1			. R. Magalhaes	Pauillac	.
1			Mr. F. Neas	.	.
1			Mr. A. Lara	.	.
	1		. F. Fouquet	.	.
30	8		Forward		

List of passengers aboard the Potosi, the ship that brought Sarah Bernhardt's company to Brazil in 1893 (Source: National Archives*, Brazil)*

Therefore, perhaps these key moments (usually culminating in scenes of death and excitement) better represent the main concessions to the tastes of foreign audiences made by Sardou in his writing, emphasizing the great *vedette*, eager to make her display her greatest dramatic qualities. However, there is no doubt that this feature also appealed to the taste of average viewers in Paris, which was also undeniably determined by the *star system*.

By classifying these plays as "export commodities", critics such as Francisque Sarcey tried to solely blame foreign viewers for the supposed crisis in French drama, which had become more and more commercial and directed towards excessive spectacularization. However, the matter needs to be reassessed, because theatre commodification

constituted a global process, linked to the growth of cities and the development of capitalism. In other words, the phenomenon of these tours in the nineteenth century is, logically, intrinsic to the commodification of dramatic art, which does not necessarily mean that this event was its cause.

Conclusion

First, by suggesting that the work of Sarah Bernhardt had to adapt to the desires of a transnational audience, and second, by highlighting some aspects of the reception of the actress in Brazil, my argument is that theatrical tours in the nineteenth century produced, or helped to produce, new ways of understanding and perceiving the global space. Seeking to analyze the travels of Sarah Bernhardt in Brazil as part of a broader process of cultural globalization, I sought to emphasize how her reception in Brazil was conducted and prepared by both artistic and mediatic flows.

Sarah Bernhardt in the role of Cléopâtre. Source: Bibliothèque Nationale de France.

These crucially influenced the way Brazilian audiences were able to assimilate the artist's presence. Furthermore, by suggesting that Sarah Bernhardt's career passed through a process of internationalization, I wanted to point out that her tours, in addition to connecting Brazilian audiences to Paris, also acted as a bridge connecting Brazil to another space, a global space. Like Benedict Anderson (1993), who refers to the importance of published periodicals to the possibility of conceiving an idea of a nation,

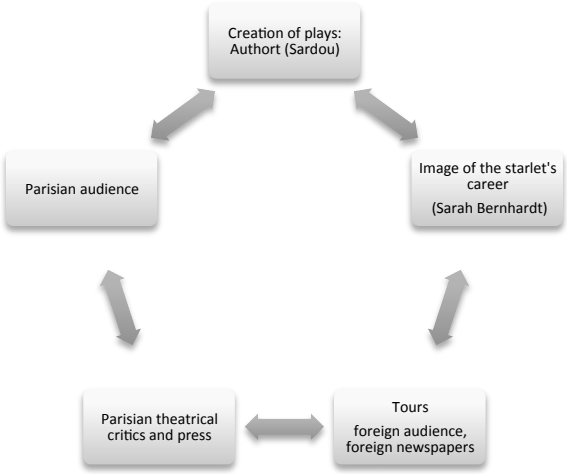
we can assert that the tours were decisive to the conception of a global sphere, where many nation-states and their people would be connected. If the theatre that was brought by Sarah Bernhardt in her luggage ended up creating a certain community of viewers at every place she visited – "an eternal human crowd", according to Joaquim Nabuco –, such a community, on the other hand, created an imagined space for itself.

Yet, once again, it is necessary to nuance this assessment more critically regarding the connections established by her world tours. Which cities integrated the theatre routes, and, after all, who was it that constituted the "human crowd", that was able to see Sarah Bernhardt, if not the main urban centres and their elites? What other routes formed by less developed urban centres – travel itineraries of less prestigious artists, perhaps – have helped build other imaginary bridges that connected different locations?[52] Such questions may reveal the selectivity of the nineteenth century globalization process, by investigating the relations of the inner city and the periphery or the socioeconomic profile of Sarah's audience members. This aspect would allow us to have a deeper understanding of the multiple (re)appropriations and updates on Sarah Bernhardt in Brazil and in different parts of the world.

In addition to this, as I tried to point out, if cultural globalization caused Brazilian theatre to be strongly influenced by the French theatre, then, inversely, French drama and the work of its artists, following the example of Sarah Bernhardt, were certainly transformed by theatrical circulation. In this sense, it is pertinent to ask whether it would be more appropriate to speak in terms of internationalization, instead of the diffusion of Parisian theatre in the nineteenth century. The word *diffusion* gives the idea of propagation or distribution abroad of finished products (the plays). It refers to a one-sided view of the cultural exchange process, considering spectators outside of Paris as simple receivers of French dramatic works. On the contrary, the word *internationalization* presupposes a bilateral or reciprocal process, where theatre, while on tour, was transformed by the attention of this other audience, to which it presented itself.

As a matter of fact, the example of Sarah Bernhardt seems to show that the theatrical production system of the nineteenth century in Paris was created in a kind of multilateral relationship between the authors, *vedettes*, and audiences from several countries, including France, besides the theatrical press of the main urban centres.

If, on the one hand, Sardou certainly considered the foreign audience when creating the texts written for Sarah Bernhardt, on the other hand, it was fundamental that his shows were successful in Paris, in order to triumph outside of France. After being scrutinized by the Parisian audience, the success of the great spectacles and *pièce à effets* in the artistic capital of Europe ensured the curiosity of the foreign audience – even if the expectations of the latter regarding the staging of plays ended up being, in reality, frustrated by the performance conditions of tours, which, in Brazil's case, were often very poor.



Press circulation performed an essential role in building up the expectations of the Brazilian audience. Intellectuals from the tropics not only commented on Parisian theatrical life, but also largely followed recurring discussions in Paris, including those on the commodification of Sarah Bernhardt, who had chosen to perform export-article plays, at the expense of a more literary theatre. The production of shows in Paris seemed, therefore, to be submitted to a complex game between the Parisian audience's aesthetic sense of taste and the expectations of foreign audiences, this being greatly determined by critics and its echoes published by local newspapers – which, in turn, were constantly in a dialogue with the French capital's dramatic criticism. This chain of relations seems fundamental, in order to understand the internationalization process of the audience's sense of taste in the context of the configuration of mass culture during the nineteenth century.

Finally, this reflection reveals that it is necessary to be very cautious regarding the use of newspapers as a historical analysis tool for these tours. As a *constitutive dimension* of theatrical life in the nineteenth century, newspapers, beyond being informative historical sources, were also true producers of discourse, of a conversation about the tours that helped to forge the idea of a global space and, in the case of the French press, ideas about the French theatre practiced outside its borders. Far from being an impartial comment, it was a point of view that tended to glorify France as a producer of world-famous plays and artists – however, attributing to tours and the exportation of French theatre the status of being causes of a supposed deterioration of its artistic quality, due to their commercial conception of dramatic art. Would this partiality of the media be only a characteristic of a past age? As discourse producers, just like the intellectuals and critics of the nineteenth century that were mentioned, we should also contrast the examples that were studied with our own academic practice. As noted by Christopher Balme and Nic Leonhardt:

> [...] the question is rather to know we can design research questions that go beyond just tracing movement (although this must also be done) and perhaps see circulation as a cultural form or structure sui generis.[53]

Lastly, it is appropriate to ask this question: to what extent does the lack of study about the phenomenon of tours (and, more specifically, about theatrical spectacles and artists that have toured) also characterize a symptom of the same dichotomy of past days, that which segregated, on the one hand, a "pure" theatre – the one made in Paris "for the

Parisians", within France's national borders –, and, on the other, an export-theatre, a bastard-theatre.

Endnotes

1 Even though the English term "globalization" and the French "mondialisation" have been initially used to describe issues concerning the geopolitics of the twentieth century (wars and conflicts), the process they imply dates from before this period, as observed by Christian Grataloup in his book on the geohistory of "mondialisation". Furthermore, Serge Gruzinski identifies the process of "mondialisation" in a period that dates well before the twentieth century, noting the importance of the Great Discoveries of the sixteenth century; cf. Serge Gruzinski, *Les quatres parties du monde: histoire d'une mondialisation* (Paris: La Martinière, 2004). In relation to the history of globalization/ "mondialisation", several authors (François Chaubet among them) emphasize the importance of the nineteenth century to this process; cf. François Chaubet, *La mondialisation culturelle* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 2013). From the theatrical standpoint, Christopher Balme insists on the importance of the transformations of that period to the creation of theatrical trade routes; cf. Christopher Balme and Nic Leonhardt, "Introduction: Theatrical trade routes", *Journal of Global Theatre History* 1 (2016): 1-9, accessed July 30, 2016, https://gthj.ub.uni-muenchen.de/issue/view/300.

2 Associated with the most important theatre in Paris, the Comédie-Française, the Conservatoire offered its students a noble gateway to a theatrical career. Considered to be the best drama school in the world at the time of Sarah Bernhardt's admission, by 1860, the Conservatoire was certainly well known for its tradition. See Anne-Martin Fugier, *Comédiennes. Les actrices en France au XIXe siècle* (Paris: Éditions Complexe, 2008), 29.

3 The Odéon, an official national theatre, had great prestige with the public and theatre critics. However, as noted by Jean-Claude Yon, this theatre was, throughout the nineteenth century, "unfrequented and mocked, because of its relatively distant geographical location" (the theatre was located on the left bank of the Seine, while most venues were on the other side of the river). Nonetheless, during the 1860s, the Odéon was still a distinguished theatre, just like the Comédie-Française, designed to spread the great French dramatic repertoire. According to the *Almanach de l'étranger à Paris* of 1867, the Odéon was a "theatre frequented particularly by students" and featured "plays of the old French theatre repertoire, comedies and tragedies in prose and verse." See *Almanach de l'étranger à Paris: guide pratique pour 1867* (Paris: Amyot Éditeur, 1867).

4 While vaudeville and operetta abounded in private theatres in Paris, the *Comédie-Française* (the capital's first theatre) projected itself as the last bastion of the great French repertoire. Existing since 1680, this official theatre was, indeed, a place of acclamation to authors and performers.

5 *Comédie-Française, Théâtre-Français* or *Maison de Molière*.

6 The *Porte Sain-Martin* (1883-1893), *Renaissance* (1893-1899) and *Sarah-Bernhardt* (1899-1923) theatres.

7 Adelina Patti (1843-1919), an Italian soprano, and Kristina Nilsson (1843-1921), a Swedish soprano.

8 Virginie Déjazet (1798-1875), a French actress, also owned a theatre named after her, between 1859 and 1870; Hugues Bouffé (1800-1888), a French actor; Pierre Chéri Lafont (1797-1873), a French actor; Etienne Arnal (1794-1872), a French actor.

9 Francisque Sarcey, " Chronique théâtrale", *Le Temps*, April 26, 1880.

10 In 1887, the businessman Maurice Strakosch observed: "If Europe eventually loses its appetite for the arts, we would certainly find it in America, where, year after year, art is making amazing progress. As evidence, we have the reception to artists who went searching for fortune in the New World [...] it is them (the Americans) that allow entrepreneurs to pay wages never seen before by stars in Europe." Maurice Strakosch, *Souvenirs d'un imprésario* (Paris: Paul Ollendorf Éditeur, 1887), 198.

11 Rachel Félix, better known as Mademoiselle Rachel (1821-1858), was the most important French actress of her time. At the age of 34, she toured the United States – but her trip, which had been expected to be hugely profitable, was a failure. The artist did not achieve financial success and contracted a disease that would lead to her death three years later. See Sylvie Chevalley, *Rachel en Amérique* (Paris: Société d'histoire du théâtre, 1957).

12 In this sense, it is important to note that, during her first trip to the United States, Sarah Bernhardt made her first performance of certain roles that would, thereafter, become part of her repertoire through her entire career. Adrienne Lecouvreur and Froufrou, characters in eponymous plays who had already been immortalized by the performances of Rachel and Aimé Desclée, were also interpreted by Sarah Bernhardt in London, May 1880, during her first tour as an independent actress. To further understand the evolution of Sarah Bernhardt's career in light of the characters she played, we recommend the work

of Ernest Pronier on her career, which provides an exhaustive list of the creations she brought to life. See Ernest Pronier, *Sarah Bernhardt, une vie au théâtre* (Genève: Alex Jullien, 1942).

13 If we take into account the testimony of Marie Colombier, a member of Bernhardt's company, about their first US tour, we can imagine to what extent advertising (a fundamental requirement for the dynamics of the North American society of the spectacle) became an indispensable tool for Sarah's success in the United States: "The whole American way of life is based on advertising; so, in terms of ads and posters, this country is undoubtedly the greatest of all. [...] It is understandable that merchants have sought to use the buzz associated with Sarah's name for the sake of their small businesses. All of the time, the people around the diva were sought by traders of all kinds, who expected to associate their brands to her fame. Thanks to this, Jarrett [Sarah's manager in that tour] and some others made good business." Marie Colombier, *Les Voyages de Sarah Bernhardt en Amérique* (Paris: C. Marpon et E. Flammarion Éditeurs, 1887).

14 Francisque Sarcey, " La Chronique Théâtrale", *Le Temps*, April 5, 1886.

15 During the tour of 1905, American businessmen had formed a kind of *trust* against foreign troupes, which in turn prevented Sarah Bernhardt from renting a theatre for her performances. That being the case, the artist and her manager then set up a circus tent to accommodate their presentations.

16 Yellow fever, for instance, was very common in Brazil at that time.

17 For more on the flourishing theatrical market in Rio de Janeiro in the nineteenth century, see Fernando Mencarelli, "A voz e a partitura: teatro musical, industria e diversidade cultural no Rio de Janeiro (1868-1908)" (PhD diss., University of Campinas, Instituto de Filosofia e Ciências Humanas, 2003).

18 This question, however, must be investigated thoroughly. After all, those were also the times of a rising nationalist sentiment in Brazil. Despite the country's pronounced Francophilia, Brazilians – especially the educated elite – were not easily fascinated by any French play or theatre company. Overall, the classics of French drama were regarded as a model, in addition to theatre that was considered more literary. Spectacular manifestations were often criticized in the country. On this subject, see Monize Oliveira Moura, "Sarah Bernhardt vue du Brésil (1886-1905)" (PhD diss., University of Versailles Saint Quentin en Yvelines and University of the State of Rio de Janeiro, 2015).

19 For more about Francophilia in Brazil, see Jeffrey D. Needell, *Belle époque tropical: sociedade e cultura de elite no Rio de Janeiro na virada do século*, trans. Celso Nogueira (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1993).

20 Christophe Charle, *Théâtres en capitales. Naissance de la société du spectacle à Paris, Berlin, Londres et Vienne* (Paris, Albin Michel, 2008), 309-358.

21 Celebrated artists of the Italian dramatic repertoire, Adelaide Ristori (1822-1906) visited Brazil in 1869 and 1873, and Eleonora Duse (1858-1924) travelled to the country in 1885 and 1907.

22 For more on this topic, see Catherine Authier, "La naissance de la star féminine sous le Second Empire", in *Les spectacles sous le Second Empire*, ed. Jean-Claude Yon (Paris: Armand Colin, 2010). The emergence of the star system is also the subject of Chistophe Charle's work on the theatre in capital cities in the nineteenth century; cf. Christophe Charle, *Théâtre en capitales: naissance de la société du spectacle à Paris, Berlin, Londres et Vienne* (Paris: Albin Michel, 2008).

23 The term "theatrical repertoire" also denotes the French authors that enjoyed literary prestige at that time.

24 Joaquim Nabuco, "Sarah Bernhard", *O Paiz,* May 27, 1886.

25 Arjun Appdurai, *Dimensões culturais da globalização: an modernidade sem peias*, trans. Telma Costa (Lisboa: Editorial Teorema, 2004), 299.

26 Joaquim Nabuco, " Sarah Bernhardt", *O Paiz*, May 27, 1886.

27 *Almanach Illustrado do Correio da Europa*, 1882.

28 Brazil had just declared its independence from Portugal, in 1822.

29 This comparison seems appopriate, given the recent Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro. The rowdy booing of foreign athletes from some Brazilian spectators – which was highly controversial and occured especially during untraditional sport events (to the Brazilian audience, at least) – was harshly criticized by the French press, and this brings to mind the debates on the tours of Sarah Bernhardt found in nineteenth-century French newspapers. See, for instance, this article on the French periodical L'Équipe ("Are Brazilian audiences disrespectful?"): " Jeux olympiques: le public brésilien est-il irrespectueux? ", *L'Équipe*, August 16, 2016, accessed October 5, 2016, http://www.lequipe.fr/Tous sports/Actualites/Jeux-olympiques-le-public-bresilien-est-il-irrespectueux/717787. The behavior of Brazilian spectators that watched the actress perform was often condemned by the French press, particularly because their reactions were considered exaggerated. Furthermore, the displays of disapproval toward the shows (especially during the tour of 1886) were discussed by Brazilian intellectuals, who wanted to "educate" the public to watch foreign artists. For more on Sarah Bernhardt's controversial reception in Brazil, see Monize Oliveira Moura, "Sarah Bernhardt vue du Brésil (1886-1905)" (PhD diss., University of Versailles Saint Quentin en Yvelines and University of the State of Rio de Janeiro, 2015).

30 Joaquim Nabuco, "Sarah Bernhardt", *O Paiz*, May 27, 1886.

31 Corille Fraser, *Come to dazzle: Sarah Bernhardt's Australian Tour* (Canberra: Currency Press/National Library of Australia, 1998), 54.

32 "Le monde devient peu à peu une contrefaçon universelle du Boulevard et de Regent Street. Et le modèle des deux villes est si envahissant que, plus une race perd son originalité et se perd sous la forme française ou britannique, plus elle se considère elle même civilisée et méritant les applaudissements du *Times*". Eça de Queiroz, *Lettres de Paris*, French translation (Paris: Minos la Différence, 2006), 18-19 (original text from June 6th, 1880) – mentioned in Chistophe Charle, *Théâtres en capitales. Naissance de la société du spectacle à Paris, Berlin, Londres et Vienne* (Paris, Albin Michel, 2008), 277.

33 In *Cultura e Imperialismo*, Said puts forward an elaborate argument for connecting geographic domination processes to cultural domination strategies. According to the author: " As none of us is outside or beyond geography, in this same manner, none of us is totally absent from the fight for geography. This fight is complex and interesting because it is not restricted to soldiers and artillery, it also includes ideas, shapes, images and representations"; cf. Edward W. Said, *Cultura e Imperialismo*, trans. Denise Bottmann (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2011), 39.

34 For instance, *Fédora* (1882), *Théodora* (1884), *La Tosca* (1887), or even *Cléopâtre* (1890).

35 The partnership with the playwright was, in fact, decisive to Sarah Bernhardt's trajectory. Thanks to Sardou's quill, the actress was able to perform big spectacular shows and historic dramas that defined her career. An heir of Eugène Scribe, who popularized the maxim "*pièce bien faite*", Sardou dominated Parisian theatres in the second half of the nineteenth century. He wrote comedies and historical plays, and his most successful works were clearly influenced by Romanticism and melodrama.

36 Francisque Sarcey, "Cronique théâtrale", *Le Temps*, November 28, 1887.

37 "On en a tant dit sur Cléopâtre, faisait-on spirituellement remarquer, que nous ne voyons guère ce qui restera à dire à MM. Sardou et Moreau. – Bien peu de chose, en effet, autant dire rien : voilà bien ce qu'est le drame sans action qu'on nous a donné à la Porte-Saint-Martin. " Édouard Noël and Edmond Stoullig, *Annales du theâtre et de la musique* (Paris: Librairie Paul Olledorff, 1890), 295.

38 "Et *Cléopâtre* n'est à vrai dire qu'une féérie, pseudo-historique, avec un morceau de bravoure à chaque tableau pour la prima donna. Quand M. Victorien Sardou travaille pour Mme Sarah Bernhardt, il réduit ses ambitions. Il se résigne à n'être que le metteur en œuvre de son génie. Il lui taille, dans un sujet donné, des scènes qu'elle peut jouer toute seule ou aidée de quelques comparses insignifiants. Ces scènes, il lui est loisible, quand elle part pour une tournée à l'étranger, de les mettre dans sa malle avec ses toilettes les costumes des figurants ; elle y ajoute ce que peut emporter de décors en train ou en navire, et vogue galère. " Francisque Sarcey, " Chronique théâtrale", *Le Temps*, October 27, 1890.

39 The term "*barnum*" most likely refers to the Phineas Taylor Barnum (1810-1891), an American businessman known for the commercial success of his circus and curiosities spectacles. Gilbert Augustin-Therry, unidentified newspaper. Newspaper clipping, part of a document available at Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Arts du Spectacle): "Sarah Bernhardt dans *Cléopâtre*", drame de Victorien Sardou, documents iconographiques". IFN-8438758.

40 During her visit to Brazil, in the last year of the tour, in addition to the nine works presented in 1886 – *Théodora* (Sardou), *Phèdre* (Racine), *Le Passant* (François Coppée), *Le Maître des forges* (Georges Ohnet), *Jean-Marie* (André Theuriet), *Froufrou* (Meilhac and Halévy), *Fédora* (Sardou), *La Dame aux Camélias* (Dumas fils), and *Adrienne Lecouvreu* (Scribe) –, Sarah Bernhardt's repertoire in 1893 included five new plays: *La Tosca* (Sardou), *Jeanne D'Arc* (Jules Barbier), *Francillon* (Dumas fils), *La Dame de Chalant* (Giacosa), and *Cléopâtre* (Sardou and Moreau).

41 I do not want to dwell too much on a poster element, even though it is quite revealing of the *star system* and offers a glimpse into the workings of touring productions: the emphasis given to the name of Sarah Bernhardt, which becomes more or just as important as the play title. Also, I will not discuss at length how the poster features the names of businessmen, an aspect that could be further investigated to cast some light on this venture, a nineteenth-century partnership between a company established in Brazil, another in France, and a third company, in the USA, responsible for the whole tour in the Americas. My interest here is to observe how information about the staging of *Cléopâtre* was handled in the poster for Brazilian audiences.

42 Indeed, the importance assigned to the aesthetic aspects of Sarah Bernhardt's shows could also be observed in her other trips. In the program for the European tour of 1888-1889, directed by J. Goudstikker, the same information is given about *La Tosca*, described as "a drama in five acts and six tableux", whose titles were also numerically listed and placed before the name of the actors.

43 Antonio Rovescalli (1864-1936), a scenery designer for many Italian operas in the nineteenth century, in Teatro alla Scala; cf. Alain Duault, *Dictionnaire amoureux de l'Opéra* (Paris: Plon, 2012).

44 " Theatros e concertos", *Jornal do Brazil*, June 21, 1893.

45 Chrispiniano da Fonseca, " Artes e Artistas", *O Paiz*, June 20, 1893.

46 In this context, notice how businessman Marcel Karsenty described the tours organized by his uncle Raphael Karsenty in the late nineteenth century: "We would carry the costumes and accessories that were impossible to find on site. Our technicians would check-in the luggage containing the bulkier objects, but that was expensive. To avoid these costs, we would carry as many things as we could. One

can imagine how comfortable it is to get off the train with your arms loaded with packages, then rushing to reach the hotel, only to return to the theatre with all haste!" Marcel Karsenty, *Les promeneurs de rêves* (Paris: Editions Ramsay, 1985), 24.

"Nous transportions costumes et accessoires introuvables sur place. Nos régisseurs faisaient enregistrer les objets les plus encombrants mais cela coûtait cher. Pour éviter des frais on prenait avec soi le maximum de choses. On imagine comme il pouvait être confortable de débarquer du train les bras chargés de paquets, de se précipiter à l'hôtel pour revenir en toute hâte au théâtre !" Given Sarah Behrnadt's world-wide itinerary, especially during the tour of 1891-1893, it must have been very difficult to transport all the costumes, sets and stage accessories to so many different countries. Her company probably had to select the most essential and transportable material. For this reason, the Brazilian theatrical criticism of the time praised the quality of the costumes worn by the actors, but complained that the scenery and accessories were rented locally, which impaired the verisimilitude of the enactments.

47 Chrispiniano da Fonseca, "Artes e Artistas", *O Paiz*, June 20, 1893.

48 It seems logical that, if there ever were musicians accompanying the performances staged in Brazil, they had not come from Paris along with Sarah Bernhardt's company. If we examine the list of passengers who embarked with her in Bordeaux aboard the Potosi ship heading to Rio de Janeiro, there are only thirty people listed – among them, twenty-three actors (most of them male, some accompanied by their wives), the rehearsal director (*régisseur général*) Victor Merle, and the entrepreneur Victor Ulmann, who travelled along his wife and son. On the topic of whether there were stage musicians accompanying the tours or not, author Corille Fraser, in her book about Sarah Bernhardt's tour in Australia in 1891, mentions a hand-written document discovered in the National Library of Australia. According to this document, very enlightening on some practical aspects of Bernhardt's travels, the Australian businessmen Williamson and Garner, in addition to renting the theatres, were also responsible for local costs such as hiring an orchestra: " [...] W&G to find theatres and local expenses including orchestra, printing and advertising, full working staff of carpenters, property men, limelight men, ushers, money and check takers, Bill posting and distributing, and all ordinary working expenses, together with all stock scenery and properties in theatres" (Fraser 1998, 61). This gives us reason to believe that, for the Brazilian tour, local musicians must have been hired in a similar manner.

49 For instance, see this positive review of *Theodora*, also written by Victorien Sardou in 1893, from the newspaper *A Gazeta de Notícias*: "Sardou was not trying to deliver a historical play. He was going for a dramatic theatrical work that could move the audiences and, at the same time, leave them dazzled by the wonders of an opulent *mise-en-scène*. Theses wonders were a little dim at the *Lyrico*, where the drama was performed two days ago; still, the scenery and the costumes give us some idea about what to expect from spectacles of such magnitude"; cf. "Theatros e...", *Gazeta de Noticias*, July 3, 1893.

50 It must be said that my research did not find many references to the use of these booklets during performances, although there were mentions of Brazilian bookstores selling translations of some foreign plays at the time.

51 "Foyer", *Diário de Notícias*, June 6, 1886.

52 In this sense, it is interesting to notice the emergence of other touring itineraries for local artists in the country. According to reports from that time, big international stars only visited Brazil's main urban centres, whereas many Brazilian theatrical companies from the capital were used to touring the smaller cities within the country. Therefore, it should be questioned, for instance, if this parallel movement could have helped the establishment of other theatrical trade routes, or whether it would be possible or not to identify, within this local process, the same issues about centre and periphery discussed in the chronic of Joaquim Nabuco.

53 Christopher Balme and Nic Leonhardt, "Introduction: Theatrical trade routes", *Journal of Global Theatre History*, 1 (2016): 5. Accessed July 30, 2016, https://gthj.ub.uni-muenchen.de/issue/view/300.

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Catherine Vance Yeh

"Experimenting with Dance Drama: Peking Opera Modernity, Kabuki Theater Reform and the Denishawn's Tour of the Far East"

Abstract

During the 1910s and 20s, Peking opera underwent a fundamental transformation from a performing art primarily driven by singing to one included acting and dancing. Leading this new development were male actors playing female roles, with Mei Lanfang as the most outstanding example. The acknowledged sources on which these changes drew were the encounter with Western style opera. The artistic and social values carrying these changes, however, suggest that Peking opera underwent a qualitative reconceptualization that involved a critical break with its past. This paper will explore the artistic transformation of Peking opera of the 1910s-20s by focusing on the three areas of contact Paris, Japan and the US. It will argue that the particular artistic innovation in Peking can only be fully understood and appraised in the context of global cultural interaction. It suggests that a new assessment of the modernist movement is needed that sees it as a part of a global trend rather than only as a European phenomenon.

Author

Catherine Vance Yeh is Professor of Modern Chinese Literature and Transcultural Studies at Boston University. Her research focuses on the global migration of literary forms; the transformation of theater aesthetics in transcultural interaction, and entertainment culture as agent of social change. Her publications include *Shanghai Love: Courtesans, Intellectuals and Entertainment Culture, 1850-1910*; and *The Chinese Political Novel: Migration of a World Genre*.

Between 1910s and 1920s Peking opera underwent a dramatic transformation. It had been dominated by the old man role, known as *laosheng*, since its beginnings in eighteenth century Anhui opera and had developed into the theater form associated with the name of the capital city Beijing. Since the 1910s, however, a sudden and

abrupt change took place with the actors playing the female role, known as *dan*, taking over the leading roles in the Peking opera repertoire and on the public stage of stardom. The key figure in this transformation was Mei Lanfang 梅蘭芳 (1894 -1961). He was followed shortly thereafter by three other *dan* actors and together they were lionized as the "four great *dan*" *sida mingdan*. While many social and political factors came together in this transformation of Peking Opera, the ultimate factor was an artistic innovation – the introduction of dance. With their new dance-driven operas, the most gifted of these *dan* actors became national stars.

The transformation of the genre strongly interacted with global stage trends. These were the ascendance of female characters to center stage in a theater tradition hitherto dominated by male roles and in particular those impersonating the statesman and the warrior; the creation of performances focused on a single principal actor which was the hallmark of the female-centered operas; the emergence of a star culture – in the Chinese case around the *dan* actors – that was driven by the new mass media; and the introduction of dance into Peking opera which led to a reconceptualization and reorientation of the artistic core of the genre. A case in point is Mei Lanfang's 'The Goddess Spreads Flowers' 天女散花 ("*Goddess*"), which was choreographed and performed for the public on November 3, 1917. Billed already at the time as a major event, it actually turned out to be a historical turning point for Peking opera while also setting Mei Lanfang on the way to national and international stardom. The modern media of photography and the reproduction of photographs in print spread the image of Mei Lanfang in the role of the Goddess throughout China as well as overseas. (Fig. 1)

Fig. 1: Mei Lanfang in the role of the Goddess in 'The Goddess Spreads Flowers" 天女散花 (Tiannü sanhua), 1917. Source: Mei Shaowu 梅紹武 eds., Mei Lanfang 梅蘭芳 ([Pictorial album] Mei Lanfang) *(Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997), p. 49.*

These global stage trends were part of a modernist rebellion in the arts that was sweeping Europe during the early twentieth century, with Paris as its center. The impulse of this rebellion spread through manifestos, pamphlets, photographs, and theater criticisms published in newspapers as well as through the global migration of actors, directors, playwrights, and critics. The result was an imagined international space that was shared by the performing arts within which concepts, news and images as well as human actors circulated with ease across language and cultural borders.

In the case of Peking opera, the actors involved were Chinese men-of-letters personally experiencing the European theater scene, as Mei Lanfang's mentor Qi Rushan did in the early years of the twentieth century; Chinese actors going abroad to see performances and perform themselves as Mei Lanfang did in 1919 in Japan, where he encountered a new kind of Kabuki, which was also going through its own transformation of reinserting dance into its performances led by actors who were legendary already in their lifetimes, such as Nakamura Jakuemon III 中村雀右衛門 (三世, 1875 - 1927), Nakamura Utaemon 中村歌右衛門 V (五世, 1865 -1940) and his son; and as Mei Lanfang would do later in the United States and the Soviet Union with many avant-garde artists among his audiences; foreign dance performances, live or recorded on silent films that were also shown in China, such as early silent films with Loïe Fuller dancing and Charlie Chaplin or Lillian Gish acting or such events on stage as when the American modern dance group Denishawn came to Beijing in 1925 for a back-to-back performance with Mei Lanfang; and finally foreigners residing in China who were passionate about the stage, such as Mary Ferguson, the head of the Peking Society of Fine Arts in the 1920s, who invited the Denishawn dancers, or Benjamin March, who taught Far Eastern art in Peking during the 1920s and helped spread the fame of Mei's art in the United States.[1]

As the wordless action of dance and silent film travelled much easier across language barriers and acting traditions than the other stage medium of modernity, the spoken drama,[2] the question will have to be explored whether this led to a rise of dance in the hierarchy of forms of performance and what role the appreciation of the dance-driven new Peking opera by international audiences in turn played in securing its status in the highly contested Chinese environment. To make this case, we will have to engage in a transcultural study that will explore the concepts, performances, and actors involved both in their given environments and their migration across cultures.

The Migration of the Concept of Dance: 1910s Paris

Mei Lanfang's dance-driven *Goddess* was a collective creation by Mei Lanfang and the inner circle of his supporters with Qi Rushan 齊如山 (1877-1962) being the principal mover behind its conception, execution and choreography. Working exclusively with Mei Lanfang, Qi Rushan became Peking opera's first and most prominent modern playwright, historian, choreographer and director, as well as the first theorist of Peking opera aesthetics. Working with Mei Lanfang over a 20 years period, he produced over 30 plays for him.

Qi Rushan himself described the experience that inspired him to consider inserting dance into Peking opera and the steps he took to implement this innovation. During his stay in Paris in 1908-1909, 1911 and 1913 he had often gone to see performances including operas.[3] This led him to conclude that Chinese opera was uncivilized, primitive and in urgent need of reform to make it "civilized."[4] After having, in the light of his new experiences, discovered what he considered the deep cultural roots of Peking Opera dance, he reversed this judgment in later writings. Once Peking opera drew again on these rich roots in traditional performance arts, especially those of dance, it was far from "primitive," would live up to what he had seen in Paris, and could even claim in the new Western terminology that Peking opera was a form of dance drama with a "integrated art system."[5] The existing operas, however, had lost this connection and were "primitive" indeed with the lack of dance the most salient feature. He set himself the task of bringing Chinese theater back to its roots and to recreate the forgotten dance. Mei Lanfang with his genius as an actor and his willingness to experiment with the new and join the "civilizing" mission was the perfect candidate to realize this ambitious plan. Thus beginning with "Chang'e escapes to the moon" 嫦娥奔月, "The Goddess Spreads Flowers," "Hegemon King Bids Farewell to His Concubine" 霸王別姬, "The Drunken Beauty Guifei" 貴妃醉酒, "The life of Yang Guifei"太真外传 (1925), "The Goddess of the River of Luo" 洛神 – to just name the most famous - Mei went on to create and perform many operas that combined dance with singing.[6]

Qi Rushan's experience of Paris performing arts could not have come at a more stimulating moment. After two decades of grand acclaim, Paris opera and ballet had been in a much-bemoaned decline by the 1890s. The next twenty years saw innovative forms of performance emerge that brought together a new crop of international performers and groups, composers, stage designers and graphic in new venues that included the Theatre d'Art (Theater of the Art) but also stages with vast popular audiences such as the Folies-Bergères. Between 1909 and 1913 the Paris stage saw performances by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes of Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps*; by Loïe Fuller doing her Fire Dance and Snake Dance with her flowing silks and stunning lighting effects; by Isadora Duncan with her first independent dance productions; by the Japanese dance troupe of Sada Yacco performing in Loïe Fuller's theater, while other places were staging Strauss' *Salomé* with its dance of the seven veils. Artists such as Ferdinand Léger, Pablo Picasso or Léon Bakst were doing

the stage design and costumes while the art nouveau scene was obsessed with Loïe Fuller's dances, for which Henri Toulouse-Lautrec contributed the posters. These performances rejected a tradition considered formalistic, artificial and dead, and offered total works of art that included acting, singing, dancing, light effects, stage decor and new types of theater design.[7]

Qi Rushan specifically mentions the overwhelming experience he had at the Paris Opera. While he does not give us the names of particular performances he saw, we can infer some of his most probably experiences from the records of the time. The Paris Opera at the time was the home to the Ballets Russes.[8] "Descriptions by Diaghilev's contemporaries of the reception of the Ballets Russes in Paris abounded in adjectives like 'marvelous,' 'overwhelming,' and 'intoxicating' and referred to the effect on the audiences in terms of 'shock' and even 'mass delirium.'"[9] Audiences were fascinated not only by the superb technical mastery of the Russian dancers, but also by their ability to express dramatic nuances not so much through miming, as had been the case with European ballet, but primarily through dance itself. Michel Fokine's choreography was revolutionary. The musical scores were exquisite; there was Chopin and Tchaikovsky, but also Alexander Borodin, Nikolai Tcherepnin, and Anton Arensky, all virtually unknown outside Russia, but whose unusual Slavic harmonies Paris audiences found spellbinding. Unquestionably the stage decors created the biggest sensation – highly stylized, in fantastic hues and shocking color combinations, they were a world apart from either traditional theater with its trompe l'oeil or the somber, austere air of the European avant-garde stage."[10] The stage and costume designs – mostly by Léon Bakst - were equally astonishing and new for the audience at the time. (Fig. 2) The program the Ballets Russes presented in their sojourn at the Paris Opera included ballets inspired by the historical periods favored by Diaghilev and his associates such as *Le pavillon d'Armide* – on the 18th century, Cleopatra – Egyptian, Polovtsian Dances – ancient Russia (1909 program). Their enthusiasm for Greek arts and theater resulted in "Narcisse" and other dances (1911-1912).[11]

Perhaps even more important for Qi Rushan were the performances of the American dancer Loïe Fuller, in particular her experimentation with silk and multi-colored tracking lights on an otherwise dark stage to create illusions and theatrical spectacles of dissolving the gravity of the body into a flowing movement with shifting colors. (Fig. 3) Mei Lanfang's dancing *Goddess* on a dimmed stage with her flowing silk sashes under tracking lights with shifting colors is clearly inspired by Fuller's performances. [12] This was the competitive and sophisticated international environment in which an art form had to prove itself. The harvest for Qi Rushan from his Paris experience was that opera performance had to combine song and dance. Embodied in the art of Ballets Russes and Fuller was the notion of a "total work of art" or a comprehensive and integrated art form that included music, dance, stage-sets and lighting, costumes design, singing and text.[13]

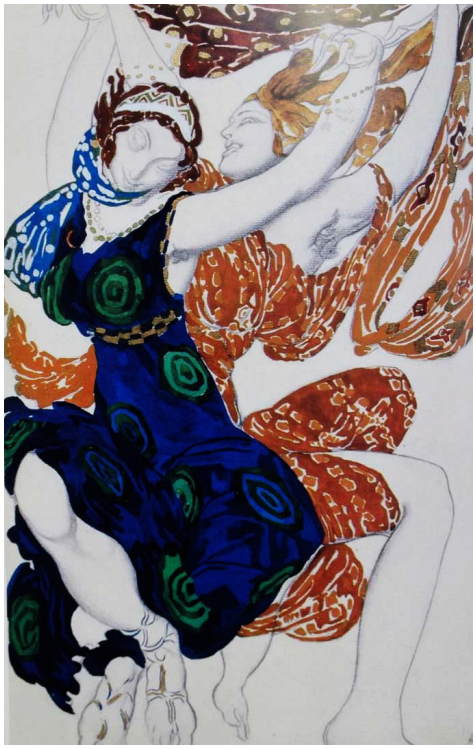

Fig. 2: One of the primary areas in which the Ballets Russes excelled, leaving and indelible impression on the development of twentieth century theater were costume and stage design. An example of Ballets Russes's production, costumes, stage design and dancers, in this case Bronislava Nijinska and Vera Fokina. Léon Bakst, "Nijinska and Fokina in 'Narcisse'." Pencil, watercolor, gouache, and gold and silver on paper. Dance Collection, *The New York Public Library.*

Fig. 3: A. Harlingue, Loïe Fuller in Costume. Photography, around 1909. Source: Jo-Anne Banzker, Loïe Fuller: Getanzter Jugendstil. *München & New York: Prestel, 1995, p. 88.*

This is what Qi Rushan had seen in what Pascal Casanova called the "capital of the world republic letters" and what seemed to him the highest achievement in theatrical art. This understanding of stage performance guided him throughout his thirty years' efforts to reform Peking opera and it informed everything he did with Mei Lanfang. Qi lamented that Chinese theater in fact once had dance as well as many other of these so-called modern and "civilized" theater practices. To restore the true and authentic Chinese theater as it was practiced in the ancient past became the "national anchor" for his modernization drive. It entailed a [re]construction of a Chinese theater that represented "Chinese high culture."

The creation of Mei Lanfang's dance drama grew out of Qi's desire to draw the lessons from his Paris experience, and to establish a Chinese performance form that included both dance and singing in a dialogue with Western performance styles, and find recognition for it as a leading member of World Theater. This desire and mission were translated into recasting Peking opera along the lines of what Qi perceived as the standard of "civilized" opera from the West. To join this world community, however, one must first clearly define the own cultural identity. For Qi Rushan, this identity needed to be recast from the Chinese cultural past. It is this heritage that will provide Peking opera with a new source for identity and innovation. In other words, Peking opera entered world-theater by establishing its "local authenticity".

While Qi Rushan's Peking opera reform drew inspiration from this Paris experience, he also found a way there to transform Peking opera in a way that would enable it to reach international audiences. After all, artists and audiences in Paris were congregating from all over the world and the stage language developed there was accessible to them all. Qi Rushan wrote:

> After [*Chang'e escapes to the moon*], the purposes of creating new operas had two objectives: the first was to enable Mei to draw in large audiences and have success at the box office; the other was to use [these new operas] as means to put Peking opera on the world map. To be successful in both made the task of choreographing new operas much harder. But fortunately it was during the years 1915 and 1916, when [we] still had not yet developed the idea of going abroad and actually performing Chinese drama on foreign stage; what we meant by putting Peking opera on the world map, initially was no more than the idea of inviting foreigners to see the shows [in China]. Since they appreciated ballet/dance drama, we began to develop in this direction. The new creations included "myth-based operas" *The Goddess of the River of Luo*, *Hongxian Steals the Seal of Power*, *The Goddess Spreads Flowers*, *Lian Jingfeng*, *The Life of Yang Guifei*, *Madam Shangyuan* etc., (the last act in *The Life of Yang Guifei* belongs to myth). They all incorporated ancient dance, such as "diaoxiuer" dance, "feather" dance, "whisk" dance, "chuishou" dance, "cup and tray" dance, "shou" dance etc. We tried in every way possible to insert dance into these [newly arranged] operas. [14]

Dance thus entered Peking opera with a double mission: to represent Chinese theater in compliance with world theater standards, and to create a common language that would ensure understanding and appreciation within the world theater scene as led by the advanced nations. This wish to communicate with international audiences was one of the major reasons for inserting dance into Peking opera. Looming large behind this urge to communicate, however, was the search for an artistic form that would be universally recognized as the cultural signature of a modern and "civilized" nation.

Actual encounters, both in China and abroad, of the performers and managers of the new Peking opera with international audiences helped in developing the particular performance style that would fit the reform agenda while also familiarizing these performers and managers with the stage reforms going on elsewhere. The result of these encounters was a new generation of Chinese artists who were familiar with modern theater aesthetics and shared its agenda.

Mei Lanfang's Encounter with the Reformed Kabuki in Japan

In 1919 Mei Lanfang was invited to perform at the Japanese Imperial Theater or Teikoku Gekijō, at the time the most Westernized and best-equipped theater in Tokyo. The man who invited him was none other than Ōkura Kihachirō 大倉喜八郎 (1837-1928), the founder of Japan's largest conglomerate, the *Ōkura zaibatsu* with its extensive interests in Korea and Manchuria, who chaired the board of directors of the Imperial Theater. Ōkura had seen Mei performing the *Goddess*, and was overwhelmed by his beauty and genius. It was this piece that sealed the deal.

Articles published at the time in Japanese newspapers and periodicals hailed Mei's *Goddess* as a revolution in Chinese opera.[15] Mei's performance was a complete success. Most of the pieces chosen by the Japanese to be performed were newly created for Mei by his supporters on the basis of traditional operas but with strong emphasis on dance.[16]

The *Goddess* was the central piece and the highlight of the visit as it was most often performed and extensively discussed by critics. In preparing for the visit to Japan, however, regardless of its overwhelming popularity among Chinese audiences, the press, the international community and many imitators, Qi Rushan opposed including the *Goddess* into the program. His surprising argument was that it did not represent traditional Chinese theater arts because it was a new piece driven by dance.[17] This contradiction between the desire to have Peking opera appreciated as an art form steeped in a rich cultural tradition; and to have it recognized as able to transform itself so as to be relevant in the modern world was shared by the Japanese

hosts. For some among the Japanese audiences the *Goddess* symbolized China's new spirit of cultural regeneration and the modernization of its theater, in short the coming of the modern to Chinese culture. They appreciated the innovative incorporation of Japanese and Western dance elements in the piece.[18] For others, the traditional *kun* opera pieces and the dance-centered pieces such as the "Drunken Beauty" (Guifei zuijiu), were more rewarding as they evoked an imagined ancient Japanese theater and dance tradition that was now lost.[19] Japanese audiences related to most strongly were the elements that were new to Peking opera and marked Mei Lanfang's personal acting style, namely dance and the expression of the character's emotions through facial expression and gesture.[20]

Mei's encounter with the Japanese stage on the "new Kabuki," *shin kabuki,* which had reintroduced dance and of which he probably already had heard much. On April 27, 1919, a day after arriving in Japan, he went to see Nakamura Utaemon V 中村歌右衛門 (五世, 1865 -1940), Japan's greatest living female impersonators or *onnagata*, playing Lady Yodo in *The Sinking Moon over the Lonely Castle Where the Cuckoo Cries*, Hototogisu Kojō no Rakugetsu 沓手鳥孤城落月, at the Kabuki-za Theater.[21] This new play had been written in 1905 by Tsubouchi Shōyō 坪内逍遙 (1859-1935), one of Japan's leading intellectuals, playwrights and literary critics, had been a professor of social science at Waseda University and was at the time translating Shakespeare into Kabuki-style Japanese.[22] The role of Lady Yodo was extremely challenging. She was the mother of Shogun Hideyoshi's designed heir Hideyori and lived with him in Ōsaka castle. As Tokugawa Ieyasu is usurping power and sets out to besiege the castle, he tries out to rescue his granddaughter whom he had married to Hideyori. Lady Yodo is driven mad as suspects everyone to be involved in this plot, in the end not even recognizing her own son. To familiarize himself with the body language of such a character, Nakamura actually had visited a madhouse. (Fig. 4) He continuously staged new Kabuki plays, some of them expressly written for him.[23]

Mei was obviously impressed by the boldness of this performance, and later had his own take on performing (in this case pretended) madness in "Yuzhoufeng" (The Precious Sword Named *Yuzhoufeng*; Fig. 5). It may even be that the series of photographs showing Nakamura Utaemon as Lady Yoda inspired Mei many years later to use this format for recording his facial expressions. (Fig. 6)

A few days after his own performance on April 27, Nakamura Utaemon V would in his turn be in the audience of Mei Lanfang's first performance at the Imperial Theater.

Fig. 4: Nakamura Utaemon as Lady Yoda in The Sinking Moon over the Lonely Castle Where the Cuckoo Cries. The photographs depict the different psychological states of Lady Yoda as she turns mad. Photograph, 1914, from a performance at the Kabuki-za. Source: Photo album, Kaigyoku Utaemon 魁玉歌右衛門 (Nakamura Utaemon V Photos)*, Yutaka Abe, ed; supervised by Nakamura Utaemon. Tokyo: Kōbunsha publishing house, 1936, p. 72.*

Fig. 5: Mei Lanfang in the role of Zhoa Yanrong, the daughter of the Prime Minster of the Qin dynasty. When her father tried to force her to marry the Emperor although she was a married woman, she fought back by pretending to be mad. (Photograph, 1950s? Source: Mei Shaowu eds., Mei Lanfang ([Pictorial album] Mei Lanfang) *(Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997), p. 290.*

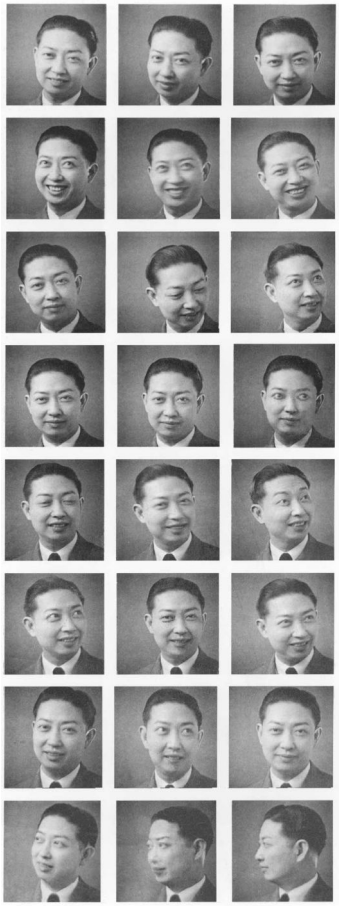

Fig. 6: Mei Lanfang, exercise of glance*, undated. Source: Mei Shaowu ed., Mei Lanfang ([Pictorial album] Mei Lanfang) (Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997), p. 184.*

Mei Lanfang also met the *onnagata* actor Nakamura Jakuemon III 中村雀右衛門 (三世, 1875 - 1927) who was performing at the Tokyo Meiji-za theater in the role of the Heron Lady 雞娘 with the famous Sagi Musume dance that starts off with a young maiden in the joy of love, and ends with her collapsing after her frantically going through the torments of hell.[24] Mei met this *onnagata* actor again in Ōsaka after his playing of the extremely challenging role of Princesses Yaegaki in the "Fox fire," *kitunebi* 狐火, act of the play *Twenty-Four Examples of Filial Piety in our own Times*, Honchô Nijûshikô 本朝二十四孝. Upon learning of her betrothed's (actually pretended) death, the Princess sings and dances her grief and agony in a highly psychological acting style. Afterwards, the two actors exchanged ideas about acting techniques, and as Mei was much impressed by his colleague's skillful make-up, he adopted some changes for himself.[25] The encounter with these two actors and the performances he saw in various theaters in Japan at the time introduced Mei to a new kind of Kabuki that was going through its own reforms. Much like Peking opera at the beginning of the Republican period, Kabuki was regarded during the early Meiji reform period as a backward relic of the past by reform-oriented intellectuals.

While for political reasons it was patronized by the Meiji emperor, its modernization was hampered in these early years by its inability to attract talented playwrights.[26] By the turn of the twentieth century, however, high profile intellectuals such as Tsubouchi Shōyō had become involved in Kabuki reform. What Mei Lanfang saw in Japan were the fruits of these reforms.

Tsubouchi Shōyō was among the dignitaries attending Mei Lanfang's performance at the Imperial Theater. What he saw reinforced his idea about creating a new Japanese theater that was based on traditional Japanese theater. Rather than making a complete break with the past, the new Japanese theater, he felt, should be established on the basis of Japan's own cultural heritage.[27] Once people with his kind of learning and creative powers started writing new Kabuki plays that would suit modern times, the new Kabuki gained status and momentum. Already in 1904, he had written the first "historical" or "new" kabuki, *A Paulownia Leaf*, Kiri Hitoha, a piece that drew both on Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衛門 (1653 - 1725) , the most famous author of Kabuki and puppet theater, Jōruri, plays, and on William Shakespeare. This play, performed only since 1904, laid the groundwork for the New Kabuki.[28] It was the first time, writes Yanagida, that the old barriers confining Kabuki were broken down and fresh breezes of freedom swept in. The lyrical beauty and the well-wrought cadences of the language of this play made it appealing for both theater audiences and readers.[29] Tsubouchi Shōyō not only wrote new plays, but also worked with Kabuki actors such as Nakamura Utaemon V to put them on. (Fig. 7)

Fig. 7: Tsubouchi Shōyō's and Nakamura Utaemon V working on the production of A Paulownia Leaf *(Kiri Hitoha). Photograph, date unclear. Source: Engeki jin:* Tsubouchi Shōyō (A theater person: Tsubouchi Shōyō*). Tokyo: Waseda University Tsubouchi Shōyō Memorial Theater Museum, 2007, p. 10.*

A part of his Kabuki reforms was the (re) insertion of dance. In his 1904 *On a New Music Drama*, Shin gakugekiron 新樂劇論, he called for a new kind of dance that would represent the new spirit of Japan [as a civilized nation]. It might either be part of the New Kabuki or be independent of it. His call for a reform of dance coincided with the 1900- 1920s modern dance movement in Paris and Berlin. A new nation, he argued, needed a new pastime and the new citizens should be able to enjoy for relaxation/cultivation in a new kind of musical drama that consisted of music and dance. He created a new term for dance, buyō 舞踊.[30] To offer an example of such a Kabuki play, he created *New Song of Urashima*, Shinkyoku Urashima 新曲浦島, in 1906 using Wagner's opera as a template. However, because he was to create a modern version of what he considered traditional Japanese dance, he also made use of the traditional Japanese form called Nihon buyō 日本邦樂. In 1922, he followed up with "Long live new Urashima"長生新浦島, a new dance production based on the first, for which he also developed elements of the choreography.[31] (Fig. 8)

Fig. 8: New dance movement created by Tsubouchi Shōyō for his dance drama "Long live new Urashima." *Photograph, 1922? Source: Engeki jin:* Tsubouchi Shōyō (A theater person: Tsubouchi Shōyō). *Tokyo: Waseda University Tsubouchi Shōyō Memorial Theater Museum, 2007, p. 18.*

The efforts to create new dance and insert it into Kabuki reflected the status of dance as the sign of a nation's modernity. This was the context in which Mei Lanfang's *Goddess* was received in Japan. Through dance, the artist and the audience were able to emotionally connect independent of language. When Mei Lanfang arrived in Japan, he unwittingly became part of and was witness to an ongoing discussion about the direction the Japanese theater and dance reform should take, a discussion bound up with that of the markers of cultural identity.

Both Peking opera and Kabuki faced the challenge to become relevant in the fast changing modern societies of China and Japan. One of the central choices to be made was that between a psychologically realistic expression of the character's emotion through facial expression and the stylized indication of these emotions through

gesture. Performance techniques in Kabuki and Peking opera had traditionally relied on the latter, conceptualized as *kata* 型, "form", in Japan and *shenduan* 身段, "body posture", in China. Developing the former, referred to as *kimochi* 気持, "feeling", was one of the main aims of Kabuki reform.[32] As Mei Lanfang observed in a speech given when he was leaving Japan to return to China:

Our Chinese theater tradition should be described as placing its emphasis on listening rather than on given pleasure to the eye. My visit to Japan has greatly stimulated me. ... [Japanese theater, old and new style] all place tremendous emphasis on [acting] technique. We express happiness, anger, sadness and joy entirely through set gestures or *shenduan*. When we encountered the refined and highly suggestive [facial] expressions [of the Japanese actors], we were quite shocked.[33]

From comments by Japanese contemporaries at the time it becomes clear that Mei Lanfang was already engaged in the new style of dance and psychological acting.[34] The comments just quoted show him aware that this new style of acting was an internationally dominant trend and that his reform of Peking opera was in good company.

During the early Meiji period, the new emphasis on realistic acting in what was eventually called the "new school" or *shinpai* had actually reduced the importance of dance. However, this did not become the dominant trend. As James Brandon pointed out, "released from previous government restrictions, Kabuki artists created dance dramas from the Noh play *The Maple Viewing* and others, in which the elevated tone of the Noh original was purposely retained."[35] Highly stylized dance based on a combination of traditional and new elements together with psychological acting where dance was part of its expression, was reaffirmed by Nakamura Utaemon VI (1917-2001), the son of probably the most famous *onnagata* actors of the early twentieth century. When asked about the most important aspects of his training, he answered: "Above all, however, the actor must master the art of dance since dance is the most important part of Kabuki acting. The dance technique must be dominant in forms such as sawari, kudoki,[36] and gidayu[37], since without dance the acting would lack beauty, taste, and depth. This is why everybody begins to learn dance as a child before learning anything else." He added this had not been so in the past,[38] and that his father had "used to teach me and other apprentices to learn the interiorization of characters before anything else. He used to ask us: 'What is this part about? What emotions are proper to it?' That was the first thing. After that came the approach through *kata*."[39] One of Nakamura Utaemon V's most frequently performed pieces was the dance drama *Hagoromo* 羽衣 (Feather robe), attested to this theory of dance being at the core of kabuki performing arts. The play was based on a Japanese legend and the most famous Nō dramas sharing its name. The story tells of a young man who finds an extraordinary feather robe hanging on a branch of a tree besides a lake.

It belonged to a Celestial maiden who found the lake so lovely that she decided to bath into and left her winds – the feather robe – on the branch. The young man agreed to return the robe to Celestial maiden if she would dance for him; which she did.

Fujima Shizue 藤間静枝, later known under the name Fujikage Seiju 藤蔭静樹 (1880-1966), was among the first to put Tsubouchi Shōyō's theory of new dance into practice. At a time when Nakamura Utaemon V and Nakamura Jakuemon III were reaffirming the central position of dance in Kabuki, she became one of the first to push for dance as a performance art independent from Kabuki and developed her own dance style.[40]

Mei Lanfang saw her dancing in 1919 and was impressed, and when he returned in 1924, his first question was how she was doing. "I have seen her perform", he told his interviewer, and it was obvious that her dance had left a strong impression on him. He commented that since he did not know Japanese, he was engaging with Japanese performing arts by looking at dance. For Mei himself as well as his Japanese audiences, dance became the most effective medium of artistic communication. Apparently, Fujikage Seijiyo had also seen Mei's performance in 1919.

Fig. 9: Nakamura Utaemon V at the Kabuki-za, 1920 in the role of "Celestial maide" *天津乙女 in the 1898 Kabuki dance drama Hagoromo 羽衣 (Feather robe). Photograph, 1920. Source:* Photo album, Kaigyoku Utaemon *魁玉歌右衛門 (Nakamura Utaemon V Photos), Yutaka Abe, ed; supervisor: Nakamura Utaemon. Tokyo: Kōbunsha Publishers, 1936, p. xx.*

It inspired her to recast one of Mei's new operas "A nun's yearning for mortal life," *Si fan* 思凡, into a dance to great acclaim.[41]

The markers of theater modernity explored by of Nakamura Utaemon and Mei Lanfang were expressive dance and psychological acting. In his speech, when leaving

Japan, Mei said that theater's lifeline was its relevance for issues of the time. While he mentioned using modern stage props and costumes in this context, the deepest impression from his Japan tour was in the domains of psychological acting, character internalization, and of featuring dance as a primary medium of artistic expression and communication.

While individual artists and cultural brokers in East Asia found in the new expressive dance that was dominating the European stage the means to express new aesthetic and social ideas, the results became increasingly "national" in character. The very intensity of transcultural interaction brought the issue of national identity in the performing arts to the fore. The drive to develop dance as a signal of modernity achieved heightened the anxiety about cultural identity. As a result, Mei Lanfang, Qi Rushan, Nakamura Utaemon VI, and Tsubouchi Shōyō all played down the importance of their transcultural exposure and claimed that dance was an organic, but lost, part of China's and Japan's theater tradition that was now renewed and revitalized. The flow of ideas and forms in dance is not a one-way street. Artists across Europe, the United States, and Asia have been looking for performance styles and ideas that retained a primordial artistic quality without having the flaws of a contrived and empty formalism, and they had turned to different cultures as well as the "foreign country of the past" to find inspiration. This impulse was behind Mei Lanfang's invitations to Japan in 1919, to the United States in 1930, and the Soviet Union in 1935 as well as his accepting these invitations, and it brought the Denishawn dancers in 1925 to Beijing to perform there and meet Mei Lanfang.

Using such foreign inspirations to break through the confines of the present and searching "authentic" roots of modernity in one's own tradition are two closely connected, albeit contrary, aspects of the dynamics of transcultural interaction. To reduce this dynamics to asymmetrical relations of power is a misunderstanding that lives off disregarding the counter-evidence for the cultural agency, and on occasion even hegemony, achieved by the less powerful part even with the consent of the superior military and economic power.

Mei Lanfang, the Denishawn Dancers, and the World Stage

In early November 1925, the Denishawn Dancers lead by Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis, who were the pioneers of American modern dance and helped to establish dance as an art form in America, reached Beijing after first visiting Japan in the course of an "Oriental Tour" tour that lasted fifteen months. As the first American dance troupe to tour the Far East, their performances were greeted with great curiosity, and wherever they went, the outcome was extremely positive. Together with showing their programs to new Asian audiences, their aim in coming to the

Orient was to find new inspirations from local dance traditions. During the Tour, they continued to add new dances to their program, which were based on the local dance traditions they had observed or learned from local teachers. They also bought costumes and props for use in their own performances.[42]

They had been invited to Beijing by Mary Ferguson, the very active head of the Peking Society of Fine Arts, who also established the contact with Mei Lanfang, who by 1925, much like the Great Wall and the Temple of Heaven in Peking, had become one of the "must see" "sites" of China. Mei, however, had just withdrawn from public view and had canceled all his performances because of the fighting among different warlords especially around Tianjin that was also threatening nearby Peking. Upon hearing of the impending visit of the famous Denishawn Dancers and realizing the unique opportunity this offered, Mei Lanfang reversed himself, and this opened the door for one of the most fruitful encounters between Peking opera and modern dance. He graciously offered to give a special performance for the American dancers. This was arranged in the same theater after the performance of the Denishawn Dancers. (Fig. 10) They had a truly international audience, with many of the members of the Peking Fine Arts Society attending.

Fig. 10: Ruth St. Denis (left), Mei Lanfang (middle), and Ted Shawn (right) at the Pavilion Theater (Zhen guang juchang) after their performances. Photograph, 1925. Source: Mei Lanfang: Foremost Actor of China. *Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1929, p. 54.*

Mei Lanfang performed the role of Concubine Yu in *Hegemon King Bids Farewell to His Concubine*, Bawang bie ji. (Fig. 11) Ted Shawn noted on Mei's performance:

> In this dance the first movement was done with an enormous circular cape, and consisted largely of postures with the cape and soft graceful movements of the hands. After the cape was removed two swords came out of the sheath, trick swords in that they appeared to be one sword at first glance, but at a certain movement in the dance suddenly became two. As the dance grew livelier the foot work became evident for the first time. The actual steps were simple and limited in variety, not exceeding a few rapid turns executed with both feet on the ground and once or twice a movement that was similar to an inhibited *Jeté tour*. Toward the end of the dance the use of the two swords became very intricate and as the swords were polished silver he achieved an effect of a network of flashing light surrounding his entire body. The power and charm, however, seem to reside mainly in his own personality, for later, when we saw other young actors attempt the same style, we realized even more the vitalizing power which Mei Lan-Fang possesses.[43]

Fig. 11: Mei Lanfang in the role of Concubine Yu, in "Hegemon King Bids Farewell to His Concubine." Photograph, date unknown. Source: Mei Shaowu eds., Mei Lanfang ([Pictorial album] Mei Lanfang) *(Beijing: Beijing chubanshe, 1997), p. 161.*

The fact that Ted Shawn recognized Peking opera as a form of dance was a triumph for Mei Lanfang's efforts to revitalize the genre. For the first time, Mei had successfully brought about the unity of song, dance, and acting in a rejection of what he had called the "stultified" and formulaic Peking opera tradition. Ted Shawn summarized Mei's motivation for change and the innovation he brought to the Chinese stage:

> The theatre as Mei Lan-Fang found it had almost died of dry rot. The drama was conventionalized to the last degree, becoming through centuries more and more divorced

> from real life and gradually losing its hold upon the public until its following was only from among the lower classes. Mr. Mei viewed the various foreign performances in the theaters of Shanghai and realized that the drama and dance of the American and European people were more vital, and more true to life. Very wisely, however, he did not attempt to copy foreign types of dancing, but went back into Chinese history to that period a thousand years ago when dancing was at its height. Thence by arduous study of books, pictures, manuscripts and music, he made a recreated dance which was truly Chinese dancing at its best.[44]

Hegemon King Bids Farewell to His Concubine was in fact a new work created for Mei by his mentor Qi Rushan. Based on a single scene in a 50-act *chuanqi* opera entitled *The Thousand Pieces of Gold* that dates back to the seventeenth century and tells the tragic story of the King of Chu, the farewell act (no. 37) was neither the centerpiece of the play nor was concubine Yu a chief protagonist. The new opera ends with Concubine Yu's suicide; by leaving out the succeeding story of the Hegemon King's own suicide, it transferred the central role to Concubine Yu. This momentous shift from an opera centered on the *laosheng*, or "old man" figure, to one centered on a single woman marked a pivotal and radically modern turn. With the new and innovative sword dance at its center, "Farewell to the Concubine" quickly became one of Mei Lanfang's signature pieces.

A newspaper review at the time about the Denishawn and Mei Lanfang's performances in front of a mixed Chinese and foreign audience compared their different dancing styles:

> This [Denishawn] company specializes in performing various new types of dance; the [dancers'] movements are completely naturalistic, the music is also very simple. This is because its purpose is to express the natural beauty of human life as well as of the human body. Whether moving or still, whether completely nude or with some minimal clothing, [their performance] altogether is based on the traces left by primitive man in age-old myths and imitates their appearance through dance steps, expressing through them a great variety of ideas. The scope of their movements is extremely wide; their leaps and jumps, bending over and arching are also not restricted to dances with the hands steps of the feet that are commonly seen. [Ted] Shawn and [Ruth] St. Denis had come to Beijing in admiration for Mei Lanfang and with the help of Mary Ferguson from the Peking Society of Fine Arts had prevailed on [the artist and former curator of the Imperial Museum] Mr. Kungpah King to make the connection with Mei Lanfang to allow them to see the true Chinese singing and dancing from Mei Lanfang and to give them a first-hand understanding of oriental arts. Mei Lanfang directly agreed … and performed the sword dance from *Hegemon bids Farewell* … Ruth St. Denis explained to the audience that that their Troupe had already for a long time the idea of an oriental tour, first, so as to make a concrete study of eastern performing art and, second, to once see for themselves the refined beauty of Mei Lanfang's art of which they had heard so much….[Although] most audience was much pleased with the performance, there were one or two features that were not satisfactory. Maybe this was because the stage was too small so that the movements could not be fully unfolded; or the dances were just too new and extraordinary and those more traditionally minded could not approve of them. Altogether the newly-created splendor of the dances were for the creators

> an example of eagerly striving for progress, while the audience time and again reacted with approval and rejection evenly split.

Describing Mei Lanfang's performance, the comments were overwhelmingly positive:

> Mei was in the role of king's consort Lady Yu.... When it came to the sword dance, the [musical instrument] of the sheng, the flute, nine-rhyme gong and other [southern opera] instruments were added, therefore the aria 'deep is the night' was especially moving. When music picked up speed and the dance-step changed all of a sudden, the movements of the sword either piercing or striking were full of unpredictable variations. Even before the end of the piece, the audience burst out with applause and loud cheers, unable to hold back. This was a spontaneous emotional response. Judging by the response of the audience, for this evening performance, the popularity of Mei's dance and singing clearly surpassed that of the Western dance.[45]

To confirm this last point, the article ends with a translation of an appreciative "Western" comment on this evening from the English-language newspaper *Peking Leader*.

The review added two more relevant points for our discussion. It reported that Mei Lanfang, Ted Shawn and Ruth St. Denis had met for a talk in Mr. Kungpah King's house where they had agreed that "the efforts made by both sides during the last decade in the domain of the performing arts may be said to have pointed into the same direction and that their experiences had been by and large the same." The second point referred to the universal accessibility of the language of dance and music. Ending its report about audience reactions to Mei's dancing and singing, it said: "Evidently, superb dance and fine tunes are quite naturally able to move people, even foreigners unused to seeing Chinese drama, once they are faced with its true and wonderful form, are always able to get the taste of it and appreciate it."[46] Peking opera anchored in dance with its new musical instrumentation is now an art form that is ready for the international stage.

In the interview with Ted Shawn, Mei Lanfang acknowledged and discussed the changes he had brought about in the artistic practices of Peking opera, with dance being the real breakthrough. On stage, writes Shawn, "he [Mei] has brought the action of the drama up to a certain point and then interpolated an actual dance; that is to say, movements to music accompanied by his own singing voice, during which the narrative or plot is held in abeyance. This was something which did not exist in the theatre at the time of his coming. Naturally he stirred up a great deal of criticism and opposition among the fundamentalists of the Chinese theatre."[47]

In particular, Mei's development of new hand gestures for the *dan* role was part of his innovative program. In the past, Shawn reported,

> an actor playing a woman's part was not supposed to make any gestures with her hands whatsoever, but had to keep them crossed in front of her during her entire time on the stage. She wore sleeves which were fastened tightly at the wrists and very often long inner sleeves which came down over and hid her hands completely. Mr. Mei changed this using loose sleeves which fell back and displayed the bare arms as far up as the elbow, and then developed a system of hand and arm movements graceful and fascinating to a degree. He has without any question a pair of beautiful hands and uses them more exquisitely perhaps than any other man in the world.[48]

As part of the new dance program, Mei Lanfang also adjusted the theatrical costume so as to be able to move freely according to the requirements of dance. In the words of Shawn: "The theatrical costumes had grown so stiff with gold brocade and tinsel that the movements of the body were almost completely concealed, so [he] revived the use of soft and clinging silks to reveal the body line."[49] (Fig. 12)

The joint performance on November 9, 1925 marked one of the first direct and self-conscious artistic exchanges and collaborations between Peking opera and modern dance. Through his interaction with the Denishawn group, Mei saw that he was in sync with the modernist agenda of overcoming the calcified routines of the performing arts and creating new forms that carried the spirit of the time while drawing on resources found in the deep past and in other cultures.

The Denishawn group in its turn wasted no time to take up the Peking stimulus. While still on their tour of the Far East they went about improvising dance dramas based on Mei Lanfang's signature pieces in their formal aspect well as their themes. In addition to their version of *Hegemon King Bids Farewell to His Concubine*, which was now entitled *General Wu's Farewell to his Wife*,[50] these included *The Goddess Spreads Flowers* and *Daiyu Burying the Flowers*, which was based on a scene in the novel *Dream of the Red Chamber*. When the group returned to Shanghai in October 1926, it performed what was advertised as its "new Chinese and Oriental" dances.

These photographs offer a glimpse into the inner workings of transcultural interaction and highlight the basic idea that cultures live and renew themselves by interacting with others. Regarding the dynamics of cultural borrowing/ appropriation/recreation, Gabriele Brandstetter points in her discussion on the wave of exoticism that swept Europe at the beginning of the twentieth century: "European performers of exoticism, such as Mata Hari, Adorée Willany, and Ruth St. Denis, however, never truly adopted or only hinted at those typical oriental movements that were perceived as especially erotic."[51]

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performers of exoticism, such as Mata Hari, Adorée Willany, and Ruth St. Denis, however, never truly adopted or only hinted at those typical oriental movements that were perceived as especially erotic."[52]

Fig. 12: Mei Lanfang in the role of Yang Guifei in Legend of Taizhen. The photograph shows the new costume Mei designed that reveals the bare arms of the character when dancing. Photograph, 1920s. Source: Mei Lanfang Foremost Actor of China*:. Shanghai: Commercial Press, 1929, p. 37.*

In other words, the Denishawn dancers were not trying to reproduce the dances they saw in Mei's and other Chinese actors' performances (which were indeed seen by contemporaries as highly erotic) as they clearly followed their own aesthetic system. Rather, they took these dances as inspirations. In creating their own version of the Peking opera dances, they derived artistic stimulus from maintaining the alien nature of the dance and by adopting some of the outwardly identifiable dance movements of Mei Lanfang, but achieved artistic consistency by inserting these into their own aesthetic system.

November 9, 1925 was not the end of this process. In 1930, Mei Lanfang made a triumphant tour in the United States, and many among the cultural avant-garde were inspired by his performances, which in this way exerted lasting effects on "Western" stage art. In 1935, Mei performed in Moscow, with the dramatist Bertolt Brecht, the stage director Stanislavski, and the film director Eisenstein (who had been alerted by Charlie Chaplin not to miss out on Mei) in the audience. Brecht's formulation of non-realistic "alienated" acting was the direct result.

Fig. 13: Edith James Long performing the silk sash dance, inspired by Mei Lanfang Mei Lanfang's "The Heavenly Maiden Showering Flowers," Shanghai (?), 1926. (Unpublished photograph. Source: Denishawn collection*, 1926; courtesy of Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations).*

Fig. 14: Edith James Long, member of the Denishawn dance group improvising— "Daiyu Burying the Flowers," Shanghai (?), 1926. (Unpublished photograph. Source: Denishawn collection*, 1926; courtesy of Jerome Robbins Dance Division, The New York Public Library for the Performing Arts, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations).*

Conclusions

During the first decades of the twentieth century, dance became one of the most vibrant forms of cultural communication and transmission of ideas as well as a major artistic stimulus for other art forms such as the motion picture. Through movement, imagery, music and in some cases with the help of technology, wonders were created,

emotions stirred, and ideas transmitted. Dance proved itself to be a transcultural language capable of securing communication between artists as well as between artists and audiences from very different cultural and language backgrounds. As a consequence, dance gained a new status on the global stage. The insertion of dance in Peking opera changed and "modernized" the genre while making it accessible to international audiences as both high art and accessible entertainment.

On the global stage, dance supported by music and singing helped lift the relative importance of the visual in theater aesthetics at the expense of the spoken word.

The artistic innovation in Peking opera during the 1910s-20s can only be fully understood and appraised in the context of global cultural interaction, and in particular the trans-cultural impact of the concept of dance. By the end of the nineteenth century, we see modern dance becoming in international cultural centers in Europe the privileged new venue and the new international language for performance art as it spearheaded the exploration of the modern expression of subjectivity with its rejection of the traditional "stultifying" art form of ballet. The rise of dance in the hierarchy of performance arts fits into the shift to the visual (as opposed to the purely verbal) as the primary medium for cultural mass communication in a world that was rapidly increasing and accelerating cross-cultural exchanges and was developing the technologies facilitating them. With its expressive potential modern dance reflected a new and modern view of the human personality that made its presence into one of the accepted feature by which to recognize a state and society whose culture that matched what in the sphere of international law was referred to at the time as the "standard of civilization." The historical actors from different places were very much aware that they were moving into a similar direction, and assured each other of this common agenda.

Mei Lanfang's artistic innovations were part of this global quest for a new artistic system of expression. They share much of the transcultural agenda of the modernist movement in dance while at the same time showing the same strenuous effort in evidence elsewhere to secure visible cultural authenticity by drawing on elements from the – in this case China's – forgotten past. The efforts of Mei and his entourage to renovate Peking opera were explicitly geared to make the genre understandable and appreciated by global audiences, and his success in this domain greatly contributed to overcome the association of Peking opera with China's rejected past among modernizing elites and to secure acceptance within China itself. While much has been written about the impact of the new Peking opera especially among the avant-garde in the performing arts, this study has tried to demonstrate the circular process in which Peking opera reform took inspiration from the world stage only to end up making its own substantial contribution. The tension between transculturally inspired innovation and cultural authenticity characteristic for the new Peking opera was constantly renegotiated. In the end the new Chinese state imposed – with Mei

Lanfang's patriotic cooperation – its own modernization by restoring a frozen "authentic" Peking opera and eliminating the most stimulating innovations while abolishing the role of the female impersonator as unsuitable to truly modern ethics.

Endnotes

[1] For a detailed study on Benjamin March and Mei Lanfang see Catherine Yeh, "China, a Man in the Guise of an Upright Female: Photography, the Art of the Hands, and Mei Lanfang's 1930 Visit to the United States." In: Christian Henriot and Wen-Hsin Yeh (eds.), *History in Images: Pictures and Public Place in Modern China*. Berkeley, Cal.: China Research Monograph 66, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013), 81-110.

[2] Many studies have been devoted to the early Chinese spoken drama and its transcultural context for which the link was mostly provided by students returning from study abroad. They generally agree that despite its markers of modernity and the commitment of quite a number of reformers to this genre, it failed to gain public appeal.

[3] According to Qi's records, he was in Paris first in 1908-1909, but did not go much to the theater; then both in 1911 and in 1913 he spent quite a lot of time in various theaters in Paris, mentioning in particular the Paris Opera. Because the business company he represented was considered "international" he received promotional tickets from various theaters. See "Qi Rushan, *Qi Rushan huiyilu* (Memoirs of Qi Rushan)." (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 2005), 72-73, 81-82, 86-87.

[4] Qi Rushan, *Shuo xi* 說戲 (On opera), Qi Rushan*, Qi Rushan wenji*. Vol. 1. (Collected works of Qi Rushan), (Liang Yan ed. Shijiazhuang: Hebei jiaoyu chubanshe, 2010), 3.

[5] Qi Rushan, *Zhongguo xiju zhi zuzhi* 中國戲劇之組織(On the [aesthetic principles upon which] Chinese theater arts is organized). Vol. 1 (originally published in 1928) (Qi Rushan: *Qi Rushan wenji, 1928*), 98.

[6] The new opera created by Qi Rushan and Mei Lanfang would be based on Qi's theory of the necessary "unity of song and dance" 歌舞并作 in Peking opera; see Qi Rushan, *Zhongguo xiju zhi zuzhi* (On the [aesthetic principles upon which] Chinese theater arts is organized). Vol. 1 (originally published in 1928) (*Qi Rushan wenji*,), 98-107.

[7] For scholarship on the Ballets Russes, see for example Boris Kochno, *Diaghilev et les Ballets Russes*. English translation, (New York: Harper & Row, 1970); Nancy Van Norman Baer, *The Art of Enchantment: Diaghilev's Ballets Russes 1909 -1929*. (SanFrancisco: The Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Universe Books, 1989). For recent studies on Loïe Fuller, see Ann Cooper Albright, *Traces: Absence and Presence in the Work of Loïe Fuller*, (Middletown, CT: Wesleyan University Press, 2007); Rhonda K. Garelick, *Electric Salome: Loïe Fuller's Performance of Modernism, (*Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2007).

[8] The company was initially in residence at the Théâtre Mogador and Théâtre du Châtelet before moving over to Garnier (Paris Opera). Archives Nationales, Archives du Théâtre National de l'Opéra AJ13 1 a 1466, inventaire par Brigitte Labat. Poussin, Paris 1977; Spire Pitou, *The Paris Opera, an Encyclopedia of Opera, Ballets, Composers and Performers,* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1990), 1440-1459.

[9] Baer, *The Art of Enchantment*, 38.

[10] Baer, *The Art of Enchantment*, 38-39.

[11] Gabriele Brandstetter, *Poetics of Dance: Body, Image, and Space in the Historical Avant-Gardes*. Published first in 1995, translated from German by Elena Polzer with Mark Franko. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), 107.

[12] The Lumière brothers' sensational silent films of Loïe Fuller's Serpentine dance and Fire dance were widely shown in major Chinese cities including Shanghai, Beijing, Tianjin and Hong Kong during the late nineteenth century to huge acclaim among Chinese audiences. For Loïe Fuller's Serpentine Dance film first shown in Shanghai (Tian Hua Tea Garden), Peking and Tianjing, and Hong Kong to foreign and Chinese audience in 1898, see Law kar, Frank Bren, Sam Ho, *Hong Kong Cinema*. (Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press), 12-18.

[13] Frank Kermode, "Poet and Dancer Before Diaghilev," *Salmagundi Magazine*, 33-34 (Spring-summer 1976), 23, 31.

[14] Qi Rushan*, Qi Rushan huiyilu*, 116.

[15] Ryūkyo Nojo 龍居之助, "Chugoku gigeki kokumei to meirei Mei Ran-fan" 中國戲劇革命與名伶梅蘭芳, *Yōkyokukai* 謠曲界 9.4 (1918), 54.

[16] Catherine Yeh, "Refined Beauty, New Woman, Dynamic Heroine, or Fighter for the Nation? Perceptions of China in the Programme Selection for Mei Lanfang's Performances in Japan (1919), the United States (1930) and the Soviet Union (1935)", *European Journal of East Asian Studies*. Vol. 6.1 (2007): 75-102; Catherine Yeh, "Politics, Art and Eroticism: The Female Impersonator as the National Cultural Symbol of Republican China" In: Doris Croissant, Catherine Yeh, Joshua S. Mostow (eds.), *Performing the 'Nation': Gender Politics in Literature, Theatre and the Visual Arts of China and Japan, 1880-1940*. (Leiden: Brill, 2008), 219-236.

[17] Qi Rushan, *Qi Rushang huiyilu*, 127.

[18] Yoshida Yoshida 吉田登志子, *Mei Lanfang 1919, 1924 nian lai Ri gongyan de baogao – Jinian mei xiansheng danchen 90 zhounian* 梅蘭芳 1919, 1924 年來日公演的報告 —— 紀念梅先生誕辰 90 週年" (A study on Mei Lanfang's 1919 and 1924 visit and public performances in Japan – in celebration of Mr. Mei's nineteenth birthday); Zhongguo Mei Lanfang jianjiuhui ed., *Mei Lanfang yishupinglun* 梅蘭芳藝術評論 (Comments on the art of Mei Lanfang). (Beijing: Zhongguo xiju chubanshe, 1990), 646–648.

[19] Yoshida Yoshida, *Mei Lanfang 1919, 1924 nian lai Ri gongyan de baogao – Jinian Mei xiansheng danchen 90 zhounian*, 649; Min Tian, *Mei Lanfang and the Twentieth Century International Stage: Chinese Theatre Placed and Displaced*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 26-32.

[20] Mei Lanfang discussed this with Ted Shawn in an interview conducted in 1925 when Ted Shawn together with Ruth St. Denis and their Denishawn dance company visited Beijing; see Ted Shawn, *Gods Who Dance* (New York: E. P. Dutton. 1929), 51-52; also for Japanese contemporaries reaction on this issue see Yoshida Yoshida, "Mei Lanfang 1919, 1924 nian lai Ri gongyan de baogao – Jinian Mei xiansheng danchen 90 zhounian,", 656, 664-665.

[21] Reported in the *Miyako shinbun*, April 28, 1919.

[22] As Tsubouchi Shōyō played a similar role in the New Kabuki as Qi Rushan did in Peking opera reform, I will come back to him.

[23] In 1921 Nakamura Utaemon put out a special collection of plays called *Yodogimi shū*. It included *Paulownia Leaf*, Kiri Hitoha 桐一葉, the first of such new Kabuki plays. *The Sinking Moon* and *Paulownia Leaf* remained his two most frequently performed roles.

[24] Kanda Hakuryū 神田伯龍, "Yurakō sengen chōja 由良港千軒長者"." (Ōsaka: Nakagawa Gyokuseidō, 1912). A fine description of the dance and the history of its performance will be found at the kabuki21 website http://www.kabuki21.com/sagi_musume.php. Accessed July 24, 2016.

[25] For Mei Lanfang's discussion of his harvest from attending performances at the Kabuki-za, Meiji-za and Shintomi-za theaters, see Yoshida Yoshida, "Mei Lanfang 1919, 1924 nian lai Ri gongyan de baogao – Jinian Mei xiansheng danchen 90 zhounian," 655. Mei Lanfang's own memoir in manuscript form of his visit to Japan was lost during the Cultural Revolution. Later a record was put together based on Mei's own memoirs as well as comments by people who had accompanied him on his Japan visit in 1919. See Anon., *Mei Lanfang abroad* 梅蘭芳在國外", http://hk.huaxia.com/wh/jjjc/zt/00047391.html, accessed July 24, 2016.

[26] Benito Ortolani, *The Japanese Theater: From shamanistic ritual to contemporary pluralism*. Handbuch der Orientalistik V.2,1. (Leiden: Brill, 1990), 176.

[27] After seeing Mei's performances, Tsubouchi *Shōyō* wrote three articles discussing Mei Lanfang's art, the Japanese public reaction and the fate of onagata in Japan. For a detailed discussion see Min Tian, *Mei Lanfang and the TwentiethCentury International Stage: Chinese Theatre Placed and Displaced*. (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012), 41-46.

[28] Yanagida, Izumi, "Pioneers of Modern Japan: Tsubouchi *Shōyō*", *Japan Quarterly*, 11(3) (July 1964), 1964, 352.

[29] On Tsubouchi *Shōyō*'s ideas regarding the New Kabuki see ibid, 355-356.

[30] *Engeki jin: Tsubouchi Shōyō* (A theater person: Tsubouchi *Shōyō*). (Tokyo: Waseda University Tsubouchi *Shōyō* Memorial Theater Museum, 2007), 16; Kuniyoshi Kazuko, *Yume no ishō kioku no tsubo: buyō to modanizumu* (The clothes of dreams and the jar of memories: dance and modernism). (Tokyo: Shinshokan, 2002), 10.

[31] Yanagida, Izumi, *Pioneers of Modern Japan: Tsubouchi Shōyō*, 357.

[32] According to the Meiji period Kabuki actor Ichikawa Danjurō IX (1838-1903), empty gesturing and declamation, which he claimed was all too common, was the hallmark of a stifling tradition that had to be overcome. His opinion that the stylized and abstract movements had to be the external

outgrowth of an inner emotion, or else they would be empty gestures devoid of meaning, was much quoted by later actors as their guideline. For his attitude, see "Interview with Ichikawa Danjurō IX (1838-1903), conducted by the British author and critic Osman Edwards during his six month visit to Japan in 1898-1899". In: Osman Edwards, *Japanese Plays and Playfellows*, (New York: Lane, 1901), 263-271. On *kimochi*, see also Samuel L. Leiter, Bando Tsurunosuke, Ichimura Takenojo, Bando Mitsugoro VIII, Onoe Baiko and Nakamura Utaemon VI, "Four Interviews with Kabuki Actors," *Educational Theatre Journal*. 18.4, Special International Theatre Issue (Dec. 1966), 391-392.

[33] *Ōsaka Asahi Shimbun,* May 27, 1919; quoted from Yoshida Yoshida, *Mei Lanfang 1919, 1924 nian lai Ri gongyan de baogao – Jinian Mei xiansheng danchen 90 zhounian*, 664.

[34] Yoshida Yoshida, *Mei Lanfang 1919, 1924 nian lai Ri gongyan de baogao – Jinian Mei xiansheng danchen 90 zhounian*, 664.

[35] James R. Brandon, "Japanese performing arts", *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Accessed July 25, 2016.

[36] These are techniques employed by the actor for interpreting certain emotional passages in the plays. Samuel L. Leiter et al., "*Four Interviews*", 400, footnote 18.

[37] *Gidayu* is the vocal style used by the chanter-narrator of the Japanese puppet theatre. Samuel L. Leiter et al., "Four Interviews", 393, footnote 8.

[38] Ibid. 400.

[39] Ibid. 401.

[40] Kataoka Yasuko 片岡康子, “Nihon no gendai buyō no seiritsu katei - Denishōn buyōdan no Nihon kōen o chūshin to shite -” 日本の現代舞踊の成立過程 ーデニショーン舞踊団の日本公演を中心としてー (A historical study of the formation of Japanese modern dance – centering on the performance tour of the Denishawn Company in Japan), *Ochanomizu University Studies in Arts and Culture*. 38 (March 1985): 93-95.

[41] "*Shin bunka shiryō*" (Historical materials on New Culture), in *Engeki shijo* (December, 1925), Chinese trans. Jin Fengji, "Mei xin yuanliu yinghua guo – 1924 nian Riben *Yanju xinchao* yaoqing zhuming xijujia wei Mei Lanfang quxing zuotanhui (sujigao)," in *Xin wenhua shiliao* 1 (1996), 53–59.

[42] Christena L. Schlundt, "A Chronology of the Professional Appearances of the American Dancers Ruth St Denis and Ted Shawn 1906-1932", *Bulletin of New York Public Library*, (January 1962), 150. Ted Shawn interviews during this tour with many actors and dancers are recorded in his *Gods Who Dance* (New York: E. P. Dutton. 1929).

[43] Ted Shawn, *Gods Who Dance*. (New York: E. P. Dutton. 1929), 51-54.

[44] Ibid. 50-51.

[45] Shesheng 攝生, "Zhongxi zhi wu: Dannasong tiaowutuan yu Mei Lanfang zhi Bawang bieji" 中西之舞：丹納宋跳舞團與梅蘭芳之“霸王別姬”(Chinese and Western dance: Denishawn dance company and Mei Lanfang’s "Hegemon King Bids Farewell to His Concubine"), *Chen bao xingqi huabao*, 1925, no. 11, 1.

[46] Shesheng, "Zhongxi zhi wu: Dannasong tiaowutuan yu Mei Lanfang zhi Bawang bieji".

[47] Ted Shawn, 51.

[48] Ted Shawn, 51-52. Ruth St Denis wrote that "I have never seen such marvelous hands as Mei Lanfang’s, nor such grace and beauty as his dancing, nor such exotic poignancy as his acting." Ruth St. Denis, *An unfinished life: An Autobiography*. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1939), 276; Jane Sherman, "The Drama Of Denishawn Dance". (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1976), 146.

[49] Ted Shawn, 51.

[50] In Jane Sherman’s *The Drama Of Denishawn Dance*, "General Wu’s Farewell to his Wife" was listed as: "Choreographed by Mei-Ian Fan, arranged by Ruth St. Denis and Ted Shawn, 1926 Music by Clifford Vaughan First performance July 15,1926, at the Victoria Theatre, Singapore. Listed on the programs of the Far East tour, 1926; the U.S. tour, 1926-1927. Danced by Charles Weidman, Ann Douglas, George Steares, Ernestine Day, and company." See Jane Sherman, *The Drama Of Denishawn Dance*. (Middletown, Connecticut: Wesleyan University Press, 1976), 145 - 148.

[51] Gabriele Brandstetter, *Poetics of Dance: Body, Image, and space in the Historical Avant-Gardes*, 172.

[52] ibid.

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Johanna Dupré

"Die erste Jockey-Reiterin der Welt, aus Süd-Amerika: Rosita de la Plata, Global Imaginaries and the Media"

Abstract

In this paper, the term *global imaginary* describes the way people at different times in history have perceived the increasing interconnectedness of the world: how they have imagined the globality of the world and their place in it. The article's intention is to take the case of the Argentinian-born circus jockey rider *Rosita de la Plata* as an example to show how marketing mechanisms in the entertainment industry of the nineteenth century, a time markedly characterized by processes of global integration, catered to these *global imaginaries*, in order to appeal to different publics. This will be shown mainly with the analysis of a number of newspaper advertisements and articles.

Author

Born in 1982, Johanna Dupré studied Theatre Studies, Comparative Literature and English at Johannes Gutenberg-University, from which she graduated in 2008. From August 2004 until May 2005 she studied at the University of Memphis, Tennessee, as a participant of the exchange program "m3 + zdf" and with grants by Fulbright and the DAAD. From February until May 2007, she spent time in Buenos Aires, Argentina, to do research for her master's thesis. In 2014-14 she worked on a PhD-project on theatre in the La Plata region for the Global Theatre History Project. Her research interests are Latin American theatre, cultural history, transnationalism, performativity and visuality. She currently works as a journalist in Mainz and Wiesbaden, Germany. Her publications include *Spiele des (Un)Sichtbaren. Performativität und Politik*. (Marburg: Tectum, 2010).

1. Introduction: *Global Imaginaries*

In the twenty-first century, we live in an age that is to a large extent defined by globality – and not only in an economic sense. As Manfred B. Steger notes in his book *The Rise of the Global Imaginary*, globalization was never merely a matter of increasing flows of

capital and goods across national borders. Rather, it constitutes a multidimensional set of processes in which images, sound bites, metaphors, myths, symbols, and spatial arrangements of globality were just as important as economic and technological dynamics. The "objective" acceleration and multiplication of global material networks occurs hand in hand with the intensifying "subjective" recognition of a shrinking world. (Steger 2008, 12).

It is precisely this effect that globalization has on the ways in which people imagine the world and themselves in it, both individually and collectively, that he subsumes under the titular term *global imaginary* – a notion that builds upon Charles Taylor's concept of the *social imaginary* as "the way ordinary people imagine their 'social surroundings'", something often "not expressed in theoretical terms" but carried in images, stories, legends etc." (Taylor 2007, 171/2). While Steger's global reframing of Taylor's term makes immediate sense for twenty-first century society, I would argue that, in the vein of one of the possible approaches Sebastian Conrad describes in *What is Global History?* – namely global history as the history of globalization – it can also be applied to study another time period marked by intense and accelerating processes of global integration: the nineteenth century (Conrad 2016, 1-17).

For the purpose of this paper, then, and to a large extent differing from Steger's notion of the term, I understand *global imaginary* to mean the way people at different times in history – for example in the nineteenth century – have perceived the increasing interconnectedness of the world and how they have imagined the globality of the world and their place in it. Thus, a *global imaginary* can encompass national or local imaginaries, but it will always exceed them by placing those imaginaries within a global frame.

Against this framework, a number of questions arise – one of them being how many *global imaginaries* we should surmise to exist at any given point in time, and what happens to the number of highly mobile people who interact with any number of them during their lifetimes. How do they adapt their behavior, and in which way does the identity ascribed to them change against the background of the respective *global imaginaries*?

The case of *Rosita de la Plata*, an Argentinian-born nineteenth century circus jockey or circus equestrienne, who traveled in Europe and South as well as North America as part of her work, allows us to explore some of these questions. It does so precisely because with her, as with circus artists or artists in general, the aspect of media that is very much connected to the emergence of *global imaginaries* gains special relevance: *Rosita* was both an object of media attention and a media player, meaning that she, or more probably her managers, consciously manipulated the media in order to shape the image by which she was perceived. We are in the realm of *public relations*, which is, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*: "The professional maintenance of a favourable public image by a company or other organization or a famous person" (OED 2016). For the purposes of this paper, I would change this definition to read: "The professional maintenance of a prospectively lucrative image by an artist and his or her managers, meant to appeal to a certain public". We can then move on to try to answer the following questions: How was Rosita's international career launched? What public

image was created for her and to a degree also certainly by her ? Why was this particular public image chosen? Did it change while she was performing in different countries? How did it tie in with what we could call the different publics' *global imaginary?*

2. From Argentina to Spain: Rosita's First Steps into the Arena

Fig. 1: Rosita on the cover of La Tomasa, *December 26, 1890.*

According to the Argentinian theatre and circus scholar Beatriz Seibel, *Rosita* was born as Rosalía Robba to a family of Italian immigrants on February 15th, 1869 in Buenos Aires (Seibel 2012, 13). A younger sister, María Dolinda was born one year later, on June 8th 1870. Both started their circus careers in 1878, aged nine and eight, respectively, in the *Circo Arena* in Buenos Aires.

As Seibel has documented, in 1878 a British equestrian company performed there under the direction of one Henry Cottrelly (Seibel 2012, 14). Cottrelly, as Signor Saltarino states in the year 1895 in his *Artisten-Lexikon*, was one of several brothers who formed an acrobat troupe that came to be quite famous in the nineteenth century. However, at some point they split up and Henry became a circus director (Saltarino 1895, 41). One of his company's attractions while appearing in Buenos Aires was a pantomime of the *Cinderella* story, performed by children (Seibel 2012, 14).

How Rosita and Dolinda came to perform in the pantomime is not entirely known, but the Argentinian theatre and circus scholar Raúl Castagnino thinks that Rosita was selling flowers in the circus when Cottrelly decided to incorporate her into the show. He then supposedly suggested to her father to put her under contract, meaning he would take her to Europe and instruct her in the equestrian circus art, while she agreed to work without

pay for ten years – something which was very common in the circus business of that time (Castagnino 1953, 118).

What is certain is that Rosita and Dolinda both traveled to Europe and almost immediately started performing at the *Circo Ecuestre* in Barcelona, where Henry Cottrelly had started to work as artistic director.

This is also where the very first steps in the forging of their public image were taken. As can be seen from a press clipping from the newspaper *Lo Catalinista*, published in 1880, the then 11-year-old Rosita was at first announced with her first name only, and so was her sister Dolinda (fig.2) On other occasions they were also called Rosita and Dolinda Cottrelly, after their artistic foster-father.


CIRCO EQUESTRE BARCELONÉS DE ALEGRIA Y CHIESI.
—Avuy dilluns, á un quart de nou, magnífica funció composta dels mes aplaudits exercicis; entre ells lo Toreix en plassa, escena eqüestre que tant crida l' atenció, desempenyada per la simpática noya Rosita.—Per primera vegada se presentará la petita mula americana oferintse 500 rals al que la monti ab las condicions expressadas en los cartells.—Entrada 3 rals.

Fig. 2: Lo Catalinista, *October 18, 1880*.

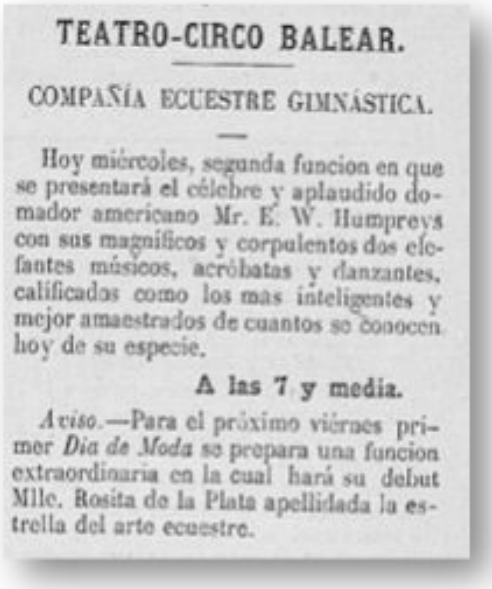
But already two years later, when performing in Palma de Mallorca, the debut of *Mlle. Rosita de la Plata* was announced in the newspaper *El Balear*, meaning that her artist's name had already been introduced (fig.3). For a Spanish public, this name must have been evocative of the former Spanish colony "Virreinato del Río de la Plata", which extended over territories that today belong to Argentina, Bolivia, Paraguay and Uruguay and which was dissolved in the wake of the successful South American revolutions at the beginning of the nineteenth century (Romero 2004, 37-44). It thus conjured up memories of a lost global imaginary, centered on Spain as a transatlantic Empire, a somewhat nostalgic vision if held against the political turmoil and decline of mid- to late nineteenth century Spain (Tarver and Slape 2016, 53-55).

Although of course by today's standards this vision or global imaginary is seen to be firmly grounded in a history of brutality and atrocities, I think it is still easy to see why it might have appealed to a significant part of the public in Restoration Age Spain, and as a consequence, why choosing to promote Rosita as *Rosita de la Plata* might have been a wise marketing decision. On a more prosaic note, it is simply an indication of her place of birth, Buenos Aires being situated on the banks of the Río de la Plata.

3.*The* Place to Launch a Career: Rosita in London

The next major step in the forging of her public image was taken when, in late 1886, she and her sister Dolinda were set to appear at the Theatre Royal at Covent Garden, London, for the Christmas Season. At that time, London dazzled not only with popular entertainment in general, but also with circus performances in particular. As Brenda

Assael shows in *The Circus and Victorian Society*, between the middle and the end of the nineteenth century, there had been an enormous surge in circus companies and troupes that were advertised in *The Era*, a weekly which soon came to be the main press organ for the entertainment industry. To be precise, the number of circus companies had risen



TEATRO-CIRCO BALEAR.

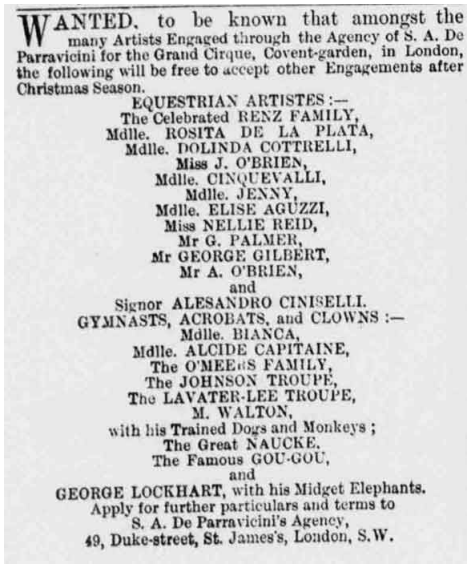
COMPAÑÍA ECUESTRE GIMNÁSTICA.

Hoy miércoles, segunda funcion en que se presentará el célebre y aplaudido domador americano Mr. E. W. Humpreys con sus magníficos y corpulentos dos elefantes músicos, acróbatas y danzantes, calificados como los mas inteligentes y mejor amaestrados de cuantos se conocen hoy de su especie.

A las 7 y media.

Aviso.—Para el próximo viérnes primer *Dia de Moda* se prepara una funcion extraordinaria en la cual hará su debut Mlle. Rosita de la Plata apellidada la estrella del arte ecuestre.

Fig. 3: El Balear*, November 15, 1882.*



WANTED, to be known that amongst the many Artists Engaged through the Agency of S. A. De Parravicini for the Grand Cirque, Covent-garden, in London, the following will be free to accept other Engagements after Christmas Season.

EQUESTRIAN ARTISTES :—
The Celebrated RENZ FAMILY,
Mdlle. ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
Mdlle. DOLINDA COTTRELLI,
Miss J. O'BRIEN,
Mdlle. CINQUEVALLI,
Mdlle. JENNY,
Mdlle. ELISE AGUZZI,
Miss NELLIE REID,
Mr G. PALMER,
Mr GEORGE GILBERT,
Mr A. O'BRIEN,
and
Signor ALESANDRO CINISELLI.
GYMNASTS, ACROBATS, and CLOWNS :—
Mdlle. BIANCA,
Mdlle. ALCIDE CAPITAINE,
The O'MEERS FAMILY,
The JOHNSON TROUPE,
The LAVATER-LEE TROUPE,
M. WALTON,
with his Trained Dogs and Monkeys ;
The Great NAUCKE,
The Famous GOU-GOU,
and
GEORGE LOCKHART, with his Midget Elephants.
Apply for further particulars and terms to
S. A. De Parravicini's Agency,
49, Duke-street, St. James's, London, S.W.

Fig. 4: The Era*, November 27, 1886.*

from only ten in 1847/48 to 43 by 1887/88, and was set to rise even higher to 74 in 1897/98 (Assael 2005, 25/6). So it seems obvious that, by 1886, London was *the* place to go if you wanted to launch an international circus career.

That this was exactly the intention behind Rosita's and Dolinda's London engagement becomes immediately apparent from the first advertisement that promoted their performance in *The Era*, commissioned by S.A. De Parravicini, who served as their agent

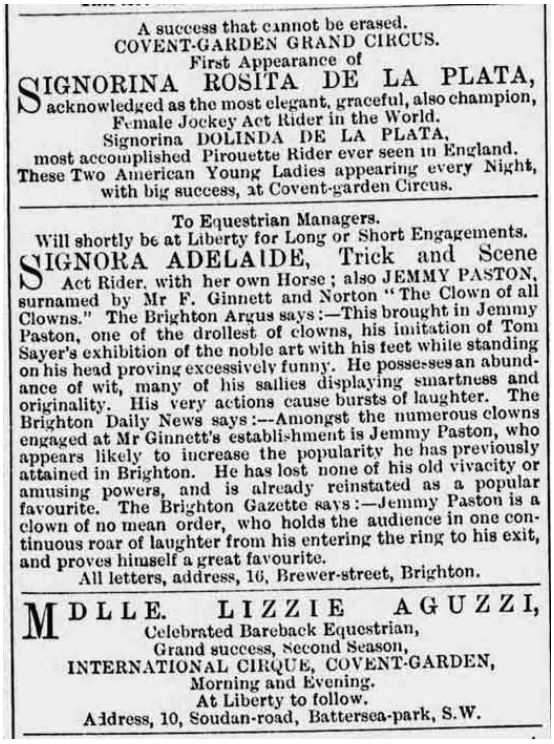
(fig. 4). In the header, it clearly states that they, together with various other artists engaged by S.A. de Parravicini, "will be free to accept other Engagements after Christmas Season". It is striking that while Rosita is being advertised as *Rosita de la Plata*, her sister Dolinda goes back to being Dolinda Cotrelli. This is understandable in the light of the contract Henry Cottrelly is supposed to have made with them in 1878: he was to teach them the equestrian art while they agree to work for ten years without pay. By 1887, it is so to speak Cottrelly's time to cash in on the investment he made, as the contract is about to expire. Thus the reason for Dolinda being called Dolinda Cotrelli might be that Henry Cottrelly wants to make the connection between them clear, which of course, as a well-known artist himself, is also an indication of quality. In later *The Era* advertisements that announce the Christmas program, we actually also see a Signor Cotrelli appearing as one of the artists of the 1887 Grand Circus Christmas Season (fig. 5) and we will see him acting as manager for both sisters sometime after that.

What is also remarkable is how exactly the artists are presented in these advertisments, keeping in mind that, in advertising, space is money. It seems to be very important to point out that almost all of these artists, while being from the "principal Continental Cirques", were also new faces for a London audience. That is obviously seen as an asset. That said, in the majority of the cases it does not seem to have been of particular interest *where* these artists *came from*, other than from the "principal Continental Cirques". Notably, the only exact geographic reference in these particular examples concerned Archie O'Brien, who had just returned "from India and Australia" – both places, of course, part of the British Empire at that time. Similarly, in the reviews of the Grand Circus Show, which appeared in *The Era,* the *Standard*, the *Morning Post* and *Lloyd's Weekly*, among other titles, the artist's nationalities were hardly ever mentioned. All this indicates a *global imaginary* where London was the center of a global empire, a hub of the entertainment industry, a center of attraction: it was where people *came to*, regardless where they *came from*.

It is interesting to keep this in mind when we now look at a further series of advertisements that were clearly meant to broker Rosita and Dolinda to interested circus proprietors. The first two of that series appeared in *The Era* on January 8th and 15th and obviously their main objective was to draw the attention of prospective employers to their remaining performances at Covent Garden (fig. 6). What we can see from the surrounding announcements is that Rosita and Dolinda are far from being the only female equestrian artists seeking an engagement at that time. Moreover, Dolinda is suddenly Dolinda de la Plata and, for the first time in London, they are directly linked to a geographical origin – not only via their telling names - but by referencing "these two American Young Ladies".

While this is still vague, one week later they are suddenly clearly advertised as The Two South-American Female Equestrians" in the header of another *The Era* ad (fig. 7). Why this is the case can most likely be inferred from the notes directly beneath this one: they once again bear witness to the fact that Rosita and Dolinda were definitely only two female equestrians among many others who were seeking employment at that time. They needed something to stand out – and it is very likely that Henry Cottrelly, who we can see acting as their manager here, figured that their being South American could be a unique selling point. Of course, in reality, both Rosita and Dolinda, while certainly having been

born in Buenos Aires, are highly transnational figures: their parents are Italian immigrants, and they left Argentina when they were but children. But that does not mean that Cottrelly could not make use of the words "South American" to fire the imagination of a prospective audience, or, more precisely, suggest to employers in the circus business, who were looking to put artists under contract in London, that these words might carry attraction value for prospective audiences.



A success that cannot be erased.
COVENT-GARDEN GRAND CIRCUS.
First Appearance of
SIGNORINA ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
acknowledged as the most elegant, graceful, also champion, Female Jockey Act Rider in the World.
Signorina DOLINDA DE LA PLATA,
most accomplished Pirouette Rider ever seen in England.
These Two American Young Ladies appearing every Night, with big success, at Covent-garden Circus.

To Equestrian Managers.
Will shortly be at Liberty for Long or Short Engagements.
SIGNORA ADELAIDE, Trick and Scene Act Rider, with her own Horse; also JEMMY PASTON, surnamed by Mr F. Ginnett and Norton "The Clown of all Clowns." The Brighton Argus says:—This brought in Jemmy Paston, one of the drollest of clowns, his imitation of Tom Sayer's exhibition of the noble art with his feet while standing on his head proving excessively funny. He possesses an abundance of wit, many of his sallies displaying smartness and originality. His very actions cause bursts of laughter. The Brighton Daily News says:—Amongst the numerous clowns engaged at Mr Ginnett's establishment is Jemmy Paston, who appears likely to increase the popularity he has previously attained in Brighton. He has lost none of his old vivacity or amusing powers, and is already reinstated as a popular favourite. The Brighton Gazette says:—Jemmy Paston is a clown of no mean order, who holds the audience in one continuous roar of laughter from his entering the ring to his exit, and proves himself a great favourite.
All letters, address, 16, Brewer-street, Brighton.

MDLLE. LIZZIE AGUZZI,
Celebrated Bareback Equestrian,
Grand success, Second Season,
INTERNATIONAL CIRQUE, COVENT-GARDEN,
Morning and Evening.
At Liberty to follow.
Address, 10, Soudan-road, Battersea-park, S.W.

Fig. 5: The Era*, December 11, 1886 (snip), Identical ads on December 18 and December 1886.*

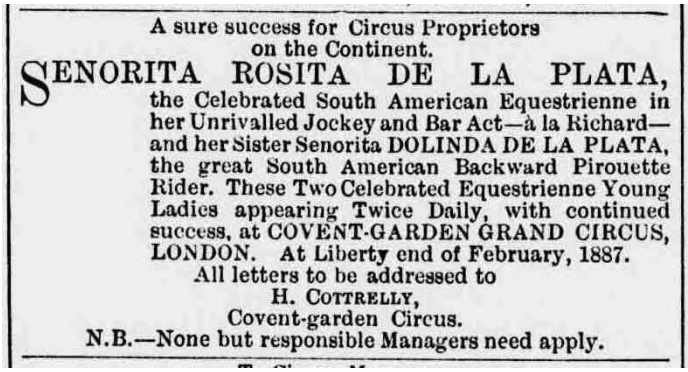
COVENT-GARDEN GRAND CIRCUS.
Continued success
of
the Two South American
Female Equestrians,
SIGNORINA ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
Signorina ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
Signorinaa ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
Signorina ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
Signorina ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
Signorina ROSITA DE LE PLATA,
the Champion Female Jockey;
and
Signorina DOLINDA DE LA PLATA,
in her extraordinary and brilliant Pirouette Act.
These Two Young Ladies appearing Nightly
with the admiration of the Public.
All letters to be addressed to
Mr COTTRELLY,
Covent-garden Circus.

To Circus Managers.
MISS NELLIE BAILEY,
First-class Equestrian, now concluding a Two Years' successful Engagement with C. Hengler, Esq., in conjunction with her Sister Miss LIZZIE HARMSTON, Contortionist. First-class Dancer, Ride in Entrées, &c. Will be at Liberty for at Home or Abroad after Feb. 26th.
Address, HENGLER'S GRAND CIRQUE, GLASGOW.

MISSES BOORNES, Equestriennes, will be at Liberty for Home or Abroad on Jan. 31st, after a successful Season of Sixteen Weeks at GINNETT'S CIRCUS, ALBERT PALACE. Miss Boorne, Dashing Balloon Act, own Horse. Miss Jessica, Heroine of the Slack Wire, Single Trapeze, and Fancy Acts on Horseback. Miss Carlotta, Trick Act. Address, 9, Meath-street, Battersea-park.

MISS FLORIE TRANSFIELD, the great American Trick-Act Rider, acknowledged by Public and Press to be the Premier Equestrienne in England. Jumping Two of the broadest Banners ever attempted by any Lady; also in her great Balloon and Fire Hoop Act, with own Horse. Splendid Costumes. Also Miss IDA, the Human Serpent and Running Vaulting Act Rider. Now at Liberty for Home or Abroad. In active preparation, a grand Trapeze Performance by Miss Florie and Ida. Address, Yarmouth House, Havelock-street, Temperance Town, Cardiff, Wales.

Fig. 6: The Era*, January 15, 1887, nearly identical advertisement on January 8, 1887.*

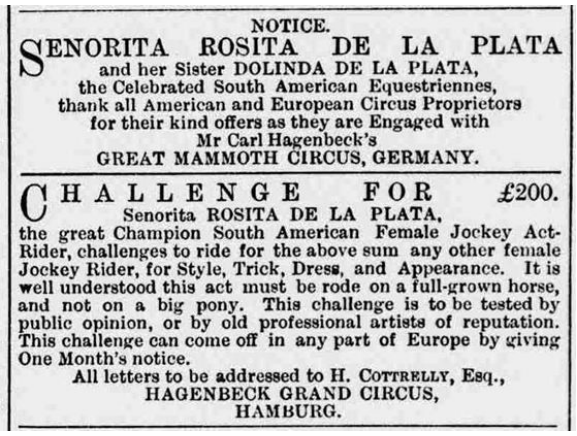


A sure success for Circus Proprietors
on the Continent.

SENORITA ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
the Celebrated South American Equestrienne in her Unrivalled Jockey and Bar Act—à la Richard—and her Sister Senorita DOLINDA DE LA PLATA, the great South American Backward Pirouette Rider. These Two Celebrated Equestrienne Young Ladies appearing Twice Daily, with continued success, at COVENT-GARDEN GRAND CIRCUS, LONDON. At Liberty end of February, 1887.
All letters to be addressed to
H. COTTRELLY,
Covent-garden Circus.
N.B.—None but responsible Managers need apply.

Fig.7: The Era*, 01/22/1887.*

The supposition that this was part of Cottrelly's strategy is corroborated by the next advertisement, this time published two weeks later, on February 5th (fig. 8) The interval of two weeks, as opposed to the previous one-week interval, might suggest that this ad was not originally planned for, and that Cottrelly decided to commission it because he was not satisfied with the employment offers Rosita and Dolinda had received up to then – but we have no way of knowing this for certain.



NOTICE.

SENORITA ROSITA DE LA PLATA
and her Sister DOLINDA DE LA PLATA,
the Celebrated South American Equestriennes,
thank all American and European Circus Proprietors
for their kind offers as they are Engaged with
Mr Carl Hagenbeck's
GREAT MAMMOTH CIRCUS, GERMANY.

CHALLENGE FOR £200.
Senorita ROSITA DE LA PLATA,
the great Champion South American Female Jockey Act-Rider, challenges to ride for the above sum any other female Jockey Rider, for Style, Trick, Dress, and Appearance. It is well understood this act must be rode on a full-grown horse, and not on a big pony. This challenge is to be tested by public opinion, or by old professional artists of reputation. This challenge can come off in any part of Europe by giving One Month's notice.
All letters to be addressed to H. COTTRELLY, Esq.,
HAGENBECK GRAND CIRCUS,
HAMBURG.

*Fig. 8:*The Era*, February 5, 1887.*

What we can see, however, is that we not only have the words "South American" twice, but suddenly the names are also "Senorita Rosita de la Plata" and "Senorita Dolinda de la Plata", not "Signorina" or "Mdlle" as before (the frequent use of these terms as opposed to "Miss", of course, already testifies to an exotistic marketing strategy underlying the circus business as a whole, even though, as we have seen, there are no clear geographic markers in the advertisements for many London performances), so there is clearly more emphasis put on forging the sisters' public image as *South American* equestriennes.

And this strategy seems to have worked: by the end of February, as announced by another *The Era* advertisement (fig. 9), both Rosita and Dolinda were engaged with Carl Hagenbeck's circus – which was probably very close to the best possible engagement they could get. After all, by 1887 Carl Hagenbeck was already a highly prominent and respected figure in the fields of animal trade and also the so-called *Völkerschauen* (i.e. nowadays highly questionable public displays of (exotic) human beings in Zoos and public gardens). He was, however, new to the circus business, just planning to open his very first circus in April that year – which is why this engagement was in Rosita's and

Dolinda's league. From the way the Hagenbeck advertisement and the "challenge" beneath it are worded, we can also see that Rosita's public image as *South American Equestrienne* or *Jockey-Act Rider* had finally been fully established.

4. Playing the Global Imaginary: Rosita in Hamburg

By April of 1887, then, Rosita was scheduled to perform at the grand opening of Carl Hagenbeck's Great Mammoth Circus in Hamburg. And judging from the way her performance was promoted there, and how it was received by the local press, it becomes very likely that the public image forged for Rosita and Dolinda in London was an important factor in Hagenbeck's decision to put them under contract. At least, he decidedto continue the strategy. For instance, we see that on a poster that announces the last performance of Hagenbeck's circus in Hamburg on April 25th 1887, Hagenbeck clearly promotes both Rosita and her sister Dolinda as "berühmte süd-amerikanische Reiterin", which translates to "famous South-American equestrienne" (fig. 10). He uses the same wording for Dolinda in the advertisement, which announced the opening performance, published in the *Hamburger Nachrichten* and all other major Hamburg newspapers on April 4th, 1887 (fig. 11).

Carl Hagenbeck's
Internationaler Circus,
auf dem Heiligengeistfeld, neben dem Panorama.
Heute, Sonnabend, den 2. April 1887,
Abends 7½ Uhr präcise:
Eröffnungs-Vorstellung.
Auftreten der Specialitäten: Fräulein Rosita de la Plata als Jockey, zum ersten Male in Deutschland. Bareback Trickact von dem berühmten Amerikaner Mr. Frank Mellville.
Miss Ella in ihren großartigen Leistungen auf dem Telephondraht. 5 Trakehner Falben-Hengste, in Freiheit dressirt und vorgeführt von Mr. Wesso. Parodie „Hohe Schule", geritten auf dem Pferde „Kamerun" von Mr. Tom Belling, genannt „August". Pironetten zu Pferde von der berühmten südamerikanischen Reiterin Mlle. Dolinda de la Plata, zum ersten Male in Deutschland. Auftreten des Amerikaners Mr. Thompson mit seinen 7 unübertrefflich dressirten Elephanten. Die hohe Schule, geritten auf dem Trakehner Rapphengst „Black Eagle" von Frl. Ghika. Vorführung der vorzüglich dressirten Affen von Mr. Moglio.
Ein Ausflug nach Wategama auf Ceylon, Ausstattungsstück, arrangirt und inscenirt von Herrn Tom Belling und Herrn John Hagenbeck, ausgeführt von sämmtlichen Damen und Herren der Gesellschaft und dem Singhalesischen Tänzer-Personal, sowie Elephanten, Pferden, Zebus 2c. Komische

Fig.9: The Era, *02/26/1887.*

Fig. 10. Carl Hagenceck's internationaler Zirkus, *Programm.*

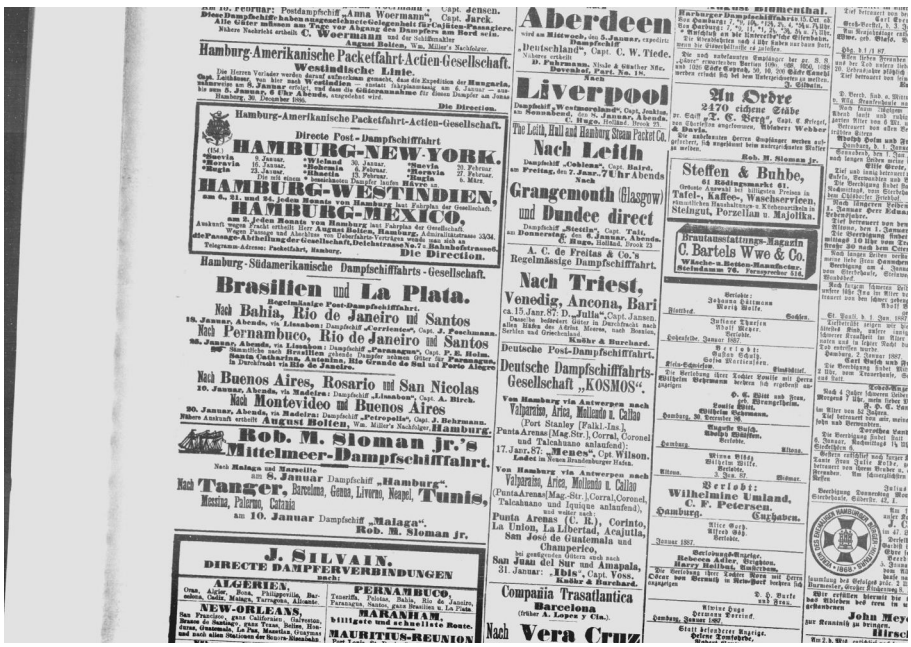


Fig. 11: Hamburger Nachrichten, *April 2, 1887.*

Rosita, here, is promoted as the main attraction, without the words "South American", but there are several advertisements over the following days where she is announced as "the famous South-American equestrienne".

When we now take a look at the press coverage of the circus performance, we see that, in Hamburg, this marketing strategy found fertile ground. While, as stated earlier, in the London reviews Rosita and Dolinda are never described as South American, in German newspapers we find the following sentences:

> Eine ebenso feine als künstlerisch hervorragende Leistung bietet die Südamerikanerin Dolinda de la Plata mit ihren Pirouetten zu Pferde. *(Hamburger Nachrichten*, April 6, 1887.)

Which translates to:

A very refined and outstanding artistic performance was shown by the South American Dolinda de la Plata with her pirouettes on horseback. (My translation, JD)

Or this:

> Hagenbeck's Circus war, wie wir vorhergesagt haben, am gestrigen Benefizabend der kühnen südamerikanischen Reiterin Frl. Rosita de la Plata ausverkauft. (*Hamburger Fremdenblatt*, April 23, 1887.)

As we predicted, Hagenbeck's circus was sold out for yesterday's gala performance by the audacious South American equestrienne Miss Rosita de la Plata. (My translation, JD)

Both quotes show that she was clearly perceived according to the public image created for her – and that her performances were a commercial success. And finally, the last example for now, which is also the most interesting one. It was published in the city of Magdeburg, one of the stations of Hagenbeck's circus once they had started touring.

> Sollte beider Schwestern Wiege auch an der Spree gestanden haben, so verleugnen die reizenden Künstlerinnen doch anscheinend nicht das verwegene und feurige, echt südamerikanische Blut. *(Magdeburger General-Anzeiger*, June 16, 1887.)

Which translates to:

Even if the cradle of these two sisters may have stood on the banks of the river Spree [the river flowing through Berlin in Germany], these two charming artists do not at all give the appearance of repudiating their dashing, passionate, authentic South-American blood. (My translation, JD)

The striking element here is that, in this quote, we see both a certain degree of skepticism as to whether they actually are South American *and* a very clear example of the powerful exoticist fantasies this association conjured up at the time. This makes it a perfect testament to the fact that the kind of public image forged for Rosita and Dolinda was both recognizable as a marketing ploy for a contemporary audience – and that this marketing ploy was still highly effective.

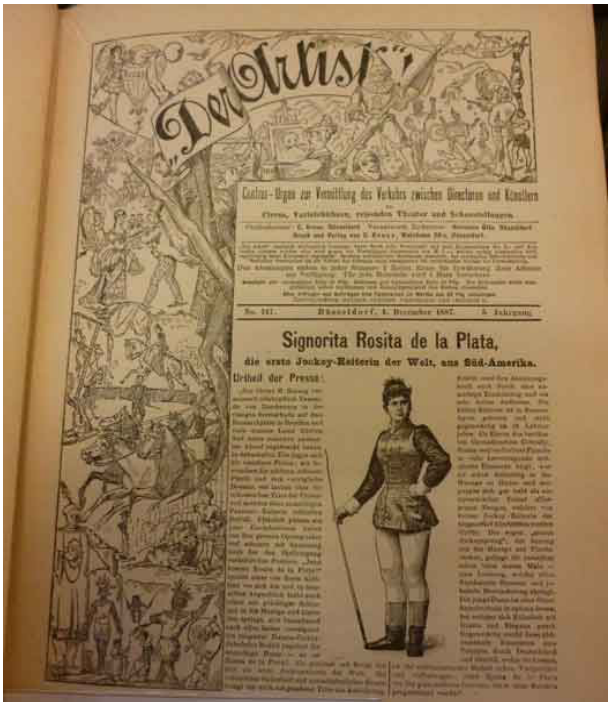


Fig. 12: Der Artist*, December 4, 1887.*

This is also why, some months later, in December 1887, we even find Rosita de la Plata, who by then had left Hagenbeck for an engagement at the Zirkus Herzog in Dresden, on the front cover of *Der Artist*, the central German press organ for the circus industry at that time (fig. 12). And by now it should be no surprise that the headline for the article, which sings her praise in the highest manner is *"Signorita Rosita de la Plata. Die erste Jockey-Reiterin der Welt – aus Süd-Amerika"*. In English: Signorita Rosita de la Plata. The world's best jockey – from South America (my translation, JD).

To some extent we even have a similar oscillation here between the effectiveness of her public image and markers that point to its constructedness: Clearly, the word "signorita" does not exist – it should be either "señorita" or "signorina".

This public image or marketing ploy was very effective; having established this, I would like to briefly go back to find out *why*. Apart from the fact that of course the end of the nineteenth century was one of the high points of exoticism in Europe as a whole, and most certainly also in Germany – the poster promoting the last performance of Hagenbeck's circus, for example, also promotes one of his infamous *Völkerschauen*, the Singhalese Caravan or Ceylon show – there is, I think, another reason, at least in the Hamburg context – and this has to do with a specific *global imaginary*.

Being the headquarters of the huge shipping line *Hamburg America Line* and also the *Hamburg Süd-Amerikanische Dampfschiffahrts-Gesellschaft,* Hamburg was a major hub when it came to connecting Europe with the Americas. As an unnamed contemporary states in a small treatise that was originally published in 1901 as an annotation to the timetable of the *Hamburg America Line,* by the end of the nineteenth century there were three ocean liners per week which departed for New York, and four which departed for South America, particularly for Brazil and the Río de la Plata region. Twice per week ships were leaving for Mexico, and there were also several additional

biweekly connections to North and South America (Thiess 2010, 12/3). These ocean liner connections were advertised on a regular basis in newspapers like the *Hamburger Nachrichten* (fig. 13) and by this fact alone must have been prominent in the minds of the newspaper readers among Hamburg's inhabitants.

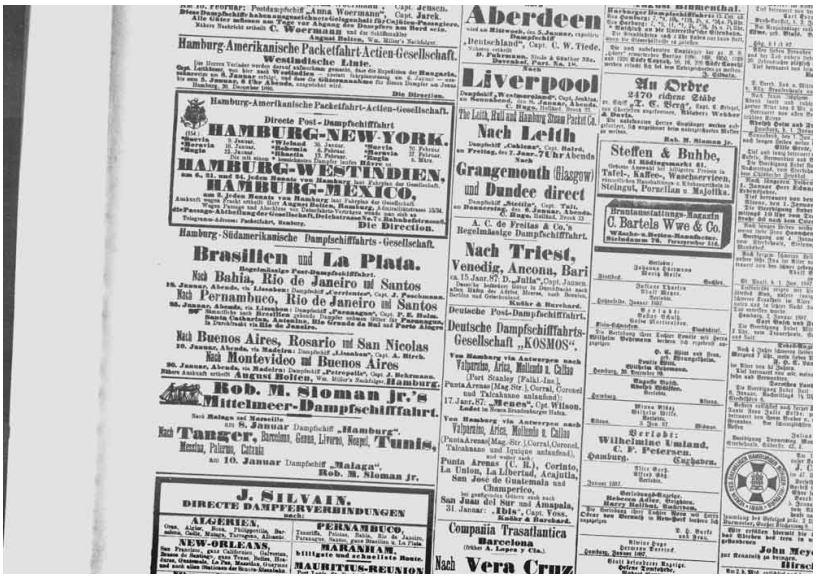


Fig. 13: Hamburger Nachrichten*, January 4, 1887. Advertisement for ocean liner connections Hamburg – North & South America Mexico; Hamburger Nachrichten.*

In the treatise, the contemporary author even states that by 1901, Hamburg's shipping lines, together with the Bremen-based *Norddeutsche Lloyd,* had surpassed every other steamship company in the world (Thiess 14). While this clearly has to be seen in the light of the nationalist sentiment of the time, even today scholars, such as Lincoln Paine in his book *Sea and Civilization: Maritime History of the World,* maintain that "by the end of the century, British primacy on the North Atlantic was under threat from both Germany and the United States" (Paine 2014, Chapter 18, "Annihilation of Space and Time", "Competition on the North Atlantic").

In addition to that, there is also the fact that nearly all of the roughly six million Germans who emigrated overseas between 1820 and 1930 migrated to the Americas – overwhelmingly to North America, which attracted 90 percent of all emigrants, but some also went to South America (Schmahl 2016). Keeping these two factors in mind, I think it is fair to state that within the *global imaginary* of many Germans at that time the Americas – while still being seen as exotic and probably exciting fantasies of untamed open landscapes and wild men on horses – were in a sense much closer to home than any other region of the world – which of course made a marketing strategy centering on the factor *South American* highly promising, and demonstrably effective.

5. An American *Global Imaginary*: Rosita's Return to Argentina

But was this phenomenon, a marketing principle, which could be viewed as appealing to the public's *global imaginary*, only to be found in the European circus business of the

nineteenth century? If we consider this period as one marked by a growing interconnectedness of the world, as a historic precedent to the forces beneath today's globalization, this clearly ought not to be the case. Interconnectedness, after all, means that there are transformations in all the connected parts, albeit to different extents and effects. Let us then take a look at what happened when Rosita returned to the country she left when she was a child.

Fig. 14: Advertisement for the performance of Frank Brown's Company at the Teatro San Martín, Buenos Aires (published in Seibel 2012, 67)

By *1893,* Rosita de la Plata had gone back to South America and was currently engaged with the company of Frank Brown, a British-born clown and circus impresario whom she was to marry some years later. In the program which announces her performance at the *Teatro San Martín* in Buenos Aires, she is promoted as "la célebre ecuestre argentina que tanto ha llamado la atención en las pricipales capitales del Viejo Mundo" which translates to "the famous Argentinian equestrienne who received so much attention in the principal capitals of the Old World" (my translation). Also, you can see the words *Jockey Inglés* next to her image, they refer to the trick she performed, jumping onto the back of a galloping horse, which was sometimes called the English Jockey Act – but of course it is also somewhat of a signal that the words are spelled out.

At first glance the sentence "received so much attention in the principal capitals of the Old World" does not carry that much meaning – but it starts to be relevant when you read it against the context of the major transformations which the city of Buenos Aires was going through at that time. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, the city was not only massively growing due to mass migration. It was also undergoing a huge infrastructural modernization project, whose goal was to leave the colonial past behind once and for all, and to turn Buenos Aires, which had been called *la gran aldea* or *the great village* up to that point, into a modern metropolis that could rival the ones in Europe (Rapport and Seoane 120-136).

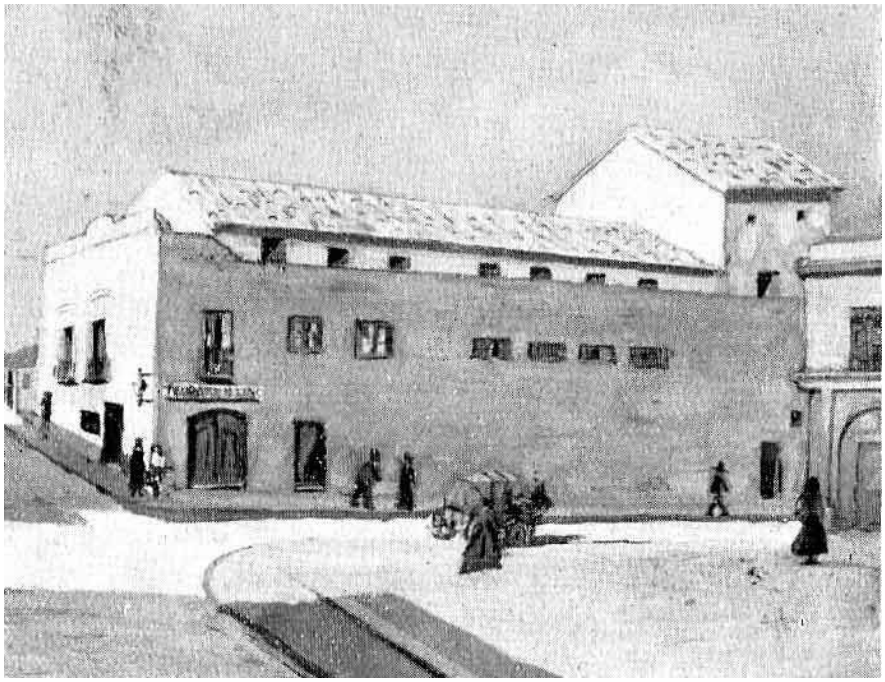
Fig. 15: Postcard depicting the Avenida de Mayo around 1900
(courtesy Biblioteca Naciónal Mariano Moreno*)*

It was the time when the *Avenida de Mayo* was being built (fig. 15, construction started in 1888 and ended in 1894), a spacious, magnificent avenue similar to the grand Parisian boulevards. One of its chief advocates was Buenos Aires' then mayor Torcuato de Alvear, who expressly took George-Eugène Haussmann and his renovation of Paris as a role model (Llanes 1955, 23-32). It is also during that time that the old colonial-style theatre *Coliseo Provisional* (1804-1872/73), a relatively plain building whose entrance, in the minds of some beholders, seemed to befit a coach house more than a theatrical building (40), was replaced with a whole plethora of new, modern, neoclassical and Art Nouveau style theatres that were constructed in Buenos Aires in the last quarter of the nineteenth century (fig. 16 and 17, Rapoport and Seoane 2007, 239).

The historic *Teatro San Martìn* at calle Esmeralda, in which Rosita's 1893 performance was staged, was one of them. Thus, it does not seem too far-fetched to surmise that it is a global imaginary connected to this modernization project and to the fact that the population of Buenos Aires was mainly comprised of people with strong ties to their original European homes that the words "the famous Argentinean equestrienne who received so much attention in the principal capitals of the Old World" appeal to. This was a global imaginary in which Buenos Aires was not only in many ways connected to the Old World, but had become itself a modern metropolis and capital, on a par with its Old-World-counterparts.

Rosita thus came to be something like a connecting figure – which is highlighted by the fact that the 1893 performances did not mark the first time she returned to Argentina. That had already happened five years earlier, in 1888, and after she left to tour Europe again from 1888 to 1893, Argentinean newspapers excessively reported on

her success abroad, or the presents awarded to her by important people who visited her gala performances (Seibel 2012, 60). By virtue of this media coverage Rosita was, in a sense, connecting Argentina to the world – and the world to Argentina.



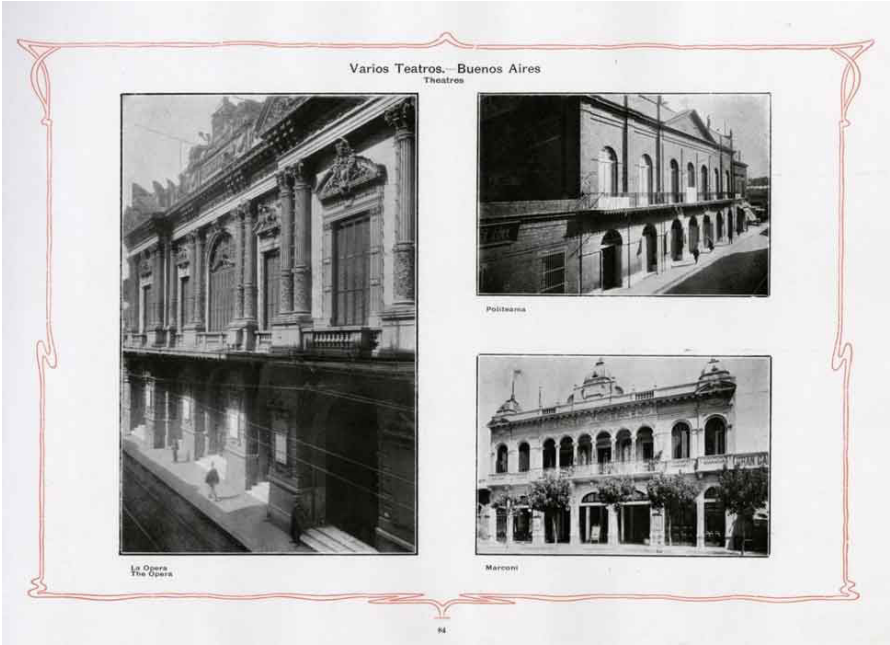


Fig. 16 and 17: Drawing of the Coliseo (1804-1873, Talluard *1932, 32) and a postcard depicting turn of the century theatres (courtesy* Biblioteca Naciónal Mariano Moreno*).*

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Lisa J. Warrington

Herr Daniel Bandmann and Shakespeare vs. the World

Abstract

German actor Daniel Bandmann played his first Hamlet at the age of 20, and made his English language debut as Shylock in New York, 1863. In his prime, he performed extensively in America, Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand, amongst other countries. Though he played roles which ranged from Narcisse and the Corsican twins to Jekyll and Hyde, he was perhaps most closely identified with a handful of Shakespearean roles: Hamlet, Shylock, Macbeth, Othello, Iago. His apparently ungovernable temper led to a love/hate relationship with the critics, played out in public through the newspapers. His responses to criticism open a window into his playing of these roles. This paper examines Bandmann's acting in the role of Hamlet and the critical interchanges he engaged in around the world, in which he defended his playing of the role.

Author

Lisa Warrington is an Associate Professor in Theatre Studies at the University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand. Current research interests (and areas in which she has published) include Shakespeare in performance, directing, Pasifika theatre, site-specific theatre, nineteenth century New Zealand theatre history and the theatre of Aotearoa/New Zealand. She is also a professional theatre director, with many productions to her credit. She runs the Theatre Aotearoa database (http://tadb.otago.ac.nz), which provides a regularly expanded detailed archive of stage productions in New Zealand.

This article examines the critical reception and acting choices – with particular reference to the role of Hamlet - of the nineteenth century German actor Daniel Bandmann (1837 – 1905), as played out in his often-stormy relationship with the world press. Herr Bandmann frequently engaged in debate with his critics via letters to the editors of sundry newspapers, or from the stage itself, post-performance. I focus primarily in this article on his relationship with the press in London, Australia and New Zealand in the years 1868 – 1881, and on his playing of the role of Hamlet. This provides a degree of

insight into Bandmann's acting choices, as well as his choleric temper, which had the effect of rousing him to re-action on many occasions. I also briefly touch upon colonial expressions of 'otherness' in the way the actor and his work were viewed by the press.

In his prime, Bandmann travelled the world, playing extensively in America, Great Britain and Ireland, but also visiting Australia, New Zealand, China, India, Hong Kong and other countries. In 1886, he published *An Actor's Tour, Or Seventy Thousand Miles with Shakespeare* a rather pedestrian memoir of a two-year world tour he had just undertaken.[1] He continued to act until 1901 when he was in his early 60s, but his fortunes dwindled, and in those later years, he often played with amateurs or in 'dime houses' in America. At the same time, he had bought a ranch in Missoula, Montana, and raised cattle and crops until his death in 1905.

Bandmann would today be regarded as prime tabloid fodder, and was indeed seen as such in his own era. He was prone to hyperbole, as shown by this billing in a provincial New Zealand newspaper, where he claimed to be 'pronounced by the Press of the entire world to be foremost among the Tragedians of the Century.'[2] He had an irascible temper, being 'sudden and quick to quarrel', and attracting – even courting - trouble throughout his professional life. He was handy with his fists, occasionally punching people in the face with whom he had disagreements. He was a bully, probably a wife beater, a short-term bigamist, and a vigorous defender of his honour in the press or in the courtroom. He roused anger in his adversaries: for example, in 1894, an American newspaper headline proclaimed 'Bandy's Bloody Shirt: the tragedian's soiled linen waved in the court room' – a report of a court case in which a farm worker was accused of attempting to brain him with a shovel during a heated argument.[3] Frequently unable to resist responding to what he regarded as unfair criticism in the press, he often couched it in terms of a reasonable right-of-reply, as in this 1881 letter to the editor of the *Otago Daily Times*:

> It is not complaint that leads me to object to the criticism by your reporter of *Richard III*, but simply a duty. I feel it a duty to the gentleman to set him right on many points, for the sake of younger and less experienced artists who may have to suffer from the fallacy under which your critic labours—a scholarly, well-read gentleman, no doubt, but completely lacking the technical experience of our art.[4]

Bandmann's contentious nature and inability to preserve a discreet silence provided entertainment, which the press were not slow to relish. For example, Minnesota's *Daily Globe*, January 4, 1880, noted: 'Bandmann appears at McVicker's, Chicago, tomorrow evening for a brief engagement. Bets are ten to one that he has a quarrel before the first week has passed.' This flippant comment proved prescient. Within a week, Bandmann had accused the Chicago *Tribune* of falsehood for their adverse criticism of his Hamlet, resulting in 'a very cold shoulder from the press and very poor business for the Bandmanns.'[5] His indiscretion and the ways in which it played out in the press provide a degree of insight into his working methodology as actor and manager/director.

Daniel Bandmann was born in Cassel, Germany in 1837. He made his acting debut aged 18, and first played Hamlet (in German) when he was about 20.[6] He came to New York c. 1853, and worked for a time in the German-speaking theatre in the Bowery district.[7] In January 1863, still in his mid-twenties, he made his English language debut as Shylock in *The Merchant of Venice* at Niblo's Garden in New York, already billed as

'the celebrated German tragedian'. [8] He apparently learned the role in English in six weeks, with the aid of an admiring lady teacher.[9] He attracted attention, both positive and negative, in a number of roles that remained in his repertoire for most of his working life, including Narcisse, Macbeth, Othello and Iago, Jekyll and Hyde, and Hamlet.

Physically, he was impressive – a tall, solidly - built man, graceful in his movements, with long dark hair and a so-called tragedian's demeanour. As the London *Times* put it: 'Herr Bandmann is one of the most striking actors, on a grand scale, that have made a debut in London for many years.' [10] He was a very physical actor, expecting a good opposition from his onstage opponents in roles that required sword fighting.[11] His voice was powerful and by some was regarded as flexible. However, the quality of Bandmann's performance in roles such as Hamlet was evidently variable, ranging from pure melodrama to the stature of the tragedian, depending on the particular point-of-view of his critics, whose responses were 'characteristically polarized', as Nicole Anae also notes in her discussion of Bandmann as Shylock.[12] When he played Hamlet in Birmingham in 1869, the *Daily Post* somewhat naively stated:

> It is simple justice to say that Mr. Bandmann's Hamlet is by far the most perfect realisation of Hamlet ever seen on an English stage. [...] Mr. Bandmann is far more a master of our English tongue [than M. Fechter]; he speaks our phrases with singular skill.[13]

But his acting in sundry roles did not impress the English theatre critic Dutton Cook, who noted in *Nights At the Play: a View of the English Stage* (1883):

> The German-American Mr Bandmann is a coarse and noisy actor, who has not the remotest idea of reciting blank verse [...] his voice is harsh and monotonous, and his face expressionless. His ungainly striding about the stage and his vehement gesticulations, his incessant smiling at the gallery and self-satisfied glances at the pit made his whole performance ludicrous.[14]

Throughout his career, Bandmann faced these critical extremes, sometimes within a single review, such as this 1879 *New York Times* report of his performance as Hamlet:

> His faults were [...] perfectly apparent. Rude force, an unpleasantly familiar manner, frequent colloquialisms of speech, generally heavy demeanour, extreme hollowness or shrillness of voice, and a limited range of facial expression – these are certainly faults which would prevent any actor from attaining greatness, and all of these are characteristic of Mr. Bandmann. Yet, in despite of this, his Hamlet was really interesting. To the supreme gift of genius he cannot hope to lay claim; he does not act from inspiration; his emotion is always more or less artificial, and his expressions of extreme passion fall easily into rant. But he is fervent, active, picturesque; and in this particular instance he is certainly original. There is, moreover, a certain intensity about all he does, which keeps his auditors in a state of sympathetic interest and suspense. [...] Mr. Bandmann's conception of Hamlet, of whose sanity he plainly entertains no doubt, may be easily imagined; it is not graceful and easy, like Fechter's, nor impassioned and pathetic, like Irving's, nor stately and poetic, like Booth's, but it is, perhaps, all the more conspicuous on this account. It does not take a high place; but it is worth seeing.[15]

Even positive reviews might damn with faint praise. After Bandmann's 1868 London debut at the Lyceum, *The Times* observed:

> In some of his impassioned utterances [...] he will remind many of Mr. Fechter, but in his command of the English language he is far superior to that celebrated actor. Indeed, there is little in his accent to indicate that he is a German at all, the slight peculiarity in his pronunciation apparently indicating the influence of his visit to America, rather than that of his birth in Fatherland.[16]

The question of Bandmann's accent plagued him throughout his career, despite his evident attempts to perfect his English pronunciation. This ensured that there was always a point of difference, an alination, in his inhabiting the roles of Shakespeare. This innately xenophobic mindset on the part of his critics echoes Homi K. Bhabha's discussions of cultural colonialism, where 'the *reference* of discrimination is always to a process of splitting as the condition of subjection: [...] where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something *different* – a mutation, a hybrid.'[17] In terms of that 'otherness' he could never aspire to the greatness - say - of an Irving or Kean. Perhaps the least equivocal pronouncement of this difference came after his death, in a memoir published by a New Zealand judge: 'The first of my 'Hamlets' was Herr Bandmann, a ponderous German actor who gave what was called a 'scholarly performance' in a vile German accent.'[18] More generally, however, his accent was part of the fabric of discussion of his work, as in the *Manchester Guardian*:

> His manner and style are simple and unaffected, and herein he follows the example of the best German masters. In declamation he is prone to the habit of making long pauses in the middle both of period and verse, a habit sanctioned by many traditional authorities, but unjustifiable except in rare and exceptional circumstances. [...] His accent [...] is generally correct, though attention is still requisite to the distinction between hard and soft dentals, and to the correct pronunciation of the *u* in unhappy, unkind, &c, though this is, perhaps, only attainable in the third and fourth generation.[19]

The same point was made by reviewers in every country where Bandmann played. As an actor who evidently prided himself on seeking perfection, it must have been galling. Certainly, he was moved to respond to a particularly vitriolic critique of his accent in the *London Times* in October 1868, stating:

> [...] I regret that, being a foreigner, and never having studied the English language till very recently, it is quite possible that I do not pronounce every word with the accent of a gentleman who has enjoyed the training of Eton and Oxford; but I am a hard-working student, and zealously anxious to do full justice to the language of my author.[20]

Adding insult to injury was the comment of a provincial critic, in New Zealand's Invercargill, who pointedly marked the perceived difference between an accent in 'old fashioned' Shakespeare and that required for a drama of the modern world:

> The old-fashioned and sometimes crabbed English of Shakespeare fits him well, but not Bulwer's smooth and polished diction, which demand such a mastery of the language as few, if any, ever acquire, unless it be their 'mother tongue'. [21]

Not only was his accent perpetually regarded as a kind of barrier to complete success in the role of Hamlet but his acting choices and vocal tics were often held up as evidence of an overly-melodramatic approach to the role. The *Sydney Morning Herald* noted in 1880, for example:

> The soliloquy 'O! What a rogue and peasant slave am I' was taken much faster than usual, rather faster, indeed, than is natural when the multitude of ideas contained in it is considered. And the reverse was the case with the succeeding soliloquy, 'To be or not to be', where many of the words were drawled and prolonged to a most unusual extent; while in the interview with Ophelia 'farewell' was sounded more as 'fa-a-are-we-eell' than as one usually hears it. Not the greatest reluctance to part with anyone would induce such a ridiculous prolongation of the words.[22]

In Bandmann's defence, it may be noted that Sir Henry Irving himself was often cited for his unusual choices of pronunciation.[23] Encouraged by the negative comments published in many reviews, Tasmania's *Launceston Examiner* in 1881 felt able to pronounce Bandmann's Hamlet as 'the reverse of perfect', again singling out his voice for particular criticism. In his opening encounter with the Ghost, he displayed an unwarranted 'tameness and a lack of animation', while the 'rogue and peasant slave' speech became a rant, 'in a voice that, had such in reality been used within the precincts of a palace, would have been heard from top to bottom.'[24]

In a London review of *The Rightful Heir*, Bandmann had been accused of imitating the Anglo-French actor Charles Fechter, who had earlier performed with great success on the London stage in plays such as *The Corsican Brothers*. Fechter's 1861 portrayal of Hamlet had been greatly lauded by the London critics, and as John A. Mills notes was "remarkable, not merely for its influence on the subsequent history of Shakespearean production, but for its own inherent value as a work of histrionic art."[25] In his October 1868 letter to the editor of *The Times*, from which I have quoted above, Bandmann was moved to respond to this charge of imitation.

> I have never seen Mr. Fechter act, except once, and then only in two or three scenes of *Hamlet*. My style of acting was formed in Germany and in the United States. When I landed in England a little more than a year ago, Mr. Fechter was a celebrity of whom I had heard much, but had never seen. I studiously kept from seeing him that I might not be accused of giving back any reflected light, or be charged with the imitation of any of his excellencies. Our common German [sic] origin, and the circumstances of our having both derived much of the knowledge of our art from Continental schools and Continental models, are sufficient to give Mr. Fechter and myself certain characteristics in common; but I cannot be the imitator of an artist whom I distinctly disclaim to have seen except upon one brief occasion.

In his turn, Fechter had drawn much criticism for his French-accented speech. Mills cites, amongst others, a Boston critic, Henry Austin Clapp, who noted: 'Several important and common words [Fechter] never mastered: even 'love' … he pronounced in a mean between *loaf* and *loave*, to the end of his career.'[26]

Bandmann was intelligent and well-read, and evidently had a strong knowledge of and love for Shakespeare. He was invited to give a speech at the Theatrical Fund annual dinner in London in 1868, in which he laid claim to Schlegel's often-expressed view that Shakespeare 'belonged' to Germany alone:[27]

> Because, when Shakespeare's genius was sent from heaven to earth, its destination was Germany, but the wind blowing westwardly it rested in England. For himself, he cared little where Shakespeare was born; he belonged to the world, and his plays were acted and appreciated in every civilised nation.

A writer for the *London Review* seethed with great sarcasm about this speech:

> Had a parallel speech been made in any country but England, the speaker could hardly have escaped the charge of impertinence, unless by accepting that of stupidity.[28]

The invective of this writer against German claims to Shakespeare goes to the heart of the innate prejudice against 'foreigners', and demonstrates the inevitable challenge that Bandmann faced when he performed Shakespeare. It is further elucidated by the *New York Sun* (June 23, 1907) in a piece headed 'Few Foreign Actors Liked.' The paper took the view that:

> American audiences have never taken kindly to the actors that came from the German stage. [...] A German accent is to us the dialect of humour, and cannot be made anything else. [...] Even Daniel Bandmann, who has always been mentioned as one of the most successful of all the German actors that ever came to this country, had only a few years of prominence. [...] Our own actors are always liked best.[29]

Arguably just as frustrating to Bandmann was this mildly patronising 1873 review of *Hamlet* which appeared in *The London Times*:

> Herr Bandmann has commenced an engagement at this theatre by appearing in the character of Hamlet. His performance is, in more than one respect, remarkable. Most remarkable is the mastery which he has acquired over the English language. Within the last twelve months the foreign accent was strong upon him; now, were it not for the "Herr" in the programme, it would be difficult to discover that he is not an Englishman. The philosophical attainment is not without accompanying disadvantages. So complete is the fluency of the utterance that it flows over every point in the dialogue. Let us add that Herr Bandmann, like M. Fechter, essays to free himself from the trammels of tradition. [30]

Bandmann's production of *Hamlet* and his portrayal of the role were clearly influenced by German predecessors. He was familiar with Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship and Travels* (1795–96), and observed the general principles of Goethe's view that 'Shakespeare set out to portray[:] a heavy deed placed on a soul which is not adequate to cope with it.'[31] Charles Fechter had also drawn upon Goethe's novel in his performance of Hamlet, as had the American actor Edwin Booth, and Germany's Emil Devrient, amongst others. Mills cites George Eliot, who praised Fechter's 'naturalness and sensibility' in the role, and observed that his 'conception of the part is very nearly that indicated by the critical observations in *Wilhelm Meister*.'[32] Joanne Cormac notes that Devrient 'brought both Goethe's classical acting style and his conception of Hamlet to his interpretation of the role. According to Rosenberg, "[...] He played for pathos, for touching without disturbing his audiences."'[33] While Goethe clearly had widespread influence on the performance of so many actors, William Diamond, writing in 1925, points out that Goethe did not necessarily intend Wilhelm Meister's reflections on *Hamlet* to represent the author's own thinking about the character: 'In Wilhelm Meister's picture of Hamlet we have not an impartial critical analysis of Shakespeare's Hamlet, but a creation that resembles more strikingly Wilhelm Meister himself than Shakespeare's Prince of Denmark. [...] While Shakespeare's heroes act, Goethe's heroes discuss.'[34]

Contemporary critics were by no means unaware of Goethe's influence on interpretations of the role when they came to review Bandmann's work. For example, Auckland's *Daily Southern Cross* in 1871 commented:

> If we may take 'Wilhelm Meister' for our guide — and we desire no better light than that which Goethe's genius has shed upon the exposition of *Hamlet* - it is the 'effect of putting upon a mind unfitted for it an enterprise of too 'great pith and moment,' and of loading it with duties it cannot undertake.' [...] With some such ideas as these we have witnessed Mr. Bandmann's presentment of Hamlet; and, making allowance for the sacrifices of poetical accuracy, necessary it would seem to ensure dramatic effect, we find them realised in his embodiment.[35]

However, while Bandmann's scholarly application to the study of Hamlet appears clear, it did not necessarily result in a great performance, as the *Daily Southern Cross* went on to observe: 'His conception, if not the effect of an inherent dramatic talent, exhibits great study, care, and meditation of Hamlet's character in abstract.' A Belfast critic writing for London's *Era* in 1874 elaborated on his influences:

> [Bandmann] seems to have carefully studied the exhaustive criticism of Goethe on the proper manner of producing *Hamlet*, and in at least one scene – that in which the ghost appears, when Hamlet is closeted with his mother – the instructions of Wilhelm Meister are followed with commendable closeness. We have portraits of both kings, the living and the dead, and both are full-length. The effect, when the perturbed spirit of the murdered king suddenly bursts on our view through the space where hangs his 'counterfeit presentment' on the wall, was striking and indeed startling. The sudden apparition seemed to thrill the audience more than the ghost usually does; and, perhaps, in no part of the representation was Herr Bandmann more weirdly natural, more impressively effective.[36]

The Bandmann version of the closet scene invariably provoked comment for its scenic splendours, and the element of surprise it produced in the audience as the Ghost emerged from a portrait, exactly as described by Goethe. Some critics prided themselves on recognising the source of Bandmann's inspiration. As Adelaide's *South Australian Register* noted in 1870: 'The mechanical effects produced in the ghost and the closet scenes are Germanic in their working out of weird notions.'[37] However, not all critics appeared aware of Bandmann's direct influences, with Melbourne's *Argus* stating that he had clearly adopted 'the arrangement made use of by Mr. Barry Sullivan of having wainscoting around the apartment, and the panels filled with portraits.'[38] Sullivan, who played Hamlet in Australia in 1862, had been much admired for the power and subtlety of his performance. Bandmann, however, took his performance to extremes. At the moment the Ghost emerged from the portrait, 'Herr Bandmann's acting [...] is of a kind to startle the most apathetic into enthusiasm. He falls back prostrate on the ground, and the whole situation is of that electrically enthralling kind which no words can possibly describe.'[39]

Bandmann was incensed when critics he deemed lacking in knowledge of European theatre practice attributed praise to certain actors whom he felt were not necessarily innovators in the role, whilst disregarding his own efforts. When the *London Times* in June 1875 compared Italian Tommaso Salvini's performance as Hamlet with that of Henry Irving, noting that both depart from 'common traditions',[40] a frustrated Bandmann wrote to the paper, under the heading 'The Stage Business of Hamlet':

> Great credit has been given both to Signor Salvini and Mr Irving for the invention of new business. It should be borne in mind, however, that much which may be new, as far as [London audiences] are concerned, may be old on other stages. I have played in German or English all over Germany, England, America and Australia. I have seen many of the great Hamlets [...] I find credit given to Signor Salvini for bringing the Ghost from under the stage. This is done in

> every theatre in Germany. Again, the introduction of a M.S. of the play in the play scene, and the nervous turning over of its leaves during the performance to hide the Prince's excitement, and to mask his due scrutiny of the King, has been done by myself years ago. The introduction of the M.S. is, in England at least, due to the late Mr. Bellew, who taught it to Mr. Fechter. [...] The fall into Horatio's arms after the play-scene is over is very old, and is done by every Hamlet in Germany. The action originates with Emil Devrient. Mr Irving has been highly praised for having his back turned to the Ghost at his first appearance. This business originated with no less a personage than Garrick himself. [...] I may claim to have reintroduced this business at my first appearance as Hamlet in Gratz, 1860. The sinking down of Mr. Irving after the disappearance of the Ghost I myself have always practised. [41]

Bandmann was evidently not the only German to comment on Irving's performance. In January 1875, *The Times* had published 'A German critique of Mr. Irving's Hamlet' – reprinted from the *Kolnische Zeitung* - which *The Times* patronisingly felt might provide its readers with amusement because of the 'foreign writer's intimate knowledge of the general state of playgoing London'. The unnamed writer made the claim that Irving's conception of the role would be difficult to clarify

> [...] to the satisfaction of German Shakespearologists. Mr. Irving is not learned in Shakespearian knowledge, nor is half so thoroughly fitted with a heavy aesthetic panoply as is commonly the case with our leading actors. With the various interpretations of Hamlet he is only superficially acquainted, and if he inclines to Goethe's this is not the result of a comparing conscious reflection, but the effect of his instinct...[42]

In November 1875, Bandmann further demonstrated his familiarity with the lineage of German actors when he published a short and largely anecdotal article entitled 'The German Stage – A Sketch' in *Macmillan's Magazine*. Here, he touched on the work of actors such as Johann Brockmann, who appeared in the first production of 'Schroeder's version of the play, based on Wieland's translation' in 1777, of which the resultant 'sensation was so great that for a time nothing was talked of in Hamburg but Brackman's [sic] Hamlet [...] whose conception of the part was principally bitterly ironical and humorous.'[43] Simon Williams notes that 'Brockmann's Hamlet was frequently compared with Garrick's, not always to Brockmann's advantage.'[44]

The first appearance of the Ghost in Bandmann's production was imbued with heightened melodramatic artifice, aided by the liberal use of limelight. As Melbourne's *Age* noted: 'During the dialogue between Hamlet and the Ghost on the castle platform, the rays of the moonlight were made to glance upon the horror -stricken prince's face with an effect which was perfectly natural and gave an appropriate weirdness to the scene.'[45] This demonstration of fear and horror was a common response to the Ghost's appearance, as suggested by Wilhelm Meister, who 'turned around sharply [... and] stood there petrified. [...] He stared at the figure, took a few deep breaths, and delivered his address to the Ghost in such a distraught, broken and compulsive manner that the greatest of artists could not have done better.'[46] Fechter as Hamlet, however, had chosen a different path: 'his acting was conspicuous by the absence of the conventional quivering, trembling, teeth-chattering agony which is apt to be the result of the coming of the apparition.'[47]

Bandmann reinstated Claudius' 'O my offence is rank' speech [III iii], often omitted in the nineteenth century, to reveal the King's remorse. This found general approval, *The*

Argus noting in 1869, for example: 'It is inconceivable that this scene should ever have been omitted, and now that it has been shown with what excellent effect it can be used, it is to be hoped that its excision will be a thing of the past.'[48] He also restored the appearance of Fortinbras at the end of the play. As *The Argus* approvingly observed, 'The contrast furnished by the marching of a military train in upon the scene of death tempers its gloom, and produces a far from disagreeable feeling of relief.' Indeed, the biggest drawback to Bandmann's re-configuring of the text was its inordinate length, with an Auckland performance in 1871 recorded as lasting four hours and a quarter, and not concluding until after midnight.[49] Perhaps understandably, the critic who made this observation was somewhat testy about the production's dramaturgy:

> Several liberties were taken with the play: of those intended to compress it within actable limits we do not complain; but we think that some of the patchwork which was embrodered on the original text might have been done better: at least the nonsense should scan properly.[50]

The role of Ophelia was played in Bandmann's tours of Australia and New Zealand by (amongst others) his second wife, Miss Milly Palmer (Mrs Bandmann) and by Miss Rose Evans. As it happens, both women would themselves later play the role of Hamlet – Palmer in 1894 and thereafter, and Evans in New Zealand in 1872, which led the *New Zealand Herald* to 'anticipate an intellectual treat of the very highest order.'[51] In playing Hamlet's encounter with Ophelia, Bandmann delivered further innovations, certainly in the opinion of the *South Australian Register*, which commented admiringly on his vocal dexterity and acting decisions. 'Get thee to a nunnery', for example,

> [...] was reiterated with a series of distinct significations which rose from an apparent jeer to a solemn adjuration. The coarseness bordering on brutality with which it was first said was seen to have served its purpose in convincing Ophelia of her lover's madness. After her exclamation, 'Heavenly powers restore him!' he calmed imperceptibly, and without relinquishing the wild expression of his face he threw passionate glances of warning at the distracted lady. The 'To a nunnery go,' which he repeated several times during his exit, was really his farewell entreaty to her.[52]

This view was endorsed by the *Otago Daily Times* in 1881, which considered Bandmann to be at his best in his rendition of this scene. [53] Simon Williams notes that Brockmann and Schröder played opposite interpretations of this scene, in which 'Schröder made it clear that Hamlet loves Ophelia passionately, while Brockmann played the fool with her.'[54]

Bandmann particularly struggled with colonial and small-town critics, who often applied a degree of irreverence to their assessments of his worth as an actor. For example, in 1890, the *Salt Lake Herald* joked about his *Hamlet*:

> Owing to an inborn sense of courtesy and three full seats on either side we remained until *rigor mortis* set in on the whole family and the curtain shut out the cheerful scene. We do not wish to wound anyone's feelings by unjust comparisons, or unduly elate any of the actors; but we think the public will sustain us in the assertion that Yorick acted his part the best.[55]

Bandmann made his first appearance in New Zealand in 1870, and returned for a triumphant progress (as he hoped) in 1881, as part of an extensive world tour. He was indeed appreciatively received in many cities. For example: 'Herr Bandmann's artistic

and living embodiment of Shakespeare's creations have evoked unbounded enthusiasm in Dunedin.'[56] But elsewhere around the country, equivocating or outright negative views appeared. The Christchurch *Press* noted of Bandmann's performance as Othello, for example, that: 'the whole character may be said to have been very unevenly played.' In particular, the reviewer was displeased by the actor's inability to regulate his voice, noting that 'the introduction of a high-pitched intonation [...] entirely spoilt what up to that point was a very fine piece of elocution.'[57] Not surprisingly, this provoked Bandmann to a sarcastic response to this (in his view) ignorant colonial critic:

> It is with the profoundest feeling and consciousness of my unworthiness and ignorance that I approach this 'holy' subject, in the hope that you will do me the justice to insert this letter. [...] May I ask why — for what reason or authority — your wiseacre uses his rusty and malicious cheese-knife to try and make insertions upon a well-established reputation of 25 years' standing, backed by half the civilised world, and such men like *(sic)* my late friends, Lord Lytton, John Forster, Tom Taylor, John Oxenford, Charles Dickens, the present Ralph Waldo Emerson, Longfellow, [and others]? [...] I appeal to the community of Christchurch whether the Liliputian attacks by a man to whom Shakespeare is a 'sealed book' upon a well-established world-wide famed artist are worthy of a first-class paper. [58]

Even this did not match the display of invective he unleashed upon the editor of the Calcutta *Statesman* in 1883:

> Sir, — I have read your report in this morning's Rag — otherwise called the *Statesman*. It was sent to me by one of your friends. [...] Your treachery all along to me, led me to no other expectations from such a JUDAS as you are. You have been, and are still trying to mislead the public and throw dirt upon my good name, and had I time and did I consider it worth the trouble I should put you in JAIL as I did your confrere in Hong-Kong, and where such curs like you ought to be. Publish this letter intact if you have the courage. But you have NOT. You can only stab in the dark like a COWARD. — Yours, Daniel Edward Bandmann.[59]

Perhaps the unkindest words came from certain provincial towns in New Zealand, such as Invercargill, near the bottom of the South Island, where Bandmann was moved to speak with asperity from the stage:

> He had been on the stage upwards of twenty years — an actor in two languages. He had travelled all over the world, and had been successful in every corner of it, and he was prepared to say that the company he had at present with him to support him, in spite of what the evening paper had said, was a better one than had ever before appeared in New Zealand. He would wager £100 that it was so. He would place the money in the Bank of New Zealand, and forfeit it if what he said was not true.[60]

It should be noted that such speeches were viewed with a degree of disdain or amusement by the papers reporting them. It is clear that Bandmann's cavalier responses were responsible for much of the opprobrium that descended on him. For example, Melbourne's *Leader* was moved to comment in 1870, when Bandmann came forward to make a speech post-performance:

> Now everybody knows that the bulk of the actors in the colony don't make much of a figure when in front of the curtain. There were and are exceptions to the rule of course. Brooke was one, Copping is one. But we don't get men every day who can go in front of the curtain and address an audience. Mr. Bandmann certainly should never venture to cross the line, which divides the stage from the auditorium.[61]

He was further roused to anger by his encounter with the provincial town of Wanganui (population in 1881 between 4,000 –5,000). In his memoir, his only reference to his visit to this town is as follows: ' The people in Wanganui are the worst in the country; the church and drink are their only means of passing their leisure. [...] But fortunately for the colony, most of them are going mad.' [62] What could have provoked such comment?

The *Wanganui Chronicle*, one of two local daily newspapers, reviewed his opening performance of *Hamlet,* noting that it contained 'numerous differences' to other 'acknowledged masters' of the role, and implying that such changes would not sit well with the Wanganui public. The review ends with what Bandmann clearly regarded as impertinence, referring tartly to both an unexplained loud 'thumping, dragging and hammering' coming from backstage before the final scene, and to the fact that 'the orchestra' consisted merely of an abominably out of tune piano, in response to which 'the stamping of some larrikins in the back part of the pit was a positive relief to the nerves.' [63]

Incandescent with rage, Bandmann stormed the newspaper's office the next day, swearing and threatening profusely about the 'damned lousy' article, and complaining also about the placement of his daily advertisement. The paper had quite deliberately buried it beneath an advert for a troupe of performing dogs. To add further intentional insult, the paper reported this entire exchange the following day, as if it were reviewing one of Bandmann's performances:

> As we said of Herr Bandmann's *Hamlet* so we say of his foul language. The numerous differences in manner, intonation, and expression between him and other acknowledged masters of the art make it a very difficult matter to form a full judgment on the first performance, and we should have to hear his abuse a second or even a third time before pronouncing a definite opinion as to the full extent of its merits. [...] It must not be forgotten, however, that Herr Bandmann was giving expression to his sentiments in a (to him) foreign language.[64]

And therein perhaps lies the cruelest cut of all: that even this small town, which might have been supposed to welcome with open arms the rare treat of an internationally-famous tragedian, finds humor in putting him in his place for his 'otherness.'

Endnotes

[1] An anecdote in the *New York Tribune* Sunday Magazine for February 5, 1905 indicates that the book had not sold well. On tour to a small town in the Western United States, a colleague was amazed to find a copy of Bandmann's book in the local newsagent. The actor paid the newsagent to approach Bandmann with the book, and tell him that it was in such demand. He had been forced to double its price. Bandmann's response was to fire off a vitriolic letter to his publisher.

[2] Amusement advertisement in: *Southland Times*, December 22, 1880, 3.

[3] *Anaconda Standard*, Montana, August 19, 1894, 6. Also: "Hardly a transaction of any kind between Bandmann and his fellows but it results in either a lawsuit against him or the severing of those friendly ties supposed to exist between man and man", *Kansas City Journal,* May 4, 1898, 8.

[4] '*Richard III*: To The Editor. *Otago Daily Times*, January 18, 1881, Page 3. Bandmann's specific complaint was that the critic had not recognised he was playing Colley Cibber's version of the play, and had thus made comments on entirely incorrect grounds. In a similar vein, the *Otago Witness* reported: 'He did not fear criticism— he wished for it; but he had a right to say that the criticism should be fair and just. But this criticism they had been subjected to had not been fair.' *Otago Witness*, January 8, 1881, 20.

[5] Reported by Melbourne's *Lorgnette* April 28, 1880, 2. The fact that this was considered news in Australia reinforces the world - wide press fascination with Bandmann's regular contretemps.

[6] An anecdote suggests he began acting as a child, treating his friends to performances of Bible stories in which he would play all the parts. This was promoted and circulated in Bandmann's publicity, as in the *Timaru Herald*, February 12, 1881, 2: 'Herr Bandmann may be said to be a born actor, as in his childhood he is said to have been in the habit of inviting his playfellows to the cellar of his house to play scenes out of the Bible such as Adam and Eve, when he spoke both the parts.'As a young actor in Germany, Bandmann was a pupil of 'Dr. Carl Grunert, of the Hof-theatre at Stuttgart; a most profound scholar and rhetorician', according to Bandmann's 'The German Stage – A Sketch', 435.

[7] Bandmann's request for naturalization in July 1858 stated that he 'has resided five years within the United States, including the three years of his minority, and one year at least immediately preceding this application, within the State of New-York'. http://search.ancestrylibrary.com/.

[8] For a discussion of Bandmann's interpretation of Shylock, see Nicole Anae, "'The Majestic Hebrew Ideal': Herr Daniel E. Bandmann's Shylock on the Australian Stage, 1880 – 1883", *Shakespeare Jahrbuch*, 150, 2014: 128 - 145.

[9] 'It is said that an English lady, enthusiastic in his behalf, undertook the task of teaching him to pronounce word by word the part of Shylock', "Herr Bandmann", *Illustrated Sydney News,* Nov 25, 1869, 12.

[10] *London Times,* February 21, 1868, 5.

[11] For example, the actor Clay Clement – whose fighting lessons were paid for by Bandmann - was told that Bandmann 'was a most dangerous antagonist in a stage duel, and very often forgot his surroundings and put up a real fight. If his opponent showed the white feather, the old man would fly into a paroxysm of age and fight like a demon. On more than one occasion he had completely driven Richmond and [Macduff] off the stage', *The Jewish South*, June 18, 1897.

[12] Anae, ibid., 129.

[13] *Birmingham Daily Post*, March 22, 1869.

[14] *Nights At the Play: A View of the English Stage*, 63 – 64. Dutton Cook here discusses his impression of Bandmann in Lord Lytton's *The Rightful Heir* (1868).

[15] *New York Times*, October 4, 1879, 5 (Performance of *Hamlet* at the Standard Theatre, New York City).

[16] *The Times*, February 21, 1868, 5.

[17] Homi K. Bhabha 1985, 153.

[18] Judge O.T.J. Alpers, "Cheerful Yesterdays", published 1951. (Alpers died in 1927.) http://nzetc.victoria.ac.nz/tei-source/AlpChee.xml

[19] *Manchester Guardian*, April 20, 1868, as cited by *The Era*, London, April 26, 1868.

[20] Letter to the Editor, *The Times,* October 9, 1868, 7, in relation to the production of *The Rightful Heir*.

[21] *Southland Daily News* (Invercargill), December 29, 1880, 2. The play under discussion was Bulwer Lytton's *The Lady of Lyons*.

[22] "Herr Bandmann as Hamlet", *Sydney Morning Herald,* October 4, 1880, 6.

[23] For example, speaking of Irving's portrayal of Shylock: 'He would say 'Gud' for 'God'; 'Cut-thrut-dug' for 'Cut-throat-dog.' (Edward Gordon Craig 1930, 62).

[24] *Launceston Examiner*, September 20, 1881, 3.

[25] John A. Mills 1974, 60.

[26] Mills, ibid., 61. On the other hand, Mills also cites Charles Dickens, writing of Fechter: 'Foreign accent, of course, but not at all a disagreeable one. And he was so obviously safe and at ease, that you were never in pain for him as a foreigner.' (62)

[27] Schlegel's often-quoted 1796 Hamlet lecture, "reclaimed Shakespeare for Germany: he [i.e. Shakespeare] belongs to no other people, apart from the English, as particularly as to the Germans" (Sabine Schülting, 2010, 291).

[28] 'Shakespeare and the Germans' from *London Review,* reprinted by the *Sydney Morning Herald* on July 7, 1868, 3. Also: 'Considering that Herr Bandmann was speaking in England to an audience of Englishmen, it must have required some audacity to assure his hearers that after all the credit of having produced Shakespeare belongs not to England, but to Germany.'

[29] *New York Sun*, June 23, 1907.

[30] *The Times*, February 13, 1873, 5. Bandmann was appearing in *Hamlet* at the Princess Theatre, London.

[31] Goethe, Volume 9: *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship*, edited and trans. Eric Blackall (Princeton University Press, 1995), 146. Also: 'A fine, pure, noble and highly moral person, but devoid of that emotional strength that characterizes a hero, goes to pieces beneath a burden that it can neither support nor cast off. [...] How he twists and turns, trembles, advances and retreats....' (146).

[32] Mills, ibid., 62.

[33] Joanne Cormac 2013, 32.

[34] William Diamond 1925, 92.

[35] *Daily Southern Cross,* Auckland, January 5, 1871, 2.

[36] *The Era*, London, Sunday, September 27, 1874; Issue 1879. *Theatre Royal*, Belfast. The specifics of the Wilhelm Meister version of the portraits in the closet scene may be found in Book V, Chapter IX.

[37] "Herr Bandmann's Hamlet and Mrs Bandmann's Ophelia", *South Australian Register,* August 16, 1870, 6.
[38] *The Argus,* Melbourne, October 4, 1869, 5.
[39] Ibid.
[40] "Signor Salvini", *The Times*, June 4, 1875, 7.
[41] "The Stage Business of Hamlet", *The Times*, June 9, 1875, 12. Bandmann allowed that possibly Irving and Salvini had come to these ideas independently, which 'is an argument in favour of their appropriateness to the situation.'
[42] *The Times*, January 18, 1875, 8.
[43] Daniel Bandmann, 'The German Stage: A Sketch' in *Macmillan's Magazine*, Nov 1, 1875: 430. However, (Simon Williams 2004, 78), notes the opposite, describing Shröder's Hamlet as highlighting 'bitterness and cynicism', while Brockmann's performance was 'more malleable and pleasing'.
[44] Simon Williams 2004, 74.
[45] *The Age*, Melbourne, October 4, 1869, 3.
[46] Goethe, trans Blackall, ibid., 194.
[47] Mills, ibid., 68, citing *Curiosities of the American Stage*.
[48] *The Argus*, ibid.
[49] *New Zealand Herald*, Auckland, January 5, 1871, 2.
[50] *Otago Daily Times*, Dunedin, January 5, 1881, 3.
[51] *New Zealand Herald*, October 4, 1872, 3.
[52] *Otago Daily Times*, January 5, 1881, 3.
[53] *Otago Daily Times*, January 5, 1881, 3.
[54] Simon Williams 2004, 81.
[55] *Salt Lake Herald*, January 19, 1890, 7.
[56] Reported in the *Wanganui Chronicle*, April 16, 1881, 2.
[57] Reported by Puck in the *Otago Witness*, Dunedin, March 12, 1881, 20.
[58] As the editor of the Christchurch *Press* is reported to have replied, the review must have made him 'quite wild, as it is impossible to believe he penned the letter calmly.'
[59] Reported in the *Otago Witness*, Issue 1638, April 14, 1883, 23.
[60] "A rather flighty utterance that, Herr. Better have contented yourself with saying Invercargill; it would have been nearer the truth.— Puck", *Otago Witness*, Issue 1522, 8 January 1881, 20. More: 'He did not fear criticism— he wished for it; but he had a right to say that the criticism should be fair and just. But this criticism they had been subjected to had not been fair; it was in bad taste, and seemed as though it were prompted by the food of the person who wrote it not having agreed with him — as if he had gone away, and dipping his pen into three or four potsful of gall and venom, had given the company the benefit of it.'
[61] *The Leader*, Melbourne, September 24, 1870, 18. Sydney's *Australian Town and Country Journal*, March 10, 1883, 13, published a letter written from Calcutta while Bandmann ('the German sausage') was touring there which made a great point of mocking the actor's failed boast that he would close the opposing theatres in town 'in four nights.'
[62] Daniel Bandmann, "An Actor's Tour", 1886, 52. 'Out of every hundred madmen in Taranaki state asylums, seventy five are from Wanganui.' (52).
[63] *Wanganui Chronicle*, April 18, 1881, 2.
[64] Reported in the *Otago Witness*, April 30, 1881, 20.

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