

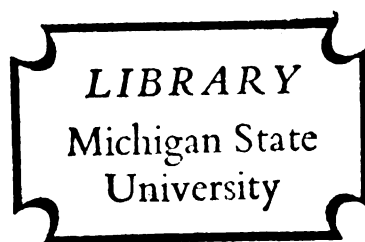
A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PLOT
DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTERS OF THE
GIUSEPPE VERDI OPERA ADAPTATIONS OF
WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S
MACBETH, OTHELLO,
AND THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

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ABSTRACT

A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE PLOT DEVELOPMENT AND CHARACTERS OF THE GIUSEPPE VERDI OPERA ADAPTATIONS OF WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE'S MACBETH, OTHELLO, AND THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR

by Donald M. Polzin

While the field of dramatic criticism is vast, the study of the dramatic structure of operas, and more specifically, operas based upon the plays of William Shakespeare, has been generally neglected. This study attempts to fill a portion of this void by comparing the plot development and characters of the three operas of Giuseppe Verdi based upon Shakespearean plays: Otello, which is based upon Shakespeare's Othello; Macbeth, which is adapted from Shakespeare's Macbeth; and Falstaff, which has its basis in Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor.

A separate chapter is devoted to each of the three operas and its comparison with the play upon which it is based. Through a detailed examination of the libretti of the operas and the scripts of the plays the study presents a statement of the number of acts and scenes in each; a comparison of the major plot development of each (through the five main steps in plot development: the opening situation, the initial incident, the turning point, the climax, and the denouement); and a comparison of the number of characters, their complexity, the size of their roles, the location, method, and preparation for their introduction, and their effect upon the plot development. Also compared are the nature and scope of the conflicts in the plays and the operas.

Donald M. Polzin

The study enumerates the changes which occur in plot development and characterization between the operas and the plays and their effect upon the overall concepts of the operas. These changes comprise additions of plot materials, deletion of characters and plot materials, interpolation of plot materials, alterations of characterization, and general compression of materials. Finally, the study notes three major results of the changes upon the operas. These results are that the major plot developments are speeded up; certain melodramatic or farcical elements are added; but the major plot development and conflicts are, for the most part, faithfully reproduced.

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By

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose

Throughout the history of opera, composers have borrowed freely from dramatic literature to provide libretti for their works. Some of the most popular of these literary sources are the plays of the great English playwright, William Shakespeare. Of those operas composed before 1940, sixty-five were based upon Shakespeare or utilized Shakespearean themes.¹ Three such adaptations are Giuseppe Verdi's operas Macbeth (1847), Otello (1887), and Falstaff (1893) as based upon Shakespeare's Macbeth, Othello, and The Merry Wives of Windsor.

This study will compare those similarities and differences in plot development and character which exist between these three operas and the plays upon which they are based. The analysis will include a description of the major plot development of each play, a comparison of the plot of the resulting opera, and a comparison of the characters of both versions.

The comparison of plot development will note the similarities and differences in content, arrangement, and dramatic treatment of materials between each opera and play, especially in regard to the five major steps in plot development--the opening situation, the initial incident, the turning point, the climax, and the denouement. The scope of the conflicts in each version will also be compared. In addition,

¹Alfred Loewenberg, Annals of Opera 1597-1940 (Cambridge, Eng.: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd., 1943).

whether these conflicts are man against man; man against nature, society, the supernatural, destiny or fate; or man against himself (inner conflict) will be discussed.

Under characters this study will note the similarities and differences between the operas and the plays in the number and size of roles. There will be a comparison of the complexity of characterization (i.e. stereotype, symbolic, or unique individual), the relationship between characters, and the plausibility of characters as determined by their motivations and presence or absence of character growth or development. In addition, a comparison of the method and location of, and preparation for the introduction of characters will be considered. Finally, the effects of these factors upon the plot development will be discussed.

Conclusions will be drawn concerning the effects of those changes in plot development and character noted between the operas and the plays upon the overall dramatic concept of the operas.

Justification

While the field of dramatic criticism is vast, the study of the dramatic structure of operas, and, more specifically, Shakespearean operas, has been generally neglected. Charles Edward Parkhurst in his 1953 unpublished Doctoral dissertation, "A Comparative Analysis of Selected European Opera Libretto Adaptations of the Romeo and Juliet Legend," states: "Occasional short articles have appeared on the subject of Shakespearean operas through the years, yet none is intended

to give a picture of the scope here proposed."¹ The Parkhurst study discusses the dramatic technique and plot development of eleven operas which are based upon Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet, and is a milestone in the field of operatic dramatic criticism. The continued scarcity of operatic dramatic criticism since the 1953 Parkhurst study leaves the body of Shakespearean opera criticism still relatively untouched, and thereby prompts this study.

Three considerations have dictated the decision to analyze the three operas of Giuseppe Verdi--Macbeth, based upon Shakespeare's Macbeth; Otello from Othello; and Falstaff, which finds its basis in The Merry Wives of Windsor. First, these operas are the work of Giuseppe Verdi, acknowledged by most as the greatest composer of Italian opera, and, who therefore must certainly rank as one of the greatest of all opera composers. Second, these are the only operas of Verdi which are based upon Shakespeare, and may therefore be viewed in toto. Finally, they maintain a present degree of critical acclaim, not only within the large Verdi repertory but within the entire field of opera, which is unequalled by all other Shakespearean opera adaptations. Francis Toye, in his biography, Giuseppe Verdi, has described Macbeth as "the most interesting of Verdi's early operas,"² and Otello as "the greatest of Verdi's operas."³ Of Falstaff, Toye says: "Only

¹Charles Edward Parkhurst, "A Comparative Analysis of Selected European Opera Libretto Adaptations of the Romeo and Juliet Legend" (unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, School of Speech, Northwestern University, 1953), p. 13.

²Francis Toye, Giuseppe Verdi (New York: Alfred Knopf, Inc., 1931), p. 273.

³Ibid., p. 426.

one comic opera by Mozart, one by Rossini and one by Wagner can rank with it--and, of all those great works, it is certainly not the least in stature."¹ In addition, Joseph Kerman asserts that in Otello "Verdi brought traditional opera to its perfection."² Henry W. Simon describes Macbeth as "an absorbing, faithful and masterly transmutation of a great Elizabethan play into a nineteenth-century Italian opera."³ Such significant works demand analysis.

Limitations

Several differences in dramatic structure found in Verdi adaptations of Shakespeare's plays are the sole result of the addition of music. This study will not attempt to discuss these purely musical considerations.

Throughout the study, English translations of the opera libretti have been used in the interest of uniform comparison of word meanings. As these translations make no attempt to duplicate the original Italian verse structure, so this study will not concern itself with any comparison of the versification of the operas with that of Shakespeare. As a further result of the use of English translations, all character names in the operas will be rendered in English in this study. Such nomenclature as Bardolpho, Pistola, Banco, Jago, et al. will be referred

¹Ibid., p. 442.

²Joseph Kerman, Opera as Drama (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1956), p. 159.

³Francesco Piave and Andrea Maffei, Macbeth (libretto), ed. Henry W. Simon, trans. Glen Sauls (Radio Corporation of America, 1959), Introduction, unpaginated.

to in their Shakespearean equivalents. However, the title Otello of Verdi's opera will appear in the original Italian so that it may more readily be differentiated from the title of the play.

In this study of plot development and character only the end-product, the completed libretto as it compares with its Shakespearean counterpart, will be considered. Although Verdi and his librettists (Francesco Piave, the chief librettist of Macbeth, Andrea Maffei, who revised portions of that same opera, and Arrigo Boito, the librettist for Otello and Falstaff) each played their particular parts in the creation of the operas, no attempt will be made to assess the contributions of each. Rather, to maintain a uniformity of crediting, this study will refer to the operas exclusively as Verdi's Macbeth, Otello, and Falstaff.

Methods

One chapter will be devoted to each of the three operas and its comparison with the play upon which it is based. Each of these chapters will be constructed with the following form:

CHAPTER I, II, or III

COMPARISON OF (name of opera) AND (name of play)

- A. Plot of the Play
- B. Comparison of the Plot of the Opera
 - 1. Sequence of Events
 - 2. Conflict
- C. Comparison of Characters

1. Macbeth	Othello	Falstaff
2. Lady Macbeth	Iago	Ford
3. The Witches	Desdemona	Fenton and Anne
4. Banquo and Others	Emilia and Others	Mistress Ford and Others
- D. Conclusions
 - 1. Changes in the Opera
 - a. Additions

- b. Interpolations
 - c. Deletions
 - d. Compression
2. Results of Changes

Information for these three chapters will be based upon an examination of the play scripts and the opera libretti. The section "Plot of the Play" will state the number of acts and scenes in the play, will present a description of the major plot action, and will note the five main steps in plot development (named in the "Purpose") as they occur.

Under "Comparison of the Plot of the Opera," the sub-section "Sequence of Events" will state the number of acts and scenes in the opera. It will trace the plot development of the opera scene-by-scene (or by group of shorter scenes). It will delineate the plot similarities and differences between the opera and the play and will compare the five main steps in plot development in the opera with those in the play. The sub-section "Conflict" will state the conflicts in the play and compare them to those in the opera.

The section "Comparison of Characters" will first list those characters from the play found in the opera and then those which are not. The section will then be divided into four sub-sections. The first three of these will each include the comparison of one of the major characters in the opera to his counterpart in the play in regard to size of role, complexity, and introduction thereof. The fourth sub-section will present a similar discussion of the remainder of the characters in the opera.

The "Conclusions" section will, in the four divisions under "Changes in the Opera," enumerate the additions, deletions, interpolations,

and compression in plot development and character in the opera. The "Results of Changes" sub-section will attempt to demonstrate the significance of these changes upon the overall dramatic concept of the opera.

A fourth and final chapter entitled CONCLUSIONS will enumerate the similarities and differences in plot development and character which appear throughout the previous three comparisons, and the resultant alterations in the dramatic treatment of the operas.

Throughout the study certain word meanings will apply.

Two physical divisions of dramatic structure are defined as follows: a scene is that portion of an act of a play or opera which commences and concludes by indication of the playwright or librettist in his stage directions; an episode is a portion of a scene which embodies a particular and separate action.

The five main steps in plot development are defined as follows: the opening situation is that point in the entire story at which the author chose to begin; the initial incident is that plot action which precipitates the sequence of events which terminate in the climax; the turning point is that significant dramatic situation in the story which forces the action to take a new direction toward the climax; the climax is that moment of highest interest in the story, the emotional end of the story; and the denouement is the tying up of loose ends after the climax.

Five other terms relating to dramatic structure have the following meanings: exposition is the presentation of facts (usually through dialogue) concerning events previous to the play or opera which are necessary to the audience (reader) understanding of the plot and

characters; comic relief is the subordinate inclusion of comedy into an otherwise serious play to provide relief from emotional tension; melo-dramatic describes serious plot action which creates conflict more through tense situations than through the moral strength or weakness of characters; farcical describes humorous plot action which has its basis more in comic situations than in clever characterizations; and conflict is the strife between opposing forces in the story.

Finally, the following three terms describe certain processes and phenomena encountered in the study: interpolation refers to the use of Shakespearean scenes or episodes from a given play in other than Shakespearean order in the resultant opera (discounting intervening deletions); saying that the substance of any scene or episode in Shakespeare is utilized in the resultant opera means that the general meaning and spirit but not the specific dialogue of that portion of the play is used; and operatic recapitulation is that repetition of previously expressed thoughts or desires presented in a lengthy choral or ensemble passage, usually at the end of a scene or act in the opera.

Source Materials

The texts of the following play scripts and libretti will be compared:

The Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc. (New York) 1946 edition of Shakespeare's Othello, Mark Eccles, editor; and the Oliver Ditson and Company Otello libretto, with Italian and English texts (no translator indicated), published in Boston in 1888.

The Cambridge University Press (London) 1954 edition of Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and John

Dover Wilson, editors; and the G. Ricordi and Company (New York) Falstaff libretto, English version by W. Beatty Kingston, published in 1893.

And the New Hudson Shakespeare edition of Shakespeare's Macbeth, Ebenezer Charlton Black, editor, with introduction and notes by Henry Norman Hudson, published by Ginn and Company, Boston in 1908; and the Radio Corporation of America reproduction of the Macbeth libretto, Italian and English texts, translated by Glen Sauls, with an introduction by Henry W. Simon, prepared for the 1959 RCA Victor recording LM/LSC-6147 of the opera.

One note of explanation about the Macbeth libretto is needed. The content of the original 1847 version of the opera was revised by Verdi for the 1865 Paris production. The only edition of Macbeth available to the public is that prepared after the 1865 revision made for Paris.¹ Therefore, as Simon explains, "it is the Paris version which is used . . ." ² in the RCA Victor recording and in this study.

Supplementary play scripts consulted in connection with the comparison of Falstaff and The Merry Wives of Windsor are the Ginn and Company (Boston) 1922 edition of King Henry IV, Part I, edited by Ebenezer Charlton Black; and the Cambridge University Press (London) 1946 edition of King Henry IV, Part II, edited by John Dover Wilson. In addition, several Verdi biographies and criticisms and Shakespeare criticisms have been consulted.

¹Toye, p. 274

²Piave and Maffei, Introduction.

CHAPTER I

COMPARISON OF MACBETH (GIUSEPPE VERDI) AND MACBETH (WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE)

A. Plot of the Play

Shakespeare's Macbeth consists of five acts of seven, four, six, three, and eight scenes respectively. The opening situation of the play is as follows: Macbeth, Thane of Glamis and General of the Army, having recently quelled a distant uprising against Duncan, a well-loved King of Scotland, is returning across the heath. He is accompanied by Banquo, another General, who (like everyone else) is unaware that Macbeth, with encouragement from his wife, Lady Macbeth, secretly covets the throne and may have considered murder as a means of attaining it.

Scenes 1 and 2 of Act I present expository material which prefaces the introduction of Macbeth. The former is the short meeting of three Witches who plan to meet Macbeth later. The latter consists of the bloody Sergeant's account of the war, Scottish nobleman Ross's announcement of the Thane of Cawdor's traitorous conduct, and King Duncan's appointment of Macbeth to Cawdor's post. It is in this Scene 2 that the nobility of Macbeth is mentioned and the goodness of Duncan is demonstrated.

The major plot action of the play begins with initial incident, Macbeth's meeting with the Witches, in Act I, Scene 3. The predictions of the Witches that Macbeth will be Thane of Cawdor and later King and

that Banquo's children will be kings precipitate all the subsequent plot action. Ross then informs Macbeth of his appointment as Thane of Cawdor.

When Duncan invites himself to Inverness, Macbeth's castle, Lady Macbeth urges Macbeth to murder him. With the arrival of the King, Macbeth and Lady Macbeth discuss the details of the crime. In Act II, Scene 2, Macbeth commits the murder, having been directed to the King's chamber in the previous scene by the vision of a dagger about which he soliloquizes: "Is this a dagger which I see before me . . ." ¹ Macbeth forgets to return the daggers used in the murder to Duncan's two sleeping grooms whom Lady Macbeth had earlier plied with drink to make possible her theft of the daggers. Lady Macbeth returns the daggers and smears the grooms with Duncan's blood so as to make it appear that they committed the crime.

At this point Macduff and Lennox, two other Scottish noblemen, are heard knocking at the door, and Macbeth and Lady Macbeth retire to wash the blood from their hands. A drunken Porter, the only comic relief element in the play, temporarily postpones the discovery of the body when he philosophizes about the effects of drink to Macduff and Lennox who have come to wake the King for his return to the palace. When the body is discovered, Macbeth rushes out and kills the grooms. Lady Macbeth, learning of the additional murders, faints. Malcolm, son of Duncan and heir to the throne, and Donalbain, the King's other son, flee to England and Ireland respectively.

¹William Shakespeare, Macbeth, ed. Ebenezer Charlton Black, with introduction and notes by Henry Norman Hudson (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1908), p. 44.

Near the beginning of Act III Macbeth, now King, plots with two Murderers to kill Banquo and his son, Fleance. In Scene 3 the two Murderers are joined by a third and the three attack and kill Banquo, but Fleance escapes. The turning point in the play occurs in the following scene when Macbeth, after being informed by one of the Murderers of the death of Banquo, twice sees the Ghost of Banquo seated in his chair at the banquet table. Throughout the scene Lady Macbeth attempts to explain her husband's unusual behavior to and maintain a friendly rapport with the assembled guests. She finally is forced to ask the guests to leave.

In Act IV, Scene 1 Macbeth revisits the Witches who, through three Apparitions, inform him to "beware the Thane of Fife [Macduff]." ¹ They also reveal that "none of woman born shall harm Macbeth," ² and "Macbeth shall never vanquish'd be until great Birnam wood to high Dunsinane hill shall come against him." ³ The Witches further show Macbeth the vision of eight kings, the last of which is the Ghost of Banquo.

Lennox informs Macbeth that Macduff has fled to England, and Macbeth determines to kill Macduff's family. In Act IV, Scene 2 the deed is accomplished by the hired killers. The act closes as Malcolm and Macduff prepare to bring the English army against Macbeth.

In Act V, Scene 1 Lady Macbeth is observed sleep-walking. In the presence of her Doctor and her Lady-in-Attendance, she reveals all

¹Ibid., p. 102.

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 103.

her pent-up emotions concerning Macbeth's reign of terror. Her death is subsequently announced in Scene 5. Meanwhile, Malcolm instructs his soldiers to cut boughs to carry before them into battle, so that it appears to Macbeth that Birnam wood is actually moving toward Dunsinane, the fortress that he has chosen to defend. Scene 7 is the climax of the play--the meeting between Macbeth and Macduff and the death of the former. In the scene Macbeth hesitates fighting Macduff temporarily when he discovers that Macduff was "from his mother's womb untimely ripp'd,"¹ and is theoretically not born of woman; but the combatants move offstage where Macduff decapitates Macbeth. Following the arrival on stage of the head of Macbeth carried on the end of a pole, the denouement, including a tumultuous "Hail, King of Scotland!"² and a final speech by the new King, Malcolm, welcoming back the exiles and promising better times, takes place.

B. Comparison of the Plot of the Opera

1. Sequence of Events

Verdi's Macbeth consists of four acts of two, three, one, and three scenes respectively. The opening situation of the opera closely parallels that of the play. In fact, the suspicion that Macbeth has been contemplating murdering Duncan even before the play begins is given greater credence in the opera. In Act I, Scene 2 of the opera, in a discussion between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth, the entire murder plan is dismissed as follows:

¹Ibid., p. 148.

²Ibid., p. 151.

LADY MAC: When does he leave?
 MACBETH: Tomorrow.
 LADY MAC: May the sun not bring forth such a tomorrow.
 MACBETH: What do you say?
 LADY MAC: Do you not understand? . . .
 MACBETH: I understand, I understand!¹

As Macbeth has just returned from battle, it is obvious that he and his wife have made considerable plans before the opera began. In Shakespeare, with its discussion of the exact details of the murder, the suspicion of any previous planning still persists but is diminished. In addition, with the deletion of Shakespeare's Act I, Scene 2 the concepts of Macbeth's nobility and Duncan's goodness do suffer slightly in the opera. Otherwise, the opening situation of the play and the opening situation of the opera are identical.

Act I, Scene 1

The opera begins with the interpolated second appearance of the Witches (Act I, Scene 3 in Shakespeare), in which they predict that Macbeth will be Thane of Cawdor and later King and Banquo will be father of kings. With the previously noted deletion of Act I, Scene 2 in Shakespeare, which includes Duncan's appointment of Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor, the announcement to Macbeth of this news becomes the first mention of the subject in the opera. The announcement itself is also compressed and altered from Ross's delivery and takes the form of two speeches by the Messengers:

MESS: Valiant Macbeth! Your sovereign has made you Thane of Cawdor.
 MAC: But that Thane still lives.
 MESS: No. Struck down by law, he perished on the block.²

¹Piave and Maffei, unpaginated.

²Ibid.

In fact, the scene, which is the initial incident in the opera just as it is in the play, is generally compressed after the Witches' predictions and reduced to four speeches after the Messengers' announcement. The content, though, remains substantially the same as in the play. The scene closes with the Witches discussion their next meeting. This conversation bears a resemblance to Act I, Scene 1 of the play.

Scene 2

Omitting Act I, Scene 4 in Shakespeare in which Duncan invites himself to Inverness, the opera moves ahead to the opening of Shakespeare's Scene 5. Lady Macbeth's reading of her husband's letter and her resolve to urge him to murder Duncan, followed by the announcement of the arrival of the King, are basically the same in both versions. The short discussion between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth which closes Act I, Scene 5 in Shakespeare is also included in the opera with the interpolation of the following two lines from Scene 7 of the play:

MACBETH: And what if the stroke should fail?

LADY MAC: It will not fail . . . if you do not shrink.¹

The remainder of Act I, Scene 7 of Shakespeare, including Macbeth's soliloquy, "If it were done . . ."² and Lady Macbeth's inspirational speech in which she charges Macbeth to "screw your courage to the sticking place,"³ is deleted from the opera. Also eliminated is Scene 6, the welcoming of Duncan to Inverness. This is effected completely in pantomime at this point in the opera.

¹Ibid.

²Shakespeare, p. 35.

³Ibid., p. 39.

Following the departure of Duncan, Macbeth sings his aria, "Is this a dagger that appears to me?"¹ based upon the soliloquy at the end of Act II, Scene 1 in Shakespeare. The opening of that scene in Shakespeare, including Banquo's conversation with Fleance and Banquo's later talk with Macbeth, is deleted from the opera.

The opera then utilizes Act II, Scene 2 of Shakespeare in its entirety, including the murder of Duncan, the smearing of the blood, and the knocking at the door. At this point the one comic relief episode in the play, that of the drunken Porter, is deleted. In the opera there is a quick discovery of the body and a deletion of the remainder of Shakespeare's Act II, Scene 3. Thus eliminated are Macbeth's killing of the grooms, Lady Macbeth's faint, and the flight of Malcolm and Donalbain. Malcolm does in fact flee in the opera, but his discussion with Donalbain (who does not appear in the opera) concerning that flight is not included.

Act II, Scene 4 of the play is also omitted from the opera. This scene contains the discussion between Ross and the Old Man about the recent weird happenings in nature, Macduff's comments concerning the suspicion cast on Malcolm and Donalbain, and the announcement of Macbeth's forthcoming coronation.

Act II, Scene 1

The conversation between Lady Macbeth and Macbeth at the opening of this scene has its basis in selected sections of Scenes 1 and 2 of Act III in Shakespeare. However, that Lady Macbeth takes part in the

¹Piave and Maffei.

planning of the murders of Banquo and Fleance is an addition in the opera. The omission of the remainder of Act III, Scenes 1 and 2 in Shakespeare eliminates Banquo's decision to go riding and Macbeth's meeting with the Murderers from the opera.

Scene 2

In this scene the opera presents the murder of Banquo (Act III, Scene 3 in the play). In the opera, however, there are two groups of Murderers--the tenors and the basses of the Chorus. The unexpected arrival of the third Murderer in Shakespeare is only hinted at in the opera when the one group of Murderers inquires of the other why they are there, and they reply, "To kill Banquo."¹ The subsequent action remains relatively the same as in the play.

Scene 3

Continuing in Shakespearean order the opera presents the scene in the banquet hall. It follows the same general order as Shakespeare's Act III, Scene 4: one Murderer tells Macbeth of the murder of Banquo and the escape of Fleance, and the Ghost of Banquo appears twice to Macbeth. Notable additions to the scene are a conventional operatic drinking song or brindisi for Lady Macbeth, and a traditional operatic ensemble at the close of the scene (and act). The drinking song is not a great departure from Shakespeare, for the Lady Macbeth in each version is attempting to create a spirit of joviality with which to mask Macbeth's morose mood and subsequent lapses into fantasy. The words of the brindisi:

¹Ibid.

Fill the goblet to the brim
 with choicest wine.
 Let pleasure be born,
 let sorrows die,
 Have done with all hatred,
 do away with all scorn.
 Let only love
 and jollity reign here.
 Let us taste and enjoy
 the cure of all ills,
 that brings renewed life
 to every heart.

Let us drive away the dull
 cares of the soul;
 let pleasure be born
 and sorrows die.

(second ending)

We'll empty our goblets
 to the renowned Banquo!
 Flower of warriors,
 the glory of Scotland!¹

which are sung before each appearance of the Ghost, emulate the spirit
 of the following Shakespearean lines of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth:

LADY MAC: Sit, worthy friends: my lord is often thus . . .
 upon a thought he will again be well . . .
 Feed, and regard him not.²

.

MACBETH: Come, love and health to all;
 Then I'll sit down. Give me some wine, fill full.³

.

LADY MAC: Think of this, good peers,
 But as a thing of custom: 'tis no other;
 Only it spoils the pleasure of the time.⁴

The banquet scene is also the turning point in the opera, and,
 just as in the play, it marks the beginning of the emotional and phys-
 ical downfall of Macbeth. In content the two versions are identical,
 apart from the non-Shakespearean additions in the operatic handling.

Scenes 5 and 6 of Act III in Shakespeare do not find their way
 into the opera. The former includes Hecate's anger at not being in-
 cluded in the Witches' dealings with Macbeth, and the latter consists
 of the discussion between Lennox and a Lord concerning the unhappy state
 of affairs in Scotland. Some of the substance of Scene 6 does appear
 in Act IV, Scene 1 of the opera.

¹Ibid.

²Shakespeare, p. 85

³Ibid., p. 87.

⁴Ibid., p. 88.

Act III

The single scene Act III of the opera follows the same basic course as Act IV, Scene 1 of the play. The scene opens with the Witches concocting their brew. (It is at the climax of these incantations that Verdi added a ballet, with Hecate as the prima ballerina, for the 1865 Paris production.) The appearances of the three Apparitions and the eight kings receive similar treatment in both versions. One deviation from Shakespeare occurs at the end of the act with the entrance of Lady Macbeth, to whom Macbeth relates the latest predictions of the Witches and with whom he plots both the continued pursuit of Fleance and the murder of Macduff's family. This duet material replaces the entrance of Lennox with the news of Macduff's flight to England and Macbeth's short soliloquy about his plans for Macduff's family in the play.

Act IV, Scene 2 in Shakespeare is deleted in the opera. In this scene Lady Macduff expresses her conviction that Macduff is a traitor, and she and her son discuss what a traitor is. Although earlier in the opera Lady Macbeth and Macbeth are provided with their emotional duet planning the murders of Macduff's family, the actual deed is not shown. Scene 3 in Shakespeare, the rather protracted discussion of Macbeth's evil reign between Malcolm and Macduff followed by the announcement to Macduff of the details of the murders of his family, is also deleted. Small portions of the substance of this scene do, however, find their way into the next scene of the opera.

Act IV, Scene 1

The refugees' chorus and Macduff's aria which open Act IV, Scene 1 of the opera draw together some of the various expressions of discontent with Macbeth's reign (notably from Act III, Scene 6 and Act IV, Scene 3 of the play). Malcolm's order that each soldier carry before him a tree branch is interpolated from Act V, Scene 4 of the play, while Macduff's lament that Macbeth has no children upon which he can revenge himself harks back again to Act IV, Scene 3.

Scene 2

This scene of the opera, Lady Macbeth's sleep-walking scene, is an almost identical reproduction of the same sequence (Act V, Scene 1) in the play. There are no significant differences in treatment between versions.

Scene 3

The final scene of the opera is a compilation of Shakespeare's Act V, Scenes 5 through 8. Macbeth's opening aria does, however, have its basis in his first speech in Act V, Scene 3 of the play. From that point, though, the opera proceeds from the announcement of Lady Macbeth's death and the approach of Birnam wood (Scene 5), through the attack (Scene 6), to the encounter between Macbeth and Macduff (Scene 8).

In thus borrowing freely from but moving rather speedily through Shakespeare's Act V, the opera does omit some minor plot elements. The defection of the several Thanes to Malcolm's service (Scene 2), Macbeth's conversation with Seyton (Scene 3), Macbeth's

killing of Young Siward (Scene 7), and Macbeth's momentary refusal to fight Macduff (Scene 8) are all eliminated. In addition, there is a great amount of compression of those elements retained.

The climax of the opera--the encounter between Macbeth and Macduff and the death of the former--coincides with the climax of the play. One significant difference does exist. The actual combat between Macbeth and Macduff takes place onstage in the opera, rather than offstage (with Macduff bringing on the head of his victim later) as in the play. The fight on stage provides Macbeth with a final solo as he dies; although, in the Paris version, Verdi thought better of the device and cut the aria out.

The denouement follows quickly after the climax and resembles that of the play. In the opera the acclamation of Malcolm takes the form of a Hymn to Victory, sung by the chorus of refugees. Macduff indicates that Malcolm can be trusted, and Malcolm, in a short musical passage, agrees.

2. Conflict

In Shakespeare's Macbeth the major conflicts are those created within the minds of Macbeth and Lady Macbeth. For Macbeth the conflict is of a dual nature. Before the murder of Duncan, Macbeth, aware of the predictions of the Witches, must decide whether (having now been presented with the opportunity) he has within him "that which cries, 'Thus thou must do,' if thou have it,"¹ or whether he is a coward "letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would.'"² After the murder his mind is

¹Ibid., p. 28

²Ibid., p. 38.

assailed with imagined plots against him resulting in his subsequent murders and continued mental unrest.

Lady Macbeth, from her faint upon learning that Macbeth has also killed the grooms, evidences a rapid mental degeneration brought on by the realization that murder breeds murder. Although she takes no part in the planning or execution of the subsequent murders, and, in fact, makes every effort not to think about them, it is this mental conflict which brings about her eventual lapse into insanity.

In the opera, where the entire plan to murder Duncan has been thoroughly discussed prior to the overture, the conflict within Macbeth loses its dual character. As Dyneley Hussey says: "His [Macbeth's] hesitations in the face of temptation are barely touched upon."¹ Also missing from the opera is the brief verbal conflict between Macbeth and Lady Macbeth during which she so cunningly accuses him of cowardice: "When you durst do it, then you were a man."²

Macbeth's second inner conflict, his sense of insecurity and fear of retaliation, is similarly portrayed in both versions. In the opera it may even be said that his anguish is compounded for, unlike in the play, Macbeth discusses each successive murder with Lady Macbeth and gains her reassurance that his suspicions are well founded.

The Lady Macbeth of the opera is a far stronger character than in the play (see "Lady Macbeth", page 25). In addition, she remains Macbeth's equal accomplice throughout. In this framework, her anxieties,

¹Dyneley Hussey, Verdi (New York: Pelegrini and Cudahy, Inc., 1949), p. 49.

²Shakespeare, p. 38.

of which she displays few, can only be likened to those of Macbeth. This constitutes some difference from her more conscience-stricken portrayal in the play.

The physical conflict between Macbeth and Macduff and their respective forces is essentially the same in both versions, except, as noted, Macbeth does not hesitate even after he learns of Macduff's unusual birth.

It should not be inferred that there is any conflict in either version between Macbeth and the forces of the supernatural--the Witches. As A. C. Bradley says of the Witches: "They merely announce events . . . No connection of these announcements with any action of his [Macbeth's] was even hinted by them."¹ Paralleling this thought, Henry Norman Hudson in his introduction to the script says: "They [the Witches] do not create the evil heart; they only untie the evil hands. They put nothing into Macbeth's mind, but merely draw out what was already there."²

C. Comparison of Characters

The following characters appear in the opera: Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, Banquo, Macduff, Malcolm, Lady-in-Attendance to Lady Macbeth, a Physician, a Murderer, three Apparitions, chorus of Witches, chorus of Murderers, King Duncan, Fleance, a Manservant, Messengers, and the Chorus (Lords, Ladies, Soldiers, and Scottish refugees). Also Hecate (when the ballet is performed).

¹A. C. Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy (London: MacMillan and Company, Ltd., 1916), p. 344.

²Shakespeare, p. xlix.

By comparison, the following characters are deleted: Donalbain; the Scottish noblemen Lennox, Ross, Menteith, Angus, and Caithness; Siward; Young Siward; Seyton; the boy, son of Macduff; Lady Macduff; the English Doctor; a Captain; the Porter; and the Old Man. In addition, Duncan and Fleance become non-speaking roles in the opera.

1. Macbeth

The differences in the character of Macbeth in the two versions have been summed up by Hussey as follows:

In the tragedy Macbeth is the protagonist, for all that he is dominated by his wife. We are shown a man of potentially noble character and a great soldier, as well as a man in whom ambition leads to crime, remorse, and neurotic weakness. In the opera . . . Macbeth's nobility is not defined at all . . . As a character he is reduced to the stature of a conventional melodramatic villain.¹

As noted, Macbeth's entrance early in Act I, Scene 1 of the opera, although similar to his entrance in the play, is effected without the two introductory scenes in Shakespeare which do serve to delineate his noble qualities. In addition, the opera's Macbeth does not exhibit any observable reluctance to kill Duncan. However, to assert that Macbeth is no more than the melodramatic villain seems to this observer an over-simplification.

The Macbeth of the opera, though certainly less complex than the Shakespearean version, does retain a certain amount of his poetic imagination which Bradley describes as "an imagination on the one hand extremely sensitive to impressions of a certain kind, and, on the other productive of violent disturbance both of mind and body."² As Simon

¹Hussey, p. 49.

²Bradley, p. 352.

puts it: "Verdi's Macbeth is a somewhat simpler man than Shakespeare's: he has not the same haunting conscience, has a less well developed imagination, less poetry in him."¹ The word "less" is the key; only a complete absence of these qualities would reduce Macbeth to Hussey's extreme description. True, Macbeth is more methodical than neurotic in the opera; nonetheless, he evidences sufficient motivation in terms of mental distress to remain believable.

2. Lady Macbeth

Conversely, Lady Macbeth becomes a sort of "co-protagonist" with her husband in the opera. Again, in the words of Simon:

In both the play and opera, it is she [Lady Macbeth] who supplies the indomitable ruthlessness to prick on the hesitating Macbeth to murder the king; and up to the point where she faints after the murder in the play . . . she takes charge of putting a plausible appearance of innocence on the movements of both herself and her temporarily unmanned husband. With the close of Act II in the play, however, Macbeth takes over so completely that she loses her managerial function. Not so in the opera. She knows all about Macbeth's plan to murder Banquo and encourages him in it. . . . In the play 'dearest chuck' remains innocent; in the opera it is she who summons the dark night to hide the bloody enterprise.²

She exhibits greater strength in the banquet scene, singing the confident brindisi. After Macbeth's second visit with the Witches she urges him further to bloody deeds. In some respects she complements Macbeth's imagination, weakened from the Shakespeare.

Consequently, her mental breakdown in the sleep-walking scene comes as more of a surprise in the opera; but her increased participation in the murders does make it more motivated.

¹Piave and Maffei, Introduction.

²Ibid.

That Lady Macbeth was one of Verdi's chief dramatic considerations is evidenced by his letter to Camarano concerning the choice of singer who was to play the part in the initial performance:

Mme. Tadolini looks beautiful and good, and I should like Lady Macbeth to look ugly and evil. Mme. Tadolini sings to perfection, and I should like Lady Macbeth not to sing at all. Mme. Tadolini has a stupendous voice--clear, limpid, powerful: I should like in Lady Macbeth a voice rough, harsh, and gloomy. Mme. Tadolini's voice has angelic qualities: I should like the voice of Lady Macbeth to have something diabolical about it.¹

From an inauspicious entrance while reading Macbeth's letter in each version (Act I, Scene 5 in the play; Act I, Scene 2 in the opera), she develops, in the opera, from a proud, self-reliant, ambitious woman, through her slight misgivings in her aria at the end of Act II, Scene 1 and through renewed strength to assist her husband, to a person finally afflicted with remorse. Contrast this with Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth who seemingly never does recover after her faint in Act II, Scene 3, and who experiences a gradual decline to her death. In all, the opera's interpretation seems to be on stronger psychological ground. In any event, she is much the "devil" that Verdi wished to create, and certainly more of an evil creation than Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth.

3. The Witches

The Witches are the only other characters in the opera who do not suffer a significant reduction in the size and scope of their roles. The composer said that there are three principal characters in his

¹Letter of Giuseppe Verdi to Salvatore Cammarano, Paris, November 23, 1848 (as quoted in ibid.).

opera--Macbeth, Lady Macbeth and the Witches.¹ In the opera there are, rather than three Witches, three choruses of Witches (the number in each being set at six by Verdi for the Paris production, but varying, apparently, with the whim of the subsequent directors). Their handling in the two versions is so similar that any differentiation must be made on the basis of the musical treatment (which is described by Simon as "primitive and naive"²), which is not our concern here. Of course, their primary purpose, described by Milton Marx as the tendency to "stress at once the supernatural atmosphere,"³ could, on this musical basis, be impaired. That they are effective catalysts for Macbeth's actions remains their strength in the opera.

4. Banquo and Others

The remainder of the characters in the opera suffer severe reductions in the size of their roles. To say that they further become less complex, however, is to project into Shakespeare's characters unique qualities which they scarcely possess. Banquo is the one character in Shakespeare, other than those already discussed, who gives any evidence of complexity. However, the opera deprives him, by omission, of his moral strength in resisting the temptation of the Witches. Further, there is no intimation, as in Shakespeare, that he suspects Macbeth of killing Duncan; and when Banquo dies in the opera, it is (due to the deletion of his intervening speeches in the play) seemingly without this suspicion.

¹Piave and Maffei, Introduction.

²Ibid.

³Milton Marx, The Enjoyment of Drama (New York: F. S. Crofts and Company, 1940), p. 64.

Similarly, Macduff and Malcolm, in the words of Hussey, "are reduced to the merest shadows of their real selves."¹ However, as their Shakespearean "real selves" is little more than a symbol of Scottish nobility, some equality in Macduff's capacity for compassion between versions may be perceived in his Act IV, Scene 1 aria in the opera. The relatively simple motivations of Malcolm and Macduff (the former's desire to regain his throne and free his country, and the latter's similar intent which is compounded by his desire for revenge for the deaths of his family) are as equally demonstrated through their less frequent expression in the opera as they are in the play.

The other characters--the Lady-in-Attendance; the Physician; the chorus of Murderers (and the single Murderer to report to Macbeth in the banquet scene); the three Apparitions; and the supernumerary servant, attendants, and Messengers--function similarly in both versions. Hecate appears in the opera only when the ballet is performed. Fleance, who does not speak in the opera (he is simply pursued across the stage by the Murderers), does not say anything significant in his two lines in the play.

One last word concerns the silence of King Duncan in the opera. Though his nobility is demonstrated by his grand entrance, the expressions of his goodness are lost and therefore his murder may not be quite as appalling and saddening as it would be in the play.

¹Hussey, pp. 48-49.

D. Conclusions

1. Changes in the Opera

a. Additions

There are only two additions in the opera of plot materials not present in Shakespeare. These are Lady Macbeth's brindisi and Macbeth's short death aria. The former has been discussed previously. The latter is interesting in that Verdi himself was not sure whether or not it was entirely appropriate (see page 21). Three other additions are musical considerations and not within the scope of this study. These are the refugees' chorus, all other ensembles, and the ballet (which is seldom performed today).

b. Interpolations

The libretto is also characterized by its scarcity of interpolations. There are, in fact, only four occasions in the opera where material is placed in other than Shakespearean order. The first of these occurs at the beginning of the opera with the second appearance of the Witches which is placed before their first (Act I, Scene 1 in Shakespeare). Actually, the essence of the first Witches' scene is so altered in the opera that it might be argued that it is an addition rather than an interpolation.

A second more pronounced but even less lengthy interpolation occurs in Act I, Scene 2 with the insertion of only two lines from Act I, Scene 7 in Shakespeare. The third borrowing occurs in Act IV, Scene 1 of the opera, and, in this case, it is not the dialogue which

is utilized but it is the spirit of the borrowed scenes which is interpolated. This scene returns to two previous scenes, the dialogue of which is not used, to capture the mood of unhappiness over the problems in Scotland. This substance is translated into a choral number for the Scottish refugees. In the fourth interpolation, still within this same scene of the opera, material concerning how the English soldiers should hide themselves behind tree branches is borrowed from Act V, Scene 4 of the play. Comprising several short speeches, this fourth interpolation is the most extensive of all those noted.

c. Deletions

The most numerous changes between the opera and the play are those due to deletion. Of deletions in the opera, Simon says:

Macbeth is one of Shakespeare's shorter plays, but the libretto though its playing time is at least as long, has room for barely half the number of words. Some scenes, some actions, had to be sacrificed . . . Duncan has not a single line to speak; minor characters like Ross, Lennox, Donalbain, the bloody sergeant, the two Siwards and the others disappear completely. Gone, except by brief report, are the murder of Lady Macduff and her children; gone are the respectful therapeutic attributes of King James I; gone are a half dozen other incidental features--gone, but not seriously missed.¹

At first glance it may appear that there is an excessive amount of character deletion, but upon examination it is seen that of the fifteen characters eliminated from the opera as many as nine are seen in only one scene. Further, seven of these characters have no more than four speeches each, with the average for the seven being three speeches. The other two characters in this category, Lady Macduff and her son,

¹Piave and Maffei, Introduction.

although providing an interesting discussion of what is a traitor, do not (alive) make any significant contribution to the plot of the play.

Of the six remaining deleted characters, half appear in only two scenes each and their average is five speeches each. Only the three characters of Lennox, Ross, and Siward represent any body of spoken material. Even these cannot be considered complex characters by any stretch of the imagination. Siward merely represents English authority, Ross is a messenger, and Lennox remains in the background most of the time.

Of the fifteen characters eliminated from the opera, the majority--with the possible exception of those which precipitate some minor plot action (i.e. Young Siward, to die at the hands of Macbeth; the Porter, for comic relief; or Donalbain, to flee to Ireland)--do not contribute to the major plot development of the play.

In addition to those characters deleted, there is also the lessened conflict in the mind of Macbeth which makes him a somewhat less complex character. Also there is the reduction of Banquo to a two-dimensional character and the lessening of the size of his role as well as the roles of all the other minor characters.

Of the twenty-eight scenes in Shakespeare, nine are deleted in their entirety from the opera. The opera also utilizes only a portion of two other scenes and the substance of three others.

So as to more readily observe the plot deletions in the opera by scene and/or episode, the reader may wish to turn to Table 1 in the Appendix. In regard to the notation in that table (and the ones which follow), it should be remembered that even the designation "None Significant" usually carries with it the implication that the material to

which it refers has been compressed. The nature of this compression will be discussed in the next section.

That material deleted from the opera, as would be expected, can be associated with those characters eliminated or reduced in scope. In Act I of Shakespeare, Scenes 2, 4, 6, and 7 have been deleted. In the first three of these Duncan is a principal speaker. Reduced to silence in the opera, there is no opportunity for him to announce Macbeth's appointment as Thane of Cawdor, invite himself to Inverness, or speak of how pleasant Macbeth's castle is. Scene 7 is a slightly different case. Two lines from it do appear in an earlier interpolation, but the essence of the scene--Lady Macbeth's goading of her husband to murder--is not found in the opera. As noted, this discussion between Macbeth and his wife no doubt took place before the opera began.

Again, the absence of Ross and the Old man makes Act II, Scene 4 impossible in the opera. Similarly, the elimination of Hecate creates the deletion of Act III, Scene 5. The pattern continues in Act IV, Scene 2 with the deletion of Lady Macduff and her son; and in Act V, Scene 2 with the loss of the other Thanes. Finally, in Act V, Scene 7, the deletion of Young Siward eliminates that action.

The deletion of partial scenes (Act II, Scenes 1 and 3) comprises, in the former instance, the conversation between Banquo and Macbeth concerning the predictions of the Witches and talk of another meeting between the men which never takes place. In the latter case, it is the Porter's episode which is deleted, again, with the lack of character to enact it. Also deleted are Macbeth's killing of the grooms, Lady Macbeth's faint, and Malcolm and Donalbain's flight.

The three scenes from which some substance is extracted are Act III, Scenes 1 and 6 and Act IV, Scene 3. In these cases the specific plot actions not utilized are performed by deleted or de-emphasized characters. In Act III, Scene 1, it is Banquo and his deleted conversation with Macbeth; in Act III, Scene 6, it is the discussion between Lennox and a Lord concerning the state of affairs in Scotland; and in Act IV, Scene 3, it is the English Doctor's appraisal of the health of his king and Ross's announcement of the death of Macduff's family.

d. Compression

Throughout the opera there is a general compression of the dialogue of the original. A good example of this compression is the following comparison between the two renditions of the short talk between Macbeth and a Murderer just after the murder of Banquo (Act II, Scene 3 in the opera and Act III, Scene 4 in the play):

<u>Macbeth</u> (Verdi)	<u>Macbeth</u> (Shakespeare)
MAC: You have blood stains upon your face.	MAC: . . . There's blood upon thy face.
MUR: They are Banquo's.	MUR: 'Tis Banquo's then.
MAC: Do I hear the truth?	MAC: 'Tis better thee without than he within.
	Is he dispatch'd?
MUR: Yes.	MUR: My lord, his throat is cut; that I did for him.
MAC: But the boy?	MAC: Thou art the best 'o the cut-throats; yet he's good That did the like for Fleance: if thou didst it, Thou art the nonpareil.
MUR: He got away from us.	MUR: Most royal sir, Fleance is scap'd.
MAC: O heaven! . . . but Banquo?	MAC: Then comes my fit again: I had else been perfect, Whole as the marble, founded as the rock; As broad, and general, as the casing air: But now I am cabin'd,

cribb'd, confin'd,
bound in
To saucy doubts and fears.
But Banquo's safe?
MUR: He is dead¹ MUR: Ay, my good lord; safe in a
ditch he bides,
With twenty trenched gashes
on his head,
The least a death to nature.²

The nature and scope of the above compression is characteristic of that throughout the libretto. Only Lady Macbeth's sleep-walking scene (Act IV, Scene 2 in the opera) is free of this compression. It is rendered almost word for word identical to Shakespeare.

2. Results of Changes

Notwithstanding the changes in the opera as noted, Verdi's Macbeth follows very closely the major plot development of Shakespeare's Macbeth. The five main steps in plot development--the opening situation, initial incident, turning point, climax, and denouement have been meticulously reproduced. Of these five elements, only one has been altered. This change is, of course, in the location on stage of the death of Macbeth at the climax of the story.

On only four occasions do the deletions of plot elements in the opera directly effect the action of the three main characters--Macbeth, Lady Macbeth, and the Witches--as Verdi designated them. In addition, these deletions, for the most part, are somehow justified or compensated for in the opera. The scene in which Lady Macbeth goads Macbeth to murder (Act I, Scene 7) is made unnecessary by the implication that

¹Ibid.

²Shakespeare, p. 83.

the whole plan has been discussed before the opera begins. The new operatic characterization of Lady Macbeth removes the necessity of her faint (Act II, Scene 3). Macbeth's planning with the Murderers (Act III, Scene 1) is merely discussion which results in subsequent action and is not highly significant in the major plot development. Finally, the killing of Young Siward (Act V, Scene 7), though serving to prove to Macbeth that he is invincible to a man born of woman, is not scientifically conclusive proof; and, in its brevity, the scene actually does not greatly enhance the overall violent undertone of the play. There is just one untidiness created by these deletions: what about the sleeping grooms which Macbeth does not kill in the opera?

Examination of those other elements deleted reveals several instances of recapitulation (Act II, Scene 4, Act III, Scene 6, and Act IV, Scene 3) the substance of which, in the opera, is embodied in the refugees' chorus and Macduff's aria in Act IV, Scene 1. There are also two occasions of relatively extraneous materials deleted from the opera. Act II, Scene 1 presents Macbeth and Banquo's conversation about the Witches and the suggestion of another meeting between the men which never takes place. Act III, Scene 5 is Hecate's long tirade which is completely unnecessary. The former scene does show Banquo's strength to resist the predictions of the Witches, and, with its elimination from the opera, reduces the complexity of his characterization.

The elimination of the Porter episode is a slight plot loss. In the play this material temporarily lowers the emotional tone and thereby increases the impact of the discovery of the body. The opera, by its deletion, negates this effect and allows the compounded horror to continue unabated from the opening strains of the overture to the final note of the music.

The lessened complexity of the character of Macbeth, the various deletions of materials not directly related to the major plot development, and the general compression speed up the plot action of the opera. In addition, with the fewer number of characters, the opera focuses most upon the three major personages and their actions, which in turn comprise the major plot development.

The reduction in complexity of the character of Macbeth and the increased villainy of Lady Macbeth, together with the hastened plot development, places the stress more upon the emotional rather than the intellectual issues in the story. The addition of the brindisi and Macbeth's dying aria also further this emotionality.

In addition, a certain excitement is created by the act endings in the opera. Each curtain scene is one of emotional tension. This handling differs from Shakespeare in that these high points in plot development are always followed directly by material of a less emotional nature in the play. Act I of the opera ends with the discovery of the body of Duncan; the Shakespeare follows this with the discussion between Ross and the Old Man. Act II in the opera ends after the banquet scene and the appearances of Banquo's Ghost; in the play there follow two scenes of lessened intensity. Similarly, Act III of the opera closes after the Witches second predictions to Macbeth; in the play this scene opens Act IV. Only in the climax do the act endings coincide.

The opera also smoothes over one Shakespearean inconsistency: the opera's Lady Macbeth does stress to Macbeth the importance of the continued pursuit of Fleance, a seemingly significant issue which is suddenly dropped in Shakespeare.

In general, the opera is a more emotionally rapid rendition of the story. It faithfully represents the major Shakespearean plot action, supplementing and rearranging it infrequently, but making it more emotional, melodramatic, and more rapidly expressed.

CHAPTER II

COMPARISON OF OTELLO (GIUSEPPE VERDI) AND OTHELLO (WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE)

A. Plot of the Play

Shakespeare's Othello is composed of five acts of three, three, four, three, and two scenes respectively. The opening situation of the play is as follows: Othello, a Moor and a Venetian military hero, has just eloped with Desdemona, a young Venetian girl. In addition, Othello has recently appointed Cassio as his lieutenant. Iago, Othello's ancient, is not only envious of Cassio's promotion, but suspects an intrigue between Othello and his wife, Emilia. Roderigo, a naive young gentleman, has been pursuing Desdemona, but her father, Brabantio, does not appreciate his attentions to his daughter.

The first act takes place in Venice. Most of the opening situation is revealed in Scene 1 through a conversation between Iago and Roderigo. The two men then proceed to the house of Brabantio to tell him of his daughter Desdemona's elopement with Othello. Brabantio goes off in search of Othello and finds him just after he has been ordered to report to the Duke of Venice. Brabantio accompanies Othello to his meeting and there asks the Duke for Desdemona's return. Desdemona herself is summoned and her explanation, "my heart's subdued even to the very quality of my lord,"¹ settles the argument in spite of

¹William Shakespeare, Othello, ed. Mark Eccles (New York: Appelton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1946), p. 19.

Brabantio's warning to Othello: "Look to her, Moor, if thou hast eyes to see: she has deceived her father, and may thee."¹ Othello is ordered to sail immediately for Cyprus to undertake its defense against the Turks. Iago tells Roderigo that he should obtain some money with which to press his suit with Desdemona, and then, in the soliloquy which closes Act I, Iago explains how he suspects an intrigue between Othello and Emilia. He vows to beseege Othello with rumors that Cassio is too familiar with Desdemona.

The scene then shifts to Cyprus where Othello arrives safely through the storm which has destroyed the Turkish fleet and ended the war. He is greeted warmly by Desdemona, who arrived earlier. A feast ensues. During the festivities Cassio, who has "poor and unhappy brains for drinking,"² is encouraged to imbibe by Iago who then instructs Roderigo to start a fight with the drunken lieutenant. Montano, Othello's predecessor as ruler of Cyprus, is wounded in attempting separate the combatants. The appearance of Othello, roused from his bed, quells the uprising. As a result, Cassio loses his lieutenancy, and Iago suggests that he appeal to Desdemona to intercede for him with Othello for its return. The fight and Cassio's demotion comprise the initial incident in the play, for, as Iago reveals in a soliloquy, the proposed meeting between Cassio and Desdemona can be used to pique Othello's jealousy.

To accomplish this end, Iago makes certain that Othello sees Desdemona meeting with Cassio. He especially calls Othello's attention to Cassio's hasty departure at the approach of Othello. When Desdemona

¹Ibid., p. 21.

²Ibid., p. 36.

pleads for Cassio, Othello further misinterprets. Iago presses his evil course by warning Othello to beware of jealousy, but adds that Desdemona has, after all, deceived her father and may bear watching. When, in his next meeting with Desdemona, Othello casts aside in anger the handkerchief with which she offers to dry his brow, Emilia retrieves it. She goes to deliver the handkerchief, which has been a gift from Othello to Desdemona, to her husband, Iago, who had expressed a desire to have the handkerchief.

Othello returns to Iago who gives him further "proofs" of Desdemona's guilt: a story of Cassio's sleeping murmurings which Iago says he witnessed and in which Cassio spoke of his desire for Desdemona, and the fact that Cassio has the handkerchief (for Iago has planted it in his room). Othello orders Iago to kill Cassio and makes Iago his lieutenant. Othello then returns to Desdemona to question her about the whereabouts of the handkerchief. The act closes with Cassio, having found the handkerchief, giving it to Bianca, a local prostitute who is enamored of him.

At the beginning of Scene 1 of Act IV, Iago administers the "final blow." He relates to Othello how Cassio has allegedly boasted about having slept with Desdemona. At this news, Othello lapses into a trance.

The turning point in the play is an elusive entity. Marx asserts that it occurs in Act III, Scene 3 when "Iago persuades Othello that Desdemona is unfaithful."¹ Elisabeth Woodbridge, however, believes that that scene is only "a part of the ascent which . . . culminates

¹Marx, p. 75.

[here] in Act IV, Scene 1."¹ Yet, later, in Act IV, Scene 2, Shakespeare has the not completely convinced Othello again question Desdemona about her fidelity, with the implication that he still hopes for some satisfactory explanation from her.

At the end of Act IV, Scene 1 Othello overhears Iago and Cassio discussing Bianca and thinks they are speaking of Desdemona. Othello is most impressed by Cassio's laughter, which Othello does not realize is directed at Bianca, whose insistent harlotry Cassio finds most amusing. Othello then sees Bianca with the handkerchief. The arrival of Lodovico, an emissary from the Duke, with the news of Othello's recall to Venice temporarily prevents any action on the part of Othello. However, when Desdemona joins the group, Othello strikes her. Lodovico and the others tactfully depart, and, as previously mentioned, Othello again questions his wife. Dissatisfied with her answers, he curses her, calling her a strumpet.

Then, Iago orders Roderigo to kill Cassio. The act closes with Desdemona's singing of the "Willow" song about an unfaithful lover, and a discussion between Desdemona and Emilia concerning Othello's strange behavior.

As Act V opens, Roderigo attacks Cassio but in the swordplay is wounded himself. In the dark, Iago lunges at Cassio but only wounds him. When others come upon the scene, Iago pretends to be one of them and kills Roderigo.

The final scene opens with Othello's soliloquy, "It is the

¹Elisabeth Woodbridge, The Drama: Its Law and Its Technique (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1898), p. 77.

cause . . ."¹ in which he ponders the murder of Desdemona and during which he kisses her three times as she sleeps. His final kiss awakens her, but despite her protestations of innocence, he smothers her. He is interrupted by the entrance of Emilia who announces that Roderigo has been killed and that Cassio is still alive. Desdemona, in a brief dying declamation, refuses to name her killer, but Othello confesses and explains to Emilia how Iago exposed his wife's affair with Cassio. Emilia's cries bring the others, and Iago's treachery is uncovered when Emilia tells how she had obtained the handkerchief. Iago kills Emilia, and Othello wounds Iago. Othello is then disarmed. Cassio confirms that he found the handkerchief, and letters found in Roderigo's pocket expose Iago's plotting. Othello, after his speech, "Soft you now, a word or two before you go . . ."² produces a hidden dagger and kills himself. He falls upon the body of Desdemona saying: "I kissed thee ere I killed thee. No way but this, killing myself, to die upon a kiss."³ Othello's final speech and suicide comprise the climax of the play.

The denouement follows quickly and consists of Lodovico's speech promising torture for Iago and a speedy report to the state.

B. Comparison of the Plot of the Opera

1. Sequence of Events

Verdi's Otello consists of four acts of three, five, nine, and four scenes respectively. Unlike the other operas in this study, the

¹Shakespeare, p. 99.

²Ibid., p. 111.

³Ibid., p. 112.

scenes in Otello change locale only from act to act.

Any comparison of the opening situation of the opera to that of the play is necessarily hampered by the fact that the opera begins with Shakespeare's Act II. Therefore, the opera takes place entirely in Cyprus and the opening situation is altered as follows: Othello, still the Venetian military hero, is sailing through a storm to Cyprus, having been ordered to defend the island from the Turks. Already arrived are his wife (of an indeterminate period of time) Desdemona, and his ancient, Iago. Iago, like in the play, is jealous of Cassio who has been recently appointed Othello's lieutenant. Also on Cyprus, which is presently governed by Montano, is Roderigo who, apparently, has loved Desdemona and now still desires her; and Emilia, the wife of Iago and attendant to Desdemona.

Besides the locale and the impending war, other differences in the opera are: the duration of Othello and Desdemona's marriage, the omission of Iago's suspicion of an intrigue between Emilia and Othello, Brabantio's disapproval of Roderigo and his warning to Othello, and the fact that Emilia is already Desdemona's confidante. Although Act I of Shakespeare is deleted from the opera, some of the material of that act is interpolated into Act I of the opera, and these borrowings will be duly noted.

Act I, Scene 1

This scene in the opera takes place at the seaport at Cyprus and marks the arrival of Othello. Paralleling Shakespeare's Act II, Scene 1, the action begins with a violent storm, described by the Chorus of Cypriots and Venetian soldiers, the opera's counterpart to

Shakespeare's three gentlemen. Cassio and Montano add two short superficial comments to the expressions of concern for the safety of Othello. Iago, already arrived in the opera, in his second of two short comments reveals his dislike for Othello in saying: "I fain would leave her [Othello's ship] buried for the waves to cover."¹

The expository material between Shakespeare's Montano and the three gentlemen describing the loss of the Turkish fleet in the storm is then dismissed briefly in Othello's appearance and one speech:

OTH: Hear glad tidings! Our wars are done.
 The ocean has 'whelmed the Turk.
 Heav'ns be and our the glory!
 What our weapons had left,
 The storm has scattered.²

This speech greatly resembles Othello's exit lines in Act II, Scene 1 in Shakespeare.

The arrival of Desdemona (who, with Emilia and Roderigo, makes an entrance with Iago in Shakespeare) is delayed. First, three brief speeches concerning Roderigo's erstwhile suicide are injected:

IAGO: Roderigo, well, now, what say'st thou?
 ROD: Drowning, say I.
 IAGO: Fool, who talks of drowning for the love of woman!³

This discussion in Shakespeare comprises several long speeches at the end of Act I, Scene 3. Then, Iago urges Roderigo to be patient in an aria the majority of which is also borrowed from Shakespeare's Act I, Scene 3, excluding the instructions to make money. Also included in this aria is one line noting Iago's feigned friendship for but inner hatred

¹Arrigo Boito, Otello (libretto) Italian and English text (Boston: Oliver Ditson Company, 1888), p. 4.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

of Othello. The aria concludes with an expression of Iago's displeasure that Cassio, "the masterly arithmetician,"¹ has been promoted before him. This latter material is condensed from Iago's first long speech early in Act I, Scene 1 of the play.

Still before the arrival of Desdemona, Iago provokes Cassio to fight Roderigo (Act II, Scene 3 in the play). The action is compressed and a typically operatic brindisi for Iago, which is clearly indicated by the Shakespearean song, "And let me the cannikan, clink, clink . . ." ² is added. The action moves directly from this song to the fight provoking words of Roderigo (who is present for the drinking in the opera): "I laugh at drunkards."³

Scene 2

The ensuing scuffle is dispersed by the arrival of Othello. This begins Scene 2 in the opera. He demotes Cassio; and, as in Act II, Scene 3 of Shakespeare, Desdemona, now making her first appearance in the opera, joins her husband. In the opera she is silent.

This scene, as in the play, is the initial incident in the plot development. Except for the compression in the operatic treatment, the handling is similar in both versions.

The remainder of Shakespeare's Act II, Scene 3--including Cassio's bemoaning his lost reputation and Iago's deprecation of such an attitude, Iago's vow to bombard Othello with lies about the relationship between Desdemona and Cassio, and the final trivial scene between

¹Ibid., p. 5.

²Shakespeare, p. 37.

³Boito, p. 9.

Iago and Roderigo--is deleted in the opera.

Scene 3

In Scene 3, the opera returns to the middle of Act II, Scene 1 of Shakespeare. Eliminating that portion in which Iago composes verses for Desdemona and observes Cassio kissing Desdemona's hand, the scene presents the first meeting of Othello and Desdemona on Cyprus. This brief encounter is supplemented with the expository material from Act I, Scene 3 of Shakespeare wherein Othello tells the Duke of how his stories of danger and conquest so excited Desdemona that she suggested that he woo her. In the opera Othello and Desdemona discuss this relationship between them in the love-duet which closes this act. Near the end of the duet Othello speaks the words, "a kiss, and yet another kiss,"¹ which presage the kisses in the death scene.

The Herald's short declamation (Act II, Scene 2) in Shakespeare is deleted from the opera.

Act II, Scenes 1 and 2

The first short scene in Act II consists of the suggestion by Iago to Cassio that he appeal to Desdemona to intercede for his reinstatement, as abbreviated from the end of Act II, Scene 3 in Shakespeare.

Scene 2 is taken up almost entirely with Iago's "Credo," an aria famous in operatic literature. It does not appear to have any literal source in Shakespeare. It does, however, reinforce the demonic nature of Iago. As Kerman states: "There is none of Shakespeare's

¹Ibid., p. 13.

curiously inconclusive 'motive-hunting' in Verdi's 'Credo', but instead the villain direct, complete, and terrible."¹ He also indicates that Verdi "sweeps together Shakespeare's four or five soliloquies"² in creating his "Credo." However, in the "Credo," Iago asserts directly that he is a "vile germ of nature [and] 'tis Fate that drives me."³ This sentiment is not strictly Shakespearean.

At the conclusion of his "Credo," Iago watches Desdemona and Cassio speaking. This short conversation (which includes Emilia), appearing in Act III, Scene 3 of the play, is thus only observed but not heard in the opera. This is Emilia's first appearance in the opera. She does not speak (cannot be heard).

Eliminated to this point are Shakespeare's Act III, Scenes 1 and 2. The former includes the comic relief episode between the Clown and the Musicians, and Emilia's agreement to assist Cassio in arranging a meeting with Desdemona. The latter shows Othello embarking on a tour of the fortifications.

Scene 3

It is at this point in the opera that the major plot issue, the building of Othello's jealousy, actually commences. Scenes 3, 4, and 5 are based entirely upon Act III, Scene 3 of the play. The major difference between versions is in the great amount of rearrangement of Shakespearean episodes in the opera. To better observe these interpolations, the reader may wish to refer to Table 2 in the Appendix.

¹Kerman, p. 140.

²Ibid.

³Boito, pp. 14-15.

The first suggestion to Othello that something may be amiss in his marriage occurs at the beginning of Scene 3 when Iago makes Cassio's hasty departure from his conversation with Desdemona look suspicious. The opera then moves quickly ahead to Iago's speeches warning Othello to beware of jealousy but to watch Desdemona from a later episode in the scene. Although Othello resists the insinuations, the expression of his faith, appearing only as a brief apostrophe to the long choral passage, is somewhat less positive than the Shakespearean twice-repeated, "I will deny thee nothing."¹ In the choral passage itself, the Chorus--women, children, and Cypriot and Albanian soldiers--bring flowers and jewels to Desdemona and their song, Othello says, "has wrung my bosom . . . if she deceive me, the heav'n itself's a liar."²

Scenes 4 and 5

The action now returns to the episode in which Desdemona speaks to Othello of Cassio. In the opera she makes a stronger plea than in the play: "You must forgive him."³ This plea has been described by Toye as "stubborn and inappropriate insistence."⁴ The scene then continues with the casting aside of the handkerchief. From this point the action of the remainder of Shakespeare's Act III, Scene 3 is compressed to bring Act II of the opera to a close. To create the quartet which closes out Scene 4, there is added to Iago and Emilia's argument over and Iago's subsequent snatching of the handkerchief (a departure

¹Shakespeare, p. 53

²Boito, p. 19.

³Ibid.

⁴Toye, p. 418.

in the opera), a concurrent speech by Desdemona. While she sings of her desire to serve, love, and comfort her husband; Othello, in an aside, bemoans his broken heart and lost dream of love. Neither of these latter outbursts has any literal source in Shakespeare.

Scene 5, still paralleling the Shakespeare, presents the discourse in which Iago, through his "proofs" (Cassio's dream and the handkerchief soon to come into Cassio's possession), further incenses Othello to vengeance. In the ensuing duet Iago also sings of his vengeance upon Othello. Othello does not, however, command Iago to kill Cassio as in the play.

Omitted from Shakespeare's Act III, Scene 3 to this point are Iago's references to men being what they seem, one's good name, and jealousy. Also missing is Othello's soliloquy with its opening reiteration of Iago's honesty.

Act III, Scenes 1, 2, 3, and 4

In the short Scene 1 the Herald announces the arrival of Lodovico, and Iago instructs Othello to overhear his conversation with Cassio. This latter material is interpolated from Act IV, Scene 1 in Shakespeare. The actual listening episode, however, is delayed in the opera. Thus deleted from Act IV, Scene 1 are both the comic relief episode containing the Clown's pun on the word "lie" (possibly indirectly referred to in Act III, Scene 5 in the opera when Cassio mentions his lodging), and Desdemona and Emilia's short discussion concerning the whereabouts of the handkerchief.

Scene 2 presents the discussion over the handkerchief found in Shakespeare's Act III, Scene 4. The scene is punctuated by material

from the middle of Shakespeare's Act IV, Scene 2, that portion in which Othello calls Desdemona a strumpet.

Scene 3 consists entirely of Othello's aria decrying the sorrows heaven has rained on him. This aria is borrowed ahead from Act IV, Scene 2 in Shakespeare (immediately previous to the name-calling material used in Scene 2), and brings about Othello's first trance (even without Iago's "final blow"--the story of Cassio's boast).

Also deleted from the opera is the remainder of Act III, Scene 4 in the play. This includes Cassio's second appeal to Desdemona, Desdemona and Emilia's discussion of jealousy, and the episode in which Cassio gives the handkerchief to Bianca.

Scenes 5 and 6

The opera returns to Shakespearean order for Scenes 5 and 6. Scene 5 includes the episode in which Othello overhears Iago and Cassio, and Cassio produces the handkerchief (altered from the play because of the deletion of the character of Bianca). Scene 6 consists of Iago and Othello's discussion of the handkerchief. At the close of this conversation, Othello resolves to kill Desdemona. This definite statement: "Her fate is settled. This same night she must die,"¹ marks the turning point in the opera; for, although Othello falters briefly before the murder, his firm intent is never questioned after this scene.

At the conclusion of Scene 6 Othello makes Iago his lieutenant. This action harks back to Act III, Scene 3 in the play.

¹Boito, p. 32.

Scenes 7, 8, and 9

Continuing with Shakespeare's Act IV, Scene 1, Lodovico is introduced in the beginning of Scene 7. The action moves from this welcome to Othello's annoyance with Desdemona. However, he does not strike her in the opera. He is deterred by Lodovico. Then, again departing from the play, Othello calls for Cassio.

The beginning of Scene 8 marks the arrival of Cassio and the announcement of the news that Othello has been recalled and Cassio has been chosen to replace him. Then occurs some operatic recapitulation as Desdemona, Emilia, Roderigo, Cassio and Lodovico expound in musical passages their particular woes and impressions. This is followed by the Chorus (Knights and Ladies) expressing their shock at Othello's treatment of his wife. Then, Iago urges Othello to strike by offering to kill Cassio. Much earlier in the play (Act III, Scene 3) Othello orders Iago to commit the murder.

Returning to the end of Shakespeare's Act IV, Scene 2, Iago urges Roderigo to kill Cassio. This differs slightly from Shakespeare in that Roderigo has not been sending jewels to Desdemona through Iago and therefore does not suspect Iago of stealing them, and Iago does not need to inform Roderigo of Othello's impending departure because Roderigo is present when the letter is read in the opera. In closing Scene 8, the ensemble, still on stage during Iago's parenthetical comments to Othello and Roderigo, sees Othello grow more agitated and curse his wife.

Continuing in Scene 9, Othello lapses into his second trance as Iago, against the distant voices singing praise to Othello, says sarcastically over his motionless body: "See here the lion."¹ This comment

¹Ibid., p. 39.

cannot be traced to any specific corresponding passage in Shakespeare.

Though borrowing on occasions from Act IV, Scene 2 of the play, the opera leaves unused the opening discussion between Othello and Emilia concerning her observations of Desdemona's conduct; and Iago, Desdemona and Emilia's discussion of Othello's recent attitude toward his wife.

Act IV, Scenes 1 and 2

Shakespeare's Act IV, Scene 3 forms the basis of Scene 1 in the opera. The introductory comments marking the departure of Lodovico and Othello and the latter's command to Desdemona to dismiss Emilia are deleted. Used in the opera is the song of the "Willow." The discussion which accompanies the song, however, is slightly abridged from the Shakespearean version.

Scene 2 is composed entirely of Desdemona's aria, "Ave Maria," which ranks almost equally with Iago's "Credo" as the most popular of the Otello music. The text has no equivalent in Shakespeare, but the song is justified by Othello's question in Scene 3 of the opera: "Say, have you prayed to-night?"¹

Scenes 3 and 4

The murder of Desdemona receives similar treatment in both versions. The action which Shakespeare presents in one scene (Act V, Scene 2) is, however, divided into two scenes in the opera. The division occurs with the entrance of the ensemble after Emilia's cry.

¹Ibid., p. 43.

There are several other notable changes in the opera. In sequence they are: Othello's long opening speech is deleted (but the three kisses are retained, being performed in pantomime in the opera); the discovery and revelation of the contents of the letters is reduced to one line by Montano: "The dying Roderigo has confessed all the dark plots of this villain."¹; Iago does not kill Emilia; Othello does not wound or threaten torture for Iago because the villain runs; and Othello is not given his "word or two" before he goes. In all, the conclusion of the opera comes swiftly, and the action ends abruptly with the suicide of Othello. Thus eliminated is Lodovico's closing speech.

Shakespeare's Act V, Scene 1, in which Roderigo is killed and Cassio is wounded, and the appearance of the non-essential Gratiano, is deleted in its entirety from the opera. In the opera Cassio kills Roderigo, but the action is not shown.

Othello's final short speech and suicide comprise the climax of the opera. In the play, the previous murder of Desdemona, due to the amount of intervening material, becomes something of an anti-climax. However, in the opera, compressed to have the suicide follow more closely after the murder, this differentiation is more difficult to make.

There is no denouement in the opera; the action ends with the climax.

2. Conflict

Woodbridge has called the conflict in Shakespeare's Othello:

¹Ibid., p. 46.

. . . a struggle between two natures: the one passionate, generous, endowed with tremendous power to love and hate, but not well poised, without controlling judgement; the other cold, intellectually agile, self-sufficient and self-controlled, able to use himself and others as tools with a skill founded in an accurate though limited understanding of human motives.¹

This should not be misconstrued to mean that there is a conflict between individuals; for, as William Archer says: "There is no struggle, no conflict between him [Othello] and Iago. It is Iago alone who exerts any will. Neither Othello nor Desdemona makes the smallest fight."²

As a result of Iago's force of will, Othello's inner struggle between love and jealousy becomes the major conflict in the play.

The opera demonstrates the same conflict. Although Othello's motivations are slightly simplified in the opera, and the action is compressed so that Othello's jealousy is aroused more quickly, the basic conflict remains the same as in the play. The opera's Othello does make a definite decision to kill Desdemona, thus temporarily resolving his inner conflict. In the play, Othello continues to be ambivalent up to the very moment that he kills Desdemona.

C. Comparison of Characters

In the cast of the opera are Othello, Iago, Desdemona, Emilia, Roderigo, Cassio, Lodovico, Montano, the Herald, and the Chorus (composed at various times of combinations of soldiers, sailors, and Cypriots [Knights, Ladies, and children]). Deleted, therefore, are Shakespeare's

¹Woodbridge, p. 37.

²William Archer, Play-making: A Manual of Craftsmanship (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc., 1934), p. 30.

characters of Brabantio, Bianca, the Duke of Venice, Gratiano, the Clown, the Senators, the Musicians, servants, attendants, and the Messenger. The gentlemen of Cyprus and the officers are incorporated into the Chorus.

1. Othello

The character of Othello is more consistent with its counterpart in the play than any other character in the opera. The more compressed plot development of the opera does force its Othello to be more speedily decisive, but his innate jealousy which finally overrides his generous, trusting, loving nature is equally demonstrated in both versions.

Othello is also the most complex of the characters in the opera. This is not to say that his characterization is psychologically complete, but merely to indicate that he presents a figure less one-sided and/or superficial than those characters who surround him.

To say further that there is character growth in Othello, however, is an overestimation. That his jealousy can be so easily aroused by a series of highly circumstantial insinuations, only proves that his capacity for jealousy is already mature and undergoes, in the words of Woodbridge, "a gradual arousing of a passionate nature until it reaches a whiteheat that destroys itself and those nearest it."¹ This cannot truly be considered character development.

Othello is a strong character. Not even Iago's professions of evil can overshadow the fact that in the end it will be Othello who

¹Woodbridge, p. 134.

will act. In fact, Shakespeare's Iago commits only one overt act (discounting the unnecessary murder of Emilia)--the cowardly wounding of Cassio and the quasi-heroic killing of the childish Roderigo; in the opera he is even denied this. Contrast this with Othello, a man driven by his own defect of character to murder his wife and take his own life, and the dominant character of Othello is easily seen.

In the opera Othello has a much stronger introduction. His first entrance is at the height of the storm. Shakespeare, through his more subdued presentation of a champion unperturbed at the prospect of his impending meeting with his wife's irate father, probably more justly creates the picture of the great black bear soon to be roused from his peaceful hibernation and excited to violence.

2. Iago

The opera's Iago is a villain, pure and simple. Stripped of his suspicions about his wife in the opera, he is motivated only by the loss of the lieutenancy, and he concocts his dark plots with all the evil machinations of the stereotyped villain of the most obvious melodrama. This characterization of the arch-intriguer could become comic to the modern taste. He only escapes this fate because, in the words of Woodbridge:

(1) the character of the victim is so noble, and is so treated as to awaken our emotional sympathy; and (2) that he is strong enough, when finally aroused, to retaliate with the terrible energy and with such terrible effectiveness that our thought is drawn away from the intellectual phases of the case to its emotional issues.¹

Verdi further allays this possible comic impression by his own physical description of Iago:

¹Ibid., p. 148.

If I had to act the part of Iago, I should make him long and lean with thin lips, small eyes set, ape-like, too close to nose, and a head with receding brow and large development at the back. His manner would be abstracted, nonchalant, indifferent to everything, incredulous, smart in repartee, saying good and ill alike lightly with the air of thinking about something else. So if someone should reproach him for a monstrous suggestion, he might retort: "Really? . . . I did not see it in that light . . . let's say no more of it." A man like that might deceive everybody, even up to a point his own wife. A small, malignant fellow would put every one on his guard and would take nobody in!¹

Yet Iago is the motivating force in both the play and the opera. When Lajos Egri describes him as the "pivotal character,"² this becomes a semantic substitution for the nomenclature "protagonist" which carries with it the picture of a sympathetic character.

In his opening speech early in each version Iago expresses his villainous intent. Although Toye describes Verdi's handling of Iago as the "most subtle characterisation"³ in the opera, it is difficult to agree in view of the villain's forthright "Credo" and unwavering, arrogant, demonic personality (which is even recognized by the opera's Emilia). There is certainly nothing subtle about his sarcastic jibe at the prostrate Othello at the close of Act III in the opera. Such additions to Shakespeare only serve to simplify the character of Iago, who has already become, by the deletion of all his physical action in the opera, a talkative plotter who runs when confronted.

¹Letter of Giuseppe Verdi to Domenico Morelli, St. Agata, September 24, 1881 (as quoted in Hussey, p. 249).

²Lajos Egri, The Art of Dramatic Writing (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1946), p. 104.

³Toye, p. 420.

3. Desdemona

Desdemona, early in the opera, achieves a distinct growth in personality. From her love-duet which, in the words of Kerman, she "sing without any reserve on an equal plane with her Othello,"¹ to her insistence upon Cassio's reinstatement, Desdemona becomes a more flesh-and-blood character. This is quite a departure from the play in which Desdemona, according to Bradley, "seems to lack . . . independence and strength of spirit."²

In her first appearance in Act I, Scene 2 of the opera she does not speak, but in her duet with Othello soon after, she reveals a strength of character which is a worthy complement to that of her husband and which Shakespeare's Desdemona never achieves. This characterization in the opera, however, is not sustained to the end. In her death scene, for example, she reacts quite similarly to Shakespeare's more fragile Desdemona.

4. Emilia and Others

The three characters mentioned so far--Othello, Desdemona, and Iago--do not suffer as appreciably from the reduction of the size of their roles as do the remainder of the characters in the opera. Emilia, for instance, becomes a much more subordinate character in the opera than in the play. In her first appearance (as late as Act II, Scene 1) she is, as far as anyone knows, merely an attendant to Desdemona. Her

¹Kerman, p. 160.

²Bradley, P. 203.

failure to speak at that time only furthers the impression that she bears no significance to the plot. Although she appears in the same act and scene in Shakespeare, she is already remembered from Act I as Iago's possibly unfaithful wife whom Iago, in the later scene, chides for having a quick tongue. However, Shakespeare's Emilia develops as an unsuspecting, subordinated wife who humbly says: "You have little cause to say so."¹

On the other hand, when Emilia speaks in the opera she is portrayed much more as Shakespeare's Iago describes her. In the quartet (Act II, Scene 4 of the opera) she shows that she understands Iago enough to suspect him of treachery, and she is not reluctant to tell him: "Your wicked scheming too well I know it."² Although she is rarely seen again until the final act, her character as expressed in the quartet already outstrips that of Shakespeare's almost unbelievably naive Emilia who can say of the handkerchief: "What he will do with it heaven knows, not I."³

So, although the size of Emilia's role is reduced, she does achieve a strength of character in the opera not found in the play.

The appearances of Roderigo, described by Shakespeare as early as in the *Dramatis Personae* as "a gulled [gullible] gentleman," and having a personality not unlike that of Cherubino in Mozart's The Marriage of Figaro (whose immaturity is best characterized by the fact

¹Shakespeare, p. 29.

²Boito, p. 20.

³Shakespeare, p. 60.

that his role in that opera is taken by a soprano), are mercifully reduced to three in the opera. These are the opening and drinking and fight scenes in Act I, and Scenes 7 and 8 of Act III in which he is instructed by Iago to kill Cassio. Deleted is the majority of Roderigo's puppy-like following of Iago's words and person to the limits of credibility. Retained, however, is his implicit trust in Iago, which, in its more limited scope in the opera, seems more justified than in the play.

Cassio, the unsuspecting target of all the malicious gossip remains a relatively indefinable entity in the opera. That he is married is only revealed in Shakespeare. That he cannot hold his liquor becomes important in both versions. But, beyond this fact, all that can be ascertained in the opera is that he is pleasant, courteous, and he has a certain charm with the ladies.

Cassio's only premeditated action is that in which he appeals to Desdemona to intercede for him with Othello. He is a curious example of a character necessary to but almost excluded from the plot. In the opera even the attack upon his person becomes a subject of exposition. His expressions of levity at the mention of Bianca do, however, constitute the only humorous respite in an otherwise highly morose opera.

Finally, Lodovico and Montano, utility characters reduced in the opera to their most necessary functions--the former to deliver the letter, and the latter to be wounded by Cassio (for that early in the opera who else could be sacrificed?)--cannot be reckoned with as individual personalities, any more than they can in the play. For most announcements and proclamations the opera employs the Chorus. Those Shakespearean supernumerary functions not incorporated into the Chorus or assumed by the Herald are deleted from the opera.

D. Conclusions

1. Changes in the Opera

a. Additions

There are nine additions in the opera of plot materials not found in the play. The first of these, Othello and Desdemona's love-duet, is based upon Shakespearean dialogue but its concept is new. It serves to delineate a different, more affectionate relationship between Othello and his wife, as well as to demonstrate the strengthened character of Desdemona. A second addition is Iago's "Credo," which, though loosely based upon his Shakespearean soliloquies, helps to create the picture of the more villainous Iago. The choral passage which sings of Desdemona's happy love is a third addition. The quartet in Act II, Scene 4 is almost completely new even to Emilia's suspicion of Iago which forces him to wrench the handkerchief from her. A fifth addition is Othello and Iago's duet which ends Act II. Although in this duet most of the material is of Shakespearean origin, the camaraderie which seems to exist between the two men is an addition in the opera. Iago's sarcastic "See here the lion" is a sixth addition.

The final three additions are the presence of Cassio for the reading of the letter in Act III, Scene 8; Othello's second trance; and Desdemona's "Ave Maria" just before her murder.

Also included in the opera are several instances of purely operatic recapitulation (notably in the Iago-Othello duet; the quartet; and the ensemble in Act II, Scene 8). Finally, as noted, the characters of Desdemona and Emilia evidence more emotionally human traits in the opera.

b. Interpolations

There are thirteen interpolations of Shakespearean materials in the opera. Nine of these occur in Acts II and III during the building of Othello's jealousy. The other four interpolations appear in Act I of the opera. Three of these are borrowings from Act I in Shakespeare which is otherwise not used in the opera. Those three portions found in the opera are the short discussion of drowning between Roderigo and Iago and the latter's instructions to be patient from Scene 3 of Act I in the play, Iago's description of Cassio from Scene 1, and Othello's description of the wooing of Desdemona as found in Scene 3. The fourth interpolation in Act I of the opera is the use of the first meeting between Othello and Desdemona on Cyprus after the Roderigo-Cassio fight episode rather than before as in the play. This interpolation creates the act-ending love-duet.

The four interpolations in Act II of the opera serve to move Iago's warnings to Othello to beware of jealousy and to watch Desdemona, and Othello's expression of temporarily renewed faith to a position before the episode in which Desdemona speaks to Othello about Cassio. This makes Desdemona's insistent plea that much stronger a force in the building of Othello's jealousy.

The five interpolations in Act III serve basically to place Othello's lament of the sorrows that have befallen him and his subsequent cursing of Desdemona to a position before the episode in which he overhears Cassio and Iago discussion Bianca. This emotional outburst, in turn, makes Othello's first trance which follows seem more motivated.

c. Deletions

The most notable deletion in the operatic version of Othello is the elimination of Shakespeare's Act I (except those three interpolations already noted). With this deletion the motivating factors for Othello's killing of Desdemona and those considerations prompting Iago to bring him to it are each reduced by one. Gone is the suggestion that Desdemona, having deceived her father, could be disposed to deceive Othello. Also missing is Iago's suspicion of an intrigue between Othello and Emilia. It is interesting to note that the opera also excludes Iago's suspicion that his wife has been unfaithful with Cassio as well. This brief suggestion occurs in Act II, Scene 3 of the play.

There are ten characters or groups of characters deleted from the opera. In addition, of the twelve scenes in Shakespeare's Act II, III, IV, and V utilized in the opera, part or all of every one suffers deletion.

Looking first at those characters omitted from the opera it can be seen that they fall into three basic categories: (1) those eliminated because of the deletion of Act I of the play (Brabantio, the Duke of Venice, the Senators, and [indirectly] Gratiano); (2) minor characters not directly concerned with the building of Othello's jealousy (Bianca, the Clown, and the Musicians); and (3) supernumeraries (servants, attendants, and the Messenger).

The absence of those characters in the first category creates two interesting deviations from Shakespeare in the opera. With the deletion of Brabantio and the circumstances surrounding Othello's marriage to Desdemona, the long-standing argument among Shakespearean

scholars as to whether or not Othello was in fact a Negro is avoided. In the opera Othello dresses as a Venetian general, all parental objection to his marriage is removed, and the question of his race becomes irrelevant. In addition, with the deletion of the Duke and the Senators, all echoes of the state are reduced to an absolute minimum. Although Lodovico, with his news of the change of command, is still included so that Iago is forced to press Othello to strike swiftly, the emissary's final speech with its reference to the state is deleted. Finally, the role of Montano is reduced to such a degree that only a careful perusal of the program would indicate who this man actually is.

In the second category the deletion of Bianca does constitute a minor plot loss, but it can be argued that seeing Cassio with the handkerchief is as strong a motivating force upon the watching Othello as seeing Bianca with--more so, if Othello could admit the possibility that she may not have obtained it from Cassio. The Clown and the Musicians, used only in the two brief comic relief episodes in the play, are deleted from the opera.

In addition, the number of appearances of the naive Roderigo are severely reduced. Finally, Iago is reduced to a more melodramatic personality, and Othello loses some motivation for his jealousy.

Completely omitted from the opera are Act II, Scene 2; Act III, Scenes 1 and 2; and Act V, Scene 1 of the play. These scenes include the Herald's short proclamation of the feast, the Clown and Musician's brief comic episode and Emilia's talk with Cassio, the four-speech scene in which Othello goes to inspect the fortifications, and the scene in which Roderigo wounds Cassio and Iago kills Roderigo. Of these plot materials only the last bears any real significance in the overall

direction of the action. The deletion of Iago's killing of Roderigo (and also his later murder of Emilia) helps to create the picture of a villain whose evil actions are merely vocal and not physical in nature. In the opera Iago talks a good murder, but he does not commit even as cowardly a one as Iago's murder of Roderigo in the play.

All the remaining scenes in Acts II, III, IV, and V of the play suffer varying amounts of deletion. The one scene in which there is a major amount of deletion is Scene 4 of Act III. Deleted here is the opening comic relief episode, Desdemona and Emilia's discussion of the whereabouts of the handkerchief, Cassio's second appeal to Desdemona, Desdemona and Emilia's discussion of jealousy, and Cassio's giving of the handkerchief to Bianca. Eliminated from Act II, Scene 1 is that portion in which Iago composes verses for Desdemona. From Scene 3 of the same act Iago's soliloquy and short episode with Roderigo are deleted. Omitted from Act III, Scene 3 are Iago's comments on the value of a good name.

The three scenes in Act IV of the play each suffer some small deletion. From Scene 1 Iago's account of Cassio's alleged boast of having slept with Desdemona which brings about Othello's trance in the play is deleted. (The trance is motivated in the opera by the interpolation of several plot elements.) Othello's questioning of Emilia about Desdemona's conduct and the later discussion between Iago, Emilia, and Desdemona about Othello's recent behavior are omitted from Scene 2. The opening of Scene 3, prefatory to the "Willow" song, is also deleted.

The final scene of the play (Act V, Scene 2) evidences the deletion of Othello's opening soliloquy, the death of Emilia, the

discovery of the letters in Roderigo's pocket, the wounding of Iago, Othello's long speech before his suicide, and the final speech of Lodovico.

d. Compression

The major characteristic of the compression in Otello is the elimination of some of the several Shakespearean soliloquies and the reduction of others. Such reduction, for instance, occurs in Othello's soliloquy in Act III, Scene 3 of the play. Comprising twenty lines in Shakespeare, it becomes a part of the quartet in Act II, Scene 4 of the opera, and is rendered as follows:

OTH: Happily because I lack
Soft parts of conversation,
Or that I am declined
Into the valley of years,
Happily because my visage
Is dyed of deepest black,
Her life is ruined, a by-word
Am I, my heart is broken,
And in the dust is scattered
My golden dream of love.¹

In addition, Iago's soliloquies, for the most part, are condensed into his "Credo." Further compression takes much the same form as that found in Macbeth: a reduction of the duration of expression.

2. Results of Changes

The changes in the opera create several differences between versions in the initial incident, turning point, climax and denouement. The location of the initial incident--Cassio's demotion (and subsequent appeal to Desdemona which Iago can cause Othello to misinterpret) is

¹Boito, p. 20.

is altered. It occurs in Scene 2 of the opera, while in the play, it is found much later in the action (Act II, Scene 3). This may be explained by the fact that Shakespeare's Iago does not devise his plot to pique Othello's jealousy until after his unsuccessful attempt in Act I to ruin Othello's marriage, a rather poor substitute for driving a man to insanity, murder, and suicide. Therefore, the action of Act I of the play, which serves more to solidify than to disrupt Othello's marital status, bears little relationship to the evil plot to which Iago refers in his final speech in Act I and which unfolds in Act II. The incident in the play is stronger, coming as it does after Act I, in which Iago has had ample opportunities to display his evil turn of mind not only in words, as in the opera, but in actions. The opera, on the other hand, demonstrates an emotional immediacy in that the story moves swiftly from Iago's statement of intent to direct action, without the intervention of the act intermission, the extraneous comic relief episode, and the other distractions provided by Shakespeare.

The turning point in the opera is more definite than in the play. After Othello's resolve to kill Desdemona there is no hesitation on his part. This effect is achieved through the interpolation of all the material which builds Othello's jealousy to a position before the turning point. After Act III, Scene 7 in the opera Othello does not question Desdemona again; he is convinced. In the play the feeling that possibly Othello could still be persuaded of his wife's innocence if someone were to speak the right word persists. When he hesitates before killing her it appears to be an extension of that ambivalence which has pervaded his character throughout.

Othello's suicide at the climax of the opera, through compression and the deletion of intervening materials, comes much closer after the murder of Desdemona. It is accomplished with a much shorter prefatory speech, and the tension created by the murder carries over almost directly to the suicide. Finally, the opera ends with the emotional peak at the climax and thereby lacks the tension-relieving denouement of the play.

The results of the changes in the main steps in plot development are the speeding up of the action, especially in the building of Othello's jealousy, and the creation of a more emotional approach to the story. The changes in characterization in the opera further enhance this emotionality.

In the opera Othello is less complex, He is provided with the motivation of Iago's insinuations of an affair between Desdemona and Cassio, supported only by the lie about Cassio's dream, Iago's warped explanations of Cassio's meeting with Desdemona, and the circumstances surrounding the handkerchief. He is denied Brabantio's warning that Desdemona may deceive him just as she had deceived her father, and Iago's tale of Cassio's boast. When, through interpolation and the deletion of not directly related intervening material, he is presented with a more rapid sequence of events in the building of his jealousy, he becomes more emotionally decisive. And when he kills Desdemona, he does so in anger and without the soul-searching of Shakespeare's Othello.

The emotionality is further enhanced by the lessened complexity of the character Iago, whose hatred of Othello is motivated only by his anger at not having been promoted to lieutenant. There is no suggestion in the opera that he suspects intrigues between his wife and

Othello or Cassio. In his "Credo" he proclaims himself a villain for the sake of villainy. He is ruled by passion.

The character of Desdemona also adds to the emotionality. Her more tender relationship with Othello makes her death that much more lamentable. Similarly, the greater awareness on the part of Emilia of her husband's treachery not only further delineates Iago's evil character, but creates a more emotionally human character for his wife.

The deletion or reduction of several of the minor characters places more emphasis upon the conflict in the story. The most notable of these eliminations are the two comic relief episodes. Just as in Verdi's Macbeth the emotional tenor of the opera is not interrupted by extraneous comedy. However, the Porter's episode in Macbeth does serve to increase the horror of the discovery of the body, while the two episodes in Othello are placed so as to be much less significant. The deletion of Bianca also reduced the occasions for levity in the opera, for in her coarseness in the play she does contrast with the more tragic tone of the story. Even the plight of Desdemona, who achieves a certain growth in personality early in the opera, is minimized later in the story so as not to overshadow the major plot issues as well as the character of Iago (after whom Verdi had originally intended to title the opera).

The majority of the deletions of plot elements serve to simplify the characters of Othello and Iago. The reduction and/or elimination of several of Shakespeare's soliloquies especially decrease the intellectual approach to these characters and their motivations. Also, by deletion, Iago is deprived of all physical action. The remainder of the plot deletions consist, for the most part, of recapitulatory

conversations which do not directly further the plot development. There is one notable exception. The deletion of Cassio's alleged boast, which is a strong motivating factor in the play, does appear to be a minor plot loss.

Finally, the additions in the opera all tend to increase its emotionality. Othello's second trance, for instance, cannot be construed to have any other purpose. In addition, the three strongest of these additions appear at the very ends of Acts I , II, and III, and thereby provide dramatic peaks just before the act curtains. The love-duet, the duet between Iago and Othello (in which each expresses his own particular desire for vengeance), and the derogatory "See here the lion" all provide not only memorable act curtains but opportunities to make the conflicts in the opera that more strongly emotional.

Therefore, a more rapid build-up of Othello's jealousy, less complex characterizations of Iago and Othello, and a more emotional portrayal of Desdemona and Emilia create an opera which minimizes the intellectual issues to stress the emotional impact of the story. Though the opera follows the major Shakespearean plot outline, it is more to be felt than to be pondered, and the actions of the characters are more to be lamented than to be understood. The result is something strongly melodramatic.

CHAPTER III

COMPARISON OF FALSTAFF (GIUSEPPE VERDI) AND THE MERRY WIVES OF WINDSOR (WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE)

A. Plot of the Play

Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor consists of five acts of four, three, five, six, and five scenes respectively. The opening situation is as follows: Sir John Falstaff, a rotund, thoroughly unprincipled old man whose thievery and deception have allowed him to drink to excess for years at the Garter Inn in Windsor has recently beaten the servants, killed the deer, and broken into the house of Justice Shallow. In addition, Falstaff's henchmen--Bardolph, Pistol, and Nym--have recently drunk with and subsequently picked the pocket of Slender, the cousin of Shallow. Also residing in Windsor is Anne Page, a pretty young thing who has attracted the amorous attentions of Fenton, a young gentleman, and Dr. Caius, a French physician. Mistress Quickly, housekeeper to Dr. Caius, has been acting as go-between with Anne for the two aspirants, both of whom she has been giving encouragement.

The play contains a major plot: the mercenary love-makings of Falstaff, and a sub-plot: the wooing and winning of Anne Page. The action begins with a discussion between country Justice Shallow and Sir Hugh Evans, a Welsh clergyman, concerning the desirability of Slender, Shallow's cousin, marrying Anne Page. The initial incident

in the sub-plot consists of Shallow and Evans' urging of Slender to court Anne. Still in the first scene of the play, the three men proceed to the Page house and there find Sir John Falstaff whom Shallow accuses of entering his house, beating his servants, and stealing his deer. Slender charges that Bardolph, Pistol and Nym got him drunk and picked his pocket. Falstaff laughingly admits his guilt and his confederates deny theirs. In neither case do Shallow and Slender gain any satisfaction, and Shallow's threats to go to the Council of State go unheeded. The scene closes with an episode between Slender and Anne in which Slender, who just previous to this admits that he does not love the girl, attempts to engage Anne in conversation. However, he only succeeds in mentioning his proficiency at bear-bating.

Evans then sends Slender's servant, Simple, to Mistress Quickly, Dr. Caius' housekeeper. Mistress Quickly, "a 'oman, that altogether's acquaintance with Mistress Anne Page,"¹ will be able to assist Slender in his courtship.

The scene now shifts to the Garter Inn where Falstaff, having first bound Bardolph over to the employ of the Host, reveals to Pistol and Nym his plans to woo both Mistress Ford and Mistress Page for their money. He produces letters which he has written to each of the ladies, but Pistol and Nym refuse to deliver them. The dispatching of the letters by a page is the initial incident in the major plot development. The scene closes with Pistol and Nym discussion how they will reveal the plot to Ford and Page.

¹William Shakespeare, The Merry Wives of Windsor, ed. Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and John Dover Wilson (London: Cambridge University Press, 1954), p. 12.

Scene 4 marks the arrival of Simple at Dr. Caius' house for his meeting with Mistress Quickly. She assures him that she will assist Slender. With the arrival of Dr. Caius, Simple hides in the closet, and, upon his discovery there, explains his presence. This so enrages Dr. Caius, who also desires Anne, that he sends a letter to Sir Hugh Evans challenging him to a duel. Mistress Quickly then assures Dr. Caius that she will intercede for him with Anne, and when Fenton arrives at the close of the scene, she makes him the same promise.

When Mistresses Ford and Page compare their identical love letters from Falstaff, they determine to punish him. They send Mistress Quickly to arrange a meeting. Pistol and Nym, as they had vowed, tell the husbands of Falstaff's plans and Ford arranges to visit Falstaff disguised as "Brook." Mistress Quickly arranges for Falstaff to meet Mistress Ford and explains that Page is home so much of the time that if Falstaff wishes to contact Mistress Page he should send his page to her. "Brook" appears and hires Falstaff to test Mistress Ford's honesty, using the pretext that he loves her and wishes to see if she can be persuaded to be unfaithful to her husband. When Falstaff informs him that a meeting has already been arranged, Ford calls Page a fool for trusting his wife. Act II closes with a raging Dr. Caius waiting in a field for Evans to arrive for their duel. After a few moments the Host persuades Dr. Caius to go with him, supposedly to see Anne.

The opening of Act III finds Evans, the other, more nervous prospective duelist, waiting near Frogmore. With the arrival of Dr. Caius and the Host, the latter's plot to keep the two men apart is exposed and the argument is resolved without swordplay. At this point it is learned from conversation that Page favors Slender and Mistress

Page prefers Dr. Caius as a suitor for Anne. Fenton cannot be considered because he lacks money.

Then follows the buck-basket incident. Falstaff arrives for his meeting with Mistress Ford. He embraces her, expressing his love for her and his wish for her husband's death. With the entrance of Mistress Page, Falstaff hides behind the arras. At Mistress Page's announcement that Ford is approaching, Falstaff hides in the buck-basket, covering himself with dirty laundry. At a prearranged signal the servants transport the basket from the house and dump it in the river. Ford searches the house, and the "merry wives" plot another indignity for Falstaff. They send Mistress Quickly to arrange another meeting.

Scene 4 of Act III begins with a conversation between Anne and Fenton, for whom she shows a preference. However, Page sends the boy away. This temporary thwarting of the lovers is turning point in the sub-plot. Nevertheless, there is that quality of joviality inherent in the play which discourages the belief that Anne and Fenton could be separated permanently. In fact, later in this same scene, Mistress Page, being thoroughly opposed to Slender and seeing her daughter's rejection of Dr. Caius, does console the lovers. The scene ends as Fenton gives Mistress Quickly a ring to be delivered to Anne.

In the final scene of Act III Falstaff bemoans his dunking in the river, but when Mistress Quickly suggests another meeting with Mistress Ford, he consents. "Brook" returns to learn of the latest development.

In Act IV Falstaff returns to the Ford House, and this time he escapes disguised as the witch of Brainford; but not before he is

beaten by Ford who has forbidden the woman to enter the house. The women plot still another torture for Falstaff and agree to inform their husbands.

The plan is to lure Falstaff to Windsor Park at midnight. He is to wear a deer head, and the women, Anne, and other children will impersonate fairies and "pinch . . . and burn him."¹ Elaborate plans are also made by Page and Slender, Mistress Page and Dr. Caius, and the Host and Fenton for each suitor to elope with Anne at the height of the festivities. Mistress Quickly goes again to Falstaff, and once again he falls into the trap. All goes as planned except that Slender and Dr. Caius discover that they have been duped when Fenton and Anne arrive on the scene married. "Brook" reveals himself, Falstaff finally reasons that "I do begin to perceive that I am made an ass,"² and the story ends happily.

There is no turning point in the major plot development of the play. Throughout the action Falstaff persists in his original intention, despite his dunking and his beating. He evidences no firm desire to abandon his plan until the climax, which is, of course, his realization that he has been the butt of all the jokes. The climax of the sub-plot is the marriage of Anne and Fenton.

The denouement consists of the unmasking, the discovery of who isn't married to whom, the identification of "Brook," the realization that several people have been duped, and the general sportsmanlike good will at the end of the play.

¹Ibid., p. 75.

²Ibid., p. 88.

B. Comparison of the Plot of the Opera

1. Sequence of Events

Verdi's Falstaff contains three acts of two scenes each. The opening situation is substantially the same as that of the play. The same miscreant Falstaff has still been up to no good; however, his most recent offenses, as well as those of his two (in the opera) henchmen, Bardolph and Pistol, have been against Dr. Caius. Anne (Nannetta Ford in the opera) is still being pursued by Dr. Caius and Fenton, with the latter probably being the more successful, even without the aid of Mistress Quickly.

In discussing the opening situation of either the play or the opera it should be remembered that anyone familiar with Shakespeare's King Henry IV, Parts I and II, in which four of these same characters appear, would have additional background information in mind. To facilitate a more equal comparison, this study will assume no such foreknowledge of the characters' earlier exploits.

As the libretto is characterized by a great amount of deletion of the Shakespeare, the reader may wish to refer to Table 3 in the Appendix to better observe these changes.

Act I, Scene 1

The action of the first scene of the opera is drawn from Act I, Scenes 1 and 3 in the play. The story opens with Dr. Caius accusing Falstaff of beating his servants, riding his favorite hackney to death, and breaking into his house. Dr. Caius further charges that Bardolph and Pistol picked his pocket while he was drunk. Falstaff pleads guilty

to the charges against him but laughs at Dr. Caius' suggestion that he will appeal to the Council of State. Dr. Caius also receives no satisfaction from Bardolph and Pistol, and, in fact, they escort him out.

The action of the major portion of Shakespeare's Act I, Scene 1 and the entire short Scene 2 are deleted from the opera. This includes the reference to Falstaff's stealing deer, which is interpreted by many Shakespearean scholars as a jibe at Sir Thomas Lucy, with whom the Bard had a similar experience in his youth. In fact, most of the topical allusions, including the spoof of Ben Jonson and his "humours" as stressed so obviously in the speech of Nym, and the incident of the post-horses (to be discussed later) are missing from the opera. In addition, the opera is not concerned with the preponderance of Shakespearean punning and quibbling. Also deleted are the discussion in Scene 1 concerning Slender's marrying Anne and Slender's brief talk with the girl. These deletions in turn make it unnecessary to enlist the aid of Mistress Quickly in Scene 2.

Shakespeare's Act I, Scene 3 is the basis for the remainder of Act I, Scene 1 of the play. Deleted only is the transfer of Bardolph from the service of Falstaff to the employ of the Host. Falstaff's plans to woo the two women and Bardolph and Pistol's refusal to deliver the letters remain basically the same. Bardolph's gives as his reason for refusing: "My honour!"¹ This prompts Falstaff to a harangue upon the subject of honor which is borrowed from Act V, Scene 1 of King Henry IV, Part I. At the close of this speech he dismisses Bardolph and Pistol from his service. Bardolph and Pistol do not, as in

¹Arrigo Boito, Falstaff (libretto), English version by W. Beatty Kingston (New York: G. Ricordi and Company, 1893), unpaginated.

the play, voice their resolve to go to Ford and Page, however, they do subsequently reveal Falstaff's plot to Ford in the opera.

Just as in the play, the initial incident in the major plot issue--Falstaff's misadventures with Mistresses Ford and Page--occurs with the sending of the letters to the two ladies.

Act I, Scene 4 of the play is also deleted in its entirety from the opera. Included in this elimination are the promises of Mistress Quickly (who is not identified as Dr. Caius' housekeeper in the opera) to aid each of the three aspirants to the hand of Anne, the discovery of Simple in the closet, and the dispatching of the letter of challenge to Sir Hugh Evans.

Scene 2

This scene is taken entirely from Shakespeare's Act II, Scene 1 with certain additions concerning Anne and Fenton. The scene opens with Mistresses Ford and Page (joined by Mistress Quickly and Anne in the opera) discussing the receipt of identical letters from Falstaff. They agree that he should be punished and begin to devise a plan. Fenton, Dr. Caius, Bardolph, and Pistol then beseege Ford with their various complaints against Falstaff. Bardolph and Pistol go on to relate the story of the sending of the two letters and Ford resolves to guard his wife carefully. This men's ensemble is a compilation of the separate episodes in Shakespeare containing this material. Fenton's presence here is an addition in the opera.

A teasing love scene between Anne and Fenton follows. This episode and those that follow in the opera between Anne and Fenton demonstrates an informal atmosphere between the lovers which is entirely

foreign to the Shakespearean version. In this episode Fenton chases Anne intent upon kissing her. At the climax of the action the lovers sing:

FENTON: Kissing is fraught with an exquisite pleasure!

ANNE: Bliss never palling, and sweet beyond measure!¹

A brief interlude between the women in which Mistress Quickly is designated to go to Falstaff and arrange a meeting between him and Mistress Ford interrupts the lovers. When they are alone again, Fenton succeeds in kissing a lock of Anne's hair and they repeat the refrain about kissing.

This duet is the initial incident in the sub-plot of the opera, which, like in the play, is the wooing and winning of Anne.

Ford then arranges with Bardolph and Pistol to present him to Falstaff in the disguise of "Brook," and the scene closes with some operatic recapitulation--an ensemble including all the principals.

Deleted from Act II, Scene 1 of the play are Page's expression of confidence in his wife and the announcement of the duel between Dr. Caius and Evans.

Act II, Scene 1

In a brief introductory passage Bardolph and Pistol plead for reinstatement. They remain to hear Mistress Quickly arrange the meeting between Falstaff and Mistress Ford and to tell Falstaff that Mistress Page regrets that her husband is usually at home (without the suggestion in the play that Falstaff send his page to her).

¹Ibid.

Continuing thus to parallel Shakespeare's Act II, Scene 2 the opera includes the visit of "Brook" to Falstaff and their agreement that Falstaff will test Mistress Ford's honesty. Following is Ford's long speech promising revenge, altered from Shakespeare in that he calls himself foolish for having been duped by his wife rather than speaking of Page's being too trusting. The scene then closes with a short episode of forced comedy in which Ford and Falstaff, each with an effected gesture of chivalry, bid each other to go out the door first. This bit of nonsense could have been suggested by the very end of Act I, Scene 1 of the play at which time Anne and Slender enact a similar "Alphonse-Gaston" sequence.

To this point three scenes in Shakespeare have been deleted. Scene 3 in which Dr. Caius waits for the arrival of his adversary, Sir Hugh Evans and the Host persuades him to leave is not found in the opera. Scene 1 of Act III in which the other prospective duelist waits near Frogmore, and with the arrival of Dr. Caius and the Host the plot of the latter to prevent the duel is revealed is likewise deleted. Finally, the action of Act III, Scene 2 is eliminated. This comprises Ford's encounter with Mistress Page and Falstaff's page who are going to see Mistress Ford, and who arouse Ford's suspicions.

Scene 2

Of the opening of Scene 2 only the readying of the basket has any direct basis in Shakespeare. Mistress Quickly's description of her visit to Falstaff and Mistress Ford's assurance to Anne that she will not have to marry Dr. Caius despite her father's instructions are additions to the opera. From this point, though, the action follows much

the same course as Act III, Scene 3 of the play. There is the entrance of Falstaff, altered in that he pursues Mistress Ford. Also added is Falstaff's "When I was page . . ." ¹ speech based on Act II, Scene 4 of King Henry IV, Part I. With the entrance of Mistress Page, Falstaff hides behind the curtain. Ford enters and looks in the buck-basket. This action is interpolated from the witch of Brainford scene, Act IV, Scene 2 of the play. Ford then searches the house. When Falstaff vacates the area behind the curtain in favor of hiding in the basket, Anne and Fenton take his place. In a strictly non-Shakespearean episode they are later discovered kissing. In the meantime, the ensemble presents some additional recapitulation, assisted by the first of two appearances of the Chorus, here composed of neighbors and servants. After the discovery of Anne and Fenton behind the curtain (where Ford was sure Falstaff and Mistress Ford were kissing), the servants, unlike in the play, take the basket only as far as the window and there deposit Falstaff into the river. Mistress Ford, in taking her husband over to the window, signifies that she will reveal the entire plot to him.

The discovery of Fenton in the house and Ford's anger with him could be considered a turning point in the sub-plot of the opera. However, just as in the play, this is a tenuous distinction to make.

Act III, Scene 4 of the play is deleted in the opera. This includes the episode between Anne and Fenton, Slender's poor attempt at wooing Anne, and Fenton's giving of a ring to Mistress Quickly for Anne.

Act III, Scene 1

Falstaff's long passage opening this scene has its basis in two sections of Shakespeare's Henry IV. The beginning of the passage can

be traced to the "A plague of all cowards . . ." ¹ material in Act II, Scene 4 of King Henry IV, Part I; while the remainder has its source in Falstaff's praise of sack in King Henry IV, Part II, Act IV, Scene 3.

Mistress Quickly's delivery of the letter inviting Falstaff to Windsor Park at midnight closely approximates the same material in Act III, Scene 5 of The Merry Wives of Windsor. The final episode in the scene in which Mistresses Ford, Page, and Quickly, together with Ford, Anne, and Fenton discuss the plans for the Fairy scene is freely altered from Act IV, Scene 5. Mistress Ford's plans for Fenton to marry Anne are, of course, an alteration in the opera.

Except for Falstaff's bemoaning his dunking (as noted), the remainder of Act II, Scene 5 in the play, including the second visit of "Brook," and Mistress Quickly's arrangement of the second meeting between Falstaff and Mistress Ford, is deleted.

The action of almost the entire Fourth Act of the play does not find its way into the opera. The most notable deletions are the post-horse incident and the entire Scene 2 in which Falstaff escapes from Ford's house dressed as the witch of Brainford.

The curious affair of the post-horses which is introduced in the short Scene 3 and comprises the latter half of Scene 5 is a sketchy topical allusion. That it refers to a visit by a German count to Windsor in 1592; a man who, as a guest of the queen, expected to have horses at his disposal without charge, is suggested by Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch.²

¹William Shakespeare, King Henry IV, Part I, ed. Ebenezer Charlton Black (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1922), p. 58.

²Shakespeare, The Merry Wives of Windsor, p. xix.

It has also been hinted by some scholars that the "three Germans" who stole the Host's horses were in reality Dr. Caius, Sir Hugh Evans, and/or their accomplices revenging themselves on the Host for having fooled them in the dueling episode. With the deletion of the Shakespearean topical allusions, and the elimination of the dueling sequence, the entire puzzling affair is dispensed with in the opera.

Further deleted are the Latin lesson in Scene 1, the episode at the beginning of Scene 5 between Simple and Falstaff, and Scene 6 which reveals the Host and Fenton plotting to foil the elopement plans of both Mistress Ford and Ford. This latter material, together with the plotting of the entire Fairy scene is found in compressed and altered form in Act II, Scene 2 of the opera.

Scene 2

Fenton's love song at the opening of Scene 2 has no literal basis in Shakespeare. It is, rather, a continuation of that relationship which has been created between Anne and Fenton throughout the opera.

Though compressed, the majority of the Fairy episode (Act V, Scenes 1 through 5 in the play) is carried over into the opera. However, several plot alterations should be noted. In the play the plans include elopement on the part of the three suitors. Page is assisting Slender, Mistress Page is assisting Dr. Caius, and the Host is in league with Fenton in separate plots to steal Anne away. In the opera, apart from the fact that Anne is Ford's daughter, the elopement plans are reduced to two: Mistress Ford will help Fenton, while Ford will aid Dr. Caius. Therefore, when the time comes for unmasking, it is Dr. Caius alone who is surprised; and it is he and Falstaff who have been

duped. At the end the Maskers (Chorus) and all the principals join in the happy finale.

As in the play, there is no turning point in the major plot action; Falstaff never alters his course of action until the climax. Similarly, the climax in the opera is the same as in the play--Falstaff's final realization of his folly. The climax of the sub-plot is also the same--the marriage of Anne and Fenton. The denouement, discounting the minor plot differences noted above, is relatively the same in both versions.

2. Conflict

All of the conflicts in both the play and the opera are of a relatively superficial, man against man nature. When Falstaff decides to improve his financial situation by feigning love for Mistresses Ford and Page, he does so with no apparent forethought. Likewise the two ladies desire only to punish him for his audacity. When these forces meet there is no discussion of principles of interest in motivations. There are simply fake protestations and physical action. Intellectual and emotional considerations give way to comic machinations.

Although there is, in the sub-plot, an emotional involvement--implied in the play and manifested in the opera--between Anne and Fenton, the only obstacle to their happiness is the presence of other persons who would impose their wills.

Similarly, the grievances over Falstaff's errant conduct are dismissed before they can be exposed to any subjective reasoning. Falstaff's love of drink and Ford's unjustified jealousy do not come in for any close scrutiny. In general, it may be said that both the

play and the opera consist of actions of people, motivated by the actions of others or by some inner desire which, in the end, does not seem to have been important.

C. Comparison of Characters

The characters from The Merry Wives of Windsor found in the opera are: Sir John Falstaff, Fenton, Ford, Dr. Caius, Bardolph, Pistol, Robin, Mistress Ford, Anne Ford, Mistress Page, Mistress Quickly, Ford's servants (not named), the Host, and the Chorus.

Shakespeare's characters deleted are: Shallow, Slender, Page, Sir Hugh Evans, Nym, John Rugby, Simple and William Page. In addition, the Host, Robin (also changed to Ford's page), and Ford's servants become non-speaking roles. Finally, Anne Page becomes Nannetta Ford in the opera.

As noted in the previous discussion of the opening situation, a truly equitable comparison, in this case, of the characters of Falstaff, Bardolph, Pistol, and Mistress Quickly, can only be achieved if any insights into their characters gained through a familiarity with the other works of Shakespeare in which they appear are disregarded.

1. Falstaff

It is especially dangerous to attempt to project the character of Falstaff as found in the earlier Shakespearean works into the personage found in The Merry Wives of Windsor. As H. B. Charlton says:

. . .the Falstaff of The Merry Wives has nothing in common with our [earlier] Falstaff except his name, a trick or two of inspired speech, and . . . the "comic" character to be found all the way down the ages of theatrical history.

The masquerading figure in The Merry Wives is an old fat fellow whom all can gull to make a private sport. . . . Gone is his old

art of creeping into a halfpenny purse, into a pepper box, or slipping through a key-hole. . . . Worse still, his wit is so dulled that he does not even see his difficulties. . . . In the end, two simple bourgeois and their wives, colleagued with a foolish doctor, a comic Welsh parson, and an innkeeper, can trample the once mighty Falstaff in Windsor's mud.¹

Yet, the only character in either version to evidence any degree of complexity is Falstaff. This is especially true of the opera. Because of the inclusion of the material borrowed from Henry IV, the fat man of the opera voices opinions on subjects outside the realm of the plot. In addition, he presents some description of his past experiences, exaggerated though it may be. His basic motivation, however, is purely financial in both versions; and his methods are disreputable. To infer that his mind dwells on any deeper subject defeats the purpose for which he has dramatic existence--to be the much-deserving target of physical and verbal abuse.

He dominates the action of the opera. In the play, with its more highly developed sub-plot, he must frequently become the conversational subject of other characters in order that he be kept in mind from episode to episode. Shakespeare even prefaces his first appearance with the comments of Shallow, Slender, and Sir Hugh Evans concerning his dishonest character. In the opera almost the same effect is accomplished by Falstaff's intentional deafness to Dr. Caius' agitated calling of his name.

There is no character growth in Falstaff (or, for that matter, any character in the play or opera). What he is, he remains. Even after his unpleasant experiences at the hands of the "merry wives" there

¹H. B. Charlton, Shakespearian Comedy (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1938), pp. 193-95.

is little reason to expect that he will discontinue his errant ways.

2. Ford

Generally unaltered in concept from the play, Ford presents the picture of the comic jealous husband. That he takes himself seriously makes him all the more humorous. In this latter respect he much resembles Falstaff, only without the outlandish obesity and affected pomposity.

He assumes his avenging role from his very first appearance in Act I, Scene 2 of the opera. In the play the same is true. However, when he does appear in Act II, Scene 1, his acceptance of the truth of his wife's unfaithfulness is not quite as ludicrously rapid as in the opera. The following selected passages from the two versions demonstrate this difference:

Falstaff

FORD: And the tales these rogues are shattering,
 Drive me mad with grim suspicion . . .
 . . . I'm abused!
 . . .
 My wife I'll keep my eye on;
 her gallant I'll look after;
 I'll have no courtier fine
 Lay hand on what is mine!
 . . .
 I shall know nor peace nor pleasure
 Till I've scotched this bloated snake.¹

The Merry Wives of Windsor

FORD: I will be patient
 I will find out this.
 . . .
 I will seek out Falstaff.
 . . .
 I do not misdoubt my wife . . .
 but I would be loath to turn them together
 . . . a man may be too confident . . . I would have
 nothing lie on my head . . . I cannot be thus satisfied.²

¹Boito, Falstaff.

²Shakespeare, The Merry Wives of Windsor, pp. 25-27.

3. Fenton and Anne

Fenton and Anne in the opera are more playful than anything else. It would be difficult to imagine that these youngsters were capable of any mature feeling of love. In the play Anne Page makes her entrance in Act I, Scene 1 after Sir Hugh Evans has already noted that she is young and pretty. Although this is a fair estimate, it is also discovered through the course of the play that she is little else.

The change in the opera which makes her Ford's daughter in no way alters her personality. However, from her opening duet (after her insignificant part in the discussion of the letters in the opera) her more affectionate relationship with Fenton becomes apparent.

Fenton, from his entrance in the play in Act I, Scene 4, is seen to be a "young gentleman" as the Dramatis Personae describes him. Fenton is inserted into the men's ensemble in Act I, Scene 2 of the opera for what appears to be a purely musical reason: a fourth singer is needed to form a quartet. He is not revealed as the impulsive boy until his duet with Anne.

4. Mistress Ford and Others

The motives of the remainder of the characters in the opera are less intense and more difficult to identify. Mistresses Ford and Page, from the time they are first seen discussing their identical letters in each version, evidence only a penchant for practical joking which is never aroused by any genuine emotional feeling. Other characters suffer from rather severe reduction of the size of their roles with the possible

exception of Bardolph who appears less but is provided with some rather lengthy musical passages. Mistress Quickly, for instance, loses any identification she may have had in the play as a delightful deceiver and purveyor of services of questionable worth. In the opera she becomes merely an agent for delivering letters and messages to Falstaff. From her entrance in the letter reading episode she is not identified, and later it can only be assumed that she is a servant of some sort to some one.

Dr. Caius is reduced to the "other man", and, being stripped of his dueling spirit, adds very little to the opera. After his opening vindictiveness (which quickly abates) he stays in the background until he discovers that he has married Bardolph.

Bardolph does actually gain personality in the opera, if the references to his large, colorful nose which are borrowed from King Henry IV, Part I, can be construed as a valuable addition. Apart from that, he and Pistol evidence an ambivalence in the opera. They seemingly cannot decide whose side they are on. As a result, they merely have a good time for themselves. In the play Bardolph and Pistol display a certain anger with Falstaff. Even this emotion is absent from the opera.

The character who suffers the greatest reduction in the opera (short of deletion) is the Host. The plotter and peace-maker of the play becomes a supernumerary in the opera. Likewise reduced to a persona muta is Robin, notwithstanding the fact that he becomes Ford's rather than Falstaff's page. Ford's servants also lose their few speeches.

Finally, the Chorus is used sparingly. Much more stress is placed upon various ensembles of the principals. The only time the Chorus comes into its own is when they portray the Maskers.

D. Conclusions

1. Changes in the Opera

a. Additions

There are eleven additions in the opera of materials not found in Shakespeare's *The Merry Wives of Windsor*. Five of the most significant of these borrowings are from King Henry IV, Parts I and II. Four of these additions serve to better delineate the character of Falstaff and are found in Act I, Scene 1; Act II, Scene 2; and on two occasions in Act III, Scene 1 of the opera. The fifth of these additions describes Bardolph's nose in Act I, Scene 1.

Three important additions concern Anne and Fenton. Their playful, forthright display of affection in Act I, Scene 2; their kiss behind the curtain and subsequent discovery there in Act II, Scene 2; and Fenton's love song in Act III, Scene 2 all help to create the different, more affectionate relationship between the lovers.

The final three additions occur in Act II, Scene 2 and include Mistress Quickly's description of her meeting with Falstaff, Mistress Ford's promise to Anne that she need not marry Dr. Caius, and the throwing of the basket containing Falstaff out of the window (rather than transporting it out of the house as in the play).

In addition there are two notable occasions of operatic recapitulation occurring in Act I, Scene 2 (the octet), and Act II, Scene 2. Finally, the characters of Falstaff, Anne, and Fenton achieve a certain (however slight) added complexity from that which they evidence in the play.

b. Interpolations

There is only one definite interpolation in the opera. When Ford searches the basket in the buck-basket scene (Act II, Scene 2) this a borrowing from Shakespeare's Act IV, Scene 2 (the witch of Brainford scene) which is otherwise deleted. One other episode which suggests interpolation is that in Act II, Scene 1 in which Ford and Falstaff enact their chivalrous discussion of which of them shall go out the door first. This is suggested by a similar short episode between Slender and Anne in Act I, Scene 1 of the play.

c. Deletions

The greatest number of changes to be noted between the opera and the play come as a result of deletion. Of the twenty-three scene structure of the play, eleven scenes are deleted in their entirety. These scenes are: Act I, Scenes 2 and 4--the sending of Simple to Mistress Quickly and their meeting; Act II, Scene 3 and Act III, Scene 1--the dueling sequence; Act III, Scene 2--Ford's meeting with Mistress Page and Falstaff's page; and Act III, Scene 4--Anne and Fenton's meeting and Page's dismissal of Fenton (so altered in the opera as to be considered a deletion). Also, the majority of Act IV of the play is deleted: Scene 1--the Latin lesson; Scene 2--the witch of Brainford scene (except the one interpolation noted); Scenes 3 and 5--the post-horse incident; and Scene 6--the Host and Fenton's plans for the latter to marry Anne.

Eight scenes of the play come in for partial deletion and/or alteration. Act I, Scene 1 loses its opening discussion of Slender's

marrying Anne and the closing meeting between the two. Also, Dr. Caius replaces Shallow and Slender as the complainant in the charges against Falstaff. Deleted from Act I, Scene 3 is Nym and Bardolph's resolve to speak to Ford and Page. "Brook's" second meeting with Falstaff is deleted from Act III, Scene 5. Finally the five scenes in Act V of the play are variously altered and partially deleted to accommodate the new arrangement of suitors of Anne and their assistants.

It can be noted that of the vast amount of plot elements of The Merry Wives of Windsor deleted from the opera only one portion, the witch of Brainford scene, has any direct bearing upon the development of the major plot issue. Rather, the majority of the deletions affect the sub-plot, which, in the opera, is portrayed in the more 'romantic tradition.

The only time in the three works under consideration that a character is created by the consolidation of two Shakespearean characters is here in Falstaff. The character of Nym is eliminated, and a few of his more important statements are given to the character of Bardolph. This consolidation, however, does not significantly alter the overall direction of the action.

The other characters reduced in scope or deleted are, for the most part, either associated with the foreshortening of the sub-plot (Shallow, Slender, Sir Hugh Evans, and the Host), or are servants (Simple, John Rugby, Robin, and Ford's servants) and not highly significant to the story. The deletion of Page does not alter the plot action, and the deletion of his young son, William, only eliminates one short nonsense scene in which Mistress Quickly contrives to misinterpret some of the words in his Latin lesson.

Finally, the Shakespearean topical allusions and punning and quibbling are deleted.

d. Compression

The libretto, having been constructed from selected and separated passages of the longer play and having a substantial amount of non-Shakespearean and other-Shakespearean material added, does not evidence any great amount of compression. Those portions utilized are, for the most part, rendered in much the same manner as in the play. To say that there is no compression of the play would certainly be an oversimplification. However, with the scarcity of Shakespearean events used, it is safe to assert that they have not been significantly reduced.

2. Results of Changes

The result of the numerous deletions is the reduction in size of the sub-plot of the opera. There are approximately one-half as many events leading up to the climax of the sub-plot in the opera as in the play. The major plot development, conversely, having suffered only one significant deletion (the witch of Brainford scene), increases in scope through the several additions to the opera. The sub-plot, though lessened in size, does, however, gain new dimension through its altered character portrayals.

The major plot development in both versions begins with the same initial incident, the dispatching of the letters to Mistresses Ford and Page. There is no turning point in either version; Falstaff persists in his original plan to the end. The climax, Falstaff's realization of his folly, is identical in each version. And so with the

denouement. Therefore, the difference between the opera and the play centers around the attempt to create a more fully rounded (psychologically) Falstaff than the fat fool of the play.

No doubt a good deal of the humor of the original production of the play lay in its topical allusions, which had long since gone stale in 1887. These allusions are not found in the opera. In compensation there is the attempt to elevate the comic concept of the opera through the revival of the dulled senses of Shakespeare's Falstaff. To this end, he is provided with some of his earlier bombast from Henry IV. However, the question still remains: do Falstaff's comments on honor and sack actually redeem a man who, just as in the play, does not "begin to perceive . . . that I've made a great ass of my self"¹ until the very end of the story? Even though he is subjected to one less indignity in the opera, it appears that Falstaff must still have his folly spelled out for him.

The more concise and romantically pleasing sub-plot of the opera is created by the deletion of a good deal of Shakespearean confusion. The tenor of the sub-plot is set in Anne and Fenton's initial love-making in Act I, Scene 2. Although the initial incident in the play comes earlier with Slender's being urged to court Anne, it is not known whom Anne actually prefers until as late as Act III, Scene 4. Although the tenuous turning point and the climax of the sub-plot are relatively the same in both versions, the deletion of such extraneous material as the abortive duel, and the inclusion of the increased emotionality of the lovers create a more clear-cut and uncluttered sub-plot.

¹Boito.

In general, the scope but not the motivations of Falstaff are increased. The major plot of the opera is expanded at the expense of the size of the sub-plot. In compensation, the sub-plot is made more emotional by the extension of the roles of Anne and Fenton in that direction. The opera is more concise, less confusing, and generally appropriate in its handling. In addition, it does attain a certain comic effect. It is not, however, more subtle nor more amusing than the play. Just as the play, it continues to focus upon situations rather than characters. While the play was probably as topically entertaining to the Shakespearean audience as it was farcically laughable, the opera only retains the more physical or "slapstick" nature of the humor.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS

The three Verdi opera adaptations of the plays of Shakespeare are achieved through numerous changes in the original. The following table enumerates the most obvious of these alterations:

Table 4. Enumeration of the changes in the Verdi opera adaptations of Shakespeare

	<u>Macbeth</u>	<u>Otello</u>	<u>Falstaff</u>
A. Additions (total)	2	9	11
1. Non Shakespearean	2	9	6
2. Other Shakespearean	0	0	5
B. Interpolations (total)	4	13	2
1. Within the play	3	13 (3 from Act I)	1
2. Suggested only	1	0	1
C. Deletions			
1. Characters			
a. Complete	15	6	8
b. Reduced to non-speaking	2	0	4
c. Groups	0	4	0
d. Consolidated	0	0	1
2. Plot			
a. Full scenes	9	4	11
b. Partial scenes	2	8	8
c. Substance used	3	0	0
(d. Total scenes in the play)(28)		(12-without Act I)	(23)
D. Four major characters			
1. More complex	1	2	3
2. Less complex	2	2	0

It can be seen from this enumeration that each of the operas contains an amount of addition of plot elements, deletion of plot elements and characters, interpolation of plot elements, and alteration of characterizations. To this listing should be added compression, most evident in Macbeth and Otello. In each opera, however, these alterations are slightly different. Macbeth is characterized by the large number of minor characters deleted and the deletion of part or all of one-half of the Shakespearean scenes. Otello is marked by several non-Shakespearean additions, a great number of interpolations, and the complete or partial deletion of all the scenes of the play. Finally, Falstaff evidences the addition of other-Shakespearean material, a large amount of scenic deletion, and the deletion of some characters integral to the action of the play.

These changes between versions and their results in the operas comprise nine definite trends which characterize the Verdi opera adaptations of Shakespeare. Placed in the form of conclusions, they follow.

The first conclusion is that the opera adaptations of Shakespeare evidence a large amount of deletion of the plot elements of the original. These deletions are, for the most part, of the more extraneous and repetitive materials which do not directly further the major plot action. In Macbeth, however, it is implied through deletion that Macbeth and Lady Macbeth discussed the details of the plan to murder Duncan before the opera began, and thus Macbeth's inner conflict is lessened and he is less complex. Also, plot deletions in Macbeth simplify the character of Banquo and reduce Duncan to an indescribable figurehead. The major results of the deletion in Otello are the lessening of the complexity of the character of Othello and Iago who are

each driven by only one motivating factor in the opera. Significant is the elimination of all physical action on the part of Iago. Also deleted is the short denouement of the play, and, as in Macbeth as well, all comic relief episodes. In Falstaff the deletion of plot elements greatly reduces the size of the sub-plot and thereby increases the emphasis placed upon the major plot action. In all three operas the plot deletions also speed up the major plot action by eliminating intervening episodes between the main steps in plot development.

The second conclusion is that several characters have been deleted in each opera. In addition, minor characters have been reduced in scope so that only three main characters remain in each opera, with a fourth character usually being an interesting but not highly significant personage. The minor characters are never complex, and those which cannot serve some utilitarian purpose are deleted. In Macbeth and Otello the characters deleted are most definitely subordinate to the major plot action. The elimination of the Porter and Young Siward in Macbeth does represent, in the former instance, loss of a respite from emotional tension; and in the latter, the elimination of the proof to Macbeth that he is invincible. And in Otello the elimination of Bianca and her possession of the handkerchief is a minor plot loss. But in all, these cannot even be considered vital plot elements. In Falstaff, however, some of the deleted characters are an integral part of the sub-plot of the play. Nevertheless, in none of the operas does the absence of deleted characters impair the major plot development. In fact, elimination of minor characters focuses the attention more upon the three major characters in each opera.

The third conclusion is that there are several plot elements and materials which serve to delineate character added to the operas. The additions to characterization, on many occasions, also increase the emotionality of the operas. The two additions to Macbeth (Lady Macbeth's drinking song and Macbeth's dying aria), for instance, are appeals to the emotions primarily and have in them very little food for thought. Similarly, the two duets, Iago's "Credo," the quartet, and Iago's comment over Othello's prostrate body all serve this same emotional function. In Falstaff there are five examples of borrowing from other Shakespeare plays, the only occasions in the three operas when the added material is not completely original and new. These additions serve mainly to delineate the characters of Falstaff and Bardolph. Three other additions, however, concern not only the new characterizations provided for Fenton and Anne but in so doing make their relationship one of romantic and emotional affection.

The fourth conclusion is that most of the main characters of the operas either gain some psychological complexity or, in losing some of their motivations, become more emotionally guided and/or more melodramatic. Gaining in complexity are Lady Macbeth, Desdemona, Emilia, Falstaff, Anne and Fenton. Becoming less complex are Macbeth, Banquo, Iago, and Othello. Remaining relatively static are the Witches and Ford only. It is curious to note that of those six of the twelve major characters in the operas who have increased in complexity, four are women, the only important women in the operas. These strengthenings provide more life-like women who become equal to their men in the complexity of their motivations and emotional expression. However, the extension of Lady Macbeth to a completely villainous person does

slightly stretch the limit of psychological credibility and faith in womankind.

That interpolation is used on several occasions is the fifth conclusion. Although the device appears in the other two operas, its use is far more pronounced and frequent in Otello. In Macbeth and Falstaff no definite pattern nor conclusive result can be attributed to the few interpolations used. In Otello, however, most of the numerous interpolations (together with some plot deletions) speed up the building of Othello's jealousy. This build-up can be associated with a more emotionally decisive Othello who arrives at a more certain conclusion more quickly than his counterpart in the play.

There is throughout the operas evidence of varying amounts of compression. This is the sixth conclusion. As a general rule the length of utterance in the plays has been reduced in almost all cases in the operas. There are few instances in which the dialogue of the play has been transferred to the opera intact. In fact, Lady Macbeth's sleep-walking scene is the only notable example of such a direct carry-over. For the most part, the dialogue has been altered, not so much in meaning but in number of lines and words spoken. In addition, the compression in Otello often takes the form of severely reduced (or deleted) soliloquies. These reductions result in a de-emphasis of the intellectual issues of the story and thereby they tend to further the emotionality of the operas. Although the compression in Falstaff is less extensive than in the other two operas, it is nonetheless clearly in evidence. The major result of compression upon all the operas is the speeding up of the action. Compression tends to move major plot elements closer together by eliminating bodies of less essential conversation.

The first major result of the additions, deletions, interpolations, and compression in the operas becomes the seventh conclusion: the major plot action of each opera is more speeded up than that of its Shakespearean counterpart. The operas contain fewer acts and scenes, and primarily through compression, also have fewer lines and words. The elimination or reduction of intervening material places the major plot events in closer proximity and thereby makes the opera plots more concise and speedy renditions of the story.

The eighth conclusion and the second major result of the changes in the operas is that certain emotionality has been added to each of the operas. This more emotional approach is created at the expense of some of the more intellectual considerations of the plays. The operas achieve this effect primarily through the following several methods: Speeding up of the plot action; in Macbeth and Otello, the deletion of the comic relief episodes; the reduction and/or deletion of soliloquies; the placing of more emotional elements at the ends of acts (primarily in Macbeth and Otello); including new materials which serve little purpose other than to inject emotionality; the decreasing of the complexity of such characters as Iago, Othello, and Macbeth; and the creation of major female characters with more human traits. These final two, seemingly opposite, means further the emotionality of the operas primarily by creating new relationships between the major characters. The Macbeth-Lady Macbeth combination is altered in that they become equal partners in crime. Othello and Desdemona and Anne and Fenton have a certain tenderness and affection added to their relationships. There is even a certain rapport between Iago and Emilia in the opera. These more emotional relationships effect the major plots of Macbeth

and Othello and the sub-plot of Falstaff, making the former two more melodramatic and the latter, with its deletion of Shakespearean topical allusions, more farcical.

As a ninth and final conclusion it may be said that although the plays have been altered in the several ways mentioned, the resultant operas remain generally faithful to the major plot development of each. In addition, the conflicts in the plays have been altered in the operas only insofar as they have been increased or sharpened to a more emotional peak. The changes in the operas seldom seriously alter the major plot action of the plays. There are no shockingly inappropriate additions. There are no deletions which seem anything but necessary and prudent. In general, in the areas of plot development and character the operas keep good faith with William Shakespeare, the man whom Verdi reputedly regarded as the greatest authority on the heart of man.

APPENDIX

Table 1. Utilization of the plot elements of Shakespeare's Macbeth in Verdi's Macbeth.

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized		Amount of Revision
	Act	Scene	
Act I, <u>Scene 1</u>			
1. The Witches discuss their recent exploits.	I	3	None sig- nificant
2. The Witches make predictions for Macbeth and Banquo (Macbeth is to be Thane of Cawdor and then King; Banquo's kin will reign).	I	3	None sig- nificant
3. Messengers tell Macbeth he has been named Thane of Cawdor.	I	3	Slight
4. The Witches discuss their next meeting.	I	1	Great
	(Interpolation) (Deleted: I, 2--the bloody Sergeant's account of the war; Duncan's appointment of Macbeth as Thane of Cawdor.) (Deleted: I, 4--Malcolm named prince; Duncan invites himself to Inverness.)		
Act I, <u>Scene 2</u>			
1. Lady Macbeth reads letter from Macbeth; seeks strength to urge him to murder.	I	5	Slight
2. Duncan arrives (pantomime).	None		
3. Lady Macbeth and Macbeth discuss killing, possible failure.	I	5 and	Slight
	I	7	None sig- nificant
	(Interpolation)		

Table 1. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized Act Scene	Amount of Revision
4. Macbeth sees a vision of a dagger.	(Deleted: I, 6--Wel- coming of Duncan to Inverness.) (Deleted: I, 7--Lady Macbeth goads Mac- beth; they discuss details of murder.) II 1 (Deleted: II, 1--Ban- quo and Macbeth's conversation, talk of another discussion of the Witches.)	None sig- nificant
5. Macbeth murders Duncan; Lady Macbeth smears blood on the grooms; there is a knock at the door; Macbeth and Lady Mac- beth retire to wash their hands.	II 2 (Deleted: II, 3--Por- ter's episode.)	None sig- nificant
6. Discovery of the body of Duncan.	II 3 (Deleted: II, 3--Mac- beth's killing of the grooms; Lady Mac- beth's faint; the flight of Malcolm and Donalbain.) (Deleted: II, 4--Ross and the Old Man's discussion of the recent weird happen- ings; Macbeth is to be coronated.) (Deleted: III, 1--Ban- quo goes riding; Macbeth plots with the Murderers.)	Slight
Act II, <u>Scene 1</u>		
1. Macbeth decides to kill Banquo and Fleance.	III 2	Great
2. Lady Macbeth urges Macbeth.	III 2	Great

Table 1. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized		Amount of Revision
	Act	Scene	
<hr/>			
Act II, <u>Scene 2</u> Two (groups of) Mur- derers attack and kill Banquo; Fleance escapes.	III	3	None sig- nificant
Act II, <u>Scene 3</u> 1. Lady Macbeth's drinking song.		None	
2. A Murderer tells Macbeth about death of Banquo, escape of Fleance.	III	4	None sig- nificant
3. Banquo's Ghost ap- pears to Macbeth.	III	4	None sig- nificant
4. Second verse of the drinking song.		None	
5. Ghost appears again.	III	4	None sig- nificant
6. Ensemble.		None	
	(Deleted: III, 5-- Hecate angry at not being included in the plans for Macbeth.) (Deleted: III, 6--Len- nox and a Lord dis- cuss the situation.)		
Act III			
1. The Witches concoct their brew.	IV	1	None sig- nificant
2. Ballet.		None	
3. The Witches make their second predic- tions through the Apparitions and the eight Kings.	IV	1	None sig- nificant
4. Macbeth plans to murder Macduff's fam- ily.	IV	1	Great
	(Deleted: IV, 2--Lady Macduff's conversation with her son; the mur- der of both.)		

Table 1. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized		Amount of Revision
	Act	Scene	
	(Deleted: IV, 3--Mal- colm and Macduff in England ready with troops; Macduff learns of the deaths of his family; English Doctor appraises the health of his King.)		
Act IV, <u>Scene 1</u>			
1. Refugees' Chorus, Macduff's aria.	III	1 and 6 and IV 3 (Substance interpolated)	
2. Malcolm instructs soldiers to carry branches before them.	V	4 (Interpolation)	None sig- nificant
Act IV, <u>Scene 2</u>			
Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking scene.	V	1	None sig- nificant
Act IV, <u>Scene 3</u>			
1. Macbeth expresses confidence.	V	3 (Deleted: V, 2--the Thanes defect to Malcolm.)	Great
2. The death of Lady Macbeth is announced.	V	5	None sig- nificant
3. The wood moves.	V	5	None sig- nificant
4. The attack.	V	6 (Deleted: V, 7--Macbeth kills Young Siward.)	Slight
5. Macbeth is killed by Macduff.	V	8	Slight
6. Macbeth's dying aria.	None		
7. Hail to Malcolm.	V	8	Slight

Table 2. Utilization of the plot elements of Shakespeare's Othello in Verdi's Otello.

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized		Amount of Revision
	Act	Scene	
(Deleted: I, 1-3--see text.)			
Act I, <u>Scene 1</u>			
1. Othello arrives through the storm.	II	1	Slight
2. Roderigo speaks of drowning.	I	3	Great
	(Interpolation)		
3. Iago urges Rod- erigo to be patient.	I	3	Slight
	(Interpolation)		
4. Iago derides Cassio.	I	1	Slight
	(Interpolation)		
	(Deleted: II, 1--Iago composes verses for Desdemona.)		
	(Deleted: II, 2--Her- ald's proclamation.)		
5. Cassio and Rod- erigo fight.	II	3	Slight
Act I, <u>Scene 2</u>			
Othello stops the fight; demotes Cassio; Desdemona enters.	II	3	None sig- nificant
Act I, <u>Scene 3</u>			
Othello and Desdemona love duet.	II	2 and	Slight
	I	3	Slight
	(Interpolations)		
Act II, <u>Scene 1</u>			
Iago suggests to Cas- sio that he ask Des- demona to intercede.	II	3	Slight
	(Deleted: II, 3--Iago soliloquy and conver- sation with Roderigo.)		
Act II, <u>Scene 2</u>			
1. Iago's "Credo."	None		
	(Deleted: III, 1--the Clown and Musicians comic relief; Emilia and Cassio converse.)		

Table 2. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized Act Scene	Amount of Revision
	(Deleted: III, 2-- Othello goes to in- spect the fortifi- cations.)	
2. Cassio and Desde- mona are seen talking.	III 3	Slight
Act II, <u>Scene 3</u>		
1. Iago calls atten- tion of Othello to Cassio's hurried de- parture.	III 3	None sig- nificant
2. Iago warns Othello		
a. beware jealousy.	III 3 (Interpolated from later episode.)	None sig- nificant
b. watch Desdemona.	III 3 (Interpolated from later episode.)	None sig- nificant
3. Chorus and Desde- mona sing of love; Chorus bring flowers and jewels.	None	
4. Othello expresses renewed faith.	III 3 (Interpolated from earlier episode.)	Slight
Act II, <u>Scene 4</u>		
1. Desdemona speaks to Othello about Cas- sio.	III 3 (Interpolated from earlier episode.)	None sig- nificant
2. Othello casts aside the handkerchief.	III 3	None sig- nificant
3. Quartet		
a. Desdemona sings of love, obedience.	None	
b. Othello sings of his lost love.	None	
c. Iago wrenches the handkerchief from Emilia.	III 3	Great
d. Emilia is suspici- ous of some plot.	None	

Table 2. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized Act Scene	Amount of Revision
Act II, <u>Scene 5</u> Iago gives "proof" of Desdemona's guilt.	III 3 (Deleted III, 3-- Iago's comments on a good name, jeal- ousy, and his re- minder of Brabantio's curse.)	None sig- nificant
Act III, <u>Scene 1</u> 1. Herald announces Lodovico. 2. Iago tells Othello to overhear his con- versation with Cassio.	None IV 1 (Interpolation)	Slight
Act III, <u>Scene 2</u> 1. Othello questions Desdemona about the handkerchief. 2. Othello calls Desdemona a strumpet.	III 4 (Deleted: III, 4-- comedy about "lies;" Desdemona-Emilia dis- cussion of the hand- kerchief; Cassio's second appeal to Des- demona; Desdemona- Emilia discussion of jealousy; Cassio gives handkerchief to Bianca.) IV 2 (Interpolation)	None sig- nificant None sig- nificant
Act III, <u>Scene 3</u> Othello bemoans the sorrows that have befallen him.	IV 2 (Interpolated from earlier episode.)	None sig- nificant
Act III, <u>Scene 4</u> Othello lapses into his first trance.	IV 1	Slight
Act III, <u>Scene 5</u> 1. Othello listens as Iago and Cassio discuss Bianca.	IV 1	None sig- nificant

Table 2. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized Act Scene	Amount of Revision
2. Cassio produces the handkerchief.	IV 1	Slight
Act III, <u>Scene 6</u>		
1. Othello and Iago discuss Cassio's having the handker- chief; Othello de- cides to kill Des- demona.	IV 1	Slight
2. Othello makes Iago his lieutenant.	III 3 (Interpolation)	None sig- nificant
Act III, <u>Scene 7</u>		
1. Othello welcomes Lodovico.	IV 1	None sig- nificant
2. Lodovico deters Othello from strik- ing Desdemona.	IV 1	Slight
3. Othello calls for Cassio.	None	
Act III, <u>Scene 8</u>		
1. Cassio enters.	None	
2. Othello announces contents of the let- ter.	IV 1 (Deleted: IV, 1--the story of Cassio's alleged boast.)	None sig- nificant
3. Recapitulation (Desdemona, Cassio, Roderigo, Emilia, Lodovico and Chorus).	None	
4. Iago offers to kill Cassio.	III 3 (Interpolation)	Slight
5. Iago instructs Roderigo to kill Cassio.	IV 2 (Deleted: IV, 2-- Othello questions Emilia; with Desde- mona discuss Othello's attitude.)	Slight
6. Othello curses Desdemona.	None	

Table 2. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized		Amount of Revision
	Act	Scene	
Act III, <u>Scene 9</u>			
1. Othello falls in- to his second trance.		None	
2. Iago says, "See here the lion."		None	
Act IV, <u>Scene 1</u>			
Desdemona's "Willow" song.	IV	3	Slight
	(Deleted: IV, 3--de- parture of Lodovico; Othello's command to dismiss Emilia.)		
Act IV, <u>Scene 2</u>			
Desdemona's "Ave Maria."		None	
	(Deleted: V, 1--the killing of Roderigo and the wounding of Cassio.)		
Act IV, <u>Scene 3</u>			
1. Othello enters; kisses Desdemona three times.	V	2	Slight
2. Othello smothers Desdemona.	V	2	None sig- nificant
3. Emilia interrupts.	V	2	None sig- nificant
4. Desdemona absolves Othello; Emilia cries out.	V	2	None sig- nificant
Act IV, <u>Scene 4</u>			
1. Iago's plotting revealed.	V	2	Slight
2. Iago runs.		None	
3. Othello commits suicide.	V	2	None sig- nificant
	(Deleted: V, 2-- Othello's opening soliloquy; death of Emilia; wounding of Iago; Othello's long suicide speech; Lod- ovico's speech.)		

Table 3. Utilization of the plot elements of Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor in Verdi's Falstaff.

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized		Amount of Revision
	Act	Scene	
<u>Act I, Scene 1</u>			
1. Dr. Caius accuses Falstaff of beating his servants, riding his hackney to death. He also accuses Bardolph and Pistol of picking his pocket. He is ejected.	I	1	Slight
	(Deleted: I, 1--Evans and Shallow discuss Slender's marrying Anne; conversation between Slender and Anne.) (Deleted: I, 2--Evans sends Simple to Mistress Quickly.)		
2. Falstaff reveals plans to woo Mistresses Ford and Page for their money.	I	3	None significant
3. Bardolph and Pistol refuse to deliver letters to the two women and Falstaff dismisses them. He sends the letters by a page.	I	3	Slight
4. Falstaff speaks about honor.	V	1 of	Slight
	<u>King Henry IV, Part I</u> (Deleted: I, 3--Nym and Pistol resolve to speak to Ford and Page.) (Deleted: I, 4--Simple meets with Mistress Quickly; he is discovered in the closet; Dr. Caius sends letter of challenge to Evans.)		

Table 3. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized Act Scene	Amount of Revision
Act I, <u>Scene 2</u>		
1. Mistresses Ford, Page, Quickly, and Anne discuss identical letters; agree Falstaff should be punished.	II 1	Slight
2. Bardolph, Pistol, Dr. Caius, and Fenton describe Falstaff's plans to Ford; express their dislike for Falstaff.	II 1	Great
3. Ford becomes jealous.	II 1	Slight
4. Fenton playfully chases Anne.	None	
5. Mistress Ford sends Mistress Quickly to bring Falstaff.	II 1	None sig- nificant
6. Fenton catches Anne who teases.	None	
7. Ford arranges to see Falstaff disguised as "Brook."	II 1	None sig- nificant
8. Octet--Recapitulation.	None	
Act II, <u>Scene 1</u>		
1. Bardolph and Pistol repent.	II 2	Slight
2. Mistress Quickly arranges with Falstaff to meet Mistress Ford.	II 2	None sig- nificant
3. "Brook" hires Falstaff to test his wife's honesty.	II 2	Slight
4. Ford bemoans his plight; will punish Falstaff.	II 2	None sig- nificant
5. Ford-Falstaff chivalry at the door.	I 1	
(Suggested by) {Deleted: II, 3--Dr. Caius awaits his dueling opponent.}		

Table 3. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shakespeare Utilized Act Scene	Amount of Revision
	(Deleted: III, 1-- Evans awaits Dr. Caius.)	
	(Deleted: III, 2-- Ford meets Mistress Page and Falstaff's page in the street.)	
Act II, <u>Scene 2</u>		
1. Mistress Quickly describes her meeting with Falstaff.	None	
2. The basket is prepared.	III 3	None significant
3. Mistress Ford says Anne need not marry Dr. Caius.	None	
4. Falstaff enters, pursues Mistress Ford.	III 3	Slight
5. Falstaff tells of when he was a page.	II 4 of <u>King Henry IV, Part I</u>	Slight
6. Mistress Page enters; Falstaff hides behind the curtain.	III 3	None significant
7. Ford enters, searches basket.	III 3 and IV 2 (Interpolation)	Slight None significant
8. Falstaff hides in the basket.	III 3	None significant
9. Anne and Fenton kiss behind the curtain.	None	
10. Ensemble--Recapitulation.	None	
11. Anne and Fenton revealed.	None	
12. Falstaff thrown out the window.	III 3	Slight
13. Mistress Ford takes Ford to the window.	None (Deleted: III, 4-- Anne and Fenton's meeting.)	

Table 3. (Cont.)

Scene and Episode	Portion of Shake- speare Utilized Act Scene	Amount of Revision
Act III, <u>Scene 1</u>		
1. Falstaff bemoans his dunking.	II 4 of <u>King Henry IV, Part I</u>	Slight
2. Falstaff praises sack.	IV 3 of <u>King Henry IV, Part II</u>	Slight
3. Mistress Quickly arranges next meeting (letter).	III 5 (Deleted: III, 5-- "Brook's" second meeting with Fal- staff.)	None sig- nificant
4. Discuss plots for Fenton, Dr. Caius to elope with Anne.	IV 4 and V 1-4 (Deleted: IV, 1--the Latin lesson.) (Deleted: IV, 2--the Witch of Brainford scene.) (Deleted: IV, 3 and 5--the post-horse incident.) (Deleted: IV, 6--the Host's plans for Fenton and Anne.)	Great
Act III, <u>Scene 2</u>		
1. Fenton's love song.	None	
2. Fairy scene.	V 5	Slight
3. Anne and Fenton married; "Brook" reveals himself.	V 5	Slight
4. Finale.	V 5 (Deleted V, 1-5-- different arrange- ment of elopers and helpers changes cli- max and denouement slightly.)	Slight

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