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Jenny Marx and the Critical Reception of Shakespeare (Performances) in 19th Century London and Dublin

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ABSTRACT

Despite the predominance of Karl Marx's references to William Shakespeare and the equally advertised presentation of his daughter, Eleanor Marx's promotion of Shakespeare through her literary Association, the Dogberry Club, and her writings, there is no indication that they influenced or eclipsed Jenny Marx's profile as another remarkable Shakespeare enthusiast. However, because of the tendency to downplay Jenny Marx's contribution to the Shakespeare chapter in the intellectual heritage of the Karl Marx family, not many are aware of her writings as a performance critic of Shakespeare's plays. Our interest in this paper is to demonstrate to what extent it could be stated that Jenny Marx is a notable Shakespeare performance critic as could be seen from five of her published journal essays. Similarly, her discussion of the work of Henry Irving as producer, actor and critic of Shakespeare's plays is presented here as one major way of confirming her knowledge of and proficiency in projecting the dynamics of Shakespeare studies and especially the theatrical productions. We equally establish that some of the issues she raises in her essays are among those promoted by some theatre historians and critics roughly a century after. Among the issues raised in her critiques include major theatres in 19thc London and especially those favourably disposed to Shakespeare productions; prominent actors and directors in the English theatre over a two-century period, and particularly those associated with the promotion of Shakespeare's plays; the theatre and production history of Richard III; and rating of the performances of the actors and actresses who appeared in productions of plays by William Shakespeare.

Keywords: *Shakespeare: Jenny Marx; production history; Karl Marx; English stage; actor-manager; Henry Irving; theatre history; Lyceum Theatre; performance.*

Introduction

> If it was her beauty that captured Karl's adolescent attentions, it was her intellect that held them and made his [Karl Marx's] heart follow. He loved to hear her speak... It was from Jenny's lips that he first heard the words of Shakespeare… -Rachel Holmes

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Notwithstanding her work as a Shakespeare scholar and a remarkable Shakespeare performance critic at that, Jenny Marx (1814-1881) is often relegated to the background as a result of the larger-than-life intellectual and activist slot her husband, Karl Marx, occupied. Invariably, this is another display of the eclipsing of one's profile such as Frederick Engels suffered and complained about as stated in his July 14, 1893 letter to Franz Mehring. According to Engels' painful lamentation, "when one has had the good fortune to work for forty years with a man like Marx, one usually does not during his lifetime get the recognition one thinks one deserves" (89). As it was with Engels, so has it been with Jenny Marx. Overwhelmed by his achievements and ratings, Karl Marx's biographers appeared to have set out to de-emphasize Jenny Marx's contributions to the intellectual development of the family, her scholastic orientations and accomplishments. Any wonder then that against the backdrop of Maynard Solomon's disclosure that "in mid-1837, [Karl] Marx briefly decided to become a theater critic, to his father's dismay" (3), many would imagine that Jenny Marx's theatre scholarship and especially as it concerns productions of Shakespeare's plays and other issues in English theatre history relating to actors and producers linked with the stage presentation of Shakespeare's plays derived from her relationship with Karl Marx.

Both Isaiah Berlin and Christopher Hill are culpable in this matter of failing to recognize Jenny Marx's intellectual capital vis a viz the training of their children. For instance, in his biography of Karl Marx, Isaiah Berlin only recognizes that Marx "was fond of poetry and knew long passages of Dante, Aeschylus and Shakespeare by heart. His admiration for Shakespeare was limitless, and the whole household was brought up on him: he was read aloud, acted, discussed constantly" (230). Unfortunately, Berlin does not accommodate what roles Jenny Marx could have played in having Shakespeare "read aloud, acted, discussed constantly" before the children. Such a context also explains why Christopher Hill's "Karl Marx and Britain" provides a beautiful insight into Karl Marx's fascination for William Shakespeare and his plays without any reference to Jenny Marx. Thus, beyond revealing that "when Marx was asked who were his favourite poets, he named Shakespeare, Aeschylus and Goethe, in that order", Hill also notes that "Marx used Shakespeare's writings to make economic or political points" as can be seen in the references he makes to *Henry IV, The Merchant of Venice, Timon of Athens, Hamlet, Henry VI, A Midsummer Night's Dream* and *Coriolanus* (241). However, despite the somewhat spectacular testimony that Marx's "daughters had so much Shakespeare read to them that they know whole scenes by heart" (241), there is no mention by Christopher Hill of whatever role Marx's wife, their mother, may have played. Similarly, nothing is said about how Jenny Karl

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Marx (nee Westphalen) could have accomplished such task of reading Shakespeare to her daughters or how with her father, Ludwig Von Westphalen, she could have contributed to the making of the Shakespeare chapter in Karl Marx's literary and family heritage.

Arising from the above therefore, there is a strong likelihood that those who are privileged to come across Jenny Marx's scholarly articles on Shakespeare as seen in such samples as "From London's Theatre World; "The London Season"; "Shakespeare's Richard II in London's Lyceum Theatre"; and "Shakespeare Studies in England" among others[1] will imagine that, in writing these, Jenny Marx was, among others, intellectually indebted to her husband, Karl Marx. But a contrary evidence shows that it was from Jenny's father that Karl Marx learnt a lot about literature's greats and, especially, William Shakespeare. Besides, despite preserving "a taste for Homer, Shakespeare and the German classics", Karl Marx, according to Rene Wellek, "wrote no formal literary criticism" (233).

Fritz J. Raddatz reports the relationship between Karl Marx and Jenny's father in his fascinating text, *Karl Marx*: *A Political Biography*. He reveals that outside a friendship with his classmate, Edgar von Westphalen and Jenny von Westphalen, "one of Karl's playmates" (Raddatz 22), Karl Marx would eventually strike a friendship with Ludwig von Westphalen, Edgar's father and Karl's future father-in-law. Concerning this worthwhile relationship, Raddatz records as follows:

> Karl Marx became particularly attached to Ludwig on Westphalen; in the young man's eyes he must have represented the acme of what a personality and a father should be. The acquaintanceship marked a turning point in Karl's development. He admired the older man's culture, his bearing, and his family. He was never admonished in that house, never had caution urged upon him, was never encouraged to write poems in praise of the government; he was simply accepted. Ludwig Von Westphalen, who was about sixty, used to take the young son of his friend Heinrich Marx for long walks, would quote Homer or Shakespeare to him, fired his enthusiasm for romantic literature, and also talked of something hitherto unknown – socialism. (22)

It is somewhat redeeming that the duo of Isaiah Berlin and Fritz J. Raddatz have dwelt on the high points of Karl Marx's indebtedness to his mentor, Ludwig von Westphalen. Isaiah Berlin has recounted how Jenny's father, Ludwig von Westphalen "encouraged him [Karl Marx] to read, lent him books, took him for walks... and talked to him about Aeschylus, Cervantes, Shakespeare, quoting long passages to his enthusiastic listener" (26-27). That Karl Marx would eventually at age twenty three dedicate his doctoral research to Ludwig Von Westphalen is more than enough indication that the pupilage that exposed him to Homer, Shakespeare and so on was not an idle or unprofitable liaison. Berlin notes that Karl Marx's "doctorate thesis contains a (glowing)

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dedication to Westphalen, full of gratitude and admiration" (27). Part of the carefully- worded dedication reads: "to his dear fatherly friend ... as a token of filial love" (qtd in Raddatz 22).

From the foregoing, one can appreciate that it is from the same noble intellectual heritage that Jenny Marx came from. Born Johanna Bertha Julie "Jenny" Freiin von Westphalen on February 12, 1814 and died on December 2, 1881, Jenny Marx whose father was a professor at Friedrich - Wichems Unversitat, Berlin, was a highly respected resource person and intellectual partner to Marx. And she was a great beneficiary of her father's library. No doubt, what is missing in the above is the role Jenny Marx played in making Karl Marx attracted to William Shakespeare. Rachel Holmes provides what should be considered as the quintessential proto literary history of Karl Marx's much advertised exposure to, acquaintance with, and admiration for William Shakespeare. As Holmes reveals, "it was from Jenny's lips that he (Karl Marx) first heard the words of Shakespeare and Shelley and absorbed the movement of her enquiring mind as she questioned, challenged and debated with all around her" (162). In other words, long before Karl Marx became a regular visitor to the Ludwig von Westphalen family through his friendship with Edgar von Westphalen, Marx's classmate, Jenny Marx as Karl Marx's playmate is regarded as the first to mention the name William Shakespeare to Marx's hearing.

There are different ways in which Karl Marx recognized and promoted Jenny Marx's intellect and distinction between 1837 and 1852. Way back during their courtship, Karl Marx had in a November 10, 1837 letter requested his father "please give greetings from me to my sweet wonderful Jenny" ostensibly because " I have read her letter twelve times already, and always discover new delights in it". Far from being patronizing, Karl Marx's proclamation in his November 10, 1837 letter to his father that Jenny's letter "is in every respect including that of style, the most beautiful letter I can imagine being written by a woman" is a remarkable testimony about a woman whose intellect should be given due recognition and celebration. It is not surprising that, according to Isaiah Berlin, "Karl Marx leaned on her unhesitatingly in all times of crisis and disaster, remained all his life proud of… her birth and her intelligence" (65). That four of Karl Marx's daughters, Jenny Caroline (1844 - 1883); Jenny Laura (1845 - 1911); Jenny Eveline Frances (1851 - 1852) and Jenny Julia Eleanor (1855 -1898) will be named after their mother, Jenny Marx, is a strong indication that Marx's wife was more than just a wife to him. While a 16 January, 1852 letter to Frederick Engels sees Jenny Marx reporting that "I am still en *function* as secretary" probably because "my husband has still not altogether left his bed", by the 15th October, 1852, she informs Adolf Cluss in a letter that "today my husband has appointed me his deputy and I therefore hasten to assume the duties of a *secretaire intime"*.

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Any wonder then that, as Subrata Mukherjee and Sushila Ramaswamy observe, "she played an extremely helpful role by editing Marx's manuscripts and preparing them for publication" (352). For one to be an editor, let alone the editor of the manuscripts of the remarkably cerebral Karl Marx could only mean that such a fellow must also have been an intellectual *par excellence*.

Although in letters she wrote Karl Marx between 1838 and 1843 Jenny Marx showed the stuff that she was made of, we are particularly interested in highlighting an August 10, 1841 letter through which she intimates her reader(s) with her intellectual orientation as a theatre - loving woman. Beyond the preliminaries of chiding Karl Marx for failing in his last letter to praise "me for my Greek" or devoting "a little laudatory article to my erudition", Jenny is excited that "there are Hegel clubs there" in Bonn to engage Karl Marx's attention. Furthermore, she reflects on the fact that her immersion in the business of intellectualism is such that "this morning quite early I studied in the Augsberg newspaper three Hegelian articles and the announcement of Bruno's books".

If Rachel Holmes had not acknowledged that "Eleanor Marx's love of Shakespeare began well before her birth. Shakespeare was a vital part of her parents' courtship. So the culture inheritance was passed to Eleanor like a family heirloom" (165), one would have been tempted to consider the identification of Eleanor with the Shakespeare "cult" as an unnecessary exaggeration. After all, in an August 10, 1841 letter she wrote Karl Marx, Jenny Marx apart from a reference to the stage: "only on the miserable little stage of our theatre one always saw the wires to which the eagles and owls and crocodiles were fastened", displays her sense of addiction to the theatre and performances therein when she notes as follows: "this evening Haizinger is acting in Bonn. Will you go there? I have seen her as Donna Diana." In other words, Jenny Marx acquaints us with an idea of her profile as someone who is fond of the theatre. Happily enough, Rachel Holmes reveals how "to try and cheer her up, Eleanor encouraged Jenny Marx to go to the theatre often and to write reviews on Shakespeare, revisiting her earlier life as a theatre critic and occasional journalist" (158). It is not only knowing about what happens in theatres in Trier that Jenny Marx is concerned with. Rather, She is also interested in and knowledgeable about theatre activities in Bonn even while she was not residing there at the time. Equally, she is familiar with Amelia Haizinger's acting[2] as to recall that she once saw the actress play the role of Donna Diana.

Jenny Marx shows through her essay, "The London Season", that she is very familiar with the theatre world and the community of artists. For instance, beyond revealing how Sardou's *pattes de mouche* is "being presented at the Court theatre in a limp and mutilated translation", Jenny Marx also reveals how "a dramatized version of Dickens Bleak House is on at the Globe Theatre, the little

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beggar-boy so being played with deeply affecting pathos by Jenny Lae". Moreover, she demonstrates an intimidating aspect of her theatre-hunting profile when she declares the way licensed theatre critics and literary correspondents would be expected to do by nothing that "the other thirty theatres are making great preparations to give a worthy reception to the foreigners who will be flocking here from all parts of the world…." *Against the above backdrop,* it is conciliatory therefore reading Holmes' significant statement: "Avid theatregoers, the Marxes followed all aspects of London theatre life, spending money on cheap tickets instead of food and fuel, arguing over the relative merits of actors Sarah Siddons, Ellen Terry and John Kemble, and *reading over their mother's drama reviews for the press"* (162 – 163 emphasis mine).

There is no doubt that Jenny Marx would have endorsed David Hare's thesis about a play approximating "what happens between the stage and the audience" (qtd in Pickering and Woolgar 152). Such explains why her theatrical eagle eyes do not miss the emptiness displayed by some audiences. For instance, while observing West End theatres towards the end of 1875, Jenny Marx feels bothered about the extremely illiterate mannerisms of "the so-called educated classes flooding to the 'Shakespeare revivals' of Charles Kean". Her anger stems from their overt insensitivity to "the marvelous language of Shakespeare" and preference for "the splendid cloth-of-gold dresses of beautiful golden-locked Anne Boleyn" and frivolities associated with Charles Kean's presentation of the "banquet and ceremonial procession of Henry the Eighth".

The foregoing should constitute a necessary introduction to the profile of a theatre enthusiast and scholar who would author the essays that engage our attention here. We are interested in five of such essays. These are "From London's Theatre World" (1875); "The London Season" (1876); "Shakespeare's Richard III in London Lyceum Theatre" (February 1, 1877); "Shakespearian Studies in England" (1876) and "From the London Theatre" (May 22, 1877). We shall adopt an individual and chronological approach in our discussion of each of them in the remaining part of the present essay.

From London's Theatre World

Part of what is remarkable about Jenny Marx's "From London's Theatre World" (November 1875) is that she engages in sketching the background to what could be described as Henry Irving's phenomenal emergence as an actor-manager and why his turning the tide of the previous disastrous reception of productions of William Shakespeare's plays should be celebrated. She identifies two definitive phases in the previous Shakespeare revivals that came to naught. Concerning the first phase associated with "a very talented Irish actor, Barry Sullivan [who] tried to rescue Shakespeare from oblivion" and who performed with "Mrs Hermann

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Vezin", regarded by her as "the best, indeed, one might say the only excellent Shakespearian actress", Jenny Marx notes as follows:

> But it was all in vain. Othello and Desdemona, Hamlet and Ophelia, King Lear and Cordelia appeared before empty houses and after Sullivan had sacrificed the fortune he had earned in Australia from his Shakespearian productions, the enterprise had to be abandoned".

Recalling a similar fate that befell another prominent institution, Jenny Marx observes as follows:

> Then Old Drury Lane stepped into the breach, an old Drury still hallowed by memories of Kemble, Kean, Mrs Siddons and Macready. The house remained empty, and after some weeks the manager was obliged to declare that "Shakespeare means bankruptcy".

While recognizing that "between 1800 and 1843 a number of important actors appeared on the English stage", Oscar G. Brockett and Franklin J. Hildy emphasize that "until 1815, it was dominated by the Kemble family. Almost all of the twelve children of Roger Kemble (1721-1802), a provincial actor- manager, became actors, but major fame was achieved only by John Philip and Sarah Kemble Siddons (1755-1831)….". (357). Frank Muir's designation of Sarah Siddons as "the great tragedienne" and also as "the greatest player of tragedy (female) that England had ever produced" (242) is a recognition Jenny Marx had accorded her a century earlier. Brockett and Hildy bring a lot of clarifications when they concede that "Kemble and Mrs Siddons established a style usually called 'classical' because of its emphasis upon stateliness, dignity, and grace" (357). As with what Jenny Marx had done earlier, the duo are full of praise for the distinction the siblings accomplished. Outside relaying how Philip Kemble "was truly excellent in such roles as Cato, Coriolanus, Cardinal Wolsey, Brutus, Rolla, and the Stranger" Brockett and Hildy assert that "Mrs Siddons, while attaining a comparable dignity rose above her brother because of her greater emotional intensity. She was especially noted for her playing of Lady Macbeth, Queen Katherine (in *Henry Viii*), Volumnnia (in *Coriolanus*) and Mrs Haller (in *The Stranger*)…" (357). As such, when Jenny Marx reflects on the atmosphere of "an Old Drury still Brockett and Hildy "hallowed by memories of Kemble, Kean, Mrs Sddons", she meant a lot.

Beyond the foregoing, Oscar G. Brockett and Franklin J. Hildy seem to bear out Jenny Marx's testimony concerning the profiles of Drury Lane Theatre and Covent Garden, London. According to them, "after 1843, Drury Lane and Covent Garden rapidly lost their positions of dominance" (390). Furthermore, they concede that "by 1860 the major work of both [Samuel] Phelps and [Charles] Kean was over and the theatre was well on its way to recovery" (393). Jenny Marx's familiarity with this milieu within which she lived could be gauged through her

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informed testimony about Phelps and Kean. In her remarkable exhumation of what could be designated theatre history even to those living in London at the time, Jenny Marx on the eve of the tricenteniary of Shakespeare's birth notes that:

> More than twenty years ago the actor Phelps, working in a small theatre in the East end of London, succeeded for a number of years in keeping a taste for Shakespeare alive among the workers. At the same time, in the West End, the so-called educated classes were flooding to the "Shakespeare revivals" of Charles Kean.

One major way to appreciate the implications of Jenny Marx's notion of "keeping a taste for Shakespeare alive" is by referring to the insistence by Brockett and Hildy that "the source of Phelps' popularity was unmistakable for his repertory was composed almost entirely of poetic drama. Except for six of the minor works, Phelps produced all of Shakespeare's plays in versions more complete than any since Shakespeare's time" (390). However, Jenny Marx does not lose sight of how "the lower strata of society" and "workers, who have a thorough knowledge of him through shilling editions" are among those who were the enduring audience who "stood round the small oak that was planted eleven years ago [1864] on Primrose Hill to commemorate the three hundredth anniversary of Shakespeare's birth".

Jenny Marx records how as a supplement to the once-in-a-while appearance of "a Hamlet or a Macbeth… in the workers districts", Henry Irving's phenomenal emergence in 1874 changed theatre history over night. She makes sure that no one forgets Irving's hitherto unimpressive profile. According to Jenny Marx's 1875 testimony, Henry Irving is one "who was known only in the provinces and whose London breakthrough had been made in melodramatic parts".

However, Jenny Marx documents for posterity how the supposedly little man of the theatre, Henry Irving, "dared to defy the old, conventional tradition and create his own faithful and original Shakespearian portrait, instead of the usual, all too familiar Hamlet". Despite whatever might be considered Irving's extraordinary production, "the critics", according to Jenny Marx, "grumbled, nagged and indulged in fault-finding" and among their complaints were that "Irving had too little of the prince in him"; could not walk elegantly and was "melodramatic". As a greatly accomplished actor-manager, Irving surpassed himself by having his *Hamlet* play for a record two hundred nights. As Jenny Marx reports, "the unheard of happened: for two hundred nights attentive and enraptured audiences packed the theatre. It became fashionable to see Irving as Hamlet. It was *bon ton* to be enthusiastic about Shakespeare".

As an unusual theatre addict and critic, Jenny Marx takes special note of the outcome of the reviews and critiques of Irving's *Hamlet* on his subsequent presentations of Prince Hamlet. She

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highlights why and how Irving strove to wean himself of "the weaknesses and crudities from which his Hamlet was not yet free". In her portrait of Irving as a quintessential artist very eager to learn and improve himself as an actor, Jenny Marx observes that "greatly to the credit of the young artist, he did not allow himself to be taken in by the applause, but continued his efforts to perfect his part with the utmost conscientiousness and the greatest diligence, ever ready cheerfully to accept and make use of good advice and serious criticism".

From Jenny Marx's report, it is equally strange that the same type of truculent criticism visited on Irving's *Hamlet* became the fate of the actor-manager's production of *Macbeth.* As Jenny Marx records: "for a month now he has been presenting *Macbeth* to us. The same grumbling, yelping and nagging from the press that greeted his production of *Hamlet* has been heard, but this time with an added bitterness and venom". She identifies *The Times* as the only exception to the generation of the venom against Irving's *Macbeth* and regrets that despite the fact that "there are full houses every day and tickets must be ordered weeks in advance", the subdued feelings of the somewhat entranced audience could have derived from the vice grip of the critics who the public seemed to have "allowed… to intimidate and frighten it".

Jenny Marx expresses a lot of reservations about how the "English philistine" has all too fallen for the stereotype of "a lazy mind" who depends on "his penny-a-liner, who thinks for him". She laments the destruction of talents wrought by inexperienced reviewers writing for the *Daily News; Standard,* and *Saturday Review*. In her sarcastic dismissal of the three newspapers, Jenny Marx notes as follows. "That very morning the *Daily News* has informed him that Irving's interpretation of Macbeth is wrong, and my newspaper-reading citizen believes his *Daily News.* Next to him sits a *Standard* philistine or even someone who believes the *Saturday Review*, each of them with ready-made opinions in his pocket".

In contrast to those who would rather have the newspapers and their reviewers think for them, Jenny Marx in a manner that blends with the dictates of the Marxist enterprise commends the audience generated from the working class. As she puts it,

> That is the great advantage of a working-class public: the working man does not allow the press to bewilder him; he goes to the theatre, relies on his own eyes and ears and applauds and hisses as his feelings and his own judgment and sense of what is proper impel him.

She draws attention to the significance of the pit and gallery in determining the success or otherwise of every performance. As a way to clinch the argument, Jenny Marx refers to the excitement displayed by Edmund Kean when he performed *Richard III* and exclaimed that "the pit rose at me".

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Beyond hoping that "Irving will not be misled by the howling of the press and the apparent coldness of the public into abandoning his exploration of Shakespeare and returning to melodrama", Jenny Marx demonstrates that a balanced criticism of Irving's *Macbeth* is possible. As her impressive evaluation of Irving reads:

> His Macbeth is not yet a finished work of art. During the first act his whole manner is uneven, unsure and therefore unsatisfactory; extreme anxiety often causes failures in intonation, and even his diction is faulty on occasion. In the second and third acts his performance rises to significant heights. His vision of the witches is presented in a masterful way and the banquet scene is powerfully gripping. During the whole of the last act, Irving's performance is peerless.

Despite acknowledging a combination of positive features that Irving possesses: "his spiritual as well as his physical gifts: his beautiful, soft, resonant, albeit not very strong voice, his noble, expressive face and remarkable mobility and fine play of his feature", Jenny Marx still concedes that it is possible for him to improve and "overcome the shortcomings, weaknesses and uneven parts of his Macbeth". She is convinced that once Irving adjusts properly to the "serious criticism" of his presentation, "that ultimately he will present consummate artistic creation, worthy of being placed beside his Hamlet".

Additionally, Jenny Marx demonstrates a sensitivity to the critical taste of audience preferences elsewhere in Europe of her time. It is based on such knowledge that Jenny Marx hopes that Irving "will perform before German audiences: audiences that know and love Shakespeare and will greet this purposeful man with benevolent interest and encouragement". She also looks forward to a future when Henry Irving will be given the respect he deserves. In her words, "we also hope that in the future he receives better support from his fellow-actors and, finally, a critical response that is more fair, less contradictory and less misleading to the public".

Shakespearian Studies in England

In "Shakespearian Studies in England", Jenny Marx displays an impressive familiarity with some crucial aspects of the configuration and operational details of the "Shakespeare Society" founded in London in 1873. Her recognition of the fact that "affiliated societies with corresponding members have been formed throughout England, Scotland and Ireland, in the Colonies and in North America. Many German Shakespeare groups have joined and even those rare birds, French Shakespeare enthusiasts, have become members" is more than enough evidence of a knowledgeable correspondent and literary historian endowed with the wisdom associated with the approximation of an eye - of - God method. Jenny Marx addresses the

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complexities of the engagements of the Shakespeare society as a research centred organization. Among such variables that could suggest a partisanship/membership as isolated and presented by Jenny Marx are (a) membership listing; (b) subscription fee (one guinea); (c) time of meeting; (d) venue of meeting (London University); (e) reading and discussion of letters, essays, critical works and research papers. Three major engagements achieved by the Shakespeare society under the presidency of Frederick [James] Furnivall, according to Jenny Marx, are "regularly reprinting the oldest Shakespeare editions in chronological sequence, as well as extremely rare and valuable works of that period and important modern criticism and research".

Beyond listing the variety of "splendidly-produced copies" of books which every member of the Furnivall-led Shakespeare Society received in 1876, and disclosing the number of Shakespeare anthologies and studies in press, Jenny Marx also demonstrates that her familiarity with the activities of the society was not derived from hearsay. Two extracts could suffice in proving that Jenny Marx was not a mere chronicler of the activities of the society. We discern in the following testimonial evidence that Jenny Marx was more than a living witness in the activities of the Shakespeare fellowship. As she documents,

> meetings have hither been only sparsely attended; however, it is a true pleasure to spend some time among the small community of the faithful, all of whom (the ladies not excepted) treat the study of Shakespeare seriously and are enriching some branch of literature by their critical and often very original and detailed research.

In elaborating the sense of camaraderie made possible by the idea of "the community of the faithful" earlier alluded to, Jenny Marx asserts that "in this Shakespearian lodge, a true spirit of brotherhood prevails; from downy-cheeked youngsters to grizzled veterans, every new comer receives a friendly welcome, and true Malvolio smiles and grins greet the youngest labourer in the Lord's vineyard". No doubt, the "downy-cheeked youngsters" would include the generation of Eleanor Marx, the last child of Karl and Jenny Marx. Of their generation Rachel Holmes has written a very engaging essay.[3]

Notwithstanding her great applause for the Shakespeare society in contributing to a great revival of the study of Shakespeare, Jenny Marx does not fail to highlight the distinction and significance of Henry Irving to the making of a new Shakespeare consciousness. As she emphasizes, "one cannot help returning again and again to the great and undeniable service rendered by Henry Irving. It is he who has electrified the masses; and it is not only that his own

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theatre is filled every night – Shakespeare has begun to draw audiences in previous empty theatres"

While presenting the profile of the inimitable Henry Irving, Jenny Marx demonstrates that she was also apprised of the legacy of the American, H.L. Bateman (1812-1875) who once managed Lyceum Theatre and whose daughters, Kate (1842-1917), Virginia (1853-1940) and Isabel (1854-1934) were celebrated actresses. It is not surprising therefore that despite not mentioning Bateman's widow who managed the Lyceum between 1875 and 1878 before Irving, Jenny Marx would describe how "Irving has been touring the provinces, Scotland and Ireland for six months, supported by the *talented and charming sisters* Kate, Isabel and Virginia Bateman" (emphasis mine). Jenny Marx's familiarity with the performances produced by Irving and their inauguration of a new Shakespeare consciousness is such that she observes how "from the beginning to end the tour has been a triumph".

Furthermore, Jenny Marx also recognizes how the tour attained its apogee courtesy of the Dublin audience of the period. While reflecting on the honour accorded Irving by "the enthusiastic citizens of Dublin", Jenny Marx displays a deep theatre history that is beyond comparison. According to her testimony,

> Irving was accorded the greatest honour that can be shown an artist when a "university festival" was organized for him. Only one other actress has ever received this distinction, and that twenty-five years ago, when Helen Faucit appeared as Antigone.

In order to demonstrate that she was not merely name-dropping, Jenny Marx beyond acknowledging that the famous actress "is the wife of Theodor Martin, who recently published a life of Prince Albert" describes Helen Faucit[4] as "this highly gifted and charming performer, who at that time shone in the company of Macready". No doubt, what Jenny Marx says about in few words is elaborated on more than one hundred years after by the duo of Oscar G. Brockett and Franklin J. Hildy who recognize Helen Faucit (1817-1898) as part of the "company of high quality" that William Charles Macready (1794-1873) "maintained" (361). Moreover, they describe Helen Faucit not only as "an actress of the Kemble school who made her London debut in 1836" but also one who was "generally considered the finest actress of the day" (361). This confirmation by Brockett and Hildy is evidence that Jenny Marx is a theatre historian and performance critic of no mean repute.

Jenny Marx's presentation of the reception granted Irving at the Dublin University is unique in many ways. For one, the distinguished "committee of twelve" that presented an address to

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Irving included "professors, scholars and well-known authorities on Shakespeare, among them Doctors Ingram and Dowden" At the head of the deputation, according to Jenny Marx, we have "Edward Gibson, Queen's counselor and a member of parliament". Unlike the hack writers who kept condemning Irving, Jenny Marx recalls how the Dublin University commended his performances and "the new insights into the character of Hamlet he had afforded, even to those most intimately familiar with Shakespeare". Concerning the ennobling opening remarks of Edward Gibson, Jenny Marx reports as follows: "it gives me particular pleasure to express to you on behalf of the graduates etc, their great admiration and respect for so great a performer, so accomplished a gentleman and so charming a companion" (qtd in Jenny Marx "Shakespearian Studies").

Without doubt, the Dublin University honour represents the apogee of the reception of Irving's Shakespeare performances. In reporting the extraordinary "College Evening" held in honour of Henry Irving, Jenny Marx displays her characteristic deep-seated and penetrating knowledge by not only recording how "the foremost professors of the [Dublin] university and even Prince Arthur, the Duke of Connaught were present", but also provides the intimidating information that the Irish "royal princes are seldom or never seen at performances of Shakespeare". It is within this context that the revelation that "the hall was packed to suffocation and the enthusiasm was truly Irish" becomes very meaningful and resonant.

Shakespeare's *Richard III* in London's Lyceum Theatre

In her February 1, 1877 essay on the performance of William Shakespeare's *Richard III*, "Shakespeare's Richard III in London's Lyceum Theatre," Jenny Marx provides a preamble that highlights the primacy of the peaceful and conducive environment that made a massive patronage of the theatre possible and a remarkable experience. As she puts it,

> there is no longer a rush to read the reports from Constantinople, Vienna and Berlin or greedily devour the yard-long despatches of special and non special correspondents ... it is thanks to this political will that the great event of the week, the production of Shakespeare's *Richard III* at the Lyceum Theatre, has attracted general and undivided interest.

With the right atmosphere established, Jenny Marx also displays an astonishing familiarity with theatre history and especially that related to Shakespeare performances. Her listing of British Directors and Actor -managers associated with the stage history of William Shakespeare's *Richard III* is remarkable in at least two ways. One, she creates the impression that the audience

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that witnessed the "great event of the week" at the Lyceum Theatre, London, were probably aware of the same stage history as to justify their unusual patronage of the performance. Two, by going back to the era of Colley Gibber (1671-1757), Jenny Marx distinguishes herself as someone who had been nurtured on Shakespeare stage history all her life. It is within the above context that one can properly appreciate Jenny Marx's identification of the failed attempts by Colley Gibber, David Garrick, George Frederick Cooke, Edmund Kean and William Charles Macready to present a successful performance of an unexpurgated and ideal *Richard III.*

As an ardent student of Shakespeare and Shakespeare studies, Jenny Marx shows that she is abreast with what could be isolated as the three definitive phases in the performances of Shakespeare's *Richard III.* Regarding the first phase which she identifies with Shakespeare, Jenny Marx sees a correspondence between that and the one that could be described as the third phase. Jenny Marx in her comparative assessment notes that:

> to the German admirer of Shakespeare it will seem incredible and unheard-of that since the time of the great dramatist, who himself produced his *Richard III at* the Globe and Blackfriars theatres, the play had, until Monday evening's production [i.e probably Jan, 1877] never *been presented* to an English audience in its *original version* (emphasis supplied)

With the familiarity that one can associate with a deeply informed theatre historian and critic, Jenny Marx reflects on how the making of the second phase of the stage history of *Richard III* opened. Beyond reporting that "after Shakespeare's death, the play disappeared completely from the stage for half a century", Jenny Marx reveals how "in 1700 a totally mutilated and disjointed version *of Richard III* by Colley Gibber appeared ...". In order to substantiate her idea of the disjointed nature of Gibber's production, she volunteers that it featured "passages of bombastic nonsense and melodramatic stage-effects added".

One significant way through which we come to terms with her contention that "many attempts have been made to present the drama in its original purity, but all have failed" is no idle talk is by being acquainted with Jenny Marx's revelation that "neither Garrick nor Cooke, Edmund Kean or Macready strayed from the beaten track". Certainly, without contextualizing the profiles of these actor-managers who were reckoned with in their eras, one will not be apprised of the significance of the theatre history symbolically exhumed and highlighted by Jenny Marx. Apart from being a former pupil of Dr Samuel Johnson, (1709 – 1784), Garrick (1717 - 1779) made theatre history when in 1741 at the age of 24 years he acted in Southerne's *Oroonoko* and later the same year "made his London debut as Richard III (Drabble and Stringer

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274). George Frederick Cooke (1756 - 1812) is considered by Oscar G. Brockett and Franklin J. Hildy as one of those who pioneered the "romantic school" and as an actor who beyond being "at his best in villainous roles such as Richard III and Iago ... cared little for grace or nobility but was unequaled in portraying hypocrisy and evil" (358).

Where with Garrick[5], Cooke and Macready she does not include their first names, Jenny Marx makes sure that rather than write Kean and create doubt she specifies the particular Kean, Edmund Kean (1787 - 1833), that she has in mind. This is to avoid any confusion that could arise from mistaking Edmund for Charles Kean (1811 - 1868), another actor-manager and son of Edmund Kean and one who will also produce his own *Richard III* in far away New York "between 1845 and 1847" (Brockett and Hildy 391). On his own part, the older Kean, Edmund Kean who "was considered a major star and, after Kemble's retirement, the foremost actor of his day" is equally known to have started his stage career "as the child prodigy master Carey ... at fourteen in a provincial company" (Brockett and Hildy 358). Despite being regarded as an actor who "excelled in somewhat villainous roles such as *Richard III*, Shylock ..." (Brockett and Hildy 358), there are those like Drabble and Stringer who contend that while Kean was "a great tragic actor who first achieved fame in 1814 as Shylock in *Merchant of Venice*", William Macready (1793-1833) was the resourceful Actor Manager of Covent Garden and Drury Lane Theatres. Drabble and Stringer note that "by 1819" Macready was "an established rival of Kean" (437). In other words, at the age of 26, Macready was in contention with the then 32 year old Edmund Kean.

One way of appreciating the enormity of Henry Irving's distinction as someone who could afford the risk of presenting Shakespeare's *Richard III* "to the public in his pure, un- distorted and original form" is by coming to terms with Jenny Marx's marvellous reportage. Concerning the unusual audience reception of Irving's *Richard III,* Jenny Marx affirms as follows:

> How successful this dangerous experiment has been was demonstrated on Monday by the enormous crowds which besieged the doors of the Lyceum. The pit and the gallery were virtually taken by storm, the intelligent, unconstrained and tactful way and the extent to which this old and unique drama has been brought into complete harmony with the demands of today's theatre were shown in the magical effect it produced on the packed audience.

Only a talented and engaging theatre critic would be able to discern such "magical effect" a performance "produced on the packed audience.

Despite her modest confession that "the narrow bounds of a single article make it impossible to cover every brilliant moment of his performance, from the tiny delicate details of his characterization to the spectacular energy of the final scene, the sword fight with Richmond,

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which concludes the play", Jenny Marx nonetheless goes to a great length and extent to project an Irving resurrection of a *Richard III* that is awesome. For instance, concerning the recreation on stage of Richard, Jenny Marx volunteers as follows:

> In his interpretation of Richard, Irving has cast all the old traditions aside. This is no "villain" with bushy brows and the stereotyped expression of a Mephistopheles who stamps about the stage… Irving knows so well how to present the arch-hypocrite, and master of dissimulation, his criminal nature held in check by ambition and his baseness veiled by a fine tissue of deceit, hypocrisy and duplicity, through the subtlest traits, tiny, almost imperceptible movements of the features, faint twitches of his compressed lips and subtle, sarcastic, fleeting smiles, hand movements and tones of voice.

Certainly, this could sum up an impressive performance of a master actor with a charge to make his simulation of King Richard manifest palpably on stage.

Jenny Marx goes to a great length to document what she describes as "few successful scenes" but literally records many. Outside the scenes involving Lady Anne; the two young princes; Margaret; and the two archbishops, Jenny Marx, true to type, commends even the relatively uncelebrated parts. For her, no part was too little to draw attention to itself. As she documents,

> all the small parts, including those of Elizabeth, the Duchess of York, Clarence, Richmond and Buckingham, were also very well performed, and this was true even of the tiniest roles, such as Catesby, Rivers, the murderers and last but not the least, the young princes, all of whom contributed much to the success of this great drama.

As actresses who stood out in their performances, two of the Bateman sisters attract special notice and recognition from Jenny Marx. Regarding the elder Miss Bateman, Jenny Marx recalls that " we cannot praise the Margaret of Miss Bateman enough – this marvelously affecting, uncanny figure, eyes fixed, features distorted by grief, her wild, stormy outburst and the curse that breaks from her in made despair". In a related manner, Jenny Marx captures the artistry of Isabel Bateman in the following manner: "Her younger sister Isabel presented Lady Anne with bewitching charm and captivating sweetness. She spoke her few words *from the heart in Richard's* tent with special feeling."

In rounding off her documentation of the overwhelming import of the performance, Jenny Marx remarks that "it is impossible to describe the excited scene in the theatre as Irving was greeted with stormy enthusiasm and frantic curtain-calls". Jenny Marx establishes to what extent Henry Irving through his *Richard III* qualifies as the quintessential stage manager and actor. According to her,

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> For the English, the production came as a fresh revelation of the old master and they sat electrified, admiring the harmony of the whole, the clarity and distinctness of motivation, the gradual development of the plot, the completeness of characterization and, above all, the inexhaustible and overflowing fount of poetry and passion.

With the above submission, Jenny Marx writes with an authoritativeness that one would associate with an Aristotle.

From the London Theatre

Although "From the London Theatre" appears to be the most miscellaneous of the five essays by Jenny Marx being considered here, it nonetheless contains vital information that concerns the performance of Shakespeare's plays and studies on same. It is the only one that provides details about the management of Lyceum Theatre by Mrs Bateman and especially how within a three-year period probably dating from 1875 to the beginning of May 1877 she ensures that Shakespeare was performed "on the stage in an almost unbroken sequence of plays". Of course, any Shakespeare performance within this milieu without what Jenny Marx isolates as "the original and brilliant productions of Henry Irving" would have been considered incomplete. Outside introducing the Bateman sisters, Isabel and Virginia as great theatre performers, Jenny Marx equally finds time to let the world know that beyond the stage we also had Irving, the author and literary critic.

Jenny Marx provides a background to "From the London Theatre" by introducing the relationship between Mrs Bateman and Henry Irving. As she puts it, "for three years Mrs Bateman has succeeded in keeping Shakespeare on the stage in an almost unbroken sequence of plays, thanks to the original and brilliant productions of Henry Irving". With such a presentation, Jenny Marx draws special attention to the profile of Mrs Bateman in her management of the Lyceum Theatre after her husband's death. It also provides a background to what made Irving to eventually inherit the management of the Theatre. Marx also identifies the challenges and especially because of rivalry from the Criterion Theatre that Mrs Bateman had to surmount in order to maintain patronage of her Theatre. Concerning the "incredible difficulties [that] had to be overcome", Jenny Marx elaborates as follows:

> There were struggles with a petty, malevolent and unjust clique of press critics, an indifferent and enervated public which, long unused to Shakespeare, had first to be drawn and educated, neglect by high society, which considers it good form to flock to the brazen charms, screened by English fig-leaves, of Sardou and Dumas fils…

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To crown the enormity of the challenges facing Mrs. Bateman is the fact of the "lack of support from the royal family which, since the death of Prince Albert, has maintained an attitude of real awe towards Shakespeare while bestowing its individed favours on dubious productions of the type of *The Rose-Coloured Domino* at the Criterion Theatre". Jenny Marx reports how in playing to the gallery, "the management of the Lyceum has decided to abandon its Shakespearian repertoire and make melodrama for a short time. The plat du jour".

As with her previous essays, Jenny Marx in "From the London Theatre" displays the same deep sense of theatre history in her evaluation of Mrs Bateman's production of *The Lyons Mail* at the Lyceum hitherto considered the dedicated space for presenting plays by Shakespeare. Beyond attempting a justification of how "the enthusiastic and delighted applause which greeted *The Lyons Mail* on Saturday was proof of how fortunate Mrs Bateman has been in her choice of a new drama", Jenny Marx goes down memory lane to not only reveal that "the play, which was originally presented at the Gaite Theatre in Paris in 1850" but also that it "is based on the famous trial which took place in France in 1794 under the Directory". Beyond demonstrating how Henry Irving featured in Mrs Bateman's production of *The Lyons Mail* where he "plays a double role-a gentle, lovable, tender paterfamilias, sure of his innocence, and a professional murderer and thief, a low brawler and drunkard", Jenny Marx also dwells on how the Bateman sisters, Isabel and Virginia, play their own roles in the same play.

Although Jenny Marx does a beautiful tribute to Irving, the author/literary critic, she spares time to point out what unrepresentative literary criticism such as written by Mrs. Ralston could be. Concerning Ralston's "Russian Revolutionary Literature" which appeared in the May 1877 issue of *The Nineteenth Century*, Jenny Marx appears extremely polemical and dismissive. For instance, in a contrastive tone which impliedly accommodates Irving but emphasizes how Ralston should be rated, Jenny Marx posits that "by contrast, his literary neighbor in the above-mentioned journal clearly belongs to the class of loud-mouthed literary charlatans". As if it was not enough to dismiss Ralston for claiming what he was not "-who because he has spent some time in Russia and is capable of a little mangled Russian, has set himself up as a pundit on Russia, upon which he pontificates at meetings and in the press"- Jenny Marx goes ahead to condemn him for failing to acknowledge a well-known authority in the subject areas. As she queries serially.

> How is it that Mr. Ralston makes no mention in his article of N. Chernyshevsky, the greatest of today's revolutionary writers? Can it be that he does not know his principal work on *Political Economy* which has the form of a critique on the lines of John Stuart Mills *Principles of Political Economy?* Does Ralston

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> not know that his collected works which consist for the most parts of critical writings in the fields of history, aesthetics, philosophy, literature and politics, now form twenty substantial volumes (not to mention a novel entitled. What is to Be Done?)? Is Ralston not acquainted with Chernyshevsky's journal, *The Contemporary,* in which the latter spurred the Russian government to emancipate the serfs (in a different way, to be sure, from how the emancipation was in fact carried out) and scourged the sham liberalism of the Petersburg press of the time with such merciless harshness that its worthy representatives felt themselves relieved of a great burden when the government banished him to Siberia, because, for the first time, an ordinary critic and scholar had become a public force in Russia?

Even when Jenny Marx considers it "a digression into The Nineteenth Century", the above can give us an understanding of the fact that she was sufficiently acquainted with what was required in critical writings for us to appreciate her desire "to welcome Irving once again in his role of author…". In other words, granted how thoroughly informed of intellectual developments and discourses Jenny Marx was and despite whatever could be considered her fondness of Henry Irving, the producer and actor, the artist was lucky that as a first-time author, his work survives Jenny Marx's critical scalpel.

While announcing Henry Irving's coming "before the English public in another double role, that of actor and author", Jenny Marx discloses how "Irving has published two articles in two issues of the monthly journal, *The Nineteenth Century".* In order to justify the reputation which the journal had earned, she emphasizes how "the contributors … include some of England's leading literary and scientific figures", among who number Tennyson, Gladstone, Archbishop Manning and Huxley. Little wonder that she contends that "it is greatly to Irving's credit that he has able to hold his place among these literary giants".

No doubt, granted the familiarity with Shakespeare promotions and discourses such as displayed in her "Shakespeare Studies in England", Jenny Marx is eminently qualified to engage Irving, the famous Actor-manager now turned theatre critic. Regarding the two-part essay by Irving, "Notes on Shakespeare by an actor", Jenny Marx asserts that "the articles contain skillful and detailed studies of Shakespeare, one dealing with the third murderer in *Macbeth* and the other with the love relationship between Hamlet and Ophelia, and offer practical advice and suggestions for actors and theatre management". As with her dismissal of the typical "penny-a-liner" reviewer in "From London's Theatre World" (1815), Jenny Marx introduces the same contrast while assessing the authority and significance of Henry Irving's writings. For her, "Irving stands out through his originality of form and the exquisite purity of his language. His quite unpretentious articles are totally free from the flavor of the penny-a-

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liner and other scribblers and this is what makes them so refreshing". Concerning the mastery of his topic and the panache he brings to bear on same, Jenny Marx insists that "Irving does not write for the sake of writing: he handles his subject, into which he puts his heart and soul, with complete seriousness and therefore treats it without the least affection". Little wonder then that our informed Shakespeare scholar, Jenny Marx, maintains that as an author, Henry Irving "cannot be denied recognition".

Henry Irving in the eyes of Theatre Critics

Henry Irving (1838 - 1905) who was born John Henry Brodribb Irving is one of the Shakespearian actors whose acts got a special notice from Jenny Marx. In virtually all her essays and especially the five that we are considering here, Irving receives a meritorious entry. As with every performer and performance, theatre historians and critics are divided in opinions about the status of Henry Irving as a prominent actor-manager in Victorian England. However, despite the disdain with which George Bernard Shaw regarded Henry Irving, Oscar G. Brockett and Franklin Hildy consider him a remarkable stage manager. According to Brockett and Hildy, "Irving's care with each element of production was crowned by even greater care for coordinating them into an integrated whole. It was for this reason that Irving's work was superior to that of his English contemporaries" (400). Roughly one hundred and twenty years earlier, Jenny Marx had discerned the same sensibilities in her direct encounters with Irving's productions.

Our interest is in Henry Irving, Jenny Marx's favourite actor, who unfortunately Bernard Shaw relegates to the background. When Shaw is not condemning John Barrymore for tampering with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, he is protesting Barrymore's 1895 production of *Macbeth*. What Shaw says about this production is reflective of his general opinion of Victorian actor-managers. According to Shaw,

> I am fond-unaffectedly fond of Shakespeare's plays. I do not mean the plays of actor- manager's editions and revivals. I mean the plays as Shakespeare wrote them, played straight through, line by line an d scene by scene, as nearly as possible under the conditions of representation for which they were designed (qtd in Gassner"Shaw"78)

Within the same disposition, John Gassner points out how "badgering the offenders -especially the chief Victorian actor-manager, Sir Henry Irving - became one of Shaw's ruling passions as a critic" ("Shaw" 78). Using all the venom available in his business as a theatre critic, Shaw remarks that "in

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a true republic of art... Sir Henry Irving would ere this have expiated his acting versions on the scaffold. He does not merely cut plays; he disembowels them" (qtd in Gassner "Shaw" 78).

As could be seen from our previous discussions, Jenny Marx obviously does not share Bernard Shaw's reservations about Irving. Even when Henry Irving "played in the provinces from 1856 to 1866 and then in London with several leading actors before going to the Lyceum Theatre in 1871 as leading man and stage manager" it was only when the Lyceum Theatre became controlled by Irving "from 1878 to 1898" that it "became the foremost theatre of London"(Brockett and Hildy 396). This profile accounts for the basis for the testimony by Brockett and Hildy that "between 1880 and 1900 the English theatre was dominated by the actor-manager, Henry Irving" (396).

Beyond the foregoing, one major way to justify the fascination that Jenny Marx had for Henry Irving as a prominent Shakespearian actor is by highlighting the celebration of his talent which came in 1895, years after Jenny Marx had died. Oscar Brockett and Franklin Hildy record that "in 1895 Irving became the first performer in English history to be Knighted, an indication that actors had at last achieved social acceptance and that Irving was considered preeminent in his profession" (400). No doubt, if the commendation by the Faculty and students at the University of Dublin which Jenny Marx recorded was a prologue, the event of 1895 in the career and life of Irving can be considered a befitting epilogue.

Notwithstanding the acknowledgment by Brockett and Hildy that "in 1874" Irving's "Hamlet ran for 200 nights, a new record for a Shakespearean play", it is strange that they argue that "the only Shakespearean role in which he was consistently successful was Shylock" (397). However, a fuller picture of Irving's rating as a Shakespeare actor may be sourced elsewhere. Before examining Jenny Marx's evaluation of Irving's *Hamlet*, it is necessary to spotlight Stark Young's comparative assessment of the *Hamlet* productions of his generation. While contextualizing his thesis that "Mr John Barrymore seemed to gather together in himself all the Hamlets of his generation, to simplify and direct everyone's theory of the part", Stark Young remarks as follows:

> to me his Hamlet was the most satisfying that I have seen, not yet as a finished creation, but a foundation, a continuous outline. Mounet-Sulley's Hamlet was richer and more sonorous; Forbes-Robertson's at times more sublimate; Irving's more sharply devised…(422).

Against the above background sketched by Stark Young, it is apposite to present Jenny Marx's appraisal of Irving's *Hamlet*. Jenny Marx records in "From London's Theatre World", how in 1874, "a young actor named Henry Irving who was known only in the provinces and whose London break-

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through had been made in melodramatic parts, ventured once again to bring Hamlet to the stage". Concerning Irving's spectacular performance, she notes as follows:

> He dared to defy the old, conventional tradition and create his own faithful and original Shakesperian portrait, instead of the usual, all too familiar hamlet… it became fashionable to see Irving as Hamlet… he succeeded, day by day, in increasingly overcoming weaknesses and crudities from which his Hamlet was not yet free and in finally creating a complete, rich, rounded and harmonious portrait in which little fault could be found.

At the end of the day, according to Jenny Marx, Irving becomes celebrated as "an ideal Prince Hamlet".

Conclusion

No doubt, from the foregoing one can appreciate that Jenny Marx was a distinguished theatre historian and performance theatre critic. That many 20th century theatre critics appear to repeat what Jenny Marx wrote about a century earlier is more than an indication that she was ahead of her time. With the devotion to minute details in her tracing and evaluating aspects of the production history of some of Shakespeare's plays and her contestation of critiques of same as provided by theatre critics of her time, Jenny Marx demonstrates that she is one of a kind as an intellectual. She is remarkable in her presentation of the stage history of William Shakespeare's plays and the distinguished cast of actors and actor-managers who made theatre history with their realizations of the dominant characters that people Shakespeare's plays. And hers was a life-long passion deriving from a critical orientation that goes back to the beginnings of her adolescence wherein apart from the rich literary foundations she got from her father, she not only exposed her husband-to-be, Karl Marx, but also her children to Shakespeare studies.

Notes and References:

[1]Jenny Marx's essays were originally published in the 19th century in *Frankfurter Zeitung und Handelsblatt,* Frankfurt. However, it is possible that the anthologization of Jenny Marx's essays on William Shakespeare in *On Literature and Art* by Marx Engels (Progress Publishers, 1976) might have robbed her of the prominence she very well deserved as not many would have taken any special note of her essays in such a book. Because the Jenny Marx essays

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studied here are reproduced from one of the internet sources housing her documents, we do not have page references to make here.

[2]The famous Amalie Haizinger 1800-1884 started her acting career as a 5 year old appearing at the Hoftheater in Karstrute. She got married to Anton Haizinger (1796-1869) in 1827 after the death of her first husband, Carl Neumann, who she got married to at the age of 16. From 1846 till her death in 1884, she was associated with the Burgtheater in Vienna, Austria. Her two daughters, Louise (1818-1896) and Adolfine (1822-1844) also became actresses.

[3]See Rachel Holmes, "Eleanor Marx and Shakespeare" *Shakespeare* 14.2 (2018): 157-166.

[4]It is instructive that despite what Jenny Marx knows about Helen Faucit's appearance as Antigone and for which Faucit won accolades from a University twenty five years before Henry Irving, Marx's recognition of Faucit as a "highly gifted and charming performer, who at that time shone in the company of Macready" is more than double applause. Originally born as Helen Farrenc, (1817-1898), Faucit was Helen Faucit's stage name. Beyond working with such influential actors as William Charles Macready, Samuel Phelps, and Charles Kean and through whose partnership she became remarkable for her interpretations of the Shakespearean female characters - Juliet, Ophelia, Rosalind, Lady Macbeth, Beatrice and so on - Helen Faucit would eventually become an impressive feminist theatre critic famous for writing two volumes of essays: *On some of Shakespeare's Female Characters* (1847) and *Shakespeare's Female Characters* (1850). Helen Faucit's resonant acting style displayed at the major 19th century London theatres as Theatre Royal, Drury lane, and the Haymarket Theatre must have endeared her to Jenny Marx the compulsive theatergoer.

[5]It was through Henry Giffard's presentation of *The Life and Death of King Richard III* on 19 October, 1741 that David Garrick emerged as an actor to be reckoned with. As Frank Muir elaborates,

Garrick was an immediate success. He was exactly what the mid eighteenth-century British theatre was most in need of; an actor who could ease theatre out of its old habits, and a figure who could stand as a central artistic authority. Garrick managed this. He also managed to demonstrate that an actor manager could make a tremendous amount of money; his wealth was

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second only to that of the Elizabethan actor Edward Alleyn, who left enough to found Dulwich College… (237)

In "The Modernity of Shakespeare's Theatre", John Gassner reveals a remarkable profile of David Garrick as an actor-manager and producer of Shakespeare's plays. According to Gassner,

It is worth recalling that the great actor-manager David Garrick, who presented twenty-four of Shakespeare's plays, at the Drury Lane Theatre under his management between 1747 and 1776, and who played in seventeen of them himself, more the costume of an eighteenth-century bridgadier general in *Macbeth.* The production was, so to speak, a modern dress *Macbeth* (46).

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