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The Events of June 1848: the 'Monte Cristo' Riots and the Politics of Protest

Theatrical riots are usually dismissed as occasions during which aesthetic reactionaries battled reformers over stylistic issues of little relevance to pressing and immediate social concerns. Yet how true is this? What were the real issues which boiled over at such apparently confined and innocuous occasions as the Old Price Riots at Covent Garden in 1809, the Paris *Ernani* riot of 1830, the visit of a celebrated English actor which sparked the New York Astor Place riot in 1849, or the first night of a play which brought about the *Playboy* riots in Dublin in 1907? The complex social and cultural tensions on such occasions clearly operated during the two days of disturbance which came to be known as the *Monte Cristo* riots in London in 1848, and there are curious modern parallels. Victor Emeljanow is Professor of Drama at the University of Newcastle, Australia. His full-length works include *Anton Chekhov: the Critical Heritage, Victorian Popular Dramatists*, and, with Jim Davis, *Reflecting the Audience: London Theatregoing, 1840–1880* (University of Iowa Press, 2001), which was recently awarded the Society for Theatre Research's Book Prize for 2002.

THEATRE semioticians argue that the process of dramaturgic construction in theatre is an ongoing one, incomplete until the spectators' responses to performance have contributed to shaping the dramatic product.¹ Even in a darkened auditorium, spectators provide a synergy of collaboration and intervention without which no dramatic closure is possible.

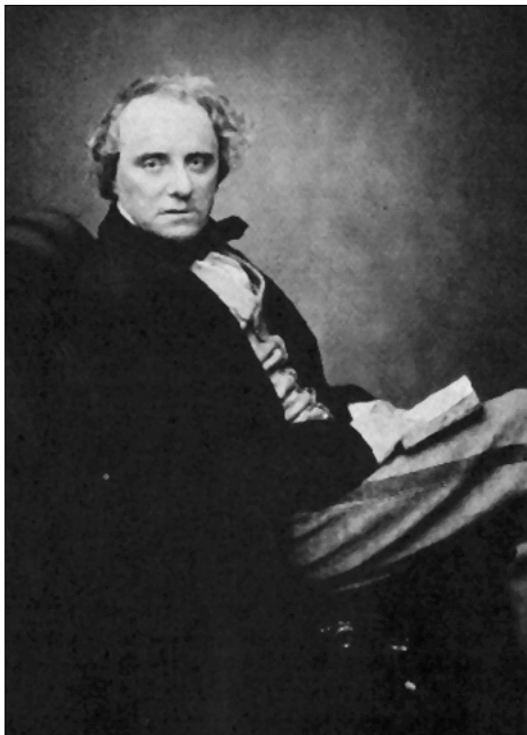
The conditions of nineteenth-century theatrical engagement – the lit auditorium, for example, by which the actors could see the spectators and spectators each other, and the existence of such jealously guarded conventions as half-price admission which required both performers and spectators to renegotiate the space which they occupied in response to the influx of a fresh and vocal audience component mid-way through an evening's performance – suggest the operation of an active and indeed volatile dramaturgic process in the theatre of the time. Such volatility also potentially allowed for a much more radical process to take place: the dramaturgic engine itself, an operation traditionally initiated by the performers on stage, could be appropriated and re-sited in the auditorium, thereby itself being transformed into a space for performance.

Writers such as Peter Brooks and Elaine Hadley² have suggested that the melodramatic mode informs both the imaginative expressions of the nineteenth century and its polemical tactics of dissent – in other words, that the features of melodrama may be seen to permeate many of the responses to the period's social, economic, and epistemological changes. If this is the case, then it should come as no surprise that spectators in a theatre could regard the defined borders of street, auditorium, and stage as illusory. We might therefore expect them not only to carry with them the melodramatic practices of the streets but also to be prepared to enact a scenario in the auditorium which might manifest components of melodramatic forms appropriated from the stage: the identification of its villains and heroes, the confrontations between the forces of reaction and change, the ritualized behaviour utilizing significant (in the semiotic sense) props and costuming.

The fluidity of the borders might, however, also result in melodramatic closure – punishment, revenge, or the re-establishment of social values – being achieved not in the auditorium but rather once more in the streets or within the equally theatricalized



The main theatrical protagonists. This page, above: Benjamin Webster when manager of the Haymarket Theatre. Below: Charles Kean in 1860. Opposite page, top: Eliza Vestris at the height of her appeal, about 1830. Bottom: Charles J. Mathews in about 1842.



arena of a court of law. In June 1848 a series of events took place at the Drury Lane theatre during which the performance of a play by a visiting French company became an occasion for spectators to take sides in a struggle whose political and social dimensions were being debated and fought over in the streets. The occasion itself was intensely theatricalized, with performers cast in the role of villains, individual spectators as heroes, and the action in the auditorium producing a crisis which indeed found its resolution and closure in a court of law.

From Old Prices to New Grievances

In 1809 Covent Garden was the site for the most celebrated theatrical riot of the English nineteenth century. Marc Baer³ has shown that the Old Price Riots were a far more complex phenomenon than earlier critics, who interpreted them as the triumph of mob rule or as a class struggle, would allow. They were an occasion when spectators were actually empowered to voice their concerns about issues such as autocratic government, aristocratic privilege, or the capitalist appropriation of popular rights in the theatre, even if they were disempowered in the streets once they had left the theatre.

The terms of the protests themselves, however, which voiced dissatisfaction with raised ticket prices and demanded the restitution of the Old Prices, also condemning the proliferation of privileged box enclosures and the containment of lower price theatre-goers within the overcrowded 'pigeonholes' of the upper galleries, all suggest narrow, essentially theatrical perspectives. We now know, however, those were largely symbolic, and there is evidence to suggest that parliamentary Radicals were responsible in part for the orchestration of the disruptive behaviour which lasted for 67 nights.

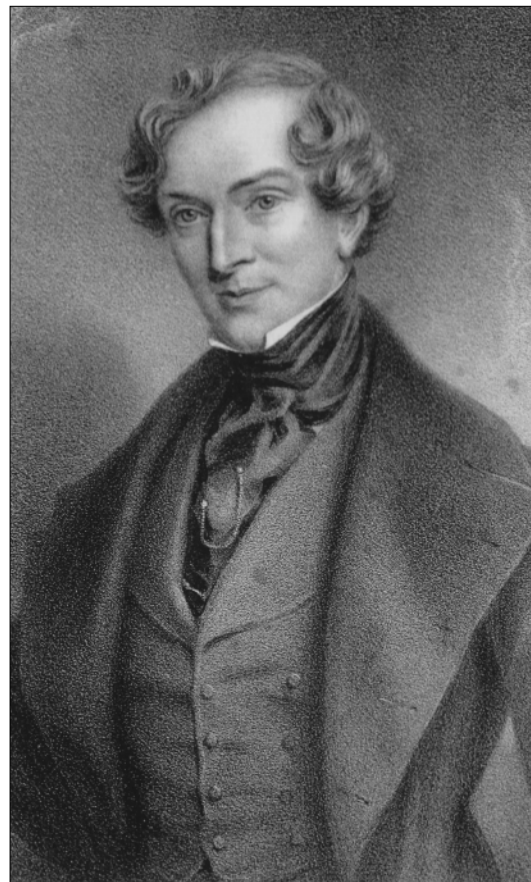
The next major disturbance in a London theatre occurred at Drury Lane in June 1848 in what became known as the *Monte Cristo* Riots. To what extent was this disturbance a mirror of the earlier Old Price Riots? Certainly direct comparisons were drawn at the time, particularly because both appeared to

have been occasioned by essentially theatrical grievances. Nevertheless, in the light of Baer's analysis of the earlier disturbance, it may be fruitful to examine the sequence of events which surrounded the *Monte Cristo* Riots as well as the issues which resulted in two nights of disruptive behaviour in a patent theatre, petitions to both Houses of Parliament, arrests, and heavy fines.

On 28 May 1848 a formal announcement appeared in the *Sunday Times* that a visit by the Paris-based Théâtre Historique to Drury Lane would take place in the near future. On 3 June *The Times* stated that the company would perform Alexandre Dumas's own version of his hugely successful novel, *The Count of Monte Cristo*, playing over two nights starting on 12 June, in order to accommodate the version's five acts and eleven scenes. The company would bring its entire production, including sets, costumes, and musicians.⁴

There were, however, already signs that some kind of organized resistance was being contemplated. Thus, *The Spectator* of 27 May referred to 'large placards' being posted everywhere – 'which at first look like new manifestations of Chartism, but on closer inspection they turn out to be appeals to the British authors and actors, calling upon them to resist the foreign invasion by petition'.⁵ This indeed happened: a petition signed by 110 members of the Lyceum theatre complained about the announcement, stating that such a foreign takeover 'must cause the immediate closing of the doors against native talent'.

On Monday 12 June, an organized disturbance occurred before the curtain rose. Tin whistles had been distributed to spectators, and shouting, which drowned out the performers, continued for three hours. Umbrellas were put up in the pit; people in the boxes were singled out and pursued outside the theatre; and there was considerable evidence that those whom *The Times* of 13 June called 'persons of standing and respectability in the histrionic profession' had been involved. Spectators wore placards inserted into their hats stating, 'No English authors or English actors are allowed to exercise their talents in Paris.'



The Riots and the Reactions

On 13 June, two men, Charles George and William Harrison – both ‘respectably dressed young men’ – as well as Harry Linden and William Attwood, described as actors, were found guilty of riot. Attwood was fined £5 for assaulting the police and the other three were released on recognizances of £100 each. On the same day Macready, the ‘eminent tragedian’,⁶ wrote to Hostein, manager of the Théâtre Historique, in a letter published in *The Times*, condemning the disreputable behaviour. He also expressed the pleasure he had felt at the reception accorded his own company in Paris some years before.

But on 14 June the disturbances resumed, with new placards and evidence of more extreme behaviour. Pit benches were overturned, decorative panels were torn off the box fascias, and banners were waved. There were more arrests, notably of the American-born actor and singer Sam Cowell, whom *The Times* (16 June) identified as the ‘leader of the rioters’. He had been at Drury Lane on both nights and moreover had pulled off his coat in order to make himself more conspicuous. Cowell had started off in the boxes and then moved to lead the demonstration from the pit.⁷ The magistrate released Cowell on a personal recognizance of £50, with two sureties of £25 each.

On 15 June the House of Commons received a petition from Benjamin Webster, the proprietor of the Haymarket, complaining of the great hardship occasioned by the country being overrun with foreign dramatic performers.⁸ At the same time, Charles Mathews, joint lessee with his wife Madame Vestris of the Lyceum Theatre,⁹ was contemplating taking out an injunction against the Théâtre Historique, given the announcement that the company would once again attempt to perform the play on the nights of 19 and 21 June at Drury Lane. In order to prevent further disturbances, the Drury Lane management stated that there would only be one entrance open and that the performance would start at 8.00 p.m. rather than 6.30, on the assumption that this would encourage a more sophisticated group of spectators.

On 16 June the petitions of Webster and the Lyceum company were read and discussed in the House of Lords. In the meantime, Mitchell, the manager of the St James’s Theatre, had invited Hostein to perform there on the nights of Wednesday 21 and Saturday 24 June.¹⁰ Hostein, in reply, wrote a letter which appeared in *The Times* on 19 June, accepting the invitation and apologizing for the trouble he had involuntarily caused. In the same issue, T. P. Cooke, who was reviving his celebrated performance as William in Douglas Jerrold’s *Black Ey’d Susan* at the Surrey Theatre,¹¹ wrote a letter affirming how well he had been received in Paris when he had performed there in 1826.

The disturbances had meant that none of the theatre critics had been able to evaluate the performance of the play at Drury Lane.¹² *The Times* reviewed the two parts on 22 June and 26 June at the St James’s Theatre, and found *Monte Cristo* a disappointingly bad play which appeared merely to replicate the structure of a serialized novel. There was no disturbance at this theatre other than that occasioned by the muted exit of audience members who found the performance interminable (*Sunday Times*, 25 June).

The Théâtre Historique returned to Paris and collapsed in the following year. Cowell, who was playing in a version of Donizetti’s *Daughter of the Regiment* at the Princess’s Theatre, was ‘received with great applause – a tribute to his spirited conduct in the recent opposition to the French company at Drury Lane’ (*Sunday Times*, 2 July), and the Surrey company rushed to put on an English version of *The Count of Monte Cristo* over one evening. It failed dismally.

Contextualizing the Riots

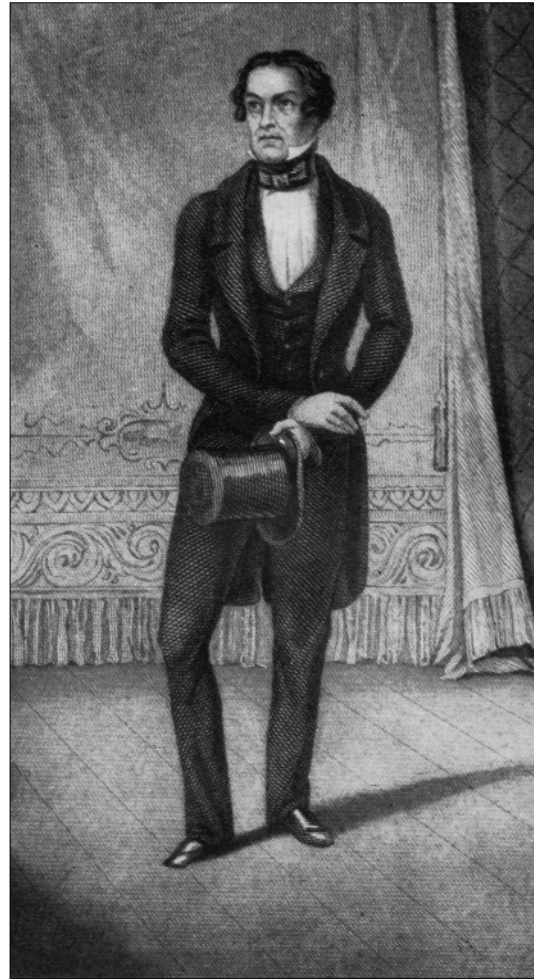
All this might appear something of a storm in a teacup, little different from protectionist cries about the foreign content of television series or Hollywood imperialism. The events do, however, throw up some interesting questions and manoeuvres. For example, was the disturbance a protest by out-of-work actors seriously disadvantaged by the number of foreign companies in London? Given

the considerable evidence of organization undertaken prior to the immediate events, who was responsible for them? Why did the disturbance take place at this particular time and place, and can it be linked, like the O. P. Riots, to tensions and issues outside the theatre? Why was it thought appropriate to bring to a head an issue about the French domination of the London stage when adaptations of pirated French originals were playing at most London theatres, and the Cirque Franconi had just completed a hugely successful season at the very theatre where the disturbances took place?

To explore these questions we need to contextualize the visit of the company and the melodramatic sites in which the spectators were operating outside the immediate locus of Drury Lane. The 1840s were a period of great social disturbances fuelled by disastrous crop failures, financial and trade depression, and outbreaks of cholera (the last in 1847). At the same time there was anxiety about the huge French standing army maintained by Louis-Philippe and that affairs in Ireland would soon reach a boiling point.

At the start of 1848, the papers were concerned with these issues and there was discussion (in the *Sunday Times*, 2 January) about the feasibility of a French invasion using fishing fleets located at Dunkirk and Brest. This was overshadowed, however, by the insurrection in Paris which started on 22 February, and which was to involve bloody confrontations between workers and soldiers, with the National Guard emerging on the side of the revolution. The result was the overthrow of the monarchy and the establishment of a republic.

One of the catch songs of the revolution was the Girondin Chorus from Dumas's *Chevalier de la Maison Rouge*. The Théâtre Historique suggested this play as a possible production in London, but the Lord Chamberlain turned it down. The company had opened its Paris production of *The Count of Monte Cristo* on 7 February, but events in the streets had forced it to close its doors despite, or perhaps because of, Dumas's well-known republican sympathies.



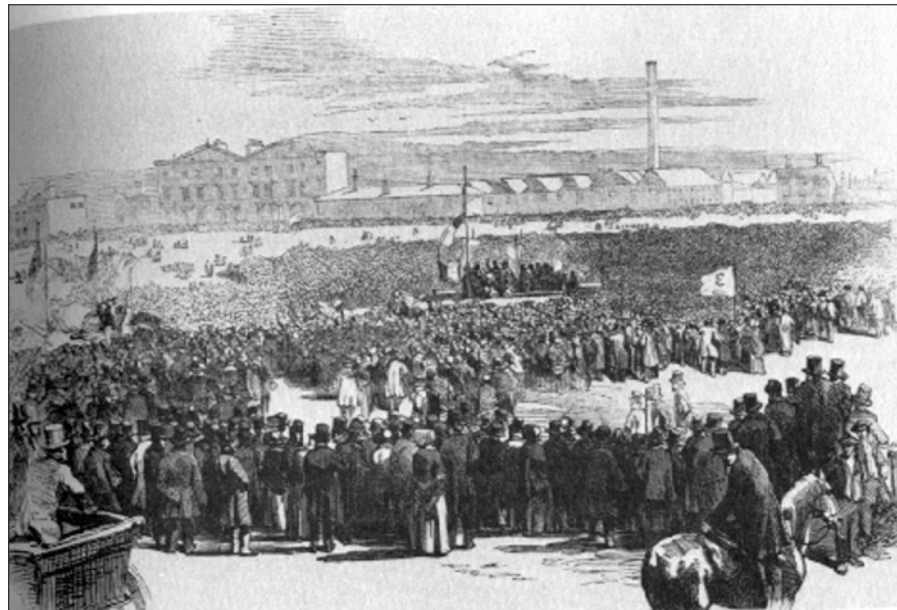
The 'wild card'. W. C. Macready, here seen at his farewell appearance, Drury Lane, 1851.

The basis of the revolution was a call for political reform and an end to the corruption associated with the court of Louis-Philippe and the deputies of the National Assembly. It had strong working-class backing. All these points, said the *Sunday Times* in its leader of 27 February, should be heeded by English politicians as well. The success of the French revolution was welcomed, particularly by two movements in Britain: the Chartists and the supporters of Irish independence.

European Revolutions and the Chartists

Chartist agitation had started in 1838, especially in the north of England, and the period up to 1842 was one of continuing out-

Right: the meeting at Kennington Common. Engraving from the *Illustrated London News*, 15 April 1848. Opposite page: police at Bishop Bonner's Fields, 12 June 1848. Engraving from the *Illustrated London News*, 17 June 1848.



breaks of rioting and fatalities. By 1848, Chartism was an umbrella for those forces demanding political, social, and economic change, which gained particular urgency from the collapse of trade in 1847–48. It's worth noting as well that continental revolutionaries were also living in England at the time, notably Mazzini, Engels, and Marx.

On 6 March 1848 a large gathering under the Chartist umbrella took place in Trafalgar Square. Speeches were read congratulating the French people, and 127 people, 61 of whom were less than twenty years old, were arrested by the metropolitan police.¹³ Shops were looted, and when it was announced that there would be a huge meeting on 10 April at Kennington Common, the authorities panicked. The beginnings of rebellion in Ireland increased this anxiety: in Dublin, solidarity with the Chartists was declared and it was proposed to send a delegation to Paris to congratulate Parisians on the 'glorious struggles in the cause of liberty'.

The British government was concerned: a 'Bill to authorize during a limited time the removal of aliens from the realm' was read for the second time in the House of Lords on 6 April, empowering justices, mayors, and chief magistrates to imprison aliens without bail. The reaction to the threat of more mass unrest was extreme. The Duke of Wellington

was made responsible for co-ordinating the mobilization of troops: 4,000 police were to be stationed at London bridges as well as 3,000 troops together with artillery pieces, and 85,000 special constables were to be sworn in to protect major buildings. Authorities had learned from the events in Paris, and no carts or vans which could serve as barricades were to be allowed on the streets.

In the event, it was an anti-climax. Torrential rain helped to disperse the large crowd, estimated at 150,000. To be sure, there was talk of assassination by the more militant Chartists and running battles with police went on throughout the night of 10 April. Moreover, arrests and rioting continued for the rest of April and into May. There was also considerable excitement in Paris where it was felt that England was on the eve of revolution. Parisians were intensely disappointed when it was discovered that, contrary to rumour, Queen Victoria had not in fact fled to the Isle of Wight as a precursor to eventual abdication (*Sunday Times*, 16 April).

It was enough to make Sir James Graham, the former Home Secretary, write in a letter on 22 April: 'I cannot shut my eyes to the certainty that the establishment of a Republic in France will give immense activity to the democratic movement in this country; and rebellion in Ireland may be the signal for



a servile insurrection which would spread far and wide.¹⁴ This seemed to be prescient, since cries of 'Down with the monarchy' and 'Three cheers for a republic' were heard at the large Chartist rally held on 31 May at Clerkenwell Green.

By now even Queen Victoria was concerned. She asked Lord John Russell whether something might be done about the seditious ringleaders. His reaction was to infiltrate informers at the various Chartist rallies. This resulted in warrants being issued by magistrate Jardine for the arrest of the leaders: John Fussell, a jeweller; Ernest Jones, a barrister; Alexander Sharpe; a copperplate printer; and Joseph Williams, a baker. Their arrests were greeted with vocal protests about police brutality.

The Mood for an Affray

Meanwhile the Chartist leaders announced a nationwide demonstration for Monday, 12 June – Monday because it was traditionally taken as an unofficial working-class holiday, and this, the organizers hoped, would ensure a greater turnout. Posters announcing the rally were everywhere joined by posted proclamations announcing a veto on the pro-

posed meeting, and 4,500 troops, six field pieces, three troops of the Royal Horse Artillery, 400 pensioners, and 4,300 police were mobilized in London. Although once again the meeting at Bishop Bonner's Field dissolved due to rain, the magistrates were not stood down until 10.00 p.m. on the night.¹⁵ This was the day that the Théâtre Historique chose to open *The Count of Monte Cristo*.

Thus spectators going to the theatre on that Monday were bombarded by placards announcing the nationwide Chartist day of dissent, those proscribing the London manifestations, and those which could be taken for Chartist notices but which were, in fact, condemning the French theatrical invasion of Drury Lane and fighting a rearguard action against free theatrical trade just at the time that the protectionists against Free Trade in Parliament were fighting a losing battle.¹⁶

Certainly the spectators who decided to go to Drury Lane were prepared for an affray. Newspaper reports suggest that the box office takings were not disadvantaged and thus that there was a good house on the night. Frustratingly, we don't know who made it up. However it is difficult to imagine Drury Lane filled with French-speaking en-

thusiasts of Dumas (unlike the much smaller St James's Theatre, located off Piccadilly, which did cater for just such a clientele).

Moreover, Drury Lane had been doing very badly for some time. Unlike Covent Garden, it had not established an identifiable repertoire for itself and was merely a garage. It was, however, an easily identifiable icon even if spectators had to approach it through some of London's worst inner city slums.¹⁷ We do know that there were considerable numbers of French supporters who entered the lists on behalf of the Théâtre Historique, many of whom were women. The newspapers disparagingly called them well-known French prostitutes. The arrested individuals, however, were not the French supporters.

The evidence of the broadsheets and the placards corroborate that the incidents at the theatre were surrounded in the streets by expressions of strident nationalism and xenophobia. There is little evidence, however, to suggest that those arrested were motivated by a fervent concern for things English. More significantly, neither is there evidence to suggest that they were starving dramatic authors or actors. Sam Cowell was a popular and successful performer; Attwood was a member of the Olympic Theatre company.

Certainly Cowell made sure that he was noticed. He was reported as having taken his coat off while positioning himself in the boxes. It may be that he was being deliberately transgressive and that under his coat he was wearing the Billy Barlow costume which identified him at Evans's Song and Supper Rooms as a working-class spokesman.¹⁸ But why was this American-born performer there in the first place?

The Palace Dimension

Since the beginning of April the *Sunday Times* had been campaigning against royalty attending performances by foreigners. On 2 April it had castigated the Prince of Wales and the royal children for attending Franconi's Cirque National at Drury Lane. It was the duty of the sovereign to support native entertainment: 'Drury Lane is now absolutely and completely a French establishment.'

Queen Victoria was sufficiently disturbed by the talk of assassination in the streets, the abdication of Louis-Philippe, and the turmoil generally in continental Europe, to intervene in order to hasten the arrests of Chartist leaders. If the theatre had the potential to be a site for the crystallizing of republican sentiments, it might also be utilized as a means for 'diverting attention from more dangerous subjects' (*Sunday Times*, 23 April). Perhaps it was timely to make a gesture. Sometime early in 1848 she had discussed the desirability of inviting an acting company to perform at Windsor Castle.

The narrative of the events now starts to become complicated. It seems likely that just as Westminster Radicals had manipulated the O. P. spectators in 1809 at Covent Garden, so the spectators at Drury Lane in 1848 were also to an extent manipulated – not by politicians but by actor/managers jostling for royal favour.

Prior to the performance of *The Count of Monte Cristo*, Benjamin Webster had submitted a petition to Parliament. Charles and Ellen Kean were at this time employed by Webster for a starring season at the Haymarket.¹⁹ Webster was a friend of Charles Mathews and Eliza Vestris, who were managing the Lyceum. Webster had been the proprietor of the Adelphi Theatre, which was equidistant between the Haymarket and the Lyceum, since 1844. It was managed by Parisian-born Madame Celeste, and she and Webster were having an extended affair.²⁰ Webster was certainly one of the managers consulted about possible arrangements for Windsor later in 1848.

But when Webster's petition was heard in the House of Lords, whatever kudos he had expected to gain by placing himself in the vanguard of English dramatic protectionists evaporated. In fact the Duke of Clarence felt that Webster was the last person who should complain, since the Haymarket was doing very well. There seemed little to support the claim of the petitioners that 'the Lyceum, Haymarket, and Adelphi have been almost necessitated to close their doors owing to the opposed force arrayed against them' (*The Times*, 16 June).

Moreover, Earl Fitzhardinge wrote to Webster saying that the actions of Cowell and others were prejudicial to the cause of English performers (*The Times*, 17 June). Cowell was a friend of Benjamin Webster. In the reports of the disturbance of 12 June, Mrs Alfred Wigan was reported as having taken an active part. Her husband was employed at the Haymarket, and wrote to the *The Times* protesting that, despite earlier newspaper accounts, neither he nor his wife were there on the night (*The Times*, 16 June).²¹ This flurry of activity might suggest that Webster was moving into damage control, distancing himself from any adverse criticism, let alone personal involvement.

The wild card, however, was the distinguished performer Macready, who was about to go to the United States. His letter to *The Times*, referred to earlier, generated an immediate legal response from Webster, Kean, and Mathews, all of whom he cordially disliked.²² They felt that they had been tarred with the brush of disrepute, although Macready had not named any of them in his letter. *The Times*, however, had always been partial to Macready, and in its comments accompanying the letter recalled in glowing terms the production of Handel's *Acis and Galatea* in 1842 during Macready's management of Drury Lane,²³ just at the time when Webster was submitting his petition to Parliament (10 June).

As far as Queen Victoria's household was concerned, Webster's actions, together with his less than discreet liaison with Madame Celeste, may have persuaded it to suggest that the Queen look elsewhere for her Master of Revels. She attended Charles and Ellen Kean's benefit at the Haymarket on 3 July, and even-handedly signalled her intention of being at Macready's farewell on 10 July as well. There is every likelihood that anti-Macready partisans tried to disrupt his farewell by disturbances in the pit and gallery.

The *Sunday Times*, which was very supportive of Webster, complained that 'an invidious attempt has been made to throw the odium of the disturbance in the theatre upon the parties who were instrumental in driving the French company from the stage of Drury

Lane theatre' (16 July).²⁴ Sometime around 13 July, Queen Victoria invited Kean's presence at Windsor Castle in December 1848 for the commencement of what would come to be known as the Windsor Theatricals. Webster may perhaps have lost the immediate battle, but he had won the war on his friend Charles Kean's behalf. Kean suggested that he and Webster co-manage the Windsor occasion.

The *Monte Cristo* riot does suggest that the spectators' reception of the Théâtre Historique's performances was influenced by political circumstances and manipulated by sections of the theatre industry for their own ends²⁵ – or rather, that the theatre space could be used to dramatize in the auditorium of Drury Lane the dilapidation of a national institution whose state could be obliquely attributed to royal neglect. The terms used in the riot remarkably echo those used in the streets and in the press: the fear of invasion, the dereliction of responsibility on the part of the ruling class, the depressed economic circumstances, the rights of free speech and assembly.

Comparisons with the O.P. Riots were obvious but perhaps also ultimately superficial. Magistrate Jardine, who had issued the warrants for the Chartist leaders, also tried the *Monte Cristo* rioters, and he quoted Lord Mansfield's judgement at the time of the O.P. Riots that people who gather in a theatre with the settled intention of damning a piece could be charged with conspiracy. Ironically, little attention had been paid by the spectators to the performance of the play. After all, far more significant issues were being addressed: the state of the country was being melodramatized in the auditorium.

Notes and References

1. For example, Marco de Marinis, 'The Dramaturgy of the Spectator', *The Drama Review*, XXXI, No. 2 (1987), p. 100–13.

2. Peter Brooks, *The Melodramatic Imagination* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1976); Elaine Hadley, *Melodramatic Tactics: Theatricalized Dissent in the English Marketplace, 1800–1865* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1993).

3. Marc Baer, *Theatre and Disorder in Georgian London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992).

4. Reputedly Dumas himself was to supervise the action, and the season was also to include *Queen Margot* and *The Three Musketeers*. In the event the supervision of the plays was entrusted to Dion Boucicault, whom Dumas had met in Paris during the disturbances in February 1848. Neither of the other two plays was performed (*Illustrated London News*, 3 June 1848).
5. *The Spectator*, 27 May 1848, p. 511.
6. W. C. Macready had managed Drury Lane from 1841 to 1843. Although financially less than successful, Macready's management had appeared to many as the beginning of a new golden age of English theatre.
7. Cowell had played in Edinburgh and was currently employed at the Princess's. He was also making a name as a singer of comic songs at Evans's, modelling himself on Frederick Robson. His renderings of the genre songs 'Billy Barlow' and 'Villikens and his Dinah', dressed in emblematic working-class costume, was to make him immensely popular at the Canterbury Music Hall in the 1850s. On Sam Cowell see Harold Scott, *The Early Doors* (London: Nicholson and Watson, 1946).
8. Benjamin Webster (1797–1882) managed the Haymarket Theatre from 1837 to 1853. The company was regarded as the best comedy ensemble in London.
9. Charles James Mathews and Eliza Vestris managed the Lyceum Theatre from 1847 to 1855.
10. It was an established venue for visiting French companies and the performances of French drama. Indeed, the entire Palais Royal company had presented a short season there with great success just as the Théâtre Historique were preparing to perform at Drury Lane.
11. Thomas Potter Cooke (1786–1864) had created the role of William in Jerrold's play at the Surrey Theatre in 1829. He was identified with the role of the sailor-hero for the remainder of his career.
12. *The Illustrated London News* of 17 June 1848 did refer to Melingue's performance as Monte Cristo and some of the scenery, but it is unclear whether this actually reflected the London performances. The commentator mentions that he had seen the original French production in Paris.
13. D. Goodway, *London Chartism 1838–1848* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), p. 115.
14. *Ibid.*, p. 79.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
16. The final dismantling of the barricades against Free Trade would take place in 1849 with the repeal of the Navigation Acts.
17. On the iconic status of Drury Lane and its failure to provide a focus for theatrical leadership, see Jim Davis and Victor Emeljanow, *Reflecting the Audience: London Theatregoing 1840–1880* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 2001), p. 193–202.
18. On the origins of the Billie Barlow figure, see Frances Fleetwood, *Conquest: the Story of a Theatre Family* (London: Allen, 1953).
19. Charles Kean and Ellen Tree, married in 1842, had toured together extensively in the English provinces and in America (most recently in 1845–47). They were to begin their important management of the Princess's Theatre in 1850.
20. See Margaret Webster, *The Same Only Different* (London; New York: Gollancz, 1969).
21. Alfred Wigan (1818–78) had joined the Haymarket company in 1847. He later worked with the Keans at the Haymarket and at the Princess's Theatre. He was particularly known for his French characters and the restraint of his performances.
22. On the legal dispute and Macready's response to their challenge, see Charles Dickens, Jr., *Life of Charles Mathews* (London: Macmillan, 1879), Vol. II, p. 167–72; and Clement Scott, *The Drama of Yesterday and Today* (London: Macmillan, 1899), Vol. I, p. 453–7.
23. Macready had presented the revival on 5 February 1842. It was regarded as a high point of his managerial career.
24. Certainly Macready saw this as a deliberately provocative action: 'an organized disturbance, similar to that got up for the expulsion of the French actors', he wrote in his journal on 10 July. See J. C. Trewin, ed., *The Journal of William Charles Macready* (London: Longman, 1967).
25. St Vincent Troubridge implies that the riot was influenced by the machinations of a theatrical cabal in 'Theatre Riots in London', *Studies in English Theatre History* (London: Society for Theatre Research, 1952).