

ARTICLE

Revisiting Mérimée in Performance / Revising the Canon of French Romantic Theater

Susan McCready

University of South Alabama

SUMMARY

When Mérimée's 1829 saynète *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* was first performed in 1850, it closed after only six performances, and Mérimée never saw it performed again. It was not until 1919, when modernist theater director Jacques Copeau produced it at his Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier, that the play enjoyed a tardy success. It has since been revived many times and immortalized in Jean Renoir's 1952 cinematic adaptation, *The Golden Coach*. This paper takes the performance history of *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* as a case in point for an analysis of the way in which the modernist "revolution" in stagecraft in the early twentieth century inflected subsequent readings and adaptations of Mérimée's play and in so doing helped to reorganize the canon of Romantic theater.

KEYWORDS : Mérimée – Musset – Dumas – Romantic theater – Romanticism – *Le Carrosse*

When Mérimée's saynète *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* appeared in the *Revue de Paris* in 1829, Étienne Delécluze judged it "Fort spirituelle mais encore plus indévoté" (Trahard 107). A minor scandal followed (the Duchesse de Berry canceled her subscription) and although it was collected in Mérimée's 1830 *Théâtre de Clara Gazul*, the play was not performed until 1850. By then, attitudes had evolved enough that it was no longer considered too immoral, however they had evolved so much that it was considered ridiculous. The play was laughed off the stage, much to the author's dismay, closing after only six performances. Mérimée never saw it performed again. In 1868 the play earned a second life as the source of Offenbach's operetta *La Périchole*, but *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* itself did not grace the stage again in France until 1919, when Modernist theater director Jacques Copeau produced it at his Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier. There, finally, it enjoyed a tardy success and has since been revived many times and immortalized in Jean Renoir's 1952 film *The Golden Coach*.

Jacques Copeau's influential revival of Mérimée's play is just one example of a reconsideration of Romantic theater that was ongoing during the interwar period both at the independent theaters of Copeau and others and at the tradition-bound Comédie-Française. It is clearly during this period that the accepted canon of Romantic theater emerged: Dumas and Hugo, who had been the most popular during their lifetimes, came to be considered heavy-handed and dated,

while Mérimée and Musset found new life on stage in a world that was at last ready for them. It is a commonplace of criticism of the Romantic theater to note that the Modernist transformation of the stage space in the early twentieth century was a necessary condition to the production of plays like Musset's *Lorenzaccio*, but of course, the performability of a play does not lead inevitably to its performance. (The Modernists did not attempt *Cromwell*.) Moreover, in the case of Mérimée's play, its performability was neither an obstacle to its performance in 1829 nor a hindrance to its success in 1850. In this essay, I will explore the intersection of the Modernist and Romantic theater in the interwar period in an attempt to answer a two-fold question about performance and canon: Why Romanticism and which Romanticism? In other words, what appealed to directors like Copeau in works like Mérimée's *Carrosse*, and how did his treatment of Mérimée's play inflect our contemporary notions of Romanticism? Using the performance history of *Le Carrosse* as a case in point, I will show how the political and social context of the *entre-deux-guerres* shaped the choices of theater directors like Copeau, and how in turn their choices shaped not only the developing Modernist aesthetic but also Mérimée's status in the academic canon and his enduring theatrical legacy in performance.

A tale of jealousy and vanity, *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* takes place in 18th-century Lima. As the curtain rises, the viceroy, immobilized by gout, worries that his mistress, the actress Camila Périchole, is being unfaithful with either a captain or a bullfighter (or maybe both). Housebound by his illness, he cannot confirm his suspicions, nor can he even enjoy his new carriage, just arrived from Spain. La Périchole appears at last (about one third of the way through the play) to torture and delight him, and eventually through threats and promises she gets the carriage for herself. As soon as la Périchole exits, the viceroy begins to regret his gift and fears that the court and the bishop will censure him for giving the coach to an actress. When on her way to church in the carriage, la Périchole causes an accident that overturns the carriage of a lady of the court, he begins to despair of his position. In the final scene, however, la Périchole reappears hand in hand with the Bishop of Lima, and the two explain that she has donated the coach to the Church for use in transporting the Blessed Sacrament to the dying. The closing scene is all veiled gallantry and hints of admiration between the actress and the bishop, and the viceroy finds he must put up with his gout and his jealousy a little longer. La Périchole emerges the clear winner, for although she does not get to keep the coach, she has strengthened her position with the viceroy and in society at large.

Although some contemporary readers took offense at what they considered the play's disrespectful treatment of religious figures and faulted Mérimée for his characteristic irony that verges on cynicism, the play was generally well received at the time of its publication in 1829. Contemporary readers admired Mérimée's wit and the character of Camila Périchole. The play and *Le Théâtre de Clara Gazul*, the collection in which it was republished in 1830, have, however, suffered since Mérimée's day from a certain critical neglect that recent scholars have attempted both to explain and to remedy. In her review of scholarship on Mérimée's theater, Barbara Cooper argues, "Because it was the first concrete illustration of the theatrical aesthetic promulgated by Stendhal ... *Le Théâtre de Clara Gazul* has managed, to some degree, to escape the neglect into which the dramatic works of ... others of Mérimée's contemporaries have fallen." She goes on, however, to lament that "such circumstantial celebrity ... is of limited value when the oblivion of history is merely traded for the obscurity of allusion" (Cooper 72-73). Writing more recently, Antonia Fonyi concurs and

asks, “Si, depuis bientôt deux siècles ... [Mérimée] continue à être reconnu, pourquoi est-il pourtant méconnu et mal connu ?” (Fonyi 131). She makes a convincing argument for the elements of his style, particularly what she calls his “sécheresse”—a quality that leaves critics cold and the authors of school books at a loss before the “inclassable” Mérimée (Fonyi 144).

Still, it seems to me that the failure of the one attempted production of *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* during Mérimée’s lifetime coupled with its posthumous success in the twentieth century are relevant to how Mérimée came to occupy the curious position of an author who is simultaneously marginalized in much scholarship on the Romantic theater and recognized as “along with Musset—the most original and most innovative French playwright of the Romantic era” (Gerould 125). Although Fonyi is writing about the reception of Mérimée’s oeuvre in general and not restricting her remarks to his plays (which of course make up only a small part of his literary production), it is telling that she begins her survey with “Mérimée est lu” (Fonyi 131) and goes on to make no mention of if or how he might also be “vu” or “entendu.” Literary reputations ebb and flow, of course; works that were hardly acknowledged at the time of publication are rehabilitated and canonized, while those once revered slip into oblivion. Plays, however, have a life outside of the library or the syllabus; and the career of a play in performance can have a profound effect on whether and how that play is later read and studied. In the case of Mérimée’s *Carrosse*, the initial failure of 1850 went unredeemed for nearly seventy years.¹ The long shadow of Victor Hugo loomed over the theater of the nineteenth century; in discussions of romantic theater, Hugo as theorist and dramaturge eclipsed Stendhal’s theories and their application in Mérimée’s *Clara Gazul*. Later, *Offenbach’s* operetta and other musical versions of *Le Carrosse* kept it alive in memory, but may have undermined consideration of it as a serious literary work. If the canon of Romantic theater has evolved significantly since Mérimée’s death in 1870, it is, I contend, in no small part thanks to the intervention of theater directors (and audiences) of the early twentieth century.

Jacques Copeau founded the Théâtre du Vieux-Colombier on the eponymous street in 1913 and quickly earned a reputation for challenging and avant-garde productions of both new plays and classics. Copeau’s style, inspired by the developing Modernist aesthetic in the visual arts and by “art theaters” that came before him, tended toward the ascetic. Throwing down a gauntlet before the theater establishment, he published a manifesto entitled “Essai de rénovation dramatique,” in the *Nouvelle Revue Française*. In it, Copeau argues for an austere aesthetic, no longer dependent on scenic machinery, free of “les trucs” that encumbered the pre-war stage (Dusigne 45). Rejecting dramatic illusion in favor of dramatic action, he writes, “Les servitudes de la scène et son grossier artifice agiront sur nous à la façon d’une discipline en nous forçant à concentrer toute vérité dans les sentiments et les actions des personnages. Que les autres prestiges s’évanouissent, et, pour l’œuvre nouvelle, qu’on nous laisse un tréteau nu!” (Dusigne 46). The theater’s first season presented such “œuvres nouvelles” (by Roger Martin du Gard and Jean Schlumberger) and also foreign classics by Heywood and Shakespeare, as well as three productions of plays by Molière and one of Alfred de Musset (a well-received *Barbérine*). From the beginning, Copeau’s choice of repertoire was questioned by some critics, who wondered at his preference for Shakespeare over Racine and for the low farces of Molière over his high comedies. Moreover, Copeau’s low-budget, bare-stage aesthetic

1 This is in contrast to Musset, whose reputation recovered somewhat tardily in the 1840s after his initial failure on stage in 1830.

was not universally appreciated and earned the Vieux-Colombier the derisive nickname “Les Folies Calvin” (Jomaron 732). Still, the pre-war Vieux-Colombier was sufficiently successful that had the war not intervened it might have gone on without interruption.

The next season of the Vieux-Colombier did not take place until 1917 in New York, where the troupe staged *Les Fourberies de Scapin* along with an original piece by Copeau entitled *L'Impromptu du Vieux-Colombier* alternating with a bill of *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* and *La Jalousie du Barbouillé* (reprised from the 1913 season). This was the first time Mérimée’s play had been performed in its original form since 1850 and it received good reviews from both anglophone and francophone critics in New York. The choice of these four plays for the American tour highlights some of the key aesthetic issues that Copeau explored throughout his career. The pairing of *L'Impromptu du Vieux-Colombier* (a sort of *art poétique dramatisé* in homage of *L'Impromptu de Versailles*) with *Les Fourberies de Scapin* announced the centrality of Molière to Copeau and his troupe. “C’est sous l’invocation de Molière que le Vieux Colombier a été fondé,” Copeau later wrote, “et qu’il a donné son premier spectacle, en octobre 1913, avec *L’Amour médecin*. L’étude du répertoire de Molière a été notre constant souci” (Copeau 1976 14). What is more, these particular plays staged what was at the time a rather idiosyncratic version of Molière; for rather than present the better-known and more canonical comedies in New York (and indeed throughout his career), Copeau preferred Molière *le farceur*, Molière the itinerant, Molière the *dell’arte* playwright and actor to the witty, spiritual, author of *Le Misanthrope*.² Given the importance of Molière to Copeau, the inclusion of Mérimée with these three plays is rather intriguing.

Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement has little superficially in common with Molière’s farces, at least as Copeau staged them, where the comic force derives from the movement of the actors’ bodies in space. In Mérimée’s play, on the contrary, the main character is immobilized and textual wit and timing predominate over *lazzi*. Still, *Le Carrosse* is a play about an actress, and as such it invites a reflection on the nature of theatrical practice, on artifice and authenticity, on appearance and reality. These were major themes for Copeau, ones that the viceroy (played by Copeau both in New York and later in Paris) ponders from his armchair. It seems to me, in fact, that the immobility of the viceroy is merely the other side of the coin to the frenzied activity of the farces. The viceroy’s inability to join the action becomes a metaphor for the position of the audience, present and necessary to the play, but at the same time excluded from it, forced into a posture of passive reflection. This intentional theatricality was a central tenet of Copeau’s aesthetic, which shunned “fourth wall” realism in favor of abstraction and might be in part what drew him to Mérimée, who, according to Fonyi, was disparaged throughout his career for the “subjectivité insuffisante” of his characters (140). Just as he preferred the farcical Molière to the more psychologically developed comedies, Copeau here chooses the Romanticism of Mérimée’s studied theatricality over the lyric effusions of Hugo or the overwrought emotions of Dumas. This early elevation of Mérimée’s play in a repertoire dominated by Molière is the first intimation of how the Romantic canon would evolve in the period between the wars.

It was not until the troupe’s return from the United States and the 1920 season at the Vieux-

2 The exception is *L’Avaro*, performed in 1913 and later in New York, starring Charles Dullin. It was not until 1940 that Copeau took on *Le Misanthrope* at the Comédie-Française.

Colombier that French audiences could see and judge Mérimée's play for themselves, but when they did it was something of a revelation. This time, the play shared a bill with a contemporary piece, Charles Vildrac's *Le Paquebot Tenacity*. André Antoine wrote in his review, "On connaît par la lecture, depuis longtemps, cette perle de Mérimée qu'est *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement*. Autre part, sur une plus grande scène, derrière une rampe, l'ouvrage semblerait un simple dialogue un peu long ... ici, grâce à ce cadre si particulier et à une parfaite réalisation, c'est pendant une heure, le plaisir le plus délicat et le plus complet" (Copeau 1979 151). Copeau's simple staging and the "parfaite cohésion" of his company were universally praised (Christout 86). Louis Jouvet who would go on to be one of the most important actor/directors of the interwar period played the bishop and Valentine Tessier, whose successful career spanned decades on stage and screen, played la Périchole opposite Copeau's viceroy. This production became the benchmark for all later productions, as when the Comédie-Française finally revived *Le Carrosse* after an eighty-year hiatus, in 1930. Reviewing that production, Lucien Dubech remarks snidely, "Si [la Comédie-Française] veut glorifier le souvenir du Vieux-Colombier, elle a gagné. Mais comme il est permis de douter que telle ait été son intention, elle ne pouvait guère faire de sottise plus ample" (Dubech). In fact, throughout his review he recalls Copeau's production from ten years earlier in glowing terms: "il sut tout tirer de rien et faire voir le Nouveau Monde avec un fauteuil, une fenêtre et une lorgnette." It would be another ten years before the Comédie-Française would stage Mérimée's play again, finally with some success. The director of that 1940 production was none other than Jacques Copeau.

In fact, beginning in the 1920s, the Comédie-Française, which still maintained a certain cultural capital as the first national stage, was becoming increasingly irrelevant to the aesthetic developments that were taking shape in the smaller independent theaters such as the Vieux-Colombier, the Atelier (led by one-time Copeau student Charles Dullin), the Comédie des Champs-Élysées with Louis Jouvet at the helm, and others. André Antoine (himself arguably the father of the art theater movement in France) had predicted this shift in his 1920 review of *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement*, "c'est au-dessus de [la maison de Copeau] que l'étoile se lèvera" (Christout 86). Antoine proved to be correct; the influence of the independent theaters grew at the Comédie-Française throughout the 1920s (affecting both the choice of plays and the manner of their production) until Copeau, Dullin, Jouvet and their sometime colleague Gaston Baty were finally invited to produce plays themselves at the state theater beginning in 1936. The revival of Mérimée's play at the Comédie-Française in 1930 is one example of this trend, and is part of the larger, parallel trend that revised the canon of Romanticism during the same period. Romanticism at the Comédie-Française before the 1920s was often equated with Hugo and therefore rather academic in tone. In fact, the Comédie-Française produced a commemorative "Centenaire du romantisme" in 1927 to mark the anniversary of the publication of Hugo's *Préface de Cromwell*. In announcing his plans for the centennial, Émile Fabre, the director of the Comédie-Française, made it clear: "... il demeure bien entendu que Victor Hugo, qui domine tout le mouvement, doit avoir la plus grande part" (Asté d'Esparbès). That was in 1923; by the time the centennial took place, due in part to the influence of the Modernist theater, Alfred de Musset, not Victor Hugo was its centerpiece, and the 1927 *Lorenzaccio* was the theatrical event of the year at the Comédie-Française.³

3 For more on the Centennial of Romanticism at the interwar Comédie-Française, see my essay "The Compromise of Commemoration: The 1927 Centennial of Romanticism at the Comédie-Française." *Modern Drama*, vol. 46, no. 2, (Summer 2003): 227-240.

Fabre later noted in his memoir that, during the Centennial and thanks in particular to the adoption of *Lorenzaccio* into the repertoire at the Comédie-Française, “Musset parut alors, à la surprise de bien des gens, ce qu’il est en réalité, le plus grand auteur dramatique français du XIXe siècle” (Fabre 115-116). Indeed, *Lorenzaccio*, which had not been performed in any way remotely faithful to Musset’s original work before Fabre’s 1927 production, would become the representative drama of the nineteenth century in France. *Lorenzaccio* eventually succeeded in reaching an international audience, as it has been widely performed abroad, particularly in Eastern Europe.⁴ Interwar performances of both Musset and Mérimée helped to reshape the Romantic canon by privileging a certain version of Romanticism that resonated with directors and audiences at the time. The *entre-deux-guerres* was characterized by an undercurrent of youthful disillusionment—with political leaders, with the political process and with modernity, itself. Against this backdrop, plays such as *Lorenzaccio*, with its critique of the spectacle of power and its young hero trapped in a role of his own making, took on a new relevance. Similarly, “Mérimée’s plays,” as Corry Cropper explains, “expose a subversive refusal to confirm any kind of social order” (18), as the once scandalous last scene of *Le Carrosse* demonstrates. This “interwar Romanticism,” which continues to inform our own (at least as it pertains to the theater), was tinged with calculated irony. In her knowing cynicism, Musset’s *Camille* (*On ne badine pas avec l’amour*) is a cousin of Mérimée’s *Périchole*; in its self-referential theatricality, Mérimée’s *Carrosse* is the precursor to all of Musset’s best comedies.

Plays in performance are, of course, ephemeral, and a convincing argument cannot always be made for the enduring legacy of a given production, but Jean Renoir’s 1952 film *The Golden Coach* allows us to make such a case for the influence of Jacques Copeau on the interpretation of *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement*, its status in the canon, and in the performance repertoire of French theaters. Renoir’s Technicolor film (only his second) was the first film he made in postwar Europe, having spent the war in the United States.⁵ Renoir, who wrote the screenplay himself, freely adapts Mérimée’s play, infusing it with all the comic movement and bustle the original lacks. Although the film retains the New World setting of the play, *La Périchole*, played by Anna Magnani, is no longer a famous Peruvian actress but simply Camilla, an Italian actress traveling with a group of itinerant comedians. In this way, Renoir emphasizes the theatricality of the original play while inscribing the *commedia dell’arte* into the film’s plot. Des O’Rawe has written convincingly about the use of *dell’arte* in the film, noting, “The Golden Coach – with its mélange of movement, colour and musicality – reaffirms the profound coherence of Renoir’s cinematic vision and its debt to the bittersweet genius of *commedia dell’arte*” (O’Rawe 87). *The Golden Coach* is, in fact, rather dizzily a film about the theater based on a play about an actress and written by a playwright using the name of an actress as his pseudonym.

The film references the theater from the opening shot: the credits roll over a drawing of a

4 Incidentally, Mérimée’s *Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* has also been widely performed in Eastern Europe (Gerould 120).

5 For more on the circumstances of financing and filming, see Bergstrom, Janet “Genealogy of the Golden Coach,” *Film History*, vol. 21, (2009): 276-294. According to Bergstrom, the choice of Mérimée’s play was not originally Renoir’s. He was hired by the producers of the Panaria company to replace Luchino Visconti as the director with the text, locations and the star, Anna Magnani already chosen.

stage curtain, which goes up in the first scene to reveal the viceroy's household. The plot advances with no other explicit reference to this framework until the final scene, but throughout the film there is a constant crossing back and forth between stage and the world. This is both literal (as in the scenes of the *dell'arte* performance, where the backstage intrigues of Camilla, Ramon and Felipe start to have an effect on those of Columbine and Pantalone) and figuratively (as in the scenes at court, where intrigues in the wings eventually make their way onto the stage of politics). Throughout the film, even the camera work underscores the theatricality of the material; as Renoir himself described it, "La caméra est axée face à la scène du théâtre ou face à la scène à filmer et elle enregistre" (Bazin 262). In a rather somber moment of clarity, the final scene resolves the paradox between stages and world. Jean Debucourt, in the role of the bishop, invites the other characters to take their bows, and as they do, they reverse the logic of stage and hall by bowing to the actress. Camilla then leaves the viceroy's house and finds herself on a stage and the curtain from the opening credits falls behind her. Alone, as she faces the audience, she faces the choice she has just made, a choice not among the three potential lovers who were seeking her hand, but between art and life. She has chosen art.

Renoir's film evokes the memory of Jacques Copeau (who died in 1949) and of the Vieux-Colombier by employing *dell'arte* as both style and subject matter. Although Copeau's interpretation of Mérimée's text was not, as we saw earlier, itself in the style of *dell'arte*, he was a leading proponent of the *dell'arte* revival in the interwar theater. Copeau explored *dell'arte* not just as a technique in performance but also in rehearsal and as a way of fostering a sense of communal purpose among his troupe.⁶ Copeau's original pairing of the play in New York with Molière's farces and the privileged position it occupied in the Vieux-Colombier repertoire (it was performed in every season from 1920-1923) make Copeau's *Carrosse* an essential part of the story of the Vieux-Colombier. The knowing theatricality of Renoir's film also recalls Copeau, whose productions often laid bare the theatricality of the stage space in a self-referential examination of theater itself. As O'Rawe notes, this concern dovetails perfectly with the use of *dell'arte*, "Ultimately [a *commedia dell'arte* performance] was about itself; it was about its own fictions, its own theatricality," he writes. "In this sense, it is hardly surprising that so many Modernist painters, composers and writers were drawn to the distinctive performative and visual characteristics of *commedia dell'arte*" (O'Rawe 88). O'Rawe rather overlooks Copeau as the author of this legacy in Renoir's film, citing instead cinematic precursors, including Marcel Carné's *Les Enfants du paradis* 1945. It is a curious omission, since, the star of that film, the great Jean-Louis Barrault, was a direct successor of Copeau, having begun his career in the theater of Copeau's former student and sometime associate Charles Dullin. Coincidentally, *Les Enfants du paradis*, which depicts the lives of nineteenth-century actors including the mime Dubureau (played by Barrault), is yet another reference in the dynamic relationship between the Modernist theatrical aesthetic and the Romantic theater.⁷

6 After he closed the Vieux-Colombier in 1925, he founded Les Copiaus, in Bourgogne, a troupe which took the *dell'arte* experiment to a new level both on stage—performing in masks, and renewing the traditions of the théâtre *de la foire*—and off—living communally and developing an idiosyncratic repertoire to suit their common artistic vision

7 See, for example, Affron, Mirella Jona. "Les Enfants du Paradis: Play of Genres." *Cinema Journal*, Vol. 18, No. 1, (Autumn, 1978) : 45-52.

Renoir's *Golden Coach* reflects a particular brand of Romanticism filtered through Modernist theatrical preoccupations, and it remains an important element of Mérimée's legacy in performance. Florence Naugrette cites the film as one reason *Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* is more often performed than Mérimée's other dramatic works (Naugrette 49). In her analysis of Mérimée's *Théâtre de Clara Gazul*, Naugrette goes on to synthesize the Modernist with the Romantic as she identifies "distançiation" as the essential characteristic of Mérimée's theater. According to Naugrette, Mérimée "opère une forme de distanciation qui relève de ce que Brecht appellera la tendance 'épique' du théâtre" (Naugrette 51). Looking through the lens of twentieth-century theatrical aesthetics, Naugrette makes a virtue of the longstanding criticisms of Mérimée's plays as distant, abrupt, and lacking psychological depth. "Le public doit accommoder son regard," she writes, "il croit reconnaître des motifs et des schémas connus, des emplois identifiables, mais la construction déjoue le déroulement prévu, sans que les actions incongrues des personnages aient été motivées," (Naugrette 57-58). Her remarks could just as easily be applied to the major plays of Musset from the early 1830s, whose abrupt endings undercut the expectations of genre, and which were not performed in their original versions until the twentieth century, when Modernist directors brought out precisely the incongruity of action that earlier audiences had found perplexing.

That today we think of (and praise) Mérimée and Musset in these similar terms is attributable in no small part to the way in which the Modernist theatrical aesthetic forced a reconsideration of the Romantic canon during the *entre-deux-guerres*. Modernist directors sought out Romantic texts but not those that had made the greatest impression on audiences of the nineteenth century. Moreover, they flatly rejected the melodramatic performance aesthetic that had dominated the Romantic stage. Interwar audiences were far too cynical for Hugo's contrived symmetry or Dumas' gushing, doomed lovers. At the same time, they rejected the "fourth-wall" Realism of their immediate predecessors on stage and with it the ideal of perfecting the dramatic illusion. These *disillusioned* directors and their audiences, on the contrary, set out to lay bare the structures of theater, to "rethéâtraliser le théâtre," to use Gaston Baty's terms (Baty 7). Wary of the conventions of stage and canon they had inherited, Copeau and the Modernists sought to reconnect with an earlier theatrical tradition (of which the *commedia dell'arte* is one example) and to elevate an alternative canon to prominence. The rehabilitation of Mérimée's *Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement* in a transformed Romantic canon is a testament to their success.

WORKS CITED

- Asté d'Esparbès, "Les Projets de la Comédie-Française: un interview de M. Emile Fabre." *Comoedia*, (4 janvier 1923) : 2.
- Baty, Gaston. *Rideau baissé*. Paris: Bordas, 1949.
- Bazin, André. *Jean Renoir*. Paris : Editions Gérard Lebovici, 1989.
- Christout, Marie Françoise, Nöelle Guibert, and Danièle Pauly. *Theatre du Vieux-Colombier: 1913-1993*. Paris: Institut français d'architecture, 1993.
- Cooper, Barbara T. "Merimee's Romantic Theater: The Present State of Scholarship." *Nineteenth-Century French Studies* 6, (1977-1978): 72-81.
- Copeau, Jacques, Marie-Hélène Dasté, and André Cabanis. *Registres. Molière 2*. Paris: Gallimard, 1976.
- Copeau, Jacques and Marie-Hélène Dasté. *Les registres de Jacques Copeau 3 : Les registres du Vieux Colombier / textes recueillis et établis par Marie-Hélène Dasté ... ; Pt. 1*. Paris: Gallimard, 1979.
- Cropper, Corry L. "Revolution under the Mantilla: Mérimée's Spanish Theatre." *Dalhousie French Studies* 66, (Spring 2004): 11-19.
- Lucien Dubech, "Le Carrosse du Saint-Sacrement." *L'Action française*, (21 février 1930).
- Dusigne, Jean-François. *Du théâtre d'art à l'art du théâtre: anthologie des textes fondateurs*. Paris: Éditions théâtrales, 1997.
- Fabre, Emile. *La Comédie-Française: Histoire d'une société de comédiens à travers les siècles*. Paris: Nouvelle Revue Critique, 1942.
- Fonyi, Antonia. *Mérimée, écrivain*. Revue Des Sciences Humaines (Lille). Villeneuve d'Ascq: Université Charles-de-Gaulle, 2003.
- Gerould, Daniel Charles. "Playwriting as a Woman: Prosper Mérimée and The Theatre of Clara Gazul." *PAJ: A Journal Of Performance And Art* 30, no. 1 [88] (January 2008): 120-140.
- Jomaron, Jacqueline. *Le Théâtre en France*. Paris: A. Colin, 1988.
- Naugrette, Florence. "La Distanciation dans le Théâtre de Clara Gazul." *Littératures* 51, (2004): 49-60.

O'Rawe, Des. "Actors-How Shocking! Renoir, Theatre and The Golden Coach." *Film & Film Culture* 3, (2004): 87-94.

Trahard, Pierre. *La jeunesse de Prosper Mérimée (1803-1834)*. Paris: E. Champion, 1925.