

Percy MacKaye: Spatial Formations of a National Character

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Percy MacKaye has been mostly ignored by theatre historians and dramatic critics despite the large numbers of spectators, participants, and readers who encountered his work during the first third of the twentieth century. The fifth son of nineteenth-century theatre impresario, Steele MacKaye, Percy first embarked on a career in the commercial theatre, writing for established stars such as Julia Marlowe. However, MacKaye garnered much more public attention for his endeavors into community performance, what he termed civic theatre. He wrote several treatises and delivered countless speeches advocating for the civic theatre. In 1914, at the peak of his career, MacKaye wrote and produced *The Masque of Saint Louis*, which incorporated thousands of community performers and drew nightly audiences that averaged nearly 100,000.

This investigation of MacKaye's works relies heavily on spatial analysis, looking at how contemporary American spaces related to the scenographic spaces in these plays and masques. Specifically, this dissertation investigates how immigration and settlement house activities, world's fairs, the City Beautiful movement, and national parks and monuments presented idealized versions of the American landscape and how these activities affected both MacKaye and participants and spectators. Throughout his symbiotic relationship with these cultural components, MacKaye continually asserted the importance of an American theatrical tradition distinct from its European influences. MacKaye yearned to forge a national character through community performances that tied American identity to its landscape.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

A mostly ignored figure in recent theatre histories, Percy MacKaye was once hailed by his contemporaries as the first great American playwright. Son of the nineteenth-century theatrical actor-producer Steele MacKaye, Percy began his writing career by providing the choral lyrics to Steele's *World Finder*, an epic about Columbus performed at the 1893 Chicago World's Fair. A decade before the George Pierce Baker's famous Workshop 47 course, MacKaye continued his dramatic endeavors while a student at Harvard. There, in 1897, he delivered the valedictory address, "The Need of Imagination in the Drama of Today," a call for revolutionary changes in American theatre similar to those occurring in Europe. E.H. Sothorn and Julia Marlowe optioned his first commercial scripts and staged the premiere of *Jeanne d'Arc* in 1906. Past and present critics consider his best drama to be *Scarecrow*, an adaptation of Hawthorne's *Feathertop* that premiered on Broadway in 1911, by which time MacKaye had established himself as one of the brightest young writers for the stage.

However, like many theatre artists of the early twentieth century, he sought to break away from the commercial model. MacKaye thought of himself as part of a "poets' onset upon the theatre" along with Ridgely Torrence, Edwin Arlington Robinson, and his longtime friend, William Vaughn Moody. Yearning to break from European cultural dominance, these writers desired "to develop in America drama of spiritual depth commensurate with the great dramas of past epochs, yet nonetheless modern and indicative of the future."¹ Edmund Clarence Stedman, a popular poet and critic forty years MacKaye's elder, labeled the foursome an "inspired phalanx of American poets."² The veracity of these titles is of less importance than the attitudes they

¹ Arvia MacKaye Ege. *The Power of the Impossible: The Life Story of Percy and Marion MacKaye* (Falmouth, ME: The Kennebec River Press, 1992), 136-137. MacKaye attended Harvard from 1893-1897, and graduated valedictorian; Moody received an A.B. in 1893, an A.M. in 1894, and taught in the English department during the 1894-1895 academic year; Robinson attended Harvard from 1891-1893; Torrence, the same age as MacKaye received his education at Miami University of Ohio.

² Ibid., 147-148.

reflect and the mutual support the quartet offered each other. MacKaye often hosted the others when they visited his family at the Cornish Colony, where they shared their works-in-progress, works that they imagined could and would alter the direction of the American theatre from simplistic and light commercial fare to serious and poetic drama.

In the 1910s, MacKaye allied himself with the American community theatre and pageant movement. But he singled himself out among American pageant directors by referring to his spectacles as ‘masques’, a term that took hold to reference symbolic, as opposed to historic, community dramas. The scale of his community productions also dwarfed many other community drama efforts; two involved casts that numbered in the thousands and drew audiences in the tens of thousands nightly. But participant and audience sizes were not the only measures of MacKaye’s social influence. For example, a comparatively small cast performed *Sanctuary* for a small audience at the artist colony in Cornish, New Hampshire.³ However, within this remote audience a recently elected president Woodrow Wilson witnessed his daughter perform a leading role, thereby allotting this small conservationist piece significant cultural importance. Wilson was not the only major American figure involved directly or indirectly in MacKaye’s career, which intersected with and relied upon major artistic, social, industrial, civic, and government leaders. By the 1920s and early 1930s, when his dramatic output had decreased in quantity, MacKaye shifted from large-scale community performances to plays about American history and its pre-industrial landscape. George Washington and Appalachian mountain folk populate an imagined American past in these later works that indicate a shift in focus from local communities to national identity. MacKaye finished his dramatic career with *Wakefield*, commissioned by Congress as part of the national celebration of Washington’s bicentennial in 1932.⁴

Given the commercial and critical acclaim afforded O’Neill, it is not surprising that MacKaye has been pushed to the side of American theatre history. Like many of his predecessors and colleagues, MacKaye’s work does not measure up to ‘modern’ standards. John Gassner

³ The original performance of *Sanctuary* employed seven speaking performers, 55 pantomime performers, and an additional three speakers in the epilogue.

⁴ MacKaye continued to compose poems after 1932 and he wrote one last dramatic piece with a remarkably long title: *The Mystery of Hamlet, King of Denmark; or, What we will, a Tetralogy, in Prologue to The Tragical Historie of Hamlet, Prince of Denmarke, by William Shakespeare*. It premiered in 1949 at the Pasadena Playhouse. Because of its chronological separation from the bulk of his career as a dramatist, I have opted to exclude it from this project.

introduces his *Best Plays of the Early American Theatre: From the Beginning to 1916* with an essay revealingly entitled “Before O’Neill.” It asserts that until the Provincetown staging of O’Neill’s *Bound East for Cardiff* American theatre “produced no masterpieces, not even near masterpieces;” there was no good dramatic writing with the exception “most notably” of MacKaye and a few others including Edward Sheldon and William Vaughan Moody, who provided “high-minded” alternatives to popular fare “in anticipation” of O’Neill.⁵ Gassner makes no mention of MacKaye’s community dramas, works that have received limited commentary in more recent works. In *Masks of Modern Drama*, Susan Harris Smith pans MacKaye’s community masque *Caliban by the Yellow Sands* as “a huge and hollow spectacle, notable only for its scale and its immediate effect on stage designers.”⁶ Oscar Brockett’s *History of the Theatre* notes MacKaye as a leading proponent of community drama; and his *Century of Innovation* mentions the “ambitious” *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*. Several contributors to *The Cambridge History of American Theatre, Volume II* note various MacKaye commercial and community dramas in isolated sentences, but he does not form a significant part of any contributor’s essay. In a clear preference that highlights experimental modernism as the sole champion over commercial fare, these works merely touch on MacKaye and community performance, with little examination of the cultural implications of these works.

Heyward Brock and James Welsh provide the first hint at a cultural study of MacKaye’s masques, by comparing three of them to those devised by Ben Jonson.⁷ After emphasizing the formal aspects of MacKaye’s work, they point out that his masques are culturally important because of their emphasis on community participation. However, they simply assert his position as an important figure in addressing the relationship between theatre and society and then neglect to investigate what that importance might be.

Only two recent books investigate MacKaye substantially. Both David Glassberg and Naima Prevots explore his pageantry work, but do not discuss in detail any of his works before 1914 or after 1917. Glassberg gives *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* a very thorough look and Prevots chronicles both *Saint Louis* and *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*. The latter author

⁵ John Gassner and Mollie Gassner. “Introduction: Before O’Neill” in *Best Plays of the Early American Theatre: From the Beginning to 1916* (New York: Crown, 1967), xv, xxvii.

⁶ Smith, Susan Valeria Harris. *Masks in Modern Drama*. (Berkeley: U California Press, 1984), 64-65. The designers of *Caliban* were most notable: Josef Urban and Robert Edmond Jones.

⁷ D. Heyward Brock and James M. Welsh, “Percy MacKaye: Community Drama and the Masque Tradition” *Comparative Drama* 6.1 (Spring 1972): 68-82.

focuses on the collaborative efforts of communities and pageant coordinators, but glosses over many of the cultural factors that lead to pageantry's rise and fall in early twentieth-century America. Glassberg notes these cultural elements and briefly discusses their intersection with the pageant movement, but he does not investigate their relationship to pageant appearance, structure, and subject matter. These good books serve as introductions to MacKaye, but they neither situate these two pieces within the arc of his career nor account fully for the interrelationship between broader cultural movements and his work.

Given the growing interest in community-based theatre and performance, MacKaye needs to be examined more closely because of his status as an innovator, advocate, and tremendously successful community performance practitioner on a national scale. The following study does not seek to assert the artistic genius of Percy MacKaye, but it does serve to account for his enormous popular impact during the first decades of the twentieth century. In raw numbers, more Americans witnessed or participated in his plays than those by any other writer of the period. Countless reform-minded American leaders at the community, state, and national level witnessed those same plays; they also read his books, listened to his speeches, and exchanged letters with him, discussing the importance of his and other community performances to social progress. Numerous organizations invited MacKaye to serve on their advisory boards or to lend his name to their causes. His influence goes well beyond his dramatic work; his community work during the early decades of the twentieth century integrated community performance with broader social issues such as immigration and Americanization, urban planning, and conservation. The following pages introduce these movements prior to a full investigation of their relationship to MacKaye's career.

1.1 IMMIGRATION AND AMERICANIZATION

Pre-1970 immigration peaked during the first decade of the twentieth century with over eight million persons arriving on America's shores, more than double the figure for the previous decade. Although the numbers alone worried many Americans, the type of immigrant caused even greater concern. In contrast to nineteenth-century patterns when most immigrants arrived from northern and western Europe, approximately three quarters of early twentieth-century

immigrants came from southern and eastern Europe. The largest population spikes came from Italy, whose immigrant numbers had risen more than three-fold from 651,893 (1891-1900) to 2,045,877 (1901-1910), and from Greece and Turkey, rising nearly eight-fold from 46,404 (1891-1900) to 324,888 (1901-1910).⁸ By the 1910s, writers advocating for retaining the purity of the original ‘Americans’ divided arriving nationalities into two camps: ‘old’ immigrants, who came from northern and western Europe, and ‘new’ immigrants, who came from any other location. America’s urban centers displayed most prominently the cultural conflicts between the ‘old’ and the ‘new’. By 1920, even after decades of industrial era migration of the ‘old stock’ from rural towns to manufacturing centers, a bare majority of birthright Americans lived in cities whereas three-quarters of the immigrant population had settled in these densely populated cores.⁹ Further threatening the perceived cultural position of the old stock, many immigrant groups formed core neighborhoods in which they could preserve their root cultural traditions instead of dispersing throughout the cities and assimilating to the dominant old stock population. Many first generation immigrants rarely left these enclaves and it was not uncommon for a community of immigrants from a single European village to relocate as a whole to an American urban neighborhood. Much like the detached settlers that first landed on America’s shores, these immigrant groups formed small colonies in each metropolis, each bearing names with which we are still familiar: Little Italy, Greek town, Polish Hill, Bohemian and Ukrainian Villages.

Perceiving the inhabitants of these urban sectors as separate from the American population, many groups – with widely varying agendas – attempted to erase the perceived differences between native-born Americans and what came to be called ‘hyphenated’ Americans. For the purposes of this examination, I will subdivide this continuum into three groups: nativists, assimilationists, and pluralists. Nativists sought to close immigration except to those groups who were already, in their minds, part of American culture. They advocated for immigration restriction based on quotas that would strongly favor ‘old stock’ Americans. Assimilationists and pluralists accepted the newcomers, but to different degrees. The latter group welcomed immigrants and their variety of cultural practices, albeit within certain limits. The former group welcomed immigrants so long as they adopted appropriate American behaviors, with the

⁸ Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*. Second Edition (New York: Perennial/Harper Collins, 2002), 189, 202.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 185.

definition of appropriate altering quite a bit with the advent of World War I. Throughout much of the early twentieth century, the middle-ground assimilationist policy seemed to hold sway, although nativism had much popular support. By the mid-1920s, a legal restriction of new immigration prevailed and assimilation of already-present immigrants became more common.

Much like many social and political issues in the history of America, the battle over immigration in the early twentieth century was one among organizations, not individuals. Nineteenth-century Americans had embraced corporations and trusts, political machines, settlement houses, and other associations as useful collectives. Dale Knobel summarizes how nativists employed the perceived dominance of the group over the individual. Deploying an us-versus-them strategy, they argued that, “if right thinking folks did not organize to mold the national character, other, wrong-thinking people probably would.”¹⁰ Nativists often fabricated these wrong-thinking people, publicizing the organization of opposing groups, whether they existed or not, in order to fuel a public perception of the binary required for their argument. Playing on the localization of immigrant communities, they argued that foreign groups could be more organized than the geographically dispersed native ones and thereby determine the American future. Publicly deprecating “the routine enfranchisement of foreign-born citizens,”¹¹ they fought against the efforts of assimilationists and pluralists, stating that immigrants becoming citizens in an unregulated manner posed a threat to American society.

Not surprisingly, Congress decided to take up the matter of immigration, with the United States Senate appointing the Dillingham Commission in 1907 to study the immigration problem. Applying methods championed by the progressive movement, nativist groups presented their opinions through experts, who touted conventional, albeit false, assumptions about ‘new’ immigrants, and thereby heavily influenced the commission’s findings. Individual experts, because of the rising social influence of ‘science’ during the turn of the century, supplanted popular-based policy-making. Whereas nineteenth-century government policy had been influenced by structured, urban political machines that relied on immigrant support, “new forms of social-scientific expertise lent intellectual authority to general policy ‘paradigms’ and specific

¹⁰ Dale T. Knobel, “*America for the Americans*”: *The Nativist Movement in the United States* (New York: Twayne, 2002), 156.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, xix.

initiatives.”¹² The Dillingham Commission heard the majority of testimony from authorities sponsored by anti-immigration groups. Although a limited minority spoke out against race-based immigration policies, their findings that emphasized the deplorable environmental conditions of urban slums did not become part of the commission’s official summary report. Congress passed several anti-immigration bills based on the Dillingham Commission’s reports, but a string of presidents, Republican and Democratic, successfully vetoed such attempts until 1924, when Congress passed and President Coolidge signed the Johnson-Reed Act, which limited immigration to 2% of each nationality as represented in the 1890 census.

Given the early date of the census, this law negated much of the work done by assimilationists and pluralists to naturalize the large influx of immigrants during the first decades of the twentieth century. By referencing data that ignored current population percentages, the Johnson-Reed act gave nativists a political victory that codified their recently-developed segregationist social practice. During the 1900s and 1910s nativist groups that had arisen during the nineteenth century shifted their focus from organizational affiliation to exclusionary practices based on geographical origin. Before this time, the status of ‘native’ had more to do with participation in fraternal groups than with place of birth or national heritage. With the infusion of immigrants from 1890-1920, ‘native’ assumed a different definition that had little to do with participation in organizations and more “with what had traditionally been called ‘blood’ and was beginning to be called ‘race’.”¹³ In 1916, Madison Grant published *The Passing of the Great Race*, which was reprinted many times over during the 1910s and 1920s.¹⁴ Grant, a member of the International Commission on Eugenics, asserted the historical superiority of Nordic ‘races’ over other European ‘races’, which in turn supported nativist privileging of northern and western European descendents over southern and eastern European descendents. The Johnson-Reed act legally endorsed Grant’s findings because the early census date limited ‘new’ immigrants’ in preference to ‘old stock’.

Opposing the nativists throughout the 1910s and 1920s, pluralists embraced the various cultures brought to the United States by all European immigrants. Horace Kallen, himself an immigrant from Germany, strongly argued against nativist restrictions and questioned the

¹² Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton: Princeton U Press, 2002), 128.

¹³ Knobel, *America for the Americans*, 191.

¹⁴ In fact, this book was most recently re-printed in 1970.

wisdom of assimilation. Instead of seeking a homogenous population, pluralists welcomed the various traditions carried to the United States. Kallen's essays advocated for a more careful examination of such terms as 'Americanization' and 'melting pot', which had become popularly accepted but fairly undefined.¹⁵ Many social reformers who identified themselves as progressives, including MacKaye, claimed a pluralist stance. Jane Addams served as an example of direct action through her work at Hull House in Chicago,¹⁶ and educational reformer John Dewey spoke in favor of the plurality of hyphenated Americans. But all of these advocates championed identities that twenty-first-century Americans consider 'white'; pluralism did not extend yet to immigrants not of European descent.¹⁷ In reality, they advocated for a limited cultural pluralism that relied on the commonality of 'Western' cultures.

Adopting a shifting position along the continuum between the two extremes, assimilationists accepted the arrival of new persons as long as they became 'American', the definition of which also shifted. During the 1900s and early 1910s assimilationists sought to remove the hyphen from immigrant identities (e.g. Italian-American), so that they would fully identify with America in terms of citizenship and culture. Both Presidents Roosevelt and Wilson spoke out against hyphenated Americans throughout their political careers. Reformers argued for educating newcomers in "American ways" and improving their environment in order to alleviate the "immigrant threat."¹⁸ As activist educators they sought to make the immigrant 'one of us', relying on a concept of an Anglo-American Protestant core culture that meant refining immigrant behavior and cleaning up living and working conditions. Such conditions, according to these reformers, were not the fault of the immigrants, who simply lived the lives they could. "Americanization proposed that most immigrants and their offspring could become part of that [Anglo-American] core if their environment was properly arranged through education, training, and supervision."¹⁹ The Committee on Information for Aliens in 1908 announced the publication

¹⁵ Some of these articles are gathered together in Horace Kallen, *Culture and Democracy in the United States: Studies in the Group Psychology of the American Peoples* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924). The original articles appeared in *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, and *The Immigrants in America Review*.

¹⁶ For a thorough examination of Hull House, see Shannon Jackson, *Lines of Activity: Performance, Historiography, Hull-House Domesticity* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001).

¹⁷ Desmond King, *Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of the Diverse Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard U Press, 2000), 29-30.

¹⁸ Edward George Hartmann, *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant* (New York: Columbia U Press, 1948), 23.

¹⁹ Knobel, *American for the Americans*, 244.

of the pamphlet, *The United States: Information for Immigrants*, in thirteen languages. Many urban education centers used this pamphlet in their night school courses. A second pamphlet, *Naturalization of Aliens, How to Become Citizens, What is Required, Rights and Duties*, was published in English only. Both English and foreign-language newspapers also published copies of these pamphlets.²⁰ The languages of these pamphlets clearly marked the path for the immigrant seeking to naturalize. The first informational one welcomed all, but the second pamphlet, which provided the path to citizenship, was only available in English, thus guaranteeing that the immigrant who desired to become a naturalized American assimilated into Anglo-American culture.

Seeking to alleviate the tensions between old and new, many assimilationists concentrated on altering the situation of immigrants through independent committees and then through state and national agencies. The North American Civic League for Immigrants (NACLI), a secular organization, sought to assist immigrants to avoid the tensions between Protestant old immigrants and Catholic and Orthodox new immigrants.²¹ It created chapters in most states with large, immigrant-filled urban centers. The one exception was Illinois, where Jane Addams had helped to form a similar but separate organization, the Immigrants' Protective League. It remained a regional organization while NACLI committees joined forces to effect policy first at an interstate, then at a national level. New York, New Jersey, and Massachusetts committees of the NACLI simultaneously presented legislation to create state immigration commissions, with Pennsylvania, California, and Rhode Island following shortly thereafter.²² To integrate and improve the lives of immigrants the New York committee began a five-point program of assimilation, industrial and civic education, population distribution away from slum centers, naturalization, and protection from labor, financial, and social exploitation. Frances Kellor, head of the New York chapter of the NACLI and a Hull House and Henry Street Settlement veteran, lobbied for a New York state immigration agency. By 1910, she succeeded in her task and headed the reform-minded New York State Bureau of Industries and Immigration. Four years later, President Wilson appointed the progressive Frederic C. Howe to be Commissioner of Immigration of the Port of New York.

²⁰ Hartmann, *Americanize the Immigrant*, 34-35.

²¹ Hartmann, *Americanize the Immigrant*, 38-41.

²² For a more detailed explanation of the activities of the NACLI, see Hartmann, *Americanize the Immigrant*, 69-87.

However, the First World War in Europe severely altered public perceptions of immigrants as more of the population became suspicious of newcomers. Whereas previous reform efforts concentrated on improving living conditions and economic opportunities for immigrants, the War boosted efforts to transform the heterogeneous immigrant population into a unified body that could serve the industrial, social, and civic life of America. A conglomeration of federal, state, and local agencies proclaimed 4 July 1915 'National Americanization Day'. With the success of this event, the National Americanization Committee formed to coordinate conferences and pamphlets to boost patriotism and national spirit among both immigrants and 'old stock'. By 1918, the committee petitioned President Wilson to declare a special holiday during which immigrants should "demonstrate their loyalty to their adopted country."²³ He responded by creating "The International Fourth of July." By 1919, over two thousand communities throughout the United States sponsored year-round Americanization committees during a nation-wide "America First" campaign.

At war's end, the threat seemed to come not simply from the immigrant, but from the immigrant that did not display allegiance to America. Even those who at one time had sought to improve the lives of all immigrants began to advocate more exclusionary methods based on political beliefs. Frances Kellor joined the movement to remove the 'alien radical' from American society. In 1920, she chaired a meeting of the Inter-Racial Council that condemned "Bolshevism and those seeking to overthrow the American government," and recommended the formation of a national agency of assimilation.²⁴ At the same time the Inter-Racial Council spoke out against the literacy test, suggesting that their goals did not focus on the adoption of surface characteristics, but rather upon an individual's adoption of something less tangible, American character.

²³ Hartmann, *Americanize the Immigrant*, 207.

²⁴ Hartmann, *Americanize the Immigrant*, 224.

1.2 AMERICAN PAGEANTRY

A group of reform-minded activists and artists formed the leadership core for American pageantry. For the most part these individuals embraced Horace Kallen's cultural pluralism, although inclusivity varied from pageant director to pageant director and from community to community. Pageantry combined artistry and social work in attempts to build community unity and identity. In practice, pageant development and performance employed a nostalgic lens to examine community history, ironing over past and present tensions between cultural subgroups. Civic leaders sponsored pageants in order to gain popularity among citizens or to promote their municipality to the region or country, not to encourage social reform. David Glassberg argues that two groups with competing agendas led efforts to create pageants during its peak in the 1910s. Patriotic and hereditary groups used it "to reinforce their particular definition of civic identity, social order, and the moral principles they associated with the past." Self-proclaimed progressives yearned to create "an elaborate ritual of democratic participation" in order to "lead all local residents in the ritual construction of a new communal identity and sense of citizenship anchored in the past, yet forged out of the underlying shared emotions generated in the present, in the immediate experience of playing together."²⁵ To suggest that pageants fulfilled only one or the other goal oversimplifies the actual events. Also, to suggest that either group, often separated from the majority of the community, maintained an objective perspective of the effects of pageants would underestimate the complexity of audience and participant response. Much like assimilation, pageantry shifted along the continuum between extremes.

Mary Porter Beegle, a leading progressive community drama and pageantry advocate, argued that community members knew how to work together but that they needed to remember how to play together in order to create positive community. If American communities did not have pageantry as a "rational and joyous form of recreation, a sane outlet," she stated, community celebratory energies could have become "a source of danger instead of a benefit."²⁶ Such sentiment perpetuates a late nineteenth-century movement to turn common activities into productive leisure. On the Fourth of July one common tactic was to guide individuals away from

²⁵ David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina Press, 1990), 64.

²⁶ Mary Porter Beegle and Jack Randall Crawford, *Community Drama and Pageantry* (New Haven: Yale U Press, 1916), 10-11, 16.

celebratory drinking and fireworks and toward ceremonial public orations about American history and ideals. That particular idea had not died with the beginning of the twentieth century. One of MacKaye's earliest planned pageants aimed to provide such "safe and sane" activities in Pittsburgh during its Fourth of July festivities in 1910. In addition to planning the event with civic leaders and promoting it to the city's populace, MacKaye promoted the use of pageants to create positive holiday experiences in a *Century Magazine* article.

MacKaye stated his intent to link public leisure with national ideals in an article promoting the unrealized Pittsburgh Pageant and Masque of Labor: "a festival commensurate in beauty, happiness, and dignity with the national idea for which it stands.... to kindle the people with a sense of their common citizenship and humanity."²⁷ MacKaye further argued that pageants and masques could serve to celebrate the contributions of the many cultures that had arrived in America and at the same time unite these diverse components under the single ideal of liberty. Instead of forcing individuals to cease popular celebrations, however, the event sought to bridge the gulf between celebration and ceremony. "Illuminations at Night" formed the climax of the event with electrical and calcium lighting, and fireworks. But prior to the popular entertainments, MacKaye and his collaborator John Alexander scheduled pageants about American history and folklore.²⁸ Such a plan is notable because it merged popular entertainments with pageantry's loftier goals as previous world's fairs had done. But more importantly, it was the first pageant plan to promote a national American identity instead of a local or regional one. Prior to 1910, there were only a handful of North American pageants, each of which focused on the specific community for which it was staged with only one exception.²⁹ MacKaye's plan for the Pittsburgh pageant opened the possibility of shifting pageantry's definition of community identity from the local to the national.

However, this patriotic zeal was not part of the first American pageant. Artists at the Cornish Colony in New Hampshire created and performed a masque entitled *The Gods and the Golden Bowl* on 23 June 1905. Leading these artists were playwright Louis Evans Shipman,

²⁷ Percy MacKaye, "The New Fourth of July: Practical Suggestions for the Production of Patriotic Pageants – Artistic Leadership Indispensable – Participation by the People – A Valuable Instrument for the Promotion of Democracy – What to do and What to Avoid." *Century Magazine* 80.3 (1910): 394.

²⁸ Percy MacKaye, "Pittsburgh Pageant 1910-1911 General Plan." Ts, 15 March 1910. Dartmouth College Library.

²⁹ The one exception to this standard was *The Pageant of the Italian Renaissance*, staged in 1909 in Chicago by the Society of Antiquarians at the Art Institute of Chicago. Its creator, Thomas Wood Stevens, later collaborated with MacKaye on *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*.

actor John Blair, and painter and illustrator Maxfield Parrish. Recently arrived at the colony, Percy MacKaye wrote the prologue to Shipman's masque, portrayed the role of Mercury, and helped Parrish devise the scenic elements. Very different from a patriotic celebration, the masque celebrated the twentieth anniversary of Augustus Saint-Gaudens' arrival at Cornish, and the founding of the artists' colony. Rooted in Roman mythology, its story related the resignation of Jupiter (played by Blair) as lord of the gods and the eventual selection of Saint-Gaudens as their new leader. The masque played on an outdoor stage, with an altar and pillars and two thrones. MacKaye's Mercury served as dramatic chorus, announcing the arrival of each group of mythological figures. After much debate, Minerva presented Saint-Gaudens with an engraved golden bowl symbolic of his supremacy and invited him, "as a saint," up to the altar. The masque ended with a procession of performers and audience from the performance site to Saint-Gaudens' studio, the artist and his wife being transported via chariot.³⁰ This small event for an audience of a few hundred friends and fellow Cornish residents provides several insights about pageantry in the United States. First, it indicates that pageantry's beginnings developed concurrently in the United States and England, contrary to David Glassberg's account in *American Historical Pageantry*. Second, it places MacKaye at American pageantry's beginnings, but in the form of the allegorical masque that he preferred. Third, the members of the colony participated in the masque to celebrate an individual leader as much as to mark an important date in the community's history.³¹ Last, it roots pageantry in a neoclassical aesthetic that merges classical ideals with contemporary Anglo-American values, pagan myth with Christian beliefs, and performers with audience.

In England, Louis Napoleon Parker began staging historical pageants the same year as *The Gods and the Golden Bowl*. Late in 1907, George Turnbull profiled these events in an article published in *World's Work*, a magazine that published a broad range of social-scientific articles dealing with community, conservation, and agriculture. In the article, Turnbull asserted that more than simple entertainments, these community performances encouraged "brotherly love" and

³⁰ Ege, *Power of the Impossible* 128-130

³¹ Naima Prevots, *American Pageantry: A Movement for Art and Democracy* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1990). Prevots begins with *Gods and the Golden Bowl*, but considers it anachronistic because it does not provide an historical chronicle of a community in the same way that later pageants do. Although, oddly enough, she later focuses on MacKaye's work on *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, a celebration of Shakespeare, and not *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, which followed a more traditional chronological format.

“civic enthusiasm.”³² Such emphasis focused on a positive and unifying community experience, with social effect outweighing artistic merit. The article quickly sparked the beginnings of a broader movement and during the summer and autumn of 1908 four pageants appeared in the United States, mostly in the northeast. By 1914, when MacKaye presented *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, communities throughout the nation had produced over eighty pageants. Even before pageantry swept the United States as one of the major methods of community reform, MacKaye had already become involved with the more presentational and allegorical masque, the form to which he held. Pageants, on the other hand, usually involved a large collection of local, amateur performers who staged a more representational version of their community history.

Creating an artistic version of community history does not necessarily follow the actual chronicle of events, nor does it necessarily reflect the broader community’s interests. Often, pageant organizers reconstituted history for present-day needs, showing an idealized past and prophesying an idealized future. Naima Prevots asserts that the social principles behind the American pageantry movement attempted to generate this improved future by playing together. “A better America was based on enlightened democracy – which meant educated participation by individuals in the life of the community.... It was the first time in American history that such a diverse group of people has put forward the concept that art was integral to, and a basic element of, the democratic process.”³³ Prevots’ diverse group of people included government and business leaders, social workers and activists, and artists; there is not much discussion about how others in the community felt about these events. In fact, it seems that during pageantry’s early years many community members needed to be convinced of its usefulness. MacKaye admonished Pittsburgh Pageant organizers – business and civic leaders – for counting on him to persuade the community through public appearances – stating that it was not only exhausting work, but that it was the city’s responsibility, not his. Although the pageant staged the history of the community for the community, such works were not – despite recurring promotional rhetoric – by the community.

³² George Turnbull, “English Historical Pageants” *World’s Work* 15 (1907): 9667-9670, quoted in Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 44.

³³ Prevots, *American Pageantry*, 1.

Pageantry must be considered within its larger social context because it served as the nexus for many varied organizations that attempted to create “a better America at a time when the country was severely impacted by the industrial revolution, migration from farms to cities, and huge numbers of foreign immigrants.”³⁴ Educators used it to teach the English language and American history; settlement house pageants celebrated immigrant customs and American heritage; theatre practitioners hoped to introduce the public to the art of performance and create new audiences; civic leaders attempted to reduce class tensions and induce patriotic fervor. In addition to these social purposes, many commercial producers entered the market simply seeking to turn a profit. In an attempt to keep the focus on drama by and for the community, the American Pageant Association (APA) formed in 1913 with William Chauncy Langdon as its president and MacKaye on the board of directors. The APA echoed the social reform sentiments of other groups seeking to integrate performance with community activism: the Community Drama Association, the People’s Institute, and the American Civic Association. The APA accredited directors who worked within its accepted goals for pageantry, thereby distinguishing them from commercial pageant directors who, it argued, simply inserted community specifics into a standardized script.

Despite the rhetoric of the APA, many of its acceptable civic pageants also inserted community members into a fairly standardized narrative. Many pageants chronicled local history in a familiar pattern of scenes: the trials of settling uncivilized land, negotiating or battling with Indian insurgents, agrarian roots, the challenges of industrial growth, and a progressive look at a bright new future. In the interest of uniting the community, controversial elements often were left out to create more acceptable versions of the past. Step-by-step, an APA-authorized pageant director guided community members as they presented or witnessed an idealized version of their past that they could take into future practice of their everyday lives. The pageant instructed them about who they were, who they are, and who they will be. A flurry of local press, often written by a pageant representative, provided a synopsis of the performance before it occurred, defined its symbolism, and promoted its importance to the community. In this manner, the director shepherded not only the event’s creation but also its reception. With heterogeneous members of the community reconstructing and restructuring events into an un-conflicted past, these festivals

³⁴ Prevots, *American Pageantry*, 1-3.

homogenized the community itself. Pageants presented culturally diverse performers and spectators with models of behavior to emulate in order to create a unified civic identity.

Not surprisingly, most community drama activists did not promote their work as explicitly homogenizing, but rather as part of the progressive movement. MacKaye and other pageantry proponents often extolled it as a celebration of cultural pluralism, claiming that it provided an environment for these several cultures to interact and intermix in a positive manner. Many in the pageantry movement also asserted its vital role in broader progressive social and political agendas, rooting their arguments in the settlement house principle that those who play together would work together instead of against each other. In *Community Drama and Pageantry*, Mary Porter Beegle argued that these performances relocated theatre to its democratic origins and “restore[d] to the people a share in the creation and development of dramatic art.”³⁵ Aiming to alleviate many of America’s social shortcomings at the beginning of the twentieth century, progressivism aimed for greater public participation in civic life, while at the same time seeking to structure that life through government stewardship. A professional pageant director educated the participants about the form and function of community pageantry and focused the amateur performers’ “naïveté, enthusiasm, and abandon.”³⁶ As with many other APA-sanctioned directors, MacKaye promoted himself as improving the lives of residents; his masques emphasized broad community participation and cooperation under his benevolent patriarchal leadership.

An APA director did not have to be part of every community performance because many instructional books appeared before and after the organization’s disintegration in the early 1920s. Just prior to the formation of the APA, Esther Willard Bates compiled *Pageants and Pageantry* as an argument for employing pageants to educate all, but mostly immigrant children. MacKaye wrote a preface to her manual and William Orr, Deputy Commissioner of Education for Massachusetts, wrote an introduction that asserted the importance of pageants as a form of patriotic community development. Later works included *Community Drama and Pageantry* (1916) by Mary Porter Beegle and Jack Randall Crawford, *The Community Theatre in Theory and Practice* (1917) by Louise Burleigh, *The Community Playhouse: A Manual on its Organization and Maintenance* (1923) by Clarence di Gioveia, and *Community Drama:*

³⁵ Beegle and Crawford, *Community Drama and Pageantry*, 7.

³⁶ Esther Willard Bates, *Pageants and Pageantry* (Boston: Ginn and Co., 1912), 17.

Suggestions for a Community-Wide Program of Dramatic Activities (1926), put forward by the Playground and Recreation Association of America. These books not only instructed prospective amateur directors in basic stagecraft, but they also highlighted how performance could have been used to strengthen community so long as their outlines were followed.

Many of the more progressive pageant advocates encouraged an embrace of immigrant traditions and an insertion of their cultural markers into the performance; pageants looked both forward and backward, pulling from the past in order to devise an ideal future. Glassberg argues that pageants thrived “at the intersection of progressivism and antimodernism” and sought to enable the public to create progressive social change by having them act out “the right version of their past” with “nostalgic imagery in a dynamic, future-oriented reform context.”³⁷ Many pageants took place outdoors, in either municipal parks or open fields, suggesting that a look back at an American community involved a look to nature. For a country that had only recently ended its frontier expansion, nature served as an important symbol of unlimited growth and opportunity. Given that the first three segments of most pageants dealt explicitly with the community’s connection to and conquering its wild environment, the formation of an American community, as performed, resulted from the unifying power of taming nature. In a similar manner, pageant directors guided citizens as they re-created the community by re-performing the conquest of their landscape.

MacKaye’s masques maintained pageantry’s performance style, but his performance spaces varied slightly because they included architectural components – and later scenographic representations of nature –as well. As part of the socially progressive wing of the pageant movement, MacKaye embraced the contributions of immigrant culture as part of the pageant event by including traditional folk costumes and dances. However, either an American landscape or a neoclassical façade, or both, framed those groups of individuals. The neoclassical façade matched those that had begun to permeate the American urban landscape in civic and private structures. As a permanent architectural element, it became the constant shared by each of the immigrant contributors; the visual message was that all these diverse groups shared this one space and its ideal, neoclassical heritage. Like many other progressive movements, pageantry saw its role as improving the environment, which would in turn improve the lives of the less

³⁷ Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 4-5.

fortunate.³⁸ By employing neoclassical design in a natural performance environment, MacKaye's masques implied that American identity begins in untamed nature and succeeds in the improved environment of neoclassical architecture.

1.3 AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

The roots of neoclassical architecture can be traced to another popular entertainment. World's fairs had been popular leisure destinations through the last half of the nineteenth century in Europe and the United States because of their display of both the latest commercial goods and global cultures. The Chicago World's Fair of 1893 sparked the architectural movement that changed the face of American cities. The Columbian Exhibition copied many features of previous fairs but added an idealized environment in which to display the latest consumer products and an arcade of world cultures. A collection of neoclassical buildings situated around a constructed lagoon and devoid of color became known as the White City. It was such a success that versions of the white city appeared at subsequent fairs at the beginning of the twentieth century including St. Louis' Louisiana Purchase Exhibition (1904) and portions of Buffalo's Pan-American Exhibition (1901).³⁹ Fair buildings were mostly temporary structures, torn down at its conclusion. However, one permanent building, built in the same style as those of the white city, remained as a trace of the fairs' existence in these three cities. The Art Galleries Building now houses Chicago's Museum of Science and Industry.⁴⁰ Planners intended the New York State Building to house Buffalo's historical society when the fair closed; they also designed the Albright Art Gallery for use as the fair's fine arts building.⁴¹ Following suit, the St. Louis fair left behind the city's art museum, which stood behind the audience at the *Pageant and Masque of*

³⁸ Prevots, *American Pageantry*, 34

³⁹ The majority of buildings deployed a color scheme designed to distinguish between displays of civilized culture (subtle tints) and displays of savage nations (bright hues). However, the two permanent structures, the New York State Building and the Albright Art Gallery, embraced the white marble facades common to the City Beautiful aesthetic.

⁴⁰ In addition to the Art Galleries Building, the Art Institute of Chicago rushed its new facility to open concurrent with the Columbian Exhibition. The building, which still houses the Art Institute today, stands about seven miles to the north of the fair site, on the eastern edge of Chicago's loop business district.

⁴¹ Situated just south of the fairgrounds, the intricate construction of the Albright Gallery delayed its opening until 1905. Both the Buffalo Historical Society and the Albright-Knox Gallery still operate from these buildings.

Saint Louis in 1914. By the turn of the century, the once-temporary neoclassical facades had become permanent icons in the new urban landscape not only in these three cities, but also throughout the United States in the form of the City Beautiful.

Slightly ahead of pageantry's rise and also simultaneously forward and backward looking, the City Beautiful movement peaked during the first decade of the twentieth century. This movement among architects and urban planners promoted a neoclassical aesthetic as a means to improve the lives of urban residents. City Beautiful architects professed to transform America's cities from their late nineteenth-century dirty and disordered existence "into a beautiful, rationalized entity."⁴² Providing civic parks and monumental structures in a neoclassical style, its advocates saw human beings as changeable within a Darwinian-influenced concept of urban planning and social control. They thought that, by manipulating shared portions of the urban environment such as parks and municipal buildings, the various components of the melting pot would form a united and improved community – a clean, white, and majestic whole. New classical-looking libraries, museums, rail stations, government offices, and some private buildings appeared in large urban centers such as Boston, Buffalo, Chicago, New York, Philadelphia, and St. Louis as well as in many smaller cities and towns throughout the United States. Not simply affecting large metropolitan areas, the City Beautiful style permeated most of the East and Midwest.

This urban reform movement affected more than structures during the early twentieth century. World's fairs and the City Beautiful manicured landscapes to complement their new buildings. Jackson and Washington Parks provided the grounds for the Columbian Exposition, Delaware Park formed the southern border of the Pan-American Exposition, and Forest Park provided a home for the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. And while cities had established urban parks during the nineteenth century, the urban park changed significantly in the City Beautiful by becoming more groomed and ornamented with monuments and architectural markers, all in its trademark style. With Frederick Jackson Turner's announcing the end of the frontier at the Columbian Exposition, the opportunity that untamed nature once provided America appeared changed as well. Altered from Frederick Law Olmstead's winding paths through rolling and slightly wild landscapes, the large urban park soon reflected the ordered geometry of the City Beautiful. Instead of providing a relief from the American city, the new parks became part of it.

⁴² William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U Press, 1989), 78.

The American West became the site in which Americans could connect more directly with nature and its frontier grandeur. Conservationists that stood opposed to Department of Forestry land use policies lobbied Congress for improved protection of the natural wonders of the American landscape. President Roosevelt pushed forward some of the first measures; between 1902 and 1909 he set aside 21 sites as national parks or monuments, most being part of the Rocky Mountain chain or to its west.⁴³ Capping a series of laws that provided greater protection of the American West, President Wilson signed a law creating the National Park Service (NPS) in 1916.⁴⁴ National park advocates attempted to educate all Americans on the significance of the untouched Western landscape. The early years of the NPS appear to have had as much to do with tourism – bringing Americans from the East to the West – as with conservation in the current sense of the term. The NPS chose sites based on panoramic vistas, not endangered species or fragile habitats; it concentrated on developing hotels and routes of access, not on limiting human impact. Its leaders worked to get mostly middle- and upper-class Americans to experience a controlled and framed version of the American landscape. Urban reform and pageantry activists from the East and Midwest attempted to recreate community history and identity. National park proponents attempted to promote the natural glory unique to America and its past as frontier country.

1.4 SPATIAL PRACTICE

Percy MacKaye's career exists at the intersection of world's fairs, urban reform, conservation, and pageantry and community drama. Only a few individuals may have been as much a part of all these movements as MacKaye, not only in terms of his activities, but also based on his personal and professional relationships with leading individuals from each camp. A brief consideration of his most notable works highlights how he meshed these four American social movements. While still in college, he wrote the choral passages for *The World Finder*, a

⁴³ The 1906 Antiquities Act greatly helped smooth conservation efforts. It enabled the President to designate a site a national monument without the consent of Congress.

⁴⁴ Herbert Hoover had proposed two National Park bills in 1912 and 1913, but both failed to pass through Congress. For a detailed, first hand, account of the formation of the National Park Service, see Horace M. Albright and Marian Albright Schenck, *Creating the National Park Service: The Missing Years* (Norman: U of Oklahoma Press), 1999.

historical and panoramic spectacle the Columbian Exposition planning committee commissioned from his theatre entrepreneur father, Steele MacKaye.⁴⁵ The audience for *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* lounged on Art Hill to peer over the Grand Basin to MacKaye's stage; the museum and the basin at the top and bottom of the hill respectively were built for the Louisiana Exposition. *Caliban by the Yellow Sands* appeared first in City College of New York's Lewisohn Stadium and then later at Harvard Stadium, both City Beautiful style arenas for public gathering. He designed *The New Citizenship* as a naturalization ceremony to further expose the immigrant to a very specific notion of American practice. Performances of *Sanctuary* served to raise funds for the Meriden Bird Society. His New England and Appalachian plays set forth to preserve in dramatic form regional peoples uniquely tied to an idealized American identity. The United States Congress commissioned MacKaye to put together a spectacle about the life of George Washington as part of the bicentennial celebration of his birth. Constitution Hall, with its neoclassical façade, housed the 1932 production of *Wakefield*, which includes a multilingual chorus of thirteen immigrant groups. During this final effort, MacKaye creates a Washington who literally becomes part of a scenographic landscape reflective of the American West.

During the early twentieth century, during a perceived immigration crisis, MacKaye joined the chorus of City Beautiful advocates, conservationists, and community drama activists. In tune with the wave of the City Beautiful movement, many of his performance spaces deployed a neoclassicism that privileged the pristine aesthetic of the emerging American empire. In tune with the wave of pageantry, his masques provided performers and spectators opportunities to rehearse and observe modes of behavior consistent with assimilationist notions of American identity. In tune with the wave of early conservation efforts, his later plays framed untamed landscapes and peoples as links to pure American identity. These waves and MacKaye's works cannot be separated from one another; they work in harmony, each one building from and contributing to an understanding of the other two.

An argument could be made that MacKaye was simply grasping at cultural fragments in the air during early twentieth-century America. However, his dramatic efforts demonstrate a consistent and conscious examination of the relationship between identity and environment. Along with verbal components, the following chapters explore the scenography of MacKaye's

⁴⁵ One week after *The World Finder* opened, albeit in a smaller than planned venue, Steele MacKaye caught pneumonia and died.

works as described in stage directions and as staged. The cultural implications of these physical manifestations, of performers in a stage space, are only evident when examining other physical spaces of contemporary America and how people functioned within them. The seeming banality of MacKaye's published texts only hints at what contemporary audiences experienced when reading or seeing his plays. Physical elements rooted in the American landscape, both natural and architectural, framed the performances and performer behavior within scenographic environments modeled how to relate properly to that landscape. These works functioned as examples of appropriate American behavior, as attempts to homogenize heterogeneous spectators and participants.

To clearly mark the intertwining of identity and environment during MacKaye's career, the subsequent chapters will examine his dramatic output through a perspective grounded in spatiality. This work will pull primarily from the theories of Edward Soja and Henri Lefebvre, which are introduced below. The following paragraphs provide a lexicon of important terms and concepts rooted in the work of these two.

To understand everyday life, Soja conceives of three interdependent and overlapping categories of space: *physical*, *mental*, and *social*. Physical space is material and tangible, including places such as buildings and parks; mental space is cognitive and representative, reflecting how individuals or communities imagine and plan the world around them; social space is how physical space is practiced, how individuals and communities live within their everyday environment.⁴⁶ Although these three categories permit subdivision of space, none of the categories exists without referencing the other; they form a trialectic relationship. Particularly when contemplating man-made spaces in which people reside, work, or relax, the interconnection between these spatial categories cannot and should not be ignored. These major categories are very broad, however, and so other subdivisions help to flesh out more subtle differences, especially among spaces outside the everyday.

Soja focuses on the urban environment and so he tends to exclude the unique qualities of temporary physical spaces created for finite use. Physical, mental, and social space at performances and festivals are more clearly inseparable. Both creators and viewers invest the given physical spaces with cognitive significance because of the performance frame. Activities

⁴⁶ Edward W. Soja, *Postmodern Geographies: The Reassertion of Space in Critical Social Theory* (London: Verso, 1989), 120-122.

within the frame also affect how spectators conceive of similar environments in everyday life. Some of Henri Lefebvre's spatial concepts help to open up Soja's trialectic.⁴⁷ The first step in understanding the cultural implications of scenographic space will be an exploration of *monumental*, *abstract*, and *theatrical* spaces. Lefebvre has argued that these spaces, simultaneously physical and mental in nature, can be used to form the base of a homogenous nation-state culture, offering heterogeneous others perceived access to it.

Theatrical space exists simultaneously as arrangements of physical objects and the conceptions about what those objects mean. What makes theatrical space unique is its inclusion of fictional individuals that move about within representations of physical space, what the work will refer to as scenographic space. Theatrical space is neither fully fictional nor fully real, but contains both worlds simultaneously. Because of this duality, it can be used to provide illusions of homogeneity by modeling ideal versions of daily life. Lefebvre asserts that during the theatrical event, "a spatial action overcomes conflicts, at least momentarily, even though it does not resolve them; it opens a way from everyday concerns to collective joy."⁴⁸ It is in theatrical space that "actor, audience, 'characters', text, and author all come together but never become one. By means of such theatrical interplay bodies are able to pass from a 'real', immediately experienced space (the pit, the stage) to a perceived space – a third space which is no longer either scenic or public."⁴⁹ Chapters two and three of this study focus on the theatrical spaces of MacKaye's commercial dramas during which audience members observe fictional characters performing within scenographic spaces. The earliest works, lyric and symbolic, focus on broad notions of identity and morality that preface MacKaye's interest in drama as a tool for social reform. But the later works pull from prominent social issues, thereby making direct connections between the fictional world and everyday life, between theatrical space and social space.

Monumental space exists when society frames a specific physical space, often a specific man-made structure, by dedicating it to memorialize a person or event. It can help to unite a society by offering "each member... an image of that membership, an image of his or her social

⁴⁷ Notably, Soja borrows much of his conceptual frame from Lefebvre and then adapts Lefebvre's trialectic of perceived (physical), conceived (mental) and lived (social) spaces. See Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (1974), trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991), 14-38.

⁴⁸ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 222.

⁴⁹ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 188.

visage.”⁵⁰ Dominant cultural groups often use monuments to smooth over social disorder by providing an apparently new space that reinforces hegemonic norms. However, these spaces can be practiced as originally intended or as transformed by alternate practices. Although imbued with a specific meaning at conception, they do not possess a single, unchangeable meaning; rather, Lefebvre argues that there is a “horizon of meanings” that shifts with social practice.⁵¹ The third chapter of this study explores how two plays – MacKaye’s *The Immigrants* and Israel Zangwill’s *The Melting Pot* – present different meanings for the Statue of Liberty, a prominent monumental space that has become a quintessential symbol of American identity. How people imagined that statue shifted markedly within its first four decades of existence: from goddess liberator to refugee magnet to marker of a closed chapter in American history. The statue, dedicated to the spread of democracy in 1886 as “Liberty Enlightening the World,” quickly became a symbol of safe refuge for diverse European immigrants. That later meaning ceased when Congress declared it a national monument in 1924, the very same year that they severely restricted legal immigration. Zangwill concludes his optimistic melodrama with the statue overlooking an idealistic version of New York City. In striking contrast, MacKaye reproduced scenographic versions of Lady Liberty – three distinct but interrelated ones for each act of *The Immigrants* – that showed a horizon of meanings for individuals who made their way to America: from savior to beacon to hollow promise.

The third chapter also begins examination of MacKaye’s community drama efforts. *The New Citizenship* further clouded the distinction between the theatrical and the public and thereby collapsed the theatrical and the everyday. Perhaps the most important component of this intermingling was employing the amateur performer instead of the professional actor, a practice that changed some members of the public from spectators of theatrical space into participants in it and thereby inserted ‘real’ individuals into ‘fictional’ space. Such a shift furthers the possibility of creating homogeneity in community dramas by nearly erasing the difference between actor and audience. Spectators no longer watch fictional characters performed by others in a fictional world. Instead, these spectators watch real people with whom they share a cultural identity perform in a scenographic world. In MacKaye’s *New Citizenship*, the actors performed their own selves, an act that enhanced the unity of character, performer, and spectator. The

⁵⁰ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 220.

⁵¹ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 226.

composition of the scenographic space simultaneously created a link through welcoming historical Anglo-American figures thereby granting new immigrants perceived access to that past and its associated identity.

Similar to monumental space, abstract space can also be deployed to reinforce dominant practice according to Lefebvre. It homogenizes a larger collection of disparate spaces around some central focal point, codifying material spaces into a single concept of spatial practice. “It is both a result and a container, both produced and productive – on the one hand a representation of space... and on the other a representational space.”⁵² Abstract space prescribes how individuals practice their environment by centralizing power and creating an apparent order out of the chaos that is urban life – it creates the illusion of homogeneity. Maps, the most common documents of spatial abstraction, pull together separate elements to create a single overarching identity. The fifty United States are separated by cultural differences as well as by Canada and the Pacific Ocean, but the disparate residents share a national identity; many maps even position Alaska and Hawaii physically closer to the contiguous forty eight. At the same time that they unify, maps exclude those outside the manufactured homogenous body, delineating dissimilar geographies by creating marked borders in mental space where they may not exist in physical space. There is little perceivable difference in the natural landscape where Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and New Mexico come together at “four corners;” nevertheless, tourists readily embrace the playfulness of standing in four states at once. In addition to material goods like maps, the cultural practices of language, fashion, and cuisine create notions of shared and separate identities.

Throughout the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Americans walked world’s fairs according to provided guidebooks that clearly separated them – the purveyors of consumer goods and midway entertainments – from the foreign others on display. Much like the arrangement of spaces at the world’s fairs, *The Masque of Saint Louis* and *Caliban by the Yellow Sands* displayed separate spaces that reflected oppositional cultures. Both community masques contrasted civilized protagonists with savage antagonists that either were ‘already dead’⁵³ or were conquered by force or benevolent reform. In each case, the protagonist controlled the privileged space to which the antagonist aspired. Just like the world cultures on display at the

⁵² Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 288.

⁵³ Philip Joseph Deloria, *Playing Indian*. (New Haven: Yale U Press, 1998).

fairs, core identity resided in neoclassical structures, with cultural others repeatedly banished to the periphery.

During the 1920s, MacKaye shifted the nature of scenographic space in his dramas to correspond to a developing understanding of American identity rooted in its newly finite natural landscape. The United States had grown more urban and industrial with each passing decade of MacKaye's life. Early in his career, many sought to counteract the oppressiveness of urban landscapes by introducing parks and playgrounds among the dense populations. A similar push sought to preserve America's untouched natural landscapes, to provide Americans access to an experience of the nation's primal past.⁵⁴ The National Park Service further protected and framed the spaces where Americans could escape their daily lives: expansive rural landscapes and urban landmarks of national historic interest. Lefebvre notes that tourism surrounding historic and natural spaces connects to a nation's development:

Countries in the throes of rapid development blithely destroy historic spaces....

Later, however, perhaps toward the end of the period of accelerated growth, these same countries are liable to discover how such spaces may be pressed into the service of cultural consumption, of 'culture itself', and of the tourism and the leisure industries with their almost limitless prospects.⁵⁵

National parks and monuments looked to America's geological and national past to unify early twentieth-century Americans with their frontier forefathers. The scenographic spaces of MacKaye's later dramas, discussed in the fifth chapter, tie into the national park movement by framing a pure American identity within the natural landscape frame. The trilogy of plays published as the *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies* contain Appalachian characters, dissociated from 1920s industrial America. These characters rooted the audience to an identity that is pure and innocent, clearly anti-industrial and anti-modern. Disinterested in capital gains, they possess an innate connection to their landscape and to each other. *Wakefield* ties MacKaye's previous community drama work with this interest in the national natural landscape. In it, he connects George Washington directly to the landscape, showing the stoic figure enmeshed within the

⁵⁴ Notably, Benton MacKaye, Percy's younger brother, proposed the founding of a hiking trail through these mountains in "An Appalachian Trail: a Project in Regional Planning." *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* 9 (October 1921): 325-330.

⁵⁵ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, 360.

scenographic landscape that suggests the mountainous terrains of the Appalachians and of the American West.

The following four chapters of this investigation look at the interrelationship between monumental, abstract, and theatrical spaces at the beginning of the twentieth century, and how those spaces meshed with the larger trialectic of physical, mental, and social spaces. World's fairs deployed abstract space to order the chaos of the emerging global community. The City Beautiful, at once physical and mental, provided an ideal urban landscape rooted in classical principles, a monumental space to unify the disparate elements of the population and exclude those unwilling to alter their daily lives. National park advocates imagined that these preserved spaces linked early twentieth-century Americans with their pioneer predecessors. Pageantry advocates and broader social reformers sought to unify communities by changing how they conceived and practiced social space. By pulling from and contributing to these social movements, MacKaye created a parallel spatial trialectic, a tightly controlled conception of American social space during the first decades of the twentieth century. At once feeding into and from these cultural spatial practices, he professed an inclusionary unity in early twentieth century America as is evident in the performance spaces and the experiences of spectators and performers. MacKaye created a national character, a version of American identity rooted in idealized versions of the American landscape.

2.0 STAGED REFORMANCE

MacKaye's masques remain his most discussed and most chronicled works, but his early commercial plays share an equally symbiotic relationship with public perceptions of American identity. From 1903 to 1914 he penned eleven plays and two opera libretti that exhibit conventional production methods and dramatic structures. Many of these lyric and prose efforts are unique in that they reflect and assert the benefits of the culture of social reform that permeated the United States at this time. MacKaye promoted another reform, asserting for the American theatre a dominant and vital role in everyday life. MacKaye's dramatic and civic theatre principles share many qualities with social reform groups and Little Theatres activists. In her history of the Little Theatre movement, Dorothy Chansky ignores MacKaye's contributions, but acknowledges the role of individuals and groups with which MacKaye associated himself and his work: "The American belief that theatre is spiritually and emotionally fulfilling, socially elevating, of civic importance, a site for assaying social change, and an enriching locus of cultural capital originated in the early decades of the twentieth century."⁵⁶

MacKaye certainly held this belief about the purposes of theatre and often promoted his concept of American civic theatre to other writers, audiences, and potential producers. Today, many histories credit the Provincetown Players and Eugene O'Neill as the first champions of a legitimate American theatre. But during the 1910s and early 1920s, many Little Theatres looked to MacKaye as a legitimizing force, an instrument of cultural and, to a lesser extent, financial capital. The Washington Square Players produced *The Antick* (one of five pieces published as *Yankee Fantasies*) for an evening of one-acts in 1915 and asked that MacKaye lend his name to their fundraising campaign. In 1923, when O'Neill and Kenneth Macgowan reconstituted Provincetown into Experimental Theatre, Inc. to permit for a more commercial mode of

⁵⁶ Dorothy Chansky, *Composing Ourselves: The Little Theatre Movement and the American Audience* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 2004) 2.

operation, MacKaye opened *This Fine-Pretty World* at the Neighborhood Playhouse. Even when he focused on community drama, MacKaye did not abandon his role as a Little Theatre advocate. He imagined community performances and Little Theatres to be logical partners because they both emphasized production for social benefit and deemphasized commercial gain.

In these conventional dramatic efforts, MacKaye staged reform-minded social spatial practices. In their scenography, these plays referenced the physical spaces of world's fairs, national parks, and cities beautiful, but did not do so on as grand a scale as his later community masques and folk-dramas. They presented audiences with examples of reform practices that dominated the American landscape at the time. Four of MacKaye's conventional plays demonstrated social change via spatial practice. Three of them, *Jeanne d'Arc*, *Fenris the Wolf*, and *The Scarecrow*, portrayed in theatrical space successful reforms that culminated in the sublimation of the self for public good. These pieces staged successful versions of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century reform as practiced in urban settlement houses. The last of these works also modeled the practice of self sacrifice for social betterment, but engaged the untested reform practice of eugenics; *To-Morrow* dramatized social improvement through rational procreation.

2.1 CIVIC AND EDUCATIONAL THEATRE

From his youth, MacKaye imagined theatre as being more than entertainment. During the 1897 graduation ceremonies at Harvard, he delivered an address about the state of the American theatre. Several years passed before he successfully staged his first play, but his speech indicates several ideas that permeate his early commercial efforts and, to some extent, his later community performances. "The Need of Imagination in the Drama of Today," which also appeared in the *Harvard Advocate*,⁵⁷ criticizes American dramatists and audiences for being too interested in outward actions, too interested in the spectacle-driven melodramas that dominated the nineteenth-century American stage. He points to Gillette's *Secret Service* as a primary example

⁵⁷ This undergraduate periodical has served since the late nineteenth century to publish the literary works of Harvard students.

that appeals “not to the imaginations of men, but to their nervous systems.” MacKaye argues that plays ought to be able to be read as well as performed, that they ought not to rely on scenic spectacle for their dramatic excitement. More importantly, he envisioned the “dramatic poet” revealing on the stage not the outward face of man, but rather “as the man’s own longings and aspirations show himself to be.” The stage should function as a “magic-mirror” to display the inner potential not the outer being.⁵⁸

American audiences seemed only mildly interested in MacKaye’s early plays compared to the visually stunning melodramas about which he complained. *Secret Service* ran for six months during the 1896-1897 Broadway season; its producer, Charles Frohman, then revived it for short runs in 1910 and 1915. Gillette’s other major piece, *Sherlock Holmes*, premiered on Broadway in 1899 and then reappeared six times by 1929. Both productions also toured the United States extensively during the 1900s. Most of MacKaye’s early plays adhere to his mandate to emphasize internal character and minimize external spectacle. They did not fare well: on average, eight of MacKaye’s nine Broadway productions closed in two weeks. The production of *A Thousand Years Ago*, a broad comedy which relied most heavily on stage spectacle, lasted 87 performances. New York and London audiences received *Jeanne d’Arc* and *Scarecrow* warmly, but neither became a hit. *Jeanne* became a staple, but not a feature, of E.H. Sothern and Julia Marlowe as they toured the country. *Scarecrow* appeared on the silver screen under the title *Puritan Passions*, but not until 1923. *Fenris the Wolf* and *To-Morrow* never appeared on a Broadway stage, but in publication they received favorable national press. Audiences did not go to the theatre to see inner potential, but they were willing to read such dramas at home.

Despite the commercial theatre connections of his father, Percy MacKaye’s career focused on performance as part of the educational process. Although Percy did not take a course from George Pierce Baker at Harvard, MacKaye maintained a professional and personal relationship with the founder of the seminal Theatre 47 Workshop.⁵⁹ Like-minded, both men publicly crusaded for the social importance of American theatre, often speaking and writing in

⁵⁸ Percy MacKaye, “The Need of Imagination in the Drama of Today,” *Harvard Advocate* 73.10 (30 June 1897): 140-142.

⁵⁹ Baker began teaching in the English department at Harvard in 1888; MacKaye studied at Harvard from 1893-1897, but at that time Baker had not yet specialized in theatre and drama. Baker offered his first course in playwriting in 1905, and began the Theatre 47 workshop in 1912. See Wisner Payne Kinne, *George Pierce Baker and the American Theatre* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954).

tandem. MacKaye dedicated “A University Pioneer” to Baker’s direction of the educational theatre program at Harvard, noting the number of influential artists and critics that had already emerged from it.⁶⁰ MacKaye himself spent a number of years at educational institutions. He first landed work as an instructor at the Craigie School in New York City from 1900 to 1904.⁶¹ In 1901 he penned *Kinfolk of Robin Hood* for his students to perform at the Berkeley Lyceum Theatre. Many of these students came from socially and politically connected families; some became prominent public figures (two became ambassadors) during their adult lives. Ege’s biography claims that MacKaye corresponded with his former pupils throughout the remainder of his life.⁶² The role of educational theatre in civic life remained the focus of his career. For him, there existed little distinction between the educational tasks of the university and the playhouse, which should produce “civic-inspiring scholarship” and “civic-inspiring art” respectively.⁶³ During the 1920s MacKaye returned to teaching as a guest instructor in poetry and drama at Miami University of Ohio, Rollins College, and Sweetbriar College. His interest in education also clearly manifested itself in prominent characters that engage in intellectual, spiritual, and civic development. Although he did not write plays specifically for the educational theatre movement that emerged during the 1900s and 1910s, many of his plays appeared on school stages and in anthologies aimed at such productions.

During this early period in his career, MacKaye also published two books about theatre as a social tool: *The Playhouse and the Play* (1909) and *The Civic Theatre* (1912). These texts discuss the physical architecture of performance spaces and the role performance should play in the daily lives of residents; they argue for the centrality of theatre in public recreation as part of broader urban reform movements. MacKaye sought to situate theatre at the core of the American city, to assert the centrality of the performance space as a site to model proper civic practice.

⁶⁰ See “A University Pioneer” in Percy MacKaye, *The Civic Theatre, in relation to the Redemption of Leisure, a Book of Suggestions* (New York: Mitchell Kennerly, 1912), 219-223.

⁶¹ During the years between graduation and employment he toured Europe with his new spouse, Marion Morse MacKaye.

⁶² Arvia MacKaye Ege, *The Power of the Impossible: The Life Story of Percy and Marion MacKaye* (Falmouth, ME: The Kennebec River Press, 1992), 109. The most famous, Averill Harriman was a pre-teen while MacKaye taught at the Craigie School. Another student was the son of Frederick A. Stokes, who published three of MacKaye’s early plays: *Anti-Matrimony*, *Sanctuary*, and *To-morrow*. However, aside from correspondence with the Stokes – son and father – there are no letters from any other former pupils in the archives at Dartmouth or Harvard. Given that MacKaye saved nearly everything pertaining to his life and career, it is likely that his communication was limited to the Stokes.

⁶³ Percy MacKaye, *Playhouse and the Play: and Other Addresses Concerning the Theatre and Democracy in America* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968 (reprint of MacMillan, 1909)), 79.

Like the settlement houses he so admired, he recognized the importance of providing a focal point, a physical space for controlled social interaction. However, MacKaye was not the first person to suggest the potential for using the stage as a reform tool.

2.1.1 Reformance

MacKaye contributed an essay to *The Children's Educational Theatre* in 1911. The book begins with a chronicle of the work of Alice Minnie Herts in the Lower East Side of New York from 1902-1909 and includes a series of essays asserting the significant role that theatre can play in the educational process. Herts reflected on her production experiences “with the object of Americanizing the Russian and Polish Jewish immigrants who people that section of the city.”⁶⁴ She managed the auditorium where many groups produced Italian and Yiddish language plays, both classical and contemporary. Deciding to unite the various groups, she brought them together for an English-language production of *The Tempest*. Like pageant organizers during the 1910s, Herts extolled how this performance unified the community of “American-born” child participants and their “foreign-born” parent spectators.⁶⁵ Based on her initial success, Herts selected many other ‘old stock’ plays for the ‘new stock’ school-aged, although not necessarily school-going, children to perform.⁶⁶ Her narrative created heroes of these young performers who learned their parts despite the enormous linguistic and social obstacles: one boy memorized his lines during his only free time, on the subway to and from his factory job. Additional tales recalled how participating in these efforts created articulate, dignified, dedicated, and unselfish members of the community. According to Herts, her efforts transformed these various Lower East Side immigrants from isolated individuals to a unified community.

Such efforts to work with immigrants were neither limited to, nor did they originate in, educational theatre performances in New York City. Settlement house and playground association workers, mostly women, attempted to provide constructive leisure activities for urban residents. These women moved beyond the private spaces to which they had been confined

⁶⁴ Alice Minnie Herts, *The Children's Educational Theatre* (New York: Harper & Brothers Publishers, 1911), 3.

⁶⁵ Herts, *Children's Educational Theatre*, 6-7.

⁶⁶ Herts discusses productions of: *The Little Princess*, *The Forest Ring*, *As You Like It*, *Ingomar*, *Snowwhite* (adapted from German into English by Marguerite Merington), *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, and *The Prince and the Pauper* (as adapted for the stage by Charles Frohman).

historically, although they did not completely divorce themselves from normative principles of the preceding century. In her study of Chicago's Hull House, Shannon Jackson observes that many reform-minded women "invoked the Victorian ideal of female self-sacrifice" when they entered the public sphere to perform what Jane Addams labeled "civic housekeeping."⁶⁷ At Hull House, Addams diligently attempted to work with the community, from *its* interests, gradually integrating mainstream practices with those of the immigrants in seemingly innocuous activities. Jackson labels these practices *reformances*, which included "festivals, exhibits, theater, music, reading groups, dances, coffeehouses, social clubs, sports, and recreation classes," and asserts that they directly served to effect social change.⁶⁸ These practices altered how others saw this community and how they saw themselves by centralizing power at the settlement house and creating an illusion of homogeneity. The acculturation of these immigrants included changing their cultural practices to reflect, at least partially, hegemonic norms. Settlement houses, playgrounds, and other outreach groups established headquarters in the midst of immigrant communities thereby creating new satellite cores for spheres of cultural influence.

Both Addams and Herts quickly identified children as first-stage targets. Many reformers believed with G. Stanley Hall⁶⁹ that children followed a progressive developmental path from savage to civilized individuals, surpassing the highest achievement of their predecessors. Reformers envisioned their task as one of altering the behavior of a few within the community who would then lead others along the same path by "infectious example." Immigrant children seemed most malleable because they were continuing along their individual evolutionary path, and because many of them were American-born. The latter distinction demonstrates the importance of geographical mapping to cultural identity. Because of their birthplace, these young members of immigrant families appeared to be more American already, even though they shared cultural practices with their parents. The children of immigrants "became a recognized means of

⁶⁷ Shannon Jackson, *Lines of Activity: Performance, Historiography, Hull-House Domesticity* (Ann Arbor: U of Michigan Press, 2001), 46-47.

⁶⁸ Jackson, *Lines of Activity*, 8, 17.

⁶⁹ Hall was a pioneer in child psychology and wrote several full-length works on the subject: *The Content of Children's Minds* (1883), *The Study of Children* (1883), *Adolescence, Its Psychology and its Relation to Physiology, Anthropology, Sociology, Sex, Crime, Religion and Education* (1904), *Youth: Its Education, Regimen and Hygiene* (1906), and *Educational Problems* (1911). In 1888, he founded the Child Study Association of America. In 1889 Hall became the founding president of Clark University and of the American Psychological Association.

access to the rest of the family, and thus a vehicle for an extended social reformation.”⁷⁰ Educating them would, in turn, educate the entire immigrant community.

The activities Herts coordinated in New York operated within this guiding principle. She chronicled audience development with claims that parents, siblings, and friends lined up for sold-out performances. For Herts, the greatest accomplishment of the Children’s Educational Theatre was that, “Not one child ever suspected our educational intent.”⁷¹ She believed, more importantly, that her spectators had elevated their taste by preferring its civic-minded productions to popular vaudeville shows. MacKaye speculated that efforts like the Children’s Educational Theatre modeled a theatrical form not accessible to the working public outside playground associations and community festivals and pageants. For him, popular theatre “recognize[d] art but debase[d] it for private profit,” and educational or religious leisure activity “ignore[d] art entirely, while seeking to uplift the public without it.”⁷² He yearned to combine the art of the commercial theatre with the goal of social improvement and spiritual uplift into a “third ideal... the Drama of Democracy – the drama as a fine art for the many.”⁷³

MacKaye, Baker, and Franklin Sargent contributed to Herts’ book essays about the types of plays children should attempt to perform. Contrary to the standard practice of staging low quality scripts, Baker and Sargent advocated the production of Greek and Shakespearean texts. MacKaye echoed their sentiments and then focused on a broader understanding of educational theatre. He denigrated the commercial theatre tradition and argued for contemporary texts that emulate the “civic ideal of Greek tradition,” in which theatre is “the chief force of civilization and religion” and something that should be government subsidized as in Continental Europe.⁷⁴ All three implied that educational productions of classical tales would acculturate audiences to high quality plays and therefore they would demand the same from American commercial theatre. Once again, children formed the path to reach the community at large. Additionally, MacKaye yearned for more contemporary American verse plays that deal with classical themes.

⁷⁰ Jackson, *Lines of Activity*, 63-65.

⁷¹ Herts, *Children’s Educational Theatre*, 70.

⁷² MacKaye, *The Civic Theatre*, 31.

⁷³ MacKaye, *The Playhouse and the Play*, 102-103.

⁷⁴ MacKaye “The Development of the Humanities in the Modern Poetic Drama” in Herts, *Children’s Educational Theatre*, 122-128. The same essay is reproduced in *The Civic Theatre* as “Imagination and the Children’s Theatre” 195-203.

Credited at the head of the essay as the author of *Sappho and Phaon* and *Jeanne d'Arc*, MacKaye essentially calls for more playwrights to follow his lead.

Only a few playwrights did so. A group of young poets and playwrights – MacKaye, William Vaughn Moody, Ridgely Torrence, Edward Arlington Robinson, and Josephine Preston Peabody⁷⁵ – formed a small band dedicated to changing the shape of American literature and theatre. Peabody wrote several verse plays between 1900 and 1913: *Fortune and Men's Eyes*, *Marlowe*, *The Wolf of Gubbio*, and *The Piper*, which premiered on Broadway in 1911 and resurfaced in 1920. Mostly she focused on youth audiences; *The Piper* is a stage version of the Pied-Piper tale. She and Robinson, along with Hermann Hagedorn, and Robert Frost, contributed the words to Baker's 1920 tercentennial pageant for Plymouth, *The Pilgrim Spirit*. Robinson dabbled in drama, but soon began his noteworthy success as a poet.⁷⁶ Torrence made his mark in 1917 with *Plays for a Negro Theatre*, three one-acts performed by the first black actors on Broadway.⁷⁷

MacKaye considered Moody his closest colleague during these early years; Moody joined MacKaye and his family at Cornish during the summer of 1906, and returned there regularly to escape the urban toil of New York. The two writers shared a Harvard education, but did not know each other on campus.⁷⁸ Moody wrote three lesser-known verse dramas: *The Masque of Judgment*, *The Fire Bringer*, and *The Death of Eve*, the last of which remained unfinished at his death in 1910. None of the three plays, which Moody described as a trilogy on the Promethean theme, was ever produced.⁷⁹ However, Moody achieved critical and commercial

⁷⁵ In his introduction to a volume of Moody's poetry, MacKaye includes Peabody as part of their "phalanx of five." See William Vaughn Moody, *Letters to Harriet* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1935). However, Ege removes her from the group in the 1992 biography of her father.

⁷⁶ Moody convinced Houghton Mifflin to publish Robinson's first collection of poems, *Captain Craig* in 1902. Robinson remained financially weak until 1905 when Teddy Roosevelt, then President, landed him a day job in New York and promoted his work in an *Outlook* article. He eventually won two Pulitzer Prizes for poetry during the 1920s. See Scott Donaldson, *Edward Arlington Robinson: A Poet's Life* (New York: Columbia U Press, 2007), 232.

⁷⁷ Robert Edmond Jones, who designed several of MacKaye's productions, directed the evening of plays at the Garden Theatre. The *Times* critic considered the plays well written and well directed but poorly acted. "Three Negro Plays Played by Negroes" *NEW YORK TIMES* (6 April 1917) 11. See also Susan Curtis, *The First Black Actors on the Great White Way* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 1998), 76-83.

⁷⁸ MacKaye tries to make their connection begin at Harvard by noting that they "may often have brushed elbows along Harvard paths" when he was an undergraduate and Moody a graduate student. Notably, Moody also delivered a commencement address at his graduation. See MacKaye's "Introduction" to Moody, *Letters to Harriett*, 19.

⁷⁹ William Vaughn Moody, *Poems and Plays of William Vaughn Moody* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1912), 182.

success with *The Great Divide*,⁸⁰ which pits American East against West in the characters of Ruth and Stephen. It opened on Broadway just a few months before MacKaye's *Jeanne d'Arc* at a time when critics hailed both men as great young dramatists, the future of the American stage. Throughout their careers, the two men supported each other personally and professionally, one sitting next to the other during tryout and opening night performances. This group of dramatists envisioned themselves as the infectious source of change in American drama, just as Herts' young thespians would change immigrant communities.

2.2 SELF SACRIFICE

MacKaye wrote four major verse dramas, only two of which appeared on stage. Critics lauded these plays in published form, but the productions elicited disparate responses from critics and audience members. Sothern and Marlowe announced that under Shubert management they would premiere *Jeanne d'Arc* and *Sappho and Phaon* during a 1906-1907 tour of Philadelphia, New York, and London.⁸¹ MacKaye reworked *Jeanne d'Arc* during several months of rehearsals and during the Philadelphia tryouts, thereby earning high critical praise and moderate box office success. One critic compared MacKaye to Shakespeare and described the effort as, "exquisitely appealing in its expression of simple faith, rich in imagery, and imbued with a most unusual quality of spiritual suggestion."⁸² Sothern and Marlowe produced only this play however. It seems that MacKaye was less willing to revise the *Sappho and Phaon* so Marlowe made her own changes. MacKaye then claimed that Marlowe broke the contract, "which permitted no textual changes in the play without the author's approval."⁸³ The rights to *Sappho and Phaon* transferred to Harrison Grey Fiske and a new production went forward with Shubert backing.

When published in March, the text of *Sappho and Phaon* received much praise, but the production faltered. MacKaye declared the Providence tryout a triumph based on weeklong SRO audiences, but the New York production attracted scarce praise and few spectators. Yiddish

⁸⁰ *The Great Divide* was an enormous hit. It ran on Broadway from October 1906 to March 1907 and then again from August 1907 to March 1908.

⁸¹ "Sothern-Marlowe Plans," *New York Times* (5 September 1906) 9.

⁸² "A Tragedy of Great Spiritual Beauty," *New York Times* (30 January 1907) 9.

⁸³ Moody, *Letters to Harriett*, 54-55.

theatre star Bertha Kalich, not Sothern and Marlowe, headlined this production; according to critics and Moody, neither she nor the remaining cast could manage the verse.⁸⁴ Or verses. MacKaye used seven different types of verse and provided a “general scheme” with which the actors were to decipher the text. In the published version, he explicitly stated that the performers should not change any aspect of the text or its verse, perhaps because of his experience with Marlowe. This Broadway premiere also opened ninety minutes late because the scenery had not arrived on time from Providence, a factor which surely irked the critics and unnerved the actors. Additionally, *Sappho and Phaon* opened across the street from the highly anticipated and successful American premiere of the Viennese operetta, *The Merry Widow*.⁸⁵

In addition to the competitive disadvantage, *Sappho and Phaon* is a fairly pointless metatheatrical romp through an ancient theatre excavation site. Its subject mattered little to American audiences during the early 1900s. By contrast, *Jeanne d’Arc* relates the heroic tale of a woman reformer. Like the women in American cities working to unify various immigrant groups into a culturally cohesive whole, Julia Marlowe portrayed the life of the woman who unified splintered regions into a unified France. *Jeanne d’Arc* is reformance staged.

MacKaye creates in Jeanne both the woman reformer and the infectious reformed child. He describes her in the synopsis submitted to Sothern and Marlowe: “Jeanne, a mere child, projected her ideal vision upon the whole of the kingdom of France, converting it for a few brief months almost to the likeness of that fairy kingdom of God with which she imagined it to be identical.”⁸⁶ The epic tragedy encompasses her youth in Domremy, her entrance at court, the sieges at Orleans and Troyes, the coronation pageant at Rheims, and then prison at Rouen. Her passion and faith infect almost all those whom she contacts along the way. During the first act at her home village, Jeanne reveals to a wounded soldier the dreams about her future role; he becomes the first convert to her “child-like faith.”⁸⁷ King Charles and many inside the court convert during the remaining acts. The most important of the courtiers, Duke d’Alençon, an

⁸⁴ “An Attempt to Act a Poetic Tragedy” *New York Times* (22 October 1907) 9. “The Lesson of One Theatrical Night” *New York Times* (27 October 1907) X1. Moody confirmed the “hopelessness” of the acting, blaming Kalich for the most part, in a letter to his wife from 22 October 1907 (*Letters to Harriett* 345). One of the other panned actresses was MacKaye’s sister Hazel.

⁸⁵ MacKaye’s play opened at the Shuberts’ flagship Lyric Theatre; Henry Savage, a member of the Syndicate, produced *The Merry Widow* at the New Amsterdam.

⁸⁶ “Jeanne d’Arc: A Synopsis,” Typescript (Dartmouth College Library, Percy MacKaye Papers (DCL)), 1.

⁸⁷ MacKaye, “Jeanne d’Arc: A Synopsis,” 6.

intellectual who first seeds Jeanne's self-doubt, suppresses his desire for her⁸⁸ and reforms himself so that his faith eventually restores Jeanne's. At times child-like, Jeanne is a reformer who converts, inspires, and saves the society that doubts her.

Jeanne d'Arc was not MacKaye's first reform narrative. His second major verse effort, *Fenris the Wolf* marked the beginning of MacKaye's professional career. Sothern and Marlowe had commissioned the play after reading *A Garland to Sylvia* and hearing a sketch for *Fenris* in 1903. Commission in hand, MacKaye moved his family up to the Cornish Colony to focus on his writing. Sothern and Marlowe began production in 1905 but never performed it for an audience. However, newspapers throughout the United States and Great Britain reviewed the published dramatic text.⁸⁹ Although one reviewer reduced *Fenris* to being a new take on the werewolf tale, many more lauded its dramatic and poetic strengths. *The London Times* considered it a complex chronicle about "the birth of a soul" and stated that, "the more we study it, the more we wish we might see it acted."⁹⁰ The wolf figure is the protagonist, but it is Freyja, written for Marlowe, who nurtures and civilizes the wild beast. *Fenris* relates a tale about the reformer as much as the reformed.

2.2.1 *Fenris the Wolf and Jeanne d'Arc*

MacKaye, who claims to have adapted *Fenris* freely from Norse mythology, opens the lengthy prologue of his complicated verse play with the "untamed and tameless"⁹¹ Fenris, chained by his father Odin and beaten by Thor and Loki. The wolf-god is all desire and instinct without rational thought, much like Hall's 'savage' youth. Freyja, "the hope of all the world,"⁹² believes that she can tame Fenris and make him a benefit to society; with the assistance of Baldur, her betrothed

⁸⁸ In the repertory of which *Jeanne d'Arc* was part, the 31-year old Marlowe also performed the roles of Ophelia and Juliet. Sothern at age 48 played Duke D'Alençon, Hamlet, and Romeo. Not surprisingly, many critics therefore considered the Duke to be Jeanne's chaste love interest.

⁸⁹ Grover cites thirty reviews from several national magazines and a range of papers representing the following American cities: Boston, Chicago, New York, Indianapolis, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New Orleans, Cleveland, and Los Angeles. See Edwin Osgood Grover, *Annals of an Era: Percy MacKaye and the MacKaye Family, 1826-1932* (Washington, DC: The Pioneer Press/Dartmouth College, 1932), 207-209.

⁹⁰ "Press Notices," *The Churchman* (17 June 1905). Percy MacKaye Collection, DCL; *London Times* (8 September 1905), quoted in Grover, *Annals of an Era*, 11.

⁹¹ Percy MacKaye, *Fenris the Wolf: A Tragedy* (New York: MacMillan, 1905), 11.

⁹² MacKaye, *Fenris*, 13.

and Fenris' brother, she will reform him with love. Odin cedes to her wishes, but specifies that the reform will take place on earth where none of them will remember their positions as gods. Fenris, Baldur, Freyja, and Odin will replace four mortals who are attempting to resolve a lover's dispute.

The first act opens with the gods now human.⁹³ At a community ritual, two rivals publicly profess their love so that the maiden can select one for her husband. The kind and gentle Baldur describes his love for Freyja poetically. Fenris simply approaches her, states his physical need for her, and roughly bites her hand. She selects Baldur and when Fenris does not accede to the resolution he is banished with a following of men. Later, Fenris attacks his rival and then seeks refuge in his lodge. When others gather to punish Fenris, Baldur defends his attacker and asks to spare his life. Odin, as the mortal community's leader, demands that Fenris be chained and tamed. Fenris fiercely resists Baldur's men, but offers the chain to Freyja, who binds him.

The second act opens in a stone prison chamber where Baldur 'tames' Fenris through reformance activities: writing, learning music, and building model temples. "We're architects," using "these blocks – to make admired harmony / And shape, however rude, some tangible / Earnest of [God's] constructive will."⁹⁴ Baldur also teaches Fenris that in prayer – by subjecting oneself to the gods' wills and relinquishing individual desire – humans find freedom. However, Fenris recalls his true identity in a dream. Fenris is alone in prayer when what he thinks is a god-sent messenger arrives. Yorul, one of Fenris' followers in the first act, reveals that Freyja and Baldur plan to wed the next day. An enraged and jealous Fenris charges Yorul to kill Baldur. Alone, Fenris lapses into his wild behavior: he smashes the block temple "and crouches, laughing, amid the ruins."⁹⁵ Later that evening, Freyja plays music to soothe Fenris, who conceals his rage and murderous plans. She grants his request for freedom so that he can attend the wedding. But when she leaves, he breaks her harp in two.

Backed by woods, an open lawn provides the setting for Act Three. Claiming to be completely reformed after his time with the children and content with his new life in the open green space, Fenris sends a messenger to countermand his order to Yorul. Fenris also warns

⁹³ There are physical reversals for Baldur, who becomes a dwarf, and Fenris, who becomes a hunter. Odin maintains his authoritative position as a priest and Freyja remains a kind-hearted maiden. There are name changes as well (Baldur to Arfi, Fenris to Egil, Odin to Ingimund, and Freyja to Thordis). However, for clarity during this summary, the names remain the same. See MacKaye, *Fenris*, 27.

⁹⁴ MacKaye, *Fenris*, 79.

⁹⁵ MacKaye, *Fenris*, 99.

Baldur not to leave him alone with Freyja, but Baldur departs anyway. Freyja arrives and admits to Fenris that she had loved his wildness and his need for her, but now she can love Baldur completely. The messenger arrives to say that Yorul would not listen to the new order and continues on his mission. Believing that his freedom will soon be taken away, Fenris confesses that he still passionately loves Freyja, wants her, and so forces a kiss on her. She flees and Baldur calmly steps in the way when Fenris tries to follow. At that moment, Yorul leaps from the woods and kills Baldur. The godly Baldur rises from the mortal corpse to present Fenris his choice. He can pursue his desire and marry Freyja, thereby bringing chaos to the world; or he can renounce his desire “by his own self-mastery”⁹⁶ and the world will continue in peace. The mortal Odin and Freyja arrive to discover the dead body, for which Yorul takes full responsibility. The thankfully quick fourth act opens with Freyja offering herself to Fenris in marriage. The community arrives to consecrate Baldur and punish Yorul with poison. However, Fenris snatches the poison and kills himself in order to restore society.

Reform dominates *Fenris*, which culminates in individual sacrifice. Freyja and Baldur transform Fenris from a selfish savage to a self-sacrificing being. An accelerated and exaggerated version of Hall’s progression from savage child to citizen adult, Fenris is saved by a woman reformer. Civilized through education, art, and music, he finally puts social need above personal desire. As with all his published plays, MacKaye wrote a rather passionate preface in which he describes Fenris as “the very spirit of ~~untamable~~ [crossed out in the manuscript] unrestrainable passion, restraining which he becomes a force, his own emancipator and destroyer.”⁹⁷ His development is not steady and smooth, however. Except for the final tableau, the mortal Fenris regresses toward his savage self at the end of each scene; but his savage actions become less grotesque: they progress from drawing blood to destroying the block temple to smashing a harp to forcing a kiss.

Reform in *Jeanne d’Arc* also develops unevenly, but men impede her success more than she fails on her own. Throughout the first act, characters range in their faith as well as their belief that France will successfully defend itself. An injured soldier believes Jeanne fully when she reveals her heavenly mandate, but others question her ostentatious piety. Her father commands

⁹⁶ MacKaye, *Fenris*, 136.

⁹⁷ “Fenris the Wolf,” manuscript (DCL). Moody criticized MacKaye regarding the preface because the play did not match the prologue. He also complained that Fenris did not fully achieve his full potential because he never fully embraced Freyja’s love or Baldur’s teachings. See Moody, *Letters to Harriett*, 230-231.

her to take a local shepherd's staff, thrust in the ground, to demonstrate her willingness to marry the boy. While everyone else sees the shepherd and his staff, Jeanne sees St. Michael, who changes the staff to a sword and commands her to undertake the campaign. She kneels and accepts the sword/staff, an act that the others interpret as her accepting a domestic life but that she believes thrusts her into the public sphere.

The second act opens with ladies surrounding a tailor who measures the childlike and not-yet-crowned King Charles. Meanwhile, Le Tremouille tends to court business and manipulates the king, who doubts his legitimate birthright to the throne. The king relegates himself to the private sphere and relinquishes control of the public sphere that he should dominate. At the edge of this chaotic court, sits the bookish d'Alençon who tries to make the king adopt the mantle of a public leader, to take control of his affairs. Instead, for entertainment's sake, Charles agrees to receive Jeanne at court and exchanges dress and position with d'Alençon in order to test her. Jeanne, guided by Sts. Michael and Catherine, approaches the true king and offers herself as a soldier. Members of court, especially d'Alençon, initially mock her offered service. Charles follows suit at first, but he is impressed by her ability to recognize his "royal sanctity" when disguised. Then, when Jeanne stands with Charles apart from the others, Charlemagne emerges from a stained glass window and offers the crown to the king. From a distance, the courtiers see only Charles kneeling at the feet of the girl. At scene's end, an exhausted Jeanne rests her head on the shoulder of d'Alençon, who whispers, "Why, 'tis a child!"⁹⁸

Having converted the childlike king, Jeanne rallies the French to her campaign. Outside Orleans, d'Alençon once again calls her a child. An English herald is the second person to label Jeanne unholy – Le Tremouille did so during the second act – but the first to directly affront Jeanne, who stumbles at the insult. In battle an arrow strikes her but, declaring herself a soldier, she plucks the barb from her body. The monks who serve her keep her by her standard, but d'Alençon wants to take her to a doctor: "We soldiers babble it like paraquets / and let a child – this brave and dreamy girl / Die in the sacrifice for us – for us!"⁹⁹ However, she rises and her strength urges the French soldiers forward, who once again launch themselves against the city walls and succeed. At camp near Troyes, several people approach her, yearning for miracle cures

⁹⁸ Percy MacKaye, *Jeanne d'Arc* (New York: Macmillan, 1918 (1906)), 88.

⁹⁹ MacKaye, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 105.

from death, sickness, and ill fortune. Jeanne tells them all to better their own lives in order to achieve their wishes. The general population still believes her a saint but Charles has succumbed to the charms of Lady Catherine. She conspires with Le Tremouille to keep the king from fully assuming his throne by claiming heavenly visions of her own but Jeanne again proves herself to Charles and Catherine confesses the counterfeit. D'Alençon, who believes her not divinely inspired but simply an innocent inspiration, yearns to show his love for the sleeping Jeanne by kissing her hand, but St. Michael materializes to prevent such tainting of the virgin.

At the moment of Jeanne's triumph, the coronation of Charles at Rheims, the audience sees in the shadows two ministers of the inquisition plan to declare her a witch, one for financial gain, the other for the archbishopric of Rouen. Convicted of heresy, Jeanne is out of the fields, confined to a dim prison cell. Having recanted her visions and voices, the self-doubting Jeanne barely clings to life. D'Alençon sneaks into her cell and attempts to extirpate her doubts. He relates to her his attempted kiss at Troyes and St. Michael's rebuke. The converted d'Alençon blames himself for planting doubt in her and through his impassioned plea, restores in Jeanne her own faith. She then goes outside to her execution in a rapturous state as stained-glass saints appear once more to watch her final act of selflessness from above.

In *Jeanne d'Arc*, Jeanne as reformer sacrifices her being for the sake of society. But the play also models the capacity for the child to serve as a catalyst for broad social reform. Unlike *Fenris*, whose own savage nature inhibits smooth reform, it is the corrupt court that ultimately destroys Jeanne once she has saved the country. Notably, the courtiers that collude to bring her down appear only in darkened spaces, contrary to Jeanne's association with nature and her near constant illumination through windows when inside.

Both *Fenris the Wolf* and *Jeanne d'Arc* adhere to principles of early twentieth-century urban reform that situate social ills in hard urban landscapes. The playground movement emerged at the end of the nineteenth century in order to provide children breathing space and specific types of exercise. In the increasingly crowded urban landscape, these earthy lots contrasted to the dominant brick, stone, and concrete. These parks recreated mental spaces of the frontier within urban landscapes. Playground advocates, and most early twentieth-century Americans, still conceived of the American soil as the great unifier. They believed that, since the country's inception, contact with the land had been the one necessary common practice to forge a

nation. By providing parks for immigrant children, reformers recreated the frontier experience that Frederick Jackson Turner had recently declared ended.

Doreen Massey asserts that individuals or groups “seek the identity of a place by laying claim to some particular moment/location in time-space when the definition of the area and the social relations dominant within it were to the advantage of that particular claimant group.”¹⁰⁰ They see the current social situation as threatening to their way of life and attempt to restructure physical, and therefore social, space. Massey offers the term *reaction formation*: “a recourse to place as a source of authenticity and stability” that develops “when time-space compression is seen as disorienting, and as threatening to fracture personal identities.”¹⁰¹ Massey argues that groups seeking power construct an exclusive space in order to differentiate between those on the heterogeneous outside and the homogenous inside. As factories and apartment buildings began to dominate the everyday landscape, many reformers attempted to recreate pockets of idealized nature within American cityscapes.

Playground associations created pockets of green space that recalled pre-urban America. In 1902, Chicago opened McKinley Park amid the meatpacking plants, iron and steel works, and tenements where many Eastern European immigrants worked and lived. The park boasted organized sports fields and a lake for swimming.¹⁰² In order to provide a “healthful influence upon morals and conduct,”¹⁰³ New York City established the Society for Parks and Playgrounds in 1891, years after settlement houses began providing playing spaces for immigrant children. In 1898, noted City Beautiful architects Carrère & Hastings designed the gymnasium at Hamilton Fish Park, which opened in 1900 on the Lower East Side.¹⁰⁴ The first permanent fresh air playground opened in 1903 a few blocks away in Seward Park.¹⁰⁵ With these spaces, reformers created physical memorials to agrarian America, to a time before the arrival of the immigrants

¹⁰⁰ Doreen Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* (Minneapolis: U Minnesota Press, 1994), 169.

¹⁰¹ Massey, *Space, Place, and Gender* 122.

¹⁰² For more information on McKinley Park and other Chicago parks founded during the early 1900s, see <<http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/>>.

¹⁰³ *A Playground for All Children* (Washington: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1976-1978), quoted in in Jonathan Kuhn “Playgrounds” in *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, Kenneth T. Jackson, Ed. (New Haven: Yale U Press, 1995), 907

¹⁰⁴ In 1914, MacKaye witnessed the Festival and Pageant of Nations at Hamilton Fish Park. The following chapter discusses this weeklong event sponsored by the People’s Institute.

¹⁰⁵ Additionally, the Outdoor Recreation League built nine playgrounds with private money. Lillian Wald, founder of the Henry Street Settlement, joined forces with Charles Stover, founder of the New York Society for Parks and Playgrounds, to form this league, which donated the parks to the city in 1902. For a concise summary of New York City playgrounds, see Kuhn, “Playgrounds,” 907.

that fueled the industrial machine. Those who walked through or played in the parks shared a spatial connection with that historical identity, thereby making them more American.

Playground associations thrived and multiplied throughout early twentieth century America with the purpose of improving the lives of urban residents. Luther Gulick, president of the Playgrounds Association of America, noted that between 1906 and 1909 the number of cities that supported public parks rose from 90 to 137, with private funds supporting parks at another 91 municipalities. MacKaye, constantly looking for a sponsor of his civic theatre, thought that it could be organized under the umbrella of playground associations because they reflected “certain aspects of the civic theatre within themselves.”¹⁰⁶ In an article reflecting on the connection between theatre and community, Percy claimed that his brother Benton suggested a “drama of democracy” in 1913 after observing people bathing in Lake Michigan near the former site of the Columbian Exhibition:

On the beach, a layer of sardined humanity in bathing suits, having as high an output of happiness as the average American ever gets... Beyond, the huge steel plants of South Chicago, each issuing a grim, black cloud that streamed indefinitely across the prairie and closed it from the sun... an exact diagram of play and work and commercialism in America. On the beach, our feeble attempt at attaining heaven: back in the phalanx of smoke-stacks our titanic triumph in attaining Hell.¹⁰⁷

Both MacKaye and the playground associations focused on the productive use of leisure time in order to create better citizens. Playground associations provided more than green spaces to combat the urban life that left children to entertain themselves in, at best, an unproductive manner. They also specified opportunities for “well-directed play,” one more reformance activity that turned children into honest and generous citizens.¹⁰⁸ These green spaces provided stages for reminiscent spatial practice by the children, who were the implicitly dishonest and selfish residents of America’s urban centers. Playgrounds provided a refuge from the stifling and de-civilizing air of the tenements.

Similar to the playground associations’ targeted youngsters, MacKaye’s title characters chafe against and wither in enclosed and darkened spaces. Fenris howls with his pack of wolves

¹⁰⁶ MacKaye, *The Civic Theatre*, 39.

¹⁰⁷ A.M. Drummond, “Theatre and Industrial Democracy,” *Theatre Arts Monthly* (July 1937): 511.

¹⁰⁸ “Lauds the Parks as a Moral Force” *New York Times* (9 May 1909) 20.

in a volcano crater far below the other gods. Like multi-story tenements, the prologue's steep mountain cliffs confine Fenris, who snarls, growls, and chews on his chain throughout the prologue. The mortal Fenris completes reform exercises inside a stone cell, but repeatedly slips back into his antisocial ways in this confining space. Jeanne experiences double confinement during the final act when MacKaye positions the deflated heroine inside a cage within the prison cell to amplify the contrast between it and her exuberance in the Domremy countryside. These two plays chart an opposite path, however. Fenris moves from confinement to openness, whereas Jeanne moves from a pastoral to an urban landscape. Only when in the open nature spaces of the lawn and the garden does Fenris fully accept reform. Jeanne remains out of doors or in contact with sunlight for most of the melodrama.

These characters thrive in greenery and sunshine just as reformers hoped immigrant children would do. Imagery about the lush sights and smells of Domremy dominate the verses of the first act and the production utilized powerful lighting effects throughout to reinforce the poetic language. The scene holds both pagan and Catholic inspirations: a statue of the Virgin Mary rests at the base of the central tree and nature spirits enchant Jeanne as they charge her with the nation-saving mission. MacKaye does not stage any battles in the cities. Rather, the war scenes occur at camps outside the cities and Jeanne chooses to sleep not in her tent, because "it stifles there within."¹⁰⁹ Interior spaces, often the sites of shadowy court intrigue, transform when light penetrates them. First, "the sun-lit form of the Emperor in the stained glass"¹¹⁰ anoints Charles, who immediately adopts her cause. In a parallel scenographic structure, the faces of Sts. Michael, Catherine, and Margaret appear in the prison window high above Jeanne in response to her regained faith. Fenris completes his reform in "well-directed play" under the light of a new day. On the wedding morning, he plays games with the children. For the first time, Fenris seems at peace as he reclines on the lawn, stretched out in the early morning sunshine. Immediately after this respite, he countermands the order to kill his brother. Here, he nears full reformation. Only his past –literal and figurative shadows from the edge of the stage – inhibits him from moving forward as a good citizen. His final act of self-sacrifice, a demonstration of his full reformation, occurs in a garden.

¹⁰⁹ MacKaye, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 137.

¹¹⁰ MacKaye, *Jeanne d'Arc*, 86.

Fenris the Wolf and *Jeanne d'Arc* were staged versions of the reformances occurring in American cities during the early twentieth century. The scenographic choices created spatial parallels to the community work executed by settlement house and constructive play advocates. In these two works, the scenic environment directly affected the successful reform of the protagonists in the same manner social workers asserted that a connection to the land via open spaces would improve the character of immigrant youth.

2.2.2 *The Scarecrow*

Written at the same time as *Fenris the Wolf* but published and produced after *Jeanne d'Arc*, *The Scarecrow*'s main character, Ravensbane, also must sacrifice himself for the good of society. Throughout the twentieth century, critics have considered *Scarecrow* MacKaye's one notable commercial and critical success. One reason could be the simplicity of language not found in many of his works, as the *New York Times* critic observed: "Wisely expressed in a graceful and eloquent sort of prose, rather than in poetry to be mouthed by actors unaccustomed to it."¹¹¹ However, acclaim for the play did not materialize immediately. MacKaye conceived the play in the Cornish woods; it then took more than eight years for it to reach a Broadway theatre. MacKaye wrote the script in 1903, Macmillan published it in 1908, and German and French translations appeared by 1910. The Harvard Dramatic Club first produced it on 7 December 1909; one year later, *Scarecrow* premiered commercially at the Middlesex Theatre in Middlebury, Connecticut; the Garrick Theatre hosted its New York opening on 17 January 1911.¹¹² Subsequently, the play appeared in Chicago and on British and German (Deutsches Theatre) stages. In 1923, the Film Guild produced a cinematic version starring Mary Astor and Glenn Hunter under the title *Puritan Passions*; it alters some of MacKaye's details, but maintains the basic plot, characters, and its "wholly symbolic" nature.¹¹³ The Moscow Art Theatre, while

¹¹¹ "'The Scarecrow' is Acted at Garrick" *New York Times* (18 January 1911) 6.

¹¹² Kenneth Macgowan stage-managed the Harvard production and Robert Edmond Jones played in the orchestra. See Moody, *Letters to Harriet* 428. In New York, *Scarecrow* ran for five weeks in 1911 and then reprised a short run during the following season. Frank Reicher played Ravensbane in both Boston and New York. Fola LaFollette, daughter of the influential Senator from Wisconsin, played Rachel in the Broadway production. See Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 221-224.

¹¹³ Frank Tuttle directed the film, which he and James Creelman adapted from MacKaye's play. It opened at the Cameo in New York City. For details about the film production see: *New York Times* (29 July 1923) X2; *New York*

on tour in America that same year, contracted with MacKaye to translate and produce the play.¹¹⁴ A revival American production in 1953 at the Theatre de Lys starred Patricia Neal and Douglass Watson. Additionally, a 1971 television production of the play starring Gene Wilder and Blythe Danner has been preserved as part of the Broadway Theatre Archive.¹¹⁵

Goody Rickby, a witch in seventeenth century Puritan Massachusetts, summons Dickon, “a Yankee improvisation of the Prince of Darkness,”¹¹⁶ to help her create a life-like scarecrow that will chase the crows over to the field of her neighbor, Justice Merton. As Dickon finishes the task, the Justice’s niece Rachel arrives to purchase from Rickby a mirror of truth. After delivery of the item is arranged, Rachel’s fiancé Richard enters and promptly escorts her away in order to protect her reputation. After they leave, Justice Merton arrives to tell Rickby he will hang her as a witch if she corrupts Rachel any further. After Merton leaves, the audience discovers that he and Rickby had a youthful tryst that resulted in a child who died at birth. As revenge against both Richard and Merton, Rickby asks Dickon to animate the scarecrow. So long as the scarecrow continues to puff on its corn cob pipe, it will continue to live. She anoints it Lord Ravensbane, and sends it off – with Dickon as tutor – to court Rachel.

The second act opens with Rachel making Richard stand with her in the mirror to confirm his true love. Acts two and three are comical, with a series of situations that reveal the hypocritical nature of the Puritan community. Ravensbane poses a strong rivalry to Richard’s courtship of Rachel: she seems magically charmed by him and Merton greedily believes a fake letter that offers a marriage proposal and twenty thousand pounds. Dickon then convinces Merton that Ravensbane is his and Rickby’s child. Rather than suffer the public scandal, the judge agrees to push Ravensbane’s suit with Rachel. He even hosts a reception to introduce the new foppish suitor to the community. With Dickon publicly touting Lord Ravensbane’s

Times (14 October 1923) X5; *Puritan Passions* (1923), Internet Movie Database, 1 May 2006, <www.us.imdb.com/title/tt0014382/>; for a contemporary review see “The Screen: The Devil’s Failure” *New York Times* (15 October 1923) 15.

¹¹⁴ Grover, *Annals of an Era*, 99. MacKaye claimed that Stanislavski thought *Scarecrow* “the only play thus far that comes up to the standard of the Moscow Art Theatre.” (Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 341). However, there is no record of the production ever taking place.

¹¹⁵ Percy MacKaye, *Scarecrow* (West Long Branch, NJ: Kultur, 1971). KCET Los Angeles produced the made-for-television film.

¹¹⁶ Percy MacKaye, *The Scarecrow or The Glass of Truth: A Comedy of the Ludicrous* (New York: MacMillan, 1911), xv.

aristocratic lineage, all in the town except Richard cater to his every odd request and overlook his obvious deficiencies.

At the end of the third act, Rachel accepts Ravensbane's proposal. At that moment, Richard turns the mirror on the couple to reveal the scarecrow, not the young Lord. Rachel's love, however, gains the scarecrow a soul. In the final act, Dickon presses the counterfeit. He threatens violence to Rachel if Ravensbane does not go through with the marriage, even though the scarecrow knows himself unworthy. When the Puritans enter, Dickon again fools them by asserting that the mirror is bewitched to show a false impression and that Ravensbane is really human. They go off to hunt down Rickby for witchcraft and leave Richard and Rachel alone with the lord and his tutor. Dickon then reasserts Ravensbane's suit over Richard's. But, saying that Rachel "is above your power,"¹¹⁷ the scarecrow interrupts the imp, confesses the truth, and breaks the life-sustaining pipe. As he drifts to his death Rachel turns him toward the mirror, which displays the reflection of not a scarecrow, but a man.

MacKaye based *Scarecrow* on Nathaniel Hawthorne's short story, "Feathertop." In the play's preface he compared his scarecrow to Hawthorne's, claiming that while the latter stands as an "emblem of a superficial fop," the former represents "human bathos."¹¹⁸ In the adaptation from story to play the scarecrow figure, although more psychologically complex, does not undergo nearly as many modifications as do the other characters and the spaces in which they exist. MacKaye's Rickby is neither as powerful nor as isolated from her town as the original. Whereas Hawthorne has her animate the scarecrow and pass her own pipe along to him, MacKaye has Dickon perform all witchcraft and create the pipe from a corncob. In both tales, Rickby sends the animated scarecrow toward the primary authority figure of the town – Justice Gookin for Hawthorne, Justice Merton for MacKaye – who leads in commerce, government, justice, and religion. Hawthorne keeps mysterious the relationship between Gookin and Rickby, simply narrating that they "know" each other, that he may have strayed during his youth, and that Rickby calls him a "hypocrite."¹¹⁹ MacKaye is much more explicit about the sexual relationship between Rickby and Merton. The play also establishes a relationship between Rickby and Rachel

¹¹⁷ MacKaye, *Scarecrow*, 177.

¹¹⁸ MacKaye, *Scarecrow*, xii

¹¹⁹ Nathaniel Hawthorne "Feathertop" in *The Oxford Book of Fairy Tales* (Oxford: Oxford U Press, 1993), 18 ("Mother Ricky knows the worshipful Justice Gookin, and the worshipful Justice knows Mother Rickby."), 25 ("This respectable old gentleman, we fear, at an earlier period of life, had given some pledge or another to the evil principle."), and 27 ("Did yonder hypocrite thrust my darling from his door?").

through the latter's interest in witchcraft. The relationship also justifies the existence of a mirror of truth, whereas Hawthorne incidentally includes a mirror "incapable of flattery."¹²⁰ Conversely, Rickby's original intent – creating the scarecrow to perform a standard function in keeping with the practice of the agricultural community – aligns her to the Puritan community. She then enlists Dickon to animate it into Ravensbane only in response to threats from Richard and Merton. Hawthorne's Rickby concocts and sends out Feathertop simply as a joke.

MacKaye alters Hawthorne's tale to create a closer spatial relationship between Rickby, Ravensbane, and the Puritans. Hawthorne's witch receives no visitors at her remote home and Feathertop walks several hours to arrive in town. Then he simply strolls through the gathering of curious townspeople en route to Gookin's house. Once he admits the mysterious figure into his home, Gookin passively watches through the doorway as the animated being woos his daughter. Polly Gookin discovers Feathertop's true nature in a private moment between the two. More importantly, Feathertop breaks his pipe in a private and socially pointless moment back inside Rickby's cottage far away from the town. His creation and self-destruction occupy a space away from the dominant community. MacKaye situates Merton and Rickby as neighbors, a significant change from Hawthorne's physical and social separation of the two. Hawthorne's townspeople also remain at a distance from his scarecrow, simply commenting on its bearing and not communicating with it. MacKaye stages an entire act during which Ravensbane is received by leading figures of the town, including the lieutenant-governor, a neighboring minister, and two professors from Harvard. During this social event, Ravensbane succeeds in wooing Rachel, who dons one of his tassels to indicate acceptance of his proposal. At this public moment, in front of the Puritan leaders, the illusion of his being human breaks. Likewise, during the fourth act, the scarecrow breaks his pipe in front of Rachel and Richard, the couple whose happiness his existence threatens. Ravensbane's image appears in a manifestation of the "magic-mirror" from MacKaye's valedictory address, one that reflects not the outside but the inside, of a person.

Like *Fenris*, *Scarecrow* relates an individual's intrusion into an established community and the threat that outsider presents. Because Ravensbane does not know and cannot adhere to socially accepted conduct, he first undergoes an educational process. Unfortunately for the dominant community, Dickon fills the role of tutor. Although the imp does provide a good deal of comic relief, Dickon's presence distracted the audience from the play's higher themes. In the

¹²⁰ Hawthorne, "Feathertop," 26.

New York production he stole focus from Ravensbane because his tricks demanded such spectacle and his character remained dominant throughout.¹²¹ Through his tutelage, Ravensbane slowly but steadily acquires the superficial social graces of his feigned rank. So, unlike Fenris whose learning and reform proceeds in fits and starts, there is little reform that the scarecrow must undergo in order to match the surface behaviors of acceptable society. The Puritans, in fact, bend to Rickby and Dickon's game until the scarecrow's true being becomes most apparent. After he sees his true physical image, Ravensbane sacrifices himself so that society can proceed as it was. But instead of running home like Feathertop, Ravensbane stays put in this new space where he elects to cease his own physical existence. In so doing, he achieves a new spiritual one. Also, by giving up his life in the shared space, he elevates this act from a pathetic suicide to a transformative act of sacrifice for the woman who gave him true life.¹²² By spending time among refined society and adopting its behaviors, Ravensbane engages his own reformation. He divests himself from his past in order to embrace the principles of his new community and restore it to its normal, pre-intrusion state.

The critic Clayton Hamilton confirmed MacKaye's success in his published effort to devise a tragedy from Hawthorne's short story: "The central conception of this play is loftily imaginative and profoundly real; for it embodies that ludicrous and tragic incongruity between what we are and what we will to be."¹²³ John Gassner includes *The Scarecrow* in his 1967 collection of the "best plays" of the American theatre before O'Neill, but does not label the effort a success. He describes the play as optimistic and symbolic and then asserts that both qualities vanished from the American stage "along with other noble esthetic and humanist causes, in the holocaust of World War I."¹²⁴ But Gassner is too simplistic in using a global war to mark a transition in MacKaye's dramas of social reform. The next of these pieces veered into darker territory, as did some social reformers, several years before President Wilson sent Americans to battle in Europe. All three of the above plays portray acts of self-sacrifice that improve or restore

¹²¹ The magical mirror and pyrotechnic effects drew substantial focus according to two reviewers. See " 'The Scarecrow' is Acted at Garrick" and Adolph Klauber, "Concerning New Plays" *New York Times* (22 January 1911) X2.

¹²² Ravensbane tells Rickby and Dickon during the last act: "I was born of Rachel." MacKaye, *Scarecrow*, 165.

¹²³ Clayton Hamilton, "The Scarecrow: A Dramatic Concept, Loftily Imaginative, Profoundly Real, Impressively Unfolded." *The Bookman* (February 1911), quoted in Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 224.

¹²⁴ John Gassner and Mollie Gassner, *Best Plays of the Early American Theatre: From the Beginning to 1916* (New York: Crown, 1967), xv.

society. However, in *To-morrow* the individual does not choose his own sacrifice. Instead, select individuals prescribe a new social order in which they seek to prevent the need for future reform by limiting the practices of the undesirable other.

2.3 BREEDING A BETTER AMERICAN

In writing *To-morrow*, MacKaye investigated eugenics as a method to prevent reproduction by those tainted with physical or mental flaws. MacKaye began work on the play, originally entitled *Peter Dale's Garden*, during the summer of 1910 while in California assisting Margaret Anglin (for whom he originally penned the manuscript) on her production of *Antigone*. While there, he met with Luther Burbank on whom he based the character of Peter Dale. Burbank was a popular figure in the 1900s and 1910s and during these decades his name graced many newspaper headlines throughout the United States. Even David Belasco, to whom MacKaye submitted an early manuscript version of *Peter Dale's Garden*, referenced Burbank's botanical experiments in his 1911 production *The Return of Peter Grimm*.¹²⁵

In a letter to his wife Marion, Percy revealed that Burbank was "receptive to the idea of the play." In line with Herts' notions of her audience being unaware of educational goals, Burbank approved expressing his theories in the theatre because it was "more influential than the pulpit... affecting man subconsciously."¹²⁶ MacKaye's success at subconscious influence is not altogether an established fact. Reviewers throughout the country strongly praised the play for its topic and presentation: "MacKaye is subtle in his presentation of eugenics and therefore teaches more effectively," effused a Washington, DC critic; and one in Portland, Oregon described it as, "a tremendously strong play... in keeping with the most advanced thought and greatest problem

¹²⁵ In a footnote, Grover subtly asserts that Belasco lifted many of MacKaye's ideas, but does not go any further. *Annals of an Era*, 24. Belasco does not broach eugenics in his more straightforward melodrama, but several similarities between the two plays are rather striking. The chief gardener of the play is named Peter, and there is also a scandal that involves a man who has abandoned his illegitimate child. That man wishes to marry Peter's daughter not for love, but to access the Grimm estate. His scheme is foiled and the daughter chooses to marry a long-faithful employee of the estate. The play is published in George Pierce Baker's *Modern American Plays* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Howe, 1920), 101-214.

¹²⁶ Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 217-218.

of the day.”¹²⁷ However, the *New York Times* reviewer panned the play for its overt preaching and weakness compared to Eugene Brieux’s *Damaged Goods*, which MacKaye had read and claimed as an influence. John Pollock’s translation of *Damaged Goods* was first published in the United States in a 1907 volume that contained three Brieux plays and a G.B. Shaw preface.¹²⁸ A century after their conception, it is evident that both plays are preachy and anticlimactic dramas about the spread of sexually transmitted disease. Discussions about eugenics pervade Brieux’s and MacKaye’s melodramas and in both a man attempts to hide syphilis from his prospective bride. Compared to the realistic clinical discourse of *Damaged Goods*, *To-morrow* retains Victorian civility by never mentioning the specific disease. MacKaye’s characters talk around the subject and only when absolutely necessary inaudibly whisper its name to each other. Both plays end with a parade of the unwanted. Brieux shows his audience a range of infected Parisians, whereas MacKaye transforms such realism to a symbolic parade of botanical rejects. Employing garden and plant-breeding metaphors throughout the play, MacKaye examines the possibility of selectively removing inherent diseases – in this case, an unspoken venereal disease – from humankind.

To-morrow, like MacKaye’s verse dramas, deployed symbolism so overtly that few could miss the references. He liberally spreads gardening and breeding metaphors, applying accepted concepts about plants and animals to humanity. The first and third acts occur at the center of Peter Dale’s garden, which clearly alludes to Eden. Revered by academic, religious, and business leaders, Peter stands as the father of a new theology with an established set of laws; he even asks his daughter Mana to give “a kiss for St. Peter!”¹²⁹ But the garden, a living laboratory, also roots the performance space in the world of contemporary scientific theory. Peter expects his Adam and Eve, his protégé Mark and Mana,¹³⁰ to follow eugenic principles in order to ensure a better race. He taught them as children by reading from Darwin’s *The Descent of Man*, and he relates a nursery-fable version of that tale during the first act to another child, with Jack and Jill being the split parts of Amoeba, the first life on earth. But as with *Genesis*, this tale perpetuates the fall of

¹²⁷ Clippings from *Washington Evening Star* (6 April 1912) and *Portland Journal* (11 February 1912). Scrapbook: *To-morrow I* (DCL).

¹²⁸ Eugene Brieux, *Three Plays by Brieux* (New York: Brentano’s, 1911 (1907)). The French title of Brieux’s play is *Les Avariés*, which translates literally as ‘the damaged’ or ‘the rotting’.

¹²⁹ Percy MacKaye, *To-morrow* 5th edition (New York: Frederick A. Stokes Co., 1912), 146.

¹³⁰ Mana even describes her relationship with Mark as: “He’s just my Adam’s rib. I came out of his marrow, like Eve, to ask all the questions and do all the mischief.” MacKaye, *To-morrow*, 102.

man: once born, Jack and Jill keep trying to climb up the hill that they tumbled down. Merging an evolutionary tale with the biblical fall of man, MacKaye preaches genetic positivism as a biological and moral imperative.

Despite Peter Dale's god-like centrality, MacKaye changed the title and thereby placed greater emphasis on the main female character's name, her storyline, and the role of reform-minded women in adopting eugenic principles. We learn that Peter has raised Mana and Mark to comprehend and further his scientific work and that both were admirable students at Berkeley. In their youth, Peter told the children of his plan for them: they will settle in the Arizona desert, a new Eden, to raise a human race pure from contemporary social ills. Although not explicitly stated until the end, Peter clearly envisions Mana marrying Mark, whom he has raised to be her mate, as he has bred flowers and trees in his garden laboratory. However, it is Mana who is tempted to follow her passion instead of her reason. Her love interest even asks her: "Do you mean that I crawled like Old Nick [Satan] into your Eden?"¹³¹ In this eugenic and melodramatic version of *Genesis*, Eve plucks the apple but never takes a bite. In a rather clunky manner, MacKaye reveals that Mana is a nickname given her by Mark because he could not pronounce "mañana."¹³² Mana also comes from Spanish for spring, the season of rebirth. As spelled and pronounced, mana in English means "power" or "authority;" it can be used for good or evil purposes.¹³³ Mana's reproductive power, her choice of mate, can improve human stock or let it decline into disarray.

Mana is involved in a whirlwind romance with Senator Julian Henshawe. Peter opposes Julian's proposal because he knows that the senator is tainted with syphilis, evident in his illegitimate and blind daughter Rosalie, whom he initially abandoned but recently adopted. Peter, however, decides to leave the choice to Mana, provided that Julian fully tells her about Rosalie and himself. Julian, also under direct pressure from Reverend Spofford, informs Mana that Rosalie is his child (a fact Mana has already determined on her own), but does not mention his disease, the cause of Rosalie's blindness. Because she thinks that his adoption demonstrates

¹³¹ MacKaye, *To-morrow*, 100

¹³² Mañana means 'tomorrow' in Spanish. MacKaye specifies the pronunciation of Mana is mä'nə, a shortened version of mañana. It is not män'ə like the bread from heaven, but for readers – the largest audience for this play – the biblical reference would still be apparent.

¹³³ William James, who taught philosophy at Harvard when MacKaye was a student there, deployed the term in *Some Problems of Philosophy* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1968 (1911)). OED *Online*, 2005. Oxford English Dictionary. 15 December 2005 < <http://dictionary.oed.com> >.

taking responsibility for his past transgressions, Mana remains committed to their betrothal, and the two opt to take an ocean-side horse ride to Julian's bungalow. After they leave, Mark discovers the nature of Julian's disease and rides after them.

Act two opens at Julian's ocean-side bungalow surrounded by twisted and overgrown cypress trees. Expressing distress over the state of nature here, Mana asks to return to her father's gardens but Julian persuades her to wait until moonrise so that they can see the way home. Mana agrees and the two begin to gather wood for a fire, during which time Mana recollects a childhood camping trip, absentmindedly chatting with Julian as if he were her Mark. When she goes into Julian's bungalow Mark approaches and confronts the senator, who again agrees to tell Mana the full truth about himself. Mark stays in the shadows to oversee the event. When Julian confesses that Rosalie's blindness was caused by "inheritance," Mana believes the flaw to have been with the mother. Julian then tries to convince himself that such was the case, but in doing so out loud he reveals that it is his line that is flawed. Mana reacts in disgust and flees inside the bungalow. Mark then reenters from the cypresses to take Mana home, but Julian resists and so Mark lifts him off the ground and throws him over the cliff. He tells Mana when she emerges that he "pulled a weed."¹³⁴

The third act returns to Peter's garden. Julian is in a perilous condition offstage, claiming to have slipped off the cliff. A series of conversations grapple with the actions of the previous day, but mostly the characters argue about what the actual concern ought to be. Peter absolves guilt by reminding Mark that he told him to spy on the untrustworthy Julian. But at the same time Mark confesses that he hurt Julian because of his own passionate love for Mana. She too confides in Peter her feelings for Mark and, in an overt biblical reference, her distress in avoiding his glance "three times: three times to-day."¹³⁵ Shortly thereafter, Julian's mother and Spofford argue with Mana because she refuses to marry Julian on his deathbed. Mana argues that women caught in such situations selfishly consider reputation only. When Spofford and Mrs. Henshawe leave to comfort Julian, Mark enters and the two admit their love for each other. However, a moral cloud hovers over the potential romance: even without legal charges, Mark regrets the violence of his actions and Julian's impending death. Miraculously, a nurse enters to inform

¹³⁴ MacKaye, *To-Morrow*, 131.

¹³⁵ MacKaye, *To-morrow*, 151

them that Julian will recover and the two joyously embrace their ideal future as Peter fondly watches from the background.

MacKaye owed a debt to Brieux for the subject matter and general structure of *To-morrow*. Despite the *New York Times*' vehement criticism of MacKaye's didacticism, Brieux preaches to the audience with equal fervor, albeit in a more Ibsenite, and therefore critically acceptable, manner. *Damaged Goods* begins in an unnamed Doctor's private consulting office containing "portraits ... [and] busts of celebrated physicians," moves to an upper-class interior for act two, and finishes in the Doctor's hospital office, "where he is chief physician."¹³⁶ During the first act, the Doctor consults with George Dupont, a young man who recently contracted syphilis during his bachelor party. The Doctor advises him that he can still marry and have children, but that he must put off that life for four years while undergoing treatment. George presses for a cure in six months because he can delay the marriage only that long; the Doctor denies the possibility and George leaves. The second act opens on George and his new bride, Henriette. The audience learns that they have been married one year, have an infant child, and that George successfully delayed the marriage by six months by claiming to have needed treatment for consumption, which he received from some other doctor. The first-act Doctor returns to examine the baby and diagnose a syphilitic infection. He provides this information only to George and his mother, who collude to contain the secret. Henriette finally discovers the taint when she overhears the Duponts, negotiating the Nurse's attempt at blackmail. She ends the act "shrieking like a mad woman: Don't touch me!"¹³⁷ The third act shifts almost completely away from the established narrative. It begins with Loches – deputy for Sarthes, outside Paris – asking the Doctor to continue treatment of the infant at his home where his daughter Henriette now resides and to certify in court George's disease to guarantee a divorce. The Doctor first persuades him against legal recourse and then argues that he should have investigated George's health before the marriage. Finally, he parades in front of Loches a series of syphilis victims, the damaged goods of the title, an attempt to inspire the deputy to enact laws to prevent the spread of syphilis. And then, quite abruptly, the play ends.

The differences in setting between *To-Morrow* and *Damaged Goods* seem somewhat innocuous at first glance, especially given that public discourse about both plays focused more

¹³⁶ Brieux, *Three Plays*, 187, 235.

¹³⁷ Brieux, *Three Plays*, 234.

on subject matter than on form. However, the spatial differences create two very different dramatic worlds and two very different impressions of the characters involved. Both plays deploy a similar scenographic structure: A – B – A¹. MacKaye's third act is the first act space undergoing its harvest transformation. Brioux moves his third act to a similar but more clinical setting: the Doctor's hospital office. *To-morrow*'s second act occurs not at the family home of the infected, but rather at his bachelor retreat. But unlike Brioux's series of private interiors, MacKaye sets his entire drama outdoors, in public spaces. Whereas *Damaged Goods* spatially asserts a disease of individuals, *To-morrow* spatially asserts the public nature of the disease. Except for the brief mention of legislation at the end, *Damaged Goods* portrays a private world that seeks to deal with a social issue individually. As such, it provokes the audience in a manner that permits it to consider disease as an individual issue. *To-morrow*, conversely, models the issue in spaces that were familiar to American audiences as a public. Although MacKaye perpetuated the repression of disease names and scientific details, he pushed his American audience to consider dealing collectively with such unmentionables.

Brioux's first and third acts are much more private than MacKaye's garden setting. Instead of the landscape vista that extends upstage, Brioux encloses the first act in the doctor's consulting office and then the third act in his office within the hospital. The final parade introduces the public nature of disease but the use of the offstage waiting room draws a physical and medical divide between the public – the infected, the damaged goods – and the private – Loches and the Doctor – neither of whom have acted publicly to prevent the disease. They simply *discuss* actions that should be taken. MacKaye's third act also expands the public nature of the disease. However, his spatial structure more clearly creates a sense of quarantine between public and private. MacKaye isolates the infectious agent from the stage: Julian is confined to the house far away from Peter's garden that has already been established as the whole of eugenic humanity. Additionally, the potential victim of the infected and the man who intervened to remove the infectious threat occupy the stage most often during this final act. Both dramas present contemporary pseudo-scientific case studies of syphilis,¹³⁸ but *Damaged Goods* functions at the clinical level and *To-morrow* at the social.

¹³⁸ By 1905, scientists had discovered and identified the bacteria that caused syphilis. By 1910, Paul Ehrlich had developed Salvarsan, an arsenic treatment to kill the bacteria. However, many in the general population responded, in the same vein as Brioux and MacKaye, with a cry for a return to morality and celibacy.

The second act locations reinforce the private-public distinction of these plays, although both acts shift to more private spaces. Brieux establishes the second act inside George's family home, clearly under the control of his mother. Whereas Mrs. Henshawe argues to maintain a good public face for Julian during the first and third acts of *To-Morrow*, Mrs. Dupont only appears during the private second act and viciously attempts to closet the syphilitic outbreak in her family. As with most interior settings, doors provide a clear separation between the Duponts and outsiders such as the Doctor or the Wet Nurse. The only threat of public exposure comes from the Duponts' servants and Brieux makes it clear that the Wet Nurse, once she discovers the nature of the disease, only wants financial compensation: "You've only got to give me my money and I shan't say a word more."¹³⁹ However, concern for personal reputation does more to stifle the public nature of the Dupont situation. During the third act, even the dispassionate Doctor argues against publicly acknowledging George's taint at a divorce proceeding. He explains to Loches first that he is bound by professional secrecy and second that he would not testify so as to protect Henriette from future social stigma. Despite the possibility that outsiders might reveal the disease to the public, Brieux sufficiently denies those avenues and emphasizes its private nature.

MacKaye also maintains spatial consistency so that the audience never forgets the public aspect of the disease during the more private second act. Viewers see not the inside of Julian's bungalow, but its exterior and its location situated within the wild coastal California landscape. Without doors to restrict outsiders from entering the stage, Mark appears and disappears fluidly from and into the shadows of the trees that surround the playing space. He constantly observes Mana and Julian, steps in to pressure the senator to defer to her interests and later tries to protect her from Julian's advances. MacKaye also includes two passive outsiders whose presence is negligible in terms of the action, but whose existence changes the frame through which the audience witnesses this act. Miss Winch, the social reporter for the local paper, opens the scene by instructing her driver to wait for her at a distance and wait for her whistle to bring the car around. She then takes up a position just out of sight behind Julian's bungalow. As act's end, the audience hears her whistle followed by the driver's car horn in response. Mark threatens and then injures Julian's physical being, leaving a publicly visible marker of his taint. Winch threatens his

¹³⁹ Brieux, *Three Plays*, 233.

social being with the front-page scandal that dominates the third act. Through the active and passive observers MacKaye creates a space that is more public than private.

MacKaye wrote *To-morrow* specifically to urge social action, but it was the critically championed and clinically direct *Damaged Goods* that the Medical Review of Reviews produced in March 1913 for a private New York audience of ministers, doctors, and social workers, and one month later for Washington dignitaries. Eventually, a Broadway production for the general public opened on 14 May; it ran for 66 performances at the Fulton Theatre.¹⁴⁰ *To-morrow* never appeared on Broadway. However, it received a reading as part of the program “Great Dramas of Today” at the Brooklyn Institute of Arts & Letters on 23 November 1912.¹⁴¹ At the Little Theatre in Philadelphia Frank Reicher, who had starred in *The Scarecrow* on Broadway, produced *To-morrow*, which opened on 31 October 1913. Additionally, newspapers throughout the country printed reviews of the published play, amateur productions, and public readings. Each one proclaimed it a dramatic endorsement of eugenic principles.¹⁴²

In the early 1910s eugenics seemed a potential social tool to reformers working in communities throughout the United States. *To-Morrow* staged an example for reform-minded audiences who believed that women, as moral guardians, must speak up in order to stop the traditional concealment of such diseases. Women’s organizations often used the play as an educational tool for the community. MacKaye kept a clipping about one such Minnesota production with the headline: “High School Boys Hear a Sex-Hygiene Play.”¹⁴³ The publisher issued at least five editions during 1912 alone, despite – or perhaps because of – a scathing review in the *New York Times* that called it a “shapeless, ineffectual melodramatic sermon on eugenics.”¹⁴⁴ Even if people heeded the reviewer’s advice to avoid the play, they still would have read the majority of MacKaye’s preface printed word for word in the review. Those who bought

¹⁴⁰ “Brieux Play on March 9” *New York Times* 8 February 1913; “Use Play to Preach Strong Medical Sermon” *New York Times* 6 April 1913; “The Curious History of Brieux’s Play in Public” *New York Times* 18 May 1913. With nearly 900 seats, the Fulton had a short-lived existence in 1911 as the Folies Bergere, a dinner theatre named for the famous Parisian nightclub. See William Morrison, *Broadway Theatres: History and Architecture* (Mineola, NY: Dover, 1999), 71-73.

¹⁴¹ Along with *To-morrow*, the event included Wedekind’s *Spring Awakening* and Maeterlinck’s *Pelleas and Melisande*. See Scrapbook: *To-morrow* I (DCL).

¹⁴² MacKaye collected reviews of the play from the following cities: Salt Lake City, Pittsburgh, New Orleans, Portland, St Paul, Denver, Baltimore, Newark, Los Angeles, Minneapolis, Des Moines, and Chicago. One review from *The Evening Chronicle* in Port Arthur, Ontario noted a small but attentive audience. In the accompanying letter, Mme. Labadie claimed to have filled the YWCA hall. Scrapbook: *To-morrow* I (DCL).

¹⁴³ *Minneapolis Morning Tribune* (19 Nov 1913), Scrapbook: *To-morrow* I (DCL).

¹⁴⁴ “MacKaye’s ‘To-morrow’” *New York Times* (10 March 1912), BR 136.

the book would have read the entire preface, in which he discusses the science underlying his retake on a dramatic theme pioneered by Ibsen and Brieux.

MacKaye's preface introduces his readers to positive and negative eugenics and its necessary role in American society. To him it is a given that the "social, political, religious aspects of our life are radically conditioned by the biological," that heredity will become the determining factor in the advance of 'the race', although it may take generations or centuries for people to embrace this notion. He separates eugenics into two camps: positive eugenics through which human stock improves itself by selective breeding, and negative eugenics that safeguards human stock "from racial poisons, through the spread of medical knowledge." He champions Brieux's *Damaged Goods* as a prime example of the latter, but states that *To-morrow* seeks to demonstrate the former category and its "serene, constructive aspects," albeit with reference to the latter because of its greater dramatic potential.¹⁴⁵ It is negative eugenics, in fact, disease prevention that occupies the greatest portion of the play. But the positive eugenic breeding of Mark and Mana, Peter's trained plants, underlies the dramatic action and shapes the dramatic resolution. At the end of the preface, he claims that eugenics and this play shed new light on Alexander Pope's adage: "The proper study of mankind – is man."

The study of flora, not man, made Luther Burbank a well-known proponent of eugenic principles. By selecting the most ideal among thousands, he propagated 'new and improved' varieties of flowers and plants. Based on these successes, he argued that men and women should apply similar breeding tactics in human mating. Throughout the 1910s the American public embraced eugenics – the science of improving human genetic stock – as a method for eradicating diseases and other weaknesses in the population. World's fairs had long popularized heredity as the most influential feature in narratives of racial progress and not surprisingly preferred Anglo stock. A few years after the science had been discredited by Franz Boas, Stanford University hosted a conference on eugenics, featuring Burbank, concurrent with the 1915 San Francisco fair.¹⁴⁶ According to Burbank, however, heredity fulfilled only one necessary component in the creation of an ideal American race. Along with playground associations, he believed that the proper environment also must be provided to children in order for them to reach their highest

¹⁴⁵ MacKaye, *To-morrow*, v-viii.

¹⁴⁶ Sheldon Cheney also wrote *Redemption*, a masque to be performed along with this conference that promoted eugenic principles. See Rydell 224.

potential. By the time *To-morrow* appeared on pages and stages throughout the country, eugenics – the science of improving the current environment – joined other popular scientific methods for bettering the American people.

MacKaye followed these scientific trends in the press. Even before meeting Burbank, MacKaye had been working on *To-morrow*, clipping newspaper articles and reviews of books about eugenics and selective breeding. As with many of his plays, he assembled a scrapbook of research about the subject matter. The articles discussed a range of topics from how eugenics could assist couples in creating desired physical attributes in their children to how immediately and strongly the American environment affected immigrant children. With his newspaper clippings, MacKaye also collected articles from leading social magazines of the day. Three such articles represent the most important cultural influences on *To-morrow*: Burbank's "The Training of the Human Plant" from *Century Magazine*, G. Stanley Hall's "From Generation to Generation" from *American Magazine*, and Belle de Rivera's "How Women Can Halt the Great Black Plague" from *Pearson's Magazine*. These articles discussed topics that *To-morrow* addresses directly and indirectly: the eradication of disease, considerations of race, and the importance of a proper environment.

MacKaye employs wild nature and trained nature imagery throughout *To-morrow*. He modeled the first and third setting after Luther Burbank's gardens in Santa Rosa, about fifty miles north of San Francisco. Spectators and readers would have been familiar with similar, though more compact, experimental gardens that appeared regularly at world's fairs. The second act occurs, as mentioned above, at Julian's ocean side bungalow among wild cypress trees. As in *Fenris the Wolf*, tamed and untamed duel on stage. Like many binaries, these two settings inform and define each other, with one – Peter's garden – clearly superior. Laid out in a very balanced way, the garden exemplifies nature contained. MacKaye includes a greenhouse that extends beyond audience sight; in it are rows of tables holding boxes of seedlings. Opposite the greenhouse, a cement ring borders a shallow pool with a curved bench forming a second perimeter around the water. A central path extends upstage with manicured flowerbeds on either side. The path then forms a T-shape, with branches going left and right. Behind this path are cactus beds and behind them is a fruit tree grove. "Dull-golden mountains and a bright azure

sky” create the backdrop.¹⁴⁷ Carefully sculpted like City Beautiful parks and the experimental gardens of world’s fairs, Peter Dale’s garden is an idealized version of nature, with each separate section an example of the latest scientific advances. Just as world’s fairs advertised products that would change America’s future, Peter’s garden provides the audience with a glimpse of the future American race.

While MacKaye uses Burbank as the basis for his most quickly recognizable individual character, Mana follows the models of Jeanne and Freyja. Reflecting the emerging group of woman activists and reformers, this highly educated woman takes control of her own life and uses her knowledge to serve the public interest. Like Freyja, Mana is drawn to the untamed in Julian and sees the good in him. Like Jeanne, her progressive ideas and actions are unwelcome by those trying to hold onto power; they disapprove of her unladylike practices. Also, like Jeanne, there is a moment at which she falters before realizing her true purpose. However, in this case, that purpose is to fulfill the role of nurturer, but in a revolutionary manner. Mana represents neither a wholly progressive nor a wholly traditional view of the American future. Like one of the plants her father breeds, Mana is yet another American experiment rooted in the past, stretching out toward an ideal future.

Like many eugenisists, Belle de Rivera – founder of the New York City Federation of Women’s Clubs – asserts that women must be selective in their choice of mate to create the best possible children, to eradicate disease. Women must screen their prospective husbands because legislators have not provided protection from venereal diseases even though they have enacted departments of health and sanitation for less taboo threats such as alcoholism and tuberculosis. Specifically, she is most concerned with syphilis and gonorrhea that, according to “eminent authority”, cause eighty per cent of infant blindness cases, a statistic that MacKaye reinforces by devising Rosalie as Julian’s tainted child. These venereal diseases originate with the fathers who spread disease “among the purest and best, the most tenderly nurtured and guarded in every class and condition of life.”¹⁴⁸ Rivera’s mandate for women to be proactive is one of the clearest distinctions between *To-morrow* and *Damaged Goods*. Brieux’s Henriette is a passive victim of George’s disease, only a minor character in one act and a hysterical one at that. The Doctor

¹⁴⁷ MacKaye, *To-morrow*, 3-4

¹⁴⁸ Belle de Rivera, “How Women Can Halt the Great Black Plague,” *Pearson’s Magazine* (March 1910) 417-418. PMK Collection, DCL.

chastises the father for not guaranteeing her prospective husband's health. MacKaye's Mana is a major character throughout all three acts and she actively rejects Julian and chooses Mark. De Rivera's argument and *To-morrow* reflect a traditional yet progressive morality, in which reform-minded women safeguard the home from external evils that men will at best not prevent and at worst propagate.

Very quickly, MacKaye expands the scope of the action to include the broader society outside the garden confines. Raeburn, a professor from Berkeley, enters the stage looking to convince Julian to endorse a new eugenics bill that would stop "some nameless causes of blindness."¹⁴⁹ When he does find Julian, Raeburn argues for eugenics in order to breed "sound Americans" by "forbidding the production of the worst stock, and by encouraging the production of the best."¹⁵⁰ When Julian asks who determines best and worst, Raeburn responds: "The doctors. There are racial poisons, perfectly well known, which ravage the homes of our people with disease, insanity and crime far more terrible than tuberculosis or the smallpox."¹⁵¹ He tries to prevent genetic defects by preventing procreation of those who are defective. Julian at first walks away, epitomizing de Rivera's ineffective legislators. But when Raeburn presses Julian by specifically mentioning marital taints that cause congenital blindness, Julian uses his riding crop to snap off a flower from one of the cacti in the garden. His action assails selective breeding at the place of its genesis, seeking to deface the garden of tomorrow.

Raeburn's stage appearance is not limited to an unsuccessful lobbying effort. Prior to Julian's arrival, the professor reminisces about Mark and Mana as students at Berkeley, fondly recalling Mana's visionary work at the university. However, nostalgia is not his only endeavor; to Raeburn California is the kingdom of tomorrow and Mana is its representative goddess. He informs Mark and the audience about goings on in Sacramento, framing his speeches with the classically inspired but progressive philosophy of the City Beautiful. The professor relates plans for a new state capitol that includes three female allegorical figures on the dome – Art, Philosophy, and Law – and asserts that they should be replaced by a single allegorical figure: "The old procrastinating word [mañana] of the dreamy dons Americanized, made brief, to name

¹⁴⁹ MacKaye, *To-morrow* 18

¹⁵⁰ MacKaye, *To-morrow* 22

¹⁵¹ MacKaye, *To-morrow* 23

the opposite spirit of our new age: to-morrow, foresight, dreams that act and look forward.”¹⁵² Originally constructed between 1861 and 1874, the capitol underwent an expansion and renovation project shortly before MacKaye’s west coast journey in 1905. But the new construction did not include any new statuary. However, the accuracy of Raeburn’s architectural history is less important than the cognizance American audiences would have about neoclassical structures graced by allegorical figures, civic buildings that blossomed throughout the country after the Columbian Exhibition. MacKaye deploys a device with which his audience would have been familiar and invents this construction project in order to introduce a new allegorical figure, with Mana as the embodiment of its values. The garden and Mana become intertwined figures, both bred by Peter Dale to improve the American future. Julian’s riding crop, therefore, strikes both the garden and Mana.

Julian is not alone in seeking to limit the expansion of selective breeding from flora and fauna to humanity; three secondary characters present arguments from industry, society, and theology against MacKaye’s positive eugenics. Just before the professor argues his case, Westgate, a lumberman, also lobbies the senator to consider a Forest Improvement Bill, which would provide government support to Peter in his efforts at breeding trees that grow nearly ten times faster than trees in the wilderness. Westgate’s thoughts about selective breeding do not go further than his concerns with maintaining his ability to profit from the land. He does not hold a philosophical belief in the process as much as he recognizes that continuous razing of western forests will leave the lumber industry without future resources. When he asks Julian to support the bill, the senator stammers in disbelief. Westgate responds with a wink: “we’re gettin’ put wise. We want to hog the future as much as the present. So go ahead, Senator; go right ahead.”¹⁵³ Not the same type of villain as Julian, Westgate embodies a calculated balance between forest preservation and logging. He marks Peter as practical and useful because his techniques help the timber industry, but when Raeburn presses Julian about the Eugenics Bill, he chimes in: “Say, he’s dotty.”¹⁵⁴ Julian, likewise, believes in selectively breeding his horses, relying on experts and pedigrees, but limits such thinking to his stud farm. Westgate endorses Dale’s plant experiments

¹⁵² MacKaye, *To-morrow*, 13-17. Regarding the origin of Mana’s name, Raeburn had commented previously about its Mexican meaning as one that perpetuates laziness and lack of motivation.

¹⁵³ MacKaye, *To-morrow* 21

¹⁵⁴ MacKaye, *To-morrow* 22.

because it helps his bottom line, but he and Julian both resist applying selection to human procreation.

During the third act, Mrs. Henshawe and Rev. Spofford, concerned about public perception, try to persuade Mana to marry Julian on his deathbed. Mana employs a eugenic argument to support her position, but Mrs. Henshawe counters: "It's not for us women to grow scientific and put an end to romance and poetry." As with the disdain Julian and Westgate express during the first act, she dismisses Mana for being foolish and scandalous. De Rivera warns that society would brand women who insist on procreation reform as, "dreamers and idealists," who will have to face "the judgment and verdict of unwomanliness and immodesty."¹⁵⁵ In the middle of the women's debate, Spofford enters with a newspaper and tells Mana that she must marry Julian. During the first act he counseled her not to do so, not to be impetuous. But now, because of "these headlines," because of her rash decision, because "young women cannot overstep the customs of sex in society without personal dishonor," she must "redeem her womanly repute."¹⁵⁶

Mana refuses, claiming that Spofford does not represent the true church, the one grounded in Deism, the one of which Mendel is priest. She berates Spofford because the churches are blessing marriages that are "sacraments of corruption," marriages that perpetuate a system of prisons and asylums to house tainted progeny.¹⁵⁷ Once again, Mana reiterates de Rivera's point by arguing against a marriage of those who are clearly ill and who will pass along disease to their children and by decrying that, "such a marriage is called 'holy' and receives the blessing of the Church."¹⁵⁸ MacKaye is careful not to craft Mana as an atheist, but he does have her be less concerned with established church practice and social reputation than in bettering humankind. This principle comes almost directly from Luther Burbank, who professes his belief in God's religion, but not in man's theology: "God made religion and man made theology, just as God made the country, and man made the town. I have the largest sympathy for religion and the largest contempt I am capable of for a misleading theology."¹⁵⁹ Following the religion of the

¹⁵⁵ Belle de Rivera, "How Women Can Halt the Great Black Plague," *Pearson's Magazine* (March, 1910): 420 in Scrapbook: To-Morrow I (DCL).

¹⁵⁶ MacKaye, *To-morrow* 162.

¹⁵⁷ MacKaye, *To-morrow* 161-164.

¹⁵⁸ de Rivera, "How Women Can Halt," 418.

¹⁵⁹ Luther Burbank "The Training of the Human Plant," *The Century Magazine* (1907): 131 in Scrapbook: To-Morrow I (DCL).

land, and like de Rivera's women of "To-day" who guarantee good health for the generations of "To-morrow," Mana faithfully selects a better partner in lieu of the tainted Julian, despite the social and theological pressures for her not to do so. More than one critic discussed the conflict in clergy having turned a blind eye to such situations. *To-Morrow* "contains an idea which the most conservative and proper of us will have to confront before this generation has passed away; namely that indiscriminate marriage without regard to the future of the race is an institution not made in heaven and not to be indefinitely permitted in civilized society on earth."¹⁶⁰

Through these dialogues, MacKaye presents the audience with opposing views on selective breeding for their world of tomorrow. Peter and his associates advocate for a new approach to producing human offspring, deploying the latest scientific arguments for their cause. The Henshawes and their associates disregard this science in order to maintain established social roles that position them as superior. This combative stance also manifests itself through the environments associated with these two sides. How these men do or do not control their space mirrors their concern for the sake of human society. Concurrent with the eugenics movement and sharing principles with the playground movement, euthenics asserted women's power to provide an ideal environment to ensure the health of the current generation and thereby provide better stock for the next. While eugenics aimed to improve the world of tomorrow, euthenics guaranteed improvement in the world of today. This science evolved in fin-de-siècle America as a reaction formation to the perceived closing of the frontier and increasingly crowded urban centers. "The general formula for healthy interior environments in the period was to imitate the outdoors: increasing the cubic feet of space per inhabitant; improving ventilation to keep people from rebreathing used air; and increasing direct sunlight to banish germs or to purify air.... Like Turner's frontier, the experience of direct contact with nature made men more efficient and ultimately better suited for modern life."¹⁶¹ At first glance, such a philosophy would embrace Julian's wilderness over Peter's garden. However, like the National Park movement that packaged for tourist consumption the more pleasant aspects of the American landscape, euthenics promoted a return to nature in terms of access to beauty, light, and air – not access to

¹⁶⁰ Clipping from *Philadelphia North American* (3 February 1912) in Scrapbook: To-morrow I (DCL).

¹⁶¹ Christine Holbo, "Euthenic America" *Stanford Electronic Humanities Review* 5.supplement. *Cultural and Technological Incubations of Fascism*. 17 December 1996. <<http://www.stanford.edu/group/SHR/5-supp/text/holbo.html>>.

unmediated nature. Euthenists embraced park and memorial versions of the American landscape, monumental spaces that recalled an idealized past. They did not advocate untamed nature.

Burbank also discusses the importance of environment on human development, advocating that children emerge better not from schools but from “the small town or the country, the nearer to nature the better.” Only in the city, where “the temptations are so great, the life so artificial, the atmosphere so like that of a hothouse,” should parents enroll children in school at an early age.¹⁶² In this light, Burbank concurs with euthenics and playground proponents about the importance of open spaces to child development and adult health. Ellen Richards, the first woman to graduate from MIT and then its first professor of sanitary engineering, asserted that, “only a small percentage of adults obtain the full efficiency from the human machine.”¹⁶³ Through contact with nature and not the city, through physical and not mental work, the human being reaches its ideal state.

Although both Peter’s garden and Julian’s bungalow are natural environments, the wild cypress trees pose a threat not dissimilar to the city. In contrast to the manicured garden, the bungalow is immersed in “somber wraiths of trees: writhing boughs and contorted skeleton trunks, twisted slantwise from the shore, from which the stricken grove seems to be fleeing in rooted frenzy.”¹⁶⁴ Like the prisons in which Jeanne and Fenris withered, these environs convey the oppression of the urban cityscape: Julian’s bungalow is squat and close, the sky is hardly visible through the trees and fog, and the malformed trees embody the ugliness of that which is not planned. Mana’s description of these trees plays intertextually with Ibsen’s syphilitic drama: “Alive in death – like ghosts.” She goes on to bemoan their twisted existence, struggling against nature: “Always to be rooted where their seeds fell – in the bitterness of the wind – just to cling to life.” Calling her his garden girl, Julian tells her that she must learn to love the “grimness” of nature. Mana replies: “May be so. But always I have loved to see things of joy, not sorrow.” Mana continues to show her disappointment with Julian’s bungalow and her disposition deflates in this environment where Julian thrives. To her the bungalow “looks as if it had *grown* here,

¹⁶² Burbank, “The Human Plant,” 129.

¹⁶³ Ellen Richards, *Euthenics: The Science of Controllable Environment, a Plea for Better Living Conditions as a First Step Toward Higher Human Efficiency* (Second Ed., Boston: Whitcomb & Barrows, 1912), 30.

¹⁶⁴ MacKaye, *To-morrow*, 91.

ages ago.”¹⁶⁵ The components are one oppressive whole. Despite her dominant and playful energy during act one, she withers in this environment.

In this twisted and close world that almost immediately drains her vitality, Mana will not play along with Julian as she had in the first act’s garden setting. She claims that the overgrown bungalow reminds her of an image from her youth:

MANA: When I was a child – a picture in Grimm’s Fairy Tales: a little house in the woods. It used to scare me. Underneath it was written: “Deep in the twilight wood was a robber’s hut.”

JULIAN: [*playfully assuming a terrible aspect.*] Aha! Behold the robber! [*Laughing, he seizes her.*] Yield, captive princess!

MANA: [*Draws away fearfully.*] Don’t kiss me – here.

MacKaye’s reference to the *Robber Bridegroom* augments the threat that Julian poses. Grimm’s fable tells of a miller’s daughter promised to an apparently good and wealthy young man. Shortly before she is to marry him, she journeys to his home following the path into the woods to her betrothed. When she arrives at the house, she discovers that he plans to kill and eat her with other men of his like. An old servant woman hides her and she watches a horrible fate befall another young woman before she escapes to her home. Like this young bride-to-be, Mana has followed her betrothed to his lair, where he attempts to consummate their relationship as he had already done with Rosalie’s mother, Hester.

Although Mana practices selective breeding, it is Mark’s actions that reflect the darkness that surfaced more prominently in reform activities of the 1910s and 1920s. MacKaye, in the self-sacrifice plays discussed above, would have had Julian elect to remove himself as a threat to Mana. His selfless act would redeem his past actions and life at the Dale household would return to its normal condition. However, Julian does not self-select. Julian remains untamed and untamable; therefore he is destroyed. Sublimation of the individual is a necessary component in reform-minded America; it is simply a choice of how that change occurs. The outsider either converts his beliefs to those of the dominant group, or he and his individuality will be forcibly removed. Given the concurrent sentiments about immigration restriction, eugenics easily morphed into a less than reformist posture.

¹⁶⁵ MacKaye, *To-morrow*, 93-97, emphasis in the original.

Julian's unregulated world threatens the possibility of selective breeding altogether. MacKaye symbolically stages the ideal American race that Peter Dale, Luther Burbank, and eugenists and euthenists imagined in the garden. In this period, sanitary cleanliness became virtually indistinguishable from moral cleanliness. Racial hygiene became part of the mix: "immigrant bodies were believed to be capable of physically and morally infecting the national body."¹⁶⁶ The twisted trees exist not only as an oppressive surround to Julian's bungalow, but also as a danger to those that live there. Grown from random seeds that have blown in, the cypress trees are the unfiltered progeny of immigrants that arrived on this shore. In contrast, the plants that Peter has raised in his carefully planned garden are protected from these wild seeds. He even catches a nettle during a conversation with his daughter. As he pockets the intruder he murmurs: "To-day the seed of Man blows on the wind, but to-morrow – Mana! The Senator's coming back soon. I leave you in charge of the garden."¹⁶⁷

Although much eugenic discourse generally focused on improving the whole of humanity, some eugenists deployed race as a significant part of their argument and thereby altered the ongoing anti-immigrant rhetoric. By 1910, immigrants no longer posed a threat by living in separate enclaves. Instead, their mere existence as different races threatened the Anglo core of American society. Among MacKaye's collected research is a copy of G. Stanley Hall's "From Generation to Generation," which focuses on 'race suicide', a term used in many studies of native and immigrant birth rates. Hall warned that native Americans must marry earlier and have more children or they would become outnumbered by immigrants who were reproducing more quickly and therefore creating an additional generation per century.¹⁶⁸ MacKaye also clipped a 1911 *Literary Digest* article that related the proceedings from the "First Races Conference" in London. It profiles Professor Earl Finch from Wilberforce University (the oldest traditionally black college in the United States) who at the conference argued for miscegenation because mulattos are superior to "negroes of the purer type."¹⁶⁹

¹⁶⁶ Holbo, "Euthenic America."

¹⁶⁷ MacKaye, *To-morrow* 57.

¹⁶⁸ G. Stanley Hall, "From Generation to Generation: With Some Plain Language about Race Suicide and the Instruction of Children during Adolescence," *The American Magazine* (1908) in Scrapbook: To-morrow I (DCL).

¹⁶⁹ Finch cites not only those who have achieved social distinction, but he also employs data about extinction rates among colonized peoples, data which current historians would attribute to any number of factors other than the genetic supremacy of European races. "Cross-Breeding Improving Humanity," *Literary Digest* (29 August 1911) in Scrapbook: To-morrow I (DCL).

Even though MacKaye's play does not introduce race as part of *To-morrow*, some public readings emphasized the importance of eugenics for the American populace. One Madame Labadie staged readings of the play in the upper Midwest. Newspaper reports about the play emphasized its eugenic message, and also quoted Labadie regarding the application of the play to contemporary American life: "For as America is the melting pot of the nations it is our duty to see that out of that great crucible come the best of citizens."¹⁷⁰ Almost all newspaper accounts of the written or performed play labeled it an endorsement of eugenics. Many advocates applied its principles to racial purity, moving beyond the prevention of unmentionable disease.

During the early portion of his career MacKaye focused on the importance of traditional theatre to American society. These four plays follow standard dramaturgical structures to model for American audiences the challenges that confront outsiders when they enter a new social group; they serve "to develop man's powers as a social being."¹⁷¹ MacKaye modeled sublimation to the dominant group as the appropriate choice for individual outsiders. *Fenris the Wolf* and *Jeanne d'Arc* were historically and culturally removed and did not confront issues facing Americans on an everyday basis. *The Scarecrow* began to approach early twentieth-century America, but its fantastical nature also removed it from the everyday. *To-Morrow* presented its audience directly with a current social issue, creating a dangerous model for how the dominant group could overcome the other, how native-born Americans could confront and purify immigrant communities.

¹⁷⁰ "Mme. Labadie pleases audience in her rendition of 'Tomorrow'," *Wisconsin State Journal* (20 May 1913) in Scrapbook: To-Morrow (DCL).

¹⁷¹ MacKaye, *The Civic Theatre*, 116.

3.0 IMMIGRATION AND AMERICANIZATION

Although their ancestors also had emigrated from Europe, many native-born Americans firmly believed that most late nineteenth and early twentieth-century immigrants threatened the established way of life. By the 1900s and 1910s, two methods to resolve this perceived threat dominated immigrant discourse: restriction and Americanization. MacKaye, who favored the latter approach, published two texts for performance that directly address the life of the early twentieth-century immigrant: *The Immigrants* and *The New Citizenship*. Appearing during the year between his tremendously successful *Saint Louis Masque* and *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, both pieces were little discussed by contemporary critics and since then have been ignored by historians. Like the pieces examined during the previous chapter, *The Immigrants* follows a traditional dramaturgic structure. Devised as an opera libretto, it chronicles the life of southern Italian immigrants who leave their small village for New York City. The second piece is a masque for amateur community performers, not professional actors. *The New Citizenship: A Civic Ritual* used performances by immigrants and civic leaders to elevate naturalization from mundane paperwork and court appearances to a ceremony of transformation and unification.

The broad social concern about immigration and its challenge to established ‘American’ identity began to swell years before MacKaye began his career as a playwright. As discussed earlier, settlement house workers addressed public concerns about immigrants in the late nineteenth-century American landscape through Americanization efforts. These reformers used everyday activities to teach newcomers how to be more like their ‘old stock’ neighbors. At the same time, some ‘old stock’ groups sought to solve the social issue by reducing undesirable immigration or closing America’s borders altogether. Three Harvard alumni founded the most prominent of these: the Immigration Restriction League (IRL) in Boston.¹⁷² Among the three,

¹⁷² The IRL formed coincidentally with MacKaye’s undergraduate years at Harvard.

Henry Cabot Lodge was the most influential politically, representing Massachusetts as a United States Senator from 1893 until 1924.¹⁷³ From this nationally prominent position, he voiced a resolutely anti-immigration stance and got himself appointed to the United States Immigration Commission, more colloquially known as the Dillingham Commission.

Many late twentieth-century historians view the Dillingham Commission as anti-immigrant and restrictionist, based on its 1911 report submitted to Congress. However, at the time, the commission appeared slightly less biased. Established in 1907, it maintained a neutral façade and functioned within the formulaic approach favored by progressives who, according to Robert Zeidel, “sought to identify each problem, subject it to expert inquiry, then decide on the best remedial course of action.”¹⁷⁴ Their process kept in line with progressive methods and they even included a few self-identified progressive contributors, such as Franz Boas. But the Commission’s majority opinion remained outside the pro-immigrant progressive mindset. Despite a thorough and somewhat balanced 41-volume report, the Commission’s summary buried many pro-immigrant findings. It reinforced restrictionist values by suggesting that the onslaught of immigrants created many of the problems plaguing the United States in the early twentieth century. At the end of its summary, the Commission recommended two policies: implementing immigration restriction quotas and instigating a literacy test. The commission’s report pleased members of the IRL, which continued to lobby for Congressional action until both recommendations became law. Six years after the Dillingham Commission’s report, Congress finally enacted a literacy requirement over President Wilson’s veto. Shortly after Lodge became Senate Majority Leader, the quota system began as a temporary restriction in 1921. A more extreme version, which established ethnic quotas based on the 1890 census and thereby hoped to entrench the ‘old stock’ majority, became permanent law in 1924.¹⁷⁵

¹⁷³ Lodge also served in the House of Representatives from 1889-1893.

¹⁷⁴ Robert F. Zeidel, *Immigrants, Progressives, and Exclusion Politics* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois U Press, 2004), 21. Zeidel’s book poses an interesting examination of the Dillingham Commission, but it falters in its assertion that the Commission employed both a progressive technique and a progressive mindset. In many ways, the Dillingham Commission operated more along the lines of the pseudo-scientific efforts that asserted restricting undesirable immigrants, who were inevitably of southern European, Asian, or African descent. Like the scientists who organized world’s fair exhibits (discussed in chapter 4), the Dillingham Commission applied the superficial components of progressive methodology to justify an already-determined course of action.

¹⁷⁵ In 1897 Congress passed the first literacy legislation, which Grover Cleveland vetoed. Taft vetoed similar legislation in 1913. Wilson successfully did the same in 1915 but could not overpower Congress in 1917. The quota

Prior to Congressional investigation, many groups attempted to ameliorate perceived immigration problems. Socially liberal or progressive groups also thought that immigration threatened American society and so they showered immigrants with information and education to make them more like the dominant populace. The YMCA offered courses in English, naturalization, American government and history, “personal hygiene, sanitation, geography, [and] industrial safety.”¹⁷⁶ Other private groups emerged to assist newcomers as they transitioned into American life. As had the IRL, the largest and most effective pro-immigrant organization also began in Boston. The North American Civic League for Immigrants (NACLI) instigated a “three-fold program of agitation, protection, and education of the newcomers in the English language and good citizenship,” notes historian Edward Hartmann.¹⁷⁷ Their efforts began at the major ports where government agencies did little more than document the boatloads of immigrants. The group and its various state committees continued to grow and influence state, although not federal, policies. By 1914, six states – Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, and California – had adopted immigration policies or formed immigration bureaus in keeping with the NACLI approach.¹⁷⁸ Educating immigrants became synonymous with Americanizing immigrants because, according to both progressive groups and the Dillingham Commission, they needed to learn about American institutions and heritage.

The NACLI was not simply a gathering of only idealistic reformers, however; American businesses also saw the organization as a means to improve their positions in the labor market. Many NACLI leaders held important commercial positions in America’s major cities; they envisioned control of the immigrant population through education and Americanization. The association’s founder, D. Chauncey Brewer, also became head of the Boston Chamber of Commerce in 1912. Frank Trumbull and Frank Vanderlip – heads of the C&O Railroad and National City Bank, respectively – helped settlement house worker Frances Kellor begin the

system initially began as a means to limit postwar immigration but remained law until 1965. Immigrants seeking American citizenship still must pass a literacy test in English at this time. See Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life* (New York: Perennial/Harper Collins, 2002), 276-277.

¹⁷⁶ The YMCA began to offer these courses in 1907, the same year that the Dillingham Commission began its investigation. See Hartmann 28-29.

¹⁷⁷ Edward G. Hartmann, *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant* (New York: Columbia U Press, 1948), 42.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 69-87.

New York Committee of the NACLI.¹⁷⁹ These men had a vested interest in maintaining a steady flow of immigrant labor, so long as it could be directed in their favor; they feared that un-Americanized immigrants would fall under the radical influence of the recently formed Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). Many union organizers feared such Americanized immigrant labor because it could supply scab workers and weaken strike effectiveness. Frank Walsh of the United Mine Workers accused business sponsored Americanization of “attempting to set up a paternalism that will bring the workers of this country even more absolutely under the control of the employers than they are at the present.” Union leaders asserted that Americanization should also include educating immigrants about union membership, labor conditions, and competitive wages.¹⁸⁰ Americanization groups officially adopted neither a pro-business nor a pro-union position, retaining a focus on assistance during the immigration process and citizenship.

Early twentieth-century immigration created otherwise inconceivable alliances among liberal and conservative Americans. The National Association of Manufacturers, very much in favor of immigrant scabs, endorsed open immigration but aimed to limit the rights and protections that more liberal progressive groups sought for new arrivals. President Taft vetoed the restrictive literacy requirement in 1913 when his Secretary of Commerce and Labor suggested that restriction would hinder industrial growth.¹⁸¹ Standing in opposition, the American Federation of Labor wanted to reduce immigration numbers, but expand the rights and protections for immigrants already in the United States. The AFL therefore formed an unconventional alliance with the IRL and eugenists, both of which did not see ‘new’ immigrants as beneficial to the United States or deserving of any rights or protections.¹⁸²

MacKaye kept close tabs on these activities as he began work on an immigration play. As with many other productions, he created a scrapbook of research, promotional materials, programs, and reviews. The earliest clipped article is dated 1908, three years before Henry Russell commissioned MacKaye and Frederick Converse to create *The Immigrants* for the

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 56. Her fellow settlement house worker Jane Addams helped found the Immigration Protective League in Chicago. It functioned in much the same way as the NACLI, but limited its scope to Chicago or, at most, Illinois at large.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 141-142.

¹⁸¹ Daniel J. Tichenor, *Dividing Lines: The Politics of Immigration Control in America* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton U Press, 2002), 137.

¹⁸² Ibid., 121.

Boston Opera.¹⁸³ MacKaye also collected stories and data by and about those who worked with early twentieth-century immigrants. One article discussed how NACLI workers assisted immigrants through the arrival and customs process, speaking to them in their native Italian. However, such assistance came with a cultural price; these same volunteers asserted that adult immigrants must be educated in English and American ways.¹⁸⁴ He clipped ads for Jane Addams' *20 Years at Hull House* and a brochure from the Foreign Language Governmental Information Service Bureau. The vast majority of clippings discussed immigrant lives in America's urban centers. However, the most intriguing article related the planned utopian experiment of providing ten acres of rural arable land to each immigrant interested in farming. Montefiore J. Kahn (cousin of opera and theatre philanthropist Otto Kahn) donated 13,000 acres at a New Jersey site outside Philadelphia and Trenton. He envisioned "a complete community... where immigrants may not only settle but govern and spread out into all branches industrial, educational, and agricultural."¹⁸⁵

The proposed community – a hybrid of urban settlement houses and frontier homesteads – highlights the desire of many native-born Americans to disperse the 'new immigrant' urban clusters they conceived of as European colonies threatening American cities. These immigrant-dominated spaces within the established urban cores threatened to destabilize spatial power bases; dispersal among rural agrarian communities spatially diffused the perceived immigrant threat and recreated the Americanizing frontier experience that Frederick Jackson Turner had declared over with the close of the nineteenth century. During the 1900s and 1910s, many Southern and Western states pursued a campaign to attract immigrants from isolated urban enclaves – most immigrants settled in northern cities with large industrial sectors – and to relocate them in small-town agrarian pursuits.¹⁸⁶ Distribution across the continent formed a land-based type of twentieth-century Americanization. Kahn announced his gift at a meeting of the American Immigration and Distribution League. Twelve governors (or their representatives) of

¹⁸³ The Boston Opera abandoned the project when it shut down during World War I. The first production did not take place until 1921, when Moorhead State University in Minnesota produced it as a lyric drama; MacKaye saved a program from this production. See "The Immigrants" Scrapbook. DCL.

¹⁸⁴ Elmer C Adams "First Aid to the Immigrant" *Boston Transcript* (4 Dec 1912) in "The Immigrants" Scrapbook. DCL.

¹⁸⁵ "Gives 13,000 Acres for Immigrants' Use." *NYT* 24 May 1912 SB: The Immigrants

¹⁸⁶ These efforts yielded only small results. By 1910, a mere 500,000 immigrants relocated to the South; 13 million lived elsewhere in the U.S. See Tichenor, *Dividing Lines*, 119.

mostly rural states served as members of the League; it welcomed immigrant farmers if they could put together a few hundred dollars for an initial capital investment.¹⁸⁷ However, not many immigrants possessed such ready cash. In fact, many immigrants could barely scrape together the federal head tax of five dollars collected at the port of entry. Kahn proposed a more feasible experiment in land-based Americanization, wherein immigrants could reenact frontier settlement to make themselves one with the American soil, long conceived as the true American unifier.

MacKaye imagined that Americanization could be possible by uniting immigrants with a figurative American soil, and by creating American folk works to model American principles and Americanize hyphenated immigrants. MacKaye stated that American identity was connected to “the soil,” which served to fuse “all the magnificent cultures which have come to her.”¹⁸⁸ But by the 1910s, native-born Americans perceived “hyphenated” immigrants as threats to a unified American identity because they held on to their native linguistic and cultural practices. Theodore Roosevelt, Woodrow Wilson, and a wide spectrum of other politicians and civic leaders decried hyphenated Americans. A few months after the first performance of his idealistic *The New Citizenship*, MacKaye claimed that community performances would create an American folk tradition and thereby provide an opportunity to refocus immigrant loyalties to the United States that would reduce the social separateness of old and new stock. He did not blame hyphenation on immigrant enclaves, but rather on scarce opportunities for immigrants to learn how to be Americans. He believed that there were not enough everyday activities or special-event traditions that fostered a unique American identity. “America had little to feed [the immigrant’s] emotion and imagination,” whereas European residents developed their sense of identity through native folksongs, folklore, and “community festivals of the peasant class.”¹⁸⁹ Throughout the immigration and naturalization process, America only offered unexplained concepts of the flag, liberty, and equality that seldom were part of immigrants’ daily lives. Like other progressive reformers, MacKaye first identified and investigated the challenges facing immigrants.

¹⁸⁷ “Gives 13,000 Acres for Immigrants’ Use” *NYT* (24 May 1912): 1.

¹⁸⁸ “Dramatize America and Cut Out the Hyphen” *New York Tribune* (2 Jan 1916), 2. “The Immigrants” Scrapbook. DCL.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

By this stage of his career, MacKaye possessed a well-connected group of friends who were also concerned about immigration. Along with Roosevelt,¹⁹⁰ MacKaye knew President Wilson and his Commissioner of Immigration at Ellis Island, Frederic C. Howe. Howe's introduction to *The Immigrants* pressed for three-fold action that echoed the principles of the NACLI: "protection, care, and assimilation of [America's] people from over the sea." However, he argued that this course should be followed as much for the nation's health as for the betterment of the millions of immigrants and their children. He praised MacKaye's lyric drama for being a call to "awaken statesmen, educators, and philanthropists to... keep the well-springs of American citizenship, American civilization, and American culture to their proper standards."¹⁹¹

Howe, who likely welcomed any public support for recent immigrants, was the third person to hold the position of Commissioner of Immigration since the federal Department of Commerce and Labor assumed control of Ellis Island in 1903. The previous Commissioners, William Williams¹⁹² (1903-1905, 1909-1913) and Robert Watchorn (1905-1909), had guided efforts to clean up Ellis Island and eradicate corruption. Williams seemed to have escaped external criticism, perhaps due to his standing as a conservative businessman. However, the more openly progressive Watchorn resigned under political pressure from restrictionist groups, who considered him too pro-immigrant. Howe eventually fell to similar pressures in 1919.¹⁹³ In 1913, the Department of Commerce and Labor split up, leaving the new Department of Labor to oversee immigration. Although commercial interests favored immigration for its cheap labor supply, labor interests – often anti-immigrant – lobbied against wide-open immigration policies. By the time MacKaye published *The Immigrants*, Howe had already come under attack for augmenting his predecessors' efforts to "humanize" Ellis Island.

¹⁹⁰ MacKaye maintained a relationship with Roosevelt, who spent time with the MacKays in Cornish while on his whistle-stop campaign tour of 1912. Roosevelt invited MacKaye's daughter, Arvia, to his Long Island home. See Arvia MacKaye Ege, *The Power of the Impossible: The Life Story of Percy and Marion MacKaye* (Falmouth, ME: The Kennebec River Press, 1992), 229-231.

¹⁹¹ Frederic C. Howe, "Introduction," *The Immigrants, A Lyric Drama* by Percy MacKaye (New York: B.W. Huebsch, 1915), viii.

¹⁹² As part of his *Immigrants* Scrapbook, MacKaye clipped an article about Ellis Island procedures under Williams. "Wilson Sees Aliens Come In," *Boston Transcript* (26 Jan 1913). "The Immigrants" Scrapbook. DCL.

¹⁹³ Henry P. Guzda, "Ellis Island a Welcome Site? Only After Years of Reform," *Monthly Labor Review* (July 1986), 30-33.

Howe replicated settlement house physical spaces and spatial practice to welcome and Americanize immigrants stuck on Ellis Island for short or long terms. As described in his introduction to *The Immigrants*, Howe thought that his fellow citizens saw the immigrant figure only via “statistics, congressional investigations, and sociological studies until [they] have almost come to look upon the immigrant as a commodity rather than as a human being.”¹⁹⁴ At Ellis, he reconfigured buildings and introduced activities to make the immigrant experience more humane. The Commissioner created a transitional community meant to Americanize the immigrant by having them enact controlled living experiences similar to those of the average American. With his salary, Howe built schools and recreation areas, ordered buildings painted with lively colors and plants hung throughout the facilities, and organized baseball games, sewing bees, and ethnic celebrations. Just like Kahn’s utopian community, Howe developed an immigrants’ city in miniature – and in protected isolation. MacKaye, who began *The Immigrants* years before Howe’s tenure, narrated a less pleasurable experience in his libretto. Only outside America do the characters display any optimism or unrestrained joy. Once in New York they are overworked and exploited, malnourished and ill; there is but one mention of a settlement house and it offers only momentary hope.

3.1 THE IMMIGRANTS AND THE MELTING POT

MacKaye was neither the first nor last playwright to stage the immigrant experience. In 1908, the same year that MacKaye began his *Immigrants* scrapbook, Teddy Roosevelt attended the premiere production of Israel Zangwill’s *The Melting-Pot* at the Columbia Theatre in Washington. Jewish leaders from Washington and Baltimore joined the President, his Secretary of State, and his Secretary of Commerce and Labor (the cabinet position recently charged with immigration policy) at the October premiere.

¹⁹⁴ Howe, “Introduction,” *The Immigrants*, vii. In the original, Howe employed the inclusive “we”.

The 'melting-pot' metaphor suggests a cultural mixing, but the characters on which his play focuses were from the most isolated ethnic group in the country.¹⁹⁵ The difference between these Jewish cultures greatly affected audience response at the two subsequent productions. Zangwill's play moved to Chicago, shortly toured smaller Midwestern cities, and finally opened in New York almost a year after the Washington premiere.¹⁹⁶

Zangwill, a British subject, previously had sent plays to Broadway with mixed success. His first immigrant drama, *Children of the Ghetto*, ran for a modest 49 performances to mostly Jewish audiences at the Herald Square Theatre in 1899. *Merely Mary Anne* had been his biggest success, with an initial run of 148 performances from 1903-1904 and a brief revival in 1907. *The Melting-Pot* ran for 136 performances beginning on 6 September 1909 at the Comedy Theatre. By far, the play achieved its greatest success in Chicago, where the audience was unfamiliar with Eastern European Jews.¹⁹⁷ The Chicago production raked in substantial revenues during its five-month run from 18 October 1908 until March 1909.

In *The Melting-Pot* Zangwill unfolds a romance between two diverse New York immigrants. David Quixano is a Russian Jewish musician, trying to write a new symphony, a musical rendition of the melting pot. Vera Revendel is a Russian Christian settlement house worker, who overcomes her inbred anti-Semitic feelings because of her love for David. She unsuccessfully seeks to promote him to the New York elite, but does arrange for a premiere for his symphony at the settlement house.

Zangwill establishes clear borders between public and private spaces in this immigrant melodrama, and in doing so creates intermediary spaces for cultural negotiation. In his essay on immigrant education from 1900-1925, Michael Olneck posits that a binary division existed

¹⁹⁵ Eastern European Jews remained concentrated in the Northeast; 70% stayed in New York City; 500,000 lived in 1.5 square miles of Lower East Side tenements. The established, middle-class German-American Jews of the Upper West Side shared little in common with the Eastern European Jews of the Lower East Side. The recently immigrated Jews were Zionist and/or socialist, whereas the established Jews endorsed a bourgeois and Anti-Zionist life. See Daniels, *Coming to America*, 226-227.

¹⁹⁶ A published version, dedicated to Roosevelt, first appeared in 1909. The 1935 edition mentions a London production at the Court Theatre opening on 25 January 1914. Zangwill returned home to London after the Washington premiere.

¹⁹⁷ Edna Nahshon, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot: Israel Zangwill's Jewish Plays* (Detroit: Wayne State U Press, 2006), 244. There were only 100,000 Jews in all of Chicago, most of them similar to those in New York's Upper West Side. Chicago's population in 1910 was just over two million according the census figures. The city's entire Jewish population formed less than 5% of the city's total.

within Americanization strategies that situated community-oriented and “supra-ethnic” American life in the public sphere and ethnic life in the private sphere.¹⁹⁸ Each act creates three scenographic spaces: supra-ethnic public, ethnic private, and hetero-ethnic semi-private. Jarring the public perception of immigrant urban colonies, Zangwill explicitly states that the Quixano home sits within a non-Jewish neighborhood. The front doorway – capped with an American flag valance – serves to access the supra-ethnic public space outside. David reinforces the spatial divide during his first entrance. The audience hears him singing in the offstage American space, “My Country ‘Tis of Thee,” which he ceases just as he opens the door. Farther inside is the kitchen, a private space that David’s grandmother practices as if it were still old Russia. The semi-private parlor becomes the space of debate, neither wholly ethnic nor supra-ethnic.

Tension between the ethnic and supra-ethnic worlds permeates the second and third acts. The scene opens with David frenetically composing, inspired by his witnessing a thousand Jewish children singing Americanization songs and saluting the flag at the settlement house. He praises the little children who will melt in the crucible and grow up to be Americans, thereby embracing the established public American space, with its assimilated homogeneity, not ethnic plurality. By the close of the second act, David and Vera have declared their love for each other but David’s uncle enters to reestablish the private ethnic world. He forbids the interfaith marriage and kicks David out when he refuses to comply. Zangwill similarly structures space for the third act. Vera’s parlor at the settlement house sits between her private interior and the public hall. In this act, Vera’s parents pay an unexpected visit from Russia. When they enter from her private room, David recognizes Vera’s father as the commander who oversaw the pogrom that killed his family. Because of her family’s sins, David says that he can no longer marry Vera, who retreats broken-hearted.

The final scene is yet again neither wholly public nor wholly private. However, the public world dominates. On the rooftop of the settlement house – where a large crowd has gathered to hear David’s New American Symphony – the audience sees the main characters move toward a supra-ethnic position. American public space surrounds the stage picture with a prominent backdrop of the New York skyline, Statue of Liberty included. Eventually Vera arrives and

¹⁹⁸ Michael Olneck, “Americanization and the Education of Immigrants, 1900-1925: An Analysis of Symbolic Action,” *American Journal of Education* (August 1989), 401.

David confesses to her that he considers himself a failure for not believing in the American god, the Melting-Pot, for holding onto his old grudge. The couple makes up and admires the sunset over the harbor, looking down on New York as the orchestra below plays “My Country ‘Tis of Thee.” Touring production programs included inserts with lyrics to the musical finale, suggesting that the audience joined in singing with the offstage performers at the play’s end.¹⁹⁹

Chicago and Washington critics and audiences greeted *The Melting-Pot* enthusiastically, but the New York papers and populace were less flattering. Burns Mantle, critic for the *Chicago Daily Tribune* relished David’s preaching about America as a melting-pot, and found the performance to be dramatically and spiritually inspiring tale applicable to all immigrants.²⁰⁰ New York audiences, however, did not believe that the play achieved its full potential; nor did they see its universality. To them, it was simply another Jewish play. The same speeches praised by most Chicago critics and audience members fell flat in New York as pedantic lecture hall material.²⁰¹

The scenographic spaces of Zangwill’s play appeared incongruent with New York audience experiences and expectations. Both reformers and restrictionists attempted to address the urban enclaves or new immigrants. Images of New York ghettos had been dispersed throughout the country by Jacob Riis in his groundbreaking *How the Other Half Lives*.²⁰² By contrast, the Quixanos lived in the midst of an Anglo neighborhood and provided at least an outward appearance of assimilation by hanging an American flag over the door. Never did the audience see on stage the tenements where most new immigrants resided. Because of the spatial discrepancy with everyday life, New York audiences easily could imagine *The Melting-Pot* simply being a romantic comedy with anti-Semitic complications.

¹⁹⁹ Nahshon, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot*, 245. claims that the sing-along ending mostly likely took place on the Chautauqua Circuit. New York reviews do not mention either a sing-along or anything more than the orchestral version. However, in the published text of 1914, Zangwill states that the unseen settlement house audience sings with the orchestra.

²⁰⁰ Burns Mantle “The Melting-Pot” *Chicago Daily Tribune* (20 October 1908).

²⁰¹ The *New York American* described it as “heavy, gloomy, mournful, and unenjoyable.” See Nahshon, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot*, 250. The *Times* labeled Zangwill’s efforts “sentimental” and “tawdry,” and his characters unrealistic. “New Zangwill Play Cheap and Tawdry” *NYT* (7 September 1909) 9. Adolph Klauber attacked the play for “its obvious spread-eagleism and appeal to claptrap patriotism.” He also illustrated how the play did not successfully elucidate its own stated theme of amalgamation for many reasons, not the least of which was that the only example of a native-born American was the irredeemable Quincy Davenport. “This Week’s Outlook in Theatrical Amusements” *NYT* (12 September 1909) X10.

²⁰² Jacob Riis, *How The Other Half Lives* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1890).

The published version also received negative press in New York. Perhaps the most biting comment was About Zangwill's not being American. "Mr. Zangwill does not understand the American point of view. His play seems rather futile and unnecessary."²⁰³ The 1914 edition of the text attempts to refute that criticism with an afterword and several appendices.²⁰⁴ For the most part, his Afterword defends the play and the Jews for which it was written buy, by the end, he sounds much like MacKaye. Zangwill boasts about the various university and civic productions of the play and the "preachers and journalists, politicians and presidential candidates" who quoted from the published text.²⁰⁵

The Immigrants is by far MacKaye's darkest work, stridently exposing a grim reality that hides behind Zangwill's idealized notions. If Zangwill hoped to "shame [America] into greater fitness" by showing its potential,²⁰⁶ MacKaye did the same by shoving forward a more realistic immigrant experience. Some differences may be attributed to its original intent as a tragic opera,²⁰⁷ but others reveal an awareness of criticisms pointed at Zangwill's melodrama. *The Immigrants* does not end with a vision of America as utopia; the wronged Italians embrace the violent revenge that David refuses. During the final act, two characters die and the young lovers are dragged off to jail. MacKaye also includes two American characters, one repeatedly helpful and one ruthlessly exploitative. Noel, an artist, represents the sympathetic progressive reformer, seeking to help where he can. Unlike the harmlessly amoral Quincy Davenport, the padrone Scammon never relents in his desire to profit as much as possible from the immigration business, no matter the human cost. Additionally, the time and space parameters of the two works vary tremendously. Unlike Zangwill's three New York settings staged post-immigration, only

²⁰³ "The Melting-Pot by Mr. Zangwill" *NYT* (25 September 1909) BR562.

²⁰⁴ The first appendix relates the numbers of immigrants, broken down by 40 nationalities, from 1 July 1912 through 30 June 1913. Also, there are personal accounts of the Russian pogroms and a reprint of a *Chicago Daily News* article about immigrant contributions to America. In the afterword Zangwill noted that he wrote *The Melting-Pot* based on his experience working for the Jewish Territorial Organization to relocate Russian Jews to the Western United States.

²⁰⁵ Israel Zangwill, *The Melting-Pot* (New York: MacMillan, 1935), 216.

²⁰⁶ "The Melting-Pot," *Jewish World* (17 June 1909), 29, quoted in Nahshon, *From the Ghetto to the Melting Pot*, 219.

²⁰⁷ Had the opera been staged for its elite Boston audience, some of whom likely were members of the IRL and the NACLI, responses to it would have been provided fascinating cultural documents with regard to their likely diverse feelings.

MacKaye's final act takes place in America.²⁰⁸ More importantly, David Quixano delays his embrace of an ideal American principle because of an atrocity in his home country. America as utopia contrasts to the pogrom-filled Russian dystopia. MacKaye creates three acts that chronicle the immigration experience: the decision to leave, the journey, and the struggles to establish a new life. The audience first sees the immigrants in their Italian village, then on the boat in New York harbor, and finally outside a sweatshop. In each of these worlds, protective and exploitative American practices struggle to control immigrant lives. The problems of the home country only create small obstacles that appear easily overcome with American intervention. Disillusionment and anger increase the more they are entrenched in America.

In contrast to *The Melting Pot*, *The Immigrants* better reflected American understanding of immigration difficulties. MacKaye's scenographic spaces more closely matched the social spaces that most Americans assumed were part of the immigrant experience. The chosen nationality also represented a much more recognizable immigrant ethnicity. Italian arrivals spiked in the twentieth century, thus surpassing every other nationality in American immigration history: over 2 million arrived between 1901 and 1910, with another 1.1 million between 1911 and 1920.²⁰⁹ By far, Italians formed the largest block of new immigrants in the latter decade: 28% of all Southern and Eastern Europeans, 83% of all Southern Europeans.²¹⁰ More than their Jewish counterparts, Italian immigrants fanned out into the nation and formed small communities in many cities. American audiences would not only recognize the Italian immigrant type, but also the Little Italy neighborhoods that dotted urban landscapes throughout the United States.

MacKaye focuses on five Italian peasants: Sandro, his two grown daughters Maria and Lisetta, and their two lovers Giovanni and Giuseppe, respectively. The first scene takes place in the public square of a small farming village. In the middle of the square, and at stage center, is a

²⁰⁸ Notably, MacKaye's first manuscript for this play has the title "The Emigrants," which suggests a focus on their identity with their native Italy, and not with their adopted America. See Box 88, Folder 8, PMK Collection, DCL.

²⁰⁹ Daniels 188-189. He uses the figure of 4.1 million Italian immigrants between 1880 and 1920 to determine the unprecedented arrival numbers.

²¹⁰ Percentages are determined based on data published by the United States Census Bureau. "Region and Country or Area of Birth of the Foreign-Born Population" 9 March 1999, <<http://www.census.gov/population/www/documentation/twps0029/tab04.html>>

fountain remarkably similar to the famous Trevi Fountain in Rome.²¹¹ Three buildings face the square: a church, a jail, and a wine shop. However, there is also a temporary structure, a tent in which Scammon projects films promoting economic opportunities in America. Poverty is definitely the prominent issue facing the residents. Soldiers interrupt a lively village festival²¹² to arrest Sandro for not paying taxes on his land. Noel, who claims to be a poor artist, pays the tax and bribes the soldiers to release the old man. The same soldiers confiscate an unnamed peasant's wine and rip his license to shreds, leaving him unable to sell his goods and therefore incapable of paying his taxes. Desperate to see Giovanni, who has been jailed for a month, Maria²¹³ grabs Noel's gold watch chain and rushes to the jail, asking to be arrested for theft. Instead of letting her be arrested, the benevolent American enters the jail to see about Giovanni's release.

America offers a perceived escape from poverty. While Maria waits, Scammon attempts to seduce and lure her away by giving her two tickets to America. Noel interrupts his actions and reveals that Giovanni will follow him into the square. After the young lovers celebrate their reunification, Giovanni realizes that there is little future for them in Italy. He cannot return to his vineyard because he will once again fail to pay his taxes. He yearns to see "the Madonna of the poor," the Statue of Liberty, where opportunity waits. Maria shows him the two tickets she had received from Scammon. But the padrone's previous comments cloud this hopeful scene. Upon seeing the sketch of Maria earlier in the act, Scammon called her a "pretty girl" and told Noel that she would do well in America as a prostitute, but this role was merely implied (just as another taboo, syphilis was only implied in *To-Morrow*). Prevented from enlisting Maria by Noel, Scammon refocuses his energies on financial gain from the remaining peasants. By the act's end, the entire village has decided to leave and they have grabbed up tickets for the boat from Naples.

²¹¹ MacKaye's stage directions call for a mermaid and a triton in the middle of the fountain, with water spouting from the latter's horn.

²¹² MacKaye believed that these local folk celebrations were essential components in forming identity. More pressingly, he believed that America lacked these events and therefore lacked a means to Americanize immigrants. See discussion of *The New Citizenship* below.

²¹³ There are parallels between *The Immigrants* and *Jeanne d'Arc*. Both Maria and Jeanne neglect festive occasions because of their piety. Maria prays in the midst of the village celebration, faithfully searching for a solution to Giovanni's imprisonment. Noel has been sketching out a portrait of Maria as she prays in the church; echoing d'Alençon when he describes her beauty: "A woman's form, but in her face a child!" See: MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 4.

The second act begins at the end of the ocean sojourn. Surrounded by an early morning fog, the specific location remains unrevealed with the exception of an American flag blowing in the headwind. At this moment, all immigrants remain optimistic about realizing their American dream. The jovial secondary couple, Lisetta and Giuseppe, reprise and revise their first act duet: “Out of our prison of poverty / We sail to the fairyland of the free!”²¹⁴ Shortly thereafter, the deck fills with others as the fog lifts to reveal New York Harbor and the Statue of Liberty. Excitedly, they return to the steerage cabin to gather their belongings. Alone on deck, Giovanni and Maria demonstrate their misconception of America, and in particular, of the New York City landscape. They plan to marry as soon as they land and to settle on “a little vineyard in the land / That nestles near those towers.”²¹⁵ Maria tries on her veil and the two embrace, believing that all will be well. At that moment Scammon arrives to inform Giovanni that the on-board immigration officer wants him. While her betrothed is off, Scammon once again attempts to seduce Maria, seeking a “favor” from her to put in a good word for Giovanni with immigration.

Many Americans knew about such affronts to immigrant honor at the time. In 1909, Anna Herkner disguised herself as a Bohemian immigrant in to report on steerage conditions to the Dillingham Commission. She was appalled. Her chronicle of events describes every aspect of the ship as filthy and sleeping accommodations that afforded little or no privacy; men frequently walked through the women’s quarters as they washed or changed. Most times, the ship’s crew, not other immigrant men, invaded the women’s communal space or “took liberties” with individual women.²¹⁶ In keeping with eutenic principles that linked hygiene with character, Herkner concluded in a *New York Times* article that no woman could remain clean, physically or morally, for the duration of the voyage.²¹⁷ MacKaye does not stage the physical filth, but he does present the immorality. Scammon knew when giving Maria two tickets that Giovanni would not be able to enter the country because of his prior imprisonment.²¹⁸ Scammon says that he will not

²¹⁴ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 68.

²¹⁵ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 76.

²¹⁶ “Steerage Conditions.” *Reports of the Immigration Commission* of the United States Senate, 61st Congress, 3rd Session, Document No. 753 (1911). The report was initially submitted to Congress on 13 December 1909, and printed as Senate Document No. 26, 61st Congress, 2nd Session.

²¹⁷ “Women in Steerage Grossly Ill Used” *NYT* (14 December 1909) 3. The article also reported that Dillingham introduced two bills to the Senate to amend the issues at hand.

²¹⁸ One immigration restriction mandated that passenger ship companies must not permit travel to America by those with a criminal record, no matter the character of the offense.

pay for her to return to Italy, but proposes that she could stay with him (impropriety again only implied) while waiting for Giovanni to return to America.

Once again, Noel intervenes to protect Maria from Scammon, who retreats from the deck. Giovanni returns to see Noel consoling Maria and misunderstands which American violated her honor. He strikes Noel, who does not retaliate; rather, he blames Giovanni's violence on Scammon and attempts to smuggle the young Italian into America by hiding him in the upper deck quarters. However, Scammon returns with immigration officials, who arrest both men, and then tries once again to corner Maria. Lisetta, Sandro, and Giuseppe arrive to protect her from the scheming villain who relishes in his victory over Noel. In contrast to the disintegrating dream for Sandro and his children, the remaining immigrants rush the deck, admiring the beauty of New York City and the opportunity they believe it holds for them.

The final act is quite unlike the first two acts spatially; the scenographic space also stands in polar opposition to Zangwill's final scene. Instead of the village's open square or the ship's open deck, MacKaye confines the action to an alley in the slums. Any embodied optimism seen in the village or ship has been beaten away. MacKaye inverts Zangwill's settlement rooftop sunset view of the city. Brick buildings surround the listless inhabitants. It is night, but the lights of lively New York glow in the distance, above and beyond the factory buildings. People slowly shuffle along the alley under the oppressive heat of midsummer. If the spectators did not understand that this act would be about the American dream denied, a white electric sign on the upstage center building tells them. A copy of Bartholdi's statue in lights advertises the Liberty Storage Vaults. Giuseppe and Sandro arrive at ten o'clock to pick up Maria and Lisetta from their shift at the garment factory. Lisetta faints from sickness and exhaustion as soon as she enters the alleyway; the others do what they can to cool and comfort her as passersby remark, "nothing; only another one – a girl."²¹⁹ Lisetta drifts off in her fever, rambling through a song she sang with Giuseppe during the first act, yearning to return to Italy where now she believes true happiness exists. She collapses because of her fever, apparently brought on by hunger and cramped living and working conditions. Maria stays to comfort her in the alley while Sandro and Giuseppe head off to see if the settlement house workers will let her sleep on their roof.

²¹⁹ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 105.

Americans were familiar with the sweatshops where many immigrants suffered. Reformers attempted to alleviate the wretched living and working conditions, blaming them on greedy employers and slumlords. Restrictionists blamed the immigrants for their squalid residences by asserting that they did little to improve their habitat, as had old immigrant predecessors.²²⁰ Deploying eutenic language that linked physical and moral cleanliness, the Dillingham Commission studied, among other topics, immigrant urban living conditions and their relation to criminal activity and incarceration. Many Americans perceived Italians as more criminal than any other group, and this stereotype became the subject of Congressional investigation.²²¹ Despite its claim that immigrants did not increase crime rates overall, this section of the Commission Report did little to change public perception. It asserts: “the character of crime may be traced to immigration from specific countries... The increase in offenses of personal violence in this country is largely traceable to immigration from Southern Europe, and especially from Italy.”²²² It goes on to specify homicide as the violent crime most unique to the Italian immigrant. With no statistical evidence to support its claims about regional origin – the report only noted “native” versus “foreign-born” crimes – the Dillingham Commission simply reinforced American views about Italian immigrant criminality.

MacKaye did little to alter the stereotype of violent behavior among Italian immigrants, but he did locate the cause for such practices in their exploitation by unscrupulous Americans. During the first two acts, the main characters expressed abundant and idealistic optimism. But violent suggestions and actions permeate the third act. Giuseppe, complaining about their difficult life pleads: “O God, if I could kill something / To save Lisett’.”²²³ When in her hallucinations Lisetta expresses how the Statue of Liberty has betrayed her ideals, her lover yearns for a bomb to blow it up. But the most gruesome violence is not targeted at the symbols of the American ideal. As Maria waits for the men to return, a stylish and drunken Scammon

²²⁰ Zeidel 108.

²²¹ In a 1911 *New York Times* article, Commissioner of Immigration, William Williams accused Congress of not enacting laws to prevent criminals from entering America. The same article targets southern Italians, specifically, as the source of Italian criminals because of their lack of “education and moral training,” which northern Italians experienced. See “Could Keep Out Italian Criminals” *NYT* (1 September 1911) 16.

²²² “Immigration and Crime” *Reports of the Immigration Commission* Volume 36. Document No. 750, 61st Congress, 3rd Session 5 December 1910. Page 2. Digital Edition reproduced by Stanford University Libraries. <<http://site.ebrary.com/lib/stanfordimmigrationdillingham/EDF?id=10006616&jsenabled=yes&useNSAPI=0>> 10 July 2006.

²²³ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 102.

saunters up to her. He again offers Maria the chance to live with him in luxury and expands it to include Lisetta. Of all the hundreds of immigrants he brought over, he claims that the best offer he ever made was for them to remain together. As he walks away he makes one deceitful final bid. Lighting a fresh cigar, he tells Maria that Giovanni has died of fever while detained on Ellis Island and shows her a “heap” of cash as one last enticement. In response to this final insult, she stabs Scammon.

Moments later Maria realizes that she can return to Italy with his money. She goes to wake Lisetta to tell her of their new opportunity only to discover that she has died. The good American once again enters, however too late to protect Maria. Giuseppe and Sandro found Noel at the settlement house with Giovanni, who clearly is not dead. She tells them about Scammon and Lisetta. Giovanni, in an act of solidarity, wipes the blood from Maria’s knife on his hands. The wounded Scammon rises and calls for the police. Giovanni quickly finishes the murder but not before the alley fills with immigrant workers. Giuseppe grabs the knife and deals another blow to avenge Lisetta as the police arrive. By play’s end, the three young Italians are arrested, the crowd exits, and Sandro kneels and prays over Lisetta’s body. Noel stands above them and asks the electric Lady Liberty, “When will you cease in darkness to destroy / The souls that seek you?”²²⁴

Unlike their attacks on *The Melting Pot*, critics responded positively to publication of *The Immigrants*. Despite MacKaye’s highly emotional text, type characters, and overt symbolism, many responded to the play as an accurate and necessary portrayal of the realities facing immigrants during the mid-1910s. MacKaye gathered reviews from across the country. One article described a luncheon and play reading attended by one hundred leading women from Buffalo.²²⁵ Whereas Zangwill seemed only to succeed in the Midwest, where there were few Jewish immigrants, MacKaye garnered praise from a broader range of cities, many with major Italian immigrant communities.

²²⁴ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 138.

²²⁵ “Mrs. Fletcher Read Percy MacKaye’s ‘The Immigrants’,” *Buffalo News* (10 April 1916). PMK Collection, DCL. In addition to this article, the scrapbook holds clippings from papers in New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Buffalo, Kansas City, New Orleans, Detroit, Des Moines, and Denver.

William Stanley Braithwaite²²⁶ wrote a glowing profile of MacKaye and his published libretto for the *Boston Evening Transcript* in January 1916. He stated that the playwright sees “a faulty attitude in the spirit which our institutions and our citizenship offers in its political declarations, and the message which [he has] at heart is that the American people must redeem their national pledge to humanity with a deeper conscience than that which merely tolerates the granting of political freedom to foreigners.”²²⁷ The article focuses on MacKaye’s desire to reach out to the immigrant and to make Americans aware of the trials they face upon arrival. Braithwaite goes on to laud MacKaye for creating a balanced presentation in which neither average Americans nor immigrants are to blame for the tragic end. Despite the balanced presentation he highlights, Braithwaite squarely blames Scammon – and similarly ruthless Americans – for not permitting immigrants a fair opportunity to succeed. “He brings to our national countenance a blush of burning shame that a moral and social indifference to the experience of fellow men and women has been permitted to exist, giving to a few unscrupulous individuals the power to falsify the terms of economic and social contract with humanity outside our borders.”²²⁸

Other reviewers echoed Braithwaite’s conclusions, highlighting the importance of the play to contemporary America. The *New York Post* noted the shift in subject matter from MacKaye’s earlier lyric plays such as *Jeanne d’Arc* or *Fenris the Wolf*: “The poet’s fancy deals not with fairy legend, mythology, and romance per se, but with a problem of current interest.”²²⁹ New York’s socialist paper, the *Call*, provided one of the few negative comments about the play. It criticized the isolated nature of the vengeance but lauded the play for its immigrant advocacy. “MacKaye has permitted his theme which opens in big, moving scenes to dwindle to the individual equation. Aside from this weakness there is little reason to contradict Commissioner Howe when he says that the book is welcome and that it should – to some degree at least – ‘Awaken America to a realization of the necessity of a constructive program for the protection,

²²⁶ Braithwaite was a poet, in addition to his role as literary critic and editor. He shared a long personal and professional relationship with MacKaye. Several MacKaye poems appeared in anthologies compiled by Braithwaite.

²²⁷ William Stanley Braithwaite “Percy MacKaye and the Nation’s Rebirth: The Problem of American Immigration Presented in all its Modern Vitality by a Young American Poet” *Boston Evening Transcript* (12 January 1916). PMK Collection, DCL.

²²⁸ Braithwaite

²²⁹ “Lyric Drama by Percy MacKaye” *NY Post* (24 Dec 1915). PMK Collection, DCL.

care and assimilation of its people from oversea’.”²³⁰ For the *Call*, MacKaye failed by not staging a large-scale insurrection against oppression, but succeeded in displaying the real immigrant situation.

Unlike Zangwill, MacKaye provides no safe, semi-private space in which immigrants negotiate their identity with native-born Americans. There is no flag hung over the entry door, no kosher kitchen, and no staged settlement house refuge. More importantly, the play situates ethnic individuals in supra-ethnic spaces. As in his earlier dramatic works, MacKaye creates public spaces where the individual and society collide. Public spaces in *The Immigrants* emphasize the ideal for which the newcomers yearn and highlight their social inferiority. The jail and Scammon’s tent dominate the piazza; the upper cabins sit above the steerage deck, with a roped-off ladder dividing the two; slum buildings block out the oversized landmarks of opportunity from the second act.

Additionally, MacKaye makes immigrant perceptions of America part of the three spaces by deploying various images of the Statue of Liberty, the marker which had become synonymous with American immigration. For Zangwill, the Statue of Liberty merely forms an unquestioned part of the fourth act backdrop. *The Melting-Pot* puts forth a utopian vision for America in which the past is overcome and all races and religions fuse together into one American type simply by living in the country. Zangwill’s scenographic statue does not question the hegemonic meaning of this monumental space; it is an unchanging beacon that draws in new parts to be smelted into the whole. *The Immigrants*, however, displays a more complex understanding of Lady Liberty. In each scene, the icon acquires new meaning by the way the image appears scenographically and by the way the immigrants conceive it.

The image now synonymous with America first rose above New York Harbor decades before either drama appeared on stage or in print. The statue appeared in America eleven years after two French men resolved to create it. President Grover Cleveland dedicated “Liberty Enlightening the World” on 28 October 1886, two years after its completion in Paris by sculptor

²³⁰ Louis Gordy “MacKaye is First an Artist and Only Secondarily a Social Reformer” *New York Call* (5 March 1916). PMK Collection, DCL

Frederic Auguste Bartholdi.²³¹ On Liberty (formerly Bedloe's) Island, America's unofficial greeter stood for 38 years until President Calvin Coolidge decreed it a National Monument on 15 October 1924, a few months after Congress passed the severely restrictionist Immigration Act discussed above.²³² At its conception, however, Americans neither considered the statue a beacon to immigrants nor a welcome gift. In 1875, Bartholdi and Edouard de Laboulaye formed the Franco-American Union to secure finances for the gift of the Statue. To boost interest, the French displayed the head in Paris in 1876. That same year, Americans interested in raising funds for the project – the Union asked the United States to fund and construct the pedestal on which the statue stands – displayed the completed hand and torch section at the Centennial Exhibition World's Fair in Philadelphia. French and American curiosity about the project, however, did not translate immediately into money. A full American committee formed the following year, slowly gathering support and funds to build a base on which the gift would stand. During the ensuing nine years, Americans changed their view of the Statue from its being "New York's Lighthouse"²³³ to a national symbol.

One poet, Emma Lazarus, helped change how Americans perceived the statue when she penned "The New Colossus" in 1883 to help the American fundraising effort.²³⁴ A Jewish immigrant, Lazarus transformed the dominant meaning of the statue from celebrating French-American friendship to welcoming immigrants. The poem's most famous section reads:

Give me your tired, your poor,
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me.
I lift my lamp beside the golden door.²³⁵

²³¹ Cleveland also vetoed using Federal money to fund construction of the pedestal the same year that Bartholdi completed trial assembly.

²³² Congress passed the Immigration Act, which included the National Origins Quota, on 26 May 1924.

²³³ National Park Service. "Statue of Liberty" < http://www.cr.nps.gov/history/online_books/hh/11/hh11c.htm>. See also "The French Statue" *NYT* (29 September 1876), 4.

²³⁴ The poem appeared on a bronze plaque outside the statue in July 1903, before which time a simple copy of the poem could be found inside the statue.

²³⁵ Emma Lazarus, "The New Colossus," in *Selected Poems*, ed. John Hollander (New York: Library of America, 2005), 58.

The imagery describes America as an expansive refuge for Europeans crowded in ghettos. Lazarus shared with Zangwill what they called the Jewish cause and some link “The New Colossus” with her desire for America to serve as a refuge from pogroms. Zangwill’s presentation of the Statue echoes Lazarus’ image of its light as a guide to refugees. *Melting Pot* scenography becomes increasingly spacious, ending with the open air view over New York City to the statue. The city itself forms the crucible in which Americans are formed; the statue is simply the “lonely, guiding star” that guides the “human freight” into the harbor, the mouth of the melting-pot.²³⁶ Once melded, Zangwill’s immigrants rise to the fresh open air where they can breathe freely.

Proponents lauded the Statue of Liberty, in addition to its being a symbol of opportunity, as a neoclassical ideal, an image of the modern goddess of enlightenment that would spark the spread of democratic principles. President Cleveland’s official acceptance described Liberty as a peaceful deity, its light spreading democracy across the ocean to “pierce the darkness of ignorance and men’s oppression.”²³⁷ Chauncey Depew, president of the New York Central Railroad, referenced Lazarus’ poem when he delivered the dedication address. He compared Liberty to Colossus and other gods of the ancient world, claiming that it dwarfed her classical predecessor. For some Americans, Liberty served to enlighten others, her light spreading outward; for others, Liberty drew to her those in need. In either late nineteenth-century perception, this monument – and the country from which her light shone – formed the core of an emerging spatial power structure, with Europe at the periphery.

However, twenty years of immigration pressed on the United States prior to Zangwill’s play and another ten before MacKaye’s libretto. Liberty’s light and ideals clearly continued to reach Europe, but many in the core no longer wished to support those drawn to its light. The IRL formed less than a decade after Cleveland’s dedication and by the time Congress officially recognized the Statue as a national monument, America had effectively closed its borders to those they considered most undesirable. Both Zangwill and MacKaye focused on how Liberty’s light appeared to immigrants; the former nostalgically maintained the optimistic glow of the 1880s, while the latter portrayed the hologram of opportunity that remained by the 1910s.

²³⁶ Zangwill, *The Melting-Pot*, 184-185.

²³⁷ “The Statue Unveiled” *NYT* (29 October 1886), 2.

The first act of *The Immigrants* displays how this light still appeared in the old world. Oppressed by poverty and rigid police control, MacKaye's peasants seek salvation via Liberty, which they describe in religious terms. For them the statue represents the ideal of liberty and opportunity, even when it appears as one of Scammon's cheap representations. The first act also establishes the misinformation that Scammon disperses about America and Americans. After Noel bails out Sandro, Giuseppe chastises Lisetta for being so awed by her father's benefactor because Scammon told him that "all Americans are made of gold!"²³⁸ Later, Scammon enters leading a pageant of donkeys, one of which pulls a wagon that carries a miniature Statue of Liberty, "America" inscribed on its base. Carting it through the square he leads the peasants into his tent for the sales pitch: a better life at \$30 per ticket. MacKaye stages a parade of immigrants following the beacon and imagining an American utopia.

Released from prison, Giovanni shares with Maria a more serious, but no less idealized, perception of Liberty. Just as Maria had appealed to the shrine of the Virgin Mary on the church steps, he finds relief from the new civic goddess that has already assisted others fleeing poverty. He recalls a dream in which he, Maria, "and millions more with burdens on their backs" pass by "the great Virgin: / Maiden and mighty mother – pitiful / Madonna of the poor!"²³⁹ Scammon further conflates religious and political imagery. Emerging from his tent, he tosses to the gathered crowd small pictures of the Statue of Liberty as he sings:

Mascots! Mascots!
Santa Libertà!
See the little saint who comes
From America!
Luck and opportunity,
Liberty, immunity,
All many have who pray to her.
Simply shout *Hurray* to her!
*Ha! ha! ha! / Santa Libertà.*²⁴⁰

²³⁸ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 10.

²³⁹ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 46.

²⁴⁰ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 53-54.

Giovanni shows one of the images to Maria, explaining that it is Lady Liberty who will save them. During the final moments of the act Scammon gathers the peasants to sell them tickets to America and trots out the wagon statue once again, “To bless your passage.” In response, the crowd grabs at the billets and cheers, “America! Santa Libertà!”²⁴¹ The early twentieth-century American audience, however, knew that Scammon simply exploited the peasants’ dreams. If not from personal experience, they read the tales of padroni – exploitative immigrant brokers – that appeared regularly in newspapers.

The immigrants continue in their faithful devotion at the opening of the second act and MacKaye stages their experience in the manner Lazarus, Cleveland, and Depew had imagined they would. Giovanni first notices Liberty emerging from the fog that covers the harbor and exclaims, “The great Madonna!” In response, the others “sink” to their knees as they see first the arm and torch of the statue and then raise their arms in prayer as its remainder comes into view. Awed by the new colossus, the chorus praises the “Mother holy! Mother queenly,” rues past oppression under “Khan and king and czar,” and recalls homelessness and poverty.²⁴² As they rush off to gather their belongings, Noel enters above, pleading with Liberty to fulfill their wishes. But instead, Scammon’s betrayal of Giovanni and Maria unfolds under the unmoved and unmovable statue.

The second act of *The Immigrants* reconceives the triangular relationship that Zangwill in his final act established between the characters, New York City, and Liberty. David and Vera stand on the settlement rooftop; the cityscape appears behind them in the middle ground with Liberty far in the distance. *The Melting-Pot* arranges the city as the site of joyous assimilation. Two immigrants give up their old world grievances to become part of their new world. They stand, literally, above and in front of it all. In contrast, the immigrants appear at first in a void – the fog – and then later overwhelmed by the structures of New York. MacKaye heightens the importance of Liberty, the symbol that the Italians worship by placing it in the middle ground with the city growing more visible in the background as the act progresses. At the same time, he positions the immigrants as outsiders, not part of the main land of America.

²⁴¹ MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 64.

²⁴² MacKaye, *The Immigrants*, 71-72.

By the beginning of the third act, idealized Liberty has been transformed into a commercialized image. Instead of an idealized view of America from the periphery, the immigrants now shuffle through the sweatshop factories at its core. From this position they neither see the original nor conceptualize a fantasy. Instead, a glowing simulacrum watches over their exploitation. The immigrants imagined Bartholdi's statue as a symbol of opportunity, but the electric sign version watches over their labors. Giovanni and Maria stand in the slum alley, the factory district blocking their view of the original statue. *The Immigrants* arranges the city as the site of dispiriting separation.

The bleak New York cityscape grimly contrasts to the opening festival in Italy. If audiences could not determine the meaning of the scenographic difference, MacKaye spells it out as usual. Although all the immigrants believed that American would provide them with wealth, Lisetta reveals the true source of their wealth as she lies dying near the trickling drain pipe that replaces the fountain of the first act. She states that the treasure for her and Giuseppe still exists within the Trevi-like fountain. That fountain, the geographical center of their village square and the heart of their village festival, forms the core of their identity. MacKaye thereby locates the source of immigrant happiness and immigrant identity within their rich cultural history and folk traditions. The drain pipe provides almost nothing for the immigrants. It carries wastewater, not cultural heritage.

3.2 RESTRICTION, ASSIMILATION, AND PLURALISM

Progressive activists concerned themselves with improving the quality of life for immigrants, which included programs teaching them how to be good Americans. Along with Ellis Island renovations and a work-release program for immigrants who had been considered "likely to become a public charge,"²⁴³ Commissioner Howe emphasized Americanization during time spent on Ellis Island, thereby creating a space to model everyday life, a space where immigrants could learn American behavior prior to their release into the urban environment. Patriotic songs

²⁴³ For many years it served as a reason for deportation. It included women charged with being prostitutes. The success rate of Howe's program was about 97%. See Guzda, "Ellis Island," 33-34.

dominated concert programs offered there. Essay contests asked residents to write in English about American life; winners held the honor of raising the flag at special events.²⁴⁴ Howe did not act alone. Progressives throughout the country encouraged voluntary Americanization activities along with other forms of social assistance during the 1900s and early 1910s. Many organizations, such as settlement houses and the YMCA offered courses in personal hygiene, industrial safety, English language, and American history and heritage.

Other groups also deployed the term ‘Americanization’ to describe immigrant transformation that emphasized matching, not merging with, the existing American population. They too positioned themselves as benefactors seeking to aid the immigrant. In 1910, Senator Dillingham asserted that, “All these newcomers need help. They need to be interested in American institutions, and it can only be done through a society of this nature, and by cooperation of churches, societies, and individuals by team work.”²⁴⁵ Industrial unrest, the type for which the *Call* seemed to yearn in *The Immigrants*, became more pervasive during the early 1910s. At the same time, the expanding reach of the war in Europe spurred patriotism and a rising interest in ‘American’ identity that generated in the general public a suspicion of immigrants as a national threat. The perceived destabilization increased interest in a more coercive form of Americanization: assimilation.²⁴⁶ Under the Americanization banner, assimilationists wanted to strip away new stock cultural practices and layer on a homogenous old stock identity. Americanization became a tool of “cultural conformity that sought to organize the resources of the schools, popular entertainment, and even employers to ‘dehyphenate’ not only recent immigrants but the offspring of earlier generations of immigrants.”²⁴⁷ Henry Ford provided immigrant workers with English instruction along with civics lessons. Dr. R. DeWitt Mallory, backed by Protestant groups, founded a college to train immigrants “in a knowledge of America and of American ideals, and capable of guiding, advising, and leading fellow members

²⁴⁴ Guzda, “Ellis Island,” 33.

²⁴⁵ North American Civic League, *Annual Report: 1910-1911*, 25, quoted in Hartmann, *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant*, 89-90.

²⁴⁶ Hartmann, *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant*, 104-105. See also Dale T. Knobel, “America for the Americans”: *The Nativist Movement in the United States* (New York: Twayne, 2002), 237.

²⁴⁷ Desmond King, *Making Americans: Immigration, Race, and the Origins of the Diverse Democracy* (Cambridge: Harvard U Press, 2000), 20-22.

of their nationality.”²⁴⁸ Mallory hoped to break the control of less savory immigrant leaders. What had started as a method of social assistance became a means of social control.

Americanization pitted assimilation against cultural pluralism. The pluralists, led by Horace Kallen,²⁴⁹ welcomed the diversity that immigrants contributed to the United States. Kallen assembled several essays in his 1924 book, *Culture and Democracy in the United States*; the commentaries had appeared during the 1910s in academic journals and more popular periodicals such as *The Nation* and *The New Republic*. Kallen asserted in “Democracy Versus the Melting-Pot” that Americanization signified “the disappearance of the external differences upon which so much race-prejudice often feeds.”²⁵⁰ Kallen countered the simplistic premise of assimilationists that if immigrants changed their outward behaviors, American identity could be preserved as it was. He argued instead for a compromise position that native-born Americans should welcome the contributions of the numerous immigrant groups in order to augment the established American culture, which should remain dominant.

Kallen published “The Meaning of Americanism”²⁵¹ in the January 1916 issue of *The Immigrants in America Review* during its second and last year of existence. Founded by self-proclaimed progressives, its advisory editorial board included Frederic Howe and Percy MacKaye. It appears to have been a response to *Old World in the New* by Edward A. Ross, a sociology professor at the University of Wisconsin who asserted the inferiority of new immigrant races and predicted the inevitable decline of American society because of their presence. The editor of *The Immigrants in America Review*, Frances Kellor, panned Ross’ work, stating that it “needs an antidote and needs it quickly.”²⁵² Kallen’s article provides such a response,

²⁴⁸ Hartmann, *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant*, 30.

²⁴⁹ Kallen began using the term ‘cultural pluralism’ as early as 1905 and introduced it to academic circles in 1910. See Dorothy Chansky, *Composing Ourselves: The Little Theatre Movement and the American Audience* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois U Press, 2004), 49.

²⁵⁰ Horace Kallen, *Culture and Democracy in the United States: Studies in the Group Psychology of the American Peoples* (New York: Boni and Liveright, 1924), 79.

²⁵¹ Horace Kallen, “The Meaning of Americanism,” *The Immigrants in America Review* (January 1916). HTC. See also Kallen, *Culture and Democracy*, 44-66.

²⁵² *The Immigrants in America Review* (March 1915). HTC.

championing America as a “Union” without “uniformity.”²⁵³ It defends ‘hyphenated’ Americans that maintain their native cultural identity and still choose American citizenship.

That same month, MacKaye published “Dramatize America and Cut Out the Hyphen” in the *New York Tribune*. In the article, he built on ideas developed in *The Immigrants* and proposed performances that reinforce Kallen’s pluralist notions about American identity. Native folk traditions remained in the hearts of immigrants because, MacKaye asserted, America could not provide alternative American folk traditions, which he thought did not yet exist. Once devised, they would enable “making America a unified nation with an international vision, a fusion of all the magnificent cultures which have come to her plus that culture of her own which springs from her soil.”²⁵⁴ He believed at the time that immigrants had no means of discovering the meaning behind American symbols such as the flag or abstract concepts such as ‘liberty’. “American soil is bristling with legends,” he wrote. “We must present American history and legend in dramatic form. Children are made to read about Washington, whom they usually see in a statue. But let the actor impersonate him. Let him speak as a living man, contemporary. Our artists have hardly made an attempt to make our history and legend live.”²⁵⁵ As usual, MacKaye blamed the commercial entertainment industry. The artist could use symbols to educate the immigrants during their leisure time and expose them to the positives of American life, not merely to the diversionary offerings of the commercial theatres and vaudeville. He proposed that the government should commission artists to dramatize foundational events: the signing the Declaration of Independence, the Gettysburg Address, Washington’s farewell address, pioneers’ westward expansion. Doing so would, as the title suggests, celebrate American identity without suppressing or erasing myriad immigrant identities. He cited recent civic pageants, including his own *Saint Louis* and *Caliban*, as successful examples.

Several years earlier, in an address to the American Society of Landscape Architects, MacKaye proposed that each city build for its residents a civic theatre at the center of its leisure district. The proposed site for such a theatre seems not unlike the Italian village square from *The Immigrants*. Emulating City Beautiful architecture, the civic theatre should have a classical

²⁵³ Kallen, “The Meaning of Americanism.”

²⁵⁴ “Dramatize America and Cut Out the Hyphen” *NY Tribune* (2 January 1916), 2. HTC.

²⁵⁵ Ibid.

portico facing a large plaza; these two elements would create an outdoor performance space to accommodate community spectators and participants on both July Fourth and Christmas: “every six months a festival of national art.”²⁵⁶ In 1915, MacKaye provided for these proposed spaces a civic ritual script that dramatizes seminal moments in American history: *The New Citizenship*.

Between the writing and publication of *The Immigrants*, and just one week after opening the *Masque of Saint Louis*, MacKaye witnessed a civic event for recent immigrants. Lorne W. Barclay invited MacKaye to be a “guest of honor” at the Festival and Pageant of Nations.²⁵⁷ Barclay directed the pageant under the banner of The People’s Institute, a long-standing progressive reform group similar to settlement houses. However, The People’s Institute did not possess a single dedicated headquarters; it used public school buildings for evening and weekend outreach programs.²⁵⁸ Like MacKaye, it sought to relocate entertainments from commercial theatres to civic locations, “school auditoriums and armories,” which provided “better physical and moral surroundings.”²⁵⁹ Although Barclay sent an official invitation, MacKaye already knew about the event months earlier. Among other connections, Frederic Howe, who served as director of The People’s Institute from 1910 through 1916, had invited MacKaye to a conference of pageantry and public schools just a few months before the event.²⁶⁰ Along with correspondence, MacKaye kept performance outlines and the results Barclay hoped to achieve. Both the culminating Pageant of Nations and *The New Citizenship* shifted the established focus of pageantry. No longer by, about, and for a geographic community, these pageants chronicled American history and portrayed “American” values for an immigrant audience.

The Festival and Pageant of Nations took place in New York’s Lower East Side during the first week of June 1914. Promoted as being of and for the neighborhood’s ‘new’ immigrants, the first five nights focused on individual ethnic groups with the sixth night resulting in all the

²⁵⁶ Percy MacKaye, “The People’s Theatre in Relation to the Civic Plan,” Lecture to the American Society of Landscape Architects (8 March 1910). DCL.

²⁵⁷ Lorne W. Barclay, letters to Percy MacKaye. The first letter (11 May 1914) informed MacKaye of the weeklong events and provided him with an outline typescript. The second letter (4 June 1914) invited MacKaye to attend the culminating pageant on 6 June 1914. HTC.

²⁵⁸ Peter G. Buckley, “People’s Institute” *The Encyclopedia of New York City*, ed. Kenneth T. Jackson (New Haven: Yale U Press, 1995), 893. See also, “Historical Note,” People’s Institute Records, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. <http://digilib.nypl.org/dynaweb/ead/nypl/msspeopl/@Generic__BookTextView/206;pt=206>

²⁵⁹ “City Recreations for Benefit of All,” *NYT* (21 April 1913), 13.

²⁶⁰ Frederic C. Howe, letter to Percy MacKaye, 1 Oct 1913. The conference occurred on 7 Oct 1913.

ethnicities gathering together to perform an historical pageant that culminated in a final scene “symbolizing the social center and the blending of the gifts of the Old and New World into the New America.”²⁶¹ During the finale, child performers sang “America” with two additional verses by poet and progressive Edward Markham. A pageant organizer, Nora Van Leeuwen, had asked MacKaye to write another verse to make it more applicable to the immigrant in early May,²⁶² but he declined because he was busy with final rehearsals in St. Louis. In addition to MacKaye, other guests of honor included Henry House founder Lillian Wald, philanthropist Adolph Lewisohn (at whose stadium MacKaye later produced *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*), and representatives from European consulates. Mrs. Margaret Wilson, daughter of the President and one-time star in MacKaye’s bird masque *Sanctuary*, “sat on a camp stool in front of a big crowd of people” as the event’s chief guest.²⁶³

Just as MacKaye hoped to use civic performances to create a unified America, the People’s Institute targeted a similar local goal: a one-week festival expected to change everyday conceptions of the neighborhood and its diverse population, united under the People’s Institute. Barclay wrote to MacKaye that the pageant aimed to transform disconnected and “homeless” Lower East Side residents into a “community.”²⁶⁴ The People’s Institute definition of homeless did not refer to housing, however. Rather, it worried that immigrants did not link their place of residence with their sense of individual, cultural, or national identity. Barclay hoped to connect individuals with each other, with their locality, and with the Institute. Additionally, he considered residents not only divided among separate cultures, but also among generations. Organizers wanted immigrants to become more familiar with American ideas and their children – “proudly, blatantly, intolerably American”²⁶⁵ – to familiarize themselves with their ancestral heritage. At the same time, the People’s Institute needed the festival to make immigrants aware of its program.

²⁶¹ Lorne W. Barclay, letter to Percy MacKaye, 11 May 1914. HTC.

²⁶² Nora Van Leeuwen, letter to Percy MacKaye, 12 May 1914. HTC. *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* opened on 28 May 1914, after which MacKaye returned to New York.

²⁶³ “Pageant of Nations Reviewed by 15,000,” *NYT* (7 June 1914), C5.

²⁶⁴ Lorne W. Barclay, letter to Percy MacKaye, 11 May 1914. HTC.

²⁶⁵ “Tenement Dwellers to Give Pageant of The Peoples,” *NYT* (24 May 1914), 53.

Organizers also wanted the festival to redefine the spatial relationship between the People's Institute and the immigrant community. To do so, they deployed the approach established by settlement houses of targeting children, who would then bring in adults. The People's Institute, following the lead of settlement houses, formed in 1898 in order to provide education to New York's labor class. Based at Cooper Union, a satellite at P.S. 63 was the first attempt to reach adults in the immigrant community. But, unlike settlement houses with an independent and identifiable space, the People's Institute did not possess a dedicated space in the community. Institute members discovered that older immigrants avoided their facilities, thinking that they were just for the children. The celebratory events brought both children as the primary performers and adults as the primary spectators to the Institute's offices in P.S. 63, creating familiarity with this space of reform. Each evening, events began a few blocks away at a more public festival space in Hamilton Fish Park and ended in the school. By linking these spaces, the People's Institute redefined how the adult immigrant community understood the physical building and the work that occurred inside it.

The event also served as an attraction for other New York City area residents, who did not approach the festival and pageant with the lofty goals of the reform-minded. One week before it began, the *New York Times* provided a full-page Sunday spread to promote the event, highlighting the cultures on display; it published an additional two promotional pieces, and two reviews of the events. The first article packaged the event as one that "differ[ed] from most immigrant activities" because the immigrants did something for the community instead of the other direction. During the weeklong event, it claimed that the residents would give their varied folk traditions to America, which "has no national dances, no peasant games, no [ancestral] costumes."²⁶⁶ Eighteen months later, MacKaye reiterated America's dearth of a folk heritage in "Dramatize America" in the *New York Tribune*. The descriptions deployed in the *Times* pieces, however, clue the reader as to the perceived levity of the events. It described the folk dancing, singing, instrumental music, and costumes in the "carnival" as "beautiful and picturesque.... gay-colored.... frisky.... lively,"²⁶⁷ and thereby framed it not as a serious social event, but rather as a

²⁶⁶ Ibid.

²⁶⁷ Ibid.; "Folk Show for East Side," *NYT* (31 May 1914), 12; "Festival of Nations Opens" *NYT* (2 June 1914), 11; "'Jewish Evening' in Pageant Week," *NYT* (4 June 1914), 5; and "Pageant of Nations Reviewed by 15,000," *NYT* (7 June 1914), C5.

superficial holiday. Some of these descriptions may be attributed to the fact that the People's Institute recruited mostly children to participate in the events, but outsider Americans attending the Festival and Pageant would have seen previous examples of superficial diversity.

Many Americans had grown to embrace a superficial understanding of world cultures through world's fairs, which consistently presented foreigners within the popular midways that emphasized amusement and entertainment. The *Times* presented for its readers the festival as it would have been seen by visitors to the Lower East Side: exotic entertainment emphasizing façades, not necessarily the substance behind them. Festival decorations also contributed to the superficial nature of the event. Residents had decorated the entire neighborhood with donated flags and greenery. Bursts of color appeared throughout the tenement neighborhood to disguise the poverty in which the inhabitants actually lived. New York residents visiting the festival could, as they did at the temporary structures of the world's fairs, focus on the surface details and not look behind the scenes. The People's Institute also deployed one Midway mainstay: illuminated signage. "Welcome to the Nations, 1914" appeared in white electric lights on the facade of P.S. 63, where each ethnic group offered a nightly speech. That same building also hosted a ball for all participants and guests after the pageant. Instead of serving as the locus of cultural pride, P.S. 63 became a site of cultural tourism, more quaint folk groups on display at an interim worlds' fair.

The neighborhood space guided visitors and residents in their experience, but the culminating pageant reinforced this frame of superficiality. It ignored the contemporary activities performed by immigrant groups in America and instead focused on their country of origin and folk traditions. The pageant kept to the standard community pageant plan: a series of pantomimes retelling the history of the area from before European arrival to the present day. As with most pageants, however, it smoothed over or ignored social discord. The history showed in succession: Indian tribes, the arrival of Hudson, the arrival of the Dutch, the triumph of the English, the arrival of Scots and Irish immigrants. However, the subsequent sections of the pageant about 'new' immigrants emphasized folk songs and dances performed in costumes of their home countries. Instead of being part of historically important actions, the timeless immigrant contributions appeared unrelated to New York's development.

The final scene, “E Pluribus Unum,” introduced Columbia, who was played by Mary Porter Beegle, a national pageant writer and director. Characters representing Lower East Side resident nations then brought her gifts. Students from P.S. 62 “performed a flag drill, after which the flags of other nations were dropped, [and] the Stars and Stripes were swung in the breeze.”²⁶⁸ The entire assembly – participants and spectators – joined in singing “America” and then recessed to the ball. After a weeklong celebration of the several Lower East Side immigrant cultures, this scene enacted the sublimation of individual identity to the American whole. Further establishing this concept, children portrayed the immigrant characters that offered tribute and assembled around the adult Columbia, suggesting a ‘natural’ relationship between a nurturing American mother and her European orphans.

3.2.1 Naturalization: *The New Citizenship*

MacKaye created a national version of the Pageant of Nations the following year. In October 1915, he published *The New Citizenship, a Civic Ritual Devised for Places of Public Meeting in America*. The ceremony synthesized the national pageantry movement with a new national surge to “dehyphenate” immigrants. MacKaye devised the script to lend gravity to the naturalization process, to imprint upon those immigrants becoming Americans the importance of American culture. A few months earlier, the Federal Bureau of Naturalization proposed that Mayor Blankenburg²⁶⁹ of Philadelphia host a reception for the newly minted Americans in Philadelphia. Attempting to centralize Americanization was not a new idea. Rochester had held a similar reception on 4 July 1910, and other individual cities offered special naturalization ceremonies throughout the early 1910s. However, Philadelphia hosted the first such event to emerge from the federal government, the first at which a President spoke, the first step in a nation-wide movement to control the performance of citizenship.²⁷⁰

Coincidentally, the mayor hosted his guests at Convention Hall three days after Germans sank the *Lusitania* off the coast of Ireland. President Wilson’s speech reflected the conflicted

²⁶⁸ “Pageant of Nations Reviewed by 15,000.”

²⁶⁹ Newspaper coverage of the ceremony noted the mayor’s own “distinctly German accent.” See “No Need to Fight, If Right,” *NYT* (11 May 1915), 1.

²⁷⁰ Hartmann, *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant*, 108-110.

feelings about recent immigrants and Americanization at this time. He addressed the gathering of four thousand naturalized citizens on 10 May 1915, claiming a willing departure from Washington because the ceremony “renewed his spirit as an American.” He instructed the new citizens to rescind their former identity, not to remain hyphenated: “You cannot become thorough Americans if you think of yourselves in groups.” At the same time, he praised the immigrants for “enriching” America by bringing with them their dreams and expecting the country to live up to its ideal.²⁷¹ MacKaye requested and received from Howe a copy of the President’s speech, excerpting a portion of it as part of *The New Citizenship*. He also gathered information about the typical processes of naturalization, archiving letters and articles before and after the civic ritual’s publication. These letters indicate that most naturalization processes did not come with fanfare to match the ceremony in Philadelphia.

Far from relating tales of unity among disparate peoples, accounts of naturalization highlighted deep-seated ethnic divisions and mistrust of the new immigrants. John Spargo chronicled his journey of naturalization in an article for *The Independent*. He complained about the Irish clerk with his “finely developed Galloway brogue” – Spargo was himself British. The other clerk, “evidently a naturalized Italian,” inspired Spargo to write that, “an indictment for participation in election frauds loomed before him.” The author also noted that there were many applicants whose papers were pushed through by “machine politicians.”²⁷² Another article contended that these ceremonies left one “astonished and shocked,” because they were rushed, mumbled, and often coordinated by a politician seeking guaranteed votes. The unidentified writer argued that immigrants needed to do more than just remain in America for the required five years. With the onset of the European war, “our so-called ‘Melting-Pot’ contains many refractory particles that fail to fuse.” The immigrant must show a vested interest in learning about American heritage and institutions. If not done in the first five years, “he may well wait a longer period.”²⁷³

²⁷¹ Frederic C. Howe, letter to Percy MacKaye, 15 July 1915. HTC. The *NYT* also published the full text. “Text of the President’s Speech” *NYT* (11 May 1915) 1. See also “No Need to Fight, If Right” *NYT* (11 May 1915) 1.

²⁷² John Spargo, “On Becoming an American Citizen,” *The Independent* (29 October 1908), 994-1000. “The Immigrants” Scrapbook. DCL.

²⁷³ “Citizens Made While You Wait,” *New York City Vogue* (1 July 1916). “The Immigrants” Scrapbook. DCL.

A few months after *The Festival and Pageant of Nations*, MacKaye clipped three letters to the editor – all from one day – that dealt with immigration and naturalization. One person reiterated the divide between old and new immigrants by using figures that suggested old stock immigrants naturalized at the rate of 60% whereas Hungarians, apparently representing all new stock immigrants, only did so at 14%. Attempting to give these numbers some validity, the author signed the letter “Statistics.”²⁷⁴ On the other hand, W.A. Corner ridiculed the idea of indoctrinating immigrants with American propaganda. Instead, Corner suggested encouraging “a sort of ‘neutral’ patriotism... calling attention to the flag as a symbol of our country and all it means to each one of us.”²⁷⁵ Malcolm James MacLeod conveyed his disappointment in the naturalization process. He noted that this experience was not “rendered sufficiently absolute and impressive,” because naturalization was “a great responsibility and a very solemn vow of surrender,” as grave as “uniting with a church.” Finally, MacLeod expressed his desire for something like MacKaye’s civic ritual. If naturalization were a more dignified event, he said, then “we might hear less in the future years about this hyphenated business.”²⁷⁶

In addition to published letters and articles, MacKaye looked to the federal government for an accurate understanding of the process by which immigrants became Americans and how many achieved citizenship. His *Immigrants* scrapbook contains an envelope full of naturalization papers, including the questions potential citizens were required to answer correctly in order to gain citizenship. Additionally, a response from the U.S. Department of Labor provided “unofficial” census statistics relating to the percentage of residents that were foreign born or the children of foreign born in several major cities: Boston 74.2%, Cleveland 74.8%, Chicago 77.5%, and New York 78.6%. Approximately three in five men of voting age in New York were foreign born, and of these just fewer than two in five had become naturalized,²⁷⁷ suggesting that less than 65% of voting age men in New York were American citizens. MacKaye, in his preface to *The New Citizenship*, extrapolates these figures to the entire population and exclaims: “More

²⁷⁴ “As Foreigners Naturalize,” letter to the editor, 1 September 1915, *NYT* (11 September 1915), 8. “The Immigrants” Scrapbook. DCL.

²⁷⁵ W.A. Corner, “A Flag is What We Will,” letter to the editor 3 September 1915, *NYT* (11 September 1915), 8. “The Immigrants” Scrapbook. DCL.

²⁷⁶ Malcolm James MacLeod, “How a Citizen Was Made,” *NYT* (11 September 1915), 8.

²⁷⁷ F.H.L., U.S. Department of Labor, letter to Percy MacKaye, undated. “The New Citizenship” Scrapbook. DCL. All other documents in this scrapbook appear to have been collected in 1915, suggesting that the data provided come from that year.

than one-sixth of our American population not yet Americanized!”²⁷⁸ MacKaye used these figures to assert that, despite Wilson’s plea for immigrants to become American citizens without allegiance to their birth country, only a slight number of immigrants had bothered to become citizens at all.

Shortly after the success of the Philadelphia reception, Frances Kellor, editor of the *Immigrants in America Review*, and Frederic Howe helped to form the National Americanization Day Committee. Working quickly, they targeted 4 July 1915 as the holiday on which activities throughout the nation would “crusade against the hyphen.” Maintaining the tradition of reformers using children to access the entire population, the committee planned to deploy school children on Flag Day to promote the event. Likewise, 1915 marked the first use of community pageantry toward a collective national goal. “The need it seeks to fill [is] a national one, not merely a local, it is designed to be at the service of whatever American community, committee, school, or civic society may desire to use it.”²⁷⁹ Cities and towns throughout the country hosted citizenship receptions or other similar events “designed to awaken interest in a more popular participation in American life and affairs by the naturalized population.”²⁸⁰ Wilson remained reluctant to enter the war in Europe, but Americanization Day launched the first volley in a nationally organized battle to dehyphenate the American population.

MacKaye had long advocated for making Independence Day a more serious event. “The New Fourth of July” appeared in *Century Magazine* in 1910 as he prepared the unrealized Pittsburgh Pageant, which was to have taken place in 1911. The article promoted the planned pageant and events, which would “kindle the people with the sense of their common citizenship and humanity.”²⁸¹ Years before the Pageant of Nations and before National Americanization Day, MacKaye had already envisioned a public celebration that would symbolically unite the various immigrant groups and their folk traditions under a watchful American eye. As envisioned, the pageant welcomed Pittsburgh’s diverse population and emphasized “Liberty” as

²⁷⁸ Percy MacKaye, Preface to *The New Citizenship: A Civic Ritual Devised for Places of Public Meeting in America* (New York: MacMillan, 1915), 7. Unfortunately, MacKaye did not leave behind evidence of how he determined this figure from the census numbers.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., 9.

²⁸⁰ “To Make Better Citizens,” *NYT* (10 June 1915), 13; “Make Americans on July 4,” *NYT* (26 May 1915), 8.

²⁸¹ Percy MacKaye, “The New Fourth of July,” *Century Magazine* (July 1910), 394.

the most important American value that united them. Like the Pageant of Nations, representatives from mostly ‘new’ immigrant nationalities – Greek, Italian, Russian, Hungarian, Croatian, and Swedish – led by their own national heroes of “civic liberty,” such as “Garibaldi and Kossuth,” would have approached the central playing space where “Washington and the Signers of the Declaration of Independence” reviewed them.²⁸² The Pittsburgh Pageant actions spatially expressed the cultural work of Americanization, wherein multiple identities present themselves to their adopted nation.

In May 1915, the mayor of New York City appointed a Citizenship Day Committee to create an appropriate event for that year’s Independence Day. The group then asked MacKaye to devise a fitting ceremony for “newly naturalized citizens.”²⁸³ The Citizenship Day Committee originally followed Howe’s suggestion to join in National Americanization Day events with a “meeting of welcome” at Madison Square Garden. Given the short period in which to work, the committee abandoned both projects, but committee chairman Adolph Lewisohn announced a future enacting of *The New Citizenship* at his new stadium at City College. MacKaye’s preface, written in August, established no specific date but references Columbus Day as the “assumed” holiday on which the first performance was to occur.

The publication also signifies a paradigmatic shift in civic performances from their ties to an individual city to their availability to communities throughout the United States. Unlike the *Masque of Saint Louis* and other city pageants, MacKaye scripted the *New Citizenship* to be produced repeatedly by large and small groups throughout the country. He asserted that his civic ritual could and should be adapted to a scale befitting the community, whether at a city stadium or a town meeting hall. His publishers also did not promote the text as a theatrical script, but rather as a book about current public issues. They listed it under “Essays and Criticism” and not “Drama, Art, and Classics.” At 50 cents, *The New Citizenship* also was the least costly in those two categories listed as recent publications in the *New York Times*,²⁸⁴ thus ensuring its accessibility by various individuals or agencies interested in Americanizing immigrants. *The*

²⁸² Ibid., 355.

²⁸³ MacKaye, Preface to *The New Citizenship*, 8.

²⁸⁴ The other 29 books ranged from \$1.00 to \$7.50. See “Latest Publications,” *NYT* (14 Nov 1915), BR 442. The relative cost of *The New Citizenship* today would be approximately ten dollars, the other books would cost from \$20 to \$150.

New Citizenship would be performed throughout the United States and would welcome thousands of immigrants from a broad range of nationalities. However, its dispersal actually reinforced a single notion of American identity. Instead of a central performance space with a large audience, these satellite performances of the same text served to standardize narratives of naturalization and American heritage.

Despite the geographical inclusiveness of the published text, MacKaye had a specific urban audience in mind when writing *The New Citizenship*. The published text contains several references to “a community gathering held in an outdoor stadium at night.”²⁸⁵ He titled early versions of the text “Stadium Ceremony for July Fourth, 1915.” He also labeled these documents, “Suggestions by Percy MacKaye,” perhaps because he was working with a committee. Only on a later incomplete typescript did he write by hand “Citizenship Ritual.”²⁸⁶ Based on his assumption of a Columbus Day performance, he employed “the Italian Group” as the first ethnicity in each sequence. Other ethnic groups – “Russians, Scandinavians, Poles, Germans, Hungarians, etc”²⁸⁷ – would follow, in variations on the activities practiced by the Italian leaders and spectator-participants. Although the Mayor’s Citizenship Day Committee did not sponsor *The New Citizenship* premiere, very few details changed in terms of the ritual or the major individuals involved. The New York League for Immigrants staged the ritual – under the title “Citizenship Reception for New Voters” – in Lewisohn Stadium on 29 October 1915 – neither Independence Day nor Columbus Day. MacKaye sat on the NYLI executive committee²⁸⁸ and Howe addressed the assembled crowd with his own words and with a letter from President Wilson. The scenes listed in the program followed the published text, suggesting that despite the title difference, this performance followed the script that MacKaye penned and published.

MacKaye remained mindful of the performance space when composing the civic ritual. The events that took place inside Lewisohn Stadium’s walls reinforced its neoclassical architecture. In addition to housing the increasing number of college sporting events, City

²⁸⁵ MacKaye, *The New Citizenship*, 27.

²⁸⁶ “Stadium Ceremony for July Fourth, 1915” and “Fourth of July Ceremony,” typescripts. “The New Citizenship” Scrapbook. DCL.

²⁸⁷ MacKaye, *The New Citizenship*, 34.

²⁸⁸ Fellow playwright Augustus Thomas also held a seat on the executive committee. Three other committees were listed in the event program: Citizenship, Education, The Immigrant and the Community. “The New Citizenship” Scrapbook. DCL.

College intended the space for outdoor dramatic events as well. In fact, its first spectators gathered in March 1915 to witness a production of *The Trojan Women*. The stadium included an amphitheater and its design emulated Greek structures, with a Doric colonnade around its perimeter.²⁸⁹ For this Greek revival stadium, MacKaye reconstructed a Greek theatrical structure by providing a skene, orchestra, and altar. He did temper the classical allusion with a colonial backdrop suggestive of Independence Hall. Three doors pierced the facade that loomed over a “circular ground space,” in the middle of which stood “the heart of the group ceremonies on the ground plane... the Civic Altar, a simple low square structure, encompassed by wide steps.”²⁹⁰ With this combination of architectural designs, MacKaye unites classical Greek and contemporary American values, locating America as the indubitable descendent of the birthplace of democracy, creating a diachronic space to indoctrinate a new gathering of converts.

MacKaye manufactured performer-spectator relationships at the beginning of the ceremony that emphasized equality among the immigrant cultures. Three representatives led each sub-group: a man carrying a flag of national origin, a woman bearing a symbol of their arts and crafts, and a child holding a musical instrument. More representatives – the first performance and published script designate folk dancers – appear in costumes of their nationality. The remaining spectators were encouraged to adorn their contemporary garments with some “colorful symbol both of his native land and of his new country as may be designated by the director of the ceremony,”²⁹¹ thereby reiterating the diachronic architecture and creating a dehyphenated individual. One spectator held a flag of national origin among his fellow immigrants throughout most of the ritual. The leaders and folk dancers assembled on the stage floor near the altar with the spectator-participants behind them. Thus, using the altar as a center point, the various ethnic groups assembled in Lewisohn Stadium in pie-shaped wedges of the semicircular performance space; there they remained throughout the performance.

Like the America to which they had migrated, the new citizens entered an already-occupied performance space. Singers and musicians, whom the audience reinforced in singing

²⁸⁹ City College of New York, “A History: The Adolph Lewisohn Plaza of Honor,” <<http://www.ccnycuny.edu/plazasite/plazahistory/history1.htm>>, 30 July 2006.

²⁹⁰ MacKaye, *The New Citizenship*, 28-29. MacKaye kept a sketch of the ground plan that reinforces the description; it shows a back wall and circular performance area. DCL.

²⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 32.

“America” and “The Star-Spangled Banner”, occupied the perimeter of the orchestral space, forming the first two rows with the spectator-participants behind them. Physically, they formed a filter through which the immigrant participants experienced the event. Near the scenographic representation of Independence Hall, the 56 signers of the Declaration of Independence had already taken their seats; Thomas Jefferson headed this group and signaled permission for the arrival of the immigrants. Once assembled, the (male) character Liberty²⁹² entered to deliver a welcome address. He narrated the ritual and introduced major figures to the audience – Jefferson, Washington, Lincoln, Wilson, and the non-speaking (female) character America.²⁹³

As with the pageants that had become so popular during the mid-1910s, this ritual included historic and symbolic scenes of American history in the context of current world events. The chosen historical speeches, some of which were edited, all reinforced Wilson’s conception of a neutral America with its naturalized citizens allied only to their adopted country. The edited version of the Declaration of Independence focused on throwing off “absolute” despotism in favor of “liberty.” MacKaye selected excerpts from Washington’s “Farewell Address” that emphasized a government united and undivided by “geographical discriminations.” The character of the first president warned against alliances or antipathies toward any nation, thereby asserting a neutral stance in foreign affairs: “Europe has a set of primary interests, which to us have no relation or a very remote one.”²⁹⁴ MacKaye’s Lincoln also spoke about national unity via portions of the Gettysburg Address, asserting the perpetuity of an American democracy that is “of the people, by the people, and for the people.”

The series of speeches by historical figures did not stray too far from the traditional pageant framework, but the subsequent actions provided a model of how new citizens should behave in their everyday lives. At the culmination of Lincoln’s speech, Liberty announced a symbolic dance of the stars and stripes performed by 48 and 13 children.²⁹⁵ At the center of the choreography, the character America mounted the central altar and planted an actual American

²⁹² In early drafts of the script, MacKaye named the character “Independence.”

²⁹³ MacKaye, *The New Citizenship*, 35. In the script, MacKaye offers the possibility of a woman performing the role of Liberty, so long as she spoke with a “mellow and resonant” voice.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 52-53.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 60. MacKaye indicates in the script that Mary Porter Beegle choreographed the movement, which “is *not*... the flag-pattern formation sometimes executed by school children,” to music by Arthur Farwell.

flag while all present sang “The Star-Spangled Banner.” The next movement recalled the first act festival of MacKaye’s *Immigrants*. Following the American dance, each ethnic group offered itself in turn. Like the opera’s first act, several people performed a ‘native’ folk dance to show the rich culture from which they came.²⁹⁶ Then, reenacting the immigrant journey, each of the New Citizen Leaders²⁹⁷ came forward to the altar with the flag from his birth country, pledging allegiance to the United States and confirming his group’s desire for “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.” Finally, the leader planted his native flag at the altar and furled it at the same time as a child unfurled an American flag in the midst of each section of spectators. All non-American flags stood furled below the central American flag, with satellite American flags spread throughout the new citizens.

During the flag actions, the immigrants joined together to become valid and unified contributors to American identity. This portion of the performance created a subservient league of immigrant nations. Instead of the supposed colonies that threatened a perceived American identity, these groups closed themselves off from their previous nationality to adopt an American one. The original separation of immigrant subgroups disappeared into an audience of flag-waving Americans. Although the folk costumes remained on some participants, the large defined divisions at the beginning of the ceremony were no longer in place. According to MacKaye, they were “merged in their seats behind the row of standards from each of which floats the flag of America.”²⁹⁸

Boy scouts then distributed citizenship papers to the newly homogenized Americans. During this process, the character America and the chorus delivered a musical version of Walt Whitman’s “Pioneers! O Pioneers!”²⁹⁹ MacKaye’s selections of Whitman’s text focused on journey and toil, thus equating the path of the immigrant with the path of the pioneer. The combination of officially granted citizenship and pioneer recollection reenacted the national

²⁹⁶ Ibid., 67. MacKaye indicates a variety of activities that may be offered at the altar: “a native ballad, athletic game, rondel, choral, or any appropriate distinctive art or craft.”

²⁹⁷ The script indicates an Italian, again based on the premise that the first performance was to have occurred on Columbus Day.

²⁹⁸ MacKaye, *The New Citizenship*, 70.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 92. In the appendix, MacKaye indicates that Arthur Farwell composed music for Whitman’s verses. He also notes that the poem has been abbreviated for “time-limit essentials” as have Washington’s Address and the Declaration of Independence.

unification that Western settlement provided earlier generations. Finally, a “representative citizen” reinforced the new unity by reading an excerpt from Wilson’s speech at the Philadelphia reception.

Responses to MacKaye’s published text admired his “attempt to inspire the foreign-born participants with an intelligent enthusiasm for the ideals of American democracy.”³⁰⁰ The *Duluth Tribune* asserted that areas with many foreign-born residents will consider *The New Citizenship* “a great civic help.”³⁰¹ Many reviews noted that MacKaye’s civic ritual permitted alteration to the specific needs or resources of a community. Ella Parmenter’s comments echoed MacKaye’s prefatory assertions about the need to an uplifting event for recent immigrants and pushed for using the script as a means for schools to educate immigrant children. She wrote that immigrants arrived with idealistic expectations, but instead were crammed into “the commercialism and artificial life of our cities.” So, logically, they yearned for a pastoral past and its “simplicity and beauty.” She continued that “native-born” Americans grew up with American heritage, but the immigrant needed to be taught it. She suggested performing *The New Citizenship* in “public schools where there are many foreign children.” She then added that the native-born could stand a little re-indoctrination as well.³⁰²

Documented performances by educational institutions certainly outnumbered known performances by any other group. MacKaye archived correspondence from organizers throughout the country. Most productions occurred at primary, secondary, and technical schools. However, after America’s entry into World War I, colleges and universities began to deploy the piece as well.³⁰³ One of the most interesting performances occurred at PS 15 in New York shortly after publication. Principal Margaret Knox invited MacKaye to witness their version of *The New Citizenship*, which formed part of graduation exercises. Knox noted that immigrants, mostly ‘new’ ones, formed the majority of her 3000 students. A picture appeared in the *New York Times*

³⁰⁰ “Searching Out the Spirit of America” *NYT* 2 January 1916, BR 1.

³⁰¹ “The New Citizenship, Masque for Teaching True Ideas of Patriotism” *Duluth Tribune* 14 Nov 1915.

³⁰² Ella C. Parmenter, “Dramatizing Citizenship” *Salem [Oregon] Statesman* 23 January 1916.

³⁰³ Several letters can be found at the Harvard Theatre Collection. Principal Frank Devlin of New York City PS12 (4 Feb 1916); a letter from Saint Louis mentions the speech by George Washington as a highlight during the event (31 May 1916); City of Detroit Recreation Commission (1 Dec 1916); Southwest Texas State University in San Marcos (24 Jan 1917); Louisville (10 May 1917); Rockford College (14 Nov 1918).

that included several of the performers as the “people of all nations... gathered about the American goddess of Liberty.”³⁰⁴

The New Citizenship provided a template for American communities to celebrate citizenship. MacKaye provided the ritual of Americanization that he had been envisioning since his work on the unrealized Pittsburgh pageant in 1911. Despite the cultural pluralism that MacKaye believed *The New Citizenship* promoted, however, the original and subsequent performances reinforced established old stock values. Communities hosted ‘Americanization days’ that “stressed the colorfulness but superficiality of ethnic diversity.”³⁰⁵ The spatial practices of these performances continued to position immigrants at the periphery of a core American identity. When they did participate in the performance, their folk dances were guided by the figure of Liberty and their leaders gathered around the figure of America. The latter of these figures, raised on a dais in the midst of an open space, created a clear parallel to the Statue of Liberty. The final action performed by the immigrants spatially and scenographically iterated the sublimation of their native identities in favor of the established, homogenous one.

After penning *The New Citizenship*, MacKaye continued his attempts to integrate immigrants into American life. During the first few months of 1916 he spoke at conferences on immigration, Americanization, and community development. Frank Trumbull, chairman of the National Americanization Committee, invited MacKaye to participate in their national conference.³⁰⁶ In April, MacKaye helped to organize the National Conference on Community Centers and Related Problems. He served on the executive committee of this broad organization with several subgroups, one of which was “The Community Center and the Immigrant.” At the conference, MacKaye chaired the panel “Co-operative Art, and the Application of Art Forms to Rural Life,” which aimed to demonstrate how pageants and other community performances regenerate rural communities. This panel clearly played to his reputation as the leader of two community masques that eclipsed all others in terms of participant and audience sizes – *The*

³⁰⁴ Photo Standalone, “Scene from ‘The New Citizenship’,” *NYT* (13 February 1916), RPA4.

³⁰⁵ Knobel, *America for the Americans*, 245.

³⁰⁶ Frank Trumbull, letter to Percy MacKaye, 17 January 1916. Trumbull invited MacKaye to be a participant at the conference of just a few days later (20 January). HTC.

Masque of Saint Louis and the upcoming *Caliban by the Yellow Sands* – but the program also noted that “a similar emphasis will be attempted with reference to immigrant communities.”³⁰⁷

Very quickly, the New York press ceased discussion of *The New Citizenship* because of plans to celebrate the tercentenary of Shakespeare’s death with a large public performance. Unlike previous community pageants and masques, the Shakespeare masque did not aim to dramatize a city or region. Instead, the Shakespeare masque combined the community-building of pageants with Americanization. The resulting performance transformed the social performance of individual communities into the social performance of a unified American identity.

³⁰⁷ “National Conference on Community Centers and Related Problems.” Brochure. HTC.

4.0 FROM SAVAGERY TO ENLIGHTENMENT

The New York City production of *Caliban by the Yellow Sands* marks the apparent apex of Percy MacKaye's career. The most promoted and publicly chronicled of his works, this 1916 masque merged professional and community performance at the core of commercial American theatre. Through the character of Caliban, MacKaye shows the first steps of one individual's journey from savagery to civilization. Based on its perceived importance and success, the masque received a second production in Boston one year later and at least one other city entertained the idea of performing this large-scale masque.³⁰⁸ *Caliban* capitalized on the success of *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, for which MacKaye devised the masque and Thomas Wood Stevens the pageant. For several May evenings in 1914, community members performed the masque for local and regional audiences immediately after Stevens' pageant chronicling the city's history. *Saint Louis* finally garnered for MacKaye unfettered praise from the New York press³⁰⁹ and the opportunity to stage *Caliban*, an outdoor community performance honoring Shakespeare. To celebrate the tercentenary of Shakespeare's death, professional actors and community performers demonstrated for stadiums full of spectators the civilizing powers of the dramatic imagination.

Two years before *Saint Louis*, MacKaye published *The Civic Theatre*, a collection of essays about community-based performances he called "a new expression of democracy."³¹⁰ Ideally, he envisioned for each municipality a central, multi-venue theatre facility with spaces to accommodate a range of indoor and outdoor performances. Among these performances, he asserted that masques, a specific form of pageantry not limited to historical subjects but still

³⁰⁸ The third city that seemed most likely to produce was St. Paul, MN. See letter from B.S. Pouzzner to Percy MacKaye. 14 October 1916. HTC.

³⁰⁹ After returning to Cornish, Marion MacKaye recalled that, "Percy's ideas were at length given unstinted recognition from the press and countless people." Quoted in Arvia MacKaye Ege. *The Power of the Impossible: The Life Story of Percy and Marion MacKaye* (Falmouth, ME: The Kennebec River Press, 1992), 257.

³¹⁰ Percy MacKaye, *The Civic Theatre, in Relation to the Redemption of Leisure, a Book of Suggestions* (New York: Mitchell Kennerly, 1912), 15.

focused on civic education, most capably reached the largest popular audience with civilizing themes. Spectator viewing, however important, formed the secondary target; participant practice would provide the experience to cohere the urban populace. MacKaye claimed that *Saint Louis* and *Caliban* created focal points around which communities united and remain so: participants in St. Louis and, to a lesser extent, New York and Boston vowed to continue playing together, or at least gathering together, when they returned to their everyday lives.

Contemporaries touted *The Civic Theatre* for its potential to refine American communities through recreation. A Chicago reviewer noted that its idealism mirrored that of the “thriving” municipal playgrounds that “were ridiculed only fifteen years earlier.”³¹¹ Other reviewers advocated adoption of MacKaye’s ideas to revive the “dramatic instinct of the people”³¹² and to become “a real instrument of civilization.”³¹³ MacKaye noted that many existing holiday celebrations satisfied an “instinct for art,” and asserted that the Civic Theatre could educate and refine these crude celebrations.³¹⁴ Like settlement workers, MacKaye sought to work with what the community already did and then to reshape those actions, to create new spaces and new practices in line with progressive notions of civilized practice.

Similar to municipal playgrounds, *Caliban* and *Saint Louis* provided physical models of refinement by privileging tamed over untamed environments. Additionally, both masques established scenographic spaces within monumental spaces, thereby referencing real and imagined places simultaneously. MacKaye staged *Saint Louis* in Forest Park, creating scenery reminiscent of the city’s pre-urban natural landscape. Organizers built an enormous stage into the Grand Basin, a remnant from the 1904 Louisiana Purchase Exhibition, and made use of its water as part of the performances. To celebrate its sesquicentennial, citizens of St. Louis performed on a scenographic version of its untamed past to propose an idealistic future. For *Caliban*, designers Josef Urban and Robert Edmond Jones³¹⁵ created tiered stage spaces that reinforced the Greek-styled architecture of Lewisohn and Harvard stadiums in which the masque appeared. Although

³¹¹ James O’Donnell Bennett, “The Civic Theatre Idea” *Chicago Record Herald* (7 August 1910). DCL.

³¹² William Archer, “The Civic Theatre” *The Daily News and Leader*, London (12 April 1913). DCL.

³¹³ Walter Lippmann, “A Civic Theatre” *New York Times Review of Books* (12 January 1913). DCL.

³¹⁴ Percy MacKaye, “The Masque and Democracy” in *Literature in the Making*, by *Some of its Makers*, Joyce Kilmer, Ed. (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1917), 315.

³¹⁵ Urban and Jones collaborated on the New York production, whereas Jones was the sole designer for the Boston production. However, the similarities between the scenographic spaces are much more prominent than the differences.

slightly different in detail, both designs included the simultaneous presence of neoclassical architecture above and untamed nature below.

In these spaces heterogeneous participants united and rallied against allegorical others, such as Gold, Lust, and War. *Saint Louis* and *Caliban* demonstrated journeys from savagery to civilization, with glimpses of enlightenment. Like the physical spaces, enlightened characters remained above savage ones. The morally strong character of Saint Louis successfully led his followers on their journey toward an ideal future and introduced a model for local, national, and international cooperation. In contrast, Caliban repeatedly succumbed to selfish desires, losing his way along the path to enlightenment set out for him by Miranda, Ariel, and Prospero. Despite MacKaye's idealistic principles, character others in *Saint Louis* and *Caliban* – especially Caliban – carried with them long-established racial and ethnic prejudice.

More than two decades of world's fairs reinforced these biases by providing spatial models of a Western-centered world. Host countries³¹⁶ defined themselves against African, Asian, and South American others who were gauged by their progress – more often their lack thereof – toward a Western concept of civilization. Host cities presented their ideal, not real, selves that located them further along the progressive line to utopia. Timothy Mitchell's spatial investigation of the 1889 Paris Universal Exhibition succinctly assesses how spatial configuration affected cultural comprehension of the everyday: "The visitor to Europe encountered not just an exhibition of the world, but the world itself ordered up as though it were an endless exhibition."³¹⁷ Within this model that conflated festival and everyday life, Egyptian spaces were meticulously created to appear dirty and disordered. By contrast, one fair exhibit showed a virtual panorama of retouched city photos that made Paris seem perfectly ordered and clean. To further reinforce the importance of the French capital, planners situated this panorama at the center of the fair, which was at the center of the actual city. "The city in turn presented itself as the imperial capital of the world, and the exhibition at its centre laid out the exhibits of the world's empires and nations accordingly."³¹⁸

The Columbian Exhibition of 1893 amplified cultural stratification. Often displaying others as more savage than they were, organizers also modeled an idealized America, with the

³¹⁶ No world's fair was hosted outside Europe, the United States, or Canada for 71 years until Rio de Janeiro hosted the 1922 fair. Osaka hosted the first Asian fair in 1970. No African city has ever hosted a fair.

³¹⁷ Timothy Mitchell, *Colonizing Egypt* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), xiv.

³¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

White City at its core. Its entertainment sector, the Midway, looked to the 1889 fair for examples of packaging world cultures. The resulting strip of facades reinforced popular American conceptions of world others as strange inhabitants in exotic locales. In addition to cultural displays as mere entertainment, the Smithsonian helped structure anthropological displays as part of its educational directive. World cultures sat at various locations on a progressive historical timeline, with the least ‘developed’ ones at its beginning and the more ‘developed’ ones (specifically old stock Western European) at its marker for present day. Country displays showed how some cultures were doomed to extinction and how others could progress to more civilized states. Subsequent American world’s fairs copied this combination of exotic entertainment, educational display, utopian architecture, and cultural categorization for the next two decades.

In a manner similar to American world’s fairs, American pageants looked simultaneously forward and backward. These fairly standardized community performances performed narrative histories of towns, cities, or regions and suggested ideal futures for them. Inevitably progressive, the pageants arranged a sequence of major events that showed the current inhabitants in an idealized manner and offered a disingenuously positive image of their future. The other represented cultures – almost always Native American – held similar stature to excluded others of the world’s fairs. Noble Indians willingly ceded their land to settlers in some pageants; in others, civilized settlers easily defeated savage aboriginals. In either scenario, Native Americans were destined to disappear from the American landscape.

MacKaye often stated that his masques differed from pageants because he used an allegorical framework instead of a historical narrative. However, *Saint Louis* and *Caliban* included another important defining characteristic: they expanded the size and scope of the imagined community. Previously, each town staged its own pageant, albeit with a uniform narrative arc. *Saint Louis* initiated the idea of using community performance to achieve a sense of national unity by calling together within the performance event, as well as during a concurrent conference, a League of Cities to stamp out the same social problems that were symbolically staged. *Caliban* likewise removed the single-community focus and maintained focus on the social education of its audiences and performers. An even more significant shift is that, unlike all the other one-time pageants, MacKaye intended that *Caliban* – just like *The New Citizenship* and some later community works – would be staged repeatedly throughout the United States. It was a national pageant with the universal theme of human development.

The combination of community formation, national unity, and repeatability makes *Caliban* and *Saint Louis* unique pieces within the American pageant movement. Any understanding of these two pieces as cultural documents, however, must consider more fully their relationship to early twentieth-century American understanding of race and culture. Like the preceding world's fairs, most notably in Chicago and St. Louis, the masques that MacKaye devised functioned as spatial models of human progress from savagery to enlightenment. *Saint Louis* showed a global future under the benevolent leadership of an enlightened America. *Caliban* provided a model for Americans to embrace their role in helping cultural others toward an enlightened state. As had the anthropologists who helped to devise exhibits of humanity, MacKaye imagined that in his self-appointed role of dramatic engineer he would educate and elevate all of American society. But as with the world's fairs, audiences focused less on the positivist social message and more on the spectacle and stereotypical images of cultural others.

4.1 MARSHALLING THE TROUPES

Staged in the years leading up to American involvement in World War I, MacKaye's masques differed from standard pageantry because of their anti-war leanings. David Glassberg notes that during these years most pageants shifted focus from celebrating individual communities to "fusing... competing local identities into a single national body" in order to prepare for war.³¹⁹ Many pageant advocates highlighted the organization and cooperation that these performances installed in American communities, asserting how such structure would be necessary for the inevitable war. MacKaye, however, focused not on war preparedness but on what he called 'a substitute for war'. He joined or lent his vocal support first to groups that advocated for Wilson's neutrality policy and later to groups that spoke out against direct

³¹⁹ David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina, 1990), 206-208. Glassberg does touch on the pro-peace stance of *Saint Louis*, but does not present it as a significant foil to the war preparedness advocated by other pageants.

American involvement in the war.³²⁰ Indeed, the character War was a prominent villain in both masques.

A few years before *Saint Louis*, William James offered a progressive approach to ending war. Instead of preaching a simple pacifism, he argued that in order for humanity to evolve socially there must be an alternative practice into which people could focus their energies. James took a historical journey noting the ever-present brutality of war that lately had clothed itself in the moral justification of those seeking to preserve peace against the aggression of others. Equally, he conceded a person's innate need for regimented behavior, for belonging to a collective, and for acting in service of the state. James argued that there needed to be a "moral equivalent of war" that preserved "some of the old elements of army-discipline;" he suggested a conscripted service by all youths "against *Nature*."³²¹ This youth corps would mine minerals, blast tunnels, staff railroads, and build roads.

One year after *Saint Louis*, MacKaye published *A Substitute for War* – offering to readers the community performance version of James' moral equivalent. MacKaye began by suggesting that the pageantry of war, its performative trappings, lured soldiers to the battlefield to participate in horrors in which they would not engage in everyday life. He echoed James when he claimed that war held good attributes such as courage, solidarity, national pride, and civic service. For MacKaye, war was "the enacting of a national drama in which the people themselves participate."³²² He also decried the blandness of the peace movement and its colorless symbol of a dove. MacKaye did not assert pacifism so much as activities that posed an alternative to war, community building without violence against another nation. He asserted that dramatic art, by using visual emblems and physical activities similar to military service, could provide American communities with James' moral equivalent.

Whereas James proposed a national service corps, MacKaye proposed a community performance corps to unite the nation and offer an opportunity for civic service. Arguing against the premise of a conscripted youth corps, MacKaye noted that industrial toil appealed little to the

³²⁰ These groups included the Emergency Peace Federation, the Liberty Defense Union, and the America Neutral Committee. See Box 41, labeled "War Material" for communications with these and other groups. HTC.

³²¹ William James, "The Moral Equivalent of War" in *Nonviolence in America, A Documentary History*, Staughton Lynd and Alice Lynd, Eds. (New York: Orbis Books, 1995), 71-73. Emphasis in the original.

³²² MacKaye, *A Substitute for War* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1915), 26. The main chapter first appeared in the *North American Review* in May, 1915.

worker whereas war seemed “hopeful and visionary in comparison.”³²³ MacKaye’s “peace militant” would deploy martial performance techniques to unite myriad service groups already in existence; the new performance corps leadership would include settlement workers, conservationists, educators, public health officials, and others interested in social service. He argued that these people already provided moral equivalents of war, but they did so in an unappealing manner by forming committees and distributing pamphlets. More problematic, he asserted, was that they did these things in separate private spaces, only occasionally meeting in a public hall to listen to “drab-coated talkers [on] a platform.”³²⁴ By the Boston production of *Caliban*, after the United States entered World War I, MacKaye shifted the reason for community performance from its being a substitute for war to its creating the necessary civic spirit during a time of war.³²⁵ For peace or war, community drama offered a way to unite disparate Americans for a common cause.

Caliban and *Saint Louis* both utilized a fairly regimented approach to rehearsals and performances. Given the enormous cast sizes, MacKaye and a group of unit directors separated the cast into small groups. Each group learned a prescribed set of movements that would mesh with the other units when put together during the final rehearsals. Often, organizers divided these groups according to cultural identity or social affiliation. Given the episodic nature of the masques, separate groups under separate leadership took on the choral roles for separate scenes. For example, Irene Lewisohn coordinated members of the Henry Street Settlement to perform the Egyptian chorus for the New York *Caliban*. In practice, MacKaye served as field marshal, coordinating the many units that were under separate command.

MacKaye suggested the creation of civil engineering as a profession that would deploy a similar structure: political engineers would determine subject matter and dramatic engineers would orchestrate public performances. MacKaye promoted himself as a dramatic engineer – a natural outgrowth of using community drama for social reform – in numerous interviews during the 1910s. In *A Substitute for War*, he offered his work organizing the citizens of St. Louis as evidence of the potential success of dramatic engineering. To complete the enormous undertaking, MacKaye noted the behaviors they adopted: “self-sacrifice, solidarity, energized

³²³ Ibid., 32.

³²⁴ Ibid., 35.

³²⁵ “Significance of Caliban explained to Newspaper Men at Dinner,” *Boston Transcript* (26 May 1917). HTC. The Boston *Caliban* also aimed to raise funds for the Red Cross.

will, militant devotion to a civic cause.”³²⁶ These production-related characteristics provided a model of community practice extending after the performances and into everyday life. Within one year, the practical results in St. Louis included the formation of a choral society, the planning of a permanent outdoor municipal theatre, the erection of a new bridge, and the implementation of a “new progressive city charter.”³²⁷ Politicians and MacKaye most frequently put forth this last item as the most relevant justification for widespread adoption of dramatic engineering and community performance as necessities of a harmonious and enlightened America.

None of these everyday items, however, directly appeared within the actions of *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*. Stevens’ pageant, a historical narrative with recognizable figures, stopped short of 1914 by some fifty years. Like many other pageants, it smoothed over potential social discord and focused on civic unity. The pageant chronicled the transition from French to Spanish to American rule as smooth occurrences with little tension among resident nationalities. Equally, it did not portray any battles from the Civil War and avoided celebrating or deprecating either North or South; in fact, during this sequence, Stevens eliminated any words in favor of instrumental music and group movement. He included neither references to contemporary civil projects nor discussions of a new city charter.

MacKaye also did not propose any specific reforms during the performance, but preferred to address general social obstacles and ills in an allegorical manner. Instead of enacting the past victories of individual citizen heroes, he created a young champion bearing the city’s name. Saint Louis, a White man without specific European affiliation who arrived just before Spanish and French settlers, led choreographed battles against the forces that sought to hold back the people. The overarching theme was that people must work together – not for self or for ethnic heritage, but for society unified – in order to stop war, master the natural world, and provide social equity. In case the audience might not get the show’s message, a barrage of press releases promoted the cooperative democracy demonstrated during the masque.

Audience members likely did not understand or act on the dominant theme of *Saint Louis* by just watching the performances; rather, they determined its meaning from the public relations campaign. The St. Louis Pageant and Drama Association (SLPDA) followed a normal pageant

³²⁶ MacKaye, *A Substitute for War*, 40.

³²⁷ *Ibid.*, 41.

organizational structure that included an educational committee. Such a committee aimed “to direct the people of the community toward a higher appreciation of the value of dramatic art, a better presentation of it, [and] a larger participation in it.”³²⁸ In St. Louis, the executive committee handled many educational tasks as well. In his chronicle of the community production, George Pierce Baker described SLPDA Executive Secretary Charlotte Rumbold as the pageant champion who won over citizens beset by a “lack of understanding or indifference at the outset.”³²⁹ SLPDA leaders informed spectators and participants about the importance of the productions, both how to receive the messages of the stories and how the practice of community performance could elevate and unite the city.

Most, if not all, pageant groups shared with playground progressives the belief that playing together created a general sense of community. The SLPDA held similar and loftier goals. John Gundlach, its chairman, asserted that “pageantry is the art of conveying through community manifestation its love of home, of country and of the beautiful. Its art is essentially one of sentiment, of community conscience, of the soul.”³³⁰ Gundlach also noted the important theme of democracy persistently shown during the pageant and masque. He stressed that the production grew from the playground movement and taught citizens about “their power and civic obligation.”³³¹

Organizers spent months creating a sense of civic pride and responding to community demand for direct or symbolic involvement. The Native-Born Committee raised money by charging twenty-five cents to enter the native-born registry that recorded date of birth, address, occupation, father’s and mother’s places of birth, and a brief family history.³³² A line for city of birth was later added to accommodate people born elsewhere who wanted to participate. Although most born outside St. Louis were American citizens by birth, many noted English, German, French, and Irish birthplaces, suggesting the high percentage of old-stock immigrants in

³²⁸ Percy MacKaye, *Community Drama: Its Motive and Method of Neighborliness* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1917), 95

³²⁹ George Pierce Baker, “The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis” *World’s Work* (August 1914), 299-399. MHS.

³³⁰ John Gundlach, Transcript of an untitled and undated speech. Municipal Theatre Collection, MHS.

³³¹ “Executive Committee Report,” *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis, 1914: Reports of the Chairmen of Committees* (St. Louis: SLPDA 1916). MHS.

³³² They could also enter information about St Louis or personal history and place it on file. Some submitted nearly a thousand words, others just basic information. More than three-thousand cards were bound into five volumes that are still housed at the MHS. This registry raised approximately \$800 (approximately \$17,000 today) for *Saint Louis*. See Benjamin Taussig “Treasurer’s Report,” *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis, 1914: Reports of the Chairmen of Committees* (St. Louis: SLPDA 1916). MHS.

the community and their active interest in the pageant and masque. To further document their civic roots, many of the native-born noted their relation to famous or leading citizens in the city's history while others noted the more everyday occupations of their ancestors. The SLPDA printed many of these family stories in the local papers, "and through those articles, thousands of St. Louisans were acquainted with the deep significance of the Pageant and Masque movement."³³³

Leading up to the performances, SLPDA Speaker's Bureau members also talked up the event and its civic importance among prospective participants and spectators. To socially diverse audiences throughout the city and region they delivered a stock speech about *Saint Louis*.³³⁴ Much like settlement house reformers, advocates went to target audiences—albeit as evening guests and not as residents.³³⁵ But instead of focusing only on civic reform, the speakers also appealed to audience desire for spectacle. They touted the impressive scenography, its vast size and its inclusion of water representing the Mississippi. They also discussed how the pageant would end at sunset and the masque would begin under electric light. While the Speaker's Bureau echoed early-twentieth-century progressive rhetoric, the vast majority of spectators looked forward to a night of visual splendor in Forest Park.

Many spectators could imagine *Saint Louis* as not just *a* night, but *another* night. One decade earlier, residents and visitors walked the very same ground during the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition. The city's art museum, originally built for the fair, stood behind the audience of *Saint Louis*, its neoclassical façade consistent with the City Beautiful aesthetic that had taken over civic architecture across the United States. Additionally, the stage was built over the Grand Basin, a man-made lagoon also conceived and constructed in the City Beautiful style for the fair. Between these structures, the audience sat on Art Hill, a grassy slope reminiscent of a Greek theatron. As a physical space, the spectator grounds recalled the classical world, the birthplace of democracy, and mirrored neoclassical America, democracy's new home. But as a social space, the former fairgrounds were where many had strolled and ogled the world's goods and cultures on display.

³³³ Ibid., 124

³³⁴ Each speaker delivered the same speech, which also touted MacKaye's and Stevens' experiences as pageant observers who then became pageant makers. "Speakers Bureau Report," *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis, 1914: Reports of the Chairmen of Committees* (St. Louis: SLPDA 1916). MHS.

³³⁵ Some of the audiences included: the Law Club, the Spanish Veterans, the Women's Council, the Parents' Association, the German-American Alliance, the Swedish National Association, the Garibaldi Club, and the Catholic Union. Speakers also traveled to across the Mississippi to East Saint Louis, Illinois and to Columbia, the centrally-located capital of Missouri. "Speakers Bureau Report." MHS.

The diachronic nature of this spatial composition parallels the separate perceptions about *Saint Louis*. The physical space, with its allusions to ancient Greece, served the pageant organizers' civic goals. But general community spatial practice did not match the elevated desires of SLPDA leaders. At the performances, many people ate during the break between the pageant and the masque; they continued their picnics into the masque so that it was mostly inaudible because of their socializing and eating. "The prevailing atmosphere was that of a crowd out for an evening of social pleasure of which the dramatic entertainment was only a part, to be praised if praiseworthy, but which could not spoil the evening if it did not amount to much."³³⁶ Many in the community did not even understand that the masque was a performance. Despite the nine-month barrage of advance press, they expected to celebrate the city at a masked ball.³³⁷ The SLPDA expected its audience to watch a civics lesson and be transformed into model citizens; the audience expected an entertaining night out with family and friends.

An entertaining trip to Forest Park is exactly what the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition had provided to thousands of locals and tourists. By 1904, world's fairs had become regular and anticipated events that introduced the latest technologies within neoclassical structures and showcased exotic cultural displays. Between 1893 and 1904, American cities hosted three official world's fairs and three unofficial ones.³³⁸ Like the pageants of the 1910s, planners of these large events promised significant civic improvements in addition to healthy profits for investors. Philadelphia hosted the first American world's fair: the 1876 Centennial Exhibition. New Orleans followed with the World's Industrial and Cotton Exposition in 1884.³³⁹ But the Columbian Exhibition of 1893 transcended the role of fair as a spectacular but isolated event. It served as a model for future fairs and greatly affected the everyday American landscape in terms of physical spaces and spatial practice, not only how American cities looked but also how Americans imagined cultural others inside and outside their national borders. The Columbian

³³⁶ Baker, "The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis."

³³⁷ Herbert S. Gardner discussed the expectant revelers as part of the SLPDA Publicity Committee report. Nearly daily press coverage for the pageant began in August, 1913 and proceeded with increasing regularity leading up to the event itself. There was a regular feature in the *St. Louis Republic* by Robertus Love called "Progress of the Pageant." MHS.

³³⁸ The official fair hosts were San Francisco (1894), Atlanta (1895), and Buffalo (1901). The unofficial fair hosts were Nashville (1897), Omaha (1898), and Charleston, South Carolina (1901-1902).

³³⁹ Between the Centennial and Colombian exhibitions, Paris hosted two fairs (1878 and 1889). Sydney (1879), Melbourne (1880), and Barcelona (1888) each hosted one.

Exhibition and subsequent world's fairs changed how Americans perceived national and international landscapes.

4.2 WORLD'S FAIRS, WHITE CITIES, AND CULTURES ON DISPLAY

In his history of the City Beautiful movement, William H. Wilson creates a narrative of how rapidly-growing Chicago stole the world's fair from the established eastern cities of New York and Washington and beat out regional rival St. Louis. By not splitting up into political factions, Chicago captured the exhibition to celebrate Columbus' discovery of America, making it an ideal example of City Beautiful principles: "an expression of civic pride, cooperation, and patronage of the arts."³⁴⁰ Ten years after its world's fair, the SLPDA hoped that *Saint Louis* would spark similar civic values, which apparently did not manifest during the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition or waned shortly thereafter. Like pageant boosters and other progressive reformers, City Beautiful advocates conceived their work to elevate public taste and to inject civic ideals into everyday life.

The architectural designs at the Columbian Exhibition provided the most widely visible seeds of the City Beautiful movement³⁴¹ which, like the playground movement, aimed at cleaning up industrialized America. Covering nearly 700 acres, the Columbian Exhibition nearly equaled Chicago's downtown in size and dwarfed its most recent predecessor, the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition.³⁴² In 1891, work began to create the fair in Chicago's industrial south side at Jackson Park, which then resembled a forest preserve more than the carefully planned landscapes of the emerging parks and playgrounds movement. The Columbian Exhibition was a marvel of controlled aesthetics and sanitary engineering. Along with the unified white neoclassical façades, a sanitation department kept the grounds spotless, fair police maintained safety and order, signs and pamphlets were all tightly controlled, and strands of electric bulbs

³⁴⁰ William H. Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins U Press, 1989), 60.

³⁴¹ Many architectural historians challenge the idea that the Columbian Exhibition sparked a movement. Wilson calls this seminal relationship "plausible though mostly mistaken." He attributes much of this urban myth to Daniel Burnham, the savvy businessman-architect who orchestrated the white city and then did his best to connect it to the City Beautiful. See *The City Beautiful Movement*, 53-57.

³⁴² The Columbian Exhibition occupied nearly ten times the acreage as the Paris Universal Exhibition. See Wilson, *The City Beautiful Movement*, 62.

created a nighttime glow. Unlike any actual American city of the 1890s, the White City provided a large-scale model of eutheic America, a clean and orderly space to insure a healthy and obedient population. It modeled the tangible possibility of a new urban utopia.

At the core of the fair, the White City presented a disingenuously positive image of late nineteenth-century America; at its periphery, the displays of other cultures were similarly disingenuous. The whiteness of the White City appeared all the more prominent because of anthropological displays at the Midway Plaisance. In addition to entertaining fairgoers, the Midway introduced Americans to many world cultures and many of the principles later embraced by twentieth-century eugenis. “The Midway provided visitors with ethnological, scientific sanction for the American view of the nonwhite world as barbaric and childlike.”³⁴³ Physically, the White City formed the central hub of the fair that greeted visitors arriving by train, whereas the mile-long Midway formed a peripheral spoke to amuse visitors who had finished examining the latest in science, industry, and commerce.

American and European displays were conceived, constructed, and staffed by the advertised hosts who put forth ideal self-images. Westerners also designed many of the African and Asian Midway displays, thereby showing a skewed image of those cultures. In keeping with similar ‘authentic’ displays at the Paris Universal Exposition, world culture exhibits on the Midway represented “the fears and prejudices of the colonisers, who represent[ed] those whom they exclude[d] as the negatives of their own self-image.”³⁴⁴ At the Columbian Exhibition, the Javanese display, “with its many quaint buildings of bamboo and still quainter natives,”³⁴⁵ garnered praise for its authenticity but the Dutch planters who controlled the island organized and funded the entire exhibit. The American responsible for the Samoan exhibit forced the natives “to resume their natural state of barbarism” after they had adopted Western clothing and hair styles.³⁴⁶ America, along with Europe, supported its claim to modernity by presenting others as definitively un-modern despite the realities of their everyday practice.

³⁴³ Robert Rydell, *All the World's a Fair* (Chicago: U Chicago Press, 1984), 40.

³⁴⁴ Mitchell, *Colonising Egypt*, 165. Mitchell largely discusses images of Egypt within the Orientalist movement. He dedicates the first chapter to that country's display at the 1889 Paris Exposition; the Egyptian exhibit was created and staffed by French men and women in costume, but sought verisimilitude by importing 50 donkeys and their drivers.

³⁴⁵ Truman, *History of the World's Fair*, 555-556.

³⁴⁶ Rydell, *All the World's a Fair*, 67. Quote is from an *Inter Ocean* story.

Organizers also created fair exhibits within the White City as a means to codify world cultures in a progressive historical narrative. Assistant secretary at the Smithsonian G. Brown Goode, an advocate for hereditary evolution as the dominant influence on human achievement, strongly believed that the fair could educate and entertain, that it could provide fairgoers with “an illustrated encyclopedia of civilization.”³⁴⁷ The spatial organization of this catalogue, not surprisingly, preferred Western culture and American expansionist political and commercial practices. Certain countries acquired prominent locations closer to the core, while others were placed near the Midway. Those cultures seated far from the White City appeared in a pre-civilized state but several other cultures appeared farther along the ‘universal’ timeline and therefore closer to it. Japan, referred to as “the Great Britain of Asia” had not yet embraced its namesake’s empirical ambitions but only “the Western spirit of enterprise and civilization.”³⁴⁸ Their exhibit of traditional teahouses appeared on the Wooded Island – a cleaned up but still somewhat wild version of pre-fair Jackson Park – across the water from the Horticultural, Women’s, and Children’s Buildings. Visitors saw Japan as a safe island among other non-threatening displays, a fertile vessel for American ambitions in Asia.

Shown as potential new cooperative allies – or perhaps future co-opted territories – several Central American countries also found homes away from the Midway. Just off the core of the White City, six national buildings stood across the North Pond from the Fine Arts building.³⁴⁹ Brazil, Guatemala, Nicaragua, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Ecuador all found their buildings tucked between European country and American state displays. The external appearance of these physical spaces reflected colonial more than aboriginal architecture. Fair organizers kept these countries within arm’s reach of the United States at the fair, and thereby suggested a similar relationship in future years. Major Ben Truman, the fair’s official historian, described Costa Rica as “a country rich in raw materials, which older countries are better able to utilize.”³⁵⁰ He also noted “the love of liberty, which is the birthright of the Latin American

³⁴⁷ Ibid., 45.

³⁴⁸ Truman, *History of the World’s Fair*, 201.

³⁴⁹ As mentioned in the first chapter, this building now houses Chicago’s Museum of Science and Industry. After the fair, the building was neglected until, in 1926, Julius Rosenwald donated \$3-million to restore the building and open a museum dedicated to industry. It opened in 1933, the same year that the city hosted the Century of Progress world’s fair. See <<http://www.msichicago.org/about-the-museum/museum-history/>> for a brief history of the museum. Rosenwald also was one of three major financiers of the 1933 world’s fair.

³⁵⁰ Truman, *History of the World’s Fair*, 540.

republics... a friendly tie which binds the great republic of North America to its southern sisters.”³⁵¹ As mapped, seen, and experienced, fair displays showed fairgoers how these countries could form part of a stronger and potentially expanded United States of the Americas.

Organizers presented only a select few nonwhite cultures as primed to become part of modern civilization. They relegated the remaining cultures to the Midway, overseen by Frederic Ward Putnam, professor at Harvard and head of its Peabody Museum of American Archaeology and Ethnology, and Sol Bloom, a young theatre and sports entrepreneur who had visited the 1889 Paris Universal Exposition and become entranced with French colonial exhibitions. Putnam lent scientific credence to the cultural exhibits and Bloom made sure that fairgoers got a good show, “an alliance between entertainment and anthropology replicated in subsequent fairs.”³⁵² As they walked the Midway and peeked at world cultures, spectators experienced humanity’s progress from savagery to enlightenment. Although Bloom valued showmanship over civility,³⁵³ it was Putnam’s racial hierarchy³⁵⁴ that fairgoers embraced. Skin tone, unsurprisingly, matched racial position on Putnam’s scale. The darkest and most terrifying, “The Big Black Dahomeyans,”³⁵⁵ held no redeeming value; but those with middle value skin tones – such as the Javanese or American Indian – were described and received as semi-civilized, capable of progressing farther toward the Anglo-American ideal.

The racial hierarchy introduced at the Chicago fair gained additional scientific credibility and became further codified in St. Louis, which also deployed a binary of white neoclassical exhibition halls and a carnival-like sector (The Pike). Former president of the American Anthropological Association, W.J. McGee steered the expansive anthropological displays at the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. Claiming to contrast racial categorization along bloodlines or skin tones, he studied cranial capacity and dexterity in order to locate all of humanity along “four

³⁵¹ Ibid., 545.

³⁵² Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, 62-63.

³⁵³ Ibid., 62. Rydell notes that Bloom preferred the sword-swallowing ability of “a tall, skinny chap from Arabia” over “earnest Swiss peasants who passed their days making cheese and milk chocolate.”

³⁵⁴ Putnam’s racial hierarchy reappeared at the Atlanta and Nashville fairs in 1895 and 1897 respectively. These fairs also included Congressionally-mandated Negro Buildings (Chicago organizers had denied repeated requests for African-American participation) but placed them alongside world others labeled barbaric or savage.. These fairs also included Old Plantation exhibits that positioned African Americans as less than equals. See Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, 83-88.

³⁵⁵ Truman, *History of the World’s Fair*, 579

culture grades of savagery, barbarism, civilization, and enlightenment.”³⁵⁶ Despite his new methods, the results reinforced accepted thinking that privileged America and Europe: aboriginals were savage, some colonized cultures had risen to a barbaric state, Europeans formed the civilized group, the English had progressed most of the way to enlightenment, whereas Americans had fully achieved it. McGee further asserted that the fair’s anthropological displays demonstrated human progress “from the dark prime to the highest enlightenment, from savagery to civic organization, from egoism to altruism.”³⁵⁷

The progressive concept of racial development provided scientific and ethical justification for expanding American control of global interests. McGee’s hierarchy from savagery to enlightenment provided the opportunity for races to progress and firmly placed the burden of cultural advancement on enlightened Whites. Anthropological displays showed how Americans had helped Native Americans with Indian schools and, by creating a ‘Philippine Reservation’, he drew a direct line from America’s expansionist past to its imperial future. The Reservation showed the civilizing process already underway among the tribes within the newly acquired territory.³⁵⁸ But McGee’s progressive idealism did not reach many Philippine Reservation visitors, who simply ogled the Filipinos in their native and very revealing costumes; voyeurism dominated American practice at the fair.

The Philippine Reservation spatially reinforced the centrality of Western culture in the new American territory by creating an idealized version of life there. Despite the ongoing and bloody resistance by remnants of the First Philippine Republic to American military presence,³⁵⁹ the Reservation showed a land of neoclassical organization and colonial control. A Spanish plaza, a reminder of the colonial power the U.S. military removed, sat at the center of the ring of ethnological displays exposing visitors to the many Filipino tribes. Philippine Scouts,

³⁵⁶ W.J. McGee, “The Trend of Human Progress” quoted in Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, 161.

³⁵⁷ W.J. McGee, *World’s Fair Bulletin* quoted in Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, 162.

³⁵⁸ Five separate Filipino races inhabited the exhibit, ranging from the savage “monkey-like” Negritos to the “picturesque” but developing Igorots to the “fierce” Muslim Moros and nearly-civilized Visayans. The Negrito was dubbed “The Missing Link” and the Igorots sang “My Country ‘Tis of Thee” for American fairgoers. Rydell successfully argues that the Philippines Exhibit helped to persuade fairgoers about the benefits from American occupation and control of the territory recently won during the Spanish-American War. For a full account of the Philippine Reservation, see Rydell, *All the World’s a Fair*, 167-178.

³⁵⁹ The First Philippine Republic formed in 1898, six months prior to the Treaty of Paris that transferred control of the islands from Spain to the United States. Official hostilities between the U.S. and the Philippines had ended in 1902, just two years before the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition. Despite the official declaration of the end of the war by the United States, factions of resistance fighters continued to harass American soldiers into the 1910s. Additionally, the Moros staged a violent resistance in April, 1904 – just as the fair opened its gates.

collaborators with American military rule, patrolled the perimeter of the Reservation dressed in formal Western military uniforms. With an assimilated appearance, they provided a buffer between the uncivilized tribes of these Pacific islands and American citizens. The Spanish plaza spatially reasserted a central controlling power and the perimeter asserted potential Filipino self-rule. These raised thatched huts contrasted the idealized white city of enlightenment and, combined with performed ‘primitive’ activities, reinforced fairgoers’ preconceived notions of the Filipinos as savage and barbaric.

Fair organizers created new permanent physical spaces within the White Cities to define civilization and enlightenment, to leave lasting monuments to Western achievement. Art museums, sites of high culture on display, emerged in American cities concurrent with their world’s fairs. In Philadelphia, Chicago, Buffalo, Nashville, and St. Louis, these permanent facilities often rose alongside the temporary fair palaces; the museums then remained as historical markers, monuments to civic cooperation and accomplishment that continue to anchor urban landscapes today. Chicago erected two permanent structures: the Fine Arts Building on the fairgrounds and the Arts Institute in the downtown area. Originally conceived to be part of the Columbian Exhibition, the Art Institute embodied the neoclassical aesthetic of the City Beautiful³⁶⁰ that matched the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Centennial Exhibition’s structural legacy. Civic leaders imagined the Art Institute working in tandem with the White City as a means to separate Chicago from its slaughterhouse and industrial roots and place it in competition with the likes of Boston and New York. Buffalo, Nashville, and St. Louis constructed their permanent museums on the fairgrounds, substantial parts of which remain as major city parks today. These museums continue to serve as monumental spaces, architectural reminders of civic cooperation and cultural prominence, both national and global. Several of these same cities also constructed historical society edifices concurrent with their respective world’s fairs.³⁶¹ These cities used the occasion of the fair to establish permanent neoclassical

³⁶⁰ The original design, which deployed a Romanesque style, was created by John Root, Daniel Burnham’s business partner. The realized design, which embraced neoclassicism, was created by Shepley, Rutan, and Coolidge, a Boston firm. See Ingrid A. Steffensen-Bruce, *Marble Palaces, Temples of Art: Art Museums, Architecture, and American Culture 1890-1930* (Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell U Press: 1991), 24-28.

³⁶¹ The Pan-Am Building in Buffalo anchored the northern end of the 1901 World’s Fair; it stands today a short distance from the art museum and houses the Buffalo and Erie County Historical Society. The Chicago Historical Society rebuilt their structure (it had burned down in the 1871 fire) shortly after the Columbian Exhibition, in 1896. Constructed for the 1904 World’s Fair, the Missouri Historical Society sits across the street from the Art Museum and the Grand Basin.

sites to house their archives, to fix their identities at the forefront of a progressive cultural timeline.

It is against this backdrop, both literal and figurative, of world's fairs that Stevens and MacKaye staged the pageant and masque. The architecture of the art museum that spectators passed on their way to the outdoor amphitheatre reflected the neoclassical designs created for the white city of the Louisiana Purchase Exposition. The scenographic burial mounds and hybrid ancient Native-American temple, not unlike exhibits on the Pike or the Midway, created an imagined foreign culture against which spectators could compare themselves. Like the world's fair that St. Louis and regional residents experienced a decade earlier, the SLPDA reinforced the centrality of Anglo American identity by creating a spatial frame within which spectators imagined past, current, and future versions of themselves and others. As part of America's emerging urban landscape, both world's fairs and *Saint Louis* served integral roles in homogenizing public practice by shaping what residents imagined as possible and acceptable behavior in everyday American life.

4.3 ENLIGHTENED AMERICANS

The pageant and the masque ran one after the other, but not as two halves of the same narrative. Instead, both began in an imagined past. MacKaye started much further back in the pre-European colonization of America, thereby structuring a narrative in which American civilization was a foretold destiny welcomed by pre-Colombian Native American gods. However, the different spatial practices more thoroughly distinguished the pageant and masque from each other; the former showed a world that followed a known and socially acceptable historical narrative whereas the latter broke from historical narrative to show that future spatial practice was subject to positive actions performed by the community.

Dramatically, Thomas Wood Stevens laid out a narrative like many pageants that chronicled the path from aboriginal savagery to American civilization. It started just before the arrival of European settlers by showing the Osage tribe already in decline. Its young chief

proclaimed, “And the mounds, at the end of this hunting / Shall lift their heads no higher.”³⁶² De Soto and Spanish priests arrived shortly and placed a cross on the ancient burial mounds. Eager for Christian teachings, the Osage next welcomed Marquette and Joliet. At the end of the first movement, the stage cleared and a medicine man appeared to explain that after the peaceful missionaries other Europeans followed seeking wealth and pushed his people westward. Finally, the prophet followed his god into the night leaving the stage vacant.

MacKaye began his masque with ancient Native Americans at sunset, literally and figuratively.³⁶³ During “Cahókia’s Dream,” Spirits of the Mound Builders performed burial rites at scenographic ruins that evoked Mayan civilization. Heroes, gods, priests, dancers, and musicians moved before the temple at twilight and then cleared the stage. From the emptiness, Cahókia appeared at the foot of the mound while animalistic and disembodied forms, the savages that devolved from his venerable race, filled the darkened stage.³⁶⁴ Waspedan, the bear spirit, then entered to tell of a “child of a new race,” who would bring “freedom and brotherhood” and build “nobler temples” on top of the burial mounds.³⁶⁵ The spirit Mississippi next entered on a barge bearing to Cahókia a little blonde-haired boy Saint Louis and a large sword. The savages then surrounded the too-old Cahókia and the too-young boy. Protecting the defenseless pair, French and Spanish conquerors drove out the dark forces to make way for “the one with the cross” who came to “christen yonder the white child.” The baptism of “Saint Louis” echoed the pageant: the pagan burial mound shrine crumbled and vanished and in its place emerged “a colossal cross burning with white fire.”³⁶⁶ Waspedan stated that “out of the formless void / Beauty and order are born,” and Cahókia ceded physical and spiritual claims to the land by crying out, “Gods and their sybils now depart: / God is eternal,” and he disappeared into a mist.³⁶⁷

Despite beginning most narratives with local tribes, community pageants hardly flattered Native American culture or welcomed Native Americans as participants. Most of these

³⁶² Percy MacKaye, *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, with Thomas Wood Stevens (St. Louis: SLPDA, 1914), 13.

³⁶³ MacKaye intended his portion of the performance to begin at sunset. In practice, however, the pageant often ran long, leaving this scene performed in twilight.

³⁶⁴ The script describes “brute-headed forms of Wild Nature Forces [that] move and mingle with glimmering limbs of savages.” MacKaye, *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, 59.

³⁶⁵ MacKaye, *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, 59-65.

³⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 72-74.

³⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 76-78.

characters appeared as savages, obstacles to settlement, and very few Native Americans performed these roles. Like the SLPDA, which refused the offer of participation by a tribe from Minnesota, many towns, cities, and regions opted to slather makeup on White performers.³⁶⁸ Many pageant handbooks included sections on creating an authentic ‘Indian’ look. One suggested that a standard makeup kit for those performing Native Americans should include “dark red grease paint, sunburn grease paint, and burnt cork.”³⁶⁹ Additionally, pageant costumes attempted to differentiate more civilized Native Americans that had come under “Saxon” influence as opposed to savages “on hostile raids.” The latter wore “nothing but brown fleshings, the loin cloth, and the war bonnet. Of course, the more blue and yellow paint on the face, the better.”³⁷⁰ Pageants showed Indians through the eyes of the dominant culture and, like world’s fair displays, reinforced racial stereotypes of aboriginal others.

Incorporating the Indian other into American identity narratives had long traditions both in dramatic offerings and in everyday life. Edwin Forrest starred as a noble savage in the 1829 New York hit, *Metamora*. By the mid-nineteenth century, American fraternal societies had sought to establish identities rooted in both European classicism and images of the American aboriginal, what Philip Deloria labels “Greco-Indian Americanism.”³⁷¹ Far removed from the tribes that early settlers encountered and with whom early-twentieth-century Missourians coexisted, Cahókia’s people existed in an organized society, the actual burial mound ruins of which stood nearby. The scenographic space, by placing the burial mound stage across the water from the audience, reiterated the spatial relationship between the current city and the ancient ruins that flanked the east coast of the Mississippi River. MacKaye connects his young nation to a classical past by suggesting the existence of an ancient American empire comparable to Greece or Rome. Despite this ancient connection, MacKaye devised a firm historical separation between the classical aboriginals and the Native Americans that shared space with European settlers and

³⁶⁸ An exception to standard practice, *The Pageant of the North West*, staged in North Dakota the same month as *Saint Louis*, used Native Americans to perform the roles of historical Indians. Frederick Henry Koch conceived and produced the piece on the campus of the University of North Dakota. Koch noted that “a group of full-blooded Chippewas, with their costumes, trappings, and instruments, has been brought from the Turtle Mountain reservation to take speaking parts, and so lend reality to the scenes” See Frederick Henry Koch, “Making ‘A Pageant of the North-West’” *Quarterly Journal of the University of North Dakota*, July 1914), 336. Also see <<http://theatrephotos.und.edu/1910%20images/1914pageantofthenw/pageantarticles/pageantnwp&pindex.html>>.

³⁶⁹ Mary Porter Beegle and Jack Randall Crawford, *Community Drama and Pageantry* (New Haven: Yale U Press, 1916), 41.

³⁷⁰ Esther Willard Bates, *Pageants and Pageantry* (Boston: Ginn & Co., 1912), 67.

³⁷¹ Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale U Press, 1999), 72.

American pioneers. The burial mound ruins linked Missourians to an ancient heritage, but pageant and masque organizers and performers clearly marked the difference between ancient, civilized Native Americans and colonial-era savages. Like American fraternal societies of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, “they desired Indianness, not Indians.”³⁷²

In *Saint Louis*, MacKaye staged Native American identity more respectfully than most,³⁷³ but Waspedan and Cahókia remained more spatially absent than present. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the image of “a positive *exterior* Indian other, one who represented authentic reality in the face of urban disorder and alienating mass society,” dominated the popular presentation of Native Americans.³⁷⁴ The white residents of St. Louis smeared bronze makeup on their bodies to play Indian savages in front of noble but fleshless ancient Native Americans. Waspedan appeared in the form of a constellation, a twinkling lighting effect without corporeal form. An often reprinted image shows MacKaye posed next to Cahókia, an enormous puppet more than twice human size. Shown after the fall of their great civilization, these disembodied figures loomed over the devolved and doomed savages writhing among the ruins. Stevens used live performers but, like Cahókia and Waspedan, both the chief and the prophet relinquished the stage for European settlement. The pageant and the masque established the Indian other as already dead; leaders did not lament the demise of their peoples as much as predict it. MacKaye’s masque, however, picked up on narratives of popular fraternal Indian societies that linked Anglo Americans with noble and ancient aboriginals. Cahókia welcomed the youthful Saint Louis – costumed in white and repeatedly described as “white” by other characters – as heir to his lands so long as the youth honored and preserved his tribal memory and beliefs. The masque implied that the citizens of St. Louis should embrace the ideals of ancient noble spirits but without contradiction could erase the savage beings encountered by European settlers. Participants and spectators retained their whiteness while they adopted Indianness.

The second movement of Stevens’ pageant reinforced the American concept of the empty frontier waiting for American settlement. He introduced French colonizers settling a clearing along the bank, where they related their united dream for this future space: “the houses and the

³⁷² Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 90.

³⁷³ Just as he thought his work would serve immigrants, MacKaye imagined himself allied with Native Americans. Several years after *Saint Louis*, MacKaye wrote a letter to the editor of the *New York Times* (19 December 1922, HTC) denouncing the Bursum Bill and U.S. policy of removing Native Americans from over 125,000 square miles of territory.

³⁷⁴ Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 74.

towers... the boats with their cargoes... the steeples and the bells.”³⁷⁵ Only after this occupation of empty space did members of the Missouri tribe arrive to claim the territory. The outpost’s leader warned the Missouri – who had behaved like refugees and beggars – that troops would soon arrive and so they should leave for their own protection. To prove that he was not a threat, he gave them food and ammunition and sent them along their way. With the Native Americans evacuated, the pageant showed how French, British, and Spanish forces contested the outpost. Different groups of soldiers raised and lowered the various flags until the Stars and Stripes went up after the Louisiana Purchase. American soldiers cheered their flag as the French and Spanish settlers exited “quietly to their houses, leaving the stage clear.”³⁷⁶ As the Osage and Missouri had done, Europeans ceded the space to the rightful inheritors. To reiterate America’s rightful ownership and expansion, a single night watchman entered the empty stage and announced to his descendents in the audience:

For the new nation takes the maiden land
Triumphantly, as youth would clasp a bride
And laughing with indomitable joy
Swings wide the door, and lights his welcoming fires
And calls his people from the whole wide world.³⁷⁷

Westward expansion took over virgin land devoid of Native Americans and transformed diverse European immigrants into unified American pioneers.

MacKaye reiterated the emptiness of the frontier in his second movement but showed how his citizens achieved the enlightenment popularized during the Louisiana Purchase Exhibition. Stevens’ pageant reinforced the disingenuous but accepted frontier narrative by having Europeans, and then Americans, build on vacant scenographic ground. Once the masque’s Europeans cleared the stage of savages to protect Cahókia and the boy Saint Louis, they too departed. But then MacKaye gave the frontier its own life through allegorical characters. American pioneers grappled with the earth itself and, as Fenris had done a decade earlier, with their own tendencies toward selfishness, toward savagery. MacKaye showed the audience their own successful change from egoism to altruism. The Life Spirit, a bird-like figure, imbued the

³⁷⁵ MacKaye, *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, 25.

³⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

³⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 40.

space with the civilizing spirit of Cahókia by releasing hundreds of white doves from one of the scenic walls. An equal number of pioneers followed the doves and called to the leadership of Saint Louis, now a handsome young crusader in silver and white, bearing his sword aloft. Pioneers fought Earth Spirits – minerals, fur, timber, and other natural resources that Saint Louis claimed for the spirit of America. The battle quickly reduced to a best-of-three wrestling match between a representative Pioneer and Gold, leader of the Earth Spirits. The Pioneer lost the first round because he worked only for himself. Once he learned instead to wrestle selflessly and for the community, he won the other two. As he defeated Gold the third time, the remaining pioneers then wrestled and defeated the other Earth Spirits, binding them to the ground. Saint Louis benevolently released them from their chains, including Gold who, as he exited, defiantly vowed to return to fight. By changing their practices from selfish savagery to selfless civility, MacKaye's settlers controlled the space itself.

The third and final movement of Stevens' pageant, an idealized narrative of expansion and social accord, employed few words. Its first section began by sending Lewis and Clark away on oar-driven boats and ended with the arrival of the first steamboat to reach St. Louis. Between these nautical milestones, St. Louisans transformed the rustic French settlement into their new and prosperous city square. After showing civic growth, the second section dealt with civic unity. The scene of Lafayette's famous visit began with a band playing the Marseillaise. Then, as "the great apostle of liberty"³⁷⁸ embraced a Yorktown veteran and placed a flower in his tricorne, the band changed its tune to Yankee Doodle. Later, German immigrants arrived only to be greeted warmly by French, Spanish, and English descendents. In accordance with SLPDA wishes, Stevens staged an abbreviated moment of social discord. First, some citizens paraded an image of Lincoln through the streets while others marched behind a newspaper headline about Fort Sumter. Blue or grey uniformed men then split off to separate sides of the stage while the band concurrently played "The Battle Hymn of the Republic" and "Dixie." Finally, the veterans reentered the stage after a headline announced peace and the pageant ended with a small festival of reunification.

Stevens and MacKaye both emphasized social unity and American global leadership in their respective shows. Two differences separated their work, however: Stevens emphasized physical spaces whereas MacKaye emphasized spatial practice; and MacKaye's stage practice

³⁷⁸ Ibid., 43.

showed an idealized future, what could be achieved, instead of only an idealized past. The pageant emphasized physical symbols and icons – clearings, squares, buildings, flags, newspapers, and portraits – and ignored the conflicts of shared social space. It showed wistful camaraderie among ethnic groups, and even among the opposing forces of the Civil War, but this fellowship appeared mostly through co-presence. The post-Civil War festival of unification came after little or no reconciliation, with no recognition of individual or sectional desire opposing community need.³⁷⁹ Contrastingly, MacKaye staged community unity after discounting practice that creates disunity. Then the masque moved forward to extrapolate the practice of civic unity to national unity to global unity under American leadership.

The masque showed an emergent and united America taking over European global dominance. After the defeat of the Earth Spirits, Waspedan announced to Saint Louis the arrival of the World Adventurers, costumed representatives from every country lead by five ‘continent’ leaders with the allegorical figure of “Europe tower[ing] highest from amongst them.”³⁸⁰ Recognizing America as its matured offspring, Europe called on Saint Louis “to lead the tribes of man... [to] give welcome to these World Adventurers, / who come to blend their blood and toil with yours.”³⁸¹ Saint Louis acknowledged that they once fought each other, but now must work together peacefully. Such work, however, echoed world’s fairs that advocated American exploitation of global natural resources, often situated in the lands of new or potential colonies or allies. The World Adventurers united under American leadership to “hunt the quarries of the world,”³⁸² but War Demons, incited by Gold, defied the newly established peace. Echoing the first battle sequence and its lesson about community, a leader from the World Adventurers engaged Gold while other individual battles also occupied the stage. Once everyone fought for the star, a symbol of the city and the nation, they quickly routed the War Demons who departed

³⁷⁹ Stevens did not necessarily choose to avoid the Civil War. Stevens and MacKaye wanted to chronicle St. Louis history from settlement to 1914, but the committee wanted to avoid the Civil War, considering the presentation of it to be “injudicious” – the compromise was to announce peace at its end and only refer to the actual war symbolically. Arthur Bostwick, “Report of the Book Committee” *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis, 1914: Reports of the Chairmen of Committees* (St. Louis: SLPDA 1916). MHS.

³⁸⁰ The five ‘continents’ were “Europe, Africa, Asia, Australia, and the Ocean Islands.” Notably absent is South America. MacKaye, *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, 90. Also notable is that the only African-American performer during the masque was a janitor, who played the role of Africa. Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 189.

³⁸¹ MacKaye, *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, 91

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 91

along with Gold. To celebrate, a herald unfurled an enormous American flag next to Saint Louis who advocated peace and forgiveness after the battle.

MacKaye reinforced paternalistic responsibility for the less fortunate and suggested that such progressive reform required American-led global cooperation. Saint Louis showed the united Pioneers and Adventurers a new problem: a group of women and children led onstage by Poverty singing a dirge that recalled the trials of the urban poor in America. Dressed in grays and blacks, the women and children yearned for the sun and the sod, thereby reinforcing eutheic notions of the environmental problems posed by city slums. A robed and hooded figure, identified as the one responsible for the blight of poverty, pushed her to the ground. Revealed as Gold, he then stole Saint Louis's sword and entered the temple atop the ancient burial mounds. Saint Louis then heard Cahókia's voice, acknowledged his responsibility to give life to Cahókia's legacy, and called forth the Pageant of Cities to save the oppressed, to enact progressive reforms. Washington led the Cities of the Union³⁸³ and allegorical figures that represented the Arts, Sciences, and Professions. Representatives from South America, Canada, England, and Europe followed as well. All the delegates formed a large 'V', with Washington at the apex, on the plaza in front of the temple. To solve the problem of Gold's usurpation, Washington called forth Imagination, who in turn called forth Love. The Christ-like child, wearing a blue tabard, iris wings, and a crown of thorns, approached the temple and knocked on the door. Gold emerged ready to strike, but knelt before Love, dropped the sword, and cried out "Master!" Love then commanded Gold and the other Earth Spirits to serve the League of Cities. The once-impoverished women and children rose from the mound dressed in clean and colorful garments.

With the selfishness of Gold suppressed, Saint Louis called on the League to continue their work to change the world in the time they have:

Let us shape the sordid world
To likeness of our dreams...
For 'tis a little,

³⁸³ Representatives – often the actual delegates to the concurrent Conference of Cities – stood for “all states and islands.” New Orleans led the river cities, Chicago led the Great Lakes, New York led the eastern seaboard, Denver led the mountain region, San Francisco led the west coast, and Honolulu led the islands. MacKaye, *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, 100.

When we, too, like Cahókia, shall lie down,
And this our city be a silent mound.
The chorus sung in response:
Out of the formless void
Beauty and order are born.³⁸⁴

The unseen Waspedan then told Saint Louis and the audience to look up to the sky, to the Eagle on whose wings the League would ride. After the serious message of the masque, MacKaye had intended to reward the audience with a flashy spectacle: the eagle, in fact, was to be an airplane³⁸⁵ shooting off fireworks in its wake. Unlike the uninspiring pacifist dove that MacKaye had derided, the plane suggested a new and exciting movement, a socially progressive future that the broad population would embrace.

4.4 URBAN, NATIONAL, AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

MacKaye had put forth *The Masque of Saint Louis* as an example of cooperative effort for social benefit, a substitute for war. Ironically, his symbol of the airplane would become one of the most advanced machines employed during the war in Europe that started two months later. Like the world's fairs, the pageant and masque created a festival space that both tied America to its imagined classical past and celebrated a progressive future of cooperation and technology. The collective efforts of the citizens of St. Louis paralleled the impressive pooling of resources to create a world's fair. Thousands of individuals came together to create an enormous festival space in Forest Park. And like the Pageant of Cities, civic cooperation would become national cooperation when America entered the war.

Civic unity, patriotism, and cooperative effort became the public face of everyday life in St. Louis for several years after the masque. President Wilson visited the city to drum up support

³⁸⁴ MacKaye, *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, 103-104.

³⁸⁵ The SLPDA cancelled the plane, when they could not verify the pilot's proficiency. SLPDA and other city leaders liked to point out that Charles Lindbergh named his famous plane after the 'eagle' from the pageant. Before overseeing construction of "Spirit of St. Louis," he flew a mail route from St. Louis to Chicago. Lindbergh's financial backing came from several prominent St. Louis businessmen, who had been members of the cast. In 1927, after his trans-Atlantic flight, Lindbergh flew to St. Louis and landed in Forest Park, the site of the masque. See footnote 77 in Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 333.

for war preparedness as part of his 1916 reelection campaign. Along with advocating for naval readiness, the President asserted the need for Pan-American unity and a plan for maintaining international peace after the end of the war, a foreshadowing of the League of Nations. The citizens of St. Louis may or may not have recognized in his proposal the final assemblage on the Forest Park stage, but they did enact once again a public performance of unity. At a speech in the city coliseum, the audience responded so positively and so vocally that President Wilson “was forced to stop his address and with visible emotion let them have their say.”³⁸⁶ Contradicting pre-speech concerns of a potentially negative reception from a “hot-bed of pro-German sentiment,” the crowd of 18,000 chanted “shouts of loyalty” that, according to the *New York Times*, proved no “influence could overwhelm American patriotism.”³⁸⁷ A later action echoed an image common to American pageants: a young girl dressed in an American flag presented the President’s new wife a bouquet of flowers at the train station. The First Lady waved the token of friendship to the crowd as the train exited the city.

Nearly one year after the President’s visit to St. Louis, MacKaye touted the cooperative seeds he planted in the city during an address to the American Civic Association (ACA). The audience for this meeting, which took place in Washington during the winter between New York and Boston productions of *Caliban*, included ACA chairperson, Margaret Woodrow Wilson, the President’s oldest daughter.³⁸⁸ At this public meeting of national leaders, MacKaye reasserted his principal argument that community drama could provide a substitute for war, that under the direction of “experts in art and civics” it could create and train an army of peace by bringing the community together toward ideas of sacrifice and heroism previously only developed during war. Providing the citizenry of St. Louis as an example, he noted how the cooperative creation of the pageant and masque translated into civic progress and harmony:

Two years afterward Mayor Henry W. Kiel of St. Louis telegraphed to a committee in Boston [then considering *Caliban*] in reference to this Community Drama that a new civic spirit was created by it which brought a new city charter and the voting of bonds for

³⁸⁶ “St. Louis Welcome Rivals Any of Tour” *NYT* 4 February 1916, 3.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 3.

³⁸⁸ For a short time, Margaret fulfilled the role of First Lady between her mother’s death in August, 1914 and her father’s second marriage to Edith Galt in December, 1915. After the President remarried, Margaret maintained a large public role throughout her father’s presidency. In September, 1913, Margaret’s youngest sister, Eleanor, had starred in MacKaye’s masque *Sanctuary*, which advocated conservation of nesting grounds at Meriden, New Hampshire, near the Cornish Colony. The piece was restaged five months later at the Conference on Conservation and the Art of Theatre in New York City.

a municipal bridge where such attempts had failed before. The twenty nationalities that participated are still together permanently organized.³⁸⁹

MacKaye also noted the snowball effect that a few progressive-minded leaders could have on a city. He related how only a few civic organizers in St. Louis spearheaded the campaign for a community drama, which then drew together thousands of participants, who then reached tens of thousands of spectators, who then clamored for a permanent site for community performance. Kiel and MacKaye firmly believed that this popular desire for community play also led to community cooperation on civic governance matters.

Beyond the national cooperation modeled in *Saint Louis*, MacKaye promoted the possibility of international cooperation through international forms of community drama that emphasized cooperation instead of competition.

...extended to world proportions, [community drama] will develop the disposition to see the nations of the world as cooperating units for the advancement of culture throughout the world; and thus lay a true foundation for a durable peace.³⁹⁰

MacKaye asserted a model of dramatic cooperation that would work with the international peacekeeping organization President Wilson proposed in St. Louis a year earlier. MacKaye's public campaign for cooperative community drama among disparate ethnic groups lauded the "League of Cities" assembled during *Saint Louis* and the concurrent Conference of Cities. However, he was notably less effusive about *Caliban*. Despite its successful premiere³⁹¹ and its being a masque intended for multiple productions, MacKaye did not put it forth as the pinnacle of community development. Partly, this choice reflected the different subject matter of the masque; *Caliban* is not about community cooperation as much as it is about the individual within the community. It focuses on the early rough stages of a cultural other's assimilation and not on American progress. Additionally, the organizational path leading to the 1916 production of *Caliban* demonstrated a less unified front among civic leaders and the production drew a smaller number of participants and spectators. Although the New York press was willing to give

³⁸⁹ "Report of Address by Percy MacKaye on Community Drama Before the American Civic Association, at its annual meeting in Washington, December 15, 1916. Margaret Woodrow Wilson, chairman." DTC. Emphasis in the original.

³⁹⁰ Ibid.

³⁹¹ *Caliban* was extended an extra week beyond the initial five performances. There was much public interest in seeing the performance extended, but weather also factored into the extension. Thunderstorms interrupted several of the originally-scheduled performances, including opening night.

MacKaye kudos for his efforts in the middle of the country, they were not so welcoming of his efforts in the middle of Manhattan.

4.4.1 The Shakespeare Masque

Historians have not discussed how *Caliban by the Yellow Sands* differed from previous pageants and masques in terms of civic engagement; that is, its relationship with the social and political leadership of New York City. Unlike scores of pageant predecessors, including *Saint Louis*, the Shakespeare Masque – as it was often called – did not seek to promote a city, a region, or a major social cause. Instead of using a geographically-defined space as a focal point, the Shakespeare Masque was promoted originally as benefitting a very select group of individuals in the most diverse of American cities. In 1915, the Players Club decided to put on a masque to celebrate the tercentenary of Shakespeare’s death. In a press release, they expressed their desire to raise \$100,000 that would be split between a statue of Shakespeare and a contribution to the Actor’s Fund of America.³⁹² Within several months, Otto Kahn held an invitation-only reading at the Metropolitan Opera House and announced a plan to stage the piece in Central Park. But the Shakespeare Masque suffered for being disconnected from the geographically defined notions of community that had dominated past pageant practice.

Only a few earlier pageants had broken from a link to physical space. W.E.B. Du Bois headed up productions of *The Star of Ethiopia*, first staged in New York City in 1913.³⁹³ *Ethiopia* used the pageant format to chronicle the histories of Africans and African Americans and the gifts they brought to the world. The production drew tens of thousands of spectators, but the mainstream press mostly ignored the event. That same year, Hazel MacKaye (Percy’s sister) mounted The National Women Suffrage Pageant, *The Allegory*, in Washington on the day of Wilson’s inauguration. Two years later, she produced the *Pageant of Susan B. Anthony*, the third women’s suffrage pageant in as many years. Whether or not the feminist pageants sparked

³⁹² *New York Sun* (17 September 1915) in “Caliban II” Scrapbook. DTC.

³⁹³ DuBois remounted the production in Washington (1915), Philadelphia (1916), and Los Angeles (1925). See David Krasner “The Pageant is the Thing: Black Nationalism and *The Star of Ethiopia*” *Performing America: Cultural Nationalism in American Theater*, Jeffrey D. Mason and J. Ellen Gainor, Eds. (Ann Arbor: U Michigan Press, 1999), 106-122.

controversy because of subject matter or form is debatable,³⁹⁴ but Frank Chocteau Brown, then head of the American Pageant Association (APA), officially declared them incompatible with the goals of the organization. In the year leading up to *Caliban*, the MacKays and Brown exchanged a series of strong-willed letters that debated the social purpose of community drama. Members of the APA had already developed doubts about site-specific pageants that followed too closely a standard format; they also questioned the performance of a single pageant throughout the country.³⁹⁵ *Caliban*, *Ethiopia*, *The Allegory*, and *Susan B. Anthony* shifted the focus of community drama from the local to the national, thereby simultaneously enlarging its potential for broad social reform and reducing its appeal to the local community.

Caliban did not match other community dramas in gathering a critical mass of elected public officials, business leaders, the press, social groups, and community reformers to push the masque forward and to generate broad public support. Early *Caliban* proponents comprised an even more select group than in St. Louis; they included some government figures and some private-sector community leaders, particularly those in the entertainment business. But these leaders did not control popular opinion in New York in the same way that the SLPDA did. Abandoning his initial unwavering support, Mayor John Purroy Mitchell – a progressive who had restructured much of the city’s governance and whose popularity was waning, especially among the working class³⁹⁶ – tabled the proposed performance because of damage the *New York Times* asserted it likely would do to the park. The day after the reading, an op-ed piece expressed concern that the masque was not a product by or for the people and that it would remove a large portion of the park from public access and enjoyment.³⁹⁷ Without backing from the press – as had

³⁹⁴ Both Prevots and Glassberg discuss *Susan B. Anthony* and *The Allegory* in their chronicles of American pageantry. Hazel MacKaye also devised two other pageants: *The American Woman: Six Periods of American Life* (1914) and *The Equal Rights Pageant* (1923). See also S.E. Wilmer, *Theatre, Society, and the Nation: Staging American Identities* (Cambridge U Press, 2000) and Sarah J. Moore, “Making a Spectacle of Suffrage: The National Woman Suffrage Pageant, 1913” *The Journal of American Culture* 20.1 (2004): 89-102.

³⁹⁵ Naima Prevots, *American Pageantry: A Movement for Art and Democracy* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1990), 99.

³⁹⁶ Mitchell only served one term, from 1914-1917. His reforms may have helped to set up the successful ones enacted by Fiorello La Guardia, but he antagonized Tammany Hall and many established ethnic groups and seemed too indebted to the wealthy elite. “John Purroy Mitchell” *The Encyclopedia of New York*, Kenneth T. Jackson, Ed. (New Haven: Yale U Press, 1995), 764-765.

³⁹⁷ “Park Invasion Not Agreed to Yet” (*NYT* 12 Jan 1916), “Another Invasion” (*New York Evening World* 13 Jan 1916) in “Caliban II” Scrapbook. DTC. Three days later, the *Times* claimed victory in moving the celebration elsewhere.

existed in St. Louis and in many smaller city and regional pageants – *Caliban* could neither proceed in a public space nor muster public support.

Denied access to Central Park, the Shakespeare Masque needed to find a home to accommodate the anticipated audience. In addition to the Tercentenary Board,³⁹⁸ comparable to the SLPDA, Mayor Mitchell also appointed an Honorary Committee. Chaired by Kahn, this latter group shared much of its membership with a previously-appointed committee to further outdoor productions of Greek tragedies. A member of both appointed committees, Adolph Lewisohn financed a second renovation of City College stadium in order to double the seating capacity to 20,000 seats.³⁹⁹ The key donor for initial construction of the stadium, which had been just completed one year earlier, Lewisohn had from the beginning intended that the arena be used for sporting events and dramatic presentations. The stadium opened with a production of *The Trojan Women*, the spark for the formation of Mayor Mitchell's Greek Tragedy Committee. Five months after announcing *Caliban*, city leaders and organizers agreed to stage the masque at Lewisohn Stadium. This compromise transferred the piece from the heart of Manhattan to a site some twenty blocks north of Central Park, almost into the Bronx. *Saint Louis* appeared in the heart of the city's major park that once hosted a world's fair and that could accommodate nearly 100,000 spectators nightly. The less public *Caliban* found its home in a much smaller⁴⁰⁰ and more formal performance arena on a college campus, known mostly for educating New York's immigrant and native-born Jewish population.⁴⁰¹

The Boston production also met with difficulties in finding a performance venue, but less so because of public opposition, or at least opposition by the major paper. In the end, two Boston sites hoped to host *Caliban*. MacKaye originally planned for the masque to take place in Fenway Park but when a tentative agreement fell through the Boston Braves offered the use of their stadium.⁴⁰² The production, which had already been advertised as a fundraiser for the Red Cross, then moved to Harvard Stadium (which could seat an additional three to four thousand

³⁹⁸ The full and lengthy title was "The New York City Shakespeare Tercentenary Celebration Civic Organization."

³⁹⁹ "Community Masque in College Stadium" (*NYT* 23 Feb 1916).

⁴⁰⁰ The population of St. Louis in 1910 was approximately 687,000 (773,000 in 1920), which meant that roughly 15% of the city could have attended *Saint Louis* each evening. The population of New York was approximately 4,767,000 (5,620,000 in 1920), so Lewisohn Stadium could only host roughly 0.5% of the populace nightly.

⁴⁰¹ "City College of New York" in *The Encyclopedia of New York*, 228-229.

⁴⁰² Boston mayor James L. Curley appealed to Red Sox owner Henry H. Frazee to shift a home game to the Braves Stadium (Letter Curley to Frazee 27 March 1917). Later, Mr. Hopgood, the business manager of the Boston Braves, offered his ballpark to MacKaye (Letter, Hopgood to MacKaye 1 May 1917). HTC.

spectators), so long as proceeds would also benefit Harvard's ROTC.⁴⁰³ Planners anticipated large receipts from the community production that would generate nearly \$80 thousand for its beneficiaries.⁴⁰⁴ Public endorsement of the Boston *Caliban* matched that of *Saint Louis*, and so organizers likely thought they would maximize audience, but even based on the financial successes in St. Louis and New York, this estimate seems high in retrospect. The Boston production promised significant revenue along with community unification through shared play. But again, *Caliban* aimed for a wide audience at a college stadium⁴⁰⁵ with which a limited quantity of spectators or participants had a direct connection. Although the producers had found homes for both productions, they did not match the broadly public nature of most community pageant sites.

The distribution of roles in *Caliban* did not adhere to the standard pageant format and MacKaye's primary collaborators were not from the New York community at large. Unlike the young medical student that starred as Saint Louis, major speaking roles were allocated to professional actors by invitation.⁴⁰⁶ Howard Kyle, a leading actor and a member of the Tercentenary Board, played the part of Prospero and Broadway veteran Lionel Braham played Caliban. Similarly, instead of scenery, costume, dance, or other committees headed by local volunteers, specialists controlled the creation of the Shakespeare Masque. Josef Urban – whose recent American citizenship was noted in the published text and in publicity articles⁴⁰⁷ – a leading designer for opera, theatre, and Ziegfeld's *Follies*, created the scenic structure of the performance space. Robert Edmond Jones, fresh from his landmark designs for *The Man Who Married a Dumb Wife*, created the costumes and scenery for the Shakespearean scenes. Isadora Duncan, with whom MacKaye had consulted about *Caliban*, appeared by invitation one night to dance around the Yellow Sands. For the Boston production, most of the professionals remained:

⁴⁰³ Letter from Joseph Beale of the Harvard Law School to D.M. Claghorn (17 May 1917). HTC

⁴⁰⁴ Letter from the Caliban Committee of Greater Boston to Thomas Brophy. HTC. In fact, the production generated no funds whatsoever for either the Red Cross or the ROTC.

⁴⁰⁵ MacKaye had suggested using Harvard Stadium for civic theatre productions long before *Caliban*. See "The People's Theatre in Relation to the Civic Plan." Lecture to the American Society of Landscape Architects (8 March 1910). DTC.

⁴⁰⁶ The form looked like a cross between an invitation to a formal event and a chain letter, with blank spaces for the name of the performer and the character role: "_____ to enact the part of _____." *Caliban* Scrapbook II, DTC. One invitation went out to E.H. Sothern, who had commissioned MacKaye's early commercial dramatic work, to play the part of Shakespeare at the end of the masque. He apparently declined; the program lists John Drew in the role. DTC.

⁴⁰⁷ Urban also served as a producer for the masque, along with Richard Ordynski, who had brought Max Reinhardt's *Sumurun* to Broadway.

Kyle and Braham reprised their roles, as did Gareth Hughes as Ariel; Jones alone designed all scenery (which changed only slightly) and costumes.

Alongside the core of professional actors, hundreds of community members executed only the choral roles and this disparity changed how the audience imagined the characters and the masque. Mary Porter Beegle,⁴⁰⁸ chair of Tercentenary board and professor of pageantry at Barnard College, organized the amateur performers. Their billing in the New York program appeared scene by scene intermixed with the professionals. Despite an advertisement highlighting the community participants, the Boston program relegated those heralded thousands to a separate section near the back. In both cases, they filled a secondary function. Unlike the St. Louis audience, the New York spectators did not see a community representative as protagonist, sage guide, or even antagonist. The spectators witnessed Braham, with his professional status and reputation, as Caliban on a bumpy journey away from savagery. Not fully democratic, *Caliban* merely provided a chance for some community members to fill the role of extras in a star-filled performance. New York spectators watched their representatives in the chorus follow the lead of an individual separate from the community. In contrast, the character of Saint Louis, performed by a member of the community, more successfully modeled potential community development alongside thousands of his fellow citizens. Even if the egalitarian nature of individuals on the stage did not match the hierarchical nature of everyday life, the composition of performers in *Saint Louis* made it seem as if social growth could benefit all community members. *Caliban* merely reinforced the stratification of New York society, with the masses looking up to individual leaders. The masque's content further reinforced this relationship.

The subject of the Shakespeare Masque also provided a relatively weak connection to the breadth of potential community participants and spectators. Unlike most conventional pageants, MacKaye's masque did not present local historical figures to celebrate the community; neither did he create a hero of manifest destiny leading an enormous civic ensemble as he had done two years earlier. Instead, MacKaye focused the narrative action on the adapted quartet of fictional characters: Prospero, Miranda, Ariel, and Caliban. Much like *Fenris the Wolf*, *Caliban* chronicles the struggles of its titular character to become civilized, shifting from a savage and selfish lust toward a self-controlled and respectful love. Caliban (Fenris) is encouraged and

⁴⁰⁸ Beegle had attended *Saint Louis* and spearheaded the effort to include a masque as part of the celebration of Shakespeare. Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 261.

nurtured by the reformer Miranda (Freyja), the object of his sexual interest, but dominated and controlled by the patriarchal Prospero (Odin). Early in the process, MacKaye imagined Miranda as a reformer-hero like Freyja or Jeanne, characters in the vein of New York's settlement house workers, many of whom also assisted in organizing and rehearsing *Caliban*. He titled one early outline *The Masque of Miranda*.⁴⁰⁹ But MacKaye split the single reformer hero – most recently imagined as Saint Louis – into the three figures of Miranda, Prospero, and Ariel. In the performed and published versions, Miranda seems more like Shakespeare's obedient daughter than one of MacKaye's early heroines. *Fenris'* Freyja persuades the reluctant Odin to give the wolf god a chance at redemption, whereas *Caliban's* Prospero introduces the idea to transform and tame “the wild thing.”⁴¹⁰ MacKaye also compressed the chorus citizenry of *Saint Louis* into the single representative figure of Caliban, the “child-curious part of us all (whether as individuals or as races), groveling close to his aboriginal origins,”⁴¹¹ but yearning toward a more civilized state. However, Caliban was only one man and no chorus of citizens faced his challenges and developed alongside him. Compared to *Saint Louis*, *Caliban* hardly manifested a community drama of the people, by the people, and for the people, thereby weakening the validity of MacKaye's assertions that community drama could lead to broader community improvement. By removing potentially empathetic characters with whom participants and spectators could identify, MacKaye further reduced the potential social impact of the Shakespeare masque.

4.4.2 Caliban by the Yellow Sands

After a rain-soaked final dress rehearsal, *Caliban* opened to a packed Lewisohn Stadium. Culturally and socially diverse spectators filled the seats to watch the performance, which alternated between the small plot-based scenes, the Shakespearean scenes, and the large choral events. Coordinated with these visual scenes, a full orchestra and a chorus of a thousand provided the musical accompaniment. Whereas *Saint Louis* related the allegory of the return of

⁴⁰⁹ The draft, dated 15 November 1915, also included the subtitle “A Community Masque of the Theatre, Written and Devised to Celebrate the Tercentenary of the Death of Shakespeare” DTC

⁴¹⁰ Percy MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1916), 24.

⁴¹¹ *Ibid.*, xv.

civilization to the American Midwest and the prospect for an enlightened, selfless, cooperative national and international future, MacKaye intended for *Caliban* to show “the slow education of man from his primitive beginnings toward the goal of co-operative civilization.”⁴¹² But unlike Saint Louis, Caliban did not always progress forward. Instead, the audience watched Caliban sputter toward civilized practice only to fall back into his savage selfishness. Perhaps a more realistic portrayal of human development, he did not match the heroic model that the citizens of St. Louis invoked during and after the performance. Nor did Caliban follow the smooth narrative of cultural progress demonstrated in world’s fairs. Caliban probably appeared to most American spectators as a Midway savage doomed to extinction.

As daylight faded, the prologue began in semi-darkness, with Ariel trapped in the jaws of Setebos. Neither Setebos nor Sycorax were portrayed by human figures, but rather oversized puppets like Cahókia. Called by his witch mother, Caliban crawled and slithered onto the stage. MacKaye hoped to represent three savage types through these characters: Setebos, “the will to destroy;” Sycorax, “primeval nature;” Caliban, “primeval man.”⁴¹³ Ariel, symbolizing human sensibility, predicted his delivery from some unnamed man and declaimed that he would never follow the priests of Setebos – Lust, Death, and War⁴¹⁴ – who had driven away Joy and destroyed Love. In response, Setebos and his trio of priests plunged the stage into darkness and chaos.

The embodiment of “human sympathy,”⁴¹⁵ Miranda arrived after hearing Ariel’s cries. Just as Cahókia praised the young Saint Louis, Ariel described Miranda as the hope that would bring back Love and Joy in order to restore humanity. But then Caliban entered and made sexual overtures to Miranda. Rebuffed, the savage Caliban called on Sycorax, who called on Setebos to “mate them at [his] altar.”⁴¹⁶ While lightning and thunder pierced the darkness, Miranda and Ariel called on Prospero to make peace and order from the madness. Prospero, “the will to create,”⁴¹⁷ entered, stopped the storm, rescued his daughter, and freed Ariel. At first, Ariel and his fellow spirits simply routed Caliban back to his cell, but Prospero asserted that only education could fully defeat the destructiveness of Setebos. He commanded Ariel to teach

⁴¹² “Synopsis of the Drama” Boston program, 7.

⁴¹³ Percy MacKaye, “The Masque of Miranda.” DTC.

⁴¹⁴ In an early set of notes, MacKaye had copied *Saint Louis* and included Gold as one of Setebos’ priests, but cross it out. “Shakespeare Masque” notes, DTC.

⁴¹⁵ MacKaye, “The Masque of Miranda.”

⁴¹⁶ MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, 22

⁴¹⁷ MacKaye, “The Masque of Miranda”

Caliban civilized ways and thereby “transform this cave of Setebos / To be a temple to Miranda.”⁴¹⁸

Knowing from experience that the spoken words would likely not be heard, MacKaye used the design elements to establish character relationships spatially.⁴¹⁹ The arrangement of the performance space segregated the characters from each other in a hierarchical manner. Although there were some differences between the stage designs of Urban in New York and Jones in Boston, spatial configurations remained consistent. The yellow sands (a full circle in New York, a three-quarter circle in Boston) provided the one location shared by characters of all ranks and accommodated the large choral interludes. On the circle, Urban painted “shadowy contours of the continents of the world,”⁴²⁰ and an hour glass on a raised altar stood at its center. The audience surrounded the sands on three sides and the sparsely-decorated, neoclassical, tiered stage formed the fourth side. On the uppermost level, formerly Setebos’ area, Prospero conjured the Shakespearean scenes during the New York production.⁴²¹ The middle level hosted the dialogue-based scenes focused on Ariel and Miranda. Finally, the lowest level held the entrance to Caliban’s cave. He rose to the middle level when he followed Prospero’s rules but fell back to the lowest level when he broke them.

The new-stagecraft inspired scenography, suggestive rather than representative, provided some theatrical legitimacy to this community performance. MacKaye noted that the settings for the masque broke from pageant traditions. The constructed and theatrical qualities of the tiered stage seen under artificial lighting differed from the natural or urban landscapes that backed community pageants seen by daylight. The only known exception, MacKaye’s own *Saint Louis*, used a realistic scenographic approach. *Caliban* made innovative use of controlled light to hide or reveal spaces during the performance. In fact, several of the dozens of publicity articles leading up to the New York performances chronicled the important developments in and deployments of new lighting technology. Urban, noted as “one of the best known exponents of

⁴¹⁸ MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, 29. The “Synopsis” states that “by the power of his [Prospero’s] art he will transform the cave of Setebos into a temple of Miranda” (18).

⁴¹⁹ To thoroughly reinforce the scenography, MacKaye included a ground plan and scenic and costume renderings in programs and in the published text.

⁴²⁰ MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, xxx.

⁴²¹ For Boston, MacKaye noted that these scenes would not be placed in the inner stage, but closer to the audience to make *Caliban* less about professional actors and more about “community mass action.” Transcript for Foreword to new edition of *Caliban*. HTC.

the ‘new stagecraft’,” employed over a hundred light sources (an enormous quantity for the time) to create bright focus on central performance spaces and dark shadows at the periphery.⁴²² This technique reinforced the centrality of Western concepts of civilization. Setebos’ forces emerged from and were banished to the shadows as many times as Prospero’s charges stood in the brightest light. Unlike the community pageants that enacted romantic versions of their imagined collective past on summer afternoons, *Caliban* embraced the latest scenographic technologies to convey a battle between enlightenment and savagery.

MacKaye and his designers set up the stage as a living laboratory of human development not unlike the anthropological displays popularized during two decades of world’s fairs. After conquering Setebos, Prospero walked Ariel into the newly lit yellow sands, which had remained in dark shadows, and noted the obvious scenographic symbolism that they represented the physical globe and its history. Not yet exposed to the civilizing qualities of theatre, Caliban began as savage man, not yet set on the path to cultural progress. As the first step in Caliban’s education, Prospero called forth a pageant of time that showed the antique civilizations of Egypt, Greece, and Rome. The Egyptians performed a ritual worship of Osiris; the Greeks executed an athletic dance and recited a choral ode from *Antigone*. The Romans, comprised of Caligula and other revelers, showed “a contrasted decadence” and the emperor’s “rage of jealousy” when he watched his love interest enact an onstage marriage.⁴²³ At the end of their scene, the Romans retreated to the shadows at the edge of the performance space.

To oppose Caligula’s possessive lust, Prospero revealed visions of enlightened human love on the uppermost level the proscenium stage created from Setebos’ altar. During a scene from *Antony and Cleopatra*, Caliban crawled out from his low cave to marvel at Prospero’s ‘magic’. The benevolent patriarch then handed his staff to Ariel and exited the stage, content with Caliban’s “awakening imagination.”⁴²⁴ Wanting to see more, Caliban tried to grab the magic staff but Ariel stopped him and warned: “Touch it not / Lest it shall scorch thy fingers and set

⁴²² Urban used approximately fifty spotlights, three searchlights, and “countless bunch lights with 1000-watt lamps” to light *Caliban*. See “Miracles of Light in ‘Caliban’ Masque” NYT 21 May 1916. In one of the few scathing reviews of the performance, however, it was noted that the actors struggled to find the slim lighting. See *Los Angeles Times* (4 June 1916) clipping in “Scrapbook: Caliban II,” DTC.

⁴²³ The first quote is from MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, 32. The second quote is from the “Synopsis of the Masque” in the New York program, 20.

⁴²⁴ New York “Synopsis,” 20.

fire / To the building world.”⁴²⁵ During a love scene from *Troilus and Cressida* Caliban betrayed his savage and mindless sexual desire: he slithered up the steps closer to the stage where he watched from a prone position, “kicking at times his lower legs (from the knees) in the air.”⁴²⁶ Caliban then approached Miranda, “in childish eagerness”⁴²⁷ to ask for bright clothing so that he could appear equal to Ariel. Believing Caliban a threat to Miranda, Ariel passed the staff to her for self-protection and exited in search of Prospero. The next Shakespearean scene showed Caesar’s ghost haunting Brutus, who called for Romans to wake. Caliban repeated the line and snatched Prospero’s staff. Miranda called out to warn him: “Touch not its power, lest thou lay waste the world.”⁴²⁸

World’s fairs established a purposeful and severe contrast between savagery and civilization and MacKaye showed Caliban in opposition to the implicitly enlightened world that Prospero commanded. All scales, feathers, furs, and blackface, Braham’s Caliban stayed in line with nineteenth-century productions of *The Tempest* and appropriated the animalistic appearances and actions often associated with colonized others. Despite MacKaye’s stated intent for him to stand for the “child-curious” aspect of humanity, Caliban’s “aboriginal origins” marked him as cultural other, as not like the predominantly white spectators and participants. Both the Columbian and Louisiana Purchase Exhibitions reified similar savage identities. As with the Samoans in Chicago, St. Louis exhibitors maintained the differences among Filipino tribes and prevented all but the collaborator Scouts from donning Western clothing. Similar to hyphenated Americans who long had threatened the dominant identity in America, global others presented a threat to American achievement at the fairs. Dale Knobel notes that “it was not the differences of those they defined as foreign that worried nativist activists, but the similarities to themselves.”⁴²⁹ Caliban attempted a similar mimicry.⁴³⁰ But his menace to Prospero’s world comes less in his physical appearance than in his behavior, his practice. The fairs relegated cultural others to their non-Western identity by re-rooting their physical appearance in the past at the same time that they promoted the latest technological advances as everyday components of

⁴²⁵ MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, 50.

⁴²⁶ Ibid., 51.

⁴²⁷ New York “Synopsis,” 20.

⁴²⁸ MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, 68

⁴²⁹ Dale T. Knobel, “America for the Americans”: *The Nativist Movement in the United States* (New York: Twayne, 2002), 195.

⁴³⁰ See Homi K. Bhabha “Of Mimicry and Man”

Western civilization. Implicitly, Westerners did not imagine the people of the anthropological displays civilized enough to use the latest technologies. Prospero, Ariel, and Miranda similarly warned Caliban to stay away from Prospero's staff, the technology that created such civilized visions.

MacKaye showed Caliban's inability to control power – and the disastrous consequences of such uncontrolled power – without assistance from Prospero's enlightened being. Staff in hand, Caliban “conjure[d] an orgy of Roman decadence,”⁴³¹ during which an unruly mob swarmed the Yellow Sands. Just as Caligula reached Miranda, trumpets pealed and “a colossal CROSS, burning with white fire,”⁴³² appeared above the performers. After clearing out all the Romans except Caligula, two figures – a Christian Shepherd and Boy – approached the emperor. The two Christians unmasked Caligula to reveal Lust; they then showed themselves to be Prospero and Ariel and banished Lust to the cell below. Defeated, Caliban tossed the staff at feet of Prospero, who lamented that it only took “one flare of riot lust” to destroy what took “a thousand years to build.”⁴³³ Embracing the role of reformer, Miranda urged her father to continue with Caliban's education, “to give him another chance to learn.”⁴³⁴

At this point in the tale, the program synopses and the full published text diverge in their accounts of Caliban's journey toward civilization. The published full text includes more vacillation by Caliban between his allegiances to Setebos and to Prospero. The programs – which, since most spoken words could not be heard, most likely guided spectator experience – focused Prospero's education of Caliban into a neatly linear progressive narrative, thus making *Caliban* like most pageants that smoothed over conflict. Whereas the New York program provides an eight-page synopsis, the Boston program only includes two or three sentences to describe each interlude and a paragraph for each act.⁴³⁵ The New York version includes little mention of Caliban's choosing to follow his past ways and neglects the violence with which

⁴³¹ New York “Synopsis,” 20.

⁴³² MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, 69. Emphasis in the original. In the “Synopsis” it is referred to as a “blazing cross” along with a shrine to St. Agnes (20), who was martyred at age 13 when she refused a Roman governor's son because of her virgin commitment to Jesus.

⁴³³ Ibid., 73.

⁴³⁴ New York “Synopsis,” 20.

⁴³⁵ The Boston production faced a more troubled financial situation than the New York production. Instead of a detailed synopsis, a full page ad appears on almost every other page of the program, thereby utilizing many of the pages to generate income instead of explaining the performance more fully to the audience.

Prospero frequently threatened Caliban. The further abridged narrative conveys an even smoother path in the 1917 production at Harvard Stadium.

The second interlude showed scenes from medieval and Renaissance Europe on the Yellow Sands. Prospero and Ariel watched the first two along with Caliban and then departed. The first action related the tale of Faustus as a German morality play on a three-tiered pageant wagon. Next, a tournament performed on horseback celebrated peace between France and England. Lastly, Caliban alone watched a commedia dell'arte scene in which Don Giovanni seduced another's lover. Inspired by these performances, Caliban vowed to work for Prospero. But Death called on Caliban to restore Setebos' temple and offered Miranda as a reward for completing the task. Torn between two masters, Caliban called out to Prospero, who entered, instructed him to follow the art and not the master, and then conjured the ghost scene from *Hamlet*. Caliban recognized his parallel temptation by Death and asked for Prospero's scroll, another tool of power, to help Hamlet and his father. Prospero fulfilled his request and then they exited severally. Miranda entered the empty stage with Ariel, who showed her a scene of peace from *King Henry VIII* and love scenes from *Romeo and Juliet*, *The Merchant of Venice*, and *The Winter's Tale*. As these end, the romantic music that had been playing changed to a dirge. Disturbed, Ariel exited to find Prospero. Shortly thereafter, Caliban entered with Death's servants to capture the swooning Miranda and remove her to the cell.

Prospero, to draw out Miranda, summoned an Elizabethan spring festival with Maypole and Morris dances. Ariel and his spirits emerged from the cell with Miranda in daisy chains. Caliban then emerged looking to be with Miranda again, disavowing his old ways and tearing Death's gray cloak from his shoulders. Prospero commanded him to keep away from her and grabbed his staff to beat Caliban (neither program notes the attempted beating described in the script), but Miranda intervened to give Caliban yet another chance and so Prospero conjured the scene from *As You Like It* in which Orlando demands food for Adam. Caliban recognized another parallel, noting that Miranda provided him the food of pity and protected him from his enemies. She replied that his only enemies were "the blind storms of [his] own nature."⁴³⁶ Caliban offered himself as her slave but she declined, wanting nobody bound to her in that way. In the New York program, MacKaye summarizes the scene simply that Caliban attempts to woo

⁴³⁶ MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, 121.

Miranda “on a high spiritual plane,” but that she declines because “Love knows not *mine* or *thine*, but only *ours*.”⁴³⁷

Still swayed by his feelings for her, Caliban succumbed again to temptation when War, a priest of Setebos, urged him to fight for her. At first Caliban declined, but then Ariel conjured a scene from *The Merry Wives of Windsor* that showed the torments laid upon Falstaff for his carnal desires. Thinking himself mocked by that scene, he almost followed War. Then, Miranda entered with one last dramatic selection, the scene at Harfleur from *Henry V*. Frenzied by Henry’s martial speech and possessing Prospero’s staff and hood, Caliban called forth War. Enacting the worst fears about empowered others, the Powers of Setebos launched fireworks, stormed the scenographic space, and captured Prospero, Miranda, and Ariel. Prospero yielded to Caliban’s victory, but he admonished the savage about how he misused the power in his hands, saying that War can only break, not build the world.

Reiterating MacKaye’s appropriation of James’ idea, that community performance could serve to channel desires for martial order, the Spirit of Time then entered to deliver a speech about the power of art over war. Echoing the Pageant of Cities from *Saint Louis*, representative groups assembled in the space with banners and symbols, each heralded by trumpeters. To model the potential of the dramatic substitute for war, “the final Pageant of the great Theatres of the World”⁴³⁸ took over the entire playing space, pushing the War and his followers into the darkness. During this pageant, Shakespeare, a mirror image of Prospero,⁴³⁹ entered along with other Elizabethan playwrights. At the procession’s conclusion, Caliban approached Shakespeare and reasserted his desire to serve. Shakespeare then recited from *The Tempest* Prospero’s “Our revels now are ended” speech.⁴⁴⁰ Along with the chorus members assembled on the Yellow Sands, Caliban – stripped of all his adopted ‘civilized’ clothing – knelt before Shakespeare and raised their arms “with a great gesture of aspiration.”⁴⁴¹ After this final tableau of the masque,

⁴³⁷ New York “Synopsis,” 22.

⁴³⁸ New York “Synopsis,” 23.

⁴³⁹ MacKaye, *Caliban by the Yellow Sands*, 144. MacKaye reinforces the common idea that Prospero is Shakespeare. The two figures circle each other and then Prospero lays his cloak on Shakespeare’s shoulders before quietly exiting the stage.

⁴⁴⁰ See William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (IV.1.148-158). Notably, this speech also marks an abrupt finish to the celebratory pageant of the unification of Miranda and Ferdinand. Immediately following this speech in *The Tempest*, Prospero prepares to receive and punish Caliban for his attempted coup.

⁴⁴¹ New York “Synopsis,” 24

they all rose and sang the national anthem, “in which all the assembled Pageant, Participants and the Spectators in the audience join[ed] in.”⁴⁴²

The final act of community singing at first seems a disjointed conclusion to a masque about Shakespeare. However, despite the Player’s Club’s original intentions, MacKaye’s productions of *Caliban* focused on creating united communities, and only secondarily on Shakespeare the individual. A flier to recruit participants for the Boston production noted the masque’s major theme – to regenerate humankind by creating a cooperative drama – and major purpose – “to bring those who are not together – TOGETHER... through the *spirit of play*.”⁴⁴³ Using the same tactics that had worked in St. Louis, organizers targeted groups already formed geographically or by practice: neighborhoods, towns, nationalities, schools, and clubs.

The Boston production more explicitly emphasized American unity. A promotional article related the object of the masque, which was “to arouse community spirit and promote good fellowship and better understanding between the sometimes widely separated elements [that] make up a great cosmopolitan population by bringing these elements together in unified action.”⁴⁴⁴ MacKaye also frequently reiterated his belief that performance preparation served to forge community. A revealing article profiles Frederick Stanhope, who directed the Boston production (MacKaye only served as an adviser and played the role of Sophocles in 1917), as yet another Prospero who transformed the community performers like so many Calibans, elevating them from raw and diverse elements into a single, fused American whole.⁴⁴⁵

The Tercentenary and Mayor’s committees’ connections to settlement houses further illuminate the presence and function of such spatial practice for the Shakespeare masque. MacKaye’s earlier *Masque of Saint Louis* celebrated the city and offered a metaphoric examination of past practices to suggest ideal future ones: social harmony at the civic level. Not rooted in a site-specific history, *Caliban* relays an imagined history of past human practice, a modeled reformance: social harmony at the individual level. Performance as immigrant reformance had a sizable record prior to the Neighborhood Playhouse. Many settlement houses had used performances in one form or another for many years. Generally, immigrants exhibited

⁴⁴² New York “Synopsis,” 24. There is no mention of community singing in either the published version of the text or in the Boston program.

⁴⁴³ *Caliban* flier for the Boston production. DTC. Emphases in the original.

⁴⁴⁴ “How Actors in Big Boston Masque will be Doing their bit for USA” *Boston Post* (8 April 1917). HTC.

⁴⁴⁵ “Real Life Prospero is Producer of ‘Caliban’.” Unlabeled article. HTC.

good citizenship and patriotism by contribution and service to their larger community,⁴⁴⁶ and community performances provided a very public opportunity for such community service. Settlement houses had used performance of Shakespeare, in particular, “to show native elites that the newcomers were educable and assimilable.”⁴⁴⁷ MacKaye’s *Caliban* reflected this settlement-house practice by showing the capacity of even the basest person to elevate his social behavior beyond his circumstance when exposed to the work of Shakespeare.

The composition of the New York Tercentenary board included many advocates and allies of social reform and Americanization. Mary Porter Beegle, the board’s chairperson, specialized in community pageantry. The Lewisohn family engaged in philanthropy beyond stadium construction. Irene and Alice Lewisohn, Adolph Lewisohn’s nieces who directed the first interlude performance, also led efforts at the Neighborhood Playhouse, affiliated with the Henry Street settlement house. Lillian Wald, founder of Henry Street, and Commissioner of Immigration Frederic C. Howe, MacKaye’s supporter for the more explicitly Americanizing *The New Citizenship*, served on the Mayor’s Honorary committee along with the elder Lewisohn.

Fifteen years earlier, the Lewisohn sisters had joined their father on a visit to the Henry Street settlement and began working with founder Lillian Wald to deploy cultural practice as a means toward Americanization of Lower East Side immigrant groups. Like Jane Addams’ Hull House in Chicago, Henry House engaged the immigrant community through its children, engaging them in creative play that then expanded to include parents. By the early 1910s, the Lewisohns had developed a series of “ecumenical religious rituals” that celebrated the cultural pluralism of scores, if not hundreds, of immigrant participants.⁴⁴⁸ They utilized visual and aural (as opposed to textual) performance techniques including procession, group recitation, dance, and music to reach an audience that did not necessarily understand the words. By 1912, they shifted into dramatic production, acting alongside immigrants, and opened a permanent theatre facility in 1915. When they moved to using professional performers in 1920, they incorporated immigrant participants in pieces with a chorus. The Neighborhood Playhouse’s early mix of

⁴⁴⁶ Michael R. Olneck, “Americanization and the Education of Immigrants, 1900-1925: An Analysis of Symbolic Action,” *American Journal of Education* (August 1989), 407.

⁴⁴⁷ Dorothy Chansky, *Composing Ourselves: The Little Theatre Movement and the American Audience* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois U Press, 2004), 57.

⁴⁴⁸ Mark Fearnow “Theatre Groups and Their Playwrights” in *The Cambridge History of American Theatre*, Volume 2: 1870-1945, Don B. Wilmeth and Christopher Bigsby, Eds. (New York: Cambridge U Press, 1999), 350.

professional and amateur performers paralleled the cast composition of *Caliban* and created a similar hierarchy.

Like other early-twentieth-century reformers, MacKaye's and the Lewisohns' good intentions now seem detrimental.⁴⁴⁹ They aimed to ally a mix of performers: professional and amateur, old stock and new. They embraced the rhetoric of Kallen's cultural pluralism, but in practice their performances reinforced the dominant Anglo identity more than they celebrated resident diversity. As Marie Olneck has observed, Americanization efforts celebrated the individual that acted in accordance with socially sanctioned norms.⁴⁵⁰ Practice, not identity, defined community. The Lewisohns "systematically erased, elided, or misread customs or practices from various traditions in the pursuit of a 'oneness'."⁴⁵¹ Americanization created the native-born Americanizer as the interpreter of what constitutes American identity, thus creating "a relationship of benevolent control and social superiority between native and newcomer."⁴⁵² As *Caliban* established between its two major figures, Americanization, then, situated the native-born (Prospero) at the center, the model of ideal practice, and the immigrant other (Caliban) at the periphery aiming to match the model.

Like the world's fairs that preceded them, *Saint Louis* and *Caliban* performed both ends of the accepted progressive cultural timeline. The enlightened Saint Louis and Prospero appear as ideal models of human practice. The former conquers the landscape and the latter takes up the white man's burden to educate and elevate cultural others. Also like the world's fairs, each of these productions sought to leave a lasting monument. The producers of *Caliban* planned on commissioning a statue of Shakespeare. Conveners of the Conference of Cities (concurrent with *Saint Louis*) set as an agenda item the establishment of Cahókia Mound and its vicinity as a National Park.⁴⁵³ By the mid-1910s, setting aside significant land for preservation had become one other tactic to reify dominant American identity.

⁴⁴⁹ For a particularly anti-MacKaye investigation of the New York *Caliban*, See Thomas Cartelli *Repositioning Shakespeare: National Formations, Postcolonial Aspirations* (New York: Routledge, 1999).

⁴⁵⁰ Olneck, "Americanization and the Education of Immigrants," 403.

⁴⁵¹ Chansky, *Composing Ourselves*, 61.

⁴⁵² Olneck, "Americanization and the Education of Immigrants," 400.

⁴⁵³ "Invitation to the Conference of Cities." MHS.

5.0 FOLK DRAMA: THE PERFORMANCE OF NATIONAL LANDSCAPE

With the onset of World War I, MacKaye stopped trying to provide a war substitute and, like many American artists and audiences, adopted a flag-waving patriotism. As he had begun to explore with *Caliban* and *Saint Louis*, he continued to strive for a unified American identity in his late works, albeit in an alternative form. His two most famous community masques aligned national identity with the architectural neoclassicism of world's fairs and the City Beautiful. MacKaye's later works, these landscape dramas, rooted this identity in the historical spaces of pre-industrial America, quite literally in the soil of the nation. Preceding his two major masques, *Yankee Fantasies* (1912) foreshadowed the four pieces that dominate MacKaye's post-*Caliban* dramatic output: *Washington, The Man Who Made Us* (1918); *This Fine-Pretty World* (1924) and *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies* (1928), a full-length play and a trilogy of one-acts respectively, all set in Appalachia; and *Wakefield: a Folk-Masque of America: Being a Midwinter Night's Dream of the Birth of Washington* (1932), commissioned by Congress to celebrate the bicentennial of George Washington's birth. All these works reflect a spatial shift from urban neoclassicism to rural natural landscapes.

MacKaye's landscape dramas emerged shortly after the formation of a national parks system during the 1900s and 1910s. Although world's fairs continued to flourish as the sites for the display and consumption of technological and commercial innovation, the National Park Service (re)constructed the American frontier for consumption by middle-class American tourists. Created by Congress and the Wilson administration in 1916, the National Park Service supervised rural landmarks and urban monuments, thereby providing new and uniquely American spatial access to a carefully constructed national past. City Beautiful architecture may have connected America to its classical European roots, but national parks provided a link between modern industrial America and its pre-Columbian roots. Like the scenographic frontier that The Pioneers encountered in *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis*, twentieth-century

park tourists could easily access empty and preserved landscapes, unsettled though not untouched American spaces.

Federally controlled land set aside from private commercial development first appeared in the nineteenth century. Authorities logically focused on the American West, with its sparsely settled lands and more open landscapes. Between 1832 and 1920, Congress or the President had designated 21 sites to become national parks; of these, only Acadia in Maine and Hot Springs in Arkansas were east of Denver and they occupied a mere 47,000 acres combined, about one-third the size of Grand Canyon National Park alone. According to National Park historian Alfred Runte, remoteness “magnified their appeal, the more so as easterners endured urban drudgery, crowdedness, and monotony.”⁴⁵⁴ However, it was not as difficult for late nineteenth-century city dwellers to go west as it had been for earlier pioneers; multiple and multiplying train lines, many laid specifically to reach the parks, offered comfortable passage to faraway majestic landscapes.

America’s first experience with a natural marvel, Niagara Falls, had not been ideal according to contemporary conservationists, who hoped to protect the newer portion of the country from similar vista desecration. Before the 1890s, the vast majority of Americans – nearly 90% – lived east of the Mississippi River.⁴⁵⁵ Niagara Falls formed the most remarkable landscape within an easy train ride, but myriad private entrepreneurs controlled access to seeing the natural wonder and their “gatehouses and fences rimmed the falls from every angle.”⁴⁵⁶ Many Americans quickly became disillusioned with the gross commercialization of the land surrounding the roaring waterfalls. In 1885, New York State responded by creating its first state park at Niagara Falls and, over many years, proceeded to buy surrounding lands from private owners. Across the border, a similar effort in Ontario began the same year.

Chroniclers of preservation have hailed these concurrent legislative attempts to rescue the park from the privatization that prevented tourists from encountering the landscape in its pre-Colombian form. In its nineteenth-century form, urban dwellers could not use the waterfall landscape as a retreat from everyday life and those who paid for access only caught a restricted glimpse of the majestic falls. From their inception, national parks have provided more than

⁴⁵⁴ Alfred Runte, *National Parks, The American Experience*, 3rd Edition (Lincoln: U Nebraska Press: 1997), 8.

⁴⁵⁵ According to the 1890 Census Report, 50% lived in the “North Atlantic”, 8% in the “South Atlantic” and 32% in the “North Central”. *Report on Population of the United States at the Eleventh Census: 1890* (Washington: Department of the Interior, 1895).

⁴⁵⁶ Runte, *National Parks*, 6

anything the idea of seeing America as its first inhabitants had done. Such spectator practice had roots in nineteenth century landscape painting, which focused on the threat that industrialization posed to American flora and fauna.⁴⁵⁷ The industrial threat to the parks paralleled how dense and dirty urban neighborhoods adversely affected human beings. The retreats available at the first national parks echoed and amplified the benefits with which eutheists endowed the smaller green spaces of urban parks. National Park establishment provided a spatial cure for the malaise of increasingly crowded manufacturing cities of the Northeast and Midwest. Grandiose spaces in Yellowstone, Grand Canyon, and Sequoia made alternative vistas available to Americans.

However, our contemporary sense of environmental protection hardly entered the discourse of the time. Proponents focused on park appearance and access to the physical space, not on ecology or wildlife protection. Individuals and corporations holding park concession contracts and railroads still needed to convince Americans about the practice of westward excursions to national parks. Only touching on the environmental hazards of tourism and deforestation, park advocates mostly presented the public with the physical marvels of potential and actual national parks, the ability to experience in person thundering waterfalls, skyscraping peaks, and fathomless canyons. “By and large national parks were considered a visual experience; their purpose was not to preserve nature as an integral whole.”⁴⁵⁸ John Muir’s landmark book *Our National Parks* (1901) included stunning photographs: glacial lakes surrounded by mountains, close-ups of flowering bushes, a road passing through a giant sequoia. Much like the communities that re-presented a frontier past at the beginnings of their pageant narratives, national parks and monuments linked visitors to an idealized American past. Print advertisements from the 1910s and 1920s relate images of easy access by rail and fantastical views of mountains and canyons. Like the individuals who offered access to Niagara Falls for a fee, the new national parks were available for tourist consumption, albeit in a more expansive and majestic manner.

Attachment to their physical landscape increasingly provided Americans a sense of national identity removed from European roots. With growing national interest, the park system flourished in the 1900s and 1910s. Forty two national monuments and eight national parks joined

⁴⁵⁷ Richard Grusin, *Culture, Technology, and the Creation of America’s National Parks* (New York: Cambridge U Press, 2004), 4.

⁴⁵⁸ Runte, *National Parks*, 81

the twenty-three national parks and monuments that existed before passage in 1906 of The American Antiquities Act, which gave the President the authority to set aside for public use “landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures, and other objects of historic or scientific interest.”⁴⁵⁹ Most of the early designations focused on Native American historical sites, such as the Gila Cliff Dwellings in New Mexico. However, tourists continued to focus only on the physical spaces, their inherent historical significance as ruins, and not so much on the practices of Native Americans who had lived there. As MacKaye had done with *Saint Louis*, many Americans “made the dwellings of prehistoric Indians suffice for the absence of Greek and Roman ruins in the New World.”⁴⁶⁰ National Parks provided new focal points for American national pride.

National Parks became American monumental spaces because their founders promoted the ancient physical spaces and devalued their previous social spatial identity. The naming and marketing of these physical spaces often reinforced dominant American culture. Richard Grusin observes that National Parks, like painting or photography, are “technologies for the reproduction of nature” that follow “the cultural formations and discursive practices of the time.”⁴⁶¹ By focusing on images of the physical spaces and not on the spatial practice of past cultures, Americans co-opted these places to root national identity in the soil, in a mythical unpopulated pre-Columbian America. In 1890, Congress established General Grant national park, a grove of redwoods surrounding a giant sequoia named for Grant.⁴⁶² Since that time, many of the two-thousand year-old trees have been named for other famous Americans, many of whom never even knew the trees existed: Washington (two trees bear his name), Franklin, Adams, Monroe, Lincoln, Sherman, and Lee. None have been dedicated to Native Americans, either historically famous individuals or the tribes that once occupied the space. In National Parks, Americans constructed a historical identity separate from the dominant European roots and Native-American predecessors. Removed from any past associations and framed as distinct landscapes, the parks provided the population access to an emerging American identity. Unlike urban parks and monuments in Washington, New York, or Philadelphia, these natural spaces

⁴⁵⁹ Act for the Preservation of American Antiquities (16 USC 431-433) 8 June 1906.

⁴⁶⁰ Runte, *National Parks*, 73

⁴⁶¹ Grusin, *Culture, Technology, and the Creation of America's National Parks*, 8-10.

⁴⁶² This section of forest is now part of Kings Canyon National Park.

functioned like the frontier itself, spaces officially declared empty to allow each visitor access to American nature literally and figuratively.

In 1910, MacKaye travelled west to San Francisco with his wife Marion to oversee production of his comedy *Anti-Matrimony*. At the same time, he assisted Margaret Anglin in developing her production of *Antigone*. However, excursions to the woods provided a more lasting imprint on MacKaye. Two years earlier, MacKaye had made the same trek to oversee production of another of his comedies, *Mater*. During that trip, he camped in the Great Basin area and joined a successful campaign to save the Armstrong Grove of redwoods from a timber company.⁴⁶³ On both trips, MacKaye joined several artists and poets for the annual *Jinks*, at the Bohemian Club's private redwood preserve. The secret performances mixed European and Native American mythology within the redwood landscape.⁴⁶⁴ Despite their professed inclusivity, these performances served to reinforce old stock cultural norms.

MacKaye quickly adopted this connection of dramatic storytelling to the landscape by creating plays that functioned as monumental dramatic spaces. Instead of focusing simply on the physical space, he singled out historical Anglo-American character types associated with a region of the country, first in New England and later in Appalachia. Two years after his second trip to California, MacKaye published a collection of five one-acts in a volume titled *Yankee Fantasies*. After he had helped preserve redwood groves in California, he set out to preserve New England character in dramatic form.

5.1 YANKEE FANTASIES

By the early 1910s, MacKaye had shifted his attention from Broadway to the nascent Little Theatre movement. Independent troupes from North Dakota, Kentucky, and Ohio to New York and Boston produced portions of *Yankee Fantasies*, usually just one of the one-acts. However, like the reception of many of MacKaye's plays, readers provided the largest audience. In the

⁴⁶³ MacKaye exchanged letters with John Muir, who he met during his visit to California, about the campaign. See Arvia MacKaye Ege, *The Power of the Impossible: The Life Story of Percy and Marion MacKaye* (Falmouth, ME: The Kennebec River Press, 1992), 190. The grove is now Armstrong Redwoods State Natural Reserve in Sonoma County. In 1917, the county purchased the land in order to preserve it.

⁴⁶⁴ See Porter Garnett. *The Bohemian Jinks, A Treatise* (San Francisco: Bohemian Club, 1908).

preface to the published volume, he set forth an argument for an American national theatre. He extolled the benefits of growing a “Studio Theatre” movement in which “the American dramatist will be free to sketch and execute many quiet, quaint and lovely interpretations of our native environment now ignored.”⁴⁶⁵ MacKaye softly chided popular portrayals of stock rural types, mostly comic, and he wistfully advocated for the Little Theatre as a place where these characters could become something more complex than buffoons. But he seems to have had as little success at truthful representation. From a twenty-first century perspective, MacKaye devised characters that appear as one-dimensional as the well-known caricatures. Effective naturalism in *Yankee Fantasies*, however, is less important than how they demonstrate MacKaye’s focus on the growing divide between rural and urban America.

In the same preface, MacKaye betrayed a nostalgic yearning for disappearing social practice concurrent with the disappearance of the Yankee. “The native race, moreover, is dying, or being transmuted, and this touches the imagination of the dramatist to interpret it before its inevitable passing.”⁴⁶⁶ Such an argument parallels the rhetoric deployed by National Park advocates, which often cited the threats industrial America posed to the remaining landscape. MacKaye’s rural New Englanders maintained pure American identity, far from the influences of urban industrialization. He suggested that the Yankee figure of the countryside held a “deep-seated historical influence... upon all our national life and growth.”⁴⁶⁷ The disappearance of the rural Yankee also meant the disappearance of American cultural foundations for MacKaye and his audience. Such fears seemed manifest in the redistribution of the population within settled America.

A great number of old and new Americans shifted their spatial identity from 1910 to 1930. Along with foreign-born immigrants, many native-born rural residents also immigrated to urban centers thereby leaving rural America outnumbered. In 1910, the Census Bureau considered only 28.4% of the population to be urban; by 1920 that figure had risen to 34.0% and by 1930 to 44.6%.⁴⁶⁸ In the Northeast, urban centers more dramatically outweighed the waning rural population; only a quarter of the population lived outside cities by 1930. Like the

⁴⁶⁵ Percy MacKaye, *Yankee Fantasies: Five One-Act Plays* (New York: Duffield & Co., 1912), xiii.

⁴⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, ix.

⁴⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, xiv.

⁴⁶⁸ The percentage of the population considered urban was likely even less in 1900, but there is no data to support this assumption. See Frank Hobbs and Nicole Stoops, *Demographic Trends in the Twentieth Century: Census 2000 Special Reports* (Washington: US Census Bureau, 2002), A-5.

pageants and masques that aimed to preserve local identity, *Yankee Fantasies* looked back nostalgically at rural life in an attempt to cement New England, and implicitly American, spatial identity in an imagined and idealized past. At a time when rural identity seemed to be vanishing MacKaye provided a dramatic version of a national park, a living image of what would soon vanish.

The Yankee plays worked together to create monumental space, to preserve for spectators regional identity within a larger American frame. These scenes about everyday people do not occur on average days. National holidays provide frames for the three one-acts discussed below: *The Antick* takes place on the Fourth of July, *Gettysburg* on Memorial Day, and *Sam Average* on Thanksgiving. Unlike pageants and masques, which often were tied to a specific date such as a town's founding, MacKaye did not suggest performing these plays on their respective holidays and the premiere performances of each did not do so.⁴⁶⁹ But the specific time frames created a temporal separation not unlike the spatial separation formed within the borders of the National Parks. Visitors to parks did not encounter nature so much as a packaged version of nature, thereby removing potential disputes over the reality of the space. Likewise, viewers and readers did not experience the one-acts as part of the respective holidays, but rather as packaged versions of them.

Although *Gettysburg* and *Sam Average* displayed overt and broadly-appealing patriotic themes that reinforced the dominant Anglo culture, *The Antick* humorously subverted hard-line nativist conceptions of national identity. MacKaye sets *The Antick* on a road that passes through a postcard image of a rural New England town. A gated white picket fence, overgrown lilac bushes, and a gable peak indicate an offstage house. The comedy opens with two men, noses in books, nearly stumbling into each other. Jonas, the middle-aged town minister, absent-mindedly walks his cow so that she can graze through the small Massachusetts town. The younger and more serious John prepares a solemn and patriotic speech that Jonas derides as "chewing [his] old Concord cud." When Jonas presses John about a "Canuck" girl that John had been courting earlier, the young man confesses that his mother opposed their marriage and states that his new fiancé Myrtle White is "real old Yankee stock." Jonas then reveals to John that he is actually

⁴⁶⁹ The premiere performance dates are as follows: *Gettysburg*, 3 January 1912; *Sam Average*, 26 February 1912; *The Antick* 4 October 1915.

half-Canadian, the illegitimate child that his father conceived with another woman but raised with his Yankee wife.

The title references Antiques, pronounced anticks, “the grotesque participators in the Bunker Hill Day celebrations at Charlestown, as well as similar Fourth of July celebrators... [from] late in the nineteenth century.”⁴⁷⁰ An offstage clamor indicates that the local Antiques have kidnapped Jonas’ cow for their parade. John grimly reflects, “The watchdogs of Seventy-six turned to yelping jackalls,” but softens when he remembers his newfound mixed lineage. He turns to find Myrtle and Mother White, who appear onstage long enough to confirm Jonas’ derogatory description of them as “vinegar” and “whey” and to provide John a chance to mention that no longer will he deliver his patriotic speech. The rag-tag parade enters and takes over the stage, chasing the Whites back into their home. Jonas delivers a mock-patriotic speech honoring King Billy (a goat) and Queen Julie (the afore-mentioned Canuck girl), who rides Billy. Costumed like the love-struck clown Pierrot, Julie clearly still holds romantic feelings for John. Once the menagerie departs, John again courts Julie, completing his endeavors with a kiss that Myrtle happens to oversee. The two lovers agree to marry and ride Billy toward the raucous parade.

As with *The Immigrants*, public space dominates the scenography, but in *The Antick* natives and immigrants alternate control of the public space. MacKaye shows polar modes of public practice that synthesize in the union of John and Julie. The native Whites demonstrate a refined and restrained mode of being. Duty and obligation dominate. Most of their conversations with John are about his performing chores at Mother White’s house, not about the impending nuptials that Myrtle clearly anticipates. The immigrant Antiques show the opposite, unrestrained celebration that neglects responsibility. However, spurred on by Jonas, John and Julie bring those two worlds together by showing a relationship both playful and newly recommitted to its social obligations.

At first glance, French-Canadians would hardly have seemed like undesirable others to a 1910s American audience, for whom ‘new immigrants’ formed the perceived threat to the old stock. But mid-nineteenth-century arguments against this ethnic group sound unsurprisingly like nativist rhetoric from the early twentieth century. In 1881, the Massachusetts Commissioner for

⁴⁷⁰ MacKaye, “The Antick” in *Yankee Fantasies*, 56-58. He includes a lengthy footnote explaining the origins, spelling (antique), and pronunciation (antick) of the title and the people to which it refers.

Labor called French-Canadians “the Chinese of the Eastern States. They care nothing for our institutions, civil, political, or educational. They do not come to make a home among us.”⁴⁷¹ To an audience that had been exposed regularly to anti-immigrant rhetoric, the tension between established native residents and newly-arrived foreigners would have sounded quite familiar.

MacKaye creates an imbalanced image of the resistance to French-Canadians by his portrayal of the American characters. Funny and charismatic, Jonas embraces tolerance. He also reveals the truth about past practices, past attempts to remain pure. The intolerant and unchanging Whites are stock characters in the extreme: the overbearing mother-in-law and the plain, bespectacled, and whiny daughter. Only John changes, growing from intolerance to tolerance. He had agreed to marry Myrtle White only to preserve “real old Yankee stock.” But Jonas dispels that illusion by informing John that his father had made the same decision to give up his French-Canadian lover so that – despite mixed blood – he would not further taint his son. Jonas also relates that guilt over this decision later drove John’s father to suicide, further evidence to persuade John to break from his notions of racial purity.

MacKaye expanded the reach of *The Antick* by having the town engaged in a specific regional practice of a national holiday. By the 1860s, rural and urban celebrations had diverged because of the different community structures. With ethnically and socially homogenous populations, small towns continued traditional, more solemn celebrations such as military-styled parades by prominent social fraternities⁴⁷² or public orations like the one John was preparing. However, American cities had become too large for a single social body to form and so subgroups vied for control of spatial practice; even homogenous ethnic groups subdivided by class or neighborhood. Lively parodies of dominant group practices involved masks, costumes, and a carnival atmosphere to openly ridicule traditional celebrations of national independence. Such mockeries necessarily occurred in public spaces in order to have any social impact and the closer to the space belonging to the dominant group the greater that impact.

⁴⁷¹ The Massachusetts Bureau of Statistics of Labor, *Twelfth Annual Report* (Boston, 1881), 469 quoted in Roger Daniels, *Coming to America: A History of Immigration and Ethnicity in American Life*, 2nd Edition (New York: Perennial/Harper Collins, 2002), 258. Approximately half a million French-Canadians immigrated to New England from the 1830s to the 1870s, both to flee political persecution and to pursue factory employment.

⁴⁷² The Charlestowne tradition that MacKaye referenced was a parody of the Ancient and Honorable Artillery Company, a group of social elites formed in 1638. This fraternal group paraded in bright red or blue uniforms, “beribboned with contrasting colors, cut in fanciful style, topped by elaborate headgear and tufted with feathers.” Diana Karter Appelbaum, *The Glorious Fourth: An American Holiday, An American History* (New York: Facts on File, 1989), 81.

The Antick demonstrated the social fractures of the early twentieth century. John's passing existence as a Yankee and decision to intermarry subverted arguments for racial purity. Jonas's role in pushing John away from racial purity by arguing, as the town minister, the moral justification further indicated the disintegration of a pure Yankee social group, even in this small town. In this way, MacKaye both preserved Yankee identity and showed its inevitable passing by setting the play during the period of transition in holiday practice. By the turn of the century, Independence Day had grown into a riotous celebration throughout the country. By about the same time, Memorial Day "had become the national occasion for orations and solemn civic exercises."⁴⁷³

Both *The Antick* and *Gettysburg* include a road on which a holiday parade passes. Contrary to the nineteenth-century public space of *The Antick*, the action of *Gettysburg* plays out in a twentieth-century New Hampshire farm's woodshed. The main characters are Polly and Link, the former a seventeen-year-old schoolteacher and the latter her great uncle, a Civil War veteran.⁴⁷⁴ As with pageantry, present and past connect during the action of *Gettysburg*. Link often calls Memorial Day by its nineteenth-century moniker, Decoration Day,⁴⁷⁵ and a model of the Gettysburg site made from wood chips and dust dominates the shed floor. As with pageantry, performer practice reinforces the physical space as a monument to a devised historical narrative. The scenographic space exists at once in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The not-so-subtly named Uncle Link moves through the woodshed model to provide his niece and the audience with nostalgic access to the well-known Civil War battle.

Apparently paralyzed from battle injuries, Link carves and shapes ox-yokes with the sometime assistance of Polly, who has instructed her students to steer their holiday parade past the farm. In the meantime, she encourages Link to educate her about the battle through reenactment. Like pageant performers, Link dons a historical costume: before he tells the story, Polly helps him fit into his old Union uniform. Repeatedly, strains of music sound from offstage and Link mentally wanders into the past discussing his feelings and experiences during the Civil

⁴⁷³ Appelbaum, *The Glorious Fourth*, 119.

⁴⁷⁴ The woodshed and its inhabiting characters Link and Polly are based on MacKaye's neighbors in Plainfield, NH from when he first moved to Cornish in 1907. See Edwin Osgood Grover, *Annals of an Era: Percy MacKaye and the MacKaye Family, 1826-1932* (Washington, DC: Pioneer Press/Dartmouth, 1932), 352.

⁴⁷⁵ By 1890 – 22 years prior to the publication and premiere performance of *Gettysburg*, all northern states had officially adopted Memorial Day as a state holiday. *Memorial Day History*. David Merchant. 30 April 2006. <<http://www.usmemorialday.org/backgrnd.html>>.

War. He describes battle strategies, successes and failures, and reminisces about his youth as the speedy and agile “Chipmunk Link.” As the offstage music builds, Link becomes more agitated and frustrated with his paralysis, complaining that, “Dead folks don’t set, and livin’ folks kin stand, and Link – he kin set quiet.”⁴⁷⁶ The music peaks when he hears the approaching children singing “John Brown’s Body,” at which point he rises from his chair, stumbles toward the daylight coming through the barn door, and joins the chorus. After singing part of a verse, he stops short, realizes his restored mobility, grabs a tattered flag from the model battlefield, and stumbles out to join the parade.

Gettysburg most closely mimics the spatial-temporal connections that MacKaye would fully embrace a few years later in his masques. Although he indicates that the play takes place at the time of its writing, performer reminiscence instigates a temporal shift. Since the action does not occur at Gettysburg, MacKaye includes the wood chip model to link the present-day playing space to the historical space that dominates the action. Also like the pageant, the individual is not the hero; he is simply the point of connection for Polly, her students, and the audience. The play became a living national monument. Instead of providing his audience with a trip to the physical site, MacKaye invited them to share in the practice of the battlefield through Link. Kenneth MacGowan praised *Gettysburg* for “the finer patriotism it evokes” and noted, somewhat less enthusiastically, that “*Sam Average* treats symbolically the essential spirit of America.”⁴⁷⁷ *Gettysburg* reflects the established techniques of American pageantry, whereas *Sam Average* foreshadows the allegory and symbolism MacKaye used in his masques.

Sam Average takes place within earshot of Niagara Falls shortly before the official end of the War of 1812. Geographically, MacKaye removes the play from traditional New England and its picturesque rural villages. Instead, the action unfolds at a military encampment somewhere near the charred remains of Buffalo.⁴⁷⁸ The one-act takes place at four o’clock in the morning on a cold Thanksgiving night. Just off center, the American flag flies against the night sky.

The play begins in a somber and realistic manner. Standing guard in the early hours of Thanksgiving, Andrew and Joel prepare to desert their post as they wait for Nell, Andrew’s wife

⁴⁷⁶ MacKaye, “Gettysburg” in *Yankee Fantasies*, 51.

⁴⁷⁷ Kenneth MacGowan, *Boston Evening Transcript* (28 February 1912) quoted in Grover, *Annals of an Era*, 27.

⁴⁷⁸ The British had burned the village of Buffalo in December 1813, leaving behind only one cabin intact. American troops captured Fort Erie in one day under the command of Gen. Jacob Brown on 2 July 1814. On 5 November 1814, American troops burned the fort and retreated to Buffalo. Incidentally, Percy’s father Steele was born in Buffalo on 6 June 1842.

who is also Joel's sister. Joel instigates their escape, signaling Nell by, "tiltin' the flag over crooked in the dirt."⁴⁷⁹ Andrew expresses second thoughts, but Joel justifies their decision by claiming that there have been two thousand deserters, that for nine months no soldier has been paid, and that already they have paid off the sergeant to turn a blind eye. When Nell arrives, Andrew's situation seems desperate; the family has run out of money, the baby is ill, and Nell has "been insulted" in her vulnerable state. Despite these circumstances, she appears disconcerted by her husband's willingness to break his oath of service. Andrew, who has torn off a portion of the flag to make a shawl for the freezing Nell, vents his frustrations at being tangled up in a war not in keeping with The Revolution's ideals and the three turn, ready to depart.

Up to this point *Sam Average* mimics the realism of the other *Yankee Fantasies*. MacKaye describes the scenographic space in realistic terms and he writes the dialogue to indicate regional dialect among the representational characters. We see them at a moment of crisis, focusing on personal issues, but the frame around the performance takes on national importance. Occurring not only on a national holiday, but also during a time of war, this one-act shows everyday people in an unusual circumstance. Both *The Antick* and *Gettysburg* continue in a realistic vein at similar turning points. At this moment, however, MacKaye makes an allegorical turn more in keeping with *Saint Louis* and *Caliban*. He associates a new figure more explicitly with the monumental American landscape; he creates a hero who emerges from the soil.

"Yankee Doodle" faintly plays in the distance as a cloaked man materializes in the background; he "pauses beside the standard of the torn flag, silhouetted against the first pale streaks of the dawn."⁴⁸⁰ After straightening the banner, he crosses toward the men reminding them to wait a few minutes for the Sergeant to indicate that their escape is clear by playing "that new war tune: The Star Spangled Banner."⁴⁸¹ Calling himself Colonel Sam Average, he identifies himself as the paymaster and offers them not cash but corn kernels that Massasoit offered to him at the first Thanksgiving in order to save him and the other settlers from famine. As they wait, Andrew pulls the colonel aside to ask if he fought in the War for Independence. Sam replies that

⁴⁷⁹ MacKaye, "Sam Average" in *Yankee Fantasies*, 141.

⁴⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 149

⁴⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 154. Francis Scott Key penned the tune during the Battle of Baltimore. The song was first published on 17 September. It was commonly used for Fourth of July celebrations throughout the nineteenth century, but not adopted as the official national anthem until 1931.

he was paymaster back then as well. Andrew then asks if men also deserted during that war, even those under Washington's direct command and, if so, what noble reasons they gave for such actions. Sam replies that men rationalized their decisions for the same reasons during both wars, but that a strong few stayed to fight in order to save everyone, including the deserters. Andrew, rapt by the figure's simple but patriotic rhetoric, offers to serve him.

The timeless Sam, who seems to have lived for over one hundred years, then shifts the focus away from men, to the landscape with which he seems intertwined. He guides Andrew to the embankment where he can hear the Niagara River and its falls rumbling in the distance. MacKaye plays on a nostalgic notion of Niagara Falls as a place that anyone could see up close and listen to from afar, a stark contrast to contemporary experience of the falls. Andrew then hears a voice that is not Sam's but "that seems to issue from the Figure's cowl."⁴⁸² It speaks about its streams, forests, and mountains that people mistreat but come back to again and again. Andrew, moved by the voice of the land, decides to stay behind when Joel and Nell come for him. Sam takes on a nature image as daylight begins to break: his cloak resembles "the half-closed wings of an eagle."⁴⁸³ Nell, who knows that Andrew will no longer desert, removes the strip of flag from her shoulders and reties it next to the rest of the flag. Sam then hands Andrew an I.O.U. and protectively throws part of his cloak around Nell's shoulders revealing the trademark wardrobe of Uncle Sam. As he escorts her to safety at a neighboring town, Andrew looks at the paper and speaks aloud the paymaster's initials on it: U.S.A. MacKaye ends the piece with the rising melody of "The Star Spangled Banner" and Andrew remaining at his post and ramming the crumpled I.O.U. into his rifle.

This final section of *Sam Average* complicates the straightforward patriotism of *Gettysburg* and foreshadows MacKaye's later work. Unlike Link, who finds physical strength through the man-made model of the battlefield, Andrew finds his courage to serve only after Sam makes him listen to the roaring of the falls and to the poetic voice of the land. As the image of an eagle, part of the American Seal, Sam then represents the country itself. In so doing, MacKaye conflates Sam and the nascent nation with nature itself; the symbol of American patriotism becomes aurally and visually intertwined with the landscape. Such a connection between

⁴⁸² Ibid., 161. No performance review mentions this effect in particular, but it is likely that the words actually emanated from offstage while Andrew focused his attention on Sam. The described effect is noted in the stage directions of the published text.

⁴⁸³ Ibid., 164

national identity and the American landscape became increasingly pronounced in MacKaye's subsequent plays. Saint Louis and Prospero both control the scenographic landscape in order to affirm a specific notion of community identity. The images of George Washington in *Wakefield* becomes literally enmeshed with the physical world. In *Washington*, MacKaye's first drama about the first president, the playwright ties the gentleman farmer to the soil in an attempt to break down his stony historical image. In the same episodic drama, MacKaye first explored the notion of American identity residing in the timeless Appalachian Mountains – an idea he further developed in the *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies*.

5.2 WASHINGTON: THE MAN WHO MADE US

MacKaye included an Appalachian singer-narrator named Quilloquon for his self-described 'ballad play' about Washington. This figure not only provided a physical thread that stitched together contemporary framing scenes and historical scenes of Washington's life, but did so by fiddling and singing a number of old American folk tunes. MacKaye divided Washington's life into three acts totaling thirteen scenes – or actions as he called them – linked by Quilloquon's twelve transitions. The first three actions provided snapshots of Washington's life before the revolution: his life as a surveyor in Virginia and his decision to stay at Mount Vernon instead of pursuing a naval career; his return from the expedition to Fort Duquesne, his engagement to Martha Custis, and his commission as Commander of Colonial Forces in Virginia; and finally, the marriage celebration at Mount Vernon. Four middle actions then examined the beginnings of revolution: the overthrow of King's College and its renaming as Columbia; Washington's departure as one of the Virginia delegation to the Continental Congress; Washington's peacemaking between rival groups of volunteers from Massachusetts and Virginia and his negotiating with civilian suppliers to the army; and his decision to cross the Delaware even after all the other generals communicated their inability to join him. The remaining six actions chronicled the success of the revolution and Washington's role in the early years of the country: the British occupation of Philadelphia during which Betsy Ross sewed her flag; the encampment at Valley Forge; the British retreat from Philadelphia, Washington's arrival, and Ross' revelation of the flag; the battle at Yorktown; Washington's refusal of

kingship; and Washington's return to Mount Vernon. Framing this history play, the prologue and epilogue took place at Mount Vernon on 4 July 1918 and contain characters from the allied nations of World War I.

In a truly patriotic tale, MacKaye claims to have begun *Washington: The Man Who Made Us* while living in Washington, D.C. during the winter of 1917-1918 and to have finished it at his rural New Hampshire home several months later on the Fourth of July. Actually, his wife Marion made a note in her diary that he returned home with the completed play at midnight while church bells "tolled the entrance of the first International Fourth."⁴⁸⁴ *The Man Who Made Us* came into being not on any Fourth of July, but on the day in 1918 that the Wilson administration declared "International Fourth of July," a celebration for allied nations to claim freedom over tyranny. MacKaye's preface to the published play begins by retelling a newspaper account of Anglo-American unity at a baseball game played on the International Fourth in England with King George V in attendance. Before the game, several American fans noticed the King and chanted: "What's the matter with King George? He's all right!"⁴⁸⁵ The day certainly fostered morale-boosting camaraderie among the King, British civilians, and American and British soldiers on the diamond. But by the time MacKaye retold the tale, "the ancient connotation of kings was blown into oblivion, and the prerogatives of Democracy over Royalty were wholeheartedly sanctioned by the united posterity of George Washington and George the Third."⁴⁸⁶

Newspaper accounts of the day related numerous celebrations of the Wilson administration's concocted holiday in England, as well as in France and Ireland. Perhaps more of a relief to European allies was the arrival that week of one million American troops. The *New York Times* ran stories about several of these celebrations in England, Canada, France, and Italy. The *Times* also reprinted an essay by Sir Hall Caine that recounted the spread of democracy from America back to Europe and beyond. In this rather optimistic piece, Caine avers that America, with its obligation to justice and humanity, could not avoid entry into the global conflict because "moral law knows nothing about frontiers." Acknowledging that the International Fourth celebrated American independence, he predicted a future day when all tyrants will have been

⁴⁸⁴ Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 290. On his Cornish property, MacKaye kept a writing cabin separate from his family residence.

⁴⁸⁵ "America Hailed at Fetes Abroad" *NYT* (5 July 1918): 7. MacKaye quotes the cheer in his preface to *The Man Who Made Us*. The *Times* claimed that the 'Sailor' King greatly enjoyed the game at which Navy beat Army 2 to 1.

⁴⁸⁶ Percy MacKaye, *The Man Who Made Us* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1919), ix.

overthrown: “the independence day of the world.”⁴⁸⁷ Like Caine, many foreign dignitaries praised Wilson’s leadership and America’s assistance in thwarting Prussian aggression. On the International Fourth, many cities in France and Italy named avenues or squares after the American president and Florence granted him honorary citizenship.

In a domestic display of American pride on the Capitol Steps in Washington, five thousand immigrants presented *Democracy Triumphant*, a pageant dealing with the war effort in an allegorical manner.⁴⁸⁸ Mrs. Woodrow Wilson chaired the pageant’s advisory committee, which included many political dignitaries and Percy MacKaye. Several patriotic, recreational, and civic groups co-sponsored the pageant, including the Washington chapter of the Drama League of America, which sought to encourage “worthy” plays for American audiences. Like MacKaye’s plans for the Pittsburgh Pageant, this event involved many different immigrant groups in a pre-pageant parade that passed a central reviewing stand en route to the pageant stage. Each group followed its own national hero and each carried its own flag along with the American flag, a vestige of *The New Citizenship*. The opening scene of the pageant revealed Humanity as she discovered suffering peoples of the world. She quickly called upon Justice, who in turn summoned Columbia who offered financial and military support to rescue the oppressed. Predicting the effort successful, “the heralds of the allied nations” announced “the Hope of the World, Triumphant Democracy.”⁴⁸⁹

Officials from New York City’s national defense committee coordinated the Pageant Parade of Independence Day, which also promoted America as the liberator-savior for oppressed nations. Roughly seventy thousand participants, all foreign born, marched up Fifth Avenue to demonstrate “loyalty... to their adopted country” in front of “hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers.”⁴⁹⁰ Along with the marchers, several cultural sub-groups created floats. The Filipino float – created a decade after the Filipino Reservation at the St. Louis world’s fair – showed “a palmy landscape in which a Filipino girl held out her hands to the Statue of Liberty.”⁴⁹¹ The Armenian float showed a woman, representing the spirit of her native country, chained and

⁴⁸⁷ “Caine Sees a July 4 for All the World” *NYT* (5 July 1918): 11.

⁴⁸⁸ “President Sees a Pageant” *NYT* (5 July 1918): 11.

⁴⁸⁹ *Ibid.*

⁴⁹⁰ “Day-Long Pageant Pictures America United for War” *NYT* (5 July 1918): 1, 6. Philadelphia hosted a similar parade on the same day.

⁴⁹¹ *Ibid.*, 6.

“holding out her hands to Uncle Sam.”⁴⁹² The Syrian float “depicted Columbia holding out the pledge of freedom to a kneeling Syrian woman, with Justice looking on.”⁴⁹³ A similar scene appeared on the Yugoslav entry. Two Russian men performed folk dances while two Russian boys marched hand-in-hand, one dressed in folk costume, and the other in an Uncle Sam outfit.

Accurate or not, the immigrant floats and parade actions showed their birth nations yearning to come under American protection as well. The immigrant performances at the parades and pageant maintain a sublimated notion of identity consistent with MacKaye’s earlier *New Citizenship*. In each of these events, immigrants celebrate their birth nations and cultures but did so as a marker of shifting national allegiance. They all took up the American banner and celebrated the expansion of American political practice back across the Atlantic. Coordination of these events with ceremonies at George Washington’s home made them part of the creation of a monumental space, one which aimed to expand the sphere of American cultural influence beyond its national borders.

As the cornerstone personality of the International Fourth, President Wilson proclaimed from Mount Vernon America’s goals for its involvement in the war: “What we seek is the reign of law, based upon the consent of the governed and sustained by the organized opinion of mankind.”⁴⁹⁴ Later in the speech, he narrated the spread of democracy back to England, with American citizens showing British citizens and other European nations the path toward liberation; at its end, Wilson laid out the framework for the League of Nations to maintain postwar peace. In a pre-radio version of mass communication,⁴⁹⁵ the Committee on Public Information distributed an abridged version of Wilson’s address to patriotic speakers throughout the country so that those speakers would deliver the same words as the President; the speech had been cabled to other countries as well, most notably Great Britain, France, and Italy.⁴⁹⁶ Wilson’s administration created a core-periphery communication model, with a centralized message emanating from Mount Vernon.

Wilson did not choose just any location for his live address. He participated in his own parade and pageant to promote more than a twentieth-century American identity, which could

⁴⁹² Ibid.

⁴⁹³ Ibid.

⁴⁹⁴ “President Wilson’s Speech at Mount Vernon” *NYT* (5 July 1918): 1.

⁴⁹⁵ Wilson first used radio in 1919 to address a ship of soldiers at sea. By the 1920s, broadcast radio began to spread across America.

⁴⁹⁶ “Nation May Hear Wilson” *NYT* (27 June 1918): 2. “Messages Open Momentous Fourth” *NYT* (4 July 1918): 4.

have been accomplished from a White House setting. Wilson set out the morning of July Fourth to board the *Mayflower* (a steam boat acquired for use during the Spanish-American War, which served at this time as the official presidential yacht) and sail down the Potomac River to Mount Vernon. Additionally, representatives from thirty-three immigrant nationalities traveled with Wilson to Washington's tomb to declare their appreciation of and loyalty to their new home.⁴⁹⁷ Wilson's speech formed part of an international ceremony honoring the first president. The party of dignitaries included the British Chief Justice, Lord Reading, "who brought wreaths to be placed upon Washington's tomb."⁴⁹⁸ The ceremonies located the source of democracy within Washington the man and his country estate, not at the urban federal capital that bore his name.

MacKaye used the well-publicized Mount Vernon event to frame *Washington*. The prologue and epilogue show twentieth-century soldiers and civilians visiting Washington's residence on the International Fourth. To help the audience recognize the different nationalities present, MacKaye color-coded the speaking roles by nationality. These characters walk through and among the arches of the colonnade as they note tidbits of historical importance. As an Italian and a British officer enter the scene, the latter announces that "the Envoys of the Allies... will place their laurel wreaths on the General's tomb."⁴⁹⁹ During the epilogue, the twentieth century again takes center stage, noting the participation by an envoy from George V and by a descendent of Lafayette in the celebration that marked "our Declaration of Interdependence – our World League."⁵⁰⁰ The play then concludes with the appearance of international flags within the Mount Vernon colonnade. This final tableaux image matched one that Americans had seen repeatedly at world's fairs. Each fair included a version of the Columbian Exhibition's Court of Honor that contained the flags of all participant nations arranged around an enormous American flag.

MacKaye also injected Wilson's International Fourth ideas, if not his exact words, into the dramatic text. During a scene that shows Washington on his way to form the Continental Army, he argues with an old family friend, Lord Fairfax, that "American rights mean human rights – or nothing. We stand on a great threshold: The cause we champion now for America

⁴⁹⁷ Edward G. Hartmann. *The Movement to Americanize the Immigrant* (New York: Columbia U Press, 1948), 108.

⁴⁹⁸ "War Cannot End with Compromises, Wilson Declares" *NYT* (5 July 1918): 1.

⁴⁹⁹ MacKaye, *Washington*, 22-25. Wreaths are still laid daily at the Mount Vernon tombs of George and Martha Washington.

⁵⁰⁰ MacKaye, *Washington*, 275-277.

must be fought by all times and peoples – and *won*, till our planet itself is free. Our cause, my lord, is noble: it is the cause of mankind.”⁵⁰¹ Fairfax departs resigned to American secession and success; as he leaves, Martha Washington comforts him by foretelling that, despite current political differences, they will be allies soon again.

Although MacKaye’s professed finishing date of *The Man Who Made Us* seems too fabulous to be true, his avowed starting date is more credible. Percy met in October 1917 with War Service Commission officials who expressed interest in a production about George Washington.⁵⁰² These officials were more than likely part of the Fosdick Commission, named for the New York lawyer President Wilson appointed to oversee the Commission on Training Camp Activities. In order to provide “wholesome recreation and relaxation for the troops”⁵⁰³ at Army and National Guard camps, the Fosdick Commission established its own syndicate of 32 performance venues, known as Liberty theatres. In step with MacKaye’s life-long interest in creating “safe and sane” diversions for the American people, Secretary of War Diehl Baker described Fosdick’s charge as “solving the old, vexed problem of how best to make our cities safe for the youth of our land.”⁵⁰⁴

With \$3.75 million⁵⁰⁵ to spend, the Commission produced a variety of entertainments on military bases and subsidized amateur and professional civilian productions that supported the war effort. MacKaye helped to promote the Commission’s work by advocating for the centralization of theatre production as part of the national campaign. In *Theatre Magazine*, he noted the similarities among the Fosdick Commission/Liberty Theatres, the Playground and Recreation Association of America, the YMCA, and other progressive community groups. He praised Marc Klaw for providing touring shows to the Liberty theatres and encouraged more Broadway producers to do the same. He urged Broadway to support America’s involvement in the Great War: “Since the prime object of [the] war is the saving of civilization, the theatre – whose proper object is to conserve the highest of civilized arts – should enlist in national service primarily for that great object.”⁵⁰⁶ As a writer already working on *The Man Who Made Us* at the

⁵⁰¹ MacKaye, *Washington*, 126-129

⁵⁰² Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 289

⁵⁰³ “Pick R.B. Fosdick to Organize League” *NYT* (16 May 1919): 13.

⁵⁰⁴ “To Keep Our Army Happy” *NYT* (24 October 1917): 20.

⁵⁰⁵ Approximately \$53 million today – a little more than half of the NEA 2007 budget.

⁵⁰⁶ MacKaye, “The War and Broadway: A Plea for a National Council of the Theatre” *Theatre Magazine* (April 1918): 203.

behest of the War Commission, MacKaye served his own interests, ideological and financial. In the same essay he proposed a National Council of the Theatre – a national version of his Civic Theatre, first articulated a decade earlier – comprised of government officials and theatrical artists and producers that would “devise and adopt the best possible policy of public amusement.”⁵⁰⁷ No such council ever formed but Broadway producers did make good use of the Fosdick Commission’s budget by supplying stock shows for troop entertainment; their interests were primarily financial.

One month after the appearance of MacKaye’s piece, a *New York Times* article announced that many commercial producers planned to book shows on the Liberty circuit.⁵⁰⁸ With the Fosdick Commission heartily subsidizing many offerings, performing for the troops suddenly became good business. However, very few of these productions would likely have met MacKaye’s standards for plays in the national interest. For the most part, producers provided standard theatrical fare. In addition to the United Booking Agency’s vaudeville acts, soldiers watched rehashed versions of successful Broadway romantic comedies and musicals offered by two of America’s largest theatrical empires: Klaw and Erlanger and the Shuberts. A few patriotic pieces also found their way to the Liberty circuit. Shortly after the International Fourth, Arthur Hopkins optioned *The Man Who Made Us* and plans for the production commenced that autumn. However, “the Armistice, and the end of hostilities, stopped preparations for the play.”⁵⁰⁹ By December 1918, Fosdick dismantled his Commission, the show lost its biggest backer, and Hopkins dropped the production.

5.2.1 French and English Allies

Despite strong American themes, scenes from *The Man Who Made Us* first appeared on a New York stage in French by the Vieux Colombier during its American residency.⁵¹⁰ In February 1919 Jacques Copeau staged select scenes from MacKaye’s lengthy text under the title

⁵⁰⁷ Ibid., 204.

⁵⁰⁸ “The U.S. and Show Business” *NYT* (12 May 1918): 54.

⁵⁰⁹ Grover, *Annals of an Era*, 101

⁵¹⁰ See Juliette Breffort-Blessing, “Washington, Action Dramatique: Jacques Copeau’s Tribute to Franco-American Friendship” *Theatre Survey* 30.1-2 (May & November 1989): 147-153. MacKaye also wrote *Behind Masks*, an opening piece for an evening of performance earlier during the season (20 November 1918).

Washington: Action Dramatique, the second in an evening of two one-acts. The entirety of MacKaye's play would not see the stage until 1920, when Walter Hampden produced it at the Lyric Theatre, with himself in the starring role.

Painted images of Washington already permeated public buildings and his monument towered over the city that bears his name. During a publicity interview about the production, Copeau and MacKaye noted their desire to humanize Washington, to erase the public perception of "the old Washington, the familiar cold presence of our school rooms."⁵¹¹ The writer aimed to achieve with *Washington* what he had attempted with *Yankee Fantasies*, to present a living monument. MacKaye reinforced this goal by including Quilloquon, an ageless Appalachian fiddler who serves as narrator for the audience and the Boy and the Girl, two children who act as on-stage audience members. Like Uncle Link, Quilloquon connects past and present for characters and spectators alike. During the prologue he claims to have known the founding father when "he wa'n't nuther a statye, nor a book, nor a state-house paintin', but a human critter."⁵¹² Further softening of Washington's image came in the form of two twentieth-century women who remained at the end of the first framing scene to ask what Martha and Mary Washington might have thought about the International Fourth festivities surrounding the man they knew as husband and son respectively. The early scenes from *The Man Who Made Us* show Washington in his youth but Copeau did not stage any of them as part of *Action Dramatique*. Instead, he jumped from the prologue to more dramatic and historically important scenes, among them Crossing the Delaware and Valley Forge, thereby reinforcing the existing cold image of Washington instead of humanizing him for twentieth-century audiences. Not surprisingly, Copeau's production garnered lukewarm reviews.

MacKaye was not the only playwright working with an American presidential title character. Hampden attempted to capitalize on the success surrounding the American production of John Drinkwater's *Abraham Lincoln*⁵¹³ by renaming MacKaye's play *George Washington* (but keeping all its scenes). *Lincoln* ran on Broadway for nearly 200 performances from December 1919 through May 1920. The nearly unknown Frank McGlynn hypnotized audiences with his

⁵¹¹ Anne Herendeen, "MacKaye and Copeau, Assassins Extraordinary" *Everybody's Magazine* (May 1919), 29 in Breffort-Blessing, "*Washington, Action Dramatique*," 150.

⁵¹² MacKaye, *Washington*, 18

⁵¹³ The Birmingham Repertory Theatre staged the premiere production of *Abraham Lincoln* in 1918.

subtle performance and uncanny resemblance to the sixteenth president.⁵¹⁴ The similarities between *Lincoln* and *Washington* are striking, as are the different strategies used to present monumental American figures. Unabashedly British – and avowedly ignorant of American history, politics, and idiom – Drinkwater scored a smash hit whereas the unabashedly American MacKaye flopped on Broadway yet again. *Washington* only survived for three weeks.

Despite their widely different receptions, *Washington* and *Lincoln* shared many structural characteristics. Both plays included contemporary narration that framed the dramatic scenes. Drinkwater devised two Chroniclers, whose verse interludes created a heroic frame around Lincoln and his actions as well as filled in the time lapses between scenes. MacKaye's Quilloquon also filled in gaps between scenes, but with folk tunes not always directly related to the actions in the play. The historical scenes from both plays steered away from big public scenes. The audience saw Lincoln mostly in private spaces: his Springfield home, Secretary of State Seward's office, a small White House receiving room, a cabinet meeting, and Grant's headquarters at Appomattox. The final scene took place in a public space – Ford's Theatre – but Drinkwater only showed the private boxes elevated above the general public. MacKaye also set many scenes in domestic spaces but the lengthy middle section showed private conversations in well-known public spaces: Independence Hall, Valley Forge, and Yorktown.

In his rather negative review of *Washington*, Alexander Woollcott – who had given *Lincoln* a very favorable review – described the evening as, “a dozen scenes interspersed with a dozen interludes. We darkly suspect it, however, of being a masque.... at a Fourth of July celebration in the Town Hall.”⁵¹⁵ It is not difficult to agree with Woollcott's suspicions. Unabashedly patriotic and written by the most prominent proponent of community performance, *Washington* has an expansive epic structure with choral interludes between scenes. Woollcott accurately identifies *Washington* as an unsuccessful attempt by MacKaye to merge his masque style with traditional dramatic fare. MacKaye devised a nostalgic look at a historical subject within a progressive narrative that applied to contemporary life. However, instead of creating a local community pageant, he attempted a national pageant, a loose dramatic history lesson about America's birth with lessons in American practice for its increasingly heterogeneous population.

⁵¹⁴ Alexander Woollcott, “The Play” *NYT* (16 December 1919): 18 and “Second Thoughts on First Nights: *Abraham Lincoln*” *NYT* (21 December 1919): 76.

⁵¹⁵ Alexander Woollcott, “The Play: Percy MacKaye to the Nth Power” *NYT* (2 March 1920): 9.

Washington followed the lead of International Fourth celebrations and showed ethnically diverse figures who banded together to form a homogenous identity. Major figures in American history engaged in awkward conversations so that they could recite quotations most applicable to America as a rising world power, not simply as a rebellious group of gentlemen farmers.

Likely the most significant reason that *Washington* failed is that Drinkwater did a better job of humanizing his subject. The audience saw Lincoln in private spaces engaged in private behavior. Whereas MacKaye forced characters to utter monumentally famous phrases in unlikely circumstances, Drinkwater rarely conflated private and public life. On stage, Lincoln never recited large portions of his Gettysburg address and only a brief phrase of the Emancipation Proclamation was ever heard.⁵¹⁶ Lincoln appeared mostly in one-on-one conversations, many times with everyday people – a former slave, a confederate soldier’s wife, a union soldier – not other well-known historical figures.

Despite his stated desire to soften Washington’s image, MacKaye presented the founding fathers in a manner both fully heroic and propagandistic. The opening moments of the Crossing the Delaware scene show a camp sentinel poring over his diary, devising patriotic rhetoric as Washington silently paced in the background. The sentinel was Thomas Paine and his words were from *The Crisis*: “O ye, that love mankind! Ye that dare oppose not only tyranny but the tyrant, stand forth! Every spot of the Old World is overrun with oppression.”⁵¹⁷ In their original context, his words aimed to persuade neutral American parties to take up the cause of revolution, but their slightly edited form justified the United States’ involvement in World War I and the establishment of the League of Nations as moral imperatives. Instead of simply asserting democratic home rule, MacKaye’s Paine reinforces Wilson’s mandate for the global spread of democracy.

MacKaye fully endorsed the war at hand by linking it to the Revolutionary War. At Valley Forge, several characters uttered catchphrases that applied to 1776 and 1919. In a discussion about the training of the Continental Army, the Prussian Baron von Steuben expressed his dismay about the soldiers in a thick accent: “Ven I tell dem orders, dey ask me of mine

⁵¹⁶ Lincoln reads, “Shall be thenceforward and forever free” in the context of a cabinet discussion about the edict. John Drinkwater, *Abraham Lincoln* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1919), 82.

⁵¹⁷ MacKaye, *Washington*, 169

reasons.”⁵¹⁸ Washington responded with a lecture on the defects of Prussian militarism with, as one critic jeered, “a prophetic eye rolling forward to 1914.”⁵¹⁹ Washington further proclaimed the morality of the American soldiers, who fight for a just cause. Later, a courier announces the alliance between America and France, which Lafayette foresightedly proclaimed was the next country on the path to “la liberté.”⁵²⁰ Each interaction between Americans and Europeans establishes a progressive narrative in which eighteenth-century America’s superior political philosophy combined with twentieth-century America’s superior military power in order to liberate and educate those Europeans who had not yet embraced democracy.

MacKaye’s focus on the play as living monument may have hindered the commercial success of *Washington*, but he discovered a new cultural base to which he wanted to anchor American identity. Washington may have been the subject of the play but the Appalachian figure relocated American roots. As discussed above, many Americans had migrated to cities, leaving behind their birthplaces. These rural sites became the focus of a nostalgic definition of home for twentieth-century America. Ageless and timeless – of both the eighteenth and twentieth centuries – Quilloquon remained untarnished by industrialism and so provided an antidote to the rootlessness of modern urban life. In addition to the musical interludes between historical scenes,⁵²¹ Quilloquon provided the Boy and Girl access to their cultural past. By virtue of their youth, they were one step removed from the historical moments but co-present on the stage. From this dual position, they took on the roles of pageant spectators and then performers. Their transitional position in the scenographic space helps to define the play as a monumental space, a space in which the observer finds an image of membership, his or her own visage. At first the Boy and Girl only observed scenes, but eventually they became participants, most notably with Quilloquon as the drum and fife trio marching with the first American flag.⁵²² By the final historical scene they became part of life at Mount Vernon as two of Washington’s descendents, called grandchildren by Martha.

⁵¹⁸ MacKaye, *Washington*, 231

⁵¹⁹ John Corbin, “Drama: A French-American Program” *NYT* (18 February 1919): 9.

⁵²⁰ Notably, this scene is one that Copeau produced as part of his *Action Dramatique*. MacKaye, *Washington*, 231-245

⁵²¹ Only three of the thirteen transitions are not dominated by Quilloquon. Negro spirituals, sung by slaves at Mount Vernon, serve as transitions into the two scenes at the adult Washington’s home; cheers at the fall of Yorktown mark the divide between American victory and a scene in which officers offer Washington a kingship.

⁵²² The Boy, Girl, and Quilloquon imitate the popular painting “Spirit of ‘76” by A.M. Willard. Notably, this painting first appeared at the Centennial Exhibition, Philadelphia’s world’s fair, in 1876.

Along with Quilloquon came a notion of American identity attached to the land of the new continent. *Washington* showed the first President repeatedly disconnecting himself from European practices and claiming a tie to the American landscape. Young George adopted Indianness; he made his first entrance impersonating a Native American to scare Mammy Sal, another land-affiliated figure with whom he shared an affectionate bond. Later, he complained about the uselessness of traditional broadsword training and stiff British military tactics that did not account for the American wilderness. He rejected the chance to study in England, preferring “this soil of America – home. Farming for me.”⁵²³ Throughout the scenes of adult life Washington allied himself with nature more than society; he went off to war in order to “defend the farm” and he often commented on the flora and fauna around him. In his final line, spoken upon his return to Mt. Vernon after the war, he reasserted his identity as a man who worked the land: “This time, Pats, – we will drain that swamp!”⁵²⁴

Through the prologue and epilogue, MacKaye transported the audience from a New York theatre to present-day Mount Vernon to historical Mount Vernon and back again. And so, like a pageant, *Washington* celebrated the historical place as much as its most famous inhabitant. Without the spectators having personal connections to the performers, as would have been the case for a pageant, MacKaye’s framing scenes linked the audience with the characters and their actions. However, unlike a community pageant - with its emphasis on local place for those who live there – *Washington* emphasized a space at once national and international. MacKaye’s ballad play stages the unification of separate persons into a single America during the actions of the play and, by referencing the International Fourth, into a single global community during the prologue and epilogue.

During the week of Copeau’s production, MacKaye clipped a story from the *New York Times* about a project for the George Washington Memorial Building in the nation’s capitol to honor the fallen soldiers of 1776 and 1917. This project, which had been in the planning stages for some time, found in MacKaye a ready ally. The George Washington Memorial Association (GWMA) formed in 1898 in order to establish a university to honor the first president. Within a few years, the GWMA simplified its objective. It resolved to build a landmark structure on the

⁵²³ MacKaye, *Washington*, 50-51.

⁵²⁴ MacKaye, *Washington*, 274.

Washington Mall in which educational objectives could be achieved.⁵²⁵ By the production of *Action Dramatique*, the GWMA had amended their mission so that the structure also would serve as a monument to soldiers of the current war effort. The *Times* article promoted the planned neoclassical building that included a seven thousand-seat auditorium for “inaugural receptions, national and international conventions and conferences, orchestral concerts and celebrations.”⁵²⁶ The Memorial Building also held potential for community-based performances, particularly those on national themes, and to become the national center for “constructive leisure,” for the “theatre of tomorrow” that MacKaye first proposed in 1912.⁵²⁷

MacKaye tried his best to help raise funds for the project, which closely reflected his own plans for a Civic Theatre. In turn, the GWMA sponsored a benefit preview performance of the Hampden production, which included “members of Congress, the Supreme Court and the Cabinet” in the audience on 22 February 1920.⁵²⁸ Continuing these efforts in 1921, MacKaye also performed a staged reading of *The Man Who Made Us* to raise money for the Cincinnati Washington Memorial fund. The playwright claimed that he knew the published version of the play would be cut for “our theatre today,” but that he composed the full script, with its pageant-influenced musical transitions and allegorical dance sequences, for “the theatre of tomorrow.”⁵²⁹ Structured like his community masques, the play’s cast ranged from 30 to 100 so that separate groups could rehearse the separate actions and then come together for the performance, thus maximizing “the organic beauty of the ensemble festival, which is the harmony of its parts.”⁵³⁰ Countless school and community groups staged the play throughout the 1920s,⁵³¹ employing staging guides provided by Hampden, MacKaye, and Robert Edmond Jones, who designed *Washington*. Although the play fulfilled many of the promises of the Civic Theatre, the building project never fully materialized. The stone foundation and enormous central staircase of the

⁵²⁵ Smithsonian Institution. *George Washington Memorial Association, Records, 1890-1922*. 18 May 2005. <<http://siarchives.si.edu/findingaids/FARU7471.htm>>.

⁵²⁶ Rupert Hughes, “Memorial Temple Under Way in Washington” *NYT* (23 February 1919): 10.

⁵²⁷ Percy MacKaye, *The Civic Theatre, in Relation to the Redemption of Leisure, a Book of Suggestions* (New York: Mitchell Kennerly, 1912).

⁵²⁸ Percy MacKaye “Young Washington at Mount Vernon” in *George Washington Plays*, A.P. Sanford, Ed. (New York: Dodd, Mead, & Co., 1931), 3

⁵²⁹ MacKaye, *Washington*, 288

⁵³⁰ MacKaye, *Washington*, 290. Hampden used 31 actors to perform *Washington* on Broadway.

⁵³¹ MacKaye collected dozens of programs that were sent to him. See Scrapbook for “Washington II” PMK Collection, DCL.

George Washington Memorial Building was laid in 1924, but then funding dried up and the project was abandoned.

5.3 APPALACHIA: KENTUCKY MOUNTAIN FANTASIES

Percy MacKaye had long involved himself in social causes. His affiliation with the GWMA demonstrates his growing awareness of the establishment of monumental spaces in America. In the 1920s, this interest focused on Appalachia. In 1920, Miami University in southwest Ohio brought him to campus on a poetry fellowship, the first of its kind in the United States. He headed up a creative writing program but, without formal teaching obligations, mostly focused on his own writing. The first summer of his appointment, he took his family on a journey to the Appalachian Mountains across the river in eastern Kentucky. Marion noted in her journal that Percy celebrated the Fourth of July at the Pine Mountain Settlement by reading *Gettysburg* to a man he called Uncle John Fiddler who, with a “timeworn face, listened entranced.”⁵³² MacKaye found the embodiment of Quilloquon in Fiddler, a living link to an idealized American past. Later that summer, Percy set out to find John Shell of Big Laurel, supposedly the oldest man in the world at 133. More than likely Shell was only 115,⁵³³ but in this meeting Percy found what he was looking for: a man born (according to Percy’s account) the year Washington was first elected president, a living monument to the beginning of the nation.

Although the most famous National Parks at the beginning of the twentieth century were in the western portion of the country, the 1920s witnessed a boom in preservation of the remaining eastern natural landscape. During the decade, ten parks and thirteen monuments gained recognition, including three along the Appalachian Mountains: Great Smokey Mountains, Mammoth Cave, and Shenandoah.⁵³⁴ The spark that ignited a relationship between Americans and their eastern mountains came from Percy’s brother, Benton, who published “An Appalachian

⁵³² Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 307

⁵³³ MacKaye’s dating of Shell came based on noting the first president for whom he ever voted. Shell claimed that it was before Andrew Jackson, which likely means he had voted for John Quincy Adams in 1824 (also the first year of his recorded existence in the form of a tax receipt) thus making his date of birth closer to 1806, than 1788.

⁵³⁴ According to Alfred Runte: “Congress authorized the secretary of the interior to accept land” for the formation of Shenandoah and Great Smokey Mountain national parks in 1926, but the land was not fully acquired until 1934 and 1935 respectively, when these Appalachian national parks joined the NPS. *National Parks*, 116-117.

Trail: A Project in Regional Planning” in 1921. Newly entranced, Percy voiced his support for the public campaign to save Appalachian land and culture with “Untamed America” in 1924.

Benton linked his trail proposal to the urban parks and playground movements, utilizing eutheic language. He described the country within a nostalgic frame that asserted a disappearing way of life. It became more urban and less rural every day and so Americans were becoming removed from the land that forged early American identity. Benton asserted that the proposed trail (which many Americans continue to use today) would provide a more adequate respite for the physically or mentally unwell than sanitariums. Two weeks on the trail – the average vacation allotted an American worker at the time – “would be a little real living for thousands of people.”⁵³⁵ Since most Americans lived in the East, he believed that “playgrounds of the people” – National Parks, at the time mostly in the West – needed to be more readily accessible for the health of the nation. Benton also wrote about how the Appalachian Trail would provide a link to “the primal aspects of the days of Daniel Boone... [a] definite avenue of experiment in getting ‘back to the land’.”⁵³⁶ Benton echoed his older brother and William James by touting community cooperation as a social benefit. According to his plan, many small temporary communities, not privately owned, would dot the trail and work together to maintain it.

During the summer of 1921, Percy first ventured into the Kentucky mountains where he encountered “rare, unclassified species of the *genus homo*... doomed to extinction [in] a world where, as by miracle, [he] found still proudly beating the pioneer heart of [his] own people – America, ancient and untamed.”⁵³⁷ In “Untamed America” Percy first argued that Appalachia survived as a living memorial to the American past. Most notably, he related his encounter with John Shell, who had died a year after their meeting.⁵³⁸ MacKaye extended Shell’s eighteenth-century roots by retelling a story that conflates personal history with biblical narrative: one mountaineer’s father was expelled to America for stealing an apple from the King’s tree in England. MacKaye framed all these tales of mountain life within a notion of heritage and

⁵³⁵ Benton MacKaye “An Appalachian Trail: A Project in Regional Planning.” *Journal of the American Institute of Architects* 8-9 (October 1921): 325-350. Reprint: Appalachian Trail Conservancy, <<http://www.appalachiantrail.org/atf/cf/%7BD25B4747-42A3-4302-8D48EF35C0B0D9F1%7D/MacKaye.pdf>>, 5.

⁵³⁶ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁵³⁷ Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 303

⁵³⁸ The *New York Times* printed a story about the burial of Shell, who died in July 1922. The *Times* also noted that several physicians had examined Shell and determined that his claims were likely untrue, but that he was definitely over 100 years old. “‘Oldest Man in World’ is Buried in Kentucky” *NYT* (11 July 1922): 14.

preservation. His mountaineers were living pioneers, true native Americans, worthy of a “Greater Conservation” that would “not stop at salvaging merely our backgrounds of physical wild nature, its power-waters and forests with their diversities of bird and plant life,” but that would “become also a conservation of spiritual wild nature, with its precious diversities of *Man*.”⁵³⁹ He asserted that Appalachian mountaineers, with their untainted folk culture, could provide an ancient civilization to match the modern one – they could provide a sense of simplified leisure to all Americans.

Portions of “Untamed America” form the preface to *This Fine-Pretty World*, MacKaye’s first Appalachian play. Both essays include the same excerpt from Marion’s diary that elevated the preserved people of Appalachia onto pedestals. They lived in a “new world and an old, untouched by the gropings of man for two centuries, unenmeshed by our faltering blunders, our stumbling existence.”⁵⁴⁰ Joining Benton and Marion, Percy reinforced the importance of the physical and cultural separation of Appalachia from urban America. Unlike Benton’s eutenic goals, Percy advocated for ‘creative conservation’ by American theatre artists. This activity entailed the preservation of human diversity, “his [sic] unspoiled heritages of thought and untamed imagination.”⁵⁴¹ The frequently highlighted oral traditions of the Appalachians offered MacKaye, the first person to write down their folklore, the ability to define the parameters of their existence and of their extinction. As he had done in the preface to *Yankee Fantasies*, he noted the inevitable disappearance of Appalachian culture as it would succumb to the expansion of industrial America. MacKaye portrayed the Kentucky mountaineers in the same vein as the already-dead Indians from *Saint Louis*; they served as ancient Anglo roots for modern America. According to MacKaye, these people were the untainted descendents of our forefathers with a language, culture, and values still rooted in our country’s nascent stage because of their isolation from the progress of history.

MacKaye published four Appalachian plays, one full-length and three one-acts. The Neighborhood Playhouse opened a successful production of *This Fine-Pretty World* on 26 December 1923.⁵⁴² *Napoleon Crossing the Rockies*, the first of the three one-acts published

⁵³⁹ Percy MacKaye, “Untamed America,” *The Survey-Graphic* (January 1924): 2. Emphasis in the original.

⁵⁴⁰ Percy MacKaye, *This Fine-Pretty World: A Comedy of the Kentucky Mountains* (New York: The MacMillan Co., 1924), xi-xii.

⁵⁴¹ *Ibid.*, xviii-xix.

⁵⁴² The production ran for 33 performances, a strong showing for MacKaye.

together as *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies*, appeared onstage at the Carnegie Institute Theatre four years before publication in 1928. While the creation of most monumental spaces, such as the National Parks, encompassed physical space, MacKaye's Appalachian plays also recreated social practice, the behaviors and dialect of the mountain people. He imagined that his plays would keep alive their oral traditions by putting on paper and on stage their "antick" stories and dialect, both "doubtless doomed to extinction."⁵⁴³ The published texts preserved the oral tradition at the same time that they removed it from contemporary life. These Appalachian plays constructed visual and aural cultural monuments, physical and social spaces.

The comedic plots of *This Fine-Pretty World* and *The Funeralizing of Crickneck* (second of the *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies*) adapt common character types – philandering husband, betrayed wife, wily servant, religious hypocrite – and conventional narrative devices – romantic entanglement, deception and double-cross, a trial scene, mistaken identity. *Crickneck* preserves Appalachian culture only inasmuch as the characters speak in heavy dialect.⁵⁴⁴ But other cultural markers in *This Fine-Pretty World* preserve Appalachian culture as MacKaye related it in "Untamed America." The actions of *Napoleon* and *Timber* (third of the *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies*) more closely relate to contemporary everyday existence in Appalachia and the encroachment of industrial America. These two plays attributed the inevitable fall of Appalachian culture to the pressures of the modern world.

MacKaye began by imagining a physical monument onstage for *This Fine-Pretty World*. The natural world dominated the scenographic representations of cabin exteriors during the first two acts. A fence or "piling" distinguished wild nature from domesticated living space in both scenes. During the first scene, only a hint of the home was visible, a recycled technique from *The Antick*. A more visible home's front porch frames the second scene. In both cases, trees and bushes dominate the physical world. Furniture has a rustic appearance; it is mostly adapted from planks and stumps. A mountain path serves as the point of entry for most characters.

The final scene took place in a schoolhouse interior, converted for use as a courthouse, with little indication of untouched nature. Instead of a scenographic monument, the actions of the performers define this space as uniquely Appalachian. Like Quilloquon, the character of Lark

⁵⁴³ MacKaye, *This Fine-Pretty World*, xvi.

⁵⁴⁴ From a twenty-first century perspective, *Crickneck* would mesh somewhat seamlessly with the recent film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* with its thick twang and absurd comedy.

threads through the entire action of *This Fine-Pretty World* and, also like Quilloquon, Lark fiddles and sings. During the first moments of the third act, Lark leads four couples through an eight-handed reel while the remaining performers stomp, sing, and clap along. Nothing about this musical moment affects the plot in any way and, when it ends, the courthouse scene begins with little reference to the opening exuberance. The dance functions as a means to preserve Appalachian culture much like the ethnic folk dances from *The New Citizenship*. The performance simultaneously documents Appalachian culture and declares it on its way to extinction or at least subordinate to modern America.

Napoleon and *Timber* also suggest the inevitable decline or assimilation of Appalachian culture as they portray the encroachment of modern civilization. MacKaye shows the external threats that will eradicate the native culture unless others intervene to prevent it. *Napoleon* achieves this goal with a lighter tone than *Timber*, but both plays portray modern industrial America as a catastrophic threat to Appalachian culture.

The title *Napoleon Crossing the Rockies* refers to a traditional tune that one of the Appalachian figures – Lark, although nothing connects him to the Lark from *This Fine-Pretty World* – keeps trying to play, but cannot without a new string for his fiddle. The song conflates recent Biblical creation with Western culture and erases the geographical distance between Europe and America. According to Lark, Napoleon watched his army cross the mountains as they built their own trail for seven days. Late on the seventh night, near daybreak, the French emperor sang the tune from the top of the mountains. This tale transplants old stock European roots into American soil.

Like the other Appalachian plays, *Napoleon* includes a visible fence, the permeable boundary that slightly separates living space carved out from the natural world. Lark and his wife Tildy, both in the twilight of their lives, occupy land that has been granted to a mining and timber company by the government in order to construct a rail line. Hodge, fully an outsider, arrives to compensate them with \$300 in gold coins to vacate immediately. Lark and Tildy refuse, but Steptoe, Hodge's guide and clearly familiar with the Appalachian folk, gets them to agree to sign over their land after they die. To smooth the transaction, Steptoe offers them two anniversary gifts: new fiddle strings for Lark and a glass bead necklace for Tildy.⁵⁴⁵ Steptoe even

⁵⁴⁵ Tildy had picked out the necklace from the nearby general store, but Lark could not afford it for their "wedding birthday."

convinces them to entrust the coins to him – he says that he will act like their bank, knowing that they will almost never ask for any of the money.⁵⁴⁶ The men, as they leave, agree to split the \$10,000 fee for getting them to sign over their land.

Youthful Hodge and Steptoe represent the modern world that threatens to overtake the ancient, simple, and poor culture that Lark and Tildy embody. MacKaye does his best to indicate the inevitable rise of the new and decline of the old. As he had done with *Saint Louis*, he begins *Napoleon* at twilight and the mountainside slowly falls into darkness. Tildy, like Cahokia, predicts her own fall. Physically frail and damaged – both her arms are broken and she has remained on the floor during Lark’s absence because she cannot pick herself up – she states early on: “I’s be dyin’ my death soon.”⁵⁴⁷ Lark enters the stage to declare that he has lost their cow and they have no provisions except for some herbs to make a tea to soothe Tildy’s aching bones. However, unlike his optimistic masque, no hero emerges who embraces the old values as a means to engage new challenges. No young boy in white comes floating down the creek. Instead, the likable con-artist Steptoe, who had spent some time running profitable prayer meetings, guides Hodge to the gullible Lark and Tildy. Unlike the liminal Steptoe, who can navigate both worlds, Hodge declares himself to be “a straight-from-the-shoulder, up-and-comin’ businessman.” His “modern business,” he says, is “like a conquering army.”⁵⁴⁸ Lark ends the drama by playing Napoleon, fiddling and singing while the new railroad path nears his mountain home. Like the Native Americans of *Saint Louis*, the Appalachians willingly cede the landscape to those who seek to conquer the land, but unlike *Saint Louis*, no heroic character vows to perpetuate ancient cultural practice or principles.

MacKaye again chronicles the conflict between modern industry and Appalachian culture in *Timber*. In this tale, however, the mountain folk are complicit in their own demise. Despite the focus on the logging industry, the scenography includes no visible sign of trees. Instead, the curtain opens on the family’s ancient matriarch Granny dozing on a bed while her brother Clabe sits next to her whittling. Breaking the silence, a large tree comes crashing down outside the

⁵⁴⁶ Lark keeps one of the gold coins to form the central medallion of Tildy’s new necklace. Otherwise, neither of the characters ever seems to be interested in using coins in a barter culture.

⁵⁴⁷ Percy MacKaye *Napoleon Crossing the Rockies* in *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies: Three Short Plays for an Appalachian Theatre* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1928), 22.

⁵⁴⁸ MacKaye *Napoleon Crossing the Rockies*, 27-28, 36.

cabin and startles Granny. This seeming homage to *The Cherry Orchard*⁵⁴⁹ immediately sets the characters of *Timber* within a world that is literally being dismantled around them – a dismantling with which they are collaborating to their own detriment.

Timber shows the landscape and its people in the turmoil of rapid transition from colonial to industrial America. Of Clabe's and Granny's descendents, all but one member have been killed by logging accidents; only the grandson Timber still thrives.⁵⁵⁰ His mother christened him after the area's industry and gifted him with a special hazel branch to protect him from harm. During the first part, an early spring avalanche sounds offstage and the older family members in the house presume all loggers, including Timber, to be dead. Clabe even performs a ritual burial of a broken clay pipe in the fireplace ashes.

But Timber survives the avalanche and returns to tell of a fantastical daydream he had during it: after a sun-drenched respite in the woods with his immediate family and ancestors, a man in yellow goggles takes Timber up in an airplane to a fairground where they attend a motion picture show. Safely at home, Timber claims that in reality he got lucky and had ridden a log down the avalanche. Margit, Timber's pregnant wife, pleads for them to move to Memphis where he need not risk his life any further. Asserting that Memphis has nothing to offer them (he claims to have visited the city once) and professing his invincibility, Timber decides that they will stay in the mountains. Near the end of the play, he sits down alone to his dinner but instead of eating, he quickly becomes drunk on moonshine. The yellow-goggled Visitor appears and, although the audience never hears him speak, Timber agrees to drive to a nearby still. Margit then reenters the empty playing space to discover that Timber left his special hazel branch behind on the table. Shortly thereafter, the silent Visitor brings Timber's broken body to the door. After surviving the logging accident, Timber met his fate in an automobile accident. Crying over her husband's body, Margit takes up the hazel branch and vows to christen their son the same as his father.

Timber shows a single family but it represents the American struggle over the Appalachian landscape. With a combination of biblical allusions and natural symbols, MacKaye

⁵⁴⁹ MacKaye certainly was familiar with Chekhov's work. Additionally, *The Scarecrow* was translated into Russian for performance at the Moscow Art Theatre and a few reviewers of *This Fine-Pretty World* even compared the play to those produced by the MAT. See Grover, *Annals of an Era*, 33, 188, 191.

⁵⁵⁰ MacKaye deploys an intriguing variation of the 'already-dead' character. Granny describes Clabe as only half-alive, destroyed by a severe logging accident. His heavy limp hinders most motion.

establishes the Kentucky Mountains as a second Garden of Eden and through Clabe he likens the logging of the mountains to Adam's taking the forbidden fruit. The broken old man tells a parable about why nearly all the men have been killed. In it, the poplar tree is the Tree of Knowledge that seeded all the other trees and Satan is the timber company tempting the men with pay for felling the trees, a sin that causes the fall of the Appalachian folk. Felled trees provide for the industrialized outside but the mountain forest no longer provides for the mountaineers; the bees have quit making honey and other components of the environment have disappeared. MacKaye implies that erasure of Appalachian culture would remove the direct link to ancient America available to modern America. The embrace of technology parallels the taking of the apple in Eden. To further drive home his point, MacKaye begins Timber's daydream in the pre-industrial Appalachian landscape but technology pulls Timber away from this paradise. When technology returns in real life, Timber embraces it to his corporeal demise.

MacKaye's Appalachian trilogy comes at a time when community pageants had disappeared and the American public cared even less about a pluralistic presentation of American subgroups. The Johnson-Reed Act of 1924, founded on eugenic arguments that privileged northern and western European nationalities, nearly cut off new immigration from southern and eastern Europe. Also by the 1920s, the progressive and pluralistic approach to social issues had fallen into disfavor among most Americans.⁵⁵¹ MacKaye, whose pluralism seemed more concerned with surface appearance than substance, created a work decidedly in line with the renewed privilege given to America's old stock. In his preface to *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies*, MacKaye reframed his earlier Yankee plays as the "northern phases of Appalachian folk-life."⁵⁵² In a similar nostalgic vein, he noted the inevitable passing of "the ancient civilization of our blended Celtic and Anglo-Saxon breeds" that will soon lose "the last of their folk heritage to the inroads of inexorable modernity."⁵⁵³ Shifting from the connection between already-dead Native Americans and the environment in *Saint Louis*, MacKaye connected the landscape to timeless Anglo-Americans, to Appalachian culture.

MacKaye found what he was looking for in Appalachia. The characters of Lark and Clabe are nothing more than Quilloquon with more realistic detail. In redwood forests, canyons,

⁵⁵¹ Dale T. Knobel, *America for the Americans* (New York: Twayne Publishers, 2002), 251-260.

⁵⁵² MacKaye, *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies*, xii.

⁵⁵³ *Ibid.*, xi-xii.

and geysers, the National Park System codified American identity with images of the monumental Western landscape. Within the eastern mountains, the ancient and untouched Appalachian figure provided American audiences with a cultural link between contemporary industrial America and its early agrarian incarnation. In the Kentucky Mountain character, MacKaye found American social roots.

5.4 HOLIDAY PLAYS

Between the publication dates of *This Fine-Pretty World* and *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies*, MacKaye spent several years working on a biography of his father. During this time, MacKaye removed himself from his previously hectic schedule. His dramatic output definitely slowed to a trickle in this period, although he continued to publish poetry and fiction.⁵⁵⁴ During the 1920s, others had picked up the mantle of community drama, but its postwar incarnation focused even more on education than it had done during the 1910s. By 1931, when MacKaye began work on his second Washington play *Wakefield*, community drama had further shifted from assimilating and Americanizing immigrants to inspiring ideal citizenship and ethics among all of America's youth.

Organizers of dramatic performances for national holiday celebrations had long struggled with a lack of scripts. MacKaye had sounded the first call for such dramatic texts in 1910 with his essay, "The New Fourth of July." Despite MacKaye's use of the mocking Independence Day parade in *The Antick*, others still hoped to shift American practice toward a more reverent observation of national holidays. A few years later, Mary Porter Beegle and Jack Randall Crawford noted in their community drama manual that "the pageant worker is confronted with the necessity of creating a popular tradition" in order to celebrate "our patriotic holidays by means of pageantry."⁵⁵⁵ Beegle and Crawford called for pageants and plays to celebrate

⁵⁵⁴ From 1903 (the date of his first professionally produced play) to 1923 (*This Fine-Pretty World*), MacKaye wrote and/or produced some thirty plays. After that point, he only produced three more dramatic works: *Kentucky Mountain Fantasies* (1928), *Wakefield* (1931-32), and *The Mystery of Hamlet, King of Denmark* (1952), a four-play prelude to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

⁵⁵⁵ Mary Porter Beegle and Jack Randall Crawford, *Community Drama and Pageantry* (New Haven: Yale U Press, 1916). 31.

Washington's Birthday (along with Independence Day, Christmas, Labor Day, Thanksgiving, and Lincoln's Birthday), which for more than thirty years lacked a national celebration tradition.

MacKaye may have given the dramatic figure of Washington a decade-long break, but the country had not. *The Man Who Made Us*, or selected scenes from it, reappeared on stage, in print, and on the air throughout the 1920s and early 1930s, leading up to the Washington bicentennial. To celebrate the 150th anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, Howard Kyle (*Caliban's* Prospero) performed the lead role for a radio broadcast of *The Man Who Made Us* on New York's WGBS.⁵⁵⁶ One year later, *Scholastic* magazine published six scenes from *Washington* in serial form. Selections from *The Man Who Made Us* also appeared in two collections of plays intended for community or educational performances. *The Appleton Book of Holiday Plays*, a collection of short pieces that answered Beegle and Crawford's call, first appeared in 1930.⁵⁵⁷ It included "Young Washington at Mount Vernon," which presents the three actions and two transitions from *The Man Who Made Us* that chronicle Washington's early years, and "Betsy Ross," which patched together the two actions about its titular character. The anthology's editor, Frank Shay, also published that same year *Here's Audacity: American Legendary Heroes*, a collection of American folk tales about mythical figures such as Paul Bunyan and Pecos Bill. Shay's influence also extended beyond scholastic productions to such notable Little Theatres as Provincetown and Washington Square. Published in 1932, A.P. Sanford's *George Washington Plays* also included "Young Washington," as did Theodore Johnson's *Washington Anniversary Plays*.

The proliferation of such anthologies indicates a broad shift in the community drama movement from one that explains the community to itself to one that explains the nation to the individual. Instead of the story of the town, city, or region, these plays present national myths, monuments to historic American figures in dramatic form. *The Appleton Book* provides tales for American holiday figures such as Robert E. Lee, Christopher Columbus, Lincoln, Washington, and Ross. Shay echoed MacKaye's stated desire to humanize Washington. In his preface, Shay revealed his hope that children and others would see the celebrated figures for their character and not just for their actions: "We can better understand these heroes if we know them as human

⁵⁵⁶ Grover, *Annals of an Era*, 504.

⁵⁵⁷ Shay's collection of plays was very popular, with additional printings in 1932, 1936, and 1938.

beings, commonplace humans, who, when the occasion demanded it, rose to the heights.”⁵⁵⁸ Targeted toward American youth, these plays showed historical figures before their fame, many times as children, thereby offering schoolchildren a more direct link to the monumental figure. Audiences therefore did not witness, as they had at Copeau’s production, the well-known heroic actions of General Washington. Instead, young audiences saw young George already possessed of the honorable traits of his elder self.

The American figures indeed inhabit common places, but hardly appear commonplace. Lincoln, only an infant in a log cabin, struggles to overcome life-threatening illness. Columbus is a “Young Buccaneer,” a dreamer on a pirate ship as it intercepts a merchant vessel. Lee appears at home as husband and father while the Virginia legislature votes to secede. These figures accompany MacKaye’s young Washington and the taciturn Ross in the anthology. Nevertheless, the national destinies of these characters appear concrete even in their vernacular settings. Lincoln, obviously, does not speak. However, his mother muses that her little boy is no different from Christ in his humble birth and that he too may someday become “a prince or something big.”⁵⁵⁹ A fervent Columbus threatens the power of the pirate captain. At eighteen, the young sailor already knows that the world is round and receives support from a friar, who advises the boy to explore for God and country.⁵⁶⁰ Lee quietly accedes to the decision by his fellow Virginians to join the Confederacy. He condones neither southern secession nor northern military action to preserve the union. When asked what he wants, Lee – echoing the agrarian desires of MacKaye’s Washington – replies: “All I ask is a Virginia farm, no end of cream, fresh butter and fried chicken.”⁵⁶¹

Like *The Man Who Made Us*, the historical details of these educational plays proffered authenticity and so producers offered them as true depictions of the subjects.⁵⁶² Many of the playwrights in the Sanford and Shay collections interspersed historical catchphrases throughout

⁵⁵⁸ Frank Shay, Ed., *The Appleton Book of Holiday Plays* (New York: D. Appleton & Co., 1930), viii.

⁵⁵⁹ “A Child of the Frontier” in Shay, *The Appleton Book of Holiday Plays*, 45-61. Nancy Hanks Lincoln is the only speaking character from the family and is only referred to as Nancy. The author notes at the beginning that no producer is to “hint that the play is woven about the birth of Lincoln, otherwise the dramatic surprise at the end would be destroyed.”

⁵⁶⁰ “For God and Spain” in Shay, *The Appleton Book of Holiday Plays*, 185-199.

⁵⁶¹ “Lee the Virginian” in Shay, *The Appleton Book of Holiday Plays*, 27-41. This quote is attributed to Lee’s response to a question from a Richmond woman about his ambitions.

⁵⁶² Fred Stirling noted that “Lee the Virginian” was based on historical fact and cited his historical sources. See Shay, *The Appleton Book of Holiday Plays*, 27.

the dialogue, a technique for which the New York critics had severely admonished MacKaye. But inclusion of these snippets in so many plays suggests their perceived effectiveness in educational drama at the time. Like the National Monuments and other historical symbols that dotted the American landscape, these famous quotes in the dramas mark their historical accuracy and cultural importance.

One piece from these collections, Phyllis Marschall's "George Washington, The Spirit of Americanization," echoes pageantry in that it includes a superficial local emphasis within its national theme. She designated the third of four episodes to be set in the state where the play would be performed. However, this episode merely places a state facade on a national narrative. Marschall uses Iowa as the state in the published text but its narrative could apply to any state in the union and, in fact, she guides producers of the play simply to insert local characteristics that the audience would recognize. In this way, she does not differ significantly from 1910s commercial pageant-makers, who simply inserted details from each town into a stock plot. Her brief synopsis of Iowa history seems very much like the history Stevens and MacKaye staged in *Saint Louis*; it begins with settlement and Indian wars and ends with mining and industry. Marschall also specified that every state episode should end with the simultaneous arrival of George Washington and Teddy Roosevelt on horseback. Washington dismounts and silently mingles with the crowd while Roosevelt vocally spurs the population on to a local effort of national importance: "No nation as great as ours can escape the penalty of greatness. Ours is a government of liberty, by, through, and under the law. A land built up by the toil and sweat of the people."⁵⁶³ The people then respond not with elation, but with a warning to those who might not embrace a Protestant work ethic, who might not possess this particular spirit of American identity:

We are the workers and makers
Tremble O Shirkers and Takers
A man is worth to his Mother Earth
All that a Man has made.⁵⁶⁴

⁵⁶³ Phyllis Marschall, "George Washington, The Spirit of Americanization" in Sanford, *George Washington Plays*, 277.

⁵⁶⁴ Marschall "George Washington" in Sanford, *George Washington Plays*, 278. The focus on work ethic seems oddly timed, considering the play's publication date – 1932 – two years into the Great Depression, but many of the plays had been written years before their inclusion in Sanford's anthology.

Roosevelt incites the crowd of on-stage spectators to exert themselves in betterment of the nation and they rise to his rallying cry. On a much smaller scale, and specifically targeted at a youth audience, Marschall communicates the same message that MacKaye had done nearly twenty years earlier with *Saint Louis*: communities that work hard together, that conquer their landscape, forge a strong nation.

These monumental dramas about historical figures blossomed along with the National Parks movement. Prominent American figures appeared in print and on the national landscape. New structures honoring two of these people joined the long-standing Washington Monument, dedicated the day before the first official federal observation of Washington's Birthday holiday in the late nineteenth century.⁵⁶⁵ Begun in 1914, the Lincoln Memorial was completed and dedicated in 1922. In 1933, the National Park Service took possession of Robert E. Lee's mansion after an eight-year renovation. Construction and renovation of physical spaces were not the only activities that occurred around the publication of these educational drama compilations. 1932 marked the two-hundredth anniversary of George Washington's birth and Congress, in a most unusual decision, commissioned Percy MacKaye to devise a performance to honor the first President of the United States.

5.4.1 *Wakefield*

MacKaye conveyed his appreciation of the opportunity Congress provided in the preface to the published version of *Wakefield*.

[I] was privileged to receive, from the United States Government, a commission – the first of its kind accorded by the Federal Government – to create for this Bicentennial occasion a dramatic festival, expressing the spiritual leadership of Washington in forms of poetry and music adapted to the participation of large numbers of men, women and children.⁵⁶⁶

⁵⁶⁵ In 1885, Chester Arthur first signed into law an official celebration of Washington's birth but the holiday had been observed unofficially as early as the late eighteenth century.

⁵⁶⁶ Percy MacKaye, *Wakefield, a Folk-Masque of America: Being a Midwinter Night's Dream of the Birth of Washington* (Washington: George Washington Bicentennial Commission, 1932), xiii.

MacKaye was no stranger to commissioned civic performances; nor was he unfamiliar with Washington as a dramatic figure. He recycled and reconfigured elements from *The New Citizenship*, *Saint Louis*, *Caliban*, and *The Man Who Made Us* into his final community masque. More a mixture of assembled images than a unified series of scenes, his final masque literally joined together principles of community and landscape dramas within a scenic collage of National Park vistas. The premiere performance took place in front of national leaders and their guests on 21 February 1932.⁵⁶⁷

Wakefield did not chronicle Washington's life but instead presented allegorical scenes that celebrated two characteristics claimed by the nation: bravery and freedom. *The Man Who Made Us* had emphasized the humanity of Washington. *Wakefield* implied that the strength of his character has become part of the country, what MacKaye calls his "Imbuing Presence," which was also the name of the character printed in the program. Instead of the commissioned subject, MacKaye chose as his titular character Wakefield, who represented the town of Washington's birth, in order "to give the *Folk-Spirit of America*... a local habitation and a name."⁵⁶⁸ Similar to the allegorical statuary that appeared within the City Beautiful landscape, the performer of this role often stood quietly within a towering landscape overlooking the actions around her. MacKaye removed Washington the founding father from the dramatic action and focused on his birthplace, thereby linking the landscape to the nascent stages of American identity. This new focus distinguished the masque from being simply another dramatic history lesson available in the anthologies discussed above.

Washington appeared less like a person and more like a towering National Park feature, reaching from the earth to the sky. H.I. Brock's review of the production described the scenographic components, a trinity that he believed represented Washington's character: "Mighty deep-rooted cedar, towering, steadfast rock, and unwavering North Star."⁵⁶⁹ During the prologue Washington entered through the audience, ascended the stage, and passed out of sight into an upstage rock. Next, MacKaye introduced Polaris, a god-like observer recycled from *Saint Louis*' Waspedan. In an act of creative astronomy, he calls on Orion and Cassiopeia to merge their thirteen stars to form a 'W' on each constellation's shield. Wakefield then entered the

⁵⁶⁷ Performances of *Wakefield* occurred from 21-28 February. Margaret Anglin performed the role of Wakefield. See Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 395-397.

⁵⁶⁸ MacKaye, *Wakefield*, xiii.

⁵⁶⁹ H.I. Brock, "The Masque that Celebrates the Washington Bicentenary," *NYT* (3 January 1932): XX4.

playing space in a manner similar to the way Washington had exited. Emerging from the tree – which looks from the published scenic sketch to be a redwood about thirty feet in diameter – she appeared “maternal, vital of earth, her figure [was] sibylline and calm, mysteriously blending aspects of Classic and Amerind.”⁵⁷⁰ Set among enormous rock faces and trees, the scenographic space resembled the Western landscapes that MacKaye encountered two decades earlier. Like the *Bohemian Jinks* MacKaye witnessed in the redwoods, the hybrid mythology of *Wakefield* mixed European and Native American components to create a new tale of American origins.

Once on the stage, *Wakefield* brought two young brothers to a central campfire where she educated them about their heritage. Along with the audience, Brave and Free watched a pageant procession of “Art, Justice, and Religion” represented by Shakespeare, the Magna Charta, and the Bible. Afterward, the siblings fell asleep and the evil forces of Drift carried off Free. A subsequent English folk procession inspired Brave to save his brother. Once he rushed off into the dark, thirteen groups entered from the audience to present simultaneously thirteen folk songs from various European cultures.⁵⁷¹ Reminiscent of *The New Citizenship*, groups of recent immigrants sang the thirteen melodies, each one associated with a specific cultural heritage. To the homogenous American audience, *Wakefield* showed that these groups were, like the original colonies, welcome but diverse additions to American culture.

To forge a nation, however, the heterogeneous voices of the immigrant singers needed to coalesce into one voice, not surprisingly an English one. In a musical melting pot of Americanization, *Wakefield* bade these immigrant groups to cease their Babel-song and join together: “Mingle your songs, Children, and they shall bless away the wrongs of ancient tyranny, to guide all yearning steps that roam on alien pastures to the heart’s returning home.” The singers obliged and enacted one part of the assimilation that already had occurred in their everyday lives. The multitude came together in a unified voice to sing Stephen Foster’s *Old Folks at Home* in the midst of the audience, which joined the chorus.⁵⁷² This particular act of Americanization united both the community performers and spectators and marked the desired homogeneity, which by this point had been helped along by the 1924 immigration restriction legislation likely

⁵⁷⁰ MacKaye, *Wakefield*, 12.

⁵⁷¹ Brock, “The Masque that Celebrates the Washington Bicentenary.” The songs were sung in Scotch, Welsh, Irish, German, Norwegian, French, Dutch, Italian, Greek, Hebrew, Bohemian, Polish, and Russian

⁵⁷² To MacKaye’s credit, he removed the explicitly racist references still frequently included in the tune. MacKaye, *Wakefield*, 80-81.

endorsed by many in the audience. At the second performance, four thousand delegates from the National Education Association filled the theatre.⁵⁷³ If the represented immigrant performers had not already chosen to assimilate, this audience would have taught their children to do so.

After the unification through song, MacKaye staged five tableaux, pantomime versions of episodes from *The Man Who Made Us*: Crossing the Delaware, Valley Forge, Kingship Refused, the Constitution, and Mount Vernon. Between each tableau, Wakefield narrated the growing success of Brave, thereby yoking Washington to Brave. The pinnacle of the actions linked the signing of the constitution with Brave's rescuing Free. Preceding Washington's return to his home estate, Polaris announced that the now successful Brave can turn "homeward to his noblest task,"⁵⁷⁴ to return to the land, the heart of America. Washington and these American characteristics both belong to the national landscape. Coming out of a high opening in the Rock, the Imbuing Presence commanded: "Reflect – how much more delightful to an undebauched mind is the task of making improvements on the earth than all the vainglory which can be acquired from ravaging it by conquest."⁵⁷⁵

But the focus on preservation was but a minor detour on an evening of patriotic display. Spatially, MacKaye positioned Washington above an American flag, which had been draped from the rock face, during this speech. The symbol of the nation became one with the landscape that it represented. The audience was invited to sing along at the end of the piece; community spectators joined the stage and immigrant group performers in united song. Printed in the program, a new verse to the Star-Spangled Banner expanded the national anthem to one with international implications. With the new lyrics MacKaye echoed Wilson's International Fourth message. Each night for a week in February, thousands sang: "does our star-spangled banner *yet* wave/O'er the land of the Free and the home of the Brave?"⁵⁷⁶

⁵⁷³ Ege, *The Power of the Impossible*, 396-397.

⁵⁷⁴ MacKaye, *Wakefield*, 82-95

⁵⁷⁵ MacKaye, *Wakefield*, 100. For those who could not hear the performer, the quote was reprinted in the program.

⁵⁷⁶ MacKaye, *Wakefield*, 101.

5.5 CONCLUSION

Over nearly thirty years, Percy MacKaye devised a wide variety of performances that reflected and influenced American culture. This examination of the social practices and physical spaces that appeared alongside those dramatic works and their scenographic components helps to better understand these interrelationships. MacKaye remained focused throughout his career on improving America through social action and his career emphasized different social movements – settlement houses, immigration advocacy and reform, the City Beautiful, and the National Parks – that aimed to make America a better place. Like many progressive-minded reforms of the period, however, his actions do not always seem beneficial from a twenty-first century perspective.

Percy MacKaye reached countless Americans throughout his career as a playwright in a range of forms: traditional drama and opera, community masques, a ballad play, and even a civic ritual. He spoke directly to many more Americans as an advocate for or advisor about immigration, urban reform, and preservation. He developed strong relationships with prominent American leaders, most notably President Wilson and his administration, interested in those same issues. Arguably, MacKaye's works rightly have been omitted from most anthologies of American drama, but these plays are highly relevant but heretofore ignored records of American cultural history. His characters, actions, and scenographic images reflect major changes in rural and urban American spaces during the first decades of the twentieth century. A contributor to and follower of these major social movements, Percy MacKaye created dramas and performances that contributed to and reflected dominant American social practice.

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