EDITED BY ANNA HRDINOVÁ AND FILIP KRAJNÍK

RESTORATION RESHAPING

SHIFTING FORMS, GENRES AND CONVENTIONS IN LATE 17TH AND EARLY 18TH CENTURY ENGLISH THEATRE

KAROLINUM



Restoration Reshaping: Shifting Forms, Genres and Conventions in Late 17th and Early 18th Century English Theatre

Anna Hrdinová
Filip Krajník
(eds.)

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KAROLINUM PRESS
Karolinum Press is a publishing department of Charles University
Ovocný trh 560/5, 116 36 Prague 1, Czech Republic
www.karolinum.cz, redakcenk@ruk.cuni.cz

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© Text by Martina Andrisová, Jorge Braga Riera, Lisanna Calvi, Fabio Ciambella, Dita Hochmanová, Anna Hrdinová, Tomáš Kačer, Filip Krajník, Lauren Liebe, Nathan Richards-Velinou, Laura J. Rosenthal, Andrew R. Walkling, Stephen Watkins, 2026
Cover image: Peter Jackson, Audience watching The Country Wife by William Wycherley. © Look and Learn
Layout by Jan Šerých
Set by Karolinum Press
First edition

A catalogue record for this book is available from the National Library of the Czech Republic.

This volume was supported by the Czech Science Foundation project GA19-07494S 'English Theatre Culture 1660–1737.'

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ISBN 978-80-246-6282-4
ISBN 978-80-246-6283-1 (pdf)

https://doi.org/10.14712/9788024662831

The original manuscript was reviewed by Elaine Hobby (Loughborough University, United Kingdom) and Gabriella Hartvig (University of Pécs, Hungary).



Charles University
Karolinum Press

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tion Shakespeare (CUP, 2023). His chapter on Restoration and 18th-century playbooks for the three-volume *Cambridge History of Punctuation in English Literature* (CUP) is forthcoming. He currently serves as Book Review Editor for *Restoration: Studies in Literature and Culture, 1660–1700*.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The origins of this volume lie in the research project 'English Theatre Culture 1660–1737,' funded by the Czech Science Foundation (GA ČR), which was conducted at the Department of Theatre Studies, Faculty of Arts, Masaryk University in Brno, Czech Republic, between the years 2019 and 2023. The project was the first attempt to evaluate critically late early-modern English theatre in the Czech language, with its main outcome being a three-volume anthology of Restoration drama in Czech, offering a representative sample of the English dramaturgy of the period for students of literature and theatre, as well as for Czech theatre practitioners, for whom the anthology was envisioned as a repository of new (that is, previously unknown or inaccessible) material for the stage.

Besides this ambition, the project also sought to examine Restoration theatre from multiple perspectives. One of them focused on Restoration theatre as a multi-genre phenomenon, taking into consideration not just the 'literary' genres of late early-modern drama, which had been frequently anthologised and studied, but also 'theatrical' genres, which had been traditionally, if not neglected, certainly overshadowed by the former in literary and theatre histories. These included musical drama, afterpieces, pantomime, puppet theatre, and others. Another pillar of our research was the transnational perspective, which deemed Restoration theatre not solely as part of English national culture, but as a phenomenon belonging to a broader international theatre tradition, with both English and Continental elements mixing together and shaping what eventually became one of the most exciting and vibrant epochs of European theatre.

The present volume is based on two international symposia on Restoration theatre which were organised as part of our research project. The first one was titled 'Forms, Genres and Conventions' and took place in October 2020; the second, 'Theatre, Society and Politics,' took place in April 2021. While originally envisioned as conferences with guests physically meeting in Brno, the coronavirus pandemic put an end to our plans and forced us to hold virtual conferences instead. Despite this, the on-line sessions proved successful beyond expectations. Had it not been for the on-line form, we would probably not have hosted so many participants from so many countries, who offered their research on Restoration theatre and its various contexts from

a wide variety of perspectives, including theatre history, the study of genres and their development, political history, theatre adaptation, gender studies, and even linguistics. The individual chapters in this volume are drawn from the papers which were presented at the on-line symposia, as well as from the fruitful discussions which ensued.

Apart from all the contributors, we would like to thank our colleagues from the 'English Theatre Culture 1660–1737' project, namely Pavel Drábek, David Drozd, Klára Škrobánková, and Kristýna Janská, who helped us organise the on-line events and whose research and ideas shaped the present volume in significant ways. Our gratitude also belongs to Tomáš Kačer, head of the Department of English and American Studies, Faculty of Arts at Masaryk University, who was unflinching in his support for our endeavours and kindly provided us with all resources necessary for the completion and publication of this book. We would also like to thank Elaine Hobby and Gabriella Hartvig for their insightful comments on an early version of the manuscript of this volume, and Matthew Nicholls for copyediting the whole text. Our biggest thanks go to the Czech Science Foundation, without whose financial support our project and the publication of this volume would not have been possible.

INTRODUCTION

ANNA HRDINOVÁ, FILIP KRAJNÍK

On April 23, 1661, Charles II, son of the executed King Charles I, was officially crowned King of England, Scotland, and Ireland in Westminster Abbey. On the day before, Charles staged the grand five-hour procession from the Tower of London through the city to the Whitehall Banqueting House with four allegorical arches, speeches, and songs which 'emphasised Charles's legitimate Stuart lineage and the return of maritime supremacy, peace and concord.'[1] The show was a signal to the subjects that, after almost two decades of the civil wars and a failed republican experiment, royal authority and royal splendour had returned to the country. One of the witnesses of the procession, the English politician, diarist, and avid theatregoer Samuel Pepys, noted that it was 'impossible to relate the glory of this day, expressed in the clothes of them that rid, and their horses and horses-clothes,' maintaining that 'so glorious was the show with gold and silver, that we were not able to look at it, our eyes at last being so much overcome with it.'[2] For the coronation ceremony itself, tiered seating was constructed in the transepts of the Abbey, turning the place into a theatre of a kind and the coronation into a lavish and carefully scripted production. The preparations for the ceremony took longer than usual – almost a year (Queen Elizabeth was crowned a century before within two months of her accession to the throne) – and the cost of the event was more than 12,000 pounds, approximately two million pounds in 2025's currency. Tabitha Barber maintains that both the procession and the coronation were 'popular spectacles that signalled the ceremonial solemnity of majesty, its semi-divine nature, and its colour, vitality and wonder.'[3] The new King Charles was certainly a man of show and ostentatious pomp – a feature evident in his relationship to the theatre as an institution.

More than eight months before his coronation – and less than three months after his return to his homeland from forced exile – King Charles officially sanctioned the restoration of English theatre, issuing a grant to his

1 T. Barber, 'Restoration', in T. Barber (ed.), *British Baroque: Power and Illusion*, London, Tate Publishing, 2020, p. 15.

2 S. Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. H. B. Wheatley, vol. 2, London, G. Bell and Sons, 1923, pp. 16–17.

3 Barber, 'Restoration', p. 15.

courtiers Thomas Killigrew and William Davenant, which provided them with

> full power and authority to erect two companies of players . . . and to purchase, builde, and erect . . . two houses or theatres with all convenient roomes and other necessaries therunto appertayning, for the representation of tragydies, comedyes, playes, operas, and all other entertainments of that nature.[4]

This happened after an eighteen-year hiatus of official theatre productions in London. A whole generation of Londoners had grown up without seeing a dramatic production in a public theatre house. In the meantime, several pre-Revolution plays had at least been published in print, including the opulent Beaumont and Fletcher folio in 1647, containing thirty-five dramas attributed to the duo; works by Shakespeare, on the other hand, had largely faded from living memory, with only three of his plays seeing print during the Interregnum.[5]

The re-opening of London theatres was in many respects a revolution rather than a continuation with the previous tradition. The King and his brother, the Duke of York (the future King James II), became the sole patrons of the new playhouses, with the King being especially involved in the theatre – be it as its regular visitor, a suggester of plots for new plays, or a great admirer of actresses, several of whom he took as mistresses. Rather than the popular theatre of Shakespeare's period, which sought to accommodate all the strata of Renaissance society, Restoration theatre was primarily an upper-class entertainment with a direct link to the contemporaneous politics (and morality) of the court. That English theatre remained even in the following decades particularly sensitive to the political climate in the country – and largely dependent on the favour of the monarch and the government – could be seen in the theatres' response to the Exclusion Crisis (1678–1682), a politically turbulent period which, however, helped to consolidate Shakespeare's reputation in the late 17th century,[6] or in the wake of the Hanoverian accession to the British throne, when competing London theatres ostensibly expressed their loyalty to the new regime and accused the other of the opposite.[7] After all, the Licencing Act of 1737, which brought theatres under strict government

4 Quoted in P. Fitzgerald, *A New History of the English Stage from the Restoration to the Liberty of the Theatres*, vol. 1, London, Tinsley Brothers, 1882, pp. 23–24.

5 See E. Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence: Politics, Print and Alteration, 1642–1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018, p. 17.

6 See L. Biagiotti, 'From Shakespeare to Titus Oates: Exclusion Crisis and Canonisation', in C. D. Baschiera and J. Everson (eds.), *Scenes of Change: Studies in Cultural Transition*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 1996, pp. 253–265; Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence*, pp. 150–170.

7 See J. Loftis, *The Politics of Drama in Augustan England*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963, pp. 63–69.

control and effectively ended the (post-)Restoration period of English theatre culture, was a direct response to the perceived threat of political and social commentary on the stages, especially that of political satire aimed at the King and the government.

Most importantly, however, the Restoration period introduced novelties to the public stage which have remained staples of English theatre since. Even in 1660, it appears that both Killigrew and Davenant's companies began to employ actresses – as opposed to the previous practice when female roles in English public theatres were played by boys and young men. When in 1662, King Charles issued revised patents for Killigrew and Davenant, giving permission 'that all the women's parts to be acted in either of the said two companies from this time to come may be performed by women,'[8] he probably just approved the status quo. Naturally, the advent of 'authentic' female players lent the stages a whole new spirit, not just because of the physical presence of the female body in front of the eyes of the (predominantly male) audiences; indeed, the actresses occasioned new dramatic possibilities explored by the playwrights. While pre-Interregnum plays were newly revised to give more space to female characters (such as John Dryden and William Davenant's 1667 adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which gives Prospero not one, but two daughters, and adds a sister to Caliban and a female companion to Ariel), new plays often emphasised 'the subjects of family, love and marriage,'[9] with female roles often written with specific actresses in mind. The advent of the first professional female playwrights was not long in coming: in 1670, Aphra Behn's first play, *The Forc'd Marriage*, premiered at the Duke's Theatre, paving the way for authors such as Mary Pix, Catharine Trotter Cockburn, and Susanna Centlivre, who burst on to the Restoration and 18th-century dramatic scene and brought to it themes and perspectives which had previously been missing on male-dominated English stages.

Another theatrical novelty of the Restoration was, of course, the playhouses themselves. With most of the pre-Interregnum theatres destroyed after their 1642 closure by Parliament, Killigrew and Davenant urgently needed new homes for their companies. While both of them leased and reconstructed former tennis courts in Vere Street and Lincoln's Inn Fields, respectively, Davenant, the more resourceful and innovative of the two, decided to follow the Continental lead and equipped his new theatre with movable and changeable scenery. When in June 1661, Davenant's theatre opened with two parts of his own heroic play *The Siege of Rhodes*, he was able to present it with 'new

8 Quoted in Fitzgerald, *A New History of the English Stage*, vol. 1, p. 77.

9 J. I. Marsden, 'Rewritten Women: Shakespearean Heroines in the Restoration', in J. I. Marsden (ed.), *The Appropriation of Shakespeare: Post-Renaissance Reconstructions of the Works and the Myth*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1991, p. 43.

Scenes and Decorations, being the first that e're were Introduc'd in *England*.'[10] Killigrew, whose much simpler playhouse in Vere Street could not compete with Davenant's, was forced to move to Bridges Street, where he, in May 1663, opened the first purpose-built scenic theatre in the country, 'one of a series to bear the distinguished name of Drury Lane' (at the rear of the theatre).[11] This step from the Renaissance anti-illusionist scene towards theatrical realism had far-reaching ramifications for the whole of Restoration dramaturgy. The settings and scenery were no longer created verbally as in the times of Shakespeare, but were rather explicitly shown, which was a marked change of not only scenic, but also textual dramaturgy and the general understanding of the relationship between the word and the stage on which it is pronounced. The newly introduced painted backgrounds, with additional stage machinery and effects, contributed to the 'spectacular' quality of Restoration theatre, on the one hand, and helped to create a sense of familiarity and intimacy for the fictional worlds, on the other. Retrospectively, the stage machinery re-defined old plays which were now revived with Restoration theatrical conditions in mind (when on 24 August 1661, Pepys saw a production of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* by Davenant's company, he noted that the play was 'done with scenes very well');[12] prospectively, it allowed for the rapid development of previously unknown or unemployed genres, such as operas and pantomimes.

To these, a number of other new developments may be added which shaped the English theatrical space and the theatre culture of the time. In the Restoration period, the first theoretical reflections on dramatic art were published in the English language, with Thomas Rymer and John Dryden as the pioneers of English theatre criticism; towards the end of the 17th century, written polemics, such as Jeremy Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, stirred controversies and debates about the theatre's purpose, marking a shift from often irreverent social satire to more 'moral' dramatic forms. From these (and other) debates, a notion of an English national theatre canon ultimately began to emerge, cementing the perceived status of 'high' dramatic works and authors. In the first years of the 18th century, the first periodicals also started appearing, in which theatrical productions were regularly commented on and advertised; in 1710, playwrights rather than printers were for the first time granted rights for the reproduction of their works by the so-called Statute of Anne, laying the foundation for modern copyright law and the notion of intellectual property belonging to the author; and in the first decades of the 18th century,

10 J. Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. M. Summers, London, The Fortune Press, 1928, p. 20.

11 W. Van Lennep, E. L. Avery, and A. H. Scouten (eds.), *The London Stage 1660–1800, Part 1: 1660–1700*, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1965, p. xxxvi.

12 Pepys, *The Diary*, vol. 2, p. 82.

especially after the opening of John Rich's theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields in 1714, the modern conception of popular commercial theatre was effectively born, causing a creative boom and an appearance of new theatre forms in the context of fierce competition between London playhouses. All these factors had a large impact on (post-)Restoration dramaturgy, making the period an immensely vibrant and exciting time for English theatre culture, marked by innovations, artistic experiments, and a (re-)definition of the rules for actors, playwrights, theatre managers, and audience members alike. Many of the changes that occurred during these decades are, in some shape or form, still valid in the theatre sphere today, and are taken for granted.

The present volume explores the English theatre culture between the restoration of the theatres in 1660 and the Licencing Act of 1737, while occasionally making excursuses into preceding or following periods to provide a fuller understanding of the discussed issues. By the term 'theatre culture' we mean not solely the dramatic texts and theatre productions of the time, but also the social, political, cultural, and economic milieu which shaped what was going on inside the theatre houses, while simultaneously being shaped by it. As Anna Hrdinová maintains in her chapter, late early-modern English theatre 'had the capacity to participate in the broader discussion of public affairs of the period that reached far beyond the space of London playhouses.' Aware of the inseparability of the theatre (or any cultural phenomenon, for that matter) from its contexts, the present volume aims at creating a picture of English Restoration theatre which goes beyond a literary discussion of individual works from the period and rather places them in broader contemporaneous situations in which they gain new meanings and relevance, consequently giving us a better understanding of the trends and tendencies in Restoration theatre and its development.

The individual chapters in this volume could be divided into several groups according to broader themes which are, to a great extent, typical of the Restoration theatre culture, namely: issues related to dramatic genres and genre experimentations of Restoration playwrights and theatre managers; adaptation and appropriation for the stage and the motivations and techniques of individuals adaptors; the reflection of contemporaneous politics on Restoration stages; and sex and gender and their representation on and off the stage.

A theme that permeates the whole volume is the rich array of genres which appeared on Restoration stages, greatly surpassing just raunchy comedies of manners which have been often seen as synonymous with Restoration dramaturgy as a whole. Using the parallel of 20th-century Hollywood studios, Stephen Watkins, in his chapter, demonstrates how Restoration dramatic genres – namely, heroic plays of the 1660s and 1670s – were shaped by

the material conditions of the theatre industry of the time, by the commercial competition between the theatre companies, as well as by the distinct dramaturgical styles which the two theatres of the time developed. Lisanna Calvi discusses the English Restoration treatment of the myth of Oedipus, compared with, and contrasted to, its classical and French predecessors, pointing out specific features of the Restoration tragedy, as well as the conditions and the cultural and intellectual contexts in which it was staged. Discussing the gender politics of Aphra Behn's comedies, Dita Hochmanová emphasises Restoration expectations regarding the comedy as a genre and how Behn entered contemporaneous debates about both the comedic genre and the role of art to justify her writing. Anna Hrdinová focuses on a typically English dramatic genre which stormed London theatres in the late 1720s, namely ballad operas, and how some of them participated in contemporaneous discussions about artistic values and the cultural status of the theatre. As Hrdinová argues, the ballad operas' capacity to participate in such conversations of the time makes them a grand source for our understanding of early 18th-century theatre and its social and cultural importance. Similarly, Filip Krajník discusses the generic variety of early 18th-century theatre (including musical theatre), demonstrating how certain plots and stories could oscillate between genres and what role Shakespearean dramaturgy played in the perceived hierarchy of dramatic forms (the 'high' and the 'low' ones) at the time.

A special category, so to speak, of late early-modern English dramaturgy was the adaptation and appropriation of earlier dramatic works, both domestic and foreign. After all, Gunnar Sorelius maintains that out of 959 performances on record in London theatres between 1660 and 1700 just 473 were of new plays, while 486 were revivals or appropriations of old ones.[13] When the new theatres opened in 1660, the managers had to rely heavily on pre-Interregnum drama, as there was only a handful of new play-texts available at the time; as the notorious conflict between Gerard Langbaine and John Dryden over the issue of plagiarism shows,[14] even in the following decades, Restoration playwrights did not hesitate to draw from the works of their predecessors, whether openly or not. Using Richard Fanshawe's rendition of Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza's *Querer por sólo querer* (as *To Love Only for Love Sake*, translated 1653–1654, printed 1670), Jorge Braga Riera observes how drama from the Spanish Golden Age was translated into English in both the pre-Restoration and Restoration eras, focusing on the ways in which the translators of these periods treated thematic, poetic, and linguistic features

13 G. Sorelius, *'The Giant Race before the Flood': Pre-Restoration Drama on the Stage and in the Criticism of the Restoration*, Uppsala, Almqvist & Wiksell, 1966, pp. 71–76.

14 For details, see P. Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing for the Stage in England, 1660–1710*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998, pp. 121–128.

of the original *comedias* and what strategies they adopted in their translations. Martina Andrisová demonstrates how Restoration and 18th-century adaptors (namely, John Lacy and David Garrick) treated Shakespearean material to suit the tastes of their audiences and how, in a way, the history of adapting Shakespeare can be seen as epitomising the history of English theatre in the late 17th and 18th centuries. Fabio Ciambella and Andrew R. Walkling discuss Restoration adaptations of plays from the canon of Francis Baumont and John Fletcher – authors more popular on early Restoration stages than Shakespeare – showing how Renaissance dramaturgy was changed by Restoration playwrights for the new political, ideological, and social contexts. While the real motivations of Restoration adaptors remain unknown to us, Walkling maintains that contemporaneous attitudes to questions of honour, loyalty, and the sovereign authority of the King played an important role in writing or adapting serious drama of the time. In his aforementioned survey of Shakespearean adaptations of the early 18th century, Krajník demonstrates how Shakespeare's stories – often in radically altered forms – were employed in the 'lesser' popular dramatic genres of the time, in spite of the perceived high status of Shakespeare's works.

As mentioned above, Restoration theatres and dramaturgy were closely related to contemporaneous politics, whether represented by the King, by Parliament, by individual persons associated with the court or the government, or by specific events in the country. Oscar G. Brockett maintains that Charles II 'treated [the theatre] as a royal property to dispose of as he saw fit'[15] and, even in the decades following the Glorious Revolution of 1688 or the Hanoverian Accession to the British throne in 1714, the political sensitivities of and towards the English theatre remained very high. Lauren Liebe demonstrates how playwrights in the mid and late 1660s adapted pre-Interregnum plays (including a lost play about the Spanish Duke of Lerma and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*) to comment on topical court disputes or to explore (and subtly criticise) governmental authority and its use, paving the way for the politicisation of the theatre in later decades. Laura J. Rosenthal discusses yet another rewriting of an earlier play, Charles Sedley's lesser-known comedy based of Terence's *Eunuchus* titled *Bellamira, or The Mistress*. In her chapter, Rosenthal proposes that the delineation of certain characters, together with the treatment of the themes of rape and slavery, are Sedley's veiled denunciation of King James II's immorality in his private affairs, as well as his governorship of the slave-trading Royal African Company.

Another great theme of the Restoration period on and off the stage was concerns related to gender and sexuality, and their subjectivity and dynamics.

15 O. G. Brockett and F. J. Hildy, *History of the Theatre*, 10th ed., Harlow, Pearson, 2014, p. 212.

Apart from the employment of professional actresses, non-aristocratic women were for the first time allowed a public voice – something that Virginia Woolf famously refers to in her essay *A Room of One's Own*, in which she maintains that 'all women together ought to let flowers fall upon the tomb of Aphra Behn . . . for it was she who earned them the right to speak their minds.'[16] In her chapter, Dita Hochmanová, however, argues that, despite her reputation as a female rake, Behn saw drawbacks in the libertine ideology and, being aware of the societal restrictions imposed on women and their desires, warned them in her works against openly expressing their sexuality. According to Hochmanová, Behn 'felt compelled to explore what opportunities women could possibly find to engage in satisfactory relationships with men and their public world.' In his aforementioned chapter, Ciambella studies the language of central female and male characters in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Bonduca* and their counterparts in George Powell's Restoration operatic adaptation of the Jacobean play, maintaining that the Restoration adaptor 'masculinised' the eponymous female character, while visibly 'feminising' the character of general Caratach, thus complicating the more straightforward gender dynamics of the Renaissance model. Indeed, as Nathan Richards-Velinou demonstrates, the issue of both male and female identity was a complex and multi-layered one. Discussing John Dryden and William Davenant's adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, which, in contrast to its model, contains a number of additional male and female characters to explore the social and physical boundaries of gender, Richards-Velinou shows how masculine and feminine identities were gradually formed on the gendered Restoration stage and how the individual characters were introduced to 'the logic of socialised gender' in order to conform to the normative social order, as understood by late early-modern English audiences.

Finally, as a form of epilogue to this volume, Tomáš Kačer addresses the issue of staging Restoration drama for modern audiences and writing new plays about the Restoration period, demonstrating the ongoing fascination for Restoration theatre – with all the topics mentioned above – not only on the part of literary and theatre historians, but also of modern playwrights, theatre practitioners, and theatregoers. As Kačer maintains, a modern production of a Restoration play is an archaeological endeavour of a kind, recreating period techniques and devices, while presenting them as a historical artefact in modern contexts. By analysing three recent biographical plays set in the Restoration period, Kačer argues for the ongoing relevance of Restoration dramaturgy for modern theatre practice, as well as contemporary audiences,

16 V. Woolf, *A Room of One's Own*, ed. D. Bradshaw and S. N. Clarke, Chichester, Wiley-Blackwell, 2015, p. 49.

who are – just like their Restoration counterparts centuries before – served 'wonderful spectacles worth watching.'

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COMPETING HEROES?
GENRE, REPERTORY, AND RIVALRY ON THE EARLY RESTORATION STAGE

STEPHEN WATKINS

The patent monopoly (or, more properly, duopoly) awarded to William Davenant and Thomas Killigrew by Charles II in the early 1660s would profoundly affect the relationship between their respective theatre companies – Davenant's Duke's Company and Killigrew's King's Company – for the next twenty years or more. While authorising both men to establish and manage a London playhouse, the patents simultaneously prohibited anyone else from doing so. The suppression of all other competition meant that Davenant and Killigrew in effect operated as a kind of professional cartel, colluding with each other to ensure their dominance of the theatrical marketplace. They set ticket prices for their audiences as well as salary scales for their employees; they restricted the transfer of actors from one company to another, unless by the managers' mutual agreement; and together they determined what quantity and type of product (i.e. plays) they would bring to market, timing each release for maximum saturation and profitability.[1] Through an aggressive campaign to enforce their hard-won domination of the industry, by 1667 the patentees had successfully seen off all outside competition.[2] They had also developed an impressive repertory of box-office hits.

Theatre historians regularly identify commercial competition between the two companies as a significant factor in the kinds of plays that entered the repertory in the 1660s. As Robert D. Hume summarises: 'The importance of competition to the writing and staging of new plays can hardly be overemphasized. When two companies competed vigorously, quite a lot of new plays got staged each year.'[3] Certainly, the need to build and retain a loyal audience meant that each company sought to outdo their rival by staging as many plays as they could manage that would appeal to the highest number of London's theatregoing public. A 'disinclination . . . to engage in serious

1 For details of the patents, see J. Milhous, *Thomas Betterton and the Management of Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1695–1708*, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1979, pp. 3–25.

2 On the battle with George Jolly between 1660 and 1667, see J. Milhous and R. D. Hume (eds.), *A Register of English Theatrical Documents, 1660–1737*, 2 vols, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, vol. 1, 1991, nos. 51, 179, 183, 188, 223, 224, 372, and 381.

3 R. D. Hume, 'Theatres and Repertory', in J. Donohue (ed.), *The Cambridge History of British Theatre*, vol. 2: *1660–1895*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 54.

competition' was not yet a major feature of either company's managerial policies, as it would become in the 18th century.[4] However, it is my contention in this chapter that, rather than going head-to-head each day with the express aim of putting the other out of business, Davenant and Killigrew did indeed venture into an uneasy alliance soon after they received their patents, devising complementary but distinctive dramaturgical house styles in order to safeguard their shared dominance of the industry and thus their mutual commercial viability going forward. This can be seen most clearly in how each company contributed to the development of the most popular genre of the 1660s and early 1670s: the Restoration heroic play. In what follows, I argue that previous accounts of the heroic play have focused too narrowly on issues of literary critical interest – to put it crudely, on playwrights and politics – at the expense of situating the plays within the commercial context of the theatres as competing businesses. In an effort to counter this imbalance, I draw on theories of popular genres taken from film studies to demonstrate how the heroic play *qua* theatrical genre functions as what Emma Smith terms 'an under-recognized generic engine' within a complex industrial process – one that affirms commercial ties between the two patent companies while simultaneously consolidating their respective positions within a burgeoning entertainment industry.[5] Just as the Hollywood studios of the classical period (*c*. 1920–1960) enjoyed ultimate creative control over which genres were established, promoted, and retained, and along what lines, so too were the two playing companies during the opening decade of the Restoration responsible for how staple genres of the repertory like the heroic play evolved. Before exploring these analogies further, however, it will be helpful to survey the various ways in which earlier critics have attempted to define and taxonomise the genre of the heroic play.

THE RESTORATION HEROIC PLAY AND ITS CRITICS

Understanding the heroic play to be a form of 'serious' drama, critics have defined and circumscribed it in structural and textual terms, pointing out features common to each of the plays taken to constitute it, such as love-and-honour plots; larger than life protagonists; exotic locations; stylised, elevated verse and ranting dialogue; and a self-conscious theatricality in its reliance on scenery and machine technologies, song and dance, and elaborate costume. For example, Eugene M. Waith defines the heroic play by the greatness of its

4 See J. Milhous and R. D. Hume, 'The London Theatre Cartel of the 1720s: British Library Additional Charters 9306 and 9308', *Theatre Survey*, vol. 26, no. 1, 1985, p. 21.

5 E. Smith, 'Genres: Cinematic and Early Modern', *Shakespeare Bulletin*, vol. 32, no. 1, 2014, p. 27.

idealised protagonist.[6] Cecil V. Deane, on the other hand, sees it primarily as an aesthetic mode, signalled by its use of the heroic couplet and its appeal to neoclassical standards.[7] More recently, commentators have been inclined to explore the genre's social, cultural, and political functions, excavating the various ideological perspectives represented within the plays. Nancy Klein Maguire, J. Douglas Canfield, Derek Hughes, Rachel Willie, and Niall Allsopp, for example, all see the heroic play as essentially concerned with promoting or critiquing royalist ideologies for a post-1660 audience.[8]

That these critics have identified the genre of the heroic play either through formalist or functionalist approaches reminds us that genres are not pre-existing, naturally occurring categories within literary history, but are rather critical tools of analysis in their own right. In his classic study of literary genres, Alastair Fowler remarks that 'genres have to do with identifying and communicating rather than with defining and classifying. We identify the genre to interpret the exemplar.'[9] In other words, genres provide us with workable strategies for reading the elements and structuring principles of a given text with a view to saying something meaningful about it. Brian Corman cites Fowler approvingly in his study of Restoration comedy, arguing that membership of a particular dramatic genre is ultimately 'determined by comparison and relation' to other texts in order to generate critical interpretations.[10] Genres, he concludes, 'are nothing more – or less – than constructs made by writers, readers, audiences, and critics.'[11] In this way, genres are in some sense always retrospective formulations; that is, they are externally determined categories applied to a text only after the process of interpretation has begun.

It is certainly the case that the heroic play is such an externally determined genre (what Corman calls an 'institutional' genre). This process arguably began as early as 1672, when John Dryden sought to chart the genre's history back to Davenant's 1650 poem *Gondibert* in his essay 'Of Heroique Playes.' Robert D. Hume's comments on the capriciousness of the term 'heroic drama'

6 E. M. Waith, *Ideas of Greatness: Heroic Drama in England*, London, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971.
7 C. V. Deane, *Dramatic Theory and the Rhymed Heroic Play*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1931.
8 N. Klein Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy, 1660–1672*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992; J. D. Canfield, *Heroes & States: On the Ideology of Restoration Tragedy*, Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 2000; D. Hughes, *Dryden's Heroic Plays*, London, Macmillan Press, 1981; R. Willie, *Staging the Revolution: Drama, Reinvention and History, 1647–72*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2015; N. Allsopp, *Poetry and Sovereignty in the English Revolution*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2020.
9 A. Fowler, *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genres and Modes*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1982, p. 38.
10 B. Corman, *Genre and Generic Change in English Comedy, 1660–1710*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1993, p. 8.
11 Corman, *Genre and Generic Change*, p. 7.

similarly make clear the importance of the modern critic in establishing the genre's parameters for literary analysis:

> How cohesive is 'heroic drama'? Plainly this depends on your definition. Is a prosperous ending necessary? If so, what is Orrery's *Mustapha*? Is a villain-centred play truly heroic? I would say no – not unless a character of virtue figures prominently in contrast, as in *Tyrannick Love*. Does opera count – and if not, do we ignore *The Siege of Rhodes*? Is rhyme a *sine qua non*?[12]

As Hume sees it, each critic must decide on the criteria by which they themselves will define 'heroic drama' and proceed to select and exclude individual plays accordingly. For Hume, the heroic genre does not exist *a priori* to the act of analysis itself. Nor can we simply accept contemporary designations on title pages and in critical prefaces and essays like Dryden's: as Corman reminds us, 'genre critics cannot depend on seventeenth-century playwrights and critics to provide them with coherent and consistent models.'[13]

In making their selections, recent commentators most frequently take an author-centric approach to the heroic play, charting the ways each playwright builds on the work of their predecessors to advance increasingly complex ideas. Derek Hughes neatly illustrates this approach in outlining the life cycle of the heroic play: 'Overall, one may distinguish three stages: Davenant and Orrery; Dryden, who deals sceptically with the values, and the political events, that Orrery simply endorses; and the host of new dramatists who take their lead from *The Conquest of Granada* but transform drama to reflect the growing sense of political crisis.'[14]

Here, Hughes summarises a view of the genre's development first articulated in an extremely influential intervention by Laura Brown in *English Dramatic Form: An Essay in Generic History* (1981). Brown insists that over the course of a decade or so the heroic play 'evolves from a rigid, straightforward, aesthetically simple, and ideologically sanguine version of the form to an increasingly problematic and complex one.'[15] Examining first Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes* (1656; 1661) and the works of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery, Brown argues that these two playwrights utilise an elevated, artificial rhetorical style that ultimately betrays them as ideologically conservative, uncritically endorsing the celebratory royalism of the Restoration by presenting

12 R. D. Hume, *The Development of English Drama in the Late Seventeenth Century*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1976, pp. 192–193.

13 Corman, *Genre and Generic Change*, p. 6.

14 D. Hughes, 'Heroic Drama and Tragicomedy', in S. J. Owen (ed.), *A Blackwell Companion to Restoration Drama*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2008, p. 209.

15 L. Brown, *English Dramatic Form: An Essay in Generic History*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1981, p. 4.

characters who sacrifice their personal desires – love, power, wealth – to their duty to the rightful sovereign, thus endorsing the dominant political culture of the period. Next comes John Dryden with plays such as *The Indian Queen* (written with Robert Howard in 1663), *The Indian Emperour* (1665), *Tyrannick Love* (1669), and the two parts of *The Conquest of Granada* (1672). In this second stage, Dryden works to complicate Davenant and Orrery's perspective by introducing characters 'whose radical individualism actually challenges the royalist status quo.'[16] Her prime example here is Almanzor from *The Conquest of Granada*, who represents a direct challenge to King Boabdelin's authority: 'Obey'd as Soveraign by thy Subjects be, / But know, that I alone am King of me.'[17]

Establishing the genre's final phase is, admittedly, more challenging, but both Brown and Hughes are typical in designating this a post-*Conquest* phase in which the heroic play reaches the limits of its ideological assumptions. For Brown, this stage is exemplified by Nathaniel Lee's early plays *Sophonisba* (1675) and *Gloriana* (1676), which work to 'produce a sense of judgmental incoherence and instability,' meaning that evaluation of characters and their situations remains indeterminate to the end.[18] Other critics may quibble about which other plays can be deemed heroic on these grounds – might we include Elkanah Settle's *Cambyses* (1671) or Aphra Behn's *Abdelazar* (1676), for example? – but the genre's decline is universally located in the late 1670s, coinciding with the rise of the more affective mode of pathetic tragedy as typified by the mature works of Lee and Thomas Otway.[19]

These accounts are compelling and have remained the standard view since their publication. Yet, this generic history is at times contradictory and fails to consider how the material conditions of the theatre industry during this period affected, and was in turn affected by, the development of the heroic play. On the one hand, these critics emphasise a teleological progression that apparently occurs across the period – from simplicity and coherence to complexity and incoherence. On the other, they contend that an incessant ground-note undergirds the heroic play right through its life cycle in its use of 'simple, static, and flat characters who are presented in repeated, stylized episodes.'[20] Davenant may be blindly royalist where Lee is full of political

16 Brown, *English Dramatic Form*, p. 22.

17 J. Dryden, *The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards, The First Part*, in J. Loftis and D. S. Rodes (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 11, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1978, 1.1.205–206.

18 Brown, *English Dramatic Form*, p. 24.

19 See, for example, Hume, *Development*, pp. 197–199, 202–205; A. Righter [Barton], 'Heroic Tragedy', in J. R. Brown and B. Harris (eds.), *Restoration Theatre*, Stratford-Upon-Avon Studies 6, London, Edward Arnold, 1965, p. 135; E. Rothstein, *Restoration Tragedy: Form and the Process of Change*, Madison, The University of Wisconsin Press, 1967, pp. 77–110.

20 Brown, *English Dramatic Form*, p. 25.

ambiguity, but the heroic action in both, Brown argues, 'is relatively regular and consistent.'[21] More fundamentally, these accounts fail to address the fact that these writers wrote for different companies: Davenant wrote for his own Duke's Company, while Dryden and Lee were commissioned by Killigrew for the Theatre Royal at Drury Lane. Orrery's plays were produced at both houses across the mid to late 1660s.[22]

Current scholarship, then, has tended to read the heroic play through its authors and their supposed preoccupation with certain ideological positions, while disregarding the material and commercial conditions that inevitably feed into their working practices. Such approaches are flawed, it seems to me, for three fundamental reasons. First, they rely on pre-determined selections of plays, without accounting for the larger repertory (and consequent commercial rivalry) of which they form a relatively small part. Second, they are too focused on trends and similarities across plays of the same period, without paying due attention to the differences, even across works by the same playwright, thus flattening out local variation and innovation in favour of repetition and conservatism. Third, such approaches wilfully ignore the extrinsic, contingent elements of theatrical production that may determine the development of a particular play, and consequently of the entire dramatic genre, such as audience response, technological capacity, casting, economics, political events, and so on. We therefore require a more agile, responsive, and elastic theory of dramatic genre than that employed by earlier scholars if we are properly to understand the heroic play, its development, and its place within the theatrical marketplace. Rather than seeing the heroic play as a specifically *literary* phenomenon, I propose that we see it rather in terms of the development of the theatre industry itself.

BETWEEN FORMULA AND SHOWMANSHIP: CINEMATIC GENRES

Film studies offers an intriguing alternative to the 'restrictive and normative' theory of genre usually propounded by literary critics.[23] Acknowledging that genre 'is not your average descriptive term, but a complex concept with multiple meanings,' Rick Altman sets out four ways in which genre might be

21 Brown, *English Dramatic Form*, p. 25. Nancy Klein Maguire also sees continuity where others have detected change, as when, for example, she writes that 'Dryden's rhymed heroic plays follow Orrery's and are thus tidily developmental' (*Regicide and Restoration*, p. 11).

22 For Orrery's relationship with the theatre companies, see W. Smith Clark II's 'Historical Preface' in R. Boyle, *The Dramatic Works of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery*, ed. W. Smith Clark II, 2 vols, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, vol. 1, 1937, pp. 24–48.

23 E. Buscombe, 'The Idea of Genre in American Cinema', *Screen*, vol. 11, no. 2, 1970, p. 34.

conceived in relation to cinema: first, genre as *blueprint*, as 'a formula that precedes, programmes and patterns industry production'; second, genre as *structure*, 'as the formal framework on which individual films are founded'; third, genre as *label*, 'as the name of a category central to the decisions and communications of distributors and exhibitors'; and finally, genre as *contract*, 'as the viewing position required by each genre film and its audience.'[24] We can agree that the Restoration heroic play has been identified using the last three of these aspects of genre theory – as structure (in its shared plots, characters, iconography, and so on), as label (as identified on title pages and in prefatory essays), and as contract (in the ways it endorses or challenges certain ideological positions for audiences). 'What cinematic genre studies brings afresh to the field' of early-modern theatre studies, writes Emma Smith, is 'the stress on genre as a blueprint for industrial production.'[25] It is the idea of genre-as-blueprint that I want to argue is of most value for historians of Restoration theatre seeking to understand the relationship between the commercial rivalry of the two patent companies and the development of their respective repertories.

Altman argues that genre theory as typically practised is too 'retrospective' to be of any use in establishing the history of a film genre and its corpus. Designating this approach to genre theory the 'Critic's Game,' he argues that it consists of gleaning the existence of a particular genre from industry and critical sources, such as advertisements and reviews, and then analysing the films most identified with that genre to arrive at a workable description of it, before searching for other, lesser-known films that likewise fit that description. Only then does one proceed to begin analysis of the genre *in toto*. The logic of the 'Critic's Game' is thus circular: critics identify a key film of the genre and then proceed to define the genre based on that film. Such a method, as Altman observes, reneges on critics' stated intentions to trace the history of the development of the genre in question in relation to industry decisions. We can observe the same logical fallacy in the approaches to the heroic play in the work discussed above. Brown and Hughes, for example, both pre-select the plays they believe to constitute the genre, using contemporary critical statements like Dryden's to justify their choices, and then work backwards to see how the heroic play developed as it reached its perceived zenith in the 1670s. In Hume's rather *laissez-faire* approach ('it depends on *your* definition . . . *I* would say no'), we can see too the centrality of the critic in establishing the limits of a genre that may not offer the most effective tool for interpretation or historical analysis.

24 R. Altman, *Film/Genre*, London, British Film Institute, 1999, p. 14.
25 Smith, 'Genres', p. 28.

To overcome the theoretical limitations inherent in the 'Critic's Game,' Altman proposes an alternative way of charting the history of a genre's development over time: 'Instead of describing generic origins with terminology developed *post facto* and retroactively applied to early films . . . I examine production decisions in order to determine the types of connection foregrounded and furthered *at the time*.'[26] This 'Producer's Game' starts from the position of the prospective producers who look to make a successful film, rather than the critics who latterly seek to identify or define its genre. Taking an early commercially successful film (the generic prototype), the producer analyses it to discover what made it profitable. The Hollywood director George Stevens described this very process back in 1947:

> Producers, writers and directors have got into the habit of screening over and over again the pictures that have been proved in the past to possess something that made them box office successes. I don't mean that they simply make them over. They break them down into their component elements, study these carefully, and then use them again in different arrangement, as parts of a new story, depending on them to exert the same appeal they did the first time.[27]

Having worked out what elements of the film contributed to its success, the producers proceed to make another film stressing that same formula. The box-office information is then checked, and the formula adjusted to ensure future success; another film is made in turn and the genre as we understand it begins to develop.

Altman uses the Hollywood biopic – a popular genre of the 1930s – to illustrate how the 'Producer's Game' differs from the 'Critic's Game.' Rather than accepting, as other critics have, that the biopic emerged fully formed as a cinematic genre with *Disraeli* in 1929, going on to encompass such classics as *Alexander Hamilton* (1931) and *Voltaire* (1933), Altman shows that *Disraeli* was never conceived by its studio, Warner Bros., as a biopic, 'a non-existent category at the time'; instead, he argues that its producers were simply seeking to appeal to contemporary audience's desires for, among other things, British political history, financial intrigue, and Jewish characters.[28] *Disraeli* was a phenomenal box-office success, but that success was not due to its affiliations with the biopic prior to its production, as the 'Critic's Game' would lead one to suggest. Rather, what Altman shows by playing a version of the 'Producer's Game,' is that the development of the biopic genre was far more

26 Altman, *Film/Genre*, p. 30 (my emphasis).

27 Quoted in David Bordwell, Janet Staiger, and Kristin Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema: Film Style & Mode of Production to 1960*, London, Routledge, 1988, p. 111.

28 Altman, *Film/Genre*, p. 40.

contingent than it was planned and developed only over time and only in retrospect. With each subsequent film, producers sought to imitate and build on those elements of *Disraeli* that were deemed to have contributed to its financial success and critical acclaim, until eventually the new genre of the biopic was discernible, to which *Disraeli* serves as a prototype.

It was, of course, the significant economic pressures of the classic Hollywood studio system that encouraged this kind of production process. As Janet Staiger explains: 'many of Hollywood's production practices result from a tension in the economic practices: a movement toward standardising the product for efficient, economical mass production and a simultaneous movement toward differentiating the product as the firms bid competitively for a consumer's disposable income.'[29] This meant that at the heart of the Hollywood studio system lay a tension between the cost-effectiveness of replicability and the commercial power of innovation – of what MGM producer Hunt Stromberg, in 1938, termed 'formula' on the one hand and 'showmanship' ('something novel, something truly "different"') on the other.[30] As a consequence, audiences (and investors) were far more likely to take a punt on an as-yet-untested novelty confident in the knowledge that the new film resembled others that were enjoyed (and thus returned a profit) in the past. Genre as a standardised formula, as a blueprint for future production, enabled producers and consumers to decide where best to invest their money. The system was designed to ensure that Hollywood's output was 'always diverse,' each film was always new, and thus 'each of its genres always different from one another,' without exposing the studios to unnecessary risk precisely because, 'within its genres, its films are also always similar.'[31]

This repetition-with-variation model led to the creation of film cycles, which Amanda Ann Klein defines as 'a series of films associated with each other through shared images, characters, settings, plots, or themes.'[32] The distinguishing feature of a cycle, as opposed to a genre more broadly, lies in how the shared language of the constituent films is used (their 'pragmatics'); in other words, for Klein, cycles are formed as a direct result of their 'financial viability' and the 'public discourses circulating around them' at the time of their distribution.[33] When a film proved commercially successful, as identified through box-office takings and/or critical acclaim, this would invariably prompt the production of a host of other, similar films that the competing studios hoped would capitalise on the original film's profitability within

29 Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, p. 88.
30 Quoted in Bordwell, Staiger, and Thompson, *The Classical Hollywood Cinema*, p. 110.
31 S. Neale, *Genre and Hollywood*, London, Routledge, 2000, p. 231.
32 A. A. Klein, *American Film Cycles: Reframing Genres, Screening Social Problems, and Defining Subcultures*, Austin, University of Texas Press, 2011, pp. 3–4.
33 Klein, *American Film Cycles*, p. 4.

a short-term timeframe, say within five to ten years. Producers would look to identify which of the features or elements of a successful film it was that yielded the positive results, and then made any required substitutions to the established genre formula in order to replicate the new success as closely as possible. Thus, as a cycle developed, innovations became new standards, and minor differences between films began to alter the overall generic formula.

In the final section of this chapter, I want to approach the genre cycle of the heroic play and subject it to a historically sensitive version of the 'Producer's Game.' By doing so, I hope to show how the industry decisions made by Davenant and Killigrew influenced the development of the genre over the course of a decade.

PLAYING THE PRODUCER'S GAME WITH THE HEROIC PLAY

As we have seen, most critics, including Brown and Hughes, identify Davenant's *The Siege of Rhodes* as the first example of the Restoration heroic play. Initially produced during the Interregnum as a through-composed opera, *Rhodes* was revived in an expanded version as a spoken play for the opening of the Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre in June 1661. Davenant also wrote a second part, to be performed on alternate days alongside it.[34]

Immediately, *Rhodes* proved extremely popular with contemporary audiences: the company's prompter, John Downes, later recorded that 'it continu'd Acting 12 Days without Interruption with great Applause.'[35] Were we playing by the rules of the 'Critic's Game,' we might be tempted to attribute this success to the fact that *Rhodes* displays all of the characteristics of the heroic play as established by later sources, such as Dryden's essay or modern critics' definitions, and that it was the audience's desire for heroic drama itself that ensured *Rhodes*'s place in the repertory of the 1660s. The problem with this is that *Rhodes* is in some significant ways *atypical* of the plays usually designated heroic on literary critical grounds. For example, the play's protagonist, Alphonso, is a private citizen and political outsider rather than an absolutist monarch, as is the case with the bulk of, say, Orrery's or Dryden's heroes. Moreover, while most heroic dramas are understood to engage in questions of conflict, sovereignty, and power, reflecting on the recent civil wars and restoration of the monarchy, *Rhodes* offers very little scope for this kind of ideological wrangling. Finally, despite starting out as an opera in the 1650s,

34 W. Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes: A Critical Edition*, ed. Ann-Mari Hedbäck, Uppsala, University of Uppsala, 1973.

35 J. Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. J. Milhous and R. D. Hume, London, The Society for Theatre Research, 1987, p. 51.

the Restoration production of *Rhodes* affords no opportunity for the kinds of elaborate musical spectacle and masque-like interludes that would come to define the genre's main dramaturgical style, and which was mocked relentlessly by the Duke of Buckingham in his antiheroic parody, *The Rehearsal*, in 1671. *Rhodes* does make extensive use of 'new Scenes and Decorations, being the first that e're were Introduc'd in *England*,' to signify shifts in stage location, but it does not utilise music or machine technologies of other kinds.[36]

Davenant did describe *Rhodes* as an '*heroique Play*' in his preface to the printed edition, but this was not the prototype that both houses would look to imitate in later works.[37] After its initial run, *Rhodes* was revived only infrequently, and never after Davenant's death in 1668. Dryden himself acknowledges that *Rhodes*, while an important step on the way towards heroic drama, was not actually itself a fully-fledged member of the genre:

> As few men have the happiness to begin and finish any new project, so neither did he [Davenant] live to make his design perfect: There wanted the fulness of a Plot, and the variety of Characters to form it as it ought: and, perhaps, something might have been added to the beauty of the stile. All which he would have perform'd with more exactness had he pleas'd to have given us another work of the same nature.[38]

Rhodes's use of moveable scenery, heroic couplets, and a love-and-honour plot were elements that both Davenant and Killigrew as theatre managers looked to take forward into future repertoire because of their popularity with audiences, but its influence on later productions, particularly at Killigrew's Theatre Royal was, as Dryden's comments suggest, minimal. Only Orrery seems to have used it as a direct model. His two early plays, *Henry the Fifth* (performed August 1664?) and *The Generall* (September 1664), written for the Duke's Company and King's Company respectively, could be said to follow *Rhodes* in dramaturgical structure, yet even these seek to make a more urgent intervention in topical political debates than Davenant by presenting audiences with usurping pretenders and absolutist monarchs.

I want to propose, instead, that the generic prototype for the heroic play – the box-office smash that Killigrew and Davenant both sought to imitate and respond to, at least initially – was not *Rhodes* but Howard and Dryden's play, *The Indian Queen* (1664). Just as the genre of the film biopic in the 1920s and 1930s 'was not created until *multiple* studios . . . repeatedly replicated specific biographical elements of the earlier films,' so did the heroic play only

36 Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 51.
37 Davenant, *The Siege of Rhodes*, p. lxxxiii.
38 J. Dryden, 'Of Heroique Playes', in J. Loftis and D. S. Rodes (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 11, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1978, p. 9.

come into full view once both theatres began to produce plays patterned on the same heroic formula.[39] This could only happen after May 7, 1663, when Killigrew's company opened their first scenic theatre at Bridges Street. Prior to this, the King's Company operated out of a converted tennis court on Vere Street, with no scenic technology whatsoever; plays were performed there as they were before 1642. As we have seen, Davenant had been using his scenic stage at Lincoln's Inn Fields since June 1661. Until the spring of 1663, the companies were working with incommensurate theatrical spaces, and therefore could not make use of the same generic formulas.[40]

Staged in January 1664, *The Indian Queen* was an elaborate production that presented audiences with stunning scenic and machine effects (including actors flying in on ropes), music, and costumes. John Evelyn saw it in February, describing it as 'a Tragedie well written, but so beautified with rich Scenes as the like had never ben seene here as happly (except rarely any where else) on a mercenarie Theater.'[41] James Winn notes that the play 'catered to the public taste for spectacle, which the new theatre was finally able to satisfy.'[42] One of the key elements of *The Indian Queen* that most influenced the future production decisions of both company managers was its inclusion of supernatural characters. In 3.2, for example, Zempoalla, the Indian Queen of the title, travels to the 'dismal Cell' of the prophet Ismeron to ask him to summon the God of Sleep and thus reveal 'what strange Fate / Must on her dismal Vision wait.'[43] As the god rises from the trapdoor under the stage, 'Ariel-Spirits' sing from wires above the usurping monarch.[44]

These kinds of supernatural interludes, consisting of music and scenic spectacle, had an immediate impact on the developing repertory. In direct response, Davenant adapted Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, expanding the witches' scenes into elaborate and lengthy musical episodes.[45] This was performed in November 1664, and won much acclaim for the company. The previous September, the Duke's Company had also staged for audiences another Shakespeare adaptation in the form of *The Rivals* (a rewrite of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*). Like

39 Altman, *Film/Genre*, p. 43 (my emphasis).

40 This distinction is hinted at by Samuel Pepys, who in his dairy designates Killigrew's Vere Street establishment as 'the Theatre' and Davenant's Lincoln's Inn Fields as 'the Opera'; see S. Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. R. Latham and W. Matthews, 11 vols, London, Bell & Hyman/Berkeley, University of California Press, 1970–1983.

41 Quoted in W. Van Lennep, E. L. Avery, and A. H. Scouten (eds.), *The London Stage, Part 1: 1660–1700*, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1965, p. 75.

42 J. A. Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1987, p. 145.

43 J. Dryden, *The Indian Queen*, in J. H. Smith and D. MacMillan (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 8, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1965, 3.2.70–71.

44 Dryden, *The Indian Queen*, 3.2.118, s.d.

45 See S. Watkins, 'Heroic Shakespeare at Lincoln's Inn Fields', in A. Eubanks Winkler, C. Fretz, and R. Schoch (eds.), *Performing Restoration Shakespeare*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2023, pp. 38–60.

The Indian Queen and *Macbeth*, this too boasted 'a Very fine Interlude in it, of Vocal and Instrumental Musick, mixt with very Diverting Dances.'[46] At the other playhouse, meanwhile, Killigrew must also have recognised the success he had on his hands because he commissioned Dryden to write a sequel (albeit without Howard's input this time around). In April 1665, the King's Company staged *The Indian Emperour*, which balanced formula and showmanship by presenting the two surviving characters of its precursor, Montezuma and Orazia, along with a set of 'new persons,' and by moving the story forward twenty years.[47] In the interests of giving audiences what they evidently wanted while also seeming to offer up something novel, *The Indian Emperour* reused the original sets and costumes of the earlier production (thus saving vital capital for the company), while providing a new narrative arc for its familiar characters. In Act Two, for example, Montezuma, like Zempoalla before him, visits a 'Magitians Cave' (2.1), is sung at by supernatural spirits, and is even confronted by the Indian queen's ghost in a small cameo role.[48]

What we can glean from this production approach to the heroic play is that, in and around 1664, the two companies were indeed, as Hume suggests, in direct competition with each other, and that this involved many plays not traditionally seen as part of the heroic genre. The 1663–1664 season had been a particularly difficult period for Davenant's company. Despite working with a younger, less experienced cast of actors, and receiving significantly less of the stock of pre-1642 plays to revive in the early days before new scripts could be produced, in 1661 and 1662 Davenant had managed to secure a significant commercial advantage by moving into a functional scenic theatre ahead of his rival. By 1663, however, Killigrew had levelled the field of play, and a new problem started to emerge: one of Davenant's leading actors, Henry Harris, began agitating for more money and threatened to leave for Killigrew's company, in contravention of the patent agreements. It may be that Killigrew himself was behind the ruckus, which was only resolved when Davenant's patron, the Duke of York, directly intervened to prevent the move. Harris, a noted singer and scene painter as well as actor, was eventually placated with a lucrative annuity from the court and the promise of more substantial parts, starting with Cardinal Wolsey in *Henry VIII*, a production also noted for the novelty of its scenery and its investment in new, lavishly expensive

46 Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 55.

47 J. Dryden, *The Indian Emperour, or The Conquest of Mexico by the Spaniards*, in J. Loftis (ed.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 9, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1966, p. 27.

48 For these important conventions that ultimately link Restoration heroic drama to 18th-century opera, see J. A. Winn, 'Heroic Song: A Proposal for a Revised History of English Theatre and Opera, 1656–1711', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 30, no. 2, 1996/1997, pp. 113–137.

costumes.[49] *Henry VIII* went up directly against *The Indian Queen* during the winter of 1663–1664, and while Davenant may have been successful in retaining Harris, there was no doubt that Killigrew's company – because of its latest success – gained the upper hand by the end of the year.[50] Thus, the following season, still jostling to assert their dominance, both managers felt justified in producing plays that made use of supernatural and musical spectacle to compete directly for audiences.

If we continue to play the 'Producer's Game,' however, we discover that the nature of the competition between the two companies shifts in interesting ways after this challenging period. As *The Indian Emperour* reached the stage at Bridges Street, armed with its supernatural interlude, Davenant's company produced a play by that other audience favourite, Orrery, with whom both companies had enjoyed considerable success in the immediate aftermath of *The Indian Queen* a year earlier. No doubt inspired by Killigrew, Davenant commissioned Orrery to write *The Tragedy of Mustapha, the Son of Solyman the Magnificent*, a sort of sequel to his own *Siege of Rhodes*, which had concerned Solyman's siege of the island of Rhodes in 1522. The new play competed directly with Dryden's in April 1665, just as *Henry VIII* and *The Indian Queen* had done the previous season.[51] Like that earlier pairing, this latest choice of repertory served too to highlight the distinctions in house style that were emerging between the theatres. In stark contrast to *The Indian Emperour*, *Mustapha* did not include any supernaturalism, nor did it interrupt the action with music and masque. Rather than make a virtue of recycling extant scenery and costumes, as Killgrew's play had done, Davenant insisted that *Mustapha* should be 'new Cloath'd with new Scenes'; it was also meticulously rehearsed. Sparing no expense with this production, and thereby implicitly accusing Killigrew of unprofessionalism, frugality, and greed, in 1665, Davenant sought to return to the dramaturgical principles of his pre-*Indian Queen* repertory: (non-supernatural) characters caught between personal desire and public duty, heroic couplets, and impressive moveable scenery, all within a broadly historical framework. Downes's comments on the production suggest that he was right to do so: it apparently generated a 'vast Profit' for the company.[52]

From 1665, we see that Killigrew's playhouse began to specialise in extravagant musical spectacular while Davenant's repertory placed more emphasis on characters' relationships and scenic verisimilitude. Partly this was a result of the differing machine technologies available at both theatres.

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49 On Harris, see R. Miyoshi, 'Thomas Killigrew's Early Managerial Career: Carolean Stage Rivalry in London, 1663–1668', *Restoration & 18th-Century Theatre Research*, vol. 27, no. 2, 2012, pp. 15–16.

50 Van Lennep et al., *The London Stage*, pp. 72–75.

51 Van Lennep et al., *The London Stage*, p. 87.

52 Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, p. 58.

As Andrew R. Walkling has demonstrated, Bridges Street not only 'sported impressive changeable scenery on a par with that at Lincoln's Inn Fields,' but it went even further by 'incorporat[ing] the kind of advanced machine technology' used to create special stage effects 'that was not in evidence at the other house.'[53] Killigrew could fly actors and musicians in on wires and cloud machines, while Davenant persisted with the basic wing-and-shutter design used for *Rhodes* and Orrery's early plays. To illustrate the differences in house styles, we can cite two later plays, again, both by Orrery. In October 1667, he wrote *The Black Prince* for Bridges Street, a play which calls in the second act for 'Women and men richly apparell'd' to 'descend to the Stage' in a cloud machine, before 'return[ing] into the Clouds, which insensibly rise, all of them singing until the Clouds are ascended to their full height.'[54] The following year, he wrote *Tryphon* for the Duke's Company, which contained no musical or machine cues of any kind.

Davenant was dead by the time that *Tryphon* was produced, but it speaks eloquently to his eventual approach to the heroic genre. We must not assume, however, that Davenant was belligerently against musical spectacle *tout court*; he was not. He had himself been an expert librettist and producer of masques at the Caroline court in the 1630s. But, after his brief flirtation with heroic spectacle in *Macbeth* and *The Rivals* in the scrum to compete with *The Indian Queen*, he tended to reserve such interludes for comedy. The most noted example is from November 1667 – just a month after the premiere of *The Black Prince* – when he collaborated with Dryden himself on a musical adaptation of *The Tempest*, which did many of the things we associate with King's Company heroic dramas of the period: actors sang, musicians played instruments, and the supernatural spirits, Ariel and Milcha, roamed about the stage (albeit unable to fly as they surely would have done at Bridges Street).

Playing the 'Producer's Game' in this way begins to erode long-held truisms about the heroic play in particular and the Restoration theatre industry in general. Where Brown and Hughes see the heroic play's development as a move from conservativism and simplicity to experiment and complexity, what we find in fact is that the earlier works by the likes of Davenant and Orrery are themselves highly complex, innovative, and experimental, as they seek to reconcile an emerging house style and what most appeals to their audiences. We can think of the plays discussed in this chapter as having been governed by each company's attempt to differentiate its products from those of its competitor, simultaneously enabling spectators to choose between their respective 'brands' while remaining formulaic enough for both theatres to

53 A. R. Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera, 1661–1706*, Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2019, p. 61.
54 R. Boyle, *The Black Prince*, in William Smith Clark II (ed.), *The Dramatic Works of Roger Boyle, Earl of Orrery*, 2 vols, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, vol. 1, 1937, p. 321.

profit from each other's successes as audiences sought to purchase new experiences based on what they had previously enjoyed. The two Restoration theatres thus balanced formula with showmanship. We might pursue a further analogy here between the patent companies and the 'Big Five' studios of the classical Hollywood period (Lowe's Inc./MGM, Paramount, RKO, Twentieth Century Fox, and Warner Bros.), who early on in the industry's development began to operate as a unified economic unit, shutting out other potential competitors. These studios, Douglas Gomery suggests, frequently acted 'like a chronically quarrelsome but closely knit family. Theatrical inter-dependencies guaranteed that if anyone produced a popular film, all members of the Big Five benefitted.'[55] Based on my analysis of the Restoration repertory, Gomery's comments could serve as an apt description of the relationship that Davenant and Killigrew pursued with each other in the early to mid-1660s. With only two theatres legally in operation, audiences were relatively guaranteed, and by offering them works that shared a basic formula but were nuanced with distinctive house styles – supernatural spectacle on the one hand (King's Company), and rhetorically and scenically energised history plays on the other (Duke's Company) – the professed rivalry between the two companies is revealed as what Smith terms a 'mutually beneficial economic pose to generate collective profit.'[56] Together, Davenant and Killigrew succeeded in cornering the theatre market in the 1660s by developing a highly flexible and lucrative generic formula, one that would continue to attract audiences and generate profits for both playhouses well into the 1670s.

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55 D. Gomery, *The Hollywood Studio System*, Basingstoke, Macmillan, 1986, p. 14.

56 Smith, 'Genres', p. 30.

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ADAPTING SHAKESPEARE'S *THE TAMING OF THE SHREW* FOR THE LATE 17TH- AND 18TH-CENTURY ENGLISH STAGE

MARTINA ANDRISOVÁ

After the Civil War broke out in England in 1642, theatre performances were banned and theatres remained closed for eighteen years till the restoration of the English monarchy. This period of the closure of the theatres may be seen as a reason for the formation of adaptation strategies during the Restoration period. The present chapter will focus on two 17th and 18th century adaptations of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* (*c*. 1590). In the discussion, the shift in Shakespeare's status throughout the decades following the reopening of English theatres in 1660 will become apparent, as well as how Shakespeare was 'made fit' for the changing tastes of late early-modern London theatre-going audiences.

In August 1660, after the collapse of the Commonwealth of England and his return to England from exile on the Continent, King Charles II issued patents to Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Davenant, playwrights and courtiers of the Caroline era,

> to erect two companies of players, consistinge respectively of such persons as they shall chuse and appoint, and to purchase, builde, and erect, or hire at their charge, as they shall think fitt, two houses or theatres . . . for the representation of tragydies, comedyes, playes, operas, and all other entertainments of that nature, in convenient places.[1]

Two companies thus came into existence: the King's Company, managed by Killigrew with the ensemble of experienced actors from the Caroline era, and the Duke's Company, which consisted of mainly inexperienced actors and was under the auspices of Davenant. Since no one else could legally perform Shakespeare or other 'legitimate' dramatists,[2] a great rivalry arose between the two companies as a result. The contest for the spectator was manifested, for example, by the implementation of various theatrical innovations[3] and the introduction of actresses on the stage.

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1 Quoted in G. C. D. Odell, *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving*, New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, vol. 1, 1920, p. 7 (ellipsis original).

2 Odell, *Shakespeare from Betterton to Irving*, vol. 1, p. 7.

3 Among the most notable innovations, one may mention interaction between audiences and

The theatre managers, however, did not only want to attract spectators by implementing new theatrical innovations and using actresses to play female parts, but also by the repertory of their playhouses itself. Since there were very few new plays written in the first years following the reopening of the theatres, the companies had to recycle older pieces from the pre-Interregnum era. Moreover, even historical records show that although some new plays were produced, the older pieces were more popular with audiences. Gary Taylor points out that 'in the three years following the resumption of regular theatrical activity in 1660, the London companies . . . performed more than eighty old plays but only nine new ones.'[4] The most popular older pieces were the ones written by the so-called 'happy triumvirate' of Renaissance playwrights – that is, the Beaumont and Fletcher duo, Shakespeare, and Jonson.[5] While Beaumont and Fletcher were the most popular of the trio because 'their wit was characterized by innuendo and double entendre which was typical for the era,'[6] Shakespeare was less appreciated. Dobson maintains that 'Shakespeare is imagined at worst as an artless rustic, at best as an archaic father-king'[7] and although John Dryden maintained that Shakespeare 'was the man who of all Modern and perhaps Ancient Poets, had the largest and most comprehensive soul [i.e. poetic greatness],'[8] he also claimed that Shakespeare's language was seen as archaic, obscure, and unnatural because of his overuse of metaphors.[9]

This is the reason why Restoration adaptors decided to adjust Shakespeare's language and, in their versions of Shakespeare's original plays, 'archaisms are replaced by the restoration's smoother tongue; puns are

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company members, new auditoriums and seating systems, moveable and elaborate scenery, the use of various machines (e.g. the witches in *Macbeth* were flying above the stage) (J. D. Canfield, Introduction to J. D. Canfield (ed.), *Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth Century Drama*, Peterborough, Ontario, Broadview Press, 2001, p. XIV); new stage (G. Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare: A Cultural History from the Restoration to the Present*, New York, Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1989, p. 16); 'increased use of music and spectacle' (S. J. Owen, *Perspectives on Restoration Drama*, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2002, p. 4), etc. For more detailed description of the changes, see the chapter 'Great Innovations' in H. Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved: The Restoration Versions in Quarto and on the Stage*, Cambridge, MA, and London, Harvard University Press, 1927, pp. 32–61.

4 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 24.

5 S. Clark, 'Shakespeare and Other Adaptations', in S. J. Owen (ed.), *A Companion to Restoration Drama*, Malden, Blackwell Publishing, 2001, p. 275. The term 'happy triumvirate' was coined by the poet William Winstanley in 1687.

6 Clark, 'Shakespeare and Other Adaptations', p. 284.

7 M. Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992, p. 13.

8 Quoted in J. I. Marsden, 'Improving Shakespeare: From the Restoration to Garrick', in S. Wells and S. Stanton (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare on Stage*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, p. 22.

9 Owen, *Perspectives on Restoration Drama*, p. 153.

omitted; extravagant passages are pared down and their diction simplified; and, inevitably, the metaphors are literalized, eliminated, or conflated into simple similes.'[10] Marsden also explains that, during the Restoration period, Shakespeare's text

> was not considered sacred because it did not represent an embodiment of his genius. This genius lay instead in his ability to represent general nature, to portray universal characters and to move an audience; these virtues, it was felt, would not be altered if the poetry were rewritten in a more modern idiom, or if the offensive puns and quibbles were quietly edited out.[11]

Shakespeare's language was, therefore, 'purified' and modernised according to Restoration tastes. However, these changes were not the only alterations frequently made to Shakespeare's plays at the time. Another effective way to attract audiences to the theatres was, as Owen points out, 'to increase entertainment-value. This was done by adding music and spectacle . . . Sometimes [it] is increased by adding sex and violence . . . to satisfy audience taste for sexual titillation,' and the incorporation of pity, horror and sensation.[12]

Shakespeare's plays, therefore, 'had to be altered in order to make them marketable.'[13] Since consumer demands and financial considerations were inevitable parts of theatrical productions in the Restoration period,[14] playwrights had to pay attention to the tastes of their audience even though their alterations were often at the expense of the actual refinement or improvement of the specific play. As Dryden at one point admitted, 'I confess I have given too much to the people in it [i.e. the audience], and am asham'd for them as well as for my self, that I have pleas'd them at so cheap a rate.'[15]

RESTORATION OF *THE SHREW*

Shakespeare's early comedy *The Taming of the Shrew* had to be altered for Restoration audiences as well. *Sauny the Scot; or, The Taming of the Shrew*, as the adaptation is called, was first performed by the King's Company on Easter

10 J. I. Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation, & Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory*, Lexington, Kentucky University Press, 1995, p. 67.
11 Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text*, p. 151.
12 Owen, *Perspectives on Restoration Drama*, pp. 148–149.
13 Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text*, p. 13.
14 K. W. Scheil, *The Taste of the Town: Shakespearian Comedy and the Early Eighteenth-Century Theater*, Lewisburg, Bucknell University Press, 2003, pp. 21–22.
15 Quoted in N. K. Maguire, 'Tragicomedy', in D. P. Fisk (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 94.

Tuesday, April 9, 1667. The titular character of Sauny was played by John Lacy, the adaptor himself. The play was performed shortly after the reopening of the theatres, which were closed from June 1665 until late 1666 because of the plague. During this period, the King's Company suffered financially and, therefore, 'depended on Lacy's talents to create and perform in successful comedies.'[16] The reason for this is that, during the Restoration period, the popularity of actors increased and spectators were no longer interested so much in the person of the playwright, as in the Renaissance, but more in the performers on the stage. As Scheil points out, 'a popular actor could [even] . . . secure success for a play.'[17] One such actor of the Restoration period was the already-mentioned John Lacy (1615–1681). According to contemporaneous records and testimonies, Lacy was 'one of the most popular actors of his day'[18] and 'a great favourite with Charles II.'[19] Scheil even maintains that Lacy's adaptation of Shakespeare's play is a great example of 'the power a popular actor had over the theatrical offerings, and the lasting success a play can create when it provides such a star role for a comic actor.' [20] That may be the reason why Sauny, a counterpart of Petruchio's servant Grumio from Shakespeare's play, is in Lacy's adaptation elevated from a minor role in the original *The Taming of the Shrew* to one of the main characters.

Lacy's *Sauny*, except for a handful of additions to the plot, follows the structure of Shakespeare's original to a certain extent up until Act Five, which underwent serious revisions.[21] What, however, was changed completely in Lacy's version is the language. The most noticeable alteration is the shift from blank verse to prose, which was perhaps related to the Restoration need for 'brevity, clarity, and simplicity'[22] and also the fact that blank verse was almost universally reserved for tragedies at the time. Lacy changes the language to fit the Restoration idiom by reducing Shakespeare's figurative expressions, which were already perceived as ambiguous and unintelligible. These alterations, however, also affect the depiction of Lacy's dramatic characters compared to their Shakespearean models. Spring, for example,

16 Scheil, *The Taste of the Town*, p. 38.
17 Scheil, *The Taste of the Town*, p. 23.
18 C. Conaway, '"Ye sid ha taken my Counsel sir": Restoration Satire and Theatrical Authority', in D. Wootton and G. Holderness (eds.), *Gender and Power in Shrew-Taming Narratives, 1500–1700*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2010, p. 150.
19 T. Haring-Smith, *From Farce to Metadrama: The Stage History of The Taming of the Shrew, 1594–1983*, Westport, Greenwood Press, 1985, p. 11.
20 Scheil, *The Taste of the Town*, p. 24.
21 For exact changes in the plot structure, see C. B. Hogan, *Shakespeare in the Theatre 1701–1800: A Record of Performances in London 1701–1750*, vol. 1, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1952, p. 414.
22 J. E. Spring, *Two Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare's Plays: Sauny the Scot; or, The Taming of the Shrew by John Lacey and The History and Fall of Caius Marius, Thomas Otway's Appropriation of Romeo and Juliet*, Ph.D. diss., Denver, University of Denver, 1952, p. 16.

argues that a notable shift occurred in Lacy's Petruchio because 'the connotative value of Shakespeare's hyperbole . . . gives the impression of a "good-humored" tamer, [while] the bluntness of the Restoration Petruchio suggests a less sympathetic character.'[23] Since Lacy's Petruchio is not such an eloquent tamer as his Shakespearean model, he employs violence and threats instead of rhetorical skills in order to reach his goals. Spencer observes this change in Petruchio's behaviour as well, pointing out that 'the most serious of Lacy's changes in character is the transformation of Petruchio from a madcap to a brute.'[24] One may notice this shift in Petruchio's delineation even in his first encounter with Margaret (a parallel to Shakespeare's Katherina). When Margaret refuses to consent to their marriage and Petruchio is unable to persuade her, he decides to threaten her, 'Hold, get me a Stick there, *Sauny*. By this hand, deny to Promise before your Father, I'll not Leave you a whole rib; I'll make you do't and be glad on't.'[25] To this, Margaret replies, 'Why, you will not Murther me Sirrah?'[26] There is no equivalent of such treatment of her in Shakespeare's play – as the Elizabethan Petruchio never threatens to beat Katherina to make her conform to his demands. Lacy's Petruchio, however, goes even further when he threatens to harm Margaret's potential suitors, 'Come, leave your idle prating. Have you *I* will, or no man ever shall. Whoever else attempts it, his throat will *I* Cut before he lyes one night with thee.'[27] One may thus observe that, while the Elizabethan Petruchio manages to persuade Katherina's relatives about her willingness to marry him by relying only on his speech, his Restoration counterpart is far from as eloquent as the original and, thus, must resort to threats.

After their wedding, Lacy's Petruchio forces his wife to drink alcohol and smoke tobacco. If she does not conform to his demands, he will not allow her to eat or sleep.[28] While Shakespeare's Petruchio deprives Katherina of food and sleep because his taming process is inspired by the techniques for taming falcons and claims to do it all 'in reverend care of her,'[29] in the parallel scene in Lacy's play, Petruchio does not seem to have such an elaborate purpose in mind and simply abuses his wife. Spencer comments on Shakespeare's Petruchio, claiming that he 'must be spirited and even rough; but his hearty good humor must flow repeatedly across footlights, so that his audience shall

23 Spring, *Two Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare's Plays*, p. 87.
24 H. Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved: The Restoration Versions in Quarto and on the Stage*, Cambridge, MA, and London, Harvard University Press, 1927, p. 280.
25 J. Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, in S. Clark (ed.), *Shakespeare Made Fit: Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare*, London, Everyman, 1997, 2.2.237–239.
26 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 2.2.240.
27 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 2.2.245–247.
28 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 3.3.36–55.
29 W. Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, ed. B. Hodgdon, London, Arden Shakespeare, 2010, 4.1.193.

never forget that his harshness to Katherina is assumed, though for a definite purpose.'[30] That is, however, not the case in Lacy's play according to Spencer, who maintains that 'Lacy's Petruchio would not be tolerated on a modern stage, and that Restoration audiences thought his jocular brutality amusing is an impressive index to the taste of that refined age.'[31]

Petruchio's abuse of Margaret culminates in the last act of the play, which Lacy completely rewrote. When the couple arrives at Beaufoy's house, Margaret rebels against Petruchio and even insults him, but he is, again, too weak to be able to handle her. That is the reason why he fabricates a story that Margaret has a toothache and tries to persuade everyone that her tooth has to be drawn. Since Margaret promised not to talk to him, he tries to make her speak and provokes her by calling a barber to pull out her tooth. When threatening with the barber does not help, he decides to be more radical and pretends that Margaret is dead and threatens to bury her alive, 'Speak, or by this hand I'll bury thee alive.'[32] When Margaret does not respond, he has the bearers called in and asks them to bind her on the bier. Only when he vows to parade her body 'through the *Strand* as far as St. *James*'s' does she finally speak out.[33] In contrast, at the same point in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Katherina is already tamed and co-operates with Petruchio. Spring argues that 'examples of this serious alteration of plot . . . suggest that Petruchio's "taming" is in no way successful, thereby depriving the drama of character development as well as thematic and structural unity.'[34] Unlike his eloquent Elizabethan counterpart, Lacy's Petruchio has to resort to threats and violence to subjugate Margaret, conforming to the Restoration's liking for a more straightforward, physical (and sexist, for that matter) kind of comedy.

What the Restoration tamer lacks is not only eloquence, but also a uniform plan to tame his wife. Both Petruchio's speeches outlining his plans for taming Katherina in Shakespeare's play are omitted from Lacy's adaptation. While Shakespeare's Petruchio clearly explains his wooing technique before meeting Katherina,[35] Lacy substitutes the original soliloquy with Sauny's whining about not being willing to live with 'a Scauding Quean'[36] and his resolution to go back to Scotland if Petruchio gets married. Lacy also omits Petruchio's later soliloquy in which he discloses his taming strategies,[37] and, instead of the speech, the scene ends with a conversation between Sauny and

30 Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved*, p. 280.
31 Spencer, *Shakespeare Improved*, p. 280.
32 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 5.1.231.
33 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 5.1.281–282.
34 Spring, *Two Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare's Plays*, p. 166.
35 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 2.1.167–179.
36 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 2.2.150.
37 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 4.1.177–200.

Petruchio's servants, with the attention of the audience being directed to the fact that Sauny is 'as fow as a Piper.'[38] Hence, not only are Petruchio's most important speeches omitted, they are also both replaced with Sauny's nonsense. Petruchio, the main protagonist of the original story, thus gives way to Sauny's buffooneries, even at the expense of the complexity of the former's character and the unity of his action.

This tendency is underscored by the fact that Sauny frequently disrupts Petruchio's taming of Margaret and that – because of Sauny's incessant comments and interruptions that continue from the wooing scene onwards – the latter's taming is ineffective and Petruchio becomes an unsuccessful tamer. For example, in the scene when Petruchio tries to persuade Margaret that the sun is the moon, Sauny reacts by saying, 'S'breed, but *I* say nay, Sir. Out, out, a Lies';[39] when Petruchio pretends that Sir Lyonell is a woman, Sauny exclaims, 'Why, i'th' Deel's Name, What mean ye? It's nea bonny Lass, Sir; S'breed, it's an aw faw Thefe.'[40] He protests even when Margaret joins Petruchio because she wants them to continue in their journey, 'The Dee'l has built a Bird's Nest in your Head. Gud, ye'r as mad as he; and he as Mad as gin he were the son of a March Hare, Sir.'[41] Although Sauny knows what is behind the actions of his master, he does not miss a chance to point out that Petruchio lies or to claim that he is mad. By doing so, he undermines Petruchio's taming efforts. And so, while the Elizabethan Petruchio has to face only his shrewish wife, his Restoration counterpart has to deal with a wife, who is more shrewish than Shakespeare's Katherina, as well as his unruly servant Sauny.

Indeed, according to Scheil, 'Sauny divert[s] attention to himself' by his constant comments and interruptions of the action of the play.[42] Although Scheil asserts that Sauny's comments 'are directed to the audience but unacknowledged by the other characters on stage,'[43] it is not always the case. His comments and interruptions do influence the course of the play and, so, the other characters are affected by them as well. This is perfectly visible in Petruchio-Margaret encounters, where his remarks disrupt the dynamics of the couple and transform the Shakespearean characters and their relationship. Since Sauny becomes a participant in the crucial taming scenes in which his original counterpart either does not appear or does not intervene,[44]

38 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 3.2.136.
39 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 4.3.17.
40 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 4.3.36–37.
41 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 4.3.42–44.
42 K. W. Scheil, '*Sauny the Scott: or, The Taming of the Shrew*: John Lacy and the Importance of Theatrical Context in the Restoration', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700*, vol. 21, no. 2, 1997, p. 75.
43 Scheil, '*Sauny the Scott: or, The Taming of the Shrew*', p. 70.
44 For example, Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 2.2.153–254; 4.3.

his actions and his coarse, vulgar, disrespectful, and violent nature have an impact on both Petruchio and Margaret.

Not only does Sauny thwart Petruchio's taming techniques, he also dehumanises Margaret. Conaway explains that Sauny's 'commentary also undercuts Margaret's speech and actions by constructing her as a sexual object that should be silenced. Throughout the play, Sauny's bawdy language suggests that Margaret's body is available for male penetration.'[45] For example, in the wager scene, when Petruchio asks Sauny to bring Margaret to him, the latter remarks, 'I'se gar her gea wuth me, Sir, or I'se put my Durke to the hilt in her Weam.'[46] Sauny threatens to put his dagger in her womb if she disobeys him. The dagger may represent his anger and hatred for her, but it may also stand for his penis. Sauny therefore exploits Margaret's sexuality as a means of expressing his coercive power.

Another example of the exploitation of Margaret's sexuality is noticeable in the bedchamber scene, which is not found in *The Taming of the Shrew*. While Shakespeare employs a conversation between Petruchio's servants to inform the audience that Petruchio is 'In her [Katherina's] chamber, / Making a sermon of continency to her,'[47] Lacy decides to show his audience what is actually happening in the bedroom on stage. Petruchio wants Margaret to undress and, when she asks him to dismiss his servants, he commands Sauny to take off her clothes instead.[48] Spring attributes the addition of the bedroom scene to the introduction of actresses on stage:

> Shakespeare's low comedy involving members of the opposite sex is largely verbal, partially because he was writing for a single-sex theatre and partly because poetry is his most effective dramatic weapon, whereas Restoration comedy of this variety is largely situational, partially because dramatists were exploiting the arrival of actresses and partly because their plays were dependent upon the patronage of a morally untidy Court.[49]

Shakespeare resorted to a form of verbal low comedy partly because he was writing for an all-male theatre and so the situational comedy with boy actors would not have had the same effect on the audience as in Restoration comedy, which employed women in female roles. Hence, as Marsden maintains, actresses on stage created 'a new climate for sexual display,'[50] which Lacy's bawdy play exploits.

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45 Conaway, '"Ye sid ha taken my Counsel sir"', p. 157.
46 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 5.1.387–388.
47 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 4.1.171–172.
48 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 3.3.1–9.
49 Spring, *Two Restoration Adaptations of Shakespeare's Plays*, p. 69.
50 J. I. Marsden, 'Rape, Voyeurism, and the Restoration stage', in K. M. Quinsey (ed.), *Broken*

A typical feature of Restoration drama was rape or near-rape scenes, which were 'fundamentally voyeuristic, depending for their effect on the audience's role as voyeurs and the actress's function as an object of their collective gaze.'[51] Although Lacy does not use this type of scene in his play, the purpose of his bedroom scene is similar because Margaret is 'presented as sexual object and thus the locus of voyeurism . . . [and] object of desire.'[52] In her essay 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema,'[53] Lara Mulvey observes that

> the woman displayed has functioned on two levels: as erotic object for the characters within the screen story, and as erotic object for the spectator within the auditorium, with a shifting tension between the looks on either side of the screen.[54]

And so, it may be said that the character of Margaret functions on these two levels as well – with the character as an erotic object for Petruchio and his servants, and the actress as an erotic object for male members of the audience.[55]

Howe, however, argues that the introduction of actresses may not be solely perceived as conservative 'in situating them within a theater which exploited their sexuality,' but also as 'radical – in allowing women a voice on the public stage for the first time.'[56] This is applicable to Lacy's Margaret as well, since, if one compares her to Shakespeare's Katherina or even David Garrick's Catharine almost ninety years after *Sauny the Scot*, Margaret is the most vocal and rebellious of them all. Singh adds that 'in certain respects the position of a Restoration woman has certainly improved. She is no more the obedient, silent and docile woman of the Elizabethan age. She has higher expectations from marriage and a new pride in her sex.'[57] This observation

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Boundaries: Women & Feminism in Restoration Drama, Lexington, Kentucky University Press, 1996, p. 185.

51 Marsden, 'Rape, Voyeurism, and the Restoration stage', p. 185.

52 Marsden, 'Rape, Voyeurism, and the Restoration stage', p. 186.

53 Although Mulvey addresses the issue of scopophilia in the cinematic experience, it can easily be applied to theatrical experience as well.

54 L. Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', in L. Braudy and M. Cohen (eds.), *Film Theory and Criticism: Introductory Readings*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 838.

55 Sadly, we do not know what actress played Margaret when *Sauny the Scot* opened in 1667. The earliest cast list that survives is from the play's revival at the Queen's Theatre in the 1706–1707 season, when the role was played by Lucretia Bradshaw, who at the time 'often played nice young women, but her range included sophisticated ladies and pathetic heroines as well' ('Bradshaw, Lucretia, later Mrs Martin Folkes', in P. H. Highfill, Jr., K. A. Burnim, and E. A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, vol. 2, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1973, p. 284).

56 Quoted in Conaway, '"Ye sid ha taken my Counsel sir"', p. 158.

57 S. Singh, *Family Relationships in Shakespeare and the Restoration Comedy of Manners*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1983, p. 156.

is attested by Margaret's vehement opposition to marriage to Petruchio, 'As *I* live, *I* will not.'[58] Unlike Katherina, who is already an obedient wife when she returns to her father's house with Petruchio, Margaret's rebellion continues. She openly insults Petruchio in front of everyone,[59] threatens him[60] and even declares: 'you shall know me to be the Master.'[61] According to Singh,

> marriage is a contract between man and woman and it is valid only as long as both fulfil the terms of the contract. If the man fails to do so, the woman is under no obligation to obey him. Indeed, as often happens in comedies of the period in such a situation, the woman has every right to rebel.[62]

Since Petruchio previously abused Margaret in his country house, she has all the right to be disobedient. Her rebellion is ultimately quashed only when Petruchio threatens to bury her alive (see above). Upon this, she admits her defeat. Her speech of obedience is, however, far from being as powerful as that of Shakespeare's Katherina, because it is reduced from the original forty-four blank verse lines to a mere couple of lines of prose: 'Fy, Ladys, for shame. How dare you infringe that Duty which you justly owe your Husbands; they are our Lords and we must pay 'em Service.'[63]

A markedly longer and more powerful monologue by Margaret is the advice that she gives to her sister Biancha in the same scene:

> Thou art a Fool, *Biancha*. Come, Learn of me. Thou art Married to a Man too; thou dost not know but thou mayst need my Councel, and make good use on't. Thy Husband bares thee fair yet, but take heed of going home with him, for when once he has thee within his verge, 'tis odds he'll have his freaks too; there's no trusting these Men. Thy temper is soft and easy; thou must Learn to break him, or he'll break thy Heart. . . . Trust him and hang him; they'r all alike. Come, thou shalt be my Schollar. Learn to Frown and cry out for unkindness, but brave Anger. Thou hast a tongue; make use on't. Scould, Fight, Scratch, Bite, any thing.[64]

Margaret's central speech in Lacy's version of the story is then the complete opposite of the obedience speech of Shakespeare's titular shrew. Margaret does not tell Biancha to be subdued and to submit to her husband as Katherina does in her speech of obedience; instead, she advises her younger sister

58 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 2.2.289.
59 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 5.1.84–86.
60 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 5.1.130–131; 5.1.134–135; 5.1.139–140; 5.1.143–145.
61 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 5.1.148.
62 Singh, *Family Relationships in Shakespeare*, p. 160.
63 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 5.1.426–428.
64 Lacy, *Sauny the Scot*, 5.1.11–24.

to fight for herself because that was the only way to survive for a woman at the time. And hence, towards the end of the play, Margaret takes the opportunity to use her voice and speaks for women.

Lacy's *Sauny* remained on the London stages until November 18, 1736, when it was produced for the last time.[65] However, the play after 1716 no longer dominated the stage as the sole version of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* because new adaptations appeared, namely the two-act farce *The Cobler of Preston* by Charles Johnson (1716) and Christopher Bullock's one-act afterpiece of the same title (1716).[66] Unlike Lacy's *Sauny*, these short pieces elaborated on the Sly material of the original Shakespeare play and omitted the whole play-within-the-play (that is, the taming story which constitutes the main plot). Another very popular adaptation of Shakespeare's play that appeared in the early 18th century was James Worsdale's two-act ballad opera *A Cure for a Scold* (1735), which, however, was clearly based more on Lacy's *Sauny the Scot* than Shakespeare's original, both in terms of the overall structure and some specific details.[67]

TRANSITION FROM THE RESTORATION TO THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY

The early 18th century saw multiple changes in the London theatrical sphere. The new ideological, dramatic, and, eventually, performative principles that started to shape the London theatre of the new century were reflected in the ways Shakespeare was being performed, edited, and adapted, and, therefore, for an understanding of Garrick's dramatic achievement and its difference from Lacy's in the Restoration period, some contextualisation is apposite here.

Towards the end of the 17th century, the practices of English theatres sparked a wave of criticism. One of the most prominent critics of the tradition of Restoration drama was the theatre critic and theologian Jeremy Collier. In his essay *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698), he describes the theatre as offensive, ignorant, lewd, and far

65 Haring-Smith, *From Farce to Metadrama*, p. 11.

66 For more on these 18th-century pre-Garrick adaptations of Shakespeare's play and their importance for the reception of Shakespeare at the time, see Filip Krajník's chapter in the present volume (pp. 207–246).

67 Not only is the main female protagonist of Worsdale's ballad opera called Margaret as well, but he also uses many alterations to Shakespeare's play introduced by Lacy. For example, Manly (the counterpart of Petruchio) threatening to beat Margaret and kill her suitors if she does not marry him (J. Worsdale, *A Cure for a Scold*, London, printed for L. Gilliver, 1735, pp. 10–11), the bedchamber scene (p. 36), and Margaret being forced to drink alcohol (p. 37). Worsdale also preserves all of Lacy's changes to Act Five (pp. 46–57).

from religious, and the characters presented on the stage as immodest and full of vice. Collier's criticism gained considerable attention and, together with other critics, such as Thomas Rymer and, later, John Dennis and Charles Gildon, he became one of the voices at the turn of the 18th century calling for a serious re-evaluation and regulation of English (and subsequently British) theatre and drama.[68]

Important literary figures of the turn of the century were not in favour of theatres either. Taylor explains that 'Swift and Pope . . . boycotted the theatre [and] Defoe actively campaigned for its suppression.'[69] In his seminal edition of collected Shakespeare plays (published 1723–1725), Pope even blamed the theatre 'for obscuring Shakespeare's genius, which he proposed to restore by removing "those almost innumerable Errors".'[70] Hence, as Taylor maintains, 'the center of English culture was shifting from performance to print – and Shakespeare went with it.'[71] The interest in editing Shakespeare in the early 18th century demonstrates an important shift from the need to adapt his 'corrupted' plays to a focus on his genuine text.[72] Though 'the stream of editions began with Nicholas Rowe in 1709, followed by Alexander Pope (1723), and Lewis Theobald (1734),'[73] it was only Theobald who was perceived as the first editor that went in search of Shakespeare's authentic text and who seriously tried to present Shakespeare's work in a form that was as close as possible to the original. He was also one of the first editors of Shakespeare who emphasised textual sanctity, which was, according to Marsden, 'absent in previous approaches to Shakespeare.'[74] Scheil maintains that Rowe's and Pope's editions, in contrast, 'allowed playwrights and audience members to look at Shakespeare in new ways that previously had not been available.'[75]

The fact that new editions of Shakespeare subsequently stimulated the production of his plays was noticeable in the 1730s, when the Shakespeare Ladies Club was formed in London in 1736 and its members 'campaigned actively for two theatrical seasons, persuading the London theatre managers

68 For a more detailed discussion about theatre criticism and proposals for theatre regulation in the period, see Matthew J. Kinservik's essay 'Reconsidering Theatrical Regulation in the Long Eighteenth Century' in M. Cordner and P. Holland (eds.), *Players, Playwrights, Playhouses: Investigating Performance, 1660–1800*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 152–171.

69 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 62.

70 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 83.

71 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 62.

72 Marsden points out that, although the early editors wanted to present a genuine Shakespeare canon, they did not preserve much of his original text either and often changed large parts of it (*Re-Imagined Text*, p. 68).

73 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 68.

74 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 70.

75 Scheil, *The Taste of the Town*, p. 202.

to put more Shakespeare plays on the stage.'[76] Taylor makes an important observation that 'since these women were encouraging the performance of plays that had not been produced in decades, their knowledge of them could have come only from reading.'[77] Hence, while 'in the seventeenth century the popularity of Shakespeare's plays with audiences had stimulated the publication of reading editions . . . in the eighteenth century, their popularity with readers stimulated new productions.'[78]

The campaign of the Shakespeare Ladies Club to bring Shakespeare back on stage helped David Garrick to build on Shakespeare's repute and prestige. Garrick is perceived as one of the main promoters of Shakespeare in the 18th century and, according to Scheil, his arrival on the theatrical scene has been 'considered a major point of transformation for adaptations of Shakespeare.'[79]

Around 1740, 'the adaptation[s] of Shakespeare's plays became common in the theatre'; before that year, 'they were very sporadic and rarely achieved any lasting success.'[80] These adaptations reflected the 'major changes in attitudes toward Shakespeare and the increasingly important role "Shakespeare" played in the definition of Britain's cultural identity.'[81] Since 'Shakespeare has been converted from vulgar showman to otherworldly philosopher,'[82] he became 'a cultural phenomenon, a marketing device, a product line, a measuring standard, a marker of quality, a model entrepreneur, and more.'[83] According to Ritchie, this shift occurred because of 'a general reconsideration of English national identity' in the 18th century.[84] Shakespeare was even 'used as a tool to construct national identity'[85] and as such enjoyed a new status, that of a national hero and an 'Antient.'[86]

It was acknowledged that 'the ancients wrote for their time [and so,] English poets and critics must write for their own. Trying to mingle the two involves a break with nature.'[87] This means that, when addressing Shakespeare, critics took into consideration the historical period in which he lived and composed his plays, an approach that had been rather uncommon in the

76 F. Ritchie, *Women and Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014, p. 143.
77 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 93.
78 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 94.
79 Scheil, *The Taste of the Town*, p. 201.
80 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 75.
81 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 75.
82 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 119.
83 C. Woo, *Romantic Actors and Bardolatry: Performing Shakespeare from Garrick to Kean*, New York, Peter Lang, 2008, pp. 18–19.
84 Ritchie, *Women and Shakespeare*, p. 67.
85 Ritchie, *Women and Shakespeare*, p. 67.
86 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 117.
87 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 108.

previous years. As Samuel Johnson pointed out in the Preface to his 1765 edition of Shakespeare's works, 'Every man's performances, to be rightly estimated, must be compared with the state of the age in which he lived, and with his own particular opportunities.'[88]

This new attitude towards Shakespeare led to the observation on the part of Shakespearean critics that 'Shakespeare's genius [was] dependent on his words.'[89] Since 'the Correctness of the Text . . . is equally necessary to the right understanding him,' the 'capital offense' for these critics lay in 'mutilating Shakespeare's words.'[90] And so, to 'truly understand Shakespeare's brilliance; in order to understand his works, a critic must "know more minutely his very words and genuine expressions".'[91] For this reason, the 18th-century adapters preferred to save large portions of the original Shakespeare in their versions of Shakespeare's plays, while some even imitated his style in their additions. The adapters wanted to do 'as little Injury to the Original as possible'; they emphasised unaltered text as Shakespeare wrote it and they wanted to bring '"more of [Shakespeare's] rich Scenes to light".'[92] Theophilus Cibber maintained that 'meddling with Shakespeare represents an unpatriotic act'[93] and Garrick, in the Prologue to his *Catharine and Petruchio*, emphasised that ''Tis my chief wish, my joy, my only plan, / To lose no drop of that immortal man.'[94]

Since the 'reviving of Shakespeare's plays became a patriotic act as well as evidence of good taste,' as Marsden puts it,[95] 'from this period onwards, Shakespeare's texts are no longer simply modernized but are instead retrospectively and unobtrusively corrected, his antiquated style imitated by adaptors as they strive to polish his now venerable works into native classics.'[96] Shakespeare's text, thus, became sacred and the playwright himself was 'established as the "great Original" behind all of his texts.'[97] Even the competition between the two theatre companies in Drury Lane and Covent Garden was impacted by the importance of the sanctity of Shakespeare's text and so they competed 'in terms of who could restore the most Shakespeare to the stage.'[98]

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88 S. Johnson, *Mr. Johnson's Preface to His Edition of Shakespear's Plays*, London, printed for J. and R. Tonson, etc., 1765, pp. xxxi–xxxii.

89 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 117.

90 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 117.

91 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 118.

92 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 77 (square brackets original, Marsden quotes from the Prologue to James Miller's 1737 comedy *The Universal Passion*).

93 Marsden, 'Improving Shakespeare', p. 31.

94 D. Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, in H. W. Pedicord and F. L. Bergmann (eds.), *The Plays of David Garrick*, vol. 3: *Garrick's Adaptations of Shakespeare 1744–1756*, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1981, Prologue ll. 54–55.

95 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 76.

96 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 14.

97 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 133.

98 Marsden, 'Improving Shakespeare', p. 31.

However, although theatres strove to employ as much of Shakespeare's original language as possible, they were still forced to amend the text to please and entertain the audience.[99] Eighteenth-century spectators differed greatly from Restoration theatregoers – as new audiences showed little interest in 'the sexual and social comedy . . . of the 1660s and 1670s' and even 'authorities had issued new instructions that "Obsenityes & other Scandalous matters" be deleted from plays.'[100] Spectators thus rejected typical Restoration features of adaptations but approved of, and requested, 'the domestic details of family life.'[101] This is the reason why the tone of playwriting changed rapidly, as Taylor puts it, 'from sexually erect to morally upright'[102] and why playwrights emphasised 'domestic virtues'[103] and 'characters' feelings and interactions at the personal and family level.'[104]

Another typical feature of 18th-century adaptations, besides those sentimentalising and domesticating Shakespeare and making his plays more moral, are heavy cuts. Marsden mentions that the plays adapted between 1754 and 1763 were 'severely reduced to one, two, or three acts.'[105] She continues that, although large parts of the original text were cut, 'additions were made in large blocks, usually in the form of new scenes inserted between previously existing Shakespearean scenes. Shakespeare's diction was rarely changed, and in plays that had been previously adapted, large segments of the original play were restored.'[106]

One may, therefore, notice a great shift in the perception of Shakespeare between the Restoration period and the 18th century. While Restoration audiences and critics mainly saw Shakespeare as archaic, corrupt, and in need of improvement, he gained a new status in the 18th century. Shakespeare was gradually perceived as a national poet, whose genius resides in his words. While Restoration adapters of his works did not hesitate to alter Shakespeare's language to make him more accessible to their audiences, in the 18th century, large portions of Shakespeare's plays were preserved as they were originally written. Indeed, this approach has continued until the present day. Nevertheless, while Shakespeare and his works have been universally revered, adaptations of his plays have tended to be overlooked and even condemned by critics due to their supposedly inferior nature. Only recently have literary scholars began to pay attention to these 'corrupted' plays.

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99 V. Cunningham, *Shakespeare and Garrick*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, p. 20.
100 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 55.
101 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 87.
102 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 55.
103 Taylor, *Reinventing Shakespeare*, p. 98.
104 Cunningham, *Shakespeare and Garrick*, p. 75.
105 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 77.
106 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 77.

THE SHREW SENTIMENTALISED

David Garrick's adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew*, titled *Catharine and Petruchio*, may be perceived as one such 'corrupted' play. It was first performed on March 18, 1754 and was staged up until the end of the 19th century, when Augustin Daly revived Shakespeare's original in 1886.[107] Garrick's adaptation of Shakespeare's comedy is perceived as 'the most important of the many revisions of *The Taming of the Shrew*.'[108] Having been performed more than 230 times by the end of the 18th century,[109] it 'was the sixth most popular Shakespearean play on stage from 1784 to 1800' and the only adaptation of *The Taming of the Shrew* to be performed 'on the English and American stages from 1754 to 1844,'[110] effectively supressing all previous versions of the play on the stage for almost a century.

Although Garrick was, like Lacy, praised for his superior acting skills,[111] Scheil remarks that he 'privileged the text over his own performance.'[112] Stone adds that, since his changes to Shakespeare were not as radical as in Lacy's case, 'his [i.e. Garrick's] audiences witnessed more authentic Shakespeare than they or their ancestors had seen before since 1700.'[113] Just like Lacy, however, Garrick had to conform to the tastes of his audience because the theatre of the 1750s was still 'a commercial and competitive enterprise.'[114] The tastes of English theatregoers, however, had shifted from lewdness, immorality, and profaneness to the importance of manners, morality, sensibility, sentiment, and sympathy. Garrick, therefore, offered a more sentimentalised Shakespeare to his spectators.[115]

In *Catharine and Petruchio*, Shakespeare's story underwent a number of alterations, one of them being heavy cuts which transformed Shakespeare's comedy into a three-act afterpiece. Garrick's adaptation thus became a farce, which was, according to Haring-Smith, the only way to make

107 I. McIntyre, *Garrick*, London, Penguin Books, 1999, p. 218.
108 Haring-Smith, *From Farce to Metadrama*, p. 15.
109 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 81.
110 Haring-Smith, *From Farce to Metadrama*, p. 15.
111 McIntyre, *Garrick*, p. 41.
112 Scheil, *The Taste of the Town*, p. 217. As Krajník points out, however, for his signature Shakespearean role of King Lear, Garrick seems to have been doing the opposite, as he was constantly toying with Shakespeare's language throughout his career to make it fit to his particular acting skills and talents (see F. Krajník, 'Restored and De-Restored: Killing off Garrick in John Philip Kemble's *King Lear*', *Theatralia*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2021, pp. 92–100').
113 G. W. Stone, 'David Garrick's Significance in the History of Shakespearean Criticism: A Study of the Impact of the Actor upon the Change of Critical Focus during the Eighteenth Century', *PMLA*, vol. 65, no. 2, 1950, p. 187.
114 Cunningham, *Shakespeare and Garrick*, p. 19.
115 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 176; A. Kendall, *David Garrick: A Biography*, London, Harrap, 1985, p. 42.

the taming story more acceptable for the audiences of the time.[116] The cuts included, for example, the complete omission of the Induction with the Sly material[117] and the elimination of the subplot focused on Katherina's sister, Bianca, and her suitors. By omitting the subplot, Garrick 'solves the problem of disunity among the three plots.'[118] Not only does Garrick thus obey the Aristotelian unity of action, but he also corrects several inconsistencies in Shakespeare's play which were created by the many disguises in the original subplot.[119]

Despite all the omissions and additions, Garrick's adaptation follows the structure of Shakespeare's main plot faithfully.[120] The language of *Catharine and Petruchio* is also very similar to the original since, when Garrick staged his piece, it was recommended to imitate Shakespeare's language, as mentioned above. Garrick, however, does adjust the language where necessary to fit the tastes of an 18th century audience. This is the reason why the bawdy expressions are reduced to a minimum; for example, Garrick censors the rather indecent 'Marry, so I mean, sweet Katherine, [keep me warm] in *thy bed*,'[121] which becomes 'Or rather warm me in *thy arms*, my Kate.'[122] He also removes certain inappropriate utterances, such as double meanings with sexual overtones. For example, the following exchange in Shakespeare is completely removed from Garrick's version:

> *Petruccio*. Go, take it up unto thy master's use.
> *Grumio*. Villain, not for thy life! Take up my mistress' gown for thy master's use?[123]

Grumio misunderstands Petruchio's commands, meaning 'let your master make what use of it he can,' for 'preparing to "use" Kate sexually.'[124] This innuendo is instead replaced by a fight between Grumio and a tailor.[125] This comic

116 Haring-Smith, *From Farce to Metadrama*, p. 23.
117 The Induction of Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* was omitted by Lacy's *Sauny the Scot* and Worsdale's ballad opera *A Cure for a Scold* as well.
118 Haring-Smith, *From Farce to Metadrama*, p. 15.
119 See, for instance, G. I. Duthie, *'The Taming of a Shrew* and *The Taming of the Shrew'*, *The Review of English Studies*, vol. 19, no. 76, 1943, p. 349.
120 For a detailed description of the differences between Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* and Garrick's *Catharine and Petruchio*, see H. W. Pedicord, and F. L. Bergmann, Commentary and Notes on *Catharine and Petruchio*, in H. W. Pedicord and F. L. Bergmann (eds.), *The Plays of David Garrick*, vol. 3: *Garrick's Adaptations of Shakespeare 1744–1756*, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1981, pp. 428–429.
121 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 2.1.269 (my emphasis).
122 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 1.204 (my emphasis).
123 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 4.3.156–158.
124 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, p. 270, fn. 156–8.
125 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 3.130.

element would have been preferred to the potentially indecent expression found in the original.

Garrick also shortens and breaks up Shakespeare's longer speeches, reassigns some of them to other characters (for example, a part of Katherina's original speech of submission is assigned to Petruchio), and inserts more stage business. He thus tried to refine the play for the tastes of his audiences and the sense of decency maintained by the then-English society. He cut and censored the play in order to soften it and to make it less immoral, offensive, or ambiguous; by doing so, he managed to, according to Marsden, 'emphasise domestic relationships.'[126]

Garrick's cuts are particularly visible when it comes to his version of the titular shrew, Catharine. He jettisons the scenes in which Shakespeare's Katherina demonstrates too much aggression. The situation in which Katherina treats her sister Bianca harshly only to know which suitor she likes the best,[127] is, for instance, completely omitted. Even Katherina's heated response to her father's reproach is cut from the adaptation. By omitting this scene, Garrick lessens the level of Catharine's shrewishness.

Catharine's married younger sister Bianca seems to be more of a shrew than Catharine herself because she constantly mocks, opposes, and insults her older sister. Catharine, therefore, does not find any support in her sister and the same may be said about the support from her father. Although Dobson believes that Catharine's marriage with Petruchio is an act of free will on her part, maintaining that 'rather than having to be forced to go through the wedding ceremony, this acquiescent Kate actively chooses to marry Petruchio,'[128] this is not entirely true. Unlike Katherina in *The Taming of the Shrew*, Catharine does not have a choice but to accept Petruchio because, otherwise, her father would have thrown her out of the house onto the streets:

> And if with scurril taunt and squeamish pride
> She make a mouth and will not taste her fortune,
> I'll turn her forth to seek it in the world;
> Nor henceforth shall she know her father's doors.[129]

Baptista makes it clear that he wishes his daughter to marry Petruchio and none other. This fact is emphasised even later, when Catharine protests against the choice of her husband, upon which her father declares, 'Better

126 Marsden, 'Improving Shakespeare', p. 34.
127 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 2.1.1–22.
128 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 199.
129 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 1.64–67.

this jack than starve, and that's your portion.'[130] She is, therefore, given an ultimatum by her father: either she marries Petruchio or she ends up starving on the streets. There is no trace of such (un)fatherly treatment in Shakespeare's Baptista.

Since Catharine cannot choose her own husband, is threatened by the ultimatum of her father, and her husband-to-be behaves like a madman, at the very end of Act One she decides to tame Petruchio to make the situation in which she has found herself more bearable:

> Why, yes: sister Bianca now shall see
> The poor abandoned Cath'rine, as she calls me,
> Can hold her head as high, and be as proud,
> And make her husband stoop unto her lure,
> As she, or e'er a wife in Padua.
> As double as my portion be my scorn;
> Look to your seat, Petruchio, or I throw you.
> Cath'rine shall tame this haggard; or, if she fails,
> Shall tie her tongue up and pare down her nails.[131]

Catharine decides to marry Petruchio only to avenge herself and she sets a goal to tame him because she wants to prove herself to her sister, other Paduan women, and even Petruchio himself. In Garrick's version, this is the main source of her rebellion and shrewishness. She, however, not only swears to tame her husband, but even promises that, if she fails to fulfil her goal, she will be ready to submit to him. Dobson adds that 'Kate has already internalized some of her "natural" subordination to Petruchio before they even speak together . . . so that her resistance to his wooing is transformed into a mere perverse whim rather than a genuine attempt to remain single and independent.'[132] He concludes that Kate is thus 'prepared to assume the prescribed wifely role already, albeit as a last resort.'[133]

Catharine, however, does not manage to tame her husband, because she is genuinely afraid of him and his manners. For example, when Petruchio beats Grumio and the tailor, she exclaims, 'For heav'ns sake, Sir, have patience! How you fright me,'[134] and even starts crying. This fear of her husband is not found in *The Taming of the Shrew* or *Sauny the Scot* and may be the reason why Catharine is more readily tamed than the original Katherina and the

130 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 1.227.
131 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 1.278–286.
132 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 195.
133 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 196.
134 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 3.133–134.

Restoration Margaret. Unlike her two earlier counterparts, Catharine even directly admits her defeat, 'I see 'tis vain to struggle with my bonds.'[135] She casts away any doubts about her submission and thus fulfils her promise to 'tie her tongue up and pare down her nails' when she fails to tame Petruchio.

Since Catharine is more readily tamed and not genuinely shrewish, her importance in the play lessens and so her spotlight is easily taken by Petruchio at the end of the play. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, Katherina's speech is the desired culmination of the plot; indeed, after being silenced throughout the whole play, she eventually takes the stage with the longest speech in the whole piece. This, however, cannot be said about Garrick's Catharine. Her speech is not only shortened from the original 44 lines to a mere 19, but is interrupted several times either by Petruchio or Bianca, with Petruchio even finishing the speech for her.

Just as Catharine is a milder shrew, so her husband Petruchio is a milder tamer, as in the end there is no real shrew to be tamed. Garrick's Petruchio is a gentleman who is not portrayed as an adventurer in search of profit like his Shakespearean counterpart because Garrick cut most of his mercenary lines. For instance, when he bargains with Baptista about his potential marriage to Catharine, he admits that

> Left solely heir to all his [i.e. Petruchio's father's] lands and goods,
> *Which I have bettered rather than decreased*.
> And I have thrust myself into the world,
> *Haply to wive and thrive as best I may*.[136]

Petruchio inherited enough money and property, which he even managed to increase, and, since he has enough material possessions, all he needs now is a wife. Marsden comprehends his character in a similar way, pointing out that 'this Petruchio is a model member of the bourgeoisie – a good business manager who, having made sure that his accounts were in order, goes in search of domestic happiness.'[137]

The fact that Petruchio is not mercenary and that his main priority is to marry and start a happy household is emphasised by the missing subplot, because his conspiring with Bianca's suitors (including their promise to pay him for his successful wooing of Katherina)[138] is omitted in Garrick's play as well. He does not even ask Baptista, 'What dowry shall I have with her to

135 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 3.165.
136 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 1.9–12 (my emphasis).
137 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 81.
138 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 1.2.271–273.

wife?',[139] as his counterpart does in Shakespeare's play. Indeed, he refuses 'Another dowry to another daughter,'[140] which Baptista offers him upon seeing the transformation of Catharine. In *The Taming of the Shrew*, in contrast, 'Another dowry to another daughter'[141] is not enough for Petruchio, who exclaims, 'Nay, I will win my wager better yet.'[142] Shakespeare's Petruchio is mercenary and boasts about Katherina's obedience, which he decides to show off just to obtain more money; Garrick's Petruchio, on the other hand, refuses Catharine's dowry, claiming that 'My fortune is sufficient. Her's my wealth: / Kiss me, my Kate.'[143] Petruchio finds his fortune in his wife and, thus, acquires domestic virtue and happiness, which is essential for him. This is the reason why he does not further test his wife in the wager scene.

Unlike Shakespeare, Garrick makes sure that it is clear to the spectator that his Petruchio only pretends to be aggressive and violent. After the wedding, when the newlyweds arrive at Petruchio's country house, Petruchio treats his servants as aggressively as his Elizabethan counterpart. However, in this case, the servants are shocked at their master's altered behaviour, 'He kills her in her own humour. I did not think so *good* and *kind* a master could have put on so resolute a bearing.'[144] The servants emphasise Petruchio's pretence and it is stated explicitly that Petruchio is normally kind but had to alter his behaviour to tame his wife.

The fact that Petruchio only *pretends* to be a brute is emphasised by his speech which is unique to Garrick's version:

> and since thou art become
> So prudent, kind, and dutiful a wife,
> Petruchio here shall doff the lordly husband;
> An honest mask, which I throw off with pleasure.
> Far hence all rudeness, wilfulness, and noise,
> And be our future lives one gentle stream
> Of mutual love, compliance and regard.[145]

In this monologue, Petruchio reveals his true nature; unlike Shakespeare's Petruchio, he states directly that he just pretended to be ruthless and violent, ultimately throwing his mask of pretence away and becoming

139 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 2.1.119.
140 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 3.264.
141 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 5.2.120.
142 Shakespeare, *The Taming of the Shrew*, 5.2.122.
143 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 3.266–267.
144 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 2.371–372 (my emphasis).
145 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 3.267–273.

'a gentle and loving husband,'[146] whom he has secretly been the whole time. He also stresses the importance of, in Marsden's words, the 'mutuality of the marriage relationship'[147] and, by doing so, he emphasises the importance of the companionate, and hence egalitarian, marriage, which, according to Singh, was perceived as a desirable type of family relationship.[148]

The motif of the companionate marriage re-appears again, when Petruchio takes his wife by the hand and goes forward to finish her speech of obedience. He does not leave her behind and takes her to the foreground with him. Although he stresses their mutuality by this gesture, he still finishes the speech for her. Dobson asserts that the speech is thus 'reallocated to the more authoritative male voice'[149] and, since it is Petruchio who lectures women that 'Such duty as the subject owes the prince, / Even such a woman oweth to her husband'[150] instead of Catharine, 'Garrick's additions here expose the hierarchical foundation on which such an ideal of egalitarian marriage is built.'[151] Marsden also adds that, in Garrick's piece, the 'plot depicts the restoration not of a monarch, but of a husband and father.'[152] And so, only when the wife accepts her subordination to her husband, does the husband decide to show his hidden gentleness and loving nature, which eventually lead to a more companionate type of marital relationship.

The present chapter demonstrates that John Lacy, working in the first years of the post-Restoration period, simplified Shakespeare's idiom not only to conform to the standards of Restoration comedy and make the story more accessible to his audiences, but also to change the delineation of his characters. Lacy's Petruchio becomes an abusive and violent tamer, lacking the eloquence of his Shakespearean counterpart, while his shrew is coarser and more rebellious than Shakespeare's titular protagonist. At the same time, she is also reduced to a sexual object, a typical feature of Restoration theatre that was introduced to the English stage with the appearance of actresses in the early 1660s. Lacy also did something that became typical of late-17th and 18th-century actors who were also playwrights: he revised the formerly minor character, Sauny, in order to show his own comic talents. As we have seen, this expansion of Sauny also significantly affected the delineation of both Margaret and Petruchio.

146 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 82.
147 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 82.
148 Singh, *Family Relationships in Shakespeare*, p. 8.
149 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 197.
150 Garrick, *Catharine and Petruchio*, 3.277–278.
151 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 82.
152 Marsden, *Re-Imagined Text*, p. 86.

In contrast and in accordance with the new taste for sentimental drama that the many social and theatrical changes from the end of the 17th century brought about, Garrick's adaptation underwent heavy cuts in order to correct the plot inconsistencies of Shakespeare's original and supress inappropriate language and motifs, and thus soften the characters in order to stage a sentimentalised, domesticised, and moral Shakespeare. Lacy's and Garrick's adaptations, therefore, both altered Shakespeare's story and language to suit the new theatres, the innovations in them, the audience, and the societies of their respective periods. One can, therefore, see not only the shift in tastes and attitudes towards Shakespeare, but also the shift in English society itself, in its worldviews and preferences. And so, as society – and, by extension, theatregoing audiences – changed, Shakespeare changed with it. This may be seen as an ongoing process that will never cease and whose effect can be seen even today, each time Shakespeare's works are revived for the 21st-century stage.

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RICHARD FANSHAWE'S *TO LOVE ONLY FOR LOVE SAKE* EXPLORING THEATRE TRANSLATION METHODS IN PRE-RESTORATION ENGLAND

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INTRODUCTION

Scholarly interest in 17th-century England's drama translation has grown markedly in recent decades,[1] with the largest proportion of publications focused on the period 1660–1700. Less attention, however, has been directed to its practice in pre-Restoration times, despite its hypothetical influence on subsequent practitioners and undoubted appeal for theatre and translation studies.

Paradoxically, this lack of consideration contrasts with the fascination shown by Jacobean and Caroline writers towards Spanish literature, mainly prose but also drama.[2] These authors, however, did not find Spanish *comedias* appealing enough to translate them fully, to the extent that in the period 1600–1660 only two texts can be regarded as 'translations' of Spanish plays, both of them by James Shirley: *The Young Admiral* (1633), adapted from Lope de Vega's *Don Lope de Cardona* (1608–1609), and *The Opportunity* (1634), from Tirso de Molina's *El castigo del penseque* (1631?).[3] Even though Shirley's relevance as the first English playwright to turn to Spanish Golden Age drama cannot be denied, he did it in such a way that 'took care that neither of his plays revealed its Spanish origin,'[4] arguably due to the controversial Anglo-Spanish relationships at the time or as a result of Shirley's personal initiative.[5] *The*

1 See J. Loftis, 'The Social and Literary Context', in T. W. Craik (ed.), *The Revels History of Drama in English 1660–1750*, vol. 5, London, Methuen, 1996, pp. 3–80; D. Currell, '"As He Refined the Language". Dryden's Task as a Translator', *Literature Compass*, vol. 3, no. 2, 2016, pp. 159–171; and J. Braga Riera, *Classical Spanish Drama in Restoration English (1660–1700)*, Amsterdam and Philadelphia, John Benjamins, 2009; 'Translation and Performance Cultures: Spanish Drama and Restoration England', *Theatralia*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2021; 'Translocating Humour to Seventeenth-Century England: The Comic Afterlife of Spanish Drama', *Forum for Modern Language Studies (Oxford Academic)*, vol. 58, no. 3, 2022, pp. 329–344.

2 This is the case of renowned playwrights such as Thomas Middleton or John Fletcher, who resorted to Spanish materials for sources and inspiration.

3 J. Loftis, *Renaissance Drama in England and Spain*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1987, p. 237.

4 Loftis, *Renaissance Drama*, p. 248.

5 The respective editions are presented in their front pages as 'written by James Shirley,' with no allusion to the source.

Young Admiral closely follows Lope's plot, but inserts new characters and scenes. Something similar can be observed in *The Opportunity*, which respects Tirso de Molina's comical story and some of its scenes but creates or modifies many others (for instance, intensifying the subplot), eliminates monologues and asides, and alters the characters' personalities, resulting in 'an excellent imitation enriched with many original features.'[6]

The opening of the theatres after the Interregnum (an interval which drastically lessened London's theatrical activity) demanded new stories, and continental plays from France and Spain surfaced as suitable candidates. Spanish texts were specially favoured by the restored monarch Charles II, who had become acquainted with the comedies of Spanish intrigue during his exile in France and the Low Countries, and even suggested some translations into English.[7] Such inspiration was notable between 1660 and 1680, above all after the success of Samuel Tuke's *The Adventures of Five Hours* (1663), from Coello's *Los empeños de seis horas* (1657). Other adaptations from Spanish texts followed: *Elvira, or the Worst Not Always True* (1664), by George Digby, from Calderón's *No siempre lo peor es cierto*; *An Evening's Love, or the Mock Astrologer* (1668), John Dryden's rendition of Calderón's *El astrólogo fingido* (1624–1625); and two translations of *No puede ser el guardar una mujer* (1659), by Antonio Moreto: *Tarugo's Wiles; or, the Coffee-house* (Thomas Sydserf, 1668), and *Sir Courtly Nice, or It Cannot Be* (John Crowne, 1685).

There are distinctive differences between Shirley's approach and the one taken by these inexperienced practitioners, who made themselves patently visible in the prefaces and covers of the printed editions and openly informed of the Spanish provenance of the play. Roughly speaking, they fairly imitated character and plot situations (with love and honour as driving forces), but obliterated versification and linguistic literalness – whereby dialogue substituted many soliloquies while more profuse stage directions contributed to agility. English proper nouns and locations were favoured, while clothes, props, and culture-related items were accommodated. This domesticating stance was also visible in the daring behaviour of women and the way honour was downplayed. By the same token, stage and textual humour was sometimes left out, although reinforced with new home jokes and wordplay. This 'loose' approach clearly responded to a specific concept of translation,[8] but

6 Stiefel quoted in A. H. Nason, *James Shirley, Dramatist,* New York, University Heights, 1915, p. 270.

7 See, for instance, J. Braga Riera, *Classical Spanish Drama*; and F. T. Hogan, *The Spanish Comedia and the English Comedy of Intrigue with Special Reference to Aphra Behn*, Ph.D. diss., Boston, Boston University, 1955.

8 M. Kitagaki, *Principles and Problems of Translation in Seventeenth-century England,* Tokyo, Yamaguchi Shoten, 1981.

also to a need to obtain commercial success,[9] favouring solutions that met the demands of the audiences. Thus, and adopting Dryden's classification of translation methods, the resulting texts depart from what he named *paraphrase*[10] and are closer to his notion of *imitation*,[11] a practice that justified omissions, reductions, and add-ons.

Right before the first performances of the Spanish *comedias* in Restoration England (starting in 1663, as mentioned above, with *The Adventures of Five Hours*), only one instance of a translated Spanish play is recorded: Richard Fanshawe's rendition of *Querer por sólo querer* (written by Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza in 1622) as *To Love Only for Love Sake* (1653–1654, published in 1670). In what follows, I will shed light on the non-verbal agents (personal motivation, literary and performative issues, social contexts) that bear specifically on the translation and reception of the source play. Also, attention will be paid to the mechanisms that Fanshawe – who was mainly a classical poetry translator – used in order to recreate a Platonic love story, and whether or not they anticipate drama translation practices in Restoration times.

RICHARD FANSHAWE AND *QUERER POR SÓLO QUERER*

Besides being a poet and translator, Richard Fanshawe (1608–1666) had a political career that led him to support the Royalist cause during the English Civil War, first being loyal to Charles I and then serving Charles II. His formal education at Cambridge included a tour around Europe, and, after a stay in France, in 1628, he arrived in Madrid, where he spent a few years and became acquainted with Spanish language, culture, and literature. Indeed, it was 'the information which he possessed of the country'[12] that explains why he was appointed Secretary to Lord Aston's embassy in this city. But as a result of his attachment to the Stuart Dynasty, he was later forced into exile in Tankersley Park, Yorkshire, where he undertook a good deal of his translation activity (including *To Love Only for Love Sake*). After Oliver Cromwell's death, he was appointed Latin Secretary in Paris (1658) and, in 1664, British Ambassador to the royal court of Spain.

9 R. Portillo, 'Staging Restoration Dramas: Practical Aspects of Their Performance', *Sederi,* no. 15, 2005, p. 63.

10 'The author is kept in view by the translator, so as never to be lost, but his words are not so strictly followed as his sense; and that too is admitted to be amplified, but not altered' (quoted in T. R. Steiner, *English Translation Theory, 1650–1800*, Amsterdam, Rodopi, 1975, p. 237).

11 The translator '(if now he has not lost that name) assumes the liberty, not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion' (quoted in Steiner, *English Translation Theory*, p. 237).

12 A. Fanshawe, *Memoirs of Lady Fanshawe, Wife of Sir Richard Fanshawe, Bart.*, London, H. Colburn and R. Bentley, 1830, p. 2.

Despite his slim output as a poet, Fanshawe has become particularly famous for his translations of poetry, not only from and into Latin, but also from Spanish, Italian, and Portuguese into English. He attempted the first translation of a literary work from Portuguese into English, *Os Lusíadas* by Camões (1655, apparently through a Spanish prose translation),[13] and of some sonnets by Spanish poets Bartolomé de Argensola and Luis de Góngora (probably in the 1630s).[14] As for theatre, he translated three full plays: John Fletcher's *The Faithful Sheperdess*, which he rendered into Latin (1658), and (into English) Giovanni Battista Guarini's *Il pastor fido* as *The Faithful Shepherd* (1647, acted at the Duke's Theatre in 1676); for the third one, he chose a Spanish source: *Querer por sólo querer*, a 6300-line verse play commissioned by María de Guzmán (the Count of Olivares's daughter) to Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza as a birthday present for Isabel de Borbón. First performed by the *meninas* and other court noblewomen on January 1, 1623, at the Salón Grande del Real Alcázar de Madrid,[15] the play was particularly expensive to stage, since the best designers were hired for the occasion and made use of the most spectacular props,[16] all accompanied by music and dancing.

Meant for an aristocratic audience, the story draws on fantasy, chivalresque, and mythological materials. It revolves around three young princes, Felisbravo, Claridoro, and Floranteo, who compete for the love of two princesses, Zelidaura and Claridiana, with the latter locked under a spell in a castle and only to be released in the presence of a wise and brave suitor. Felisbravo and Claridoro manage to break the spell, but Cupido favours Floranteo's love for the princess, who turns him down. From that moment on, an intricate, intriguing plot of confrontations and jealousy between the princesses and the different suitors ends with the intervention of Mars, who consecrates both ladies to the cult of Diana.

However, the interest of the play does not lie so much in characterisation[17] as in its lyricism and the political intentions of the Spanish text. Its aim

13 D. Gioia, '*Os Lusíadas* in English: the Real Motivations Behind the First English Translation of Camoes's Masterpiece', *Mots Palabras Words*, no. 5, 2004, p. 59.

14 For a full record of his poetry in translation, see R. M. Walker, 'Sir Richard Fanshawe's *Lusiad* and Manuel de Faria e Sousa's *Lusíadas Comentadas*: New Documentary Evidence', *Portuguese Studies*, vol. 10, 1994, pp. 44–47; and Á. M. García Gómez, 'Sir Richard Fanshawe y *Querer por sólo querer* de Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza: El cómo y el por qué de una traducción', in H. W. Sullivan et al. (eds.), *La comedia española y el teatro europeo del siglo XVII*, London, Tamesis Books, 1999, p. 123.

15 G. C. Peale, '*Querer por solo querer*. Un hito en la historia materialista del teatro cortesano', in J. Farré (ed.), *Dramatugia y espectáculo teatral en la época de los Austrias*, Madrid, Iberoamericana, 2009, p. 125.

16 R. Lorenzo Martínez, *Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza. Estudio y análisis de la dramaturgia del secretario real de la corte de Felipe IV,* Ph.D. diss., Barcelona, Universitat de Barcelona, 2005, p. 148.

17 This is probably so because certain actions might have been deemed indecorous for such a noble cast (G. A. Davies, *A Poet at Court: Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza (1586–1644)*, Oxford, The Dolphin Book, 1971, p. 228).

seems quite clear from the laudatory lines dedicated to the ruling class, and most noticeably at the beginning of Act One when the work of the Spanish Army is praised, and the brave and fair Belisbravo is identified with King Philip IV himself. The male characters, all noble and intelligent, set out on a journey in search of (courtly) love, in what is seen as an attempt to entertain but also to re-educate morally the values of courtesans,[18] offering a good image of the monarchs. In short, he manages to give a lyrical touch to a story topic that diverges from the standard cape-and-sword *comedia* except for the presence of the *gracioso*, the sharp-tongued Rifaloro, who, as required by the genre, is the butt of several jokes and counterpoint of the high-ranking characters.

Fanshawe translated this text between 1653 and 1654, when he was suspended from any sort of diplomatic and political activity. The cover page of the printed edition (published posthumously in 1670) reads: '*Querer por solo querer / To Love Only for Love Sake: A Dramatick Romance. Representated at Aranjuez before the King and Queen of Spain to celebrate the birthday of that King by the Meninas. Written in Spanish by Don Antonio de Mendoza, 1623. Paraphrased in English, Anno 1654 / Together with The Festivals of Aranwhez.*'[19] The translator's name, which appears here as 'Sir R. F.,' is spelled out in one of the opening poems.

The next sections will delve into Fanshawe's *modus operandi* as a theatre translator and the potential categorisation of *To Love Only For Love Sake* as a 'paraphrase.'[20]

TO LOVE ONLY FOR LOVE SAKE

Fanshawe's sole translation of a Spanish play leads to speculation about the reasons that made him pick a court play and a playwright whose fame was eclipsed by more successful and prolific figures, such as Lope de Vega or Calderón de la Barca.[21] Historical, political, literary, and personal reasons may explain this.

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18 Lorenzo Martínez, *Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza*, p. 153.

19 The second part, entitled *Festivals represented at Aranvvhez before the King and Queen of Spain, in the Year 1623, to celebrate the Birthday of that King, Felipe IV*, is a description in verse and prose of that festival. A study of this poem can be found in J. Braga Riera, 'The festival at Aranwhez: una traducción inglesa en verso a mediados del siglo XVII', *Enlaces*, no. 1, 2004.

20 See note 10. The Prologue to the English edition also includes some praising words by T. O. for the Spanish author and his 'dramatick romance,' described as 'paraphrased by him.'

21 Hurtado de Mendoza only wrote twenty plays including *comedias* and interludes, probably because of his multiple occupations at Court. Still, he was an outstanding man of letters, as proven

From a historical perspective, 'the resentment and fear' that Protestant England held toward Catholic Spain at the time,[22] a factor usually mentioned to justify the low output of translations from Spanish (but decisive in Shirley's case), may have influenced the choice of play: Fanshawe's support for the Royalist cause might not only have prevented him from attempting other translations, but also have forced him to adjust the sources he drew upon.[23] It is not coincidental that he picked one which was known in England already,[24] mainly after the Prince of Wales visited Madrid in 1623, when he was able to see a performance.[25]

Politically, Fanshawe was probably attracted by a sort of play, the so-called *comedias palaciegas*, that had become very popular in Madrid. In fact, between 1635 and 1638, the Palacio de Buen Retiro was the venue for many theatrical parties held by the Royals, some of which he probably attended. Since Philip IV favoured court theatre and commissioned plays to courtiers, Hurtado de Mendoza possibly saw this play as an opportunity to praise his royal clients, something that can be perceived in the political nature of many of his other writings. In the same fashion, Fanshawe could have selected a story dealing with courtly love and marital arts, close to his monarchic and aristocratic ideals, but with no serious political or social implications.

From a literary perspective, his decision could have been the result of pure poetic interest in the lyrical character of the play. This would explain, for example, why he retained versification, and the special attention he paid to language and metrics,[26] proving that English was, like Latin or Spanish, able to portray masterpieces of universal literature. Still, some theatrical interest cannot be ruled out; some parts were actually staged in his own home with his daughters as actresses (for instance, during his second trip to Madrid as Lord Aston's secretary), and the preservation (sometimes with alterations) of the stage directions point to some sort of dramaturgical intention. Yet, there is no evidence (as expected, given the political circumstances in England) of

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by his presence in many miscellanea publications in Madrid from 1633 on (Lorenzo Martínez, *Antonio Hurtado de Mendoza*, p. 19). He also seems to have influenced some of Molière's plays (Lorenzo Martínez, *Antonio Hurtado*, pp. 27–28).

22 E. R. del Río, 'The Context of Translation: Richard Fanshawe and Spanish Verse', *Revista Alicantina de Estudios Ingleses*, no. 17, 2004, p. 6.

23 This concealment is noteworthy in his selection of Góngora's poems, translating those that displayed no religious or political undertones (del Río, 'The Context of Translation', p. 20).

24 It contains echoes of *The Trionfi* by Petrarch, first translated into English in 1554, and deals with topics familiar to English audiences at the time, as disguise, hidden identities, and feminist issues (for instance, Princess Zelidaura refuses to be valued just because of her beauty).

25 García Gómez, 'Sir Richard Fanshawe', p. 130.

26 In this sense, his intentions seem radically opposed to those of translator George Digby, who was born in Madrid where his father was ambassador to the Spanish court and lived there for his first eleven years (1612–1623), whose translated play, *Elvira, or the Worst Not Always True*, was unmistakeably meant for the stage.

any professional staging or intention to take the text to the theatres, which tips the balance towards a literary motivation – but one that guarantees a full theatrical experience for 'the reader.'[27]

As for his personal reasons, he could have embarked on a very challenging task in order to find some respite from the worries of his days in captivity and improve his skills as a translator, as the rewordings of *Os Lusíadas* reveal.[28] Even though there is no testimony concerning his views on translation, he apparently conceived this task as one loyal to the source, but open to some personal touch. This can be deduced from the flattering words of one of his contemporaries, Sir John Denham, in a poem on Fanshawe's rendering of *Il Pastor Fido*, where he compares Fanshawe to other practitioners: 'They but preserve the ashes, thou the flame / True to his sense, but truer to his fame.' Denham suggests that it is not 'the ashes,' but the spirit, that prevails: 'Yet, after all, (lest we should think it thine) / Thy spirit to his circle dost confine.'[29] Also, he makes it clear that Fanshawe did not pursue a 'word by word' method:

> That servile path thou nobly dost decline
> Of tracing word by word, and line by line.
> Those are the labour'd births of slavish brains,
> Not the effect of poetry, but pains.[30]

TITLE, PLOT, STRUCTURE, *DRAMATIS PERSONAE*

Fanshawe closely follows the disposition of content of the source edition and refers to the original *comedia* as 'comedy,' a term that seemed appropriate for a text that, in principle, portrayed the two basic story lines of a typical Restoration comedy: romance (mainly involving unrequited love) and humour (usually involving the droll, but sometimes also gallants and ladies). He also includes the initial dedication, the laudatory prologue or *loa* (together with a definition of this term), and a 'post-loa' named 'song' (an element that fits with the frequent presence of musical accompaniment in Restoration performances).

Regarding the play's structure, some of the decisions Fanshawe made distance himself from the ways adopted by his Restoration counterparts, who used to make plays noticeably longer. He also preserves the Spanish three-act

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27 García Gómez, 'Sir Richard Fanshawe', p. 138.

28 Gioia, '*Os Lusíadas* in English', p. 60.

29 Quoted in Steiner, *English Translation Theory*, p. 63. Some contemporary scholars such as J. W. Mackail have also complimented his excellence as a poetry translator (*Studies of English Poets*, London, Longmans, Green, and Co, 1925, pp. 31–52).

30 Quoted in Steiner, *English Translation Theory*, p. 64.

division, as opposed to the five-act model favoured by the English tradition. He thoroughly maintains the internal distribution of each act and the Aristotelian unities, as well as play localisation and the space-time references in the original texts (inserted principally in the dialogue). This also applies to the verbal décor, which is always respected, as in the final lines of Act One:

CL: La tierra cubre un espanto.	CL: The Earth is hid with terrors dire.
FE: Rayos descogen los cielos.	FE: Heaven lets down sheets of fire.
GE: ¡Qué furia! CL: ¡Qué obscuridad!	GE: What sadness! CL: What obscurity!
FE: ¡Qué horror![31]	FE: What horror![32]

The graphically marked asides are fully retained as well as the occasional long monologues, which are never broken up. In addition, the list of characters is presented following the Spanish edition, which includes names and surnames (together with the names of the actresses that performed the roles in Spanish). Such closeness is perceived, too, in the rendering of the title: *Querer por sólo querer* faithfully becomes *To Love Only for Love Sake* – a method for title translation that contrasts with the custom of Restoration practitioners to choose double titles, with the first part focusing on a more appealing (or commercial) side of the original story.

The fidelity to the source also applies to the plot, with very few exceptions: some changes have little repercussion (for instance, in the Spanish Act One, the General tells Felisbravo about his thirty military ships, as opposed to the two hundred vessels in the English version), though others are slightly more significant and seem to be provoked by the impositions of versification.

VERSIFICATION AND POETRY

One of the most intricate problems Fanshawe had to face was the wide variety of Spanish metric forms, which, depending on the dramatic situation or the character who utters them, may range from *redondillas* (preferred for factual dialogue and humorous situations) and *cuartetas* to *décimas* (especially in monologues) and *sonetos* (mainly used for lyrical soliloquy), among others. To this diversity of metric phenomena, the many rhetorical figures in the stanzas must be added. Given such complexity, it is not surprising that

31 A. Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer por solo querer*, Madrid, por Juan de la Cuesta, 1623, p. 12.

32 R. Fanshawe, *To Love Only for Love Sake: A Dramatick Romance*, London, printed by William Godbid, 1670, p. 36. For exemplification purposes, the spelling of both Spanish and English editions has been modernised. The Spanish text used corresponds to the 1632 edition, presumably the one Fanshawe consulted.

Restoration dramatists, when rendering Spanish plays, used prose and blank verse, with occasional rhyming couplets. Fanshawe, though, prevented this formal loss by preserving versification, but recasting it for English audiences in the fashion of heroic verse (popular in the 1660s), with occasional tercets and quatrains:

GE: De los tuyos un leño
nos falta solamente,
y rey de su Tridente
pondrás, Marte segundo.[33]

GE: All of thy Navy but one ship is missing.
And thou (king of the Trident, second Neptune,
Lord of the four seas) has hurled[.][34]

One of the immediate consequences of line lengthening is that the sprightly verses of the original acquire at times a formal tone in English; at the same time there is an effort to portray agility, for example, by retaining the instances of repartee, as in this exchange between the Captain and Felisbravo regarding Zelidaura:

FE: ¿Se casó? CA: ¿Cómo casarse?
FE: ¿Es altiva? CA: Es invencible.
FE: Acaba tu historia y sea.
En buen hora hermosa, y libre.[35]

FE: She married? CA: She! FE: What proud?
CA: Invincible.
FE: Conclude thy story then (and let her be)
in a good hour fair, and at liberty.[36]

Fanshawe's meticulousness is evident in how he masters the art of combining sense and metre, in such a way that sometimes even the Spanish word order is retained, making the rhyming words coincide in both languages, as in the next example with *procura*-try, *ojos*-eye:

RO: Todo es guerra. ZE: Los despojos
desta victoria procura.
CL: Ay que es mayor aventura
el encanto de tus ojos.[37]

RO: All's war. ZE: Thy fortune in the
adventure **try**.
CL: Ah! How much more's the inchantment
of that **eye**.[38]

Other times, content is rearranged in different lines, as in the following excerpt, where Rifaloro comically appeals to some giants:

33 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 1.
34 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 3.
35 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 3.
36 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 6.
37 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 6.
38 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 14.

RI: Gigantes caritativos,
dulces, amables, discretos,
a pesar de libros tantos
que os han pintado tan necios.[39]

RI: Charitable, loving, sweet,
Good faced giants and discreet.
Spite of so many lying books
That paint you fools with ugly looks.[40]

The five adjectives describing the giants (*caritativos, dulces, amables, discretos, necios*) are kept and redistributed together with the rest of the information but for the addition of 'lying' and 'good faced.' These incorporations seem necessary here, as well as in other cases due to metrics and rhyme impositions, which reveal a fondness for these over other elements:

GI: ¿Qué mandan vuestras mercedes?
RI: ¡Merced! ¿Y eso mas? Si puedes
dinos montaña de hueso.
¿Este castillo qué encierra?
Prodigio en fábrica humana.[41]

GI: What is your worship's pleasure?
RI: Worships too?
Mountain of bone, if thou can't tell us, do.
What is embraced by this castle's **dyke**?
Say, prodigy; to humane creature **like**.[42]

In the example above, a humorous conversation between a Giant and Rifaloro, the word 'dyke' is inserted to complete the third line and guarantee the rhyme with 'like.' Other times re-elaborations are trickier, as in Felisbravo's inner reflection on love while fighting sleep, where the result retains an identical number of lines thanks to rewording, proving the translator's mastery in conserving Hurtado de Mendoza's poetics:

FE: Tormenta quiero, y no calma,
que si sale vencedor
rendirá solo en mi amor
lo que dexa de ser alma.
Si durmiere un solo instante,
porque es morir lo dormido,
lo quiero, y quede vencido
por hombre, y no por amante.[43]

FE: Tempest I seek, not calm; if the days thine
Thou quell'st my body, my love still is whole:
I give thee all of that which is not soul.
And, since in lodgings from the street love lies,
So thou (and spare not) quarter in my eyes
A while, harbouring so unwelcome guest
(As men obey thy brother death's arrest)
Not as a lover, but a mortal.[44]

Another example of verse alteration can be observed in the way the six original sonnets abandon their Spanish pattern in favour of the Elizabethan one.

39 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 21.
40 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 81.
41 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 7.
42 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 18.
43 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 8.
44 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 20.

Thus, unlike early Restoration translators, Fanshawe, being a poet himself, did not do away with the sprightly Spanish metre but made an effort to preserve the poetry by accommodating it to conventional English versification. Consequently, the resulting verses may not be as agile, and at times acquire a very formal tone, but on other occasions the composition preserves both dynamism and beauty, altering the structure of the content if necessary.

STAGE DIRECTIONS

A particular feature of the work of Restoration translators was the creation of conventional stage notes containing information extracted from the original dialogues, while adding new ones absent in Spanish. This guaranteed that content was preserved, but also contributed to a looser, more dynamic style in the resulting plays. This pursuit of theatricality is also seen in Fanshawe's work, but he approached these directions very accurately and, albeit with a few exceptions, avoided any sort of alteration.

One of the reasons for the conservation of the stage actions in *Querer por sólo querer* is undoubtedly the fact that they were numerous and rich, something unusual for Golden Age standards. This detail mainly responds to the paramount importance they acquire in plot development, given the volume of spectacular effects the performance required. Apart from those that mark entrances, exits, and asides, there are many other stage directions referring to dress and to the objects and accessories used, and also to the characters' actions and positions on the stage, as well as those designating gesture or emotion.

The minor alterations made by Fanshawe affect all categories of directions. For instance, he is more rigid regarding attire, as clearly seen at the start of Act One:

Y por otra salga el Príncipe Felisbravo, vestido de persa, **o como quisiere**, acompañado de gente; y llegue el general a sus pies, poniendo en ellos el bastón, **y podrá** traer el General una corona de laurel[.][45]	At the other, Felisbravo habited after the Persian manner, with a royal train; and let the General approach him, lying the truncheon at his feet; and the General **is to** wear a laurel crown[.][46]

The flexibility provided by Hurtado de Mendoza is not respected in the English direction, which discards *como quisiere* ('as he wishes') and *podrá* ('can').

45 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 1, s.d.
46 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 1, s.d.

However, this sort of decision is not repeated consistently throughout the text, and such 'rigidity' is absent from other instances.

The most striking discrepancies, though, are found in directions for action, which account for most of the new additions: in Act One we are told that the Captain 'seeing Felisbravo disturbed he stops,'[47] and in Act Two Floranteo 'offers to go away,'[48] 'Claridiana shows herself,'[49] 'Zelidaura spies them together,'[50] 'Claridiana goes away by degrees casting looks back at him,'[51] and, during a fight, 'Rifaloro hits one of them.'[52] Examples in Act Three include 'Claridiana and Floriana remain,'[53] and Felisbravo's reaction at the contemplation of a woman's portrait, when he 'stands or lies down, with his eyes fixed towards the door, as upon the dear object,'[54] among others.

In other cases, the existing stage directions are given more emphasis (*Vuelve a mirar el retrato* becomes 'looks upon it again, and again'[55]), or add detail, such as a destination, Tataria, is added to a direction involving Felisbravo, the General and Roisalora: 'As in journey towards Tartaria Felisbravo replying to their dissuasions from it.'[56]

To some extent, much of this extra information can seem unnecessary, such as the action marking the interruption of Zelidaura's monologue in Act One, when 'she hears the passing of somebody,' as well as many entrances and exists. This redundancy is ever more evident when the dialogue makes the situation clear. For instance, the translator adds 'falls at her feet' to indicate that Claridiana must incline before Zaliadora, something that is specified in the dialogue: 'At these triumphant feet thy slave inclined.'[57]

Other additions combine direction and emotion, as when Claridoro, Zelidaura, and Roselinda enter 'as in heat of argument, begun in the tyring-room,'[58] while many others complement information about tone: 'to her aloud,'[59] 'quarrelling,'[60] 'as receiving with joy,'[61] etc.

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47 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 5.
48 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 52.
49 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 56.
50 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 61.
51 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 63.
52 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 103.
53 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 116.
54 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 130.
55 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 8.
56 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 14. This localisation note is iterated in Act Three, again without an equivalent in Spanish (p. 101).
57 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 118.
58 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 9.
59 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 57.
60 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 73.
61 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 101.

All in all, the different types of stage directions receive slightly more attention in the English text, even though some of the changes made are inconsequential. Fanshawe's 'performative aim' was not incongruous with the ingrained conventions that were adopted later in Restoration theatre in this regard, but slightly different from his own method in the other plays he translated, in which directions are even more accurately portrayed.[62] Needless to say, the exceptional number of allusions in *Querer por sólo querer* to indicate dress and dramatic action facilitated the creation of a translation suitable for the stage.

Finally, the conventional stage directions are reinforced in the Spanish text by the presence of implicit didascalic elements integrated in the dialogues. They are preserved in English, as in the following conversation between the Captain and Felisbravo:

CA: Quedemos solos. FE: La gente Capitán retira.[63]	CA: To tell it, let me thy Ear in private borrow. FE: General retire the Folks.[64]

CHARACTERS' NAMES AND CULTURE-RELATED ITEMS

Fanshawe's inclination for fidelity is also patent in how he retained the characters' Spanish names. This decision is strikingly different from that adopted by his Restoration successors, who rejected many of the original names for varied reasons (cultural, political, etc.) and were prone to naturalisation. By fully retaining the Spanish spellings, Fanshawe provided these names with exoticism, but missed many of their lexical, phonological, and ethnic connotations. This loss is especially visible semantically, since most of the names are allusive, either overtly or implicitly: Claridiana and Claridoro inevitably remind us of *claro* ('clear'), and the same applies to Roselinda (*rosa* and *linda* – beautiful rose), the servant Florinda (*flor* meaning 'flower'), and Felisbravo (from *felix*, Latin for 'happy,' and *bravo,* or 'brave'). As a result, references to personality or physical features are lost in English, even more when comical associations are present. This is so for the droll Rifaloro (from *rifa,* 'raffle,' and *loro*, 'parrot') and Prince Floranteo (from 'flower' and *galantear*, 'to woo'). The sense of strangeness is more accentuated when bearing in mind that these Spanish names were not associated with the English literary tradition, in the manner that other Spanish (or Italian) names were at the time.

Such exoticism also manifests in the way culture-related items are dealt with, although their number is quite limited since the play – despite the

62 García Gómez, 'Sir Richard Fanshawe', p. 135.
63 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 2.
64 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 4.

constant references to Spain – is not linked to a particular culture. The only changes found in this regard are the substitution of *claveles* ('carnations') for 'jessamine'[65] or 'violet,'[66] or the solutions for rendering *villano/villana*.[67] A touch of colour is felt, too, in the retention of some Spanish words such as *fácil* ('easy'),[68] *victoria*,[69] and *hola*.[70] Spanish toponyms are preserved, as well: Spain, the Levant, and the rivers Tagus and Harama. Other times Spanish lexis is inserted on purpose, i.e. the moment Felisbravo refers to Zaliadora as 'what a spanking labradora!'[71]

In light of the above, we may conclude an absence of naturalisation in the characters' names, toponyms, and scarce culture-specific items, with no deletions or new creations. Besides, unlike in Restoration-translated *comedias*, the target text does not incorporate new characters or cultural items. This exoticism is also visible in the occasional forms of address or invocations kept in Spanish.

THE CO*MEDIA* MOTIFS: MONARCHY, WOMEN AND LOVE, HUMOUR

As already discussed, Fanshawe's monarchic ideals are patent not only in play choice, but also in the way he maintains the tributes to the queen (see, for instance, Zeliadaura's laudatory words on p. 8) and king, e.g. Felisbravo's description of what makes a good king, conveniently transplanted into English:

FE: Los ojos del rey severos,
en lo apacible templados
fabrican fuertes soldados,
y hacen justos consejeros.[72]

FE: A monarch's gracious eye, preserving State,
makes a brave soldier, and just magistrate.[73]

65 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 8.
66 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 88.
67 Fanshawe might have had some trouble with this term used to refer to a rustic person. Hence, his solutions included: 'mountaneer' (p. 70); 'shepherdess' (p. 130) or 'in a rustic habit' (p. 123) for the female; or 'as a country gentleman' (p. 143) or 'country boor' (p. 155) for the male. A similar solution is found for *serrana*, a term allusive to someone living in the mountains, which he renders as 'rural goddess' (p. 70).
68 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 31.
69 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 32 and p. 33.
70 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 106.
71 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 80.
72 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 2.
73 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 3.

Claridiana also speaks about the ingredients of a good monarch: 'To speak a Prince Valiant to cut and slash, does not suffice, nor to resolve a riddle styles him wise.'[74] Apart from these features something must be remembered – no king is fair if badly counselled:

FE: Que siendo el príncipe bueno,
no puede haber mal ministro.[75]

FE: For Price's care is over all that's theirs
Nor can good Kings have evil counsellors.[76]

If the monarchic tone of *Querer por sólo querer* was a factor contributing to its translation, the same can be said, although to a lesser extent, about the presence of love, especially love at first sight, which is a constant in *Siglo de Oro* theatre. In *Querer por sólo querer*, however, women, far from reacting with the expected passivity, adopt a strong, masculine role that is respected in the English translation, as exemplified in Zeliadora's concept of a woman:

ZE: Pues hay hombres femeniles,
en quien tal flaqueza vemos,
al cielo desagraviemos,
las mujeres varoniles:
que tal vez vemos que miente
la misma naturaleza.[77]

ZE: Since there be men effeminately bent,
we manly women must that wrong undo,
for you see sometimes nature can lie too
than to persuade my happiness in her.[78]

This daring definition of love defies men's more conservative views, as expressed by Claridoro when he explains the ultimate consequence of female beauty:

CL: Si con alma rigurosa,
te niegas lo que mereces,
y el ser amada aborreces,
¿para qué naciste hermosa?[79]

CL: If you despise praise, neglect care,
And hate to be loved, why are thou fair?[80]

The masculine conception of love expressed by Claridoro also finds Zeliadora's opposition, which openly criticises men's interest in material things:

74 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 34.
75 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 6.
76 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 16.
77 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 4.
78 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 9.
79 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 4.
80 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 12.

ZE: Si enamora la beldad,
¿qué importa ser labradora?
Pero mejor enamora
belleza y comodidad.[81]

ZE: Men are no friends to beauty cloth'd in rags,
If beauty strike love's fire, why should it less
than in a Queen, placed in a shepherdess?[82]

'Sex battles' were undoubtedly amusing, so it is no surprise that these or other original plot situations that are the source for comedy were imitated in English. The same is true for Rifaloro, the figure embodying most of the joking and laughter. Fanshawe takes advantage of the possibilities of the *gracioso* to provoke situational and verbal humour (for instance, Rifaloro's cowardly nature, or the way he reproaches kings for their inappropriate conduct). Hence, we see the moment when the droll mocks Claridoro after he falls asleep in his pursuit of his loving Zeliadora:

RI: ¿Ya se ha quedado dormido?
¿Tan presto? ¡Qué necedad!
Más parece habilidad
que de galán, de marido.[83]

RI: He's fallen asleep, so soon? What frailty is?
More like a Husband, than a Lover, is.[84]

Likewise, we find it in this conversation between Rifaloro and Zeliadora, who also participates in the comic remark:

RI: Ay triste, San Belianis,
que me ha mordido una sierpe.
ZE: No te espantes, que en palacio
toda sabandija muerde.[85]

RI: St Belianis! A Snake stung my toe!
ZE: In Court there's not a worm but stings you
know.[86]

Other times slight modifications are necessary so as not to sacrifice comicality. In the following exchange between Rifaloro and the giants, Fanshawe finds no easy solution to portray *soslayo* ('sideways'), resorting to a different part of the body such as the nose:

RI: Que os partiera con un rayo,
por detrás y por delante,

RI: Thee out (I vow) and not half bone
leave thee,

81 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 19.
82 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 68.
83 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 8.
84 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 20.
85 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 11.
86 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 32.

que para ningún gigante,	with glittering Morglay: for the gentle slit,
permite Dios el **soslayo**?[87]	over the **nose** would never Giant fit.[88]

Fanshawe's skill is quite often remarkable in this sense, especially when facing complex Spanish lexical creations such as *arroldanado* ('provided with a small shield'); or when *furias arroldanadas*[89] becomes 'Orlando Furioso,'[90] a literary allusion that keeps the meaning of 'furious'; or when the humoristic intention is accentuated by using dialectal features without an equivalence in Spanish, such as 'rare sops.'[91]

The use of dialect as a way to stir humour is mainly used by Fanshawe in the scenes of mixed identities, specifically in Act Two, when Zaliadora, disguised as a country woman, must fake her 'country' origin and uses words such as *yow, yowr, yowe, thow,* or *mought* (for 'you,' 'your,' 'you're,' 'though,' and 'might,' respectively). This is innovative with respect to the Spanish text, which shows no explicit dialectal marks, although a few times it announces the way in which lines should be uttered, like at the start of Act Two, when Zelidaura, in the habit of a shepherdess, is supposed to use *villano lenguaje* ('countryperson idiom'):

ZE: En este traje,	ZE: In this **country tone** and dress
y en el **villano lenguaje**	Disguised rudely, safe we are.[93]
rudamente disfrazada.[92]	

Some of these additions could have acted as a way to compensate the few instances in which humour is lost, as is the case with one of the rare colloquial expressions uttered by Spanish Zaliadora, *¡pardiez!* (a colloquial interjection to denote surprise or anger), neutrally translated as 'by my troth.'[94]

Dialects aside, mockery of Spanish customs seemed to be a good source of humour as well. In the next comment, Rifaloro jokes about his master loving two women in the Spanish fashion, which is creatively translated using a cuisine-related metaphor ('six in a dish'):

87 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 7.
88 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 19.
89 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 7.
90 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 19.
91 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 8.
92 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 17.
93 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 61.
94 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 69.

RI: Ser amante a la Española
es un gusto muy salado,
que es a lo antiguo, y menguado,
esto de amar a una sola.[95]

RI: The Spanish fashion has my vote,
in mistresses, though not in diet:
One goes but dully down the throat
six in a dish the modern riot.[96]

The same can be said about metatheatrical references, as the one referring to an excessively long play without the typical final marriages of the *comedias*:

RI: Aquí acaba la comedia
de los siglos de los siglos
que aún es pesada, y eterna,
tanto puede, el ser tan necia.[97]

RI: Here ends the play,
of for ever and aye
tiring female and male,
without a marriage in the tale.[98]

Restoration translators resourcefully exploited the comic possibilities of the *gracioso*, making him more daring in his remarks.[99] Fanshawe also uses this stock character, among other things, to transfer the Spanish comical allusions directly, or integrates them in his search for an increased witty effect that might compensate for its disappearance in other parts of the play.

CONCLUSIONS

Richard Fanshawe was a cultivated man with a good knowledge of foreign languages and a great interest in literature and translation (mainly poetry), as well as theatre. He chose an exceptionally long Spanish play that he devotedly translated into English, a method that quite distances him from Shirley and from the later Restoration translators of Spanish *comedias*.

The fact that Fanshawe opted for a court play without any commercial expectations can explain why he kept the title, characterisation, and long soliloquies of the original Spanish piece. Even though the resulting metre and rhyme provoked several alterations in content, the plot is faithfully followed, as well as the profuse stage directions. In addition, he did not resort to English names or places, accommodating almost all the scarce culture-related

95 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 37.
96 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 149.
97 Hurtado de Mendoza, *Querer*, p. 42.
98 Fanshawe, *To Love Only*, p. 167.
99 The translated plays contain expressions in bad taste that would be impossible to find in 17th-century Spanish comedies: 'I'll tell him he's the son of a whore, and his grandfather rose by pimping' (Surly in *Sir Courtly Nice*); 'You bewitching whores' (Crack in *Sir Courtly Nice*), etc. See more examples in Braga Riera, *Classical Spanish Drama,* p. 214.

items. Women's behaviour was not enhanced nor downplayed, and textual humour was respected by exploiting its lexical possibilities but without adding new characters or situations and always observing the poetic sense of the original.

The resulting English text owes a great deal to the translator's passion for poetry and translation, but also to the political circumstances he found himself in as an ardent Royalist supporter. Hence, he chose a play with no political implications, probably out of lyrical interest rather than theatrical (although the performative side is never overlooked). He retained the 'Spanishness' of the original, as perceived in act-division, characterisation, the choice of locations, and the preservation of the plot-driving forces (love and humour). Some asides and stage directions were added or modified, and songs, rhythm, and poetry were fully accommodated to avoid artifice.

This being so, *To Love Only for Love Sake* can be described as a play properly 'paraphrased in English.' Nonetheless, it slightly departs from the Drydenean notion in some aspects, such as the translator's visibility, the richer stage directions, the addition of words for the sake of versification (and their alteration to preserve metre), and the use of a more 'relaxed' approach to enhance humour (changing jokes or using dialect), all aspects that are closer to Dryden's concept of 'imitation.' Fanshawe, thus, emerged as a poet who left behind the Caroline translation practice and timidly anticipated successful devices that early Restoration theatre translators would eventually adopt. But unlike them, he prioritised fidelity and (especially) beauty without putting theatricality at risk.

In any case, this study shows how Spanish Golden Age drama served as 'rewritable' material for drama practitioners in mid-17th-century England, although *To Love Only for Love Sake* seems to be only a timid predecessor of *comedia* translation practice in Restoration times.

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‘ALL YOU SHALL SEE OF HER IS PERFECT MAN’
PERFORMING MASCULINITIES IN JOHN DRYDEN AND WILLIAM DAVENANT’S *THE TEMPEST*

NATHAN RICHARDS-VELINOU

On April 25, 1662, a set of royal patents issued to theatre managers Thomas Killigrew and William Davenant established the legal and regulatory framework for the ways in which gender could be performed on the English stage. The patents set out a series of provisions regarding how Killigrew and Davenant’s acting companies were expected to behave when adapting the works of pre-Restoration playwrights for London audiences. The patents express a concern that ‘many plays formerly acted do contain several profane, obscene and scurrilous passages, and the women’s parts therein have been acted by men in the habit of women, at which some have taken offence,’ and give the command

> that from henceforth no new play shall be acted . . . containing any passages offensive to piety and good manners, nor any old or revived play containing any such offensive passages as aforesaid, until the same shall be corrected and purged by the said master or governors of the said respective companies from all such offensive and scandalous passages.[1]

In addressing the potential for ‘offence’ brought about by the pre-Restoration practice of having boy actors perform in ‘women’s parts,’ the patents

> give leave that all the women’s parts to be acted in either of the said two companies for the time to come may be performed by women so long as their recreations, which by reason of the abuses aforesaid were scandalous and offensive, may by such reformation be esteemed not only harmless delight, but useful and instructive representations of human life.[2]

These regulatory patents set forth an ideological statement – one which possessed the authority of royal license – as to what forms of gender performance would and would not be considered acceptable to present to Restoration

1 ‘Killigrew’s patent, 25 April 1662’, in D. Thomas (ed.), *Restoration and Georgian England, 1660–1788*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, pp. 17–18.

2 ‘Killigrew’s patent, 25 April 1662’, pp. 17–18.

audiences. The documents express a particular uneasiness on the subject of how 'women's parts' should be performed on stage. Men are not understood to be acceptable candidates for performing these parts; the practice of having 'men in the habit of women' is placed alongside the 'obscene and scurrilous' textual passages that must be 'purged' so as not to 'offend' audience sensibilities. Women are granted the ability to perform in these parts only on the condition that their performances help to bring about the project of theatrical 'reformation' proposed in these documents, transforming what could be 'scandalous and offensive' about these roles into something that is 'harmless' and 'instructive.' In order to bring the theatre closer in line with a more pragmatic, or 'useful,' mimetic representation of 'human life,' the patents demand both a textual and a performative change in the representation of gender in English drama. Female roles are to be written for and performed by women actors following a specific set of moral and ideological guidelines, and pre-Restoration plays are to be adapted into this new theatrical context. For the stage to properly represent 'human life' to its audiences, it must rely on a naturalised alignment of female performers with 'women's parts.'[3]

The question of who could perform 'men's parts,' however, was not so strictly regulated. While the tradition in English theatre of boy actors performing in women's roles had come to an end as a result of the 1662 royal patent, a new tradition of women performing in men's roles was just beginning: the tradition of breeches and travesty roles. Such an example of an actress's sustained performance of masculinity would be discussed in the introductory prologue to William Davenant and John Dryden's adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* (1667). In its first performance on November 7, 1667, the play's prologue would inform its audience that, because of a 'dearth of Youths' among their players, the Company had been 'forc'd t'employ / One of our Women to present a Boy':

> And that's a transformation you will say
> Exceeding all the Magick in the Play.

3 For extended critical studies focused on the new roles of women in Restoration theatre, see J. H. Wilson, *All the King's Ladies: Actresses of the Restoration*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1958; K. E. Maus, '"Playhouse Flesh and Blood": Sexual Ideology and the Restoration Actress', *ELH*, vol. 46, no. 4, 1979, pp. 595–617; J. Pearson, *The Prostituted Muse: Images of Women and Women Dramatists, 1642–1737*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1988; E. Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660–1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992; D. Payne, 'Reified Object or Emergent Professional? Retheorizing the Restoration Actress', in D. Payne and J. D. Canfield (eds.), *Cultural Readings of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century English Theater*, Athens, GA, University of Georgia Press, 1995, pp. 13–38; L. J. Rosenthal, 'Reading Masks: The Actress and the Spectatrix in Restoration Shakespeare', in K. M. Quinsey (ed.), *Broken Boundaries: Women and Feminism in Restoration Drama*, Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1996, pp. 201–218; and F. Ritchie, *Women and Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2014.

> Let none expect in the last Act to find,
> Her Sex transform'd from man to Woman-kind.
> What e're she was before the Play began,
> All you shall see of her is perfect man.
> Or if your fancy will be farther led,
> To find her Woman, it must be abed.[4]

The 'Boy' being introduced in this prologue is the newly added character Hippolito, a male character introduced by Dryden and Davenant, who would be performed in breeches by the actress Jane Long. While the prologue informs its audience that the character Hippolito will remain a 'perfect man' throughout the performance, it goes on to direct its audience's attention towards the female body lying behind Long's performance of maleness. If any members of the audience are tempted to discover the true 'Sex' of the actress, they are invited to 'find her Woman' sexually, or 'abed.' Within the confines of the play's narrative, however, the actress's performance of masculinity would be sustained, a 'transformation' in gender brought about by way of a performative 'Magick.'

The addition of the character Hippolito to Shakespeare's *Tempest* is foregrounded not only in the play's prologue, but also in the introductory preface by John Dryden printed alongside the play in 1670. In his preface, Dryden would give an account of the inspiration behind the additions that he and his collaborator Davenant had made to Shakespeare's play:

> Sir *William D'avenant*, as he was a man of quick and piercing imagination, soon found that somewhat might be added to the Design of *Shakespear*, of which neither *Fletcher* nor *Suckling* had ever thought: and therefore to put the last hand to it, he design'd the Counterpart to *Shakespear*'s Plot, namely that of a Man who had never seen a Woman; that by this means those two Characters of Innocence and Love might the more illustrate and commend each other. This excellent contrivance he was pleas'd to communicate to me, and to desire my assistance in it. I confess that from the very first moment it so pleas'd me, that I never writ any thing with more delight.[5]

As Dryden explains, Hippolito, the 'Man who had never seen a Woman,' had been a 'Counterpart' created to reflect the narrative of Shakespeare's Miranda, a woman who has never seen a young man. In keeping with the play's pattern

4 J. Dryden and W. Davenant, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, in M. E. Novak (ed.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 10, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1970, Prologue, ll. 29–38 (italics reversed).

5 J. Dryden, 'Preface to the *Enchanted Island*', in M. E. Novak (ed.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 10, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1970, p. 4 (italics reversed).

of neoclassical doubling, Dryden's theme of 'Innocence and Love' would also be expanded upon through the addition of Dorinda, Miranda's sister, who has also never seen a man other than her own father Prospero.[6]

In Dryden and Davenant's play, the figure of Hippolito seems to exist at the very limits of legible masculinity. In moments such as the prologue, the play directs the audience's attention away from Hippolito's on-stage male identity and, as critics have pointed out, onto the female body of the actress.[7] Within the narrative of the play, however, Hippolito is gradually taught to recognise gender difference, and to identify himself as a 'man' who desires 'women.' My purpose for this chapter will be to examine how Dryden and Davenant's adaptation takes up the questions of sexual difference and the legibility of gendered bodies. Dryden and Davenant's play stages a series of scenes in which male and female bodies are identified and misidentified by characters who have not yet been socialised into normative gender codes. These characters learn to navigate a new heterogeneity of gender, while at the same time learning to identify themselves as either 'men' or 'women.' Over the course of the play's narrative, Hippolito comes to recognise not only the limitations of his social identity as a 'man,' but also the limitations of his own male body. By the end of the play, in order to integrate into normative society, Hippolito is taught that he must conform to a socially acceptable model of 'male' behaviour in order to remain a 'perfect man.'

Beginning in the earliest scenes of the play, Dryden and Davenant foreground visual observation as a means of learning and interpretation. When Prospero enters onto the stage in the second scene of the play and asks his daughter, '*Miranda*! where's your Sister?', Miranda responds by telling her father that she left Dorinda 'looking from the pointed Rock, at the walks end,

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6 For modern critical approaches to the changes made by Dryden and Davenant to Shakespeare's text, see M. E. Novak, Commentary on *The Tempest*, in M. E. Novak (ed.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 10, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1970, pp. 319–379; K. E. Maus, 'Arcadia Lost: Politics and Revision in the Restoration *Tempest*', *Renaissance Drama*, vol. 13, 1982, pp. 189–209; M. Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992; L. J. Rosenthal, 'Reading Masks: The Actress and the Spectatrix in Restoration Shakespeare', in K. M. Quinsey (ed.), *Broken Boundaries: Women and Feminism in Restoration Drama*, Lexington, University of Kentucky Press, 1996, pp. 201–218; and L. Leigh, *Shakespeare and the Embodied Heroine: Staging Female Characters in the Late Plays and Early Adaptations*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

7 Laura Rosenthal, for example, reads Hippolito primarily as a female body within the context of the play; Rosenthal argues that the Hippolito's '[socially] inappropriate female desire' almost brings about the character's death, and that the character gradually 'learns to contain his (her) enormous sexual appetite' ('Reading Masks', p. 208). Lori Leigh, on the other hand, draws attention to a series of slippages between the character's 'male' and 'female' characteristics, and argues that Hippolito 'seemingly moves through the play with a fluid rather than fixed gender, operating as both male and female and exploring desire through both genders' (*Shakespeare and the Embodied Heroine*, pp. 95–96).

on the huge beat of Waters.'[8] Dorinda's 'looking,' or her visual curiosity in witnessing the spectacle of the storm that opens the play, becomes one of the character's earliest traits that the audience is introduced to. When Dorinda herself first enters onto the stage later on in the scene, she gives an account of the 'huge great Creature' she has seen in the storm:

> This floating Ram did bear his Horns above;
> All ty'd with Ribbands, ruffling in the wind,
> Sometimes he nodded down his head a while,
> And then the Waves did heave him to the Moon;
> He clamb'ring to the top of all the Billows,
> And then again he curtsy'd down so low,
> I could not see him: till, at last, all side-long
> With a great crack his belly burst in pieces.[9]

In attempting to make sense of this 'Creature,' which Miranda identifies as 'the Ship' that has been wrecked in the storm, Dorinda brings to life the body of the inanimate ship, relating its movements to that which she already knows.[10] The ship is personified as having nodded its 'head,' clamoured, and curtsied against the oncoming waves. The ship appears to possess the animal body of a 'floating Ram' with a distinguishable 'head' and 'belly.' The 'body' of the ship that the audience sees on stage in the opening scene is defamiliarised, and is reconfigured according to Dorinda's own system of understanding.

Dorinda's strategies of reading unknown bodies are put to use once again when the two sisters first see the men Hippolito and Ferdinand. As with the 'body' of the ship, the play's audience is made to re-evaluate the male body through the eyes of Dorinda and Miranda. The discourse of animality is brought up by Prospero as he describes the unknown 'man' Hippolito to his daughters: Prospero warns Miranda and Dorinda that 'The curled Lyon, and the rugged Bear / Are not so dreadful as that man.'[11] Prospero's statements on the animality of 'man' prompt Dorinda to fear that the 'man will catch us else, we have but two legs, / And he perhaps has four.'[12] Dorinda and Miranda eventually learn, however, to differentiate the 'dreadful' unknown creature that is 'man' from other unknown 'Creatures' such as the ship (gendered as a 'him') through their observation of the male body of Hippolito. Upon first seeing the unknown Hippolito, the two sisters are surprised that he possesses

8 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 1.2.1–3.
9 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 1.2.300–311.
10 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 1.2.301.
11 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.4.97–98.
12 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.4.116–117.

a physical body comparable to their own – that he 'walks about like one of us' and 'has legs as we have too.'[13] After further interacting with Hippolito, Dorinda gives the following account of her meeting with the newly discovered 'man':

> At first it star'd upon me and seem'd wild,
> And then I trembled; yet it look'd so lovely, that when
> I would have fled away, my feet seem'd fasten'd to the ground;
> Then it drew near, and with amazement askt
> To touch my hand; which, as a ransom for my life,
> I gave: but when he had it, with a furious gripe
> He put it to his mouth so eagerly, I was afraid he
> Would have swallow'd it.[14]

In her initial interaction with Hippolito, Dorinda fears that the 'man' will slip back into the monstrous animality that had earlier been suggested to her by Prospero. Hippolito is initially seen as something that is 'wild,' and that might devour her by 'swallowing' her hand. The encounter between Dorinda and Hippolito, however, not only allows Dorinda to recognise Hippolito's humanity, but also allows her to recognise Hippolito's identity as a 'man': over the course of Dorinda's speech, Hippolito changes from an 'it' into a 'he.'[15]

This shift in pronouns is mirrored later on in the play when Prospero introduces Miranda to Ferdinand from a distance. When Miranda asks Prospero whether or not Ferdinand is 'a Spirit,' Prospero explains that: 'it eats and sleeps, and has such senses as we have. This young Gallant, whom thou see'st, was in the wrack; were he not somewhat stain'd with grief (beauty's worst Cancker) thou might'st call him a goodly person.' At the same time that Prospero identifies Ferdinand as a 'person,' he also identifies him as a man; Ferdinand is, like Hippolito, transformed from an 'it' into a 'he.' After instructing Miranda to 'Advance the fringed Curtains of [her] Eyes' and look upon Ferdinand, Prospero directs his daughter's process of 'looking' by encouraging her to read the body before her as a male 'he.'[16] Through a scene of metatheatrical spectatorship – Miranda's eyelids become the 'fringed Curtains' of

13 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.5.1–2. Lori Leigh argues that Miranda and Dorinda, in their account of Hippolito's 'legs,' are drawing attention to the 'female' body of the actress in breeches, and are here 'making a metatheatrical reference to those legs being the same as theirs, or in other words, female legs' (*Shakespeare and the Embodied Heroine*, pp. 91–92).

14 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 3.1.104–111.

15 Lisanna Calvi has pointed out this shift in pronouns in her article on *The Tempest*, writing that 'Hippolito transforms from a creature ("it") into a man ("he")' ('"Suppos'd to be Rais'd by Magick"', or *The Tempest* "Made Fit"', in S. Bigliazzi and L. Calvi (eds.), *Revisiting 'The Tempest': The Capacity to Signify*, Basingstoke, Palgrave Macmillan, 2014, p. 162).

16 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 3.5.1–9.

the stage – Prospero introduces Miranda to the logic of socialised gender by instructing her on how to identify the bodies that appear before her on stage.

The visual exchanges of the play function not only as acts of gendering, but also as the means by which characters come to explore their own gender identities. In their initial encounter, Hippolito and Dorinda hesitantly identify themselves as 'man' and 'woman.' When asked by Hippolito, 'what art thou?', Dorinda explains, 'Alas I know not; but I'm told I am a Woman.' When subsequently asked, 'pray tell me what you are,' by Dorinda, Hippolito similarly explains 'I must confess, I was inform'd I am a man, / But if I fright you, I shall wish I were some other Creature.'[17] Though the characters identify themselves as 'Woman' and 'man,' those identities seem to be built upon the uncertain foundation of what they have been 'told' or 'inform'd' of by Prospero. As the play goes on, Hippolito continues to express anxiety over the certainty of his male identity; when Ferdinand asks Hippolito to tell him 'what [he is],' Hippolito informs him that he 'well hop'd I was a man, but by your ignorance / Of what I am, I fear it is not so.' Although Ferdinand reassures Hippolito by telling him that there is 'no doubt' that he is a man, Hippolito is not yet certain of his male identity within the newly heterogeneous gendered world into which he has been introduced.[18]

Although these characters identify themselves as 'men' and 'women,' the exact limits as to what constitutes masculinity and femininity remain uncertain early on in the play's narrative. In fact, the young characters of the island think about gender much more in terms of similarity than of difference. When first observing Hippolito and hearing him talk, Dorinda exclaims, 'Heark! it talks, sure this is not it my Father meant, / For this is just like one of us.'[19] Though taught by Prospero to believe in a palpable difference between themselves and bestial 'men,' Dorinda's first remarks are on the similarities between her own 'female' body and the 'male' body of Hippolito. Furthermore, at the first moment that Hippolito sees the new 'woman' Dorinda, he asks, 'What thing is that? sure 'tis some Infant of the Sun, dress'd in his Fathers gayest Beams, and comes to play with Birds: my sight is dazl'd, and yet I find I'm loth to shut my Eyes.'[20] In his first moments seeing a woman, Hippolito initially identifies her using male pronouns: '*his* Fathers gayest Beams.' Hippolito is initially taught by Prospero to imagine women as 'something between young men and Angels'; in following these terms by characterising Dorinda as an Angel-like 'Infant of the Sun,' Hippolito initially identifies

17 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.5.40–42, 51–54.
18 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 3.6.10–14, 17.
19 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.5.10–11.
20 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.5.34–37.

'women' using the same terms that he would use to identify 'men,' the two groups existing on a comparable spectrum of the human and the divine.[21]

Having not yet been socialised into normative gender codes, the young characters of the island struggle to grasp the nebulous social and physical boundaries of gender. In the first act of the play, Dorinda and Miranda have the following discussion about the new possibility of meeting the young 'men' that Prospero has spoken of:

Dor. Methinks indeed it would be finer, if we two
Had two young Fathers.
Mir. No Sister, no, if they were young, my Father
Said that we must call them Brothers.
Dor. But pray how does it come that we two are not Brothers then, and have not Beards like him?
Mir. Now I confess you pose me.[22]

Dorinda and Miranda conceptualise these new 'men' in relation to the only point of reference that they have for maleness: their 'Father.' Though they know that the new men, or 'Brothers,' will be 'young' in comparison to Prospero, the two 'young' women begin to question why they are not identifiable as 'Brothers' themselves. For the two sisters, the physical trait of 'Beards' is not yet something that is inherently tied to gender difference, i.e. if a man walks about on 'two legs' as women do, then why do women not grow beards as men do? The physical identifier of the 'Beard' has, for the sisters, not yet become an essentialised masculine trait.

For Hippolito as well, the figure of the 'Father' is used as a means of thinking through social codes of gender. After Hippolito is first introduced to Ferdinand, Ferdinand tells him the story of his shipwreck and the loss of his father Alonzo. After Ferdinand tells him that ''twas sad to lose a Father so,' Hippolito responds, 'I, and an only Father too, for sure you said / You had but one.' When Ferdinand asks Hippolito 'Have you a Father?', Hippolito responds, 'I was told I had one, and that he was a man, yet I have bin so much deceived, I dare not tell't you for a truth.'[23] In his uncertainty about social roles, Hippolito expresses a possibility of a multiplicity of 'Fathers' who are not necessarily 'men.' Hippolito has been 'told' that he has one father who was a 'man,' though he is not certain about whether or not this piece of information is true. Simply because Ferdinand has one male 'Father,' it does not necessarily follow that everyone has one father, or that all fathers are men.

21 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.4.45.
22 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 1.2.324–330.
23 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 3.6.2–4, 20–22.

Though the socialised Ferdinand views Hippolito as being 'wondrous simple,' maleness is in no way logically tied to fatherhood for the not-yet-socialised Hippolito.[24] For Hippolito, the social role of 'Father' is not yet something that is exclusively or normatively male.

Hippolito continues to raise questions about the boundaries of normatively 'male' behaviour when discussing the concept of monogamy with Ferdinand. After asking Ferdinand whether there are 'more fair Women . . . besides [Dorinda],' Hippolito claims that he 'will have all of that kind, if there be a hundred of 'em.' When Ferdinand attempts to explain to Hippolito that he 'must be ty'd to one,' Hippolito replies by saying, 'Sir, I find it is against my Nature. / I must love where I like, and I believe I may like all, / All that are fair.'[25] In defending his own desire for polygamy, Hippolito presents monogamy as an arbitrary social rule with no grounding in 'Nature.' In following the impulses of his own 'natural' desires, he is able to imagine a social order in which he is free to 'love' whomever he desires. Hippolito's continued defence of polygamy throughout the play, however, exposes not only the arbitrariness of social monogamy, but also the arbitrariness of appeals to 'Natural' gender roles. Later on in the play, when Ferdinand 'requests' Hippolito not to love Miranda, Hippolito again appeals to his own 'Natural' impulses, stating that he 'must love all who are fair; for, to tell / You a secret, Sir, which I have lately found / Within my self, they all are made for me.'[26] In following the 'natural' desires of his body, or in searching 'within his self,' Hippolito claims that he is capable of loving 'all that are fair.' The 'secret . . . within [his] self' that Hippolito claims to have discovered, however, is that women are 'all made for [him],' existing as an egotistical reflection of his own desires. Hippolito attempts to establish his own polygamous social order by presenting it as the 'Natural' result of his own self-reflection.

In order to be integrated into the 'brave new World' of the newly arrived Italians, however, Hippolito must learn to reject his desire for a socially transgressive form of polygamy and accept his normative role as 'husband' to Dorinda. Issues of gender transgression and social boundaries are addressed elsewhere in the play by way of the subplot involving Caliban's interactions with the shipwrecked sailors. Dryden and Davenant follow Shakespeare in giving a North African origin to Caliban by way of his mother Sycorax. In speaking with Ariel, Prospero recounts the story of 'This damn'd Witch *Sycorax* for mischiefs manifold, and sorceries too terrible to enter humane hearing, from *Argier* thou knowst was banisht.'[27] The non-European origins

24 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 3.6.5.
25 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 3.6.49–53, 57–62.
26 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 4.1.267–269.
27 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 1.2.86–88.

of Caliban are placed in contrast with the origins of the newly-arrived Italians; following their shipwreck, Gonzalo explains that Alonzo and Antonio 'have made amends to Heav'n, / By your late Voyage into *Portugal*, / Where, in defence of Christianity, / Your valour has repuls'd the *Moors* of *Spain*.'[28] The island setting of the play is thus put at the centre of a Mediterranean conflict over the boundaries of European Christendom; over the course of the island's history, the Christian European Prospero has displaced the North African Sycorax and imposed his own rule of law over the island and its inhabitants.

In existing outside of the boundaries of European Christendom, Caliban and his newly added sister Sycorax are described as possessing monstrous abject bodies. Caliban is often described rather as the 'Monster of the Isle,' or something between a 'man' and a 'fish,' while his sister Sycorax is identified as a 'Monster,' and is variously named by Trincalo as 'My dear Blobber-lips' and 'Queen Slobber-Chops.'[29] In her examination of the concept of monstrosity, entitled *Embodying the Monster*, Margrit Shildrick discusses the ways in which monstrous 'others' often destabilise the limits of the human body. Shildrick writes:

> It is not simply that monsters – strangers in general – disrupt the usual rules of interaction in that their cultural distance may be offset by physical proximity, but that they may not be outside at all. . . . In seeking confirmation of our own secure subjecthood in what we are not, what we see mirrored in the monster are the leaks and flows, the vulnerabilities in our own embodied being. Monsters, then, are deeply disturbing; neither good nor evil, inside nor outside, not self or other. On the contrary, they are always liminal, refusing to stay in place, transgressive and transformative. They disrupt both internal and external order, and overturn the distinctions that set out the limits of the human subject.[30]

In Dryden and Davenant's *Tempest*, the figures of Caliban and Sycorax – the 'Monsters of the Isle' – remain 'always liminal,' as they are denied a place in the European social order established by the island's 'human' subjects. While the previously unsocialised Hippolito comes to be able to recognise himself as legibly 'male' by the end of the play, the transgressive bodies of Caliban and Sycorax instead exist beyond the limits of physical legibility.

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28 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.1.27–30.

29 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 2.3.161–162, 3.3.12, 130.

30 M. Shildrick, *Embodying the Monster: Encounters with the Vulnerable Self*, London, SAGE Publications, 2002, p. 13.

The 'monstrous' figure of Sycorax, for example, is characterised as displaying an amalgam of male and female gendered traits.[31] The disruptive nature of Sycorax's gender hybridity is expressed in the following exchange after Sycorax has become 'Queen' to Trincalo:

> *Calib*. And he shall get thee a young *Sycorax*. Wilt thou not, my Lord?
> *Trinc*. Indeed I know not how, they do no such thing in my Country.
> *Syc*. I'le shew thee how: thou shalt get me twenty *Sycoraxes*; and I'le get thee twenty *Calibans*.
> *Trinc*. Nay, if they are got, she must do't all her self, that's certain.[32]

Sycorax not only proposes that she will 'get' children herself by Trincalo, but also proposes a reciprocal impregnation by which Trincalo will 'get' children by her. Trincalo rejects Sycorax's sexual proposition, characterising her as a monstrous hermaphroditic figure who can 'get' children 'all her self.' While Trincalo declares himself 'Espous'd' to the 'lawful Inheritrix of this Island' Sycorax, he does so in order to 'claim lawful Title to this Island.'[33] As Bridget Orr has argued, Dryden and Davenant present issues of imperial contact 'in a comic key, attempting to resolve them through the invocation of a discourse of savagery which effectively displaces the rights of indigenous and creole peoples under natural or common law by denying their humanity.'[34] Trincalo thus denies the 'humanity' of Caliban and Sycorax in order to facilitate an act of displacement; Trincalo engages with Sycorax only insofar as he can establish his own European empire over the island. Sycorax and Caliban are ultimately denied a place in the European social order that is established by the end of the play. The sexual transgressions of the two characters culminate in an incestuous union: Trincalo finds Sycorax 'upon a sweet Bed of Nettles, singing Tory, Rory, and Ranthum, Scanthum, with her own natural Brother.'[35] Because of their continued transgression and liminal bodies, Caliban and Sycorax appear, in Shildrick's terms, 'deeply disturbing' to the European characters of the play.

In order to be integrated into the normative European society established by the shipwrecked Italians, Hippolito must come to reject his own sexually

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31 Surviving cast lists from 18th-century productions of the play indicate that the part of Sycorax was frequently played by a male performer. The earliest surviving casting information for Sycorax indicates that a male actor 'Cross' played the role during a performance of the play on July 29, 1708 (see E. L. Avery (ed.), *The London Stage, 1660–1800, Part 2: 1700–1729*, vol. 1, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1960, p. 174).

32 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 3.3.37–44.

33 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 3.3.119–122.

34 B. Orr, *Empire of the English Stage, 1660–1714*, Cambridge, University Press, 2001, p. 194.

35 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 4.2.108–109.

transgressive desires. Orr has argued that, for Restoration audiences, Hippolito's overactive desire could potentially 'be understood as an effect of his barbarous upbringing, symptomatic of the degeneration widely regarded as consequent on removal from the centers of refinement.'[36] In order to move out of the liminal position occupied by Caliban and Sycorax, Hippolito must come to follow the example of socialised 'refinement' set forth for him by Ferdinand. He does so not only by eventually accepting the value of monogamy, but also by coming to understand the limits of his own body. Prior to his duel with Ferdinand, Hippolito struggles to understand the concept of his own physical mortality. After Ferdinand tells Hippolito that he must not love Miranda 'till [he is] dead,' Hippolito asks, 'How dead? what's that? but whatsoe're it be / I long to have her.' When Ferdinand proposes a duel over Dorinda and Miranda, Hippolito accepts his challenge, stating that 'ev'ry day I'le fight for two more with you.' Without an understanding of the meaning of 'death,' Hippolito believes himself to be capable of fighting 'ev'ry day' against Ferdinand's attempts to restrain his desire. In discussing the 'Swords' that he and Ferdinand will be fighting with, Hippolito explains, 'This is brave sport, / But we have no Swords growing in our World.'[37] The masculine violence of the 'Sword' that Ferdinand introduces is not yet a part of Hippolito's island 'World.'

The limits of Hippolito's own body are presented to him once he enters into masculine contention with Ferdinand. Before dueling with Ferdinand, Hippolito states that he '[means] to fight with all the men I meet, and / When they are dead, their Women shall be mine.'[38] In his desire to keep 'all' women for himself, Hippolito places himself in competition with 'all' men. In his duel with Ferdinand, however, Hippolito comes to recognise his own social and physical limitations. After nearly being killed in the duel, Hippolito is told by Dorinda that his 'hurt . . . was justly sent from Heaven / For wishing to have any more but me.' Hippolito agrees, stating, 'Indeed I think it was, but I repent it: the fault / Was only in my blood; for now 'tis gone, I find / I do not love so many.'[39] The 'hurt' that is enacted upon his body serves as a 'just' lesson by which Hippolito learns to accept a monogamous relationship. Hippolito's body, having been purged of 'blood,' has also been purged of transgressive desire. Later in the same scene, after Miranda enters on stage to heal Hippolito, Hippolito tells her, 'I find that if you please I can love still a little.' After Miranda warns him that she 'cannot be unconstant, nor shou'd you,'

36 Orr, *Empire of the English Stage*, p. 195.
37 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 4.1.252–254, 334, 314–315.
38 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 4.1.225–226.
39 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 5.2.43–44, 45–47.

Hippolito exclaims, 'O my wound pains me.'[40] Hippolito's bodily injury, or his 'wound,' serves as a physical reminder not only of his mortality, but also of the monogamous role that he learns to adopt. Hippolito's own material body is coerced into accepting a socially-appointed 'appropriate' masculine role.

The play's Restoration audience, however, would have been able to identify a discrepancy between the 'material body' of the on-stage actress playing Hippolito and the 'socially appointed' male role that the character comes to accept. Indeed, the play at no point operates under the pretence that the 'on-stage' character Hippolito truly possesses an 'off-stage' male body. Critics such as Lori Leigh have made note of multiple 'metatheatrical references' to Hippolito's underlying 'female' body that appear throughout the play.[41] Dryden and Davenant's play draws upon the audience's own knowledge of Hippolito's 'off-stage' female body – a knowledge established, in part, by way of the act of uncovering that takes place in the play's introductory prologue – and uses it as an opportunity for sexual innuendo. Hippolito's interactions with Ferdinand, for example, often take on an erotic tone, as when Ferdinand is explaining sword-fighting to Hippolito and tells him that he 'must stand thus, and push against me, / While I push at you, till one of us fall dead.'[42] Similarly, in the play's final scene, Hippolito asks Ferdinand to 'teach me quickly how Men and Women in your World make love.'[43] While Hippolito's education in male sexuality is part of his process of socialisation, the comic suggestion of erotic intimacy between the two characters certainly plays upon the audience's ability to recognise the bodies of Ferdinand and Hippolito as 'Man' and 'Woman' capable of together participating in the heterosocial process of 'making love.'

If the play's audience, as indicated by these comic moments of gender slippage, remained always aware of the female body underlying the performance of Hippolito, the following question must then arise: how would a Restoration audience interpret a narrative in which a female body is gradually socialised into normative masculinity? How does the performer's 'off-stage' female body shape the audience's interpretation of Hippolito as 'perfect man'? In discussing the subversive potential of breeches roles on the Restoration stage, Diana Solomon writes the following:

> [Recognizable] within the breeches part is the female character, the new male figure she is attempting, and the actress herself. The performativity present in the mingling of gendered attire and behavior makes space for a comedy of possibility, one that

40 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 5.2.64–66.
41 Leigh, *Shakespeare and the Embodied Heroine*, p. 95.
42 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 4.1.312–313.
43 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest*, 5.2.194–195.

> confirms gender regulations yet also challenges them through the fact of the woman performing comedy.[44]

For Solomon, the 'mingling' of gendered significations entailed in the breeches role opens up a space of 'possibility' on stage in which the regulatory norms of gender can be both 'confirmed' and 'challenged.' Bound together, or 'recognizable,' within the travesty role of Hippolito are the female actress, the male character, and the masculinity that the character comes to emulate. The play follows the character through various stages of gender embodiment and identification – from self-doubt and denial to eventual recognition and acceptance – and presents each stage to the audience for comic re-evaluation. From the early misrecognitions of Dorinda and Hippolito to the later misunderstandings regarding social traditions of monogamy, much of the play's humour depends upon the audience's ability to recognise the social conventions governing normative gender and to view those conventions, at least for a moment, as open to ridicule and subversion. While the play is not necessarily critical of the normative masculinity that Hippolito comes to adopt – it is an identity, the play suggests, that is more socially acceptable than that of Caliban or Sycorax – it reveals to its audience, at the very least, the ways in which Hippolito's masculinity is shaped by regulatory social forces that are not necessarily dependent upon the character's, or the performer's, 'natural' or 'real' body.

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THE LIMITS OF LIBERTY IN APHRA BEHN'S *THE DUTCH LOVER*

DITA HOCHMANOVÁ

The opening of the theatre scene to women as actors under Charles II allowed women to become publicly famous and acknowledged for their artistic endeavours. The increased hunger for novelty on stage resulted in new opportunities not only for female performers, but also for writers, who supplied an insatiable demand with new pieces to please the broad audiences. An opportunity also opened for Aphra Behn (1640–1689), a well-connected witty ex-spy, who was probably first employed as a scribe and adapter of old plays by Thomas Killigrew, but soon started writing her own pieces and made a name as the first professional female playwright.[1] During her career, she became well-established, publicly known, and associated with the libertine movement for her controversial opinions on social norms.[2] At the same time, she saw double standards in libertinism and, in her plays, drew attention to the risks that women had to face in their social position. This chapter considers Aphra Behn as one of the pioneering mediators between the male world of public affairs and the enclosed sphere of privacy which women experienced. The way in which she communicated with audiences in the unique position that she occupied reveals some of her concerns, but also certain paradoxes of her time, which she acknowledged and reconciled with the humour and playfulness of provocative comedy.

Although there were female writers before her, for example Katherine Philips (1632–1664) and Margaret Cavendish (1623–1673), they were mostly noblewomen, publishing their works at their own expense, and therefore could be 'neither an artistic nor an economic role-model' for Behn.[3] Rather than following in their footsteps, Behn set out on a separate path through the little world of London theatre companies that provided her with not only the possibility of public recognition, but also a very much needed income. In fact, we can see John Dryden (1631–1700) and Thomas Shadwell (1642–1692) as her professional predecessors in the theatre market rather than any of

1 M. A. O'Donnell, 'Aphra Behn: The Documentary Record', in D. Hughes and J. Todd (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 5.

2 S. Staves, 'Behn, Women and Society', in D. Hughes and J. Todd (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 12.

3 D. Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2001, p. 5.

the previous female writers.[4] Unfortunately, unlike her more established male counterparts, Behn initially did not benefit from the privilege of having a patron. While Shadwell enjoyed the patronage of the Duke of Newcastle, Dryden's plays frequently appeared with dedications to leading members of the nobility. As it regards Aphra Behn, it was not until the publication of her ninth play, *The Feign'd Curtizans* (1679), that she found a dedicatee: an acclaimed actress, Nell Gwyn (1650–1687).[5] A female playwright who could be considered an established money-earning professional and a public figure was therefore quite an extraordinary case.

Similar to female artists on stage, who were often purposefully eroticised, female playwrights were also first viewed as a new form of prostitution. Gallagher maintains that playwriting was an extension of a woman's erotic play, incorporating wit as another weapon in her amorous arsenal. This 'newfangled whore' of a playwright, as Gallagher calls her, made an unprecedented public presence, one which had to be carefully negotiated. As a result, since Behn had to navigate the commercial, sexual, and linguistic exchange from the unsteady position of a professional female writer, she did not present her playwriting to audiences as a daring achievement of self-expression, but as a new proof of the necessary obscurity of the new 'public' woman.[6] Taking up the role of a seductive lyric poet, Behn addresses the male spectators and, in the prologues to her plays, frames her drama by the larger comedy of erotic exchange between the writer and the audience.[7] On the whole, actresses and women writing for the stage both established a new form of identity, which, on the one hand, made them 'objects of lust, gossip, seduction, and (occasionally) assault, but at the same time, excited admiration through their talent'[8] and helped them build accomplished careers outside the privacy of their own homes.

Aphra Behn's beginnings as a playwright seemed promising from the very start, but her triumph did not last as long as she would have hoped. While her first two plays, *The Forc'd Marriage* (1670) and *The Amorous Prince* (1671), performed at Lincoln's Inn Fields, were met with success, her third play, *The Dutch Lover*, which was staged at the Dorset Garden Theatre on February 6, 1673, resulted in failure.[9] Hughes describes her first play, *The Forc'd Marriage*,

4 D. Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', in D. Hughes and J. Todd (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 30.

5 Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', p. 35.

6 C. Gallagher, 'Who Was that Masked Woman?', in H. Hunter (ed.), *Rereading Aphra Behn*, London and Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1993, p. 66.

7 Gallagher, 'Who Was that Masked Woman?', p. 67.

8 Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', p. 29.

9 *London Stage Database* [website], https://londonstagedatabase.uoregon.edu/event.php?id=1021 (accessed on 26 March 2022).

as generally well received with a run of six days and a star-studded cast of the Duke's Company lead performers, namely Edward Angel, Tomas Betterton, William Smith, Mary Lee, and Mary Betterton, widely famous for her role of Lady Macbeth.[10] Nevertheless, according to Hughes, Behn's third play came at the time when the early Restoration comedy of intrigue and elaborately mistaken identity was becoming unpopular with the audiences and started to be replaced by 'a social comedy of men-about-town, without the distraction of a serious main plot.'[11] Although she blamed the actors for not following the stage directions and thus making her play less plausible, Hughes is convinced that 'it is unlikely that it sank a play which is, in truth, very hard to follow.'[12] Moreover, he states that the negative reception of *The Dutch Lover* might have been aggravated by the première of Shadwell's *Epsom-Wells* (1672), which was 'the first realistic social comedy to contain consummated sex' and 'the most sexually daring play to be produced since the Restoration.'[13] The fast-progressing demands of the stage and the severity of competition between theatres therefore revealed the fickleness of Behn's professional status as well as her vulnerability to the audience's changing taste.

To keep herself in the market and in a desired conversation with the spectators, Aphra Behn had to keep up with the established genres and trends, but also break out of the expected role into which she fell as a female writer. In her preface to *The Dutch Lover*, Behn makes a statement about the general expectation regarding the imagery and tone of her work when she comments on an assumption made by 'a long, lither, phlegmatick, white, ill-favour'd, wretched Fop' that 'they were to expect a woful Play, God damn him, for it was a womans.'[14] Expressing her deep scorn for such limited judgment, Behn makes sure to distinguish herself from the anticipated sentimental complaint about the female lot by asserting an argument about comedy not being a means of the 'amending of mens Morals, or their Wit,' but rather 'the best divertisement that wise men have.'[15] She also reminds her readers about the standards of the genre by adding, 'having inscrib'd Comedy on the beginning of my Book, you may guess pretty near what penny-worths you are like to have, and ware your money and your time accordingly.'[16] Theorising thus about comedy as a literary form and its social function, Behn entered the

10 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 37.
11 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 48.
12 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 50.
13 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 49.
14 A. Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, London, printed for Thomas Dring, 1673, An Epistle to the Reader, sig. A4^{v} (italics reversed).
15 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, An Epistle to the Reader, sigs A3^{v} and A4^{r} (italics reversed).
16 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, An Epistle to the Reader, sig. A2^{v} (italics reversed).

ongoing debate about the purpose of art and established herself as an original intellectual voice in the public domain.

Interestingly enough, in contrast to Mary Astell (1666–1731), who complained about the restrictions placed on women's education,[17] in the same preface, Behn further asserts the right of women to write plays by separating their wit from the necessity of learning, to which women did not have access. In Behn's view, 'Plays have no great room for that which is mens great advantage over women, that is Learning,' as is shown on the example of 'the immortal *Shakespears* Playes (who was not guilty of much more of this than often falls to womens share)' and still 'have better pleas'd the World than *Johnsons* works.'[18] Since she separates learning from playwriting and defines its aim as entertainment, she clearly sets attracting the audience as her priority.

As is notoriously known, the sexual explicitness of some of her plays received indignant criticism from the public. Although Behn defends herself in the preface, referring to other male writers who were equally open about sexuality in their scenes and whose work 'have been prettie well receiv'd of late,'[19] Mary Ann O'Donnell claims that, in fact, she was less vilified than most of her contemporaries;[20] furthermore, as Hughes maintains, the accusations of bawdry had more to do with a general reaction against the increasing sexual frankness of comedy than with Behn's gender.[21]

Behn's attitude towards morality was further complicated by her allegiance to libertine thinking and proclaimed friendship with Lord Rochester (1647–1680), an author of erotic poetry and an infamous rake. Although their alleged friendship is frequently mentioned, Paul Salzman argues that the literary association with Rochester that she claimed after his death was probably exaggerated: 'she stated that he had praised her poetry and helped her to improve it, although there is no evidence for this stemming from Rochester himself.'[22] Behn's interest in Rochester's work could therefore be explained by her desire to link her name to a more famous colleague in order to raise her own professional status.

Another reason for such a connection is indisputably Behn's fascination with the libertine ideology, which argues for the authority of nature and the value of physical pleasure in present time.[23] The wish for the free expression of female sexuality is strongly felt in Behn's plots, in which women often

17 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 5.
18 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, An Epistle to the Reader, sig. a1^{r} (italics reversed).
19 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, An Epistle to the Reader, sig. A4^{r} (italics reversed).
20 O'Donnell, 'Aphra Behn: The Documentary Record', p. 8.
21 Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', p. 31.
22 P. Salzman, *Reading Early Modern Women's Writing*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 204.
23 S. Staves, 'Behn, Women and Society', in D. Hughes and J. Todd (eds.), *The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2004, p. 20.

choose and desire their lovers. Instead of giving in to the destiny determined by their family members, many of Behn's female characters reveal themselves as plotters, who 'abandon moral scruples either for what they think is love or because they can think of no better ways to survive economically.'[24] In *The Dutch Lover*, for example, all the heroines of the story are introduced as being in love with the main male characters and pursuing their designs to fulfil their desires throughout the play.

Although the appeal of libertinism for the degree of freedom which it promises is apparent in Behn's writing, she does not seem to fully subscribe to the ideology. Apart from clearly realising the fact that libertinism was an upper-class, coterie philosophy, not ever to be adopted by the common people,[25] she also appears to be repelled by its excesses, which seem distasteful to her.[26] Apprehensive of the vulnerable situation in which women find themselves when openly expressing their sexuality, the playwright gives a clear warning against such foolishness. In agreement with Astell's assertion that women were not so feeble and had the rational capacity to resist vain male blandishments,[27] Behn generally calls for a more satisfying form of relationship between men and women than a brief sexual encounter.

As opposed to her first plays, where the male world is portrayed as a military one and women are reduced to exchangeable 'spoils of battle,'[28] *The Dutch Lover* is presented in a more complex and more contemporary setting. As a result, Behn is able to explore a more familiar social sphere and draw attention to the limitations women faced in the public domain while revealing their vulnerability to the oppressive nature of male desire. Whereas women in her plays are scolded for blind naivety in dealing with their lovers, men are satirised for foppery and affectation. In *The Dutch Lover*, Behn presents two foppish characters: Haunce van Ezel, a rich foreigner coming to Spain to marry his friend's daughter, and Alonzo, a light-hearted libertine, who seeks excitement and adventure everywhere he goes. For their ignorance of social norms and foolish behaviour, both Haunce and Alonzo serve as sources of comedy – Haunce for his appalling manners and Alonzo for the recklessness and risks that he takes when pursuing women.

Nevertheless, a comparison between the muddled Haunce and foolhardy Alonzo reveals an important characteristic, one which makes the satirical statement much deeper than a straightforward caricature. Although both men come to Spain to fulfil a marital arrangement with a woman promised to

24 Staves, 'Behn, Women and Society', p. 27.
25 Staves, 'Behn, Women and Society', p. 21.
26 M. L. Stapleton and S. F. Austin, 'Aphra Behn, Libertine', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture*, 1660–1700, vol. 24, no. 2, 2000, p. 79.
27 Staves, 'Behn, Women and Society', p. 27.
28 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 51.

them, they do not feel particularly tied by the engagement and both see their future spouses as random representatives of the opposite sex. For example, when Haunce comes to the country in a storm, he is reported to be 'recruiting his emptyed stomach with Brandy, and railing against all women-kind for [Marcel's] sister's sake, who has made him undertake this voyage.'[29] Similarly, Alonzo openly expresses his very inclusive attitude towards women, when he disregards his social obligations towards his future wife and bargains for a night of casual sex with a pretty girl whom he meets on the first day after his arrival, saying to her,

> man is a strange ungovern'd thing; yet I in the whole course of my Life have taken the best care I could, to make as few mistakes as possible: and treating all women-kind alike, we seldom err; for where we find one as you profess to be, we happily light on a hundred of the sociable and reasonable sort.[30]

As the example of the two fops shows, the general attitude of male characters in the play seems to disclose their inability to see women as individuals, as well as their unwillingness to engage in relationships that would go beyond satisfying their needs.

Despite the amusing situations into which the two fops get themselves, Behn makes a clear distinction between Alonzo's disregard for his arranged marriage in the form of continuous advances that he makes to other women and Haunce's overall boorish ignorance of civil behaviour towards the opposite sex. While Alonzo often gets into trouble for his irresponsible selfish interest in sexual pleasure, Haunce and his misogynist lack of interest in women are drawn in a much more negative light, especially when he is revealed as potentially violent to his future wife. In comparison to Alonzo's cheeky advances, which tempt women without, however, oppressing them, Haunce's utter lack of courtesy is described as an ominous circumstance from which his supposed future wife, Euphemia, has to be saved.

Nevertheless, not even Alonzo's sexual adventures are portrayed as entirely innocent. His 'inclinations to libertinism'[31] not only bring him into difficult situations, but also make women risk their social standing. For example, when he gets mistaken for Marcel and is offered the key to Clarinda's room by her maid, he does not hesitate to take it, neglecting both his engagement to Hippolita and his promises to Euphemia. To keep his conscience at peace with his deeds, he allows himself the freedom to betray his mistress on the grounds of necessity to oblige the mysterious lady as well as himself, thinking,

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29 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 2.
30 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 12.
31 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 35.

> Now if 'twere to save my Life cannot I forbear, I must go in: Should *Euphemia* know this, she would call it levity and inconstancy; but I plead necessity, and will be judg'd by the amorous men, and not the jealous women: For certain this Lady, whoe'er she be, designs me a more speedy Favour than I can hope from *Euphemia*, and on easier terms too.[32]

Unfortunately, when he is approached by Marcel in the dark hallway to Clarinda's chamber, the encounter results in Marcel's serious injury and Clarinda's desperate escape from her home. Alonzo's seemingly inoffensive courtly attitude towards beautiful women therefore proves to be potentially fatal to his immediate surroundings.

Alonzo, however, is not the only character in the play driven by passion. Clarinda's longing for Marcel and Euphemia's crush on Alonzo show female desire as equivalent to male, but their possibilities of enjoying an affair with a man whom they fancy are strictly limited. Clarinda has to keep her wishes a secret from her parents and plot with her maid to leave the doors open for her lover while she is waiting inside 'all trembling with fear and shame (and yet an infinite desire to see him too).'[33] She also has to rely on Marcel's honour to marry her, otherwise she could be ruined and repudiated by her family. Comparably, Euphemia undertakes a great risk when she sets up a meeting with a handsome stranger whom she spotted during her walk to church. Hiding under a veil to protect her identity, she seeks him out to bargain for his willingness to save her from an unwanted engagement with another man. When approaching the stranger, not only does she have to possess confidence in her ability to talk Alonzo into marriage, she also needs to pin her hopes on his kindness as a prospective husband, which is clear from her negotiations of marital conditions with him throughout the play. For instance, during their encounter in her father's house, Alonzo sees his future self growing so fond and jealous of Euphemia that he would want to keep her 'from the Sight of all Mankind' and 'depriv'd of the greatest pleasure of this life, the blessing of change.'[34] Daring to employ her wit to negotiate for a better deal, Euphemia retorts to her libertine suitor, 'I am sorry to find so much ill nature in you; would you have the conscience to tie me to harder conditions than I would you?'[35] Even though he promises to marry her and try, Euphemia's opportunities to even see other men would always strictly depend on Alonzo's whim. As is evident from the portrayal of Clarinda and Euphemia, Behn depicts her female characters as passionate in equal measure to their male counterparts,

32 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 24.
33 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 23.
34 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 39.
35 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 39.

but, at the same time, she draws attention to the restrictions imposed on women by their social status.

The parallel between limits pressed upon women's sexual desire and their ability to enjoy interaction with men in public spaces is further enhanced in the way Behn uses stage settings. As Hughes stresses in his analysis of *The Rover*, Behn has 'a remarkable gift for exploiting the visual resources of the stage, especially in order to examine the different ways in which men and women control space.'[36] One example in *The Dutch Lover* would be the border between the private and the public domains represented by domestic spaces and the open street. When Euphemia leaves the safe and familiar space of her rooms to pursue the charming Alonzo, she has to wear a veil to be protected from the gaze of strangers outside, who might confuse her with a prostitute. In a similar vein, when Dormida and Clarinda flee from her parents' house, they throw themselves immediately under the protection of the first man they meet and beg him to escort them to a safe household nearby. Overall, the open public space of the street is deemed dangerous for women since it is ruled and dominated by men.

Nevertheless, the boundary between the two worlds gets broken when women impose their presence in the public space under extreme circumstances. When the abandoned and disgraced Hippolita wants to avenge herself, she challenges her seducer, Antonio, to a duel under the pretence of being Alonzo, appearing on stage in male clothes. Since there are no other men willing to stand up for her, she is forced either to become a part of the public world as a prostitute or to pretend to be a man to engage in a fight for her honour. As Hughes observes about Behn's plays, 'the only woman to negotiate the outside world – with some difficulty – does so dressed as a young man.'[37] By committing the desperate act of physically challenging an armed male, Hippolita pushes Alonzo to admit that it was he who caused confusion between Clarinda and her true lover, Marcel, and also moves Antonio to accept her as his wife. So, instead of revealing her own plaintive story, she penetrates the male public space in disguise, which stirs communication between characters and allows for reconciliation and peace.

One significant aspect of Hippolita's act is the necessity of disguise and swindle, which is the only way for her to get her revenge on the lover who betrayed her. After succumbing to Antonio's courtship and promises, Hippolita bitterly regrets her decision to leave with her beloved man when he takes her from one brothel to another and ruins her reputation. The price of freely exposing one's own desires and following them is thus portrayed as dangerously high for women, as is also clear from the example of another amorous couple

36 Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', p. 37.
37 Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', p. 39.

in the play. As opposed to Alonzo, who openly admits to be 'damnably in love' with Euphemia,[38] his ladylove cannot afford to be entirely honest with him. Alonzo's fondness of new conquests, which he is so afraid to leave behind and 'be condemn'd to a dull honest Wife,'[39] highlights that libertinism seeks chaste beauty as an object of enjoyment, which is then no longer desirable.[40] As a result, Euphemia has every reason to doubt the seriousness of his promises of marriage. Conscious of her unsafe position, she reveals her feelings only in a soliloquy, saying, 'I must have this stranger, or I must dye; for whatever face I put upon't, I am far gone in love, but I must hide it.'[41] It seems that for Euphemia, the only way to seduce Alonzo is in a clandestine manner and with the help of deceit because she cannot express her wishes openly. Moreover, the sole power that she has over her situation is based on withholding sex from the object of her interest, which conflicts with the libertine idea of freely giving in to pleasure. Restrained in her freedom to communicate her fancy or in actually realising it, Euphemia therefore cannot be seen as a female libertine for seducing a random handsome man. As Staves confirms, despite Behn's interest in libertinism, which authorised women's free enjoyment of sexual pleasure, the playwright clearly saw it as a masculinist ideology[42] and acknowledged the social limits it imposed on women.

Euphemia's audacious act of addressing a stranger in the street is also motivated by her fear of being forced into an arranged marriage, as she confesses to Alonzo, 'I am contracted to a man I never saw, nor I am sure shall not like when I do see, he having more vice and folly than his fortune will excuse, though a great one: and I had rather dye than marry him.'[43] It is thus not only Alonzo's charm, but also Euphemia's desperate wish to escape the pre-arranged contract that prompt her to take the risk and negotiate her future herself. In her eyes, the freedom of choice, which she is denied, is the highest value, as is clear from her claim, 'I'l cast my self away upon the next handsome young fellow I meet, though I dye for't.'[44] Although the randomness of her choice might seem to be a wanton longing for an affair with an attractive man, her manipulations of Alonzo are motivated by a more serious consideration, which is the very chance to decide about her future existence. Similarly to Hippolita, she has to take action and trespass into the public

38 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 21.
39 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 39.
40 L. Finke, 'Aphra Behn and the Ideological Construction of Restoration Literary Theory', in H. Hunter (ed.), *Rereading Aphra Behn*, London and Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1993, p. 27.
41 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 15.
42 Staves, 'Behn, Women and Society', p. 21.
43 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 12.
44 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 15.

domain unrecognised to bargain for better conditions than those that were contracted for her.

The male-dominated public space, which the female characters had to navigate when trespassing their designated place in society, is not the only danger to which Behn draws attention. Where female desire is portrayed as a languishing, unfulfilled wish in *The Dutch Lover*, male sexuality is often described as more violent in its nature. In Hughes's view, 'Behn's plays are by no means relentlessly dark, but they can explore the darker side of male sexuality, and at some time or other she calls on the most menacing register of her actors.'[45] One such example could be found in the portrayal of Silvio, who has a burning desire for Cleonte, his alleged sister. The forbidden feeling drives him to the point where he enters her rooms uninvited, openly admitting to his longings, and after he is rejected, he later even threatens to take Cleonte by force during an accidental meeting in a garden. Although Cleonte fancies him, she often finds herself oppressed by his presence, both in her own private rooms and outside, since his violent passion seems inescapable.

Despite the violent streak in her male characters, Behn does not generally depict men as reckless ravishers. According to Hughes, the Hobbesian view of human beings as intrinsically egocentric creatures of restless desire 'pervades the drama of Behn's contemporaries, and feeds her own preoccupation with the persistence in modern society of the archaic military systems in which it originated.'[46] Consequently, men in her plays fulfil their social roles as defenders but also governors of women – both these roles based on their capacity for violence. In contrast, women are depicted as lacking the killer instinct, as is apparent in the character of Hippolita, who cannot physically avenge herself. When the two lovers on escape are dwelling in a forest and he falls asleep, Hippolita reflects upon her situation and, with a dagger in her hand, contemplates murdering the traitor for ruining her life and reputation,

> For 'tis an act too horrid for a woman. *[Turns away.*
> But yet thus sleeping I might take that soul, *[Turns to him.*
> Which waking all the charms of Art and Nature
> Had not the power t' effect.
> Oh were I brave, I could remember that,
> And this way be the Mistress of his heart.
> But mine forbids it should be that way won[.][47]

45 Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', p. 36.
46 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, pp. 8–9.
47 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 46.

Although the heroine is physically capable of taking her ravisher's life in his sleep, she does not seem to be emotionally equipped to kill another human being even though she wishes to.

Contrary to what might be expected, Behn does not satirise the character of Hippolita by turning her into a secretly complacent victim either. Hughes and Stewart both agree that 'in her use of actresses, Behn tended to work against caricature and stereotyping, and to go for depth.'[48] Stewart further observes that as opposed to Restoration comedy of manners, which 'satirizes ravishment, treating the sexual chase as a game played by two consenting parties, delightfully intent upon consommation,' the tone in Behn's intrigue comedy is different, 'for her atmosphere is very dark, with the heroine in genuine jeopardy, rendered virtually powerless.'[49] Hippolita's ambiguous attitude towards Antonio, who on the one hand seduces her and then betrays her, but whom at the same time she loves and cannot let go, discloses the complicated relationship between the two lovers. In spite of the fact that other characters in the play perceive her as a morally condemnable woman, having eloped with a stranger without her parents' consent, the desperate Hippolita is also depicted as seriously suffering for nothing more than falling in love when she is forced to leave her home and blindly follow a man whom she barely knows. The dynamics of the couple is therefore further from comedy and closer to the grim reality of the ominous fate of women who do not choose their lovers wisely.

Unlike the diverting portrayals of attempted rape in Restoration comedy, 'Behn's tragicomedies of intrigue are an exception to the rule.'[50] Rather than exposing body parts of actresses, who turned up on the stage approximately at the same time when rape scenes became popular in comedies,[51] Behn refers to rape as to what it originally was, 'a property crime of man against man,' which 'was not a matter of female consent or refusal.'[52] The eroticism of an attempted rape popular in Restoration comedy is, in the case of Hippolita, replaced by a rape in its original sense of the abduction of a woman by force, when the young maiden is stolen from her family by Antonio in an attempt to seek revenge against Hippolita's brother. After he debauches her and she asks why he refuses to marry her as promised, he replies,

Ant. Why, I will tell thee; 'twas not love to thee,
But hatred to thy Brother *Don Marcel*,

48 Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', p. 37.
49 A. M. Stewart, *The Ravishing Restoration*, Selinsgrove, Susquehanna University Press, 2010, pp. 10–11.
50 Stewart, *The Ravishing Restoration*, p. 48.
51 Stewart, *The Ravishing Restoration*, p. 48.
52 Stewart, *The Ravishing Restoration*, p. 75.

Who made addresses to the fair *Clarinda*,
And by his quality destroy'd my hopes.
Hip. And durst you not revenge your self on him?
Ant. His Life alone could not appease my anger;
And after studying what I had to do –
Hip. The Divel taught thee this.
Ant. Yes, and you I chose,
Because you were contracted to *Alonzo*,
That the disgrace might be more eminent.[53]

By placing Hippolita in a brothel and putting out a sign that she is for sale, he damages not only her reputation, but also the reputation of her family and humiliates his enemy. Rape is thus portrayed as a violent act of rage and revenge, not necessarily connected with sexual desire, and, in contrast to egocentric libertine thought, force in sexual relationships is shown 'as unkind, unappreciated by women.'[54] What appears to be a somewhat rough and dramatised flirtatious game between male and female characters in Restoration comedy is approached with more seriousness by Behn, as she not only draws attention to its possible sinister consequences, but also alludes to the omnipresent real threat of rape that women had to accept as a part of their reality.

In spite of being restricted in their desires and their public presence, Behn's female characters do not cease fighting for their place in the world. Although men are clearly not offering to share this place with them, Hughes notes that the starting point in Behn's plays is such that sharing becomes an inevitable moral obligation, as it is increasingly evident that 'the subjection of women is an irrational survival from archaic societies which depended upon military strength.'[55] While asserting herself publicly as a writer on the literary scene and fighting for the possibility to do so, Behn is, nonetheless, aware of the remaining powerful structures of violent male hierarchies, still operating in modern society. Therefore, compared with other writers' portryals of women in plays in the same period – for instance, the heroine of Thomas Durfey's *Madam Fickle* (1676), who linguistically surpasses her male opponents and uses her wit to overpower them – Behn never takes so rosy a view of women's ability to gain equality of status through equality of linguistic power.[56] Her female characters in *The Dutch Lover* are portrayed as ultimately failing to engage in such conversations with men that would help

53 Behn, *The Dutch Lover*, p. 47.
54 Stapleton and Austin, 'Aphra Behn, Libertine', p. 85.
55 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 8.
56 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 10.

them fulfil their desires. For instance, when Euphemia tries to negotiate her future relationship with Alonzo, she can hardly make any arrangements and has to intrigue him to make him take part in a charade to deceive her father. Rather than using wit as a tool to outsmart her lover, she uses it to excite his curiosity and keep his interest. The fact that she wins him over in the end is thus based on her ability to make herself maximally desirable.

In Hughes's view, Behn 'doubts whether language is the real key to power.'[57] As he states, 'for her, men exercise the power of the word because it is always underwritten by that of the sword.'[58] Although in *The Dutch Lover* Euphemia manages to employ her beauty and wit to charm a stranger into helping her, she cannot escape the violence of the male outer world and, when confused with Hippolita for her veil, she gets assaulted by a furious Marcel during one of the sword fights. Furthermore, when Hippolita begs Haunce to help her escape from Antonio, calling the latter a ravisher, her accusation is doubted and ignored. It is only when Haunce is shamed by his servant's interest in her distress and when he is insulted by Antonio himself that the fight between the two gentlemen starts. Neither wit nor appeal to moral duty can therefore guarantee the heroines any form of power or safety.

Despite the fact that women in Behn's plays often find themselves under distressing conditions, which they cannot resolve by negotiating, she does not portray them as entirely helpless. Instead of portraying Hippolita as a pity-evoking, ravished heroine, Behn lets her use deceit to openly challenge her lover in a duel. Although she is wounded by Marcel, thanks to her bravery, both Alonzo and Antonio decide to claim her, and, subsequently, she is also forgiven by her family. She does not address the distressing situation through her use of language, since it is her brother and her lover who do the talking and the fighting; what is more important, however, is that she eventually manages to avoid complete defeat and destruction. Lacking the means to persuade men through their words, Behn's female characters often turn to deception and amorous play to realise their aims.

As opposed to tragic heroines, 'Behn's rape and attempted rape victims typically marry, an act that symbolically represents and reaffirms patriarchal power, but also affirms the human potential for forgiveness, trust and love.'[59] At the end of *The Dutch Lover*, Hippolita is reunited with Antonio after he gains respect for her and reconciles with her brother; Euphemia is rescued from her boorish future husband when given to Alonzo disguised as Haunce; and finally, Clarinda is no longer restrained from finding happiness with her Silvio because it is revealed that they are not siblings after all. Even Haunce

57 Hughes, 'Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre', p. 35.
58 Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*, p. 10.
59 Stewart, *The Ravishing Restoration*, p. 10.

and his silly companion Gload happen to marry Euphemia's maids in the end, and the couples join in a masquerade to celebrate the happy ending. Marriage between the characters who have chosen each other is thus presented as another chance and the only way for the heroines to enjoy sex and still be socially respected.

In conclusion, unlike Katherine Philips and Margaret Cavendish, who became famous before her, Aphra Behn entered the profession as a commoner and without any immediate assistance. What is more, in contrast to her greatest male rivals at the beginning of her career, John Dryden and Thomas Shadwell, she did not even receive financial aid from powerful benefactors. Thanks to her difficult position as a female playwright unsupported by family or patrons, and not profiting from a high social status, Aphra Behn became engaged in a strenuous conversation with the masculine commercial world of the stage to secure her survival. Her struggle to balance the expectations of audiences with the wish to enjoy the freedom that men had to express their views and desires is notably visible in all her work. As much as she was in favour of liberty, she did not, however, fully embrace Lord Rochester's libertine thoughts. Painfully aware of the limits that society imposed on women's desires, she felt compelled to explore what opportunities women could possibly find to engage in satisfactory relationships with men and their public world. As opposed to Mary Astell, who demanded better access to education for women, Behn was generally dismissive of scholarly learning and bet on genuine female intelligence and wit. On the other hand, in comparison to Thomas Durfey's enthusiasm for female eloquence, she was rather sceptical of the powers that genius can offer. As a result, she presented negotiation and wit as effective tools of manipulation but not necessarily the means of achieving female empowerment. In order to maintain the possibility of a social dialogue between the sexes, in her third play, *The Dutch Lover*, she rejected the popular pathetic image of women as fatal victims of male desire. As she united the darker overtones of male oppressive behaviour with the resourcefulness of female artifice, she presented the prospect of marriage as potentially healing and also a necessary condition for men and women in love to enjoy life and the freedoms that it offers.

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'THE CURTAIN'S DRAWN'
INCEST AS SPECTACLE IN JOHN DRYDEN AND NATHANIEL LEE'S *OEDIPUS*

LISANNA CALVI

A MG, che per prima

In his *A Short View of Tragedy*, published in 1693, Thomas Rymer played the villain with a smiling cheek to the Restoration *Oedipus*. The only tragedies that, in the whole history of western drama, he 'reckon'd in the degree of Perfection' were 'the *Oedipus* of *Sophocles*. That, by *Corneille*' as well as 'others, of a Modern Cut, *quantum mutatus*!'[1] The 'Modern Cut' *Oedipus* Rymer nastily alluded to was the product of the joint effort of John Dryden and Nathaniel Lee, who had co-authored a successful rewriting of the ancient Greek play in 1678. Dryden's response to Rymer followed without delay and in the *Dedication* of his *Examen Poeticum*, he promised retaliation by remarking that

> If I am the Man, as I have Reason to believe, who am seemingly Courted, and secretly Undermin'd: I think I shall be able to defend myself, when I am openly Attacqu'd. And to shew besides, that the *Greek* Writers only gave us the Rudiments of a Stage, which they never finish'd. That many of the Tragedies in the former Age amongst us, were without Comparison beyond those of *Sophocles* and *Euripides*. But at present, I have neither the leisure nor the means for such an Undertaking. . . . But the *quantum mutatus* may be remember'd in due time. In the mean while I leave the World to judge, who gave the Provocation.[2]

Oedipus: A Tragedy was staged at the Dorset Garden Theatre in the fall of 1678 as internal references[3] apparently suggest, written by the Poet Laureate, John

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1 T. Rymer, *A Short View of Tragedy*, London, printed by Richard Baldwin, 1693, sig. A4^{v}. The expression 'quantum mutatus (ab illo)' [how changed (from what he once was)] is normally used, ironically, to underline how deeply something or someone has changed from what it or he/she was.

2 J. Dryden, 'Dedication to *Examen Poeticum*', in P. Hammond and D. Hopkins (eds.), *The Poems of John Dryden*, vol. 4: *1693–1696*, London and New York, Routledge, 2013, pp. 214–215.

3 Alan Roper places the première 'between the opening of the season [of 1678–1679] in September and the licensing of the play for publication on 3 January 1679' (G. R. Guffey, M. E. Novak, and A. Roper (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 13, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1984, p. 443). The printed Prologue mentions the English victory over the Dutch at Mons (August 17) and the Second Woollen Act (August 1), which established stricter rules for the burying of corpses in a woollen shroud. The Epilogue refers to pope-burning

Dryden, and the then-fashionable tragic playwright, Nathaniel Lee, whose flair for classical hints and otherworldly imagery derived both from his passionate and fiery nature and the university education he had received at Trinity College, Cambridge, where he had stayed from *c*. 1658 to 1665. With regard to this collaboration, Dryden later declared that he 'writ the first and third acts of *Oedipus*, and drew the *Scenary* of the *whole play*,' duly commending his friend for 'help[ing] . . . [his] barren fancy' and implicitly attributing to him the authorship of Acts Two, Four, and Five.[4] The English *Oedipus* apparently fulfilled the public's expectations, as Dryden himself almost sarcastically acknowledged in the play's Epilogue, in which his and Lee's work is compared to a 'Treat,' a delicacy purposely made in order to satisfy a glutton audience: 'Their Treat is what your Pallats rellish most, / Charm! Song! and Show! a Murder and a Ghost!'[5] This was apparently not showing off, since their play 'took prodigiously, being Acted 10 Days together,' and 'was Admirably well Acted; especially the Parts of Oedipus and Jocasta: one by Mr. Betterton and the other by Mrs. Betterton.'[6]

As James Anderson Winn remarked in *John Dryden and His World*, 'some of the play's success may have been due to the good luck or prophetic skill or last-minute revisions by which Dryden and Lee matched their plot to the fantastic Plot now gripping the nation.'[7] Winn refers, of course, to the notorious Popish Plot that, between 1678 and 1679, fuelled anti-Catholic hysteria and was enough to resurrect the obsessive fear of the Civil War. The play may in fact 'have profited from its relevance to current events,'[8] as a number of scholars have observed,[9] and the dark setting that characterises many of its scenes, together with the well-known incest-and-parricide plot, were undoubtedly attuned to the grim atmosphere of general distrust that was

processions, that is, bonfires in which an effigy of the pope was burned; they traditionally took place on either Guy Fawkes Day (November 5) or on the anniversary of Queen Elizabeth's accession (November 17).

4 J. Dryden, *The Vindication of the Duke of Guise*, in V. A. Dearing and A. Roper (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 14, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1992, p. 344. On the Dryden-Lee collaboration, see R.E. Brown, 'The Dryden-Lee Collaboration: *Oedipus* and *The Duke of Guise*', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700*, vol. 9, no. 1, 1985, pp. 12–25.

5 J. Dryden, Epilogue to *Oedipus*, in G. R. Guffey, M. E. Novak, and A. Roper (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 13, p. 215 (ll. 31–32; italics reversed).

6 J. Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. J. Milhous and R. D. Hume, London, The Society for Theatre Research, 1987, p. 79.

7 J. A. Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1987, p. 314.

8 Winn, *John Dryden and His World*, p. 316.

9 See, among others, A. Battigelli, 'Two Dramas of the Return of the Repressed: Dryden and Lee's *Oedipus* and the Popish Plot', *Huntington Library Quarterly*, vol. 75, no. 1, 2012, pp. 1–25; and C. B. K. Schille, 'At the Crossroads: Gendered Desire, Political Occasion, and Dryden and Lee's *Oedipus*', *Papers on Language and Literature*, vol. 40, no. 3, 2004, pp. 305–328.

gripping the court and the nation. In fact, as Fiona Macintosh and Edith Hall have remarked, if 'Tudor dramatists had used incest as a metaphor for political corruption in general . . . in the aftermath of the Civil War, those earlier links . . . [were] felt even more acutely.'[10] A political reading of the play, however, goes beyond the scope of this essay, which aims instead to explore Dryden and Lee's treatment of the Oedipus myth on the Restoration stage.

From antiquity onwards, western thought has worn the badge of visualism, and vision indeed 'appears firmly ensconced as the dominant sense in Restoration theatre.'[11] The presence of actresses offered a new and sexually titillating enjoyment, and the perspectival splendour of the stage and a studied apparatus of scenes and machines appealed to the fashionable and sophisticated London audience. With regard to these aspects, *Oedipus* seemed destined for success, but Dryden and Lee's drama still faced a challenge, as Dryden himself had anticipated ten years before. In his *Essay on Dramatick Poesie*, when referring to Greek tragedies, he had pointed out their dependence on 'some Tale deriv'd from Thebes or Troy, or at least some thing that happen'd in those two Ages.'[12] According to this fashion, Sophocles drew his subject from the Theban Cycle, and when he presented his own play based on the Oedipus story, Dryden observed how

> before it came upon the Stage, it was already known to all the Audience: and the people so soon as ever they heard the Name of *Oedipus*, knew as well as the Poet, that he had kill'd his Father by a mistake, and committed Incest with his Mother, before the Play; that they were now to hear of a great Plague, an Oracle, and the Ghost of *Laius*: so that they sate with a yawning kind of expectation, till he was to come with his eyes pull'd out, and speak a hundred or more Verses in a Tragick tone, in complaint of his misfortunes.[13]

Sophocles did admirably well, as Dryden stated in the Preface to *Oedipus* in 1679, but for their part, Lee and Dryden had risked the prospect of serving a '*Chapon Bouillé*'[14] to their audience, since not only was *Oedipus* 'the most

10 E. Hall and F. Macintosh, *Greek Tragedy and the British Theatre 1660–1914*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 9.

11 S. J. Watkins, 'Groping in the Dark: Reading Touch in Restoration Comedy', *Restoration*, vol. 45, no. 1, 2021, p. 62.

12 J. Dryden, *An Essay on Dramatick Poesie*, in S. Holt Monk and A. E. W. Maurer (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 17, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1971, p. 24. For a discussion of Dryden's critical perspectives on *Oedipus*, see M. Giulietti, 'Una riscrittura del mito: *Oedipus* di Dryden e Lee', *Studi di Letteratura Francese*, vol. 15, 'Edipo in Francia', Firenze, Leo S. Olschki Editore, 1989, pp. 53–68.

13 Dryden, *An Essay on Dramatick Poesie*, p. 24.

14 'But one *Oedipus*, *Hercules*, or *Medea*, had been tollerable; poor people they scap'd not so good cheap: they had still the *Chapon Bouillé* set before them, till their appetites were cloy'd with the

celebrated piece of all Antiquity,' but also because 'in [their] own Age, Corneille has attempted it, and it appear[ed] by his Preface, with great success.'[15] In his *Œdipe*, staged in 1659, the Frenchman had augmented the original storyline, which he also derived from Sophocles (and Seneca), by adding two characters, Dircé, Laius and Jocasta's daughter (and Œdipe's younger sister), and Thesée, her lover. 'L'Amour n'ayant point de part dans ce Sujet,' wrote the French author, 'j'ai tâché de remédier . . . y ajoutant . . . l'hereux Episode des amours de Thesée & de Dircé.'[16] Dryden and Lee resorted to a similar 'happy Episode' and added the 'under-plot'[17] of Eurydice, Adrastus, and Creon. Jocasta's brother is here a Shaftesbury-like villain, deformed and vicious, who lusts after his niece, Eurydice, wishing at the same time to snatch the crown from Oedipus's head. Complication arises when the young girl scornfully rejects him and declares her love for the Argive prince, Adrastus, a purposely conceived minor figure who, precisely because of his inferior rank, was not at risk of obscuring Oedipus's fame or reputation, a detail which Dryden criticised in Corneille's tragedy.[18] Nor was Seneca looked at favourably in the Preface; the Latin poet, Dryden remarked, was 'always running after pompous expression, pointed sentences, and Philosophical notions, more proper for the Study than the Stage.'[19] This leads to the avowed Sophoclean filiation of the play, which Dryden appears to be very proud of: '*Sophocles* indeed is admirable every where: And therefore we have follow'd him as close as possibly we cou'd.'[20] This declaration has in fact been variously called into doubt and it suffices here to quote Fiona Macintosh's acute observations on the play's main sources:

> The debt to Sophocles is considerable . . . [and] indeed, in some circles the play was criticised for being too dependent on its principal Greek source and perilously close to an act of pure plagiarism. . . . The Senecan hallmark, however, remains the strongest on *Oedipus*, with incest and fate being the two central controlling forces in the play.[21]

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same dish, and the Novelty being gone, the pleasure vanish'd' (J. Dryden, *An Essay on Dramatick Poesie*, p. 24).

15 Dryden, Preface to *Oedipus*, p. 115.

16 'Love had no part in this subject . . . I sought a remedy by adding the happy episode of the love of Theseus and Dirce' (my translation) (P. Corneille, 'Au Lecteur', in *Œdipe, tragédie*, imprimée à Rouen et se vend à Paris, chez Courbé et De Luynes, 1659, n. p).

17 Dryden, Preface to *Oedipus*, p. 115.

18 'This was an errour in the first concoction; and therefore never to be mended in the second or the third: He introduc'd a greater Heroe than *Oedipus* himself: for when *Theseus* was once there, that Companion of *Hercules* must yield to none: The Poet was oblig'd to furnish him with business, to make him an Equipage suitable to his dignity, and by following him too close, to lose his other King of *Branford* in the Crowd' (J. Dryden, Preface to *Oedipus*, p. 116; italics reversed).

19 Dryden, Preface to *Oedipus*, p. 116 (italics reversed).

20 Dryden, Preface to *Oedipus*, p. 116 (italics reversed).

21 F. Macintosh, *Sophocles Oedipus Tyrannus*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2009, p. 58.

The problem was still on the table, as it were, and the tale of the Theban king remained a story of incest and parricide that was 'already known to all the Audience.' How could it please an audience, such as the Restoration one, that 'understood what it saw and heard' and had 'a strong pretension both to style and class,'[22] but could, at the same time, yearn to satisfy voyeuristic cravings? What could be the right way to avoid the danger of boiling the capon and serve instead a dainty dish, or better, a palatable 'Treat' that could 'please an unsatiable Audience'?[23] Greek and Latin debts apart, the solution apparently lay in the very treatment of the protagonist's crimes, and especially of incest. If, in *Oedipus*, the 'incest motif (as in Seneca) becomes the governing force in the play,' it does not so (only) by growing into 'a meditation on the prohibition of incest'[24] but by *spectacularising* its presence and, therefore, transforming it into an authentic source of theatrical pleasure. In this regard, we may borrow Andrew Sofer's use of the scientific concept of dark matter. 'Translated into theatrical terms,' Sofer cleverly argues, 'dark matter refers to the invisible dimension of theater that escapes visual detection, even though its effects are felt everywhere in performance . . . it also incorporates the incorporeal: offstage spaces and actions, absent characters, the narrated past, hallucination, blindness, obscenity, godhead, and so on.'[25] Incest might be listed among these invisible stage presences, in that its absence/*irrepresentability* is 'materially elusive though phenomenologically inescapable.'[26] In *Oedipus Rex*, the Chorus alludes to Oedipus being incestuous, and sings:

> All-too-famous Oedipus,
> you have made the voyage twice
> into one engrossing harbour –
> as a child you grew there,
> then you plunged in as a husband,
> coming back as groom there.[27]

The reference, although vivid (Jocasta's womb is the harbour Oedipus has visited twice), is given to the lyrically liminal expression of the Chorus. Incest is

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For issues of plagiarism in Dryden's and Lee's *Oedipus*, see P. Kewes, *Authorship and Appropriation: Writing of the Stage in England, 1660–1710*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998, pp. 157–158.

22 J. Powell, *Restoration Theatre Production*, London, Boston, Melbourne, and Henley, Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984, p. 13.

23 Dryden, Preface to *Oedipus*, p. 115 (italics reversed).

24 Macintosh, *Sophocles Oedipus Tyrannus*, p. 60.

25 A. Sofer, *Dark Matter: Invisibility in Drama, Theatre, and Performance*, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 2013, p. 3.

26 Sofer, *Dark Matter*, p. 4.

27 Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*, in Sophocles, *Oedipus the King and Other Tragedies*, trans. O. Taplin, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2015, p. 62 (ll. 1208–1210).

therefore 'woven into the fabric of theatrical representation'[28] but is confined to *other* spaces, rhetorically designed or even unsubstantial, such as dreams, as the Sophoclean Jocasta famously tells Oedipus: 'Just think how many men have gone to bed / together with their mothers in their dreams.'[29]

After Sophocles, Seneca reworked the myth by ingraining its prophetic dimension not only into the protagonist's conscience but also into the supernatural elements with which he interspersed his play. Incest runs through Oedipus's thoughts as an obsessive *fil rouge*. Right from the opening scene, the Senecan hero is haunted by the hideous prophecy he has received at Delphi:

> What I fear is unspeakable: that I may kill my father with my own hand. The Delphic laurels warn me of this, and decree another, greater crime for me. Is any iniquity greater than a father's murder? Unhappy ties of kinship! I am ashamed to utter my fate. Phoebus threatens the son with his parent's bed, a monstrous marriage, an unnatural, incestuous union.[30]

Incest is by far what he fears (and abhors) the most, as it is 'the more fearful portion of my destiny,'[31] still it remains unseen, circumscribed as it is into a narrated past. On the other hand, Tiresias's divination, which he performs on stage with the help of his daughter, Manto, is full of visual, if symbolic, references to incest.[32] When Manto, following her father's orders, describes to him the sacrificed heifer's entrails, she realises that 'the whole order is changed, nothing lies in its proper place, everything is turned around.'[33] This is – as Maurizio Bettini called it – 'the divinatory transcription of incest,'[34] which is pointed at as a preposterous derangement of the laws of nature, translated by images of disorder and aberration. Its ominous aura keeps growing. Oedipus's oracular memories and new insights keep torturing him until Tiresias, during an offstage necromantic rite, interrogates Laius's ghost, who exposes his son's crimes, thus leading to the unavoidable final catastrophe.

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28 Sofer, *Dark Matter*, p. 4.

29 Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*, p. 51 (ll. 982–983).

30 L. A. Seneca, *Oedipus*, in L. A. Seneca, *Tragedies*, vol. 2, trans. J. C. Fitch, Cambridge, MA, and London, Harvard University Press, 2018, p. 19 (ll. 15–21) (available at https://www.loebclassics.com/, accessed 29 April 2022).

31 Seneca, *Oedipus*, p. 87 (l. 792).

32 Although current scholarship argues for the performability of these plays, this particular scene has been often deemed unstageable. A case for its playability has been made, however, by hypothesising the use of pantomime dancers. See E. Dodson-Robinson, 'Performing the "Unperformable" Extispicy Scene in Seneca's *Oedipus Rex*', *Didaskalia*, vol. 8, no. 27, 2011, http://www.didaskalia.net/issues/8/27/ (accessed 2 April 2022).

33 Seneca, *Oedipus*, p. 49 (ll. 366–367).

34 M. Bettini, 'Lettura divinatoria di un incesto (Seneca Oed. 366 ss.)', *Materiali e discussioni per l'analisi dei testi classici*, no. 12, 1984, p. 148 (my translation).

Notwithstanding Dryden's unsympathetic opinion of Seneca's play, which he defined as 'more proper for the Study than the Stage,'[35] many of the supernatural elements in *Oedipus* betray their Senecan derivation.[36] In particular, the two English playwrights exploited the Senecan conjuration scene – an offstage event later narrated by Creon – by dragging it on stage and transforming it into an impressive performance. In a 'dark Grove' a procession of priests '*all cloathed in long black Habits*'[37] is followed by Tiresias and Manto, who prepares the ceremony according to her father's directions. Peals of thunder and heart-rending laments are heard, while flashes of lightning illuminate the stage, now '*wholly darken'd*.'[38] All is ready for the evocation but the 'Infernal Gods must . . . have Musick too,'[39] the blind prophet says, thus yielding the right of way to music.[40] Laius's ghost is eventually charmed on stage and '*rises arm'd in his Chariot, as he was slain*.'[41] The scene undoubtedly responded to the contemporary *gusto* for elaborate spectacle, one that made full use of stage machinery and special effects, such as onstage darkness, music, and trapdoor tricks. The Restoration audience was 'excited by sensationalism,' and the gory vision of a murdered Laius certainly titillated their appetite all over. Yet, the pleasure they were after was 'both intellectual and physical,' in that it derived 'not only from the expression but from the conception of the work.'[42] This expectation was fulfilled in *Oedipus* by the representation of incest, or better, by the *performative* treatment of it that not only inhabits the protagonists' expression but also entertains a constant negotiation with the theatrical space in which it takes place.

What singles out Dryden and Lee's play among other renditions of the ancient myth is in fact its handling of the incest motif. As has been often pointed out, the greatest innovation of the English *Oedipus* is the relationship between Jocasta and Oedipus, now based on mutual love. The choice has been ascribed to Dryden's theorisation of love, which 'being an Heroique Passion, is fit for Tragedy.'[43] Corneille had introduced the same theme in his *Œdipe*, but limited its scope to the liaison between Dircé and Thesée. Dissimilarly,

35 Dryden, Preface to *Oedipus*, p. 116 (italics reversed).
36 On the play's Senecan debts, see, in particular, H. Slaney, *The Senecan Aesthetic: A Performance History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 174–180.
37 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 3.1.231, s.d.
38 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 3.1.292, s.d.
39 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 3.1.297.
40 The incidental pieces that follow ('Hear, ye sullen Powers below,' 'Musick for a while,' 'Come away,' 'Lajus! Hear and appear') were famously set to music by Henry Purcell for a revival of the play in 1692. The original score has not survived.
41 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 3.1.345, s.d.
42 Powell, *Restoration Theatre Production*, p. 60.
43 J. Dryden, *Heads of an Answer to Rymer*, in S. H. Monk and A. E. W. Maurer (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 17, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1971, p. 186.

in Dryden and Lee, love is primarily introduced with regard to Oedipus and Jocasta, whose exchanges are dominated by passion and desire. In Act One, as soon as Oedipus, who has just returned from the war, meets his wife, their dialogue pivots on the verbalisation of their love:

> [*Oedipus*.] So well I love, words cannot speak how well.
> No pious Son e're lov'd his Mother more
> Than I my dear *Jocasta*.
> *Jocasta*. I love you too
> The self-same way: and when you chid, methought
> A Mothers love start up in your defence,
> And bade me not be angry . . .
> For I love *Lajus* still as wives shou'd love:
> But you more tenderly; as part of me:
> And when I have you in my arms, methinks
> I lull my child asleep.[44]

Words cannot say how deep Oedipus's love for his wife is, which would confirm how incest escapes not only visual recognition but also discursive representation. Yet, he soon compares his affection to filial love, while Jocasta's attraction towards him is akin to the loving tenderness of a mother. Incest disturbingly sneaks into their discourse as motherly and wifely loves merge and the order of things (wife ≠ mother) coincides with its reversal (wife = mother) as it happens in an incestuous relationship. One should notice, though, how the final emphasis is performative: 'when I *have you in my arms*, methinks I *lull* my child asleep.' The tragic irony is here apparent (when Jocasta takes Oedipus in her arms she is in fact embracing her son!) but her words also intimate the physical dimension of her relationship with Oedipus. The spectre is evoked, then, and yet immediately rejected when, moments later, the king forbids the marriage of Creon and Eurydice – which Jocasta would have allowed – because they are too near of kin and the mere thought of incest is something he shudders at ('I know not why, it shakes me / When I but think on Incest').[45] Rather than staving it off, though, Oedipus's reaction brings incest into a position of prominence as the opening of Act Two demonstrates. A midnight storm is battering Thebes while the horizon is filled with ominous prodigies. The 'perfect Figures of a Man and a Woman,' dressed in purple robes and adorned with the tokens of royalty appear in the sky 'Just

44 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 1.1.527–536.
45 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 1.1.558–559.

West,' and their 'Majestick heads' bear the names of Oedipus and Jocasta 'in large gold'[46] while a bloody moon undergoes a monstrous labour:

> Why from the bleeding Womb of monstrous Night,
> Burst forth such Miriads of abortive Stars?
> Ha! my *Jocasta*; look! the Silver Moon!
> A selling Crimson stains her beauteous Facet
> She's all o're Blood! and look, behold again,
> . . .
> A vast Eclipse darkens the labouring Planet.[47]

It is a masque-like spectacle that metonymically identifies incest with its unnatural progeny (the 'abortive stars') and acts as a portentous warning to the protagonists, who stand amazed in front of it.[48] Oedipus cannot read the signs, as it were, and forcefully swears his and Jocasta's innocence. Significantly enough, his claim hinges on guilt itself: 'By all the indearments of miraculous love, / By all our languishings,'[49] he says, thus dragging the physical/sexual dimension of their love once again to the fore.

With regard to the 'prodigies scene,' however, what needs to be foregrounded is also its spatiality. We may rather safely infer from the stage direction[50] that accompanies the apparition that the same is located on the inner stage and may be categorised as a discovery scene. As Juan A. Prieto Pablos points out, 'discovery scenes are by no means exceptional in Restoration drama' since 'the use of moveable shutters . . . permitted a wide open display of the inner stage.'[51] From a conceptual point of view, the use of this area often 'concerned the view of characters in private intimate situations . . . [which] suggests . . . that this deeper recess of the stage was regarded as especially suitable for these situations.'[52] The vision of the prodigies in 2.1 does not disclose an 'intimate situation' but apparently showcases stagecraft possibilities in front of which '*all . . . [come] forward in amazement*.'[53] One

46 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.22 and 65–66.
47 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.35–41
48 Anne Hermanson suggests how in the 1670s 'ceremony as a foundation of the monarchic order is transformed into chaos in the horror plays.' In *Oedipus*, which she ranks among these dramas, 'the expected emotional responses of awe or dread to such supernatural manifestations are dulled by the playwrights through their characters' lack of belief in, or ignorance of, the significance of the phantasms' (A. Hermanson, *The Horror Plays of the English Restoration*, Farnham, Ashgate, 2014, pp. 16, 18).
49 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.79–80.
50 '*The Scene draws, and discovers the Prodigies*' (Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.31, s.d.).
51 J. A. Prieto Pablos, 'The Inner Stage as Acting Space in Restoration Theatres', *Theatre Notebook*, vol. 74, no. 3, 2020, p. 144.
52 Prieto Pablos, 'The Inner Stage', p. 155.
53 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.31, s.d.

should not forget, however, that the prodigies are made to appear in what is supposed to be Oedipus and Jocasta's royal bedroom; the actors/viewers stand in '*An open Gallery*,' with '*A royal Bed-Chamber being suppos'd behind*'[54] and the visual metaphor of the two royal figures, later identified as Oedipus and Jocasta themselves, and of a bloody and 'labouring Planet' could hint at the king and queen's (abnormal) intimacy and at the birth of their children. Oedipus is/should be king, not because he has married Jocasta but because he is her son. This twist of the natural and dynastic order is spectacularly set in a less illuminated and deeper space – behind the 'open Gallery' – which may also allude to the secret recesses of the protagonists' minds. Nevertheless, rather than awakening their conscience, this discovery scene inaugurates a process of performative welding between Oedipus and his crime as they respectively become the actor and subject of new shows, the first of which is significantly carried out on the inner stage too. After Tiresias, inspired by the god Apollo, has tried to unravel the mystery that still surrounds Laius's death, Oedipus passionately voices his longing to spend the night with his beloved wife ('To bed, my fair, my Dear, my best *Jocasta*'),[55] even though he feels 'an unusual chillness'[56] coming upon him. When he next enters the stage, he is in fact looking for his wife's embrace:

Oedipus *Enters, walking asleep in his shirt, with a Dagger in his right hand, and a Taper in his left.*

Oedipus. O, my *Jocasta*! 'tis for this the wet
Starv'd Soldier lies all night on the cold ground;
For this he bears the storms
Of Winter Camps, and freezes in his Arms:
To be thus circled, to be thus embrac'd.
That I could hold thee ever! Ha! where art thou?
What means this melancholly light, that seems
The gloom of glowing embers?
The Curtain's drawn; and see, she's here again!
Jocasta? Ha! what, fall'n asleep so soon?
How fares my love? this Taper will inform me.
Ha! Lightning blast me, Thunder
Rivet me ever to *Prometheus* Rock,
And Vultures gnaw out my Incestuous heart!
By all the Gods! my Mother *Merope*![57]

54 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.1, s.d.
55 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.280.
56 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.292.
57 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.339–353.

Apart from the obvious Shakespearean hints to both Macbeth's hallucinatory visions and Lady Macbeth's sleepwalking,[58] the scene has been regarded as Oedipus's 'admission of incestuous dreams' which 'undermines his purity of motive in wedding Jocasta.'[59] I only partially agree with this interpretation. First of all, if Oedipus is asleep, and therefore is dreaming, he is dreaming what many men have dreamt before him, that is, sleeping with their mothers, and the scene may be defined as a performative translation of the Sophoclean incestuous fantasy.[60] Secondly, rather than pointing to his motive in marrying the queen of Thebes – which would imply some hidden awareness of his kinship to her – the scene foregrounds the spectacular quality of incest itself. Not only is the act (almost) performed on stage (even though Oedipus is dreaming, what prevents it is seemingly only the fact that Jocasta has fallen asleep), but it is acted as a proper discovery scene. The metaphorical representation of incest conveyed by the grand vision of the opening scene of Act Two, which had been something Oedipus had only gazed at in amazement, has now become a 'live action' scene, of which he is the protagonist. 'The Curtain's drawn,' he says, thus suggesting a proxemic arrangement that places him on or close to the inner stage where the royal bed stands and the *drawing* of a curtain alludes to the discovery of such a prop.[61] In fact, this is the space in which the prodigies had appeared and Oedipus has seemingly become one of them; the scene he performs, immersed in a dim light, is duly accompanied by the impressive evocation of lightning and thunder. Far from carrying out a cautionary function, Oedipus's dream fosters a growing, conspicuous display of incest. The remedy he suggests against fear and nightmares is to 'snatch the strongest Cordial of . . . love'[62] and, even though the ominous voice of a ghost (perhaps Laius's) calls him and Jocasta by name from within in order to scare and separate them, Oedipus declares that he will not recede and will pursue his purpose to its end, even if he has to stand amidst a whirlwind of storming spectres. Incest ultimately becomes the paradoxical antidote against itself:

58 On Dryden's and Lee's Shakespearean debts, see S. Bigliazzi, 'Edipo dopo Shakespeare: mito e tragedia nel dramma di Dryden e Lee', *Dioniso*, no. 4, 2014, pp. 93–127.

59 R. A. McCabe, *Incest, Drama and Nature's Law 1550–1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 275.

60 'Just think how many men have gone to bed / together with their mothers in their dreams.'

61 As Juan Prieto Pablos argues, 'the discovery of large or heavy props might seem to justify the concurrence of characters on the inner stage . . . The display of props is the second most common cause of discoveries and likely a strong contributing factor in scenes involving the presence of characters, due to the practical need to keep actors in close proximity to the props, if not through the whole duration of the scene, at least while actors interacted with these props' (Prieto Pablos, 'The Inner Stage', pp. 146–147).

62 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.417.

Call louder, till you burst your aiery Forms!
Rest on my hand. Thus, arm'd with innocence,
I'll face these babling *Daemons* of the air:
In spight of Ghosts, I'll on.
Tho' round my Bed the Furies plant their Charms;
I'll break 'em, with *Jocasta* in my arms:
Clasp'd in the folds of love, I'll wait my doom;
And act my joys, tho' Thunder shake the room.[63]

The visual/physical dimension of love (and incest), the dark matter, is brought to light and the royal bed itself becomes spatialised as the centre of the incestuous *performance* surrounded by a baleful host of infernal spectators.

The idea of a show carried out in front of an audience continues and is further enhanced by the protagonists, and by Oedipus in particular. After Phorbas, Laius's former servant, has definitely identified Jocasta's young husband as the old king's son and murderer, Oedipus faints. As soon as he regains consciousness, he tries to stab himself, but is prevented, and eventually calls for 'darkness and everlasting night'[64] to fall on him and on the earth, bringing chaos and universal wreckage. If one may read here a proleptic sign of his eventual self-blinding, Oedipus's plea is also interestingly veined by a metatheatrical allusion to Restoration stagecraft:

O that, as oft I have at *Athens* seen
The Stage arise, and the big Clouds descend;
So now in very deed I might behold
The pond'rous Earth, and all yon marble Roof
Meet, like the hands of *Jove*, and crush Mankind[.] [65]

This reference to stage devices and machines is of course evocative of the contemporary theatre rather than of the Athenian one; the anachronism is in fact perfectly attuned to the spectacular quality of his action. Even the punishment he wishes to be struck by is a prodigious show, visually and acoustically impressive. But he is not be crushed by the falling earth, because the show must go on, as it were. Faithful to the myth, Dryden and Lee have their hero '[snatch] . . . from forth their bloody Orbs / The Balls of sight, and [dash] . . . 'em on the ground.'[66] Creon aptly describes this terrible

63 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.421–428.
64 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 4.1.620.
65 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 4.1.612–616.
66 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 5.1.70–71.

act of self-mutilation as a 'Master-piece of Horrour,'[67] which, although styled as 'new and dreadful'[68] does not deviate from the sources, and is especially remindful of Seneca.[69] Authentic novelty is yet to come. Oedipus reappears on stage, lamenting his fate and hallucinating over his sons and daughters, now transformed into a terrifying 'Medley of Creation.'[70] He is soon joined by Jocasta who tries to reach for him but is rejected. At first Oedipus confines her to a gendered categorisation of ravenous eroticism that sounds like Creon's early allegations of sexual greed:

Creon. These Women are such cunning Purveyors!
Mark where their *Appetites have once been pleas'd*,
The same resemblance in a younger Lover
Lyes brooding in their Fancies the same Pleasures,
And *urges their remembrance to desire*.[71]
Oedipus. Art thou not gon then? Ha!
How dar'st thou stand the Fury of the Gods?
Or com'st thou in the Grave *to reap new pleasures*?[72]

Soon enough, though, Oedipus starts feeling for her again and the word 'husband,' spoken by Jocasta, sounds like a kinetic signal that makes him run to her in order to renew their past 'indearments of miraculous love':[73]

Jocasta. In spight of all those Crimes the cruel Gods
Can charge me with, I know my Innocence;
Know yours: 'tis Fate alone that makes us wretched,
For you are still my Husband.
Oedipus. Swear I am,
And I'll believe thee; steal into thy Arms,
Renew endearments, think 'em no pollutions,
But chaste as Spirits joys: gently I'll come,
Thus weeping blind, like dewy Night, upon thee,
And fold thee softly in my Arms to slumber.[74]

67 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 5.1.72.
68 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 5.1.72.
69 'With hooked fingers he greedily searches out his eyes and, torn from their very roots, he drags both eyeballs out' (Seneca, *Oedipus*, ll. 965–967).
70 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 5.1.155.
71 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 1.1.66–70 (my emphasis).
72 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 5.1.183–185 (my emphasis).
73 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 2.1.79.
74 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 5.1.217–225.

No oracle, no fate, no prohibition, no ghastly awareness can stop him. Oedipus's gestures are charged with erotic power, now consciously attached to incest, whose consummation is subtly yet unquestionably signified by the 'dewy Night' simile. Incest is pronounced ('you are still my Husband'), performed ('I'll come . . . upon thee'), consummated ('like dewy Night') and, in that, styled as a truth that Oedipus himself yearns to believe in ('Swear I am / And I'll believe thee,' he cries). Yet, this exposes its nature as stage fiction, and as such it needs to be performed. The sudden appearance of Laius's ghost pushes the queen over the brink and her mad talk – when she raves about reaching heaven and setting the gods' dwellings on fire – is again recorded in terms of visual and gestic display which Oedipus, though blind, duly commends:

> *Oedipus*. Excellent grief! Why, this is as it should be!
>
> . . .
>
> I could have wish'd, methought, for sight again,
> To mark the Gallantry of her distraction:
> Her blazing Eyes darting the wandring Stars,
> T' have seen her mouth the Heav'ns, and mate the Gods,
> While with her Thundring Voice she menac'd high,
> And every Accent twang'd with smarting sorrow[.][75]

The appraisal of the performance, up to its suprasegmental features, adds to the idea that incest (and its effects, such as mental derangement) is a stage spectacle to be performed with artistry.[76] But the curtain is of course Oedipus's.

While Jocasta, after having murdered all her four children and stabbed herself to death, fantasises about a reunion with Oedipus in the afterlife, where – she claims – they will be acquitted by the gods, Oedipus must find

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75 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 5.1.274, 277–282.

76 Mary Betterton, who played Jocasta, had possibly carried out her role extremely well since, as Colley Cibber remarked, she was gifted with 'superior Strength and Melody of Voice' and could 'throw out those quick and careless Strokes of Terror from the Disorder of a guilty Mind . . . with a Facility in her Manner that render'd them at once tremendous and delightful' (C. Cibber, *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber*, ed. R. W. Lowe, London, John C. Nimmo, vol. 1, 1889, p. 162). This also points to the idea of 'incest-as-performance,' almost establishing, as Jocelyn Powell would have it, 'a dialogue . . . over the characters' heads' (Powell, *Restoration Theatre Production*, p. 72). The same kind of dialogue could also be boosted by the fact that the titular roles of Oedipus and Jocasta were played by Mr and Mrs Betterton, whom the contemporaries held in high esteem for their respectability. Mary, in particular, 'unlike many of her colleagues . . . attracted no sexual lampoons' (J. Milhous, 'Betterton, *née* Sauderson, Mary', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/24708, accessed 22 April 2022). The strict morality and decency of the pair struck a contrast against Oedipus and Jocasta's unlawful desire, which further celebrated its fictional nature.

his own effective finale. He gropes his way up to a tower and prepares for an impressive dive which, he says, must be duly acclaimed:

> May all the Gods too from their Battlements
> Behold, and wonder at a Mortals daring;
> And, when I knock the Goal of dreadful death,
> Shout and applaud me with a clap of Thunder.[77]

One may question the actual nature of his 'daring.' It may be circumscribed to this final suicidal leap only, but it gestures in fact at the long-standing performance Jocasta and Oedipus have been offering. This has been Oedipus's 'daring,' but also Dryden and Lee's. Pitting themselves against the myth, they *re*wrote its course, but, above all, turned its (unspeakable) truth into a stage spectacle whose success consisted in the continuous negotiation of its artificial status. If undoubtedly charmed by ghosts, lightning, and extraordinary stage effects, what the audience probably appreciated the most in *Oedipus* was the far from '*Bouillé*' exhibition of incest as performance, as *theatre*, confirming that, as Dryden himself would have it, 'they, who have best succeeded on the Stage, / Have still conform'd their Genius to their Age.'[78]

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77 Dryden and Lee, *Oedipus*, 5.1.455–458.

78 J. Dryden, Epilogue to *The Conquest of Granada by the Spaniards, The Second Part*, in J. Loftis, D. S. Rodes, and V. A. Dearing (eds.), *The Works of John Dryden*, vol. 11, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1978, ll. 1–2 (italics reversed).

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WEAPONIZING ADAPTATION
CLARENDON'S IMPEACHMENT AND POLITICAL CRITIQUE IN RESTORATION DRAMA

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The early years of Restoration politics were shaped by a number of powerful figures at Charles II's newly established court. None could claim the power held by Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon (1609–1674), nor could any match the conflict his policies caused. When a series of disasters struck in the mid-1660s, Clarendon, already falling from favour, made a persuasive scapegoat. His impeachment and subsequent charges of high treason became a central topic of discussion and debate throughout both the court and its mirror, the theatre. Two new plays, Robert Howard's *The Great Favourite, or, The Duke of Lerma* and John Dryden and William Davenant's *The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island*, explored the implications of Clarendon's impeachment from opposite sides of a growing political division. This essay examines how these two plays, both adaptations of pre-Restoration works, critiqued the so-called Clarendon Crisis while using the mode of adaptation to claim political distance and poetic merit.

By the middle of the 1660s, the initial jubilation of the Restoration had fully ended, and England was no longer so enamoured of the returned king. While the Restoration had offered a moment for significant political and social change, the policies of moderation and balance which had dominated Charles II's initial years in power served primarily to stall any sense of progress and often led to bitterness amongst Charles's earliest supporters. It is difficult to imagine any other strategy which might have been more successful, however. Through a refusal to promote either royalist or parliamentarian interests, the early Restoration government managed to create an uneasy balance – but a balance nonetheless – between opposing political factions. However, this balance was precarious and depended on the careful negotiation of opposing factions, histories, and desires.

The policies of mercy expressed in the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion (1660) became part of the cultural and social fabric of the early Restoration. The theatre duopoly of the early 1660s largely presented highly pro-Royalist plays which also emphasised the ideals of mercy and unity that formed the core of early Restoration political policy. By the mid-1660s, however, political divisions within the court began to intersect with the theatres in two distinct ways: the allusive playing out of court politics on stage and the use of drama to comment on the court.

In the middle years of the decade, any sense of unity became strained by a number of outside forces, including the beginning of the second Anglo-Dutch war in February 1665, the onset of plague early in the same year,[1] and the Great Fire of London in October 1666. All three events created significant upheavals in both the political and theatrical worlds. The war itself initially had both popular and political support, particularly from those with mercantile interests. Likewise, the theatres produced a number of militaristic plays, including Davenant's *The Rivals* (1668), the Earl of Orrery's *The Generall* (1664), and Dryden's *The Indian Emperor* (1667). However, disastrous naval losses and financial mismanagement quickly turned public attitudes sour. Despite significant financial grants from Parliament to fund the war, Charles began borrowing money from wealthy London merchants, many of whom soon found themselves in dire financial straits due to the plague and then the fire.

The plague seems to have been treated as a largely civic, rather than national, matter. Preoccupied with the war, Charles and his court left much of the management of illness and reporting to city and parish officials. This can perhaps be justified by the perception that the plague was primarily a problem for the city, rather than the country, despite the flight of most of London's wealthier citizens – including Charles and the royal family in July 1665 – to the countryside, often carrying the plague with them. However, not long after the nobility began returning to London, a third disaster struck: the Great Fire.

This disaster 'laid waste to about 400 streets, 89 parish churches and 13,200 houses, covering as much as 436 acres in ash,'[2] and it significantly increased tensions between religious factions and against foreigners in London as citizens sought someone to blame. However, the foreign tradespeople, largely French or Dutch, who lived in the neighbourhood where the fire began, were integral parts of London's bustling textile industry, and the Catholics, as Francis Dolan notes, 'had James II's Catholicism and Charles II's suspected Catholicism granting them some social legitimacy.'[3] Although numerous acts passed as part of the so-called Clarendon Code had effectively barred Catholics and other non-conformists from public office, they were still a significant, if contentious, portion of the London population, particularly when they numbered among its foreign citizens. Despite numerous

1 According to A. Lloyd Moote and Dorothy C. Moote, plague had been present in the greater London metropolitan area since Christmas of 1664, and by May or April of 1665 had grown into an epidemic. In Whitehall and parishes near the court, examiners seem to have been particularly hesitant to attribute deaths to the plague, which may explain why theatres remained open until early June.

2 F. Dolan, *True Relations: Reading, Literature, and Evidence in Seventeenth-Century England*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013, p. 87.

3 Dolan, *True Relations*, p. 89.

broadsides and pamphlets warning of a Catholic and/or foreign conspiracy to destroy London, however, the eventual conclusion of several investigations was that the fire was caused by 'the hand of God, a great wind and a very dry season.'[4] While this conclusion somewhat reduced tensions between the factions, it did not completely eliminate fears of Catholic plotting.

The Restoration government encountered these three crises more or less simultaneously, and while its continuation was testament to the country's desire not to repeat the political turmoil of the Civil Wars, it cannot be said that the government, particularly the institution of the monarchy, escaped unscathed. As Tim Harris has noted, the monarchy suffered a serious loss of prestige throughout the 1660s and 1670s through failing to enact either domestic or foreign policies that found wide support.[5] While the Cavalier Parliament that met in 1664–1665 still seemed optimistic, the Parliament that met in 1666–1667 was deeply divided over the management of the war and the attribution of responsibility for the Great Fire.

The theatres, like many of London's businesses, found little to sustain them, and in June 1665, both theatres were closed by order of the Lord Chamberlain, though the sparse offerings recorded in *The London Stage* from March onward may suggest that theatrical activity had been slowed by the companies themselves for several months preceding these official closures. Although Charles and his court returned to Whitehall in January 1666, theatrical activity did not resume until October of that year at court, and as late as December in the public theatres.

More importantly, however, the theatres reopened in a changed London and for a changed court. While both companies continued to rely on popular staple plays from pre-Interregnum dramatists, new plays began appearing in greater numbers from both professional dramatists like John Dryden and George Etherege, and from courtiers like Roger Boyle and James Howard. Playwrights began writing back at power, rather than endorsing the ideals of forgiveness and mercy that had marked the early years of the Restoration. The period between 1666 and 1678 served as an era of experimentation with the limits of drama as a tool of political critique, as opposed to its role in reiterating the new political regime earlier in the 1660s. The adaptations and revivals of the late 1660s and early 1670s bridged the politically optimistic plays of the early Restoration with a far more critical use of pre-Interregnum drama during the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis.

In the aftermath of the disasters of 1666, politicians and commoners alike looked for someone to blame for London's recent run of misfortunes and

4 *Calendar of State Papers, Domestic: Charles II, 1666–7*, ed. M. A. E. Green, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1863, p. 175.

5 T. Harris, *Restoration: Charles II and His Kingdoms*, New York, Penguin Books, 2005, pp. 70–71.

England's losses in the war. At court, a clear target emerged: Edward Hyde, the Earl of Clarendon. His wide-ranging political influence had long been controversial, as his position as the Lord Chancellor and Charles's long-time advisor offered him great power at court. His staunch adherence to the law made him one of the chief proponents of the policy of balance and mercy that began the Restoration, even when such a balance was detrimental to the king's wishes.[6] He also appeared to have struggled with navigating interpersonal court politics and favouritism, which left him opposing both Barbara Palmer, Countess of Castlemaine, and George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, the king's two most powerful favourites. An initial attempt at his impeachment had taken place in 1663, and from that point onward, his support within the court waned. His opposition to the Second Anglo-Dutch War earned him no friends, and his advice to Charles throughout the war – first to avoid recalling parliament, and later to use the royal prerogative to raise money (which was construed as a proposition for military rule) – proved disastrous for Clarendon's security within the court. In many senses, he became the perfect scapegoat.

Clarendon was dismissed from office at the end of August 1667, though he remained in England to fight against the impeachment charges until 'two strong hints from the king' the following November, following charges of high treason, led him to flee into exile in France from which, despite his best efforts, he would never return.[7] The political and social upheavals of the mid-1660s, and particularly debates over Clarendon's impeachment, spurred new theatrical productions which moved 'away from clear-cut and recidivate Royalist propaganda to cautious and veiled criticism.'[8] This essay examines two such plays – Robert Howard's *The Great Favourite, or, The Duke of Lerma* and John Dryden and William Davenant's *The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island* – as polarising examples of the forms this critique could take, from a thinly-veiled attack to a philosophical musing on the nature of political power. Both plays achieve their goals through the adaptation of earlier works, and this framework both granted the playwrights potential political distance as well as embedded them within an increasingly prestigious and literary dramatic lineage. Thus, they were able to claim both poetic merit and political clout through (re)writing such increasingly political plays.

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6 History has painted Clarendon as inflexibly Anglican, to the extent that the series of anti-nonconformist bills passed during the early years of the Restoration were named after him. However, as recent scholarship, including Paul Seaward's biography in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, has argued, Clarendon seems to have sought compromise, particularly for the Presbyterians, as a means of securing the power of the restored monarchy.

7 P. Seaward, 'Hyde, Edward, first earl of Clarendon', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 4 October 2008, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/14328 (accessed 15 September 2020).

8 N. Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 125.

Howard's *The Great Favourite, or, the Duke of Lerma* (1668) is, perhaps, the strongest literary denunciation of Clarendon. Howard was ambitious, both as a politician and as a member of the Theatre Royal, for which he wrote plays and served as scene designer. He was consistently a Member of Parliament from 1661 until his death in 1698. While Howard's engagement in the so-called country faction would have made him Clarendon's political opponent, his animosity towards the earl had gained a personal component in 1667, when Clarendon supported Howard's wife Honoria in her petition 'for relief from the ill usage of her husband.'[9] In the attempts to remove Clarendon from office, Howard found a way to unite his political and literary interests. Howard quickly threw in his lot with a growing anti-Clarendon faction headed by the Duke of Buckingham and became one of its central proponents by turning his playwriting skills towards criticism of Clarendon and England's current political situation.

The Duke of Lerma was likely composed sometime in late 1666 or early 1667, when Howard was 'to go into the Countrey,'[10] presumably to escape the plague. Though its source text is no longer extant, Howard claimed that it was an adaptation of an earlier play. It was first performed in February 1668, though rumours of its impending release had circulated since at least January. By the play's premiere, Clarendon was already in semi-voluntary exile, though Charles II 'had given his assent to a bill banishing Clarendon for life unless he returned by the beginning of February 1668.'[11] The play's premiere on the 20th of that same month likely served to reinvigorate anti-Clarendon sentiments against his potential return.

The printed edition of *The Duke of Lerma* begins with a lengthy epistle to the reader, in which Howard explains that he has been more than willing to print this play because his audiences have contested its authorship. Unlike many dramatists adapting the works of others throughout this period, Howard acknowledges his debt but in such a manner that leaves his as the only name attached to the text. He explains that 'a Gentleman' had brought a play called *The Duke of Lerma* to the King's Company, and that this play served as his source for the plot. He is careful to explain that the original version of the play was not well suited for the stage,

> since the contrivance, scarce would merit the name of a plot; and some of that assisted by a disguise; and it ended abruptly: and on the Person of *Philip* the 3. there was fixt such a mean Character, and on the Daughter of the Duke of *Lerma* such a vitious one,

9 H. Oliver, *Sir Robert Howard, 1626–1698: A Critical Biography*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press, 1963, p. 127 (quoting from *H. M. C.*, Report 12, App. 7, Sir David Fleming MSS, p. 46).

10 R. Howard, *The Great Favourite, or, the Duke of Lerma*, London, printed for Henry Herringman, 1668, sig. A2^{v}.

11 Seaward, 'Hyde, Edward, first earl of Clarendon.'

> that I cou'd not but judge it unfit to be presented by any that had a respect, not only to Princes, but indeed to either Man or Woman.[12]

These complaints mimic those frequently found in justifications for other adaptations, where the adapter explains that they have 'made into a play' some earlier, deficient text, usually through extending an abrupt ending or abbreviated text,[13] revising flat or morally ambiguous characters,[14] or refining plot elements to bring them in line with the theatrical conventions of the period, not only by including critical theories of unity, but also through expanding women's roles and the level of technical and scenic detail required for staging. However, Howard's play is somewhat unusual among early adaptations in that he acknowledges his use of an earlier play without actually naming his source. Howard asserts that he has taken only the 'hint' of 'the Duke of *Lerma* saving himself in his last extremity, by his unexpected disguise, which is as well in the true story as the old Play,'[15] as well as the names of the characters from his source text. Without access to this earlier, unprinted play, it is impossible to know the extent of Howard's actual alterations.

Harbage notes that Howard's description of *The Duke of Lerma*'s source as an 'old play' suggests that it was a pre-Interregnum manuscript, likely the now-lost *The Spanish Duke of Lerma* known to have been in Humphrey Moseley's possession at the beginning of the Restoration.[16] In receiving this manuscript from an unnamed source associated with the King's Men, Howard must have seen a double opportunity: the chance to increase his own literary prestige through the alteration – however large or small that alteration may have been – of an unprinted play, and an opportunity to draw unfavourable parallels to Clarendon, who filled a similar role in the English court to that of the historical Spanish Lerma.

The Duke of Lerma begins with the impending exile of the titular character, who opens the play by lamenting that his loyalty has not been rewarded and that the king (historically, Philip II of Spain) 'shot Ruine at me, and there lies, / Forgiving all the world, but me alone.'[17] The language of forgiveness, loyalty, and reward in Lerma's opening lines calls back to the themes of early

12 Howard, *The Great Favourite*, sig. A2^{v}.

13 As with Davenant's *Macbeth*, Shadwell's *Timon of Athens*, or Buckingham's *The Chances*.

14 See, for example, Tate's adaptation of *The Island Princess*, which removes moral ambiguity from Quisara and Ruy Dias to reframe them as paragons of virtue at the expense of most of the plot's complexity.

15 Howard, *The Great Favourite*, sig. A2^{v}.

16 A. Harbage, 'Elizabethan-Restoration Palimpsest', *The Modern Language Review*, vol. 35, no. 3, 1940, p. 299. Harbage disputes Moseley's attribution of the play to Henry Shirley and instead assigns authorship to John Ford based on stylistic and linguistic similarities.

17 Howard, *The Great Favourite*, p. 1.

Restoration politics and drama alike, where a failure to reward the faithful Cavaliers was a common complaint. In initially aligning Lerma with a still-disgruntled portion of the court (and one with which the playwright himself was newly associated), Howard emphasises the need for loyal courtiers to be properly rewarded lest they turn traitor, even as he underlines Lerma's greed through his parallels with Clarendon. While *Lerma* has often been read as a straightforward condemnation of Clarendon,[18] moments like this opening scene complicate such a reading.

The first scene opens just before Lerma's exile is to be confirmed, only for said exile to be forestalled by the king's death. Seeing an opportunity to integrate himself into the new king's favour, Lerma uses his daughter Maria as a pawn to prevent his banishment and reestablish his political influence. Despite Maria's initial resistance to being used in this manner, believing that she is being prostituted to the king at the expense of her own virtue, she is convinced to follow her father's plans once she meets the young king, who is instantly enamoured of her. From there, the primary action of the play largely shifts away from Lerma's machinations to focus on Maria's own struggles between filial piety and loyalty to her nation. Nancy Klein Maguire argues that 'to save both her King and her father, Maria risks her "fame," and the theatre-goers perhaps felt that her honour dilemma paralleled their own Interregnum entanglements – or at least paralleled their rationale of their choices.'[19] Howard's play thus marks a new trend in Restoration drama. Whereas most early plays focused on reaffirming the rights of the monarchy and the need for mercy and forgiveness, in the later 1660s, plays began to show a marked ambivalence about the role of crown and court and a subject's duties toward government.

Chief among these concerns at the time of the play's composition was Clarendon's power over the king, the court, and, potentially, the succession. *Lerma* draws parallels between the situation of Lerma, Maria, and the King and that of Clarendon, his daughter Anne, and the Duke of York. Since Howard's own preface to *The Duke of Lerma* notes that Maria's character was one of his chief alterations to the text, making her less 'vitious' and more virtuous,[20] it is likely that he reshaped the arc of her story to provide a flattering image of Anne and James's early relationship. While accounts surrounding James and Anne's marriage vary from romantic to coercive,[21] the union was very much

18 See, for example, Susan Owen's 'Restoration Drama and Politics: An Overview' in S. J. Owen (ed.), *A Companion to Restoration Drama*, Malden, Blackwell Publishing, 2008, pp. 126–139, and Maguire's *Regicide and Restoration*.

19 Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, p. 131.

20 Howard, *The Great Favourite*, sig. A2^{v}.

21 The exact nature of their relationship is, of course, far more complicated than this essay has space to explore. As examples of the range of romantic and political valences with which this

against Charles's and the queen mother's political wishes. Charles eventually relented, possibly due to Anne's pregnancy, and the two were married on September 3, 1660. However, Henrietta Maria's violent rejection of the match left Edward Hyde 'acutely embarrassed,' and, afraid 'that he would be accused of unbridled ambition in marrying his daughter into the royal family, he suggested that [Anne] should be sent to the Tower and even executed.'[22] Though their marriage was eventually accepted, *The Duke of Lerma*'s portrayal of Lerma forcing Maria into the young king's path must surely have reignited initial tensions over the match. James 'was widely seen as under her thumb'[23] and Pepys commented that 'the duke of York, in all things but his codpiece, is led by the nose by his wife.'[24] With James as Charles's only heir, Clarendon's influence over him through Anne was seen as a direct threat to the succession.

Though it is impossible to know what liberties Howard took with revising his source text, little of the actual history that inspired the play remains in the adaptation. The Duke of Lerma, Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas, was a historical figure. His relationship with King Philip II of Spain was contentious, but he became a favourite of Philip III and appears to have held a role similar to Clarendon's: he was thoroughly integrated into court politics and was seen as holding dangerous power over the king. However, his daughter Maria and the play's use of her to seduce the king on Lerma's behalf are purely fictional. Nancy Klein Maguire has suggested that Maria may 'represent England itself,'[25] though this reading, particularly given Maria's reluctance toward the King, makes the play a far stronger critique of the monarchy than it initially seems. If Maria is an analogue for England, then Howard is advocating for the King's/Charles's unconditional love for a country that, while it may secretly love him, publicly resists him and refuses to be controlled by him.

The play concludes on an apparently happy note. King Philip proposes marriage to Maria, asserting that '*Spains* empty Throne; / Unless from you shall want succession,'[26] and her uncle Medina and the Duke D'Alva reframe Lerma's earlier claims upon Maria's filial responsibility, arguing that wedding

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relationship is discussed, see John Miller's *ODNB* entry on Anne and John Callow's *The Making of King James II: The Formative Years of a Fallen King*, Gloucestershire, Sutton Publishing, 2000, pp. 90–92.

22 John Miller, 'Anne [née Anne Hyde], duchess of York (1637–1671), first wife of James II', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/14325 (accessed 17 September 2020).

23 Miller, 'Anne [née Anne Hyde].'

24 S. Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. R. Latham and W. Matthews, vol. 9, London, Bell & Hyman/Berkeley, University of California Press, 1974, p. 342.

25 Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, p. 128.

26 Howard, *The Great Favourite*, p. 68.

the king is her duty to the nation. Though Maria appears reluctant to 'submit to [Philip] / And Heaven, to teach [her] heart what's best to do,'[27] Philip's final declaration that 'let not a smile upon a face be seen / Till fair *Maria* yields to be my Queen'[28] suggests that the wedding will move forward, regardless of Maria's wishes. However, this resolution raises more problems than it solves. It emphasises the power of the royal prerogative (though only through the monarch's ability to dictate his marriage and thus the succession – a problem which would arise again nearly a decade later with the Exclusion Crisis), and 'though it advises Charles II, like Philip II [sic], to take a more active role in administration, the conclusion says nothing about the means to that end.'[29] What the play does offer, however, are cautions against being led too easily by favourites, whether directly or through the mistresses they provide.

Charles's quarrels with Clarendon stemmed in part from Clarendon's condemnation of Charles's private life, particularly his many mistresses. While the play excoriates Clarendon through parallels with Lerma, it also, as Richard Braverman has argued, 'chastises King Charles through King Philip, a young and inexperienced monarch who nearly loses control of his kingdom' because of his love for the wrong woman.[30] Here is where the play's political motivations become less clear, however. The distrust of favouritism implicit in the play's denunciation of Clarendon matches the politics of the anti-Clarendon faction with whom Howard had aligned himself. However, the play's cautions against the poential power of royal mistresses works somewhat against the desires of the cabal, and particularly Buckingham, who was attempting to replace Lady Castlemaine's influence by recruiting first Nell Gwynn and then Moll Davis as mistresses for the King, perhaps in an attempt to restore his own standing as a royal favourite. Nell Gwynn's performance as Maria must have felt particularly provocative, especially for politically savvy viewers like Pepys, who commented only on the play's 'reproach [of] our King with his mistress' and 'was troubled for it, and expected it should be interrupted.'[31] Howard's adaptation thus was a double pronged attack upon the court, one which reflected Clarendon's recent fall from power, but which equally warned against the influence of future favourites, particularly those who wielded power through the offer of mistresses.

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27 Howard, *The Great Favourite*, p. 68.

28 Howard, *The Great Favourite*, p. 68.

29 R. Braverman, *Plots and Counterplots: Sexual Politics and the Body Politic in English Literature, 1660–1730*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1993, p. 85. Throughout his examination of *The Great Favourite*, Braverman references the King character as Philip II; however, a closer examination of the historical figures portrayed in the play suggests that the King is Philip III.

30 Braverman, *Plots and Counterplots*, p. 84.

31 Pepys, *The Diary*, vol. 9, p. 81.

Howard was not alone in critiquing the court of the late 1660s, and even royalist playwrights, including John Dryden and William Davenant, sought to offer subtle guidance through drama. The Dryden-Davenant adaptation of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, subtitled *The Enchanted Island* (printed 1670),[32] became the Restoration's most successful adaptation of Shakespeare and one of its most successful plays overall, particularly if we include the later operatic variation on the play in our accounting. *The Enchanted Island* is less immediately – or, at least, less blatantly – topical than Howard's *Duke of Lerma*; it does not contain easy one-to-one parallels between characters and historical figures. Yet, because the play lacks a clear metaphorical key, one can read it as standing in for a multiplicity of political and ethical quandaries, or for none at all. Pepys, and likely many others, chose to see it as 'the most innocent play that ever I saw.'[33] Even so, Pepys did find 'the seamen's part' – the most overtly political element of the play – 'a little too tedious,'[34] presumably because of the directness of its political content. Still, he returned to see the play at least six more times in the next two years. *The Enchanted Island* premiered on November 7, 1667 to a nearly full house. According to estimations in *The London Stage*, the play was performed for two consecutive weeks,[35] a phenomenon that the records do not suggest for many other plays performed during Charles II's reign.

Much of the scholarship on the play focuses on Dryden and Davenant's (and, later, Shadwell's) deviations from their Shakespearean source text and the significance of those changes, whether in terms of politics, theatrical conventions, gender roles, or other topics of concern in Restoration drama studies. Katherine Eisaman Maus's foundational article 'Arcadia Lost: Politics and Revision in the Restoration *Tempest*' has set the tone for much of the work on this adaptation by asserting that it 'redefines the limits and uses of sovereignty.'[36] Later research has complicated this reading through various critical lenses, particularly feminist and postcolonial approaches, yet the core thesis holds true. *The Enchanted Island* is one of the first plays of the Restoration to call into question the proper uses of governmental authority, as well as the loyalties owed to a government by its subjects. Here, I use the term 'government' rather than 'monarchy' deliberately, for the play is as much an interrogation of duchies, commonwealths, and colonisation as it is of the specific power structures associated with monarchy.

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32 For the sake of clarity, I will be referring to the Dryden-Davenant *Tempest* by this subtitle.

33 Pepys, *The Diary*, vol. 8, p. 522.

34 Pepys, *The Diary*, vol. 8, p. 527.

35 W. Van Lennep, E. L. Avery, and A. H. Scouten (eds.), *The London Stage, 1660–1800, Part 1: 1660–1700*, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1965, p. 123.

36 K. E. Maus, 'Arcadia Lost: Politics and Revision in the Restoration *Tempest*', *Renaissance Drama*, vol. 13, 1982, p. 189–210.

The concerns of *The Enchanted Island* are not the same as those of Shakespeare's *Tempest*. Whereas Shakespeare primarily investigates power structures through Prospero's character and his control over both the island and its inhabitants, Dryden and Davenant expand this analysis, incorporating the entire cast to explore questions of loyalty, both to a formerly usurped ruler and to the figure of the father-king, and provide cautions against improper uses of power, particularly in the form of the sailors' duchy-turned-matrilineal commonwealth and Prospero's failed attempts at absolutism.

In Shakespeare, Prospero is the ultimate authority on the island. Ariel's obedience may be in the service of eventual freedom, but it is absolute. He reminds Prospero, 'I have done thee worthy service, / Told thee no lies, made no mistakings, served / Without or grudge or grumblings.'[37] Throughout the narrative, he behaves precisely as Prospero commands, and there is little sense of him exercising agency beyond this strict obedience, despite his desire for freedom. Similarly, Miranda is consistently concerned about her promises to her father throughout her courtship with Ferdinand. She chastises herself because she 'prattle[s] / Something too wildly,' and says, 'my father's precepts I therein do forget.'[38] Even in the midst of confessing her love, she is continually putting Prospero's commands first, her own desires second. Caliban's disobedience is portrayed as comically villainous, though ultimately not a serious threat to Prospero's authority over the island. Alonso concludes the play by repenting his usurpation and restoring Prospero's dukedom to him, though the emphasis is on Miranda and Ferdinand as the future inheritors of the duchy rather than on Prospero's restoration. Still, Prospero's power is absolute, and all of the events of the play work out as he has dictated through his magic and his control of Ariel.

Dryden and Davenant's Prospero is far less powerful and authoritative, and he often loses control of the very events he is attempting to orchestrate. Whereas Shakespeare's Prospero begins by recounting to an obediently listening Miranda the story of how they came to the island, the Prospero of *The Enchanted Island* begins in a position of confusion and frustration. He has to enlist Miranda's help in locating her sister Dorinda, one of Dryden and Davenant's additions to the plot, and Miranda starts by immediately questioning her father's reasons for conjuring the storm and wrecking the ship. Miranda and Dorinda conspire to see the shipwrecked men, despite Prospero's strict orders against doing so. Ariel's loyalties are likewise split, for Hippolito has, or at least claims to have, the authority 'to bind [Ariel] in the bottom of the Sea, / Far from the lightsome Regions of the Air, / ([His] native fields) above

37 W. Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, revised ed., ed. V. M. Vaughan and A. T. Vaughan, London, Arden Shakespeare, 2011, 1.2.247–249.

38 Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, 3.1.57–59.

a hundred years.'[39] Ariel is also capable of acting on his own authority, without command from either Prospero or Hippolito, for he leaves the island to visit the Hesperides, Palestine, and Britain to concoct a cure for Hippolito after Ferdinand has apparently killed him.

As a patriarch-king, then, Prospero is hardly a successful figure, and his many failures, particularly in ruling over the romantic encounters of his children and ward, allow for considerable questioning of the king's authority over his subjects' individual lives and consciences. Dobson locates the play's central theme in questions of paternalistic power embodied by the authority of the monarchy: 'the crisis of authority which the play dramatizes has generally been examined simply in terms of the restored monarchy, rather than of the wider family ideology on which that monarchy depended.'[40] This theme, as Dobson reads it, is constructed both through references to Restoration political debates and through the play's naturalisation of patriarchal 17th-century ideals. However, Prospero's continual failure to exercise authority over his daughters suggests a similar failure of power within Charles II's court. Indeed, during the late 1660s, it became clear that there would be ongoing political divisions within the court that had initially been seen as a remnant of the Interregnum split between royalists and parliamentarians, as well as the various religious rifts within English society. Over the next decade, these divisions within the court became stark enough to eventually lead to the formation of England's first two political parties.

Yet, even as *The Enchanted Island* portrays the king's authority as fallible, the loyalty owed to him by his subjects is depicted as unquestionable. Though Prospero is often challenged, he is still the central figure to whom all other characters continually turn. It is, ultimately, his authority that directs the action of the play, even when that direction is misguided, imprecisely followed, or deliberately subverted.

The Enchanted Island centres Prospero's father-king role as the sole source of clemency and redemption, and the sub-plot with Alonzo and Antonio is reconfigured to highlight the necessity of a just and merciful monarch. As George Robert Guffey has pointed out, *The Enchanted Island* depicts an Alonzo and Antonio who 'are already repentant of their crimes at the beginning of the play' and have 'tried to expiate their guilt by sailing to Portugal and defending Christianity against the Moors.'[41] Even though they are responsible for Prospero's (and Hippolito's) usurpation, they are deeply remorseful.

39 Dryden and Davenant, *The Tempest, or The Enchanted Island*, London, printed by J. M. for Henry Herringman, 1670, p. 66.

40 M. Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation, and Authorship, 1660–1769*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992, p. 41.

41 G. R. Guffey, *After the Tempest*, Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1969, p. viii.

Shakespeare has Alonso and his companions traveling for the wedding of Alonso's daughter, and while that marriage is described as bittersweet at best, it is far from the two usurpers' attempts to make 'amends to Heav'n' through crusading in *The Enchanted Island*.[42] Alonzo's own guilt frames him as the subject of divine, and by extension kingly, justice: 'No act but penitence can expiate guilt, / Must we teach Heaven what price to set on Murthers? / What rate on lawless power, and wild ambition? / Or dare we traffic with the Powers above, / And sell by weight a good deed for a bad?'[43] Only a higher power – god or sovereign – has the power to offer true redemption, regardless of what good deeds have been performed.

Prospero offers this redemption in language that is highly reminiscent of the Act of Indemnity and Oblivion: 'All past crimes I bury in the joy of this / Blessed day.'[44] By the end of the final act, Prospero has transformed from the jealous and vengeful father into a gentle and forgiving ruler. While Shakespeare's Prospero is an effective, omnipotent king of his own (very small) kingdom, the Dryden-Davenant adaptation recreates him as a tyrant who makes deeply flawed attempts at both policing his daughters' sexuality – thus ensuring their dynastic marriages – and negotiating the restoration of his dukedom. While many scholars have noted the changes in Prospero's character, most have written these changes off as 'one more element in a good show,'[45] and such reductive assessments overlook the political resonance of such a figure, particularly in 1667. The play is ultimately ambivalent about Prospero's use of his power, and this ambivalence reflects growing concerns over Charles II's reign.

While Dryden remained a staunch royalist, the national anxiety over proper governance made its way into much of his work in this period. As Laura Brown has argued,

> the arbitrariness of Dryden's restoration of civic order reproduces in dramatic form the instability that began to be felt . . . with the impeachment of Clarendon, the decline of Cavalier control in the Commons, the weakening of the House of Lords and the increasing power of merchant and agrarian capitalist interests in the nation.[46]

In this passage, Brown is speaking specifically about *The Conquest of Granada*, but its sentiment is equally applicable to *The Enchanted Island*'s failures of

42 Dryden and Davenant, *The Enchanted Island*, p. 14.
43 Dryden and Davenant, *The Enchanted Island*, p. 15.
44 Dryden and Davenant, *The Enchanted Island*, p. 79.
45 A. Gerwitz, *Restoration Adaptations of Early 17th-Century Comedies*, Washington, DC, University Press of America, 1982, p. 20.
46 L. Brown, *English Dramatic Form, 1660–1760: An Essay in Generic History*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1981, p. 18.

civic and patriarchal order and their sudden and supernatural happy resolution.

Whereas the pre-Interregnum plays and adaptations that had been performed in the first years of the Restoration focused on themes of balance, mercy, and forgiveness, *The Enchanted Island* marks a sharp departure from earlier uses of older drama. Here, Shakespeare's text is altered to criticise, albeit gently, the crown and court. As Nancy Klein Maguire has argued, the political parallels are multifaceted, reflecting at different points the struggles of Charles I, Charles II, and the Earl of Clarendon, as well as the perils of the Commonwealth period.[47] In all cases, the play is concerned with how to respond to failures of one's own power. Ultimately, Prospero recognises his failures as such. Though he is owed a certain level of authority through his position as usurped and exiled duke, he is unsuited to wield the power that he possesses. Whereas Shakespeare's Prospero famously drowns his book of magic and returns to Milan to take up the dukedom once more, his Dryden-Davenant counterpart seemingly remains on the island, asking only that 'On my retreat let Heaven and Nature smile.'[48] Like Clarendon, he chooses his own exile, and Dryden and Davenant's royalist sympathies depict this as a noble alternative to attempting to wield power poorly.

However, the play also makes it clear that England's recent experimentations with Commonwealth rule are not a viable solution to less-than-ideal monarchs. As George R. Guffy has noted, Dryden and Davenant reassign any discussion of a commonwealth from the nobleman Gonzalo, who sees the commonwealth as a potential utopia, to the lower class drunken sailors.[49] While this reassignment neatly dodges any hint of rebellious thoughts from serious sources, it also expands the play's discussion of commonwealth ideology – and the problems inherent therein – by transforming the topic of a speech of less than fifty lines into a running theme across multiple scenes. The sailors' government on the island is contested from within nearly from the moment of its creation, with every sailor insisting upon a title and the attempt at 'liv[ing] well and orderly'[50] (though if only in hopes of gaining wealth from shipwrecks) almost immediately dissolves into rival dukedoms before Trincalo declares himself the lawful inheritor of the island through his 'marriage' to one of its original inhabitants, Sycorax. The ever-changing attempts to create and assert authority over the island and its inhabitants,

47 Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration*, p. 135.
48 Dryden and Davenant, *The Enchanted Island*, p. 82.
49 G. R. Guffey, 'Politics, Weather, and the Contemporary Reception of the Dryden-Davenant *Tempest*', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700*, vol. 8, no. 1, 1984, pp. 2–3.
50 Dryden and Davenant, *The Enchanted Island*, p. 19.

both foreign and native, provide a compressed parallel to the various power struggles and re-envisionings of government throughout the Interregnum.

In *The Enchanted Island*, Davenant and Dryden comment on the failures of the Commonwealth in ways that echo the pro-royalist stance of the first half-decade of Restoration drama, yet their portrayal of Prospero as a failed absolutist patriarch king also highlights potential pitfalls in monarchical rule. However, because they are careful to revise Shakespeare's play in such a way as to avoid drawing direct parallels between Prospero and either Charles I, Charles II, or Clarendon, they created a play that spoke to contemporary concerns without inviting censure. Similarly, the play's general concern with the methods of governance – whether over the family or over the nation – were perennial topics of interest throughout the political upheavals of the late 17th and early 18th centuries, and, alongside the play's focus on spectacle and sexual comedy, made *The Enchanted Island* one of the most successful plays of its era.

While the purposes and outcomes of *The Great Favourite* and *The Enchanted Island* could hardly have been more different, each was the product of a similar trend in Restoration drama. Ultimately, the crises of the mid-1660s, culminating in Clarendon's impeachment and exile, marked a turning point in both Restoration politics and theatre practices. Courtier dramatists increasingly turned to adaptation as a means of critique, attack, and propaganda for a multiplicity of court disputes and factions. The increasing politicisation of theatre during this period would pave the way for theatre to serve as a central locus for political debate and polarisation during the later years of Charles II's reign, particularly during the Popish Plot and the Exclusion Crisis.

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EDMUND WALLER'S RESTORATION VERSION OF *THE MAID'S TRAGEDY*

ANDREW R. WALKLING

The Maid's Tragedy, by Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, is one of the most celebrated plays to have emerged from the Jacobean era. Premiered sometime between 1608 and 1611 and first published in 1619, it remained a popular offering throughout much of the 17th century. From the 1620s through the early 1660s, it appeared in new print editions at least once every decade, and it was included as the opening play of the 'Second Beaumont and Fletcher Folio' of 1679.[1] Moreover, there is evidence that, as the property of Thomas Killigrew's King's Company, it held the boards consistently throughout the early years of the Restoration, if not beyond: Samuel Pepys records having seen some or all of it on five occasions between 1661 and 1668,[2] and Charles II himself evidently attended a performance in November 1667.[3] We know less about the play's fate in the 1670s and early 1680s, when performance records are more sparse, but critics such as Edward Howard continued to commend it.[4] Even Thomas Rymer, who savagely critiqued it in his 'Letter to Fleetwood Shepheard' of 1677–1678, acknowledged its place among six of 'the choicest and most applauded *English Tragedies* of this last age,' a list that also included William Shakespeare's *Othello* and *Julius Caesar*.[5] In January 1687, the play was revived with a newly composed theatre suite by the former Master of the

1 F. Beaumont and J. Fletcher, *Fifty Comedies and Tragedies*, London, printed by J. Martyn, H. Herringman and R. Marriot, 1679, pp. 1–20.

2 S. Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. R. Latham and W. Matthews, 11 vols, London, Bell & Hyman/Berkeley, University of California Press, 1970–1983, vol. 2, p. 100; vol. 7, p. 399; vol. 8, pp. 71–72; vol. 9, pp. 164 and 193.

3 The National Archives, London, LC5/139, p. 130: '[Nov:] 23 The Maydes Tragedie at y^{e} Theatre – 010 : 00 : 00'; see also LC5/12, p. 17.

4 E. H[oward], *The Womens Conquest: A Tragi-Comedy*, London, printed for H. Herringman, 1671, sig. A3^{v}. See also the anonymous 'ESSAY ON *Dramatick Poetry*' in *Amaryllis to Tityrus. Being the First Heroick Harangue of the Excellent Pen of Monsieur Scudery. A Witty and Pleasant Novel. Englished by a Person of Honour*, London, printed for W. Cademan, 1681, pp. 65–69 at p. 67.

5 T. Rymer, *The Tragedies of The last Age Consider'd and Examin'd by the Practice of the Ancients, and by the Common sense of all Ages. In a Letter to Fleetwood Shepheard, Esq;*, London, printed for R. Tonson, 1678, p. 1. Rymer's attack on *The Maid's Tragedy* is on pp. 104–141. We might also note Robert Gould's satire 'The Play-House,' written in 1685, where *The Maid's Tragedy* is numbered among a select few that 'stand in the first rank that claim Eternity,' despite being 'damn'd by a pert, modern *Wit*,' i.e. Rymer. See R. Gould, *Poems Chiefly consisting of Satyrs and Satyrical Epistles*, London, 'sold by most Booksellers in *London* and *Westminster*', 1689, pp. [155]–185 at p. 178.

King's Musick, Louis Grabu,[6] and James II and his Queen attended a performance the following April.[7]

The seemingly enduring popularity of *The Maid's Tragedy* during the Restoration is surprising, since much of the plot revolves around a tyrannical king who manipulates an innocent, young courtier to serve his own lustful ends, and who is gruesomely murdered as a result.[8] The never-named King, who has taken the beautiful Evadne as his mistress, contrives to marry her off to Amintor, despite Amintor's engagement to Aspatia, who from the very beginning of the play is broken-hearted at having been abandoned by her beloved. Amintor, however, discovers on his wedding night that Evadne is otherwise pledged, and that his marriage to her is a sham designed to conceal the monarch's dalliances with her and to legitimise any children she might bear by her royal lover. The audience learns of the ruse in real time with the astonished Amintor in a powerful and touching scene in Act Two, Scene One, where Evadne haughtily rejects her new husband's innocent blandishments, threatening him with the King's retribution should he refuse to play along. Ultimately, the truth is revealed by Amintor to Evadne's brother Melantius, a gruff but upright soldier who has served the King nobly in the wars, and who treasures Amintor as his dearest friend. Incensed by the stain put upon his family's honour and the fraud perpetrated on Amintor, Melantius determines, in connivance with his brother Diphilus, to murder the King, proclaiming, 'from his Iron Den I'le waken death, / And hurle him on this King.'[9] The success of Melantius's scheme depends upon him gaining access to the fort, which is in the keeping of the cantankerous old man Calianax, father to Aspatia. Melantius seeks to recruit Calianax by pointing out that the disconsolate Aspatia's grief is also a direct consequence of the King's wicked actions. But his effort appears to backfire when the old man, who envies and

6 See A. R. Walkling, 'The Ups and Downs of Louis Grabu', *Royal Musical Association Research Chronicle*, vol. 48, 2017, pp. 1–64 at p. 45 and n. 264.

7 The National Archives, London, LC5/147, p. 361: 'Aprill 6: The King & Queene & a Box for y^{e} Maides of Hono^{r} at y^{e} Maides Tragedy – – – – 15 : 00 : 00.'

8 The most comprehensive published study of the post-1660 reception of *The Maid's Tragedy* can be found in A. C. Sprague, *Beaumont and Fletcher on the Restoration Stage*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1926. The discussion of *The Maid's Tragedy* occupies pp. 58–63 (performance history and controversies) and pp. 178–186 (interpretation). More difficult to access, but well worth examining for the thoroughness of its coverage, is F. W. Terhune, *A Critical Edition, with Introduction, of Edmund Waller's Alteration of Beaumont and Fletcher's The Maid's Tragedy*, Ph.D. diss., Gainesville, University of Florida, 1976.

9 F. Beaumont and J. Fletcher, *The Maids Tragedy As it hath been Acted at the Theatre Royal, by their Majesties Servants*, London, printed for R. Bentley and S. Magnes, 1686, p. 31. Given the subject of the present study, quotations from the first four acts of the play will be drawn from this edition, which was likely published in association with the 1687 revival. The edition includes the original fifth act by Beaumont and Fletcher (as well as their original masque in Act One, regarding which see below); no edition of the full play was ever published with any element of Waller's ending sutured in.

fears Melantius, immediately goes to inform the King of the conspiracy. This leads to the famous banquet scene (Act Four, Scene Two) in which Melantius brilliantly outfaces Calianax, adamantly denying knowledge of any plot and convincing the King that his aged servant is delusional, all the while whispering to an increasingly agitated Calianax that the latter's double-dealing has only placed him in an even more untenable position. Overcome by his bewildering turn of fortune and the loss of the King's confidence, Calianax sullenly agrees to yield up the fort. In the meantime, Melantius has furiously confronted Evadne about her duplicity. Her resistance broken, she agrees to join the plot and assassinate her lover, the King. In Act Five, she carries out her brother's directive, tying the King to his bed as he sleeps, confronting him with his crimes after he awakes, and then fatally stabbing him. Melantius, now in control of the fort, dictates the terms of his pardon from the King's brother and successor Lysippus. In the final scene, Aspatia appears disguised to Amintor, challenges him to a duel, and then allows herself to be killed by him. When he discovers what he has done, he kills himself as well, but only after rejecting the appeal of a repentant Evadne who, having received no forgiveness from him, also kills herself.

This last sequence of events, seemingly, constitutes the eponymous 'maid's tragedy,' but it is the political story, featuring Melantius, the King, Evadne, and Calianax, plus Melantius's and Evadne's brother Diphilus and the King's brother Lysippus, that dominates the play. Amintor's role supplements this storyline, not only because it is his misfortune that engenders Melantius's wrath against the King, but also because Amintor serves as a foil to Melantius when he expresses horror at the very idea of regicide. As he succinctly puts it in one instance, 'I dare not do a sin',[10] and he has already informed the King, shortly after discovering his betrayal, that 'there is / Divinity about you, that strikes dead / My rising passions.'[11] Melantius, having initially opened his thoughts to his friend, must therefore dissemble in order to hinder Amintor from actively opposing the scheme. Indeed, what we might regard as the main storyline – that is, the political one – relies heavily on the theme of dissimulation. The King and Evadne conceal their relationship from Amintor, and the audience discovers the subterfuge at the same moment he does; the devastated Amintor then dissembles to his friends and even, briefly, to the King, pretending (at Evadne's command) that all is well in his new marriage. Evadne also seeks to dissemble about her condition in the confrontation with her brother Melantius, although his threats of violence ultimately bring out the truth. The blunt, unlettered soldier Melantius must himself learn and practice dissimulation, which he does masterfully in the

10 Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maids Tragedy*, p. 32.
11 Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maids Tragedy*, p. 26.

scene where he browbeats Calianax and convinces the King that he harbours no ill intentions. He also has to dissemble with Amintor, not once, but twice, under converse circumstances – both times in order to prevent his plot going amiss. The dissimulation continues in Act Five when Evadne gains access to the King's bedchamber in order to carry out the murder, and when Calianax, ensconced with the rebels in the fort, still hopes to betray Melantius right up until the very moment when the new king Lysippus magnanimously offers a general pardon to all. And, of course, Aspatia successfully deceives Amintor into thinking that she is her own wronged brother, whose challenge to a mortal duel Amintor readily accepts once he has been sufficiently provoked.

The foregoing observation about dissimulation is important not so much for an understanding of *The Maid's Tragedy* itself, since such behaviour is common enough in tragedies of the English Renaissance. Rather, it casts into sharp relief the alternative ending concocted by the poet Edmund Waller (1606–1687) sometime during the Restoration and first published in 1690, three years after his death. Scholars are divided on precisely when, or even why, Waller penned his new fifth act for Beaumont and Fletcher's play. The question hinges on a tradition prevalent in the late 17th and early 18th centuries that, as Gerard Langbaine first articulated it in 1691, 'King *Charles* the Second, for some particular Reasons forb[ade] its further Appearance during his Reign' and it could be revived only after Waller had 'wholly alter'd' the play's ending 'to please the Court.'[12] Langbaine's 'particular Reasons' seem self-evident: the murder of a lustful king would have been doubly sensitive to the Restoration regime, coming not only in the wake of the mid-century crisis of revolution and regicide but also at a time when the well-documented royal lechery indulged in by Charles II was a touchy political subject. Yet, despite the frequent repetition of this anecdotal assertion in the ensuing years, there remains some doubt as to its veracity. As we have already noted, the play was frequently lauded by commentators during Charles's reign, with no mention being made of any contemporary administrative actions taken against it.[13] Moreover, in the 1720s, Elijah Fenton reported a contrary assertion that the playwright Thomas Southerne, who first arrived in London from Ireland in 1680, 'in the latter end of [Charles II's] reign [had] seen it acted at the Theatre Royal, as it was originally written by *Fletcher*; but, never with Mr. *Waller*'s alterations.'[14]

Given the wide range of unanswered questions concerning Waller's intervention in refashioning *The Maid's Tragedy* during the Restoration, it is

12 G. Langbaine, *An Account of the English Dramatick Poets*, Oxford, printed by L. L. for G. West and H. Clements, 1691, p. 212.

13 For an overview, see Terhune, *A Critical Edition*, pp. 10–12.

14 E. Fenton (ed.), *The Works of Edmund Waller Esq.r in Verse and Prose*, London, printed for [J.] Tonson, 1729, p. lxxxviii (sig. Zzz4v).

important to indicate here what issues the present article cannot aspire to adjudicate. These include whether the ban purportedly imposed on the play by Charles II (or by one of his agents, such as the Lord Chamberlain) really occurred, as Langbaine and others after him asserted; why Waller chose to undertake his rewriting of the fifth act (and this comprehends such matters as his choice to reorient the play as a tragicomedy, as well as his adoption of rhymed verse); approximately when Waller wrote the revision (in the 1660s, when rhyme was in fashion on the stage; or in the late 1670s, perhaps after Rymer's critical takedown of the original play;[15] or in the early 1680s, when political sensitivities related to dramatic performances had significantly escalated?); and whether the play was ever actually performed in some version of its altered state. Views on these issues have varied considerably among scholars from the 18th century to modern times,[16] with the most consequential modern discussion being an article published in 1982 by that redoubtable scholar of Restoration drama and theatre history, the late Robert Hume.[17] Hume briefly surveyed the main evidence and propounded his own guess that 'Waller's adaptation probably remained unperformed,' but that 'if it did achieve performance, I think it likelier to have done so circa 1664 than in the 1680s.'[18] He was careful to present his views as speculation, and indeed there are arguments that could be advanced against some of his conclusions, among them the absence of any mention by Samuel Pepys of alterations at any time during the 1660s;[19] the fact that Waller went to the trouble to write a new prologue and epilogue for the play, something that was not normally done until a production was in the works; and perhaps even the existence of an additional Restoration-era text, replacing Beaumont and Fletcher's interpolated wedding masque in the play's first act, which will be discussed briefly at the end of this chapter. Ultimately, however, the extant data are simply insufficient to generate any definitive resolution to the conflicting contemporary accounts or the hypotheses of modern scholars. The present investigation, therefore, has a more modest objective: to explore the features and elements

15 This suggestion is raised by Sprague in *Beaumont and Fletcher on the Restoration Stage*, pp. 62–63, n. 5.

16 The arguments are admirably treated in Terhune, *A Critical Edition*, pp. 4–20.

17 R. D. Hume, '*The Maid's Tragedy* and Censorship in the Restoration Theatre', *Philological Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 4, 1982, pp. 484–490. Two more recent investigations of Waller's revisions should also be cited here: S. Clark, 'Sex and Tyranny Revisited: Waller's *The Maid's Tragedy* and Rochester's *Valentinian*' and W. Chernaik, 'Sex, Tyranny, and the Problem of Allegiance: Political Drama During the Restoration', both in C. Gill (ed.), *Theatre and Culture in Early Modern England, 1650–1737: From Leviathan to Licensing Act*, Aldershot, Ashgate, 2010; Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2016, pp. 75–86 and 87–105.

18 Hume, '*The Maid's Tragedy* and Censorship', p. 488.

19 Pepys is last known to have attended a performance on May 9, 1668, and had also seen it less than a month prior; in 1661, he had explicitly remarked on the play's 'sad and melancholy' character (Pepys, *The Diary*, vol. 2, p. 100).

of Waller's revisions, to offer some thoughts on what they might tell us about Waller's process, and, on the basis of these considerations, to put forward a few of my own, purely speculative, suggestions about the genesis, purpose, and implications of the revised work.

However obscure its circumstances may be, Waller's newly-composed fifth act of *The Maid's Tragedy* is an intriguing text, and rewards close study. In fact, two different versions survive, both of which first appeared in print in 1690, not long after the poet's death. The first was published by Thomas Bennet in *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems*;[20] this appears to have been an unauthorised edition, and later that year the publisher Jacob Tonson offered a second version in *The Maid's Tragedy Altered*.[21] In a statement at the beginning of his volume, Tonson noted that Waller had not intended its contents to be published,

> but that a Person, who had borrowed a Manuscript Copy of them, took upon him to print them. The Copy from which they were printed, was very Imperfect; and there being noe means left to suppress them, it was thought fit to suffer them to be more correctly printed from the last and truest Copies.[22]

It is not clear how Tonson came to possess a more faithful rendition of Waller's unreleased material, nor why he felt the pressing need for a rejoinder to Bennet's volume.[23] However, it is interesting to note that, under the umbrella of Henry Herringman, who had issued the 'fifth edition' of Waller's main corpus of poetry in 1686, both Bennet and Tonson sold distinct issues of the 'sixth edition' in 1693 and 1694, respectively, to which was appended Bennet's 1690 volume containing the 'Imperfect' version of Waller's *Maid's Tragedy* text – and, moreover, that, in 1705, both men acted

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20 E. Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems. Containing, His Alteration of the Maids Tragedy, And whatever of his is yet unprinted*, London, printed for T. Bennet, 1690, pp. 1–40. The publication was licensed on September 26, 1689, and advertised in the *Term Catalogue* for Michaelmas 1689 (issued in November); it appears to have been intended to complement Waller's *Poems, &c. Written upon several Occasions, And to several Persons . . . The Fifth Edition, with several Additions Never before Printed*, published by Henry Herringman in 1686, while the author was still alive.

21 E. Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered. With some other Pieces*, London, printed for J. Tonson, 1690, pp. 3–44. This volume was registered with the Stationers' Company on November 24, 1689, and advertised – alongside Tonson's publication of the Earl of Rochester's adaptation of Fletcher's *Valentinian* – in *The London Gazette*, no. 2637 (February 16–19, 169[1]).

22 Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], sig. [A]2^{r} (italics reversed).

23 Interestingly, each volume presents, following the conclusion of the main text, a small scrap of the version printed in the other: Bennet's *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* includes 'Some Verses that seem to be part of the foregoing Play' drawn from the Tonson version of the final scene with Aspatia and Amintor (pp. 42–43), while Tonson's *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* supplies a portion of the Bennet version of Waller's opening passage featuring Evadne, along with a note explaining that this originated as part of the earlier recension (pp. 44–46).

together as sellers for a 'seventh edition' of the collection, which included (for the first time since 1690) the supposedly improved version that Tonson had originally printed.[24] There are numerous textual differences, both large and small, between what I will henceforth call the 'Bennet' and 'Tonson' versions, and these have been thoroughly catalogued and examined in Frances Woy Terhune's 1976 Ph.D. dissertation,[25] but the principal aim of Waller's revision remains the same: to remake the play into a tragicomedy that reinforces the strong message of royalism undergirding Charles II's regime.

Waller's Act Five picks up at a crucial juncture in the story: in the preceding act, Melantius has convinced Evadne to kill the King, has neutralised both Calianax's opposition and Amintor's sudden urge to proceed rashly, and has gone to seize the fort and foment a popular uprising. Whereas Beaumont and Fletcher's original proceeds to escalate the tragic momentum with Evadne's arrival at the King's bedchamber at the beginning of the new act, Waller effects a precipitous retreat from the tragic plot, a change signalled by his replacement of Beaumont and Fletcher's loose blank-verse iambics with the crisp heroic couplets characteristic of early Restoration serious drama. Here, Evadne has suddenly repented of her murderous intention and instead takes steps to withdraw herself from the play's action entirely. Musing that 'A*Mintor* lost, it were as vain a thing, / As 'tis prodigious, to destroy the King' and reasoning that 'Compell'd by Threats, to take that bloody Oath, / And the Act ill, I am absolv'd by both,'[26] she despatches a messenger with letters of explanation to Melantius and the King and disappears – into a nunnery

24 E. Waller, *Poems, &c. Written upon several Occasions, And to several Persons . . . The Seventh Edition with several Additions, Never before Printed*, London, 'for the Assignes of *H. H*[*erringman*] and Sold by *J. Tonson* . . . and *T. Bennet*', 1705, pp. 303–344 (with the supplemental passage, as in Tonson's original publication, on pp. 344–346). Note that the pagination of this double volume has been manipulated so that Tonson's 1690 pages 3–46 are equivalent to this edition's 303–346: there are in fact fifteen unnumbered pages between p. 299 (sig. V6^{r}) at the end of the first part and p. 303 (sig. X1^{r}) at the beginning of the second. Even were we to discount the insertion of a single title leaf (signed '(u)') for Part 2 and a separate four-leaf sig. '(u)' for its Preface, thus leaving us with only the concluding five-page table of contents for Part 1 that occupies sigs V6^{v}–V8^{v}, the numbering system does not come out logically. (It can be observed that once the new sequence has begun, the only differences in exact page breaks in the text between the 1690 and 1705 editions are in the Prologue, pp. [30]3–[30]5, and one stage direction that has migrated from the bottom of p. 33 in 1690 to the top of p. 334 in 1705.)

25 See n. 8, above. Terhune's edition (based on the Tonson version) and appendices cover pp. 82–122 and 139–156, and there is a detailed discussion on pp. 20–37. Oddly, Terhune seems to have been unaware of Tonson's 1690 publication, and hence refers to what I am calling the Tonson version of Waller's *Maid's Tragedy* conclusion as the '1705 edition.'

26 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 4. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 6. In quoting from Waller's fifth act, I cite page numbers in a dual format, referencing both the Bennet and the Tonson editions, as published in 1690. In order to maintain some continuity with Terhune's practice in her critical edition (which, however, applies modern spelling and typographical conventions) all of my transcriptions are from Tonson's publication.

in the Bennet version, and in the Tonson version onto her yacht, bound for parts unknown. Upon receiving her letter, the furious Melantius seeks out the King's brother Lysippus (for some reason rechristened 'Lucippus' by Waller), intending to trap him into supporting the assassination plot. The King, meanwhile, has begun to feel the prick of conscience for his tyrannical behaviour, and when he is given his letter from Evadne, which reveals the plot against him, he hides himself to eavesdrop on Melantius and Lysippus as they reappear. Lysippus, whom Melantius has previously described as 'full of Honour,'[27] has committed the classic mistake of swearing an oath not to reveal what Melantius will say to him, before learning that it regards his own brother's projected murder. Caught in the web of his own virtue – a dilemma largely unfamiliar to the denizens of the preceding four acts – he first tries to reason with Melantius in a lengthy exchange touching on just conduct, propriety, gratitude, and deference to authority. When that fails and Melantius reminds him of his vow of secrecy, Lysippus changes tack and challenges him to a duel. The two agree to meet presently 'behind the Castle-wall,'[28] and for the moment they go their separate ways.

Having overheard the entire exchange, the King is informed by one of his courtiers that Melantius now controls the fort, and that all seems to be lost. Yet, despite this grim prospect, he is buoyed by the honourable conduct of his brother and undergoes a significant change of heart. Realising that his enslavement to passion has undermined his ability to rule, and that 'there's nothing but our private Valour left,'[29] the King resolves to intervene directly in the impending duel and, in a chivalrous gesture, summons Melantius's brother Diphilus to serve as a second on the opposing side. They arrive just as Lysippus and Melantius are about to commence fighting, and, following a number of high-minded speeches, as well as asides in which Lysippus implores his royal brother to stand down for his own protection, the duel begins in earnest. Melantius and Diphilus have also conferred together, however, and Waller shows the onetime conspirators experiencing their own moral transformation. As Melantius expresses it,

> Tho foul Injustice Majesty did stain,
> This noble carriage makes it bright again.

27 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 8. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 9.

28 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 16. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 18.

29 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 18. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 20.

When Kings with Courage act, some[t]hing divine
That calls for Reverence, does about them shine.[30]

Overawed by their king's reburnished majesty, and astounded by his magnanimity, the rebellious brothers abandon their aggressive posture, using their swords only to guard and not to attack. When Lysippus challenges them to 'fight us, as Enemies, or ask for Grace,' Melantius and Diphilus instantly yield. Declaring that 'the Royal Sword thus drawn, has cur'd a wound / For which no other Salve could have been found,'[31] they kneel and beg forgiveness – which the King readily grants. The erstwhile 'tragedy' is resolved, and it remains only for Melantius to pledge his assistance in assuaging the brewing popular revolt.

As we can imagine, Waller's injection of a quasi-philosophical argument between Melantius and Lysippus about the prerogatives of the monarch offers an entirely new element to the story. But even more important from the perspective of a Restoration audience is his elevation of the King's brother from a hitherto largely inconsequential personage – in describing a performance of the original Beaumont and Fletcher play in the 1690s, the 18th-century encyclopaedist William Rufus Chetwood calls him 'a very insignificant Character, requiring little more than an amiable Figure'[32] – to a pivotal player in the narrative. As he emerges from his hiding place after overhearing Lysippus's and Melantius's conversation, the King immediately exclaims,

O! what an happiness it is to find
A friend of our own blood, a Brother kind!
A Prince so good, so just, so void of fear,
Is of more value than the Crown I wear.[33]

Such rhetoric would have had substantial purchase in the Restoration, particularly in the 1670s and early 1680s, when Charles II laboured to fend off popular and Parliamentary attacks on his brother and heir presumptive James, Duke of York. Notwithstanding Charles's personal distaste for James's rigid dogmatism and arrogant demeanour, the public and propagandistic statements issuing from his court during this period invariably

30 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], pp. 22–23. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 25.

31 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 24. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 26.

32 W. R. Chetwood, *A General History of the Stage, from its Origin in Greece Down to the Present Time*, London, printed for W. Owen, 1749, p. 232.

33 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], pp. 16–17. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 18.

emphasised the posture of James as obediently subservient and intensely loyal, and at the same time as an indispensable prop to the monarchy – his royal brother's right-hand man.[34] Indeed, the Preface to Bennet's *Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* (attributed to the Rev. Francis Atterbury, who is thought to be the 'Person, who had borrowed a Manuscript Copy' of Waller's works, deplored by Tonson) pointedly remarks that 'the Play was alter'd, to please the Court: 'Tis not to be doubted who sat for the two Brothers Characters.'[35]

Waller's short-circuiting of the revenge plot so painstakingly constructed by Beaumont and Fletcher not only recalibrates *The Maid's Tragedy* into a tale of redemption but also advances a forceful exposition of sacred, divinely ordained monarchy. By emphasising the awesome power inherent in kingship, he contrives to wipe away at a stroke the stain of the King's depravity and corruption. In redirecting the tragic ending of the original *Maid's Tragedy* to a tragicomic resolution, Waller reinforces for his contemporaries an understanding of the restoration of Charles II as its own happy ending after a dark time of national tribulation.[36] But Waller is also more specific in signalling the particular circumstances of a pair of royal brothers, motivated by a mutual respect and care that supersedes everything that character flaws, poor choices, and murderous plots can bring against it. As Waller's King observes in his final speech: 'Of all we offer to the Pow'rs above, / The sweetest Incense is fraternal Love.'[37] This is a message that seems to emerge from nowhere if the first four acts are taken into consideration, but one that nonetheless comes to govern the rescripted play and determine its centre of gravity.

The overt acknowledgement of fraternal loyalty is not the only way in which Waller's fifth-act King starts to resemble Charles II. Crucial to the resolution of the story is Evadne's departure from Rhodes, the island where the play is set, bearing away in her yacht a trove of 'wealth . . . from this exhausted Court,' the spoils of her royal affair. She is no penitent but is instead determined to exercise her charms 'upon the Continent,' where 'Asiatick Kings shall see my Beauties Prize, / My shining Jewels, and my brighter Eyes.'[38] As has been noted, this is from the Tonson version; in the Bennet version, which represents Waller's earlier draft, Evadne does experience contrition and opts

34 A good example can be found in the anonymous text of the 'Welcome Song for his Royal Highness at his return from Scotland in the year 1682,' performed for James and Charles on April 8 of that year. For a transcription of the text, see B. Wood (ed.), *The Works of Henry Purcell*, vol. 15: *Royal Welcome Songs, Part I*, London, Novello, 2000, pp. xxviii–xxix.

35 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], sigs a1^{v}–a2^{r}.

36 For a study of this phenomenon in England during the first decade of Charles II's reign, see N. K. Maguire, *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy, 1660–1671*, Cambridge University Press, 1992. Maguire briefly discusses Waller's revisions to *The Maid's Tragedy* on pp. 66–67.

37 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 38. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 42.

38 Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 8.

to take the veil, entering a monastery dedicated to the virgin goddess Vesta. Speaking to the Abbess as she solicits admission, she allows that 'of all passions, I Ambition find / Hardest to banish from a glorious mind,' but that in the end devotion to God (here, Jove) should be counted 'a step above / A Princes favour.'[39] Both of Evadne's possible fates conveniently eliminate her agency from the otherwise exclusively male world of power and honour, thereby hastening the reconciliation of Melantius and his brother with the King and his brother, Lysippus.[40] But they also both carry a more particular resonance, one that may be intended to address an aspect of the original *Maid's Tragedy* that must have been considered especially sensitive during the Restoration. In an age when established literary and dramatic texts could be – and frequently were – applied to contemporary events, the fictional King's use of his exalted rank to satisfy his inordinate lust would have invited comparisons to Charles II's well-known penchant for taking royal mistresses. One element of Charles's sexual history may have especially stood out: Beaumont and Fletcher's King and his foisting of the beautiful and ambitious Evadne on the hapless Amintor would have felt uncomfortably close to Charles's treatment of his 27-year-old courtier Roger Palmer, whom he made Earl of Castlemaine in 1661 after having taken Palmer's young wife Barbara as his mistress more than a year before. Like Evadne, the Countess of Castlemaine was a celebrated beauty, and placed her ambitions uppermost: largely as a consequence of her own efforts in that regard, she remained a great celebrity in England throughout the first decade of her royal lover's reign.

It is difficult to imagine that even an oblique identification of Lady Castlemaine with Evadne, who repents of her whoredom and murders her royal lover in the original play, would not have been considered embarrassing to Charles II in the 1660s. However, I suggest that any contemporary parallels implicitly drawn between the two women may have actually become more problematic for Charles II during the 1670s, when the Countess (elevated in her own right, without consideration of her husband, to Duchess of Cleveland in August 1670) began to fall from favour. Sonya Wynne explains that, as the new decade progressed,

> Cleveland's credit was slowly fading: by 1673 she had resigned her place in the queen's bedchamber, in 1674 she was fined for recusancy, in 1675 the duchess of Portsmouth's

39 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 6. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. [46].

40 In both cases, we might observe, Melantius is initially enraged by her escape, whether to the Vestals, where 'she'll corrupt them all, / And teach them from their Sacred Vow to fall' (Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 7 / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. [46]) or abroad, as 'The Sea's not vast enough to quench her Lust' (Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 8).

> son was created a duke before her own sons, and then, finding herself in some financial difficulties, she decided to go to France for two years in order to economize. She left in March 1676, and did not return permanently until 1682.[41]

The gradual souring of Barbara Villiers's once-preeminent status in Restoration court society may have intensified a desire to reimagine a popular play that already cut somewhat close to the bone for Charles II, and the Countess/Duchess's shifting fortunes, especially during the 1670s as her star dimmed, may help to explain Waller's successive revisions. As Tonson informs us, 'in his first Thoughts of Altering this Play,' Waller

> pitcht upon a design of making *Evadne* go among the Vestals. But considering, that the Persons in this Play are suppos'd to be Heathens, who never admitted any but pure Virgins among their Vestals; he changed his design.[42]

The earlier recension, found in the Bennet version, points perhaps towards Barbara's position as a convert to Roman Catholicism (from 1663) and her role as a patron of at least one convent in France.[43] But the 'changed . . . design' reflected in the Tonson version seems to cement the association even more strongly; although by the mid-1670s she retained none of the fabulous wealth she had amassed during the preceding decade, Charles II's one-time mistress nonetheless looks a lot like Waller's refashioned Evadne as she embarks from Rhodes for new adventures, and perhaps new amorous conquests, abroad.

Given the degree of specificity in Waller's treatment, we might conclude that, in fact, the theme of regicide in *The Maid's Tragedy* was actually far less of a concern than the possible reading of Charles II's lascivious conduct and its potential implications. After all, as Terhune points out, regicide was common among Jacobean tragedies, many of which continued to be performed on the Restoration stage without raising hackles.[44] Waller's task, then, would seem to be not so much to remove the gruesome scene of the King's murder but rather to extract the problematic Evadne – the sole character, we should note, whose personal attributes become worse rather than better in

41 S. M. Wynne, 'Palmer [*née* Villiers], Barbara, countess of Castlemaine and *suo jure* duchess of Cleveland', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004, https://doi.org/10.1093/ref:odnb/28285 (accessed 21 July 2025).

42 Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 44.

43 As Wynne reports, Barbara donated £1000 in the latter 1670s for new buildings at the English convent of the Order of the Conception in Paris, where her daughters were students. In addition, Horace Walpole relates an anecdote about Barbara donating 'an Altar-Piece to a Convent of Nuns in *France*,' which in fact depicted herself and her eldest bastard son posing as a Madonna and Child. See H. Walpole, *Ædes Walpolianæ: Or, a Description of the Collection of Pictures at Houghton-Hall in Norfolk*, London, [?printed by John Hughs], 1747, p. xvi.

44 Terhune, *A Critical Edition*, p. 13.

Waller's retelling – from the latter portion of the play's narrative. The emphasis on Evadne's faithlessness towards everyone she encounters helps to shift blame away from the King and to render his sexual transgressions less consequential. As Lysippus remarks to Melantius (while pointing out that Melantius, too, has taken a mistress), 'Love is the frailty of Heroic minds; / And where great Vertues are, our pardon finds.'[45] This function of the newly reenvisioned *Maid's Tragedy* is underscored in Waller's epilogue, which incorporates an *apologia* for the King, and, by extension, Charles II. In its new guise, Waller assures his audience, the play rejects the 'rude' practices of the past,

> When Love was held so capital a Crime,
> That a Crown'd Head could no compassion find;
> But dy'd, because the Killer had been kind.[46]

In a more refined age, the epilogue implies, the indulgent caresses of a loving monarch are no great offence and can be set aside in favour of more salient considerations such as royal honour and majesty.

From the perspective of the Restoration regime, therefore, the salutary effect of Waller's revisions to this popular work would be threefold: the potential neutralisation of contemporary censure of Charles II's conduct towards his mistresses (paradoxically, by enhancing the parallels between the fictional and real exemplars); the resuscitation of royal honour that enables a reconciliation between contending factions in the civic sphere; and – as an added benefit – the elevation of Lysippus, through his bravery, loyalty, and sense of duty, to a position of parity with his royal brother. Waller's treatment of these elements serves both to underscore the identification of Beaumont and Fletcher's King with Charles II and to defang that potentially invidious identification. Royalism, both in the play and in the world of late 17th-century England, prevails *in spite of* occasional lapses of character in the person of the monarch. Ultimately, it is the King's divine rather than his human manifestation that dictates both his authority and the acquiescence in that authority by those over whom he reigns, and Lysippus's declaration to Melantius during their debate over royal prerogative that ''Tis all the gratitude Subjects can shew, / To bear with Patience what their Princes do'[47] serves to accentuate this point.

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45 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 12. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 14. Melantius, it should be noted, is unmarried – as is the King – so the marital infidelity so blatantly indulged in by Charles II is not at issue here.

46 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 39 (italics reversed). / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 43 (italics reversed).

47 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 13. / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], p. 15.

Whatever the (probably unknowable) truth may be about when and under what circumstances *The Maid's Tragedy* was revised, Waller's process as he crafted those revisions was undoubtedly deliberate and carefully considered and may well have extended over a period of years. In evaluating the result, as manifested in both of the extant versions, it is common for scholars' attention to focus primarily on that element of the plot dealing with regicide: Melantius, the King, Evadne, and the newly elevated Lysippus. Indeed, Waller himself appears to have concentrated his initial efforts on this more overtly political plotline. *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* (Bennet's edition) includes an 'EPILOGUE, Design'd upon the first alteration of the Play; when the King only was left alive.'[48] Read literally, this description is rather alarming: one imagines the kind of deep tragedy with which a play like *Hamlet* concludes, with corpses littering the stage. However, a careful examination of the text reveals the title's true meaning: the epilogue was for a half-revised performance, into which Waller's new tragicomic regicide plot, leaving the King alive, had been incorporated, but which still retained the iconic tragic ending associated with the pair of star-crossed lovers in which, as the epilogue's opening couplet explains, '*ASpatia* bleeding on the Stage does lye, / To shew you still 'tis the *Maids Tragedy*.'[49] This original epilogue serves two functions: to reinforce the message about the King's lack of culpability in love (using text, already discussed above, that would later be adopted into a second, longer version of the epilogue), and to tease the idea that, depending on the audience's approbation of his efforts thus far, Waller might consider revising the other plotline as well.[50] Evidently he felt sufficiently encouraged; both the Bennet and the Tonson versions, notwithstanding a number of largely inconsequential textual differences between them, also bring this other element of the story (indeed, as Waller had observed, the one that gives the play its name) to a happy conclusion. Gone is Beaumont and Fletcher's evocative duel between the disguised Aspatia and her unsuspecting paramour, depicted in a woodcut print that had graced the title pages of the play's earliest editions. Instead, Waller brings Aspatia to a gloomy forest, where she seeks out certain

48 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], pp. 40–41. This text does not appear in Tonson's edition as printed in 1690; however, it does turn up in the 1705 edition, p. 378 (entirely detached from the rest of the *Maid's Tragedy* material, which occupies pp. 303–346, as noted above, n. 24).

49 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 40 (italics reversed). Some revision must have been carried out, of course, in order to remove that portion of the scene in which Evadne returns, is rejected by Amintor, and kills herself. The simple excision of one passage amounting to around seventy lines, plus another small change towards the very end of the play, would have solved the problem.

50 Alternatively, the King, who delivers the epilogue, assures his audience that if the revision is disliked, future performances may revert to the original version, in which 'I must be slain' (Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], p. 41; italics reversed).

poisonous berries to bring an end to her misery. Amintor also comes to the forest, with the intention of begging her forgiveness, and when he happens upon her about to consume the beautiful but deadly fruit, he rushes forward and dashes them out of her hand.[51] This new round of changes to the plot necessitated a revised epilogue, which adopted some language from the preceding version, but to which Waller also added a discussion of his use of rhymed verse. Expressing astonishment that Jacobean playwrights had mostly written in a more prose-like (i.e. unrhymed) style, he offers what may be one of the more eloquent justifications for the rhymed heroic form that dominated serious drama during the first decade and a half of the Restoration:

> Well sounding Verse, where Princes tread the Stage,
> Should speak their Vertue, or describe their rage.
> By the loud Trumpet, which our Courage aids,
> We learn that sound, as well as sense, perswades.
> And Verses are the potent charms we use,
> Heroic Thoughts and Vertue to infuse.[52]

Waller's pronouncement, of course, covers both phases of his revision, although the chronologically later portion involving Amintor and Aspatia is more varied metrically.[53] Therefore, it can still provide us with little concrete information that would help to date his efforts. Waller may have been echoing the prevailing view in drama circles as he was writing, or he could have been offering an *ex post facto* justification following the general abandonment of rhyme in tragedies around 1677.[54] In any event, we should remind ourselves, the whole point of Waller's revisions is to turn a tragedy into a tragicomedy, itself a form that had largely fallen out of fashion by the middle of the 1670s, so we are no closer to understanding his specific motives.

If one or more of Waller's revisions did see production at some point during the 1670s, it is possible that those revisions were abandoned in the

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51 The sequence begins with three soliloquies separated by individual entrances and exits: first Aspatia, then Amintor, then Aspatia again with the berries. In the Bennet version (p. 33), Amintor then appears out of nowhere to prevent her from eating them, whereas in the Tonson version (p. 37) he spies her towards the end of her second soliloquy, remarking on her actions while remaining undetected, and then intervenes to stop her.

52 Waller, *The Second Part of Mr. Waller's Poems* ['Bennet's edition'], pp. 39–40 (italics reversed). / Waller, *The Maid's Tragedy Altered* ['Tonson's edition'], pp. 43–44 (italics reversed).

53 Aspatia's soliloquies are almost entirely in iambic tetrameter, while those for Amintor are mostly in iambic pentameter (in each case, there is one exceptional couplet). Once Amintor intervenes to save his beloved, the text returns to iambic pentameter exclusively.

54 For a useful discussion, with a scrupulously curated list of rhymed heroic tragedies, see J. D. Canfield, 'The Significance of the Restoration Rhymed Heroic Play', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 13, no. 1, 1979, pp. 49–62.

following decade; we have Thomas Southerne's testimony, cited above. Moreover, when the versatile King's Company actor Charles Hart died in 1683, his vivid portrayal of the dying Amintor was specifically commended as among his greatest, and hence most memorable, roles, suggesting that Amintor's pathetic demise remained fresh in the public's recollection.[55] The picture is further complicated, however, by one additional piece of textual evidence: a separate, undated eight-page print entitled 'THE NEW MASQUE FOR THE Maids Tragedy.' As is so often the case with such 'programme libretti,' it is highly ephemeral. As far as we are aware, only a single copy survives, in the Bodleian Library, Oxford,[56] and it was seemingly unknown to all prior commentators except Hume, who simply passed over it in a footnote as a 'further complication.'[57] The print itself offers little tangible information: it has no colophon or other identifying details, with its first leaf containing only what is effectively a 'half-title' (quoted above) on the recto, and a blank verso. The text itself begins on page 3 (the first numbered page, which is signed A2), below a head-title that appears to have been set with standing type lifted directly from the half-title. There is nothing to associate this text with Waller, nor even any certainty that it predates the 1690s.[58] Even though the dialogue is entirely new, the plot and characters closely follow those in the original Beaumont and Fletcher masque of *c.* 1608–1611. Night '*rises in Mists*' (a stage direction transferred verbatim from the old to the new version), summons Cinthia, and converses with her; they then call up Neptune, who in turn

55 *An Elegy On that Worthy and Famous Actor, Mr. Charles Hart, Who departed this Life Thursday August the 18th. 1683*, [London], printed by N. Thompson, 1683: 'For when they saw AMINTOR bleed, strait all / The House, for every Drop, a Tear let fall.' This description could, of course, hearken back to pre-revision performances of the 1660s, but the fact that it was referenced so prominently more than a decade later makes it at least possible that Hart reprised the part towards the end of his career.

56 *The New Masque for the Maids Tragedy*, Bodleian Library, Vet. A3 c.10 (9). I am very grateful to the staff of the Weston Library at the Bodleian for kindly supplying me with a scan of this print.

57 Hume, '*The Maid's Tragedy* and Censorship', p. 490, n. 24.

58 Hume pronounced himself 'inclined to doubt [the] conjectured date' of 1683 recorded in the source he cited (but which likely derives originally from the printed 'pre-1920' Bodleian catalogue). A search for watermarks in the paper, which I have not been able to carry out, might provide some further clues regarding dating. It may be worth noting that the typographic style, while broadly consistent with the last quarter of the seventeenth century, does not conform in the specific features of its layout with any of the variety of other contemporaneous program libretti we know of, such as *Songs and Masques in the Tempest* (1674), *The Songs & Masque in the New Tempest* (1674), *The Prologue to Calistho, with the Chorus's between the Acts* (1675), *The Songs in Circe* (1677), nor those for any of the school and private productions of the 1670s and 1680s (including *Beauties Triumph*, *A Parley of Instruments*, *Venus and Adonis*, and *Dido and Aeneas*), nor those associated with plays performed between 1694 and 1701 (including *Valentinian*, *Imposture Defeated*, *Rinaldo and Armida*, *The Mad Lover*, and *The Virgin Prophetess*). Note that a now-lost playbill records a performance of *The Maid's Tragedy* on July 11, 1698 at Lincoln's Inn Fields: see W. Van Lennep , E. L. Avery, and A. H. Scouten (eds.),, *The London Stage 1660–1800*, *Part 1: 1660–1700*, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1965, p. 498.

produces Æolus. The arrival of minor divinities (tritons and nereids in the Restoration version) ushers in a series of songs and dances incorporating hymeneal rites. There is no reason not to believe, therefore, that this 'new masque' served precisely the same function as that in the original, which was performed at the end of Act One in celebration of Amintor and Evadne's nuptials and in preparation for the consummation that is supposed to follow (but which, of course, does not). Indeed, while the Restoration version is considerably shorter, consisting of only about sixty-two lines of dialogue (excluding choral and other repetitions) in contrast to the 166-odd lines of the Beaumont and Fletcher, certain passages in the former are clearly inspired by the latter. Take, for example, the second stanza of Beaumont and Fletcher's 'Second Song,' which imagines, in sexually charged (and, to modern tastes, somewhat disturbing) language, the possession of the bride by her new husband:

> Stay, gentle Night, and with thy darkness cover
> the kisses of her Lover.
> Stay, and confound her Tears, and her shrill cryings,
> Her weak denials, Vows, and often dyings;
> Stay and hide all,
> but help not though she call.[59]

In the new version, this becomes a speech by Æolus, addressed directly to the husband:

> Jolly Bridegroom, take thy Right,
> Love and you must Reign to night;
> Seize the Virgin, boldly seize her:
> Regard not her Crying,
> Her Trembling and Dying,
> Deny what she begs, and you please her.[60]

Similarly, the opening couplet of Beaumont and Fletcher's third song,

> To bed, to bed; come *Hymen*, lead the Bride,
> And lay her by her Husbands side[61]

serves as a model for the final valediction of the new masque, which is sung by a chorus:

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59 Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maids Tragedy*, p. 9 (italics reversed).
60 *The New Masque for the Maids Tragedy*, p. 7.
61 Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maids Tragedy*, p. 10 (italics reversed).

Hymen, bring away the Bride,
Lay her by her Lover's Side:
Night must give what Day deny'd.[62]

Hence, apart from potentially updating some of the epideictic language to better suit late 17th-century tastes, the creation of *The New Masque for the Maids Tragedy* accomplishes very little substantively; indeed, it could have served in any Restoration production of the play, whether or not Waller's fifth-act revisions were incorporated.

Where the new masque does innovate is in the area of music. While the evidence is only circumstantial, the configuration and character of the text strongly suggest that this masque was through-composed. Page 5 contains two passages in which a '*Chorus*' repeats text already uttered (by Neptune), and on pages 6 and 7 there are three instances of stanzas that conclude with the same two lines with which they began, a likely indicator of musical setting. Moreover, in one place, on page 6 (and only there), a passage is headed with the explicit direction '*A* Triton *Sings*.' Taken together, the considerably shortened text, its division into mostly stanzaic passages of irregular metre, and the presence of the chorus all imply that this was a musical masque, replacing the more characteristically Jacobean one by Beaumont and Fletcher that comprised mostly spoken text in iambic pentameter, with a few metrically irregular songs and 'Measure[s]' (i.e. courtly dances) introduced towards the end. The likely through-composed musical character of the new masque, as well as the quantity of machine-driven stage effects cued in the print,[63] provides the clearest evidence that this revision was designed to update one especially spectacular component of the original play in order to make it appeal to a Restoration audience.

The Restoration version(s) of *The Maid's Tragedy*, most if not all of which emanated from the pen of the veteran poet Edmund Waller, provide an opportunity to explore several significant aspects of the period's drama. To begin with, the survival of multiple versions of the revised text, as well as additional fragmentary evidence demonstrating an ongoing process of revision,

62 *The New Masque for the Maids Tragedy*, p. 8.

63 Cinthia is the only one who '*descends in her Chariot*' (*The New Masque for the Maids Tragedy*, p. 4) from the skies, but Night, Neptune ('*in his Sea-Chariot*'), and the tritons and nereids all '*rise*' (pp. 3, 4, and 6), implying the use of multiple traps, including at least one large scenic trap. Note that, if the new masque was mounted after the union of the King's and Duke's Companies in 1682, the 'Sea-Prospect' (p. 3) that serves as the masque's backdrop could have deployed scenery originally created for the closing masque of the dramatick-opera version of *The Tempest*, first performed at Dorset Garden in 1674.

offers a rare window into a seasoned author's creative practice. Waller's precise motives and the specific chronology of his revisions remain opaque to us, but it is nonetheless possible to consider the artistic and practical effects of his choices, and to reconstruct something resembling a sequence of activity, as I have attempted to do here.[64] Second, examining the overall revised work from a literary standpoint, it is worth noting the abrupt shift that the play undergoes when we pass from Beaumont and Fletcher's first four acts into Waller's fifth. Not only is the governing theme of dissimulation in the former almost entirely supplanted by a new emphasis on honour and truth-seeking, but the characters themselves are transformed, whereby Melantius evolves into a champion of hierarchical rectitude; the King is now no longer lecherous and effete but has become both swashbuckling and politic; and Lysippus is turned into an avatar of brotherly love and devotion. Combined with the introduction of rhymed couplets in place of blank verse, these changes effect a radical transformation *in medias res* in both the mood and the character of the play, one that Restoration audiences would seem to have accepted without remark.[65] Finally, the overtly political disposition of a major part of the revised text speaks, even if only in general terms, to the perceived utility of adapted plays, drawn from the classic works of an earlier era, for propagandistic purposes. Indeed, it is worth proposing that any meaning that we may discover lying – either hidden or on the surface – within Restoration adaptations may help to account for the decisions made by playwrights and poets such as Waller to undertake those adaptations in the first place. The importance of monarchical ideology in the serious drama of the Restoration cannot be overstated, and while many questions remain about the revisions to *The Maid's Tragedy*, the rescripted play clearly reflects the era's attitudes towards honour, loyalty, and sovereign authority, employing the process of revision to further reinforce the principle, laid out decades earlier at the beginning of the 17th century, that divinely ordained royal power must in the

64 Further light might be shed on Waller's process through a detailed examination of a manuscript privately held by the poet's descendants. The volume, copied by one of Waller's daughters sometime in the 1680s or shortly thereafter, presents a full version of his *Maid's Tragedy* revision, including a prologue and epilogue plus 'additional passages' (ff. [6]–[26] of the reversed end of the manuscript; some other brief passages are on ff. [1] and [2] of the non-reversed end). See P. Beal (comp.), *Index of English Literary Manuscripts*, vol. 2: *1625–1700*, part 2: *Lee–Wycherley*, London, Mansell, 1993, pp. 573 (WaE 59), 579 (WaE 145), 595 (WaE 412), and 619 (WaE 787).

65 The same could be said of other Restoration adaptations, for example Sir William Davenant's *Macbeth* of *c.* 1663–1664, in which new scenes featuring the Macduffs (which include a considerable number of rhymed couplets) take on a very different cast from the older Shakespearean parts of the play, and the villain Macbeth himself dies with a renunciation of the 'vain World, and what's most vain in it, *Ambition*' on his lips. See W. Davenant, *Macbeth, A Tragædy. With all the Alterations, Amendments, Additions, and New Songs. As it's now Acted at the Dukes Theatre*, London, printed for P. Chetwin, 1674, pp. 32–'36' (for a crucial Macduff scene; in this edition, p. 35 immediately follows p. 32) and p. 65 (for Macbeth's decease).

end eclipse all other considerations. As a distracted Amintor tells his friend Melantius at the tail end of Beaumont and Fletcher's Act Four, just moments before some Restoration spectators may have found themselves suddenly thrust into Edmund Waller's alternative world, 'There is not the least limb growing to a King, / But carries Thunder in it.'[66]

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66 Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Maids Tragedy*, p. 48.

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‘A DAUGHTER RAVISHED’
SEDLEY’S *BELLAMIRA* AND THE DRAMA OF ENSLAVEMENT

LAURA J. ROSENTHAL

In 1676, the English politician and Member of Parliament Sir John Reresby feared losing all of his property over an accusation that he had castrated his African servant and thus caused his death. Reresby claimed that the Duke of Norfolk falsely accused him in a plot to get his property:

> I had a fine Black of about Sixteen Years of Age, presented to me by a Gentleman who brought him over from *Barbadoes*: This Black lived with me some Years, and died about this time of an Imposthume in his Head. Six Weeks after he was buried, I received an Account That at *London* it was credibly reported I had caused him to be Gelt, and that the Operation had killed him.[1]

Reresby called this a ‘falsehood, and a ridiculous Story.’ As a preventative measure, however, Reresby called in a coroner to ‘view the Body with a Jury,’ of whom several attended ‘because of [the body’s] Colour, having a Curiosity to see him after he was dead.’ The jury concluded that the boy died ‘by the Hand of God.’[2]

Norfolk nevertheless continued to press the case. A lawyer and a surgeon (whom Reresby had previously ‘caused to be prosecuted not long before for having two Wives’) presented the coroner with a warrant to see the body. The surgeon trained his attention on the child’s penis, and ‘under the Pretence of viewing the Part the better, would have taken it up with a Penknife.’[3] Reresby stopped him out of the suspicion that he ‘would give the Wound he sought for. . . . The Part,’ however, ‘proved to be perfectly sound and entire,’ even though the body had been long underground and the rest of it ‘much putrified and decayed.’[4] The African body before them had become an inverted eunuch: not a body without genitals, but genitals without a body.

This incident points to an important historical context for this period that has attracted minimal attention. Reresby’s life, like that of many of his elite contemporaries, intersected with the transatlantic slave trade. The author

1 J. Reresby, *Memoirs of John Reresby*, London, printed for S. Harding, 1735, p. 33.
2 Reresby, *Memoirs*, p. 34.
3 Reresby, *Memoirs*, p. 35.
4 Reresby, *Memoirs*, p. 35.

reported, without further comment or explanation, receiving this young 'Black' as a gift. Reresby denied, but did not seem shocked by, the accusation. Certainly in the colonies, castration was, infamously, part of the repertoire of torture used to enforce the servitude of kidnapped Africans. In Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, colonial tormentors begin their final assault on the royal slave by cutting off his genitals.[5] Norfolk's accusation suggests that the castration of humans designated as property was not unknown in London either.[6]

At the centre of the accusation against Reresby is the intersection of castration and enslavement, two forms of violence also brought together in different ways on stage in Charles Sedley's comedy *Bellamira; or, the Mistress* (1687), an adaptation of Terence's *Eunuchus* (161 BCE). Reresby, who befriended Henrietta Maria while in royalist exile during the English civil wars, recorded the political machinations during the Restoration and through the Revolution of 1688 in his *Memoirs*. Charles Sedley was a playwright, poet, and notorious libertine who flourished in the reign of Charles II, but later became alienated from the Stuarts and supported the Glorious Revolution. As members of the court circle, Sedley and Reresby may even have known each other. Restoration comedy has a reputation for tackling scandalous topics and political controversies; this stage's engagement with race, slavery, and the slave trade, however, has attracted less attention, possibly due to the tendency to focus on a small number of canonical comedies. Indeed, the comedy of this period, recognised for its bawdy humour and depiction of status anxiety in the drawing rooms and bedrooms of the one percent, seems like an unlikely place to find recognition of the economic system that helped underwrite these competitions for eminence, social supremacy, and sexual dominion. Yet, the reign of Charles II saw England's chartering of the Royal African Company (and before that, the Company of Royal Traders into Africa). During the Restoration, each of these companies had operated out of London and involved the class of people who could afford to attend the theatre and who had the connections to appear at court.

While this essay focuses on a lesser-known play, I hope to suggest that Restoration drama offers an untapped source for exploring the public consideration of the nation's participation in the slave trade at the time. Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*, which appeared soon after *Bellamira*, was part of a larger conversation about self-possession, bodily integrity, and justice. Like *Oroonoko*,

5 On early-modern associations between castration and enslavement, see P. Parker, 'Barbers and Barbary: Early Modern Cultural Semantics', *Renaissance Drama*, vol. 33, 2004, pp. 201–244.

6 Reresby's fear of losing his land suggests that Africans working in wealthy English households might have had greater legal protection than in the colonies or that the line between 'servant' and 'slave' was not entirely stable at this time and place. If the Black youth was sixteen at the time of his death, then the friend from Jamaica must have presented Reresby with a young child as a gift, echoing the prestige at court associated with possessing African children as servants.

Bellamira suggests the intensifying racialisation of human ownership. While this play documents a racialised division between those who own themselves and those who do not, it also holds up for scrutiny the actions of enslavers. Sedley turned a classical play written by a formerly enslaved Black African (Terence) into a reflection on self-ownership and ownership by others.[7] He molded this revered comedy into a veiled attack on James II in part through reference to the king's governorship of the Royal African Company. The intersection of slavery and castration, set against the (uncastrated elite's) power to rape and enslave, points in Sedley's version of *The Eunuch* to one possible way that English audiences in this period processed their own nation's Stuart-led entrance into the African trade. *Bellamira* offers one example of how Restoration theatre confronted the slave trade in ways that some contemporaries would have recognised. Slavery was not so much disavowed or naturalised, as has been commonly argued, as it was merged with contemporary issues of liberty, sovereignty, and rights with regard to one's body.

Reresby's memoir takes the African slave trade as a naturalised part of the current landscape, but *Bellamira* points with a critical eye to the connection between the Royal African Company and the royalty from which the company derived its title and its privilege. Produced in the second and penultimate year of James II's tumultuous reign, *Bellamira* fosters uneasiness about the Catholic monarch and the transatlantic company that he governed. As we will see, opponents of James II accused him of proposing to make all English people into slaves and Bellamira explores the potential overlap – in, admittedly, an attenuated way – between Englishmen enslaved by 'Popery,' Africans enslaved by European traders, and other forms of non-freedom. At the heart of this exploration lies the rape of an enslaved Englishwoman by a lover disguised as an enslaved eunuch suggestive of James II, the mortal enemy of Charles Sedley for ravishing his daughter and leading the nation into slavery.

THE PLAY

Bellamira is a strange, funny, and sprawling play with some familiar Restoration comedy elements. The eunuch disguise recalls William Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675),[8] and the eponymous Bellamira is one of many powerful

7 On the Dutch adaptation of Terence's play, see N. Smith, 'Slavery, Rape, Migration: The View from the Amsterdam Stage, 1615', *Shakespeare Studies*, vol. 48, 2020, pp. 80–86.

8 For an in-depth account of the representation of the eunuchs in the plays of this period, see A. Greenfield, 'Eunuchs in London Theatre', *Comparative Drama* vol. 53, no. 102, 2019, pp. 1–29. See also A. Abdulhamit, 'Early Modern Eunuchs and the Transing of Gender and Race', *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, vol.19, no. 4, 2019, pp. 116–136. Other insightful articles about eunuchs include J. Chow, 'Showing the Eunuch: Disability, Sexuality, and Dryden's *All for*

courtesans who appear on the Restoration stage, who themselves recalled the powerful courtesans in Whitehall. *Bellamira* features a vain-glorious braggart (Dangerfield), fawning but clever servants, financial concerns standing in the way of love, and themes including foppery, cross-dressing, whorehouses, drunkenness, identity-shifting, metatheatricality, cuckoldry, and marriages that only sort of work out. Sedley organises the play around two central plots of overlapping desire: Keepwell is the overindulgent lover of Bellamira, a beautiful courtesan who seeks to rescue her dear friend Isabella, who has been sold into slavery and is currently owned by Dangerfield, who offers to exchange Isabella for sexual access to Bellamira, a deal she appears to accept. Keepwell's younger brother Lionel is in love with Isabella and disguises himself as a eunuch in order to get the opportunity to be alone with her. Seeing her undress for her bath, he rapes her. Bellamira, meanwhile, has to get rid of Keepwell temporarily, fight off Dangerfield, and try to protect Isabella.[9] But while Restoration Act Five marriages often leave the audience with the impression that happiness may not ensue, the engagement of Lionel and the enslaved Isabella is particularly disturbing because Lionel, in the disguise of a eunuch, rapes the woman he professes to love, a plot turn that contemporaries found disconcerting.[10] The play ends with an impending marriage between the eunuch who is not a eunuch, and the slave who is not a slave.

Sedley takes from Terence the conceit of the lover who exchanges clothes with a eunuch to gain access to a woman, thus using the guise of castration to achieve domination. The play opens with Lionel's older brother Keepwell indulging his mistress Bellamira with two requested gifts: an enslaved Ethiopian 'of Royal Bloud'[11] and an enslaved eunuch named Pisquil. (The real Pisquil, however, has already changed clothes with Lionel.) Sedley's comedy turns on the actions of this fake eunuch and includes four different enslaved figures

Love', in A. Greenfield (ed.), *Castration, Impotence, and Emasculation in the Long Eighteenth Century*, New York and London, Routledge, 2020, pp. 105–124; B. Cortese, 'Eunuchs, Mutes, and the Performance of Anxiety in Orientalist Plays', in A. Greenfield (ed.), *Castration, Impotence, and Emasculation in the Long Eighteenth Century*, New York and London, Routledge, 2020, pp. 88–104; N. Gorelick, 'The Fetish, the Phallus, the Fantast: Orientalism, Symbolic Castration, and the Eighteenth-Century Imaginary', in A. Greenfield (ed.), *Castration, Impotence, and Emasculation in the Long Eighteenth Century*, New York and London, Routledge, 2020, pp. 69–87. These essays show the various ways in which depictions of the eunuch commonly intersect with other social identities, especially race and disability.

9 Sedley includes a couple of comic subplots, but this essay will mostly address the two main plots.

10 In a dedication to Sedley, Thomas Shadwell celebrates the success of *Bellamira*, but notes that some ladies found the play to be 'obscene,' a point he tries to refute. Shadwell also thanks Sedley for giving him the profits from the production (T. Shadwell, Dedication to *The Tenth Satyr of Juvenal English and Latin / the English by Tho. Shadwell*, London, printed for Gabriel Collins, 1687, sig. A2^{r}).

11 C. Sedley, *Bellamira, or The Mistress* (1687), in V. de Sola Pinto (ed.), *The Poetical and Dramatic Works of Sir Charles Sedley*, vol. 2, London, Constable & Company LTD., 1928, 3.1.157.

(if we count both the real eunuch slave and the fake one). Like the eunuch, the enslaved Ethiopian princess is also not what she appears: Merryman admits in an aside to the audience that he is lying about the woman's royal status to impress Bellamira with their patron's generosity and to compete with other men seeking her sexual attention. The main plot of Sedley's play concerns two false slaves – Isabella and Lionel – with two actual slaves in the background: the Ethiopian woman and Pisquil, an enslaved eunuch.

The enslaved characters in this adaptation could be understood simply as a remnant of the Roman plot with no referent to the transatlantic trafficking of African people. But Sedley's choice to move the drama to contemporary London demands that he transpose the ancient practice of slavery onto a modern one, which may have been part of his motivation for doing so. In *Slavery and the Culture of Taste*, Simon Gikandi has argued that the elite in the 18th century disavowed the horrors of slavery despite it providing the profits for a new culture of luxury, with those intersections only visible occasionally. He aims to bring to light the 'barely visible connection between matters of art and taste and the political economy of slavery.'[12] According to much scholarship, the slave system was even less visible in 17th-century English literary culture. In her important study of English identity in the wake of the beginnings of that nation's participation in the slave trade and slave system, Susan Amussen in *Caribbean Exchanges: Slavery and the Transformation of English Society, 1640–1700* notes that while images of African children appeared in elite portraiture, the literature of the time, with a few notable exceptions (such as Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*), did not deal with this issue. Slavery, she argues, rarely appeared on stage during the Restoration; it was 'pushed aside' even when the plays depict the colonies.[13]

Literary critics reading more broadly, however, have shown that more of this engagement becomes visible if we look beyond the narrow band of plays that tend to attract attention. Bridget Orr notes a fascinating discussion about race by Thomas Rhymer and Charles Gildon in a controversy over *Othello*, and points out that many plays depict the Ottoman enslavement of Christians.[14] Ayanna Thompson has also explored the significance of the torture of the racialised and/or enslaved male body in the tragedies and heroic plays of this period.[15] Both Orr and Thompson point the way toward a study of Restoration drama alert to race and slavery. *Bellamira* appeared at a historical moment in which the relationship between race and slavery that would emerge by the

12 S. Gikandi, *Slavery and the Culture of Taste*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2011, p. 3.

13 S. D. Amussen, *Caribbean Exchanges: Slavery and the Transformation of English Society, 1640–1700*, Chapel Hill, University of North Carolina Press, 2007, p. 191.

14 B. Orr, *Empire on the English Stage, 1660–1714*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 22–25; on plays depicting the Ottoman Empire, see Orr, *Empire on the English Stage*, pp. 61–76.

15 A. Thompson, *Performing Race and Torture on the Early Modern Stage*, New York, Routledge, 2008.

18th century was not fully aligned, a situation underscored by the play's Roman plot. *Bellamira*, however, shows that this alignment was already visible in England. I suggest that this play, an adaptation of a Roman play by a very well-known Black African Roman and former slave, raises questions about England's entrance into the business of buying and selling people through reference to the king who chartered the Royal African Company (Charles II) and his brother James II, who governed the company from the time of its creation to his overthrow in 1688. Keepwell and Lionel are versions of Terence's original brothers, but in Sedley's adaptation they come to resemble the two libertine Stuart brothers who ruled England from 1660 to 1688.

With only one licensed theatre in operation, 1687 would have been a difficult year to persuade the single, united company to produce a new play. It also would have been a politically delicate year to be writing for the stage. J. M. McGinnis has argued that Sedley offered the stage a translation rather than an original piece to avoid political conflict in the tumultuous penultimate year of the reign of James II.[16] Certainly, McGinnis is right to note that Sedley needed to disguise his attack on James, who grew increasingly forceful in his absolutist ambitions and harsh in his treatment of his enemies.[17] Sedley, as McGinnis shows, understood that he had to be very careful. But rather than turning to Terence to *avoid* political engagement, Sedley, I argue, instead used the strategy of adaptation to express opposition. While retaining political deniability by way of Terence, Sedley nevertheless offered through this play a series of explorations of slavery, power, ownership, and the reign of James II.

JAMES II AND THE ROYAL AFRICAN COMPANY

Given the elite urban class fraction that patronised the theatre, playwrights could have expected audiences with a fairly sophisticated understanding of current political and commercial controversies. While the Restoration period was not the first time that the English traded for slaves, it did mark the beginning of government-sanctioned – and royally chartered – companies operating legally in competition with the established trades run by the Portuguese, the Spanish, the French, and the Dutch. Well into the early 18th century, this trade operated out of London.[18] Susan Amussen and Michael Guesco have

16 J. M. McGinnis, 'Sedley's *Bellamira*: Terence and Whig Comedy', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700*, vol. 37, no. 2, 2013, pp. 21–35.

17 See S. C. A. Pincus, *1688: The First Modern Revolution*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2009; J. Miller, *James II*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 2000; G. Burnet and T. Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, vol. 2, ed. M. J. Routh, Oxford, University Press, 1823.

18 See J. A. Rawley, *London, Metropolis of the Slave Trade*, Columbia, University of Missouri Press, 2003.

each pointed out that there was something at least in theory 'un-English' about enslaving people from the beginning. Amussen argues that slavery presented a challenge to the identity of English people, who defined themselves first and foremost as free and therefore valued that freedom of others.[19] In 1623, the English merchant Richard Jobson declined to purchase slaves in West Africa, claiming that the English 'were a people, who did not deale in any such commodities, neither did wee buy or sell one another, or any that had our owne shapes.'[20] Yet, as Guesco also suggests, slavery would have been familiar to the English from their extensive contact with European slave-trading nations (the Dutch, the French, and the Spanish in particular). While the trade would later become centred in Bristol, the locus of operation during the Restoration period was in London, and the people who would have been most familiar with the trade – that is, those close to the court – were the same people who were attending the theatre.

We would expect, then, that slavery would have made its way more centrally into drama as it did so prominently in the 18th century through plays like Thomas Southerne's *Oroonoko* and George Coleman's *Inkle and Yarico*, as well as other plays that address race, such as the many revivals of *Othello*, Joseph Addison's *Cato*, and William Congreve's *The Mourning Bride*, a play almost unmatched in its popularity. Restoration comedy, after all, addressed all kinds of third-rail subjects, facing sexuality head-on in daring and hilarious ways. The tragedies, as Bridget Orr has shown in great detail, engaged England's imperial expansion.[21] There are at least two reasons why we do not see as much drama that confronts the transatlantic slave trade as we might expect. The first has been suggested by Holly Brewer: given the participation of King Charles II and his brother James in the English slave-trading company, objections would have been dangerous, even treasonous.[22] As Harold Weber has shown, Charles became increasingly vigilant about any writing that challenged his government.[23] The second reason, however, is that we simply have not looked closely enough. The presence of slavery has been overlooked in part because it is not necessarily represented in specifically realistic ways, or in ways in which readers would later become accustomed but rather appeared in symbolic and encoded ways; in glimpses and innuendoes; as happening offstage in the background; and in seemingly minor subplots. But this

19 Amussen, *Caribbean Exchanges*, p. 8.

20 Quoted by M. Guasco, *Slaves and Englishmen: Human Bondage in the Early Modern Atlantic World*, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014, p. 73.

21 Orr, *Empire on the English Stage*.

22 H. Brewer, 'Slavery, Sovereignty, and "Inheritable Blood": Reconsidering John Locke and the Origins of American Slavery', *The American Historical Review*, vol. 122, no. 4, 2017, pp. 1038–1078.

23 H. Weber, *Paper Bullets: Print and Kingship Under Charles II*, Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 2015.

does not mean it was absent. For instance, William Wycherley's comedy *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* features a subplot with two young Africans, who are slaves or servants, though it is not clear which they represent. Elkanah Settle's *The Empress of Morocco* features large dance numbers that may have been performed by Africans, as does John Crowne's *Calisto*. Nevertheless, after the death of Charles II in 1685, James became king and remained the governor of the Royal African Company. In a court-centred theatre culture, questions about the legitimacy or justice of enslavement would have been filtered through the specific historical condition of the monarchy's involvement in this trade. This would have been even more intensely true in the brief reign of James II.

TERENCE THE AFRICAN

Terence was much admired in the early-modern period and a classical author with whom all educated men would have been familiar. As mentioned, William Wycherley's *The Country Wife* draws from Terence's *Eunuchus*, the story of a lascivious young man who passes himself off as a eunuch to gain access to women who would not otherwise be available to him. Wycherley, however, only takes this single conceit from Terence. In contrast, Sedley identifies *Bellamira* as a translation of the Terence play and follows the general outlines of the plot (although with some strategic departures, as I will later discuss).

While Terence was a popular playwright who inspired many Restoration authors, I nevertheless take it as significant that Sedley chose to adapt a play by an African writer and former slave, especially for a play that includes key enslaved characters transposed into 1687 London. The understanding of ancient slavery in part shaped the understanding of the transatlantic slave trade, as the business was consolidated in the late 17th century.[24] *Bellamira* suggests that Sedley had a nuanced view of the slave trade as it was emerging at the time. Slavery in *Bellamira* is global rather than domestic, as evidenced by the enslaved Isabella, who travels unwillingly from England to Jamaica to Spain and back to England. The female slave gifted to Bellamira is said to be Ethiopian. Sedley does not identify the national origin of the enslaved eunuch Pisquil, but his eunuch status marks him as foreign.

Sedley transforms Terence's trickster figure – Merryman – from a slave to a servant. While the full-blown 'tricky slave' figure[25] appears later in the

24 Guasco, *Slaves and Englishmen*, pp. 17–18.

25 On the trickster eunuch, see K. Elam, 'The Fertile Eunuch: *Twelfth Night*, Early Modern Intercourse, and the Fruits of Castration', *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 47, no. 1, 1996, pp. 1–36. For more

18th century (in *The Padlock*,[26] for example), Restoration comedy features servants who fill this role. (A quick-thinking servant, for example, gets the other characters out of an awkward situation at the end of *The Country Wife*.) By disassociating the Merryman figure from slavery and allowing him to function with near equality with other characters and as part of the local culture, Sedley aligns his play with not Roman but contemporary practices of enslavement, in which slaves were signified as foreign and more deeply oppressed, with more limited chances of transitioning into the status of free citizenship. In *Bellamira*, marks of difference include, but are not limited to, skin colour; the Ethiopian's slave status is marked by her skin, but this is not the case with the enslaved eunuch. English Protestant culture did not practice castration for musical, religious, or political purposes, so eunuchs always represented foreigners. Sedley's audience would have likely been familiar with the Ottoman practice of assigning black eunuchs as harem guards. The eunuch's damaged body aligns him with his enslaved status, ghosted by the Ottoman practices. (White eunuchs served other functions.) Sedley draws on the Ottoman and the Roman model, as Bellamira uses her gift-eunuch to guard the virginal Isabella, and thus, Lionel's eunuch disguise is shadowed by racial associations as well.[27] Isabella shares this node of convergence: while neither black nor a eunuch, she has associations with each position. As a rape victim, an erstwhile virgin, and a woman whose femininity is highlighted by Bellamira's more masculine presence (she dominates Keepwell, rescues Isabella, and bullies Dangerfield in male disguise, a scene to which I will return), Isabella's feminine vulnerability or 'lack' is highlighted in the play. Further, like the 'Ethiopian princess' but in a different way, her character acknowledges the significance of the English commerce in enslaved Africans outside the walls of the theatre. The play ultimately reveals Isabella to be English-born, but her forced migrations between Jamaica and Spain mark out a familiar route for the forced migration of 17th-century enslaved Africans. Her white skin announces her ultimate status as a free Englishwoman, yet she circulates in the play's narrative in ways similar to Africans trafficked by Europeans.

The possibility that Sedley's play confronts the English monarchy's embrace of the African trade is further supported by the decision to revive a play by an African-Roman playwright. Misha Teramura has recently pointed out that Terence was among the three most influential classical playwrights in

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on the Restoration trickster figure throughout the comedy, see J. D. Canfield, *Tricksters & Estates: On the Ideology of Restoration Comedy*, Lexington, University Press of Kentucky, 1997.

26 C. Dibdin, *The Padlock*, London, printed for W. Griffin, 1768.

27 Abdulhamit, 'Early Modern Eunuchs.' See also Cortese, 'Eunuchs, Mutes, and the Performance of Anxiety'; and Gorelick, 'The Fetish, the Phallus, the Fantast.'

the early-modern era, and his racial identity was interpreted in various ways at different times.[28] Phillis Wheatley expressed her admiration of this poet of '*Afric*'s sable race' as a precedent for her own literary career.[29] Early-modern authors, Teramura explains, would all have known Terence as an indispensable figure in their Latin education, and 'almost all sixteenth-century Latin editions bore title pages giving Terence's ethnically determined cognomen, Afer.'[30] A widely-circulated biography of Terence written by Suetonius 'painted a picture of a dark-colored African slave whose remarkable talents led him to freedom and artistic success.'[31] Some early-modern writers, however, rejected the possibility that an African and a former slave could have written such excellent plays. Both Michel de Montaigne and Roger Asham, Termura points out, argued that the plays attributed to Terence were actually written by someone else.[32] The racial prejudice against Terence and his authorship 'became more salient as the expansion of chattel slavery in the later seventeenth century further encouraged Europeans to efface the humanity of the African people they were enslaving.'[33]

Restoration writers, however, clearly understood Terence as an African. In his *Momus Triumphans*, Gerard Langbaine referred to Terence as 'that *worthy* Carthagenian.'[34] In *Geographia Universalis*, the authors reported that

> the Kingdom of *Tunis* can pride itself in the Birth of *Hannibal, Asdrubal, Terence*, and other great Men: and *Christianity* is obliged to it for the Birth of *Tertullian,* St. *Cyprian*, and St. *Augustin.* The City of *Tunis* has encreased it self from the Ruins of *Carthage the Great*, formerly the Rival of *Rome,* and the Capital City of a very considerable State.[35]

Dryden admired Terence, and cited him as an authority in his preface to *The Mock Astrologer*, specifically referencing *Eunuchus* to defend himself against criticism:

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28 M. Teramura, 'Black Comedy: Shakespeare, Terence, and *Titus Andronicus*', *ELH: English Literary History*, vol. 85, no. 4, 2018, pp. 877–908. See also M. Teramura, 'The Terence Editions of Thomas Marshe', *Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America*, vol. 113, no. 1, 2019, pp. 69–82.

29 Quoted in Teramura, 'Black Comedy', p. 879.

30 Teramura, 'Black Comedy', p. 879.

31 Teramura, 'Black Comedy', p. 890.

32 Teramura, 'Black Comedy', p. 889.

33 Teramura, 'Black Comedy', p. 890.

34 G. Langbaine, *Momus Triumphans, Or, the Plagiaries of the English Stage Expos'd*, London, printed for N. Cox, 1688, sig. a1^{v}.

35 P. Duval and F. Spence, *Geographia Universalis, the Present State of the Whole World: Giving an Account of the Several Religions, Customs, and Riches of Each People, the Strength and Government of Each Polity and State, the Curious and Most Remarkable Things in Every Region, with Other Particulars Necessary to the Understanding History and the Interests of Princes*, London, printed by H. Clark for F. Pearse, 1685, p. 71.

> 'Tis charg'd upon me that I make debauch'd persons (such as they say my Astrologer and Gamester are) my Protagonists, or the chief persons of the *Drama*; and that I make them happy in the conclusion of my Play; against the Law of Comedy, which is to reward Virtue and punish Vice. I answer first, that I know no such law to have been constantly observ'd in Comedy, either by the antient or Modern Poets. *Choerea* [who becomes Lionel in Sedley] is made happy in the Eunuch, after having deflour'd a Virgin: and *Terence* generally does the same through all his Plays, where you perpetually see, not only debauch'd young men enjoy their Mistresses, but even the Courtezans themselves rewarded and honour'd in the Catastrophe.[36]

John Ogilby affirmed the greatness of Terence and other ancient Africans but disparaged Africans of his own time. Ogilby dedicated his 1670 *Africa* to Charles II, whose official 'Cosmographer and Geographic Printer' he would later become in 1674:

> Insomuch that in former times these parts produced divers ingenious and great Wits, such as the Comedian *Terence,* and some Fathers and Doctors of the Christian Church: And others whose valour was not inferiour to the greatest, who by an incredible courage maintain'd their liberty against the most magnanimous of the *Romans*; although the present Inhabitants by a sad change, are so degenerated from that glory of their Ancestors, that they are esteemed the absurdest and most despicable *Clowns* in the Universe.[37]

Not by coincidence, Ogilby sought favour from the king with his imposing volume on Africa in the two years leading up to the formation of the Royal African Company.[38] There are many adaptations of Terence's play in this period, and not all fold the playwright's identity into the meaning of the production. In a play that explores a plot around unjust enslavement, however, there

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36 J. Dryden, *An Evening's Love, or, The Mock-Astrologer*, London, printed by T. N. for H. Herringman, 1671, sig. B2^{v} (italics reversed).

37 J. Ogilby, *Africa Being an Accurate Description of the Regions of Ægypt, Barbary, Lybia, and Billedulgerid, the Land of Negroes, Guinee, Æthiopia and the Abyssines : With all the Adjacent Islands, either in the Mediterranean, Atlantick, Southern Or Oriental Sea, Belonging Thereunto: With the several Denominations Fo their Coasts, Harbors, Creeks, Rivers, Lakes, Cities, Towns, Castles, and Villages, their Customs, Modes and Manners, Languages, Religions and Inexhaustible Treasure: With their Governments and Policy, Variety of Trade and Barter: And also of their Wonderful Plants, Beasts, Birds and Serpents : Collected and Translated from most Authentick Authors and Augmented with Later Observations: Illustrated with Notes and Adorn'd with Peculiar Maps and Proper Sculptures*, London, printed by Tho. Johnson for the author, 1670, p. 30.

38 While most late 17th-century writers acknowledge Terence as an African and the author of his plays, the tradition of denying this possibility also persisted. The playwright Edward Howard, as Teramura notes, like Montaigne before him, doubts that 'a mean *African* or Slave, such as *Terence*,' could have written the plays attributed to him (Teramura, 'Black Comedy', p. 890).

is reason to believe that Sedley's audience would not have missed this connection.

THE DIFFERENCE WITH SEDLEY

Sedley's repetition and revision of Terence's *Eunuchus* suggests an attack on the Stuarts and, implicitly, their guilt as profiteers from the slave trade. Sedley's tilt becomes visible by comparing the two plays. As do many Restoration adapters, Sedley augments the roles of women and the importance of their characters, but the presence of women on the stage as actresses is not the only reason for this shift. Sedley names his adaptation after the courtesan Bellamira (Thais in Terence's play) rather than the eunuch. Pamphilia, whom Sedley transforms into Isabella, has no lines in Terence's play, but has many in Sedley's. While playwrights wanted to create roles for the actresses to exploit their physical presence, Sedley's development of these characters is meaningful in itself and not, as is sometimes the case, for the purpose of voyeurism.[39] Isabella now has an intriguing, almost sentimental, backstory, and Bellamira is transformed from Terence's cunning whore to the more complex character of a clever manipulator with yearnings for a long-lost friend. Isabella had previously met Lionel in Spain, and the two had fallen in love. Resisting the agreed-upon exchange of sex for Isabella, a cross-dressed Bellamira, in a scene added by Sedley, robs Dangerfield and has him beaten by Merryman (also in disguise), which comically reveals Dangerfield's cowardice.[40] Sedley also adds a romance between Thisbe (Pythias) and Merryman that Bellamira facilitates. There is a strong sense in Terence's play that Pamphilia's virginity is carefully guarded because it is a crucial part of her value as a commodity. In *Eunuchus*, the rape outrages Pythias and Thais because it has damaged the girl's value. By contrast, Sedley's Bellamira loves Isabella and wants to restore her to the family from whom she was kidnapped. By transposing the action from ancient Rome to contemporary London, Sedley layers the European transatlantic slave trade on top of the Roman practice of unpaid servitude in a way that also conjures the Ottoman practice of enslaved Black eunuchs assigned to guard the harem. In Terence's play, Thais wants a eunuch as her slave because only queens have such beings at their service.

39 On the male gaze and the body of the actress in Restoration drama, see K. Straub, *Sexual Suspects: Eighteenth Century Players and Sexual Ideology*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1992; and J. I. Marsden, *Fatal Desire: Women, Sexuality, and the English Stage, 1660–1720*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2006.

40 On the early-modern legacy of the braggart soldier Thraso from Terence's play, see D. Derrin, 'Crackinge Thraso: The Braggart Soldier in Sixteen-Century Sermons and Religious Polemic', *English Studies*, vol. 98, no. 7, 2017, pp. 704–716.

An enslaved eunuch would thus elevate her status. In Sedley, however, Bellamira asked her paramour for *two* human gifts: 'When has my Bounty fail'd? Did not you ask the other Day a *Blackamoor*, and then an *Eunuch*, out of a meer Humour because Princes use 'em.'[41] The London mistress demands both a eunuch – not a popular gift in 17th-century England – *and* a 'Blackamoor,' a gift that served a similar status function in the Stuart court as the eunuch does for Thais, as the anecdote from Reresby suggests. Bellamira additionally plots to acquire Isabella. With Bellamira's double request, Sedley amalgamates the Roman, the Ottoman, and the modern: the Stuart brothers did not own eunuchs, the prestigious human property, according to Thais, of royalty. They did, however, like Reresby, own 'blackamoors' – enslaved African children brought into the royal household as servants.

In Sedley's play, women, eunuchs, and Africans all circulate as commodities and gifts. The enslavement of Isabella and the Ethiopian princess, however, is counterbalanced by the self-possession and power of Bellamira herself, who in some ways absorbs the role of tricky slave and eunuch through her masculine disguise (circulating as a 'castrated' man), her gallant rescue of Isabella, and her revenge on Dangerfield. Terence's tricky slave (Parmeno) is turned into a servant (Merryman) who is aligned with Bellamira. Isabella's trajectory intersects with the transatlantic slave trade while at the same time placing in vulnerable positions a woman who turns out to be English. Isabella had been kidnapped as a child, purchased, and given to Bellamira's mother. Bellamira's mother had fled to Jamaica when her family's fortunes broke. The play hints that the mother supported herself and her daughter through sex work, and Isabella is depicted as a gift given in exchange to sexual favours:

> *Bell*[*amira*]. There [in Jamaica] a Person of Quality fell in Love with her [the mother], and amongst other Presents, gave her the finest Girl I ever saw, stoln out of *England* by some Kidnappers.[42]

Isabella and Bellamira were raised together and Bellamira loves her like a sister. But Isabella continues to function as a commodity; Bellamira's mother left Isabella to her brother (or brother-in-law) as payment for debt. The uncle recognised the girl's value, brought her to Spain, and sold her there to Dangerfield, who 'put her to wait on his Sister.'[43] But Dangerfield has now returned to England and offers the girl to Bellamira in exchange for sex, which is why she has to get rid of Keepwell for a few days. While Keepwell is

41 Sedley, *Bellamira*, 1.1.205–207.
42 Sedley, *Bellamira*, 1.1.106–109.
43 Sedley, *Bellamira*, 1.1.135.

gone, Bellamira exchanges sexual access to her own experienced body for the virginal and commodified body of Isabella. Dangerfield turns Isabella over to Bellamira, but she repays him with a beating rather than sex. As noted, Bellamira disguises herself as a man and recruits Merryman to help her teach Dangerfield a lesson. While she is out dealing with an enslaver and potential rapist, however, she unknowingly leaves Isabella vulnerable to the fake eunuch Lionel and all that follows.

LIFE OF CHARLES SEDLEY

To show the connection between Lionel's rape of the enslaved Isabella and the Stuarts, we need to turn briefly to Charles Sedley himself. During the Restoration, Charles Sedley earned a reputation as a prominent court wit. His royalist play *The Mullberry Garden* was performed in 1668. Rochester praised Sedley for his seductive verse:

> Sedley has that prevailing gentle art,
> That can with a resistless charm impart
> The loosest wishes to the chastest heart;
> Raise such a conflict, kindle such a fire,
> Betwixt declining virtue and desire,
> Till the poor vanquished maid dissolves away
> In dreams all night, in sighs and tears all day.[44]

Dryden immortalised Sedley as Lisideius in *Of Dramatic Poesy* and defended him against the charge of lasciviousness in his preface to *The Assignation* (1673). Sedley became legendary for a drinking spree with other rakes in which he appeared naked on the balcony of Oxford Kate's, as Samuel Pepys wrote,

> abusing of scripture and, as it were, from thence preaching a Mountebanke sermon from the pulpitt, saying that there he had to sell such a pouder as should make all the cunts in town run after him – a thousand people standing underneath to see and hear him.[45]

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44 J. Wilmot, Earl of Rochester, 'An Allusion to Horace, the Tenth Satyr of the First Book', in D. M. Vieth (ed.), *The Complete Poems of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968, pp. 123–124.

45 S. Pepys, 'Wednesday, July 1, 1663', *The Diary of Samuel Pepys: A New and Complete Transcription*, R. Latham, and W. Matthews (eds.), 11 vols, London, Bell & Hyman/Berkeley, University of California Press, 1970-1983, vol. 4, p. 209.

Sedley caused another scandal five years later:

> This day Pierce doth tell me, among other news, the late frolick and Debauchery of Sir Ch. Sidly and Buckhurst, running up and down all the night with their arses bare, through the streets; and at last fighting, and being beat by the watch and clapped up all night.[46]

The king was not pleased with the Oxford Kate incident; he was also angered by a report that Sedley had the actor Edward Kynaston beaten up for mocking him on stage. (Apparently, Kynaston looked something like Sedley, a resemblance that suggests Sedley's physical attractiveness as well as his seductive language.) Sedley's coziness with the court, however, planted the seeds for his later hostility, namely the seduction of Sedley's daughter Catherine by James, Duke of York, which may have contributed to Sedley's defection to the Whig party. Catherine's mother, also named Catherine, had gone mad, believing herself to be Queen Catherine, consort to Charles II, and insisted that everyone address her as 'your highness.' Charles Sedley sent his wife to a convent and settled down with Ann Ayscough. He left his fortune to a son produced by this union, cutting his daughter out of his will. Sedley became seriously involved in oppositional politics, which eventually led to a position in Parliament under William and Mary, whom he supported with enthusiasm.[47] Gilbert Burnet wrote that the younger Catherine Sedley aimed to become to King James II what Barbara Castlemaine had been to King Charles II, but never acquired the same influence.[48] The Earl of Dorset satirised her in Bellamira-like terms:

> Proud with the Spoils of Royal Cully,
> With false pretence to Wit and Parts,
> She swaggers like a batter'd Bully,
> To try the tempers of Men's Hearts.[49]

So, while Catherine's mother thought she was the queen, Catherine styled herself as the next powerful court mistress. After several failed attempts, Queen Mary forced her husband to end the affair, but James did not abandon her. Instead, Catherine received a house, an allowance, and a title. She had

46 S. Pepys, 'Friday, October 23, 1668', *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, vol. 9, pp. 335–336.
47 On the life of Sedley, see V. de Sola Pinto, *Sir Charles Sedley, 1639–1701*, London, Constable & Company LTD, 1927.
48 Burnet and Burnet, *Bishop Burnet's History of His Own Time*, p. 401.
49 Earl of Dorset, *Poems on Affairs of State*, quoted in de Sola Pinto, *Sir Charles Sedley*, p. 217.

become close friends with some of the other court mistresses. Some members of the opposition rooted for the Protestant Catherine as potentially a counterbalance to James's Catholicism, but Charles Sedley was not one of them. Instead, he plotted to bring William and Mary to the throne. When asked how he could oppose James when he had been so loyal to Charles, he answered, 'I am even in point of civility with King James. For he made my daughter a Countess, so I have helped make his daughter a queen.'[50]

Although once a libertine himself, Sedley found the affair between his daughter and the king humiliating. An anonymous 1688 poem, 'A Letter to my Lady Osborne,' suggests the violation experienced by the father, in spite of the benefits that accrued to his daughter:

> But Sidley has some colour for his Treason,
> A daughter Ravished without any Reason:
> Good natur'd man, He is most strangely blest,
> His Daughter's Honour is his Worship's Jest.
> And she to keep her Father's honour up,
> Drinks to the Dutch with Orange in her Cup.[51]

While we will never know for sure why Sedley broke with the Stuarts and helped to depose James II, it seems reasonable to suspect that the king's treatment of his daughter influenced this change. Central to the plot of *Bellamira*, of course, is rape framed by romance: Isabella had previously fallen in love with Lionel and she agrees to marry him at the end of the play. There is no evidence that James assaulted Catherine, and, as mentioned, she embraced the benefits of this relationship. Both events, however, involve illicit and affectionate relationships in which the man possesses extreme power over the woman. James was Catherine's king; Lionel, lacking other authority and opportunity, uses deception and force against an enslaved woman who had just been exchanged so her slave-master could have sex with a different woman. That James very publicly 'ravished' Sedley's daughter suggests the possibility that hostility toward the monarch played a role in his decision to adapt Terence's comedy about rape and enslavement.

50 C. Sedley, *Some Account of the Life of Charles Sedley*, quoted in de Sola Pinto, *Sir Charles Sedley*, p. 174.

51 Quoted in de Sola Pinto, *Sir Charles Sedley*, p. 174.

EUNUCHUS, EUNUCHS, AND BELLAMIRA

We need to read *Bellamira*, then, in the context of Sedley's political opposition and personal hostility toward James II. The play's framing plot centres on the relationship between the rapist's older brother Keepwell and a strong, wily courtesan, raised in Jamaica where her mother had taken refuge from creditors after the family went bankrupt. Bellamira found her way back to London. She successfully extorts a stream of luxuries from Keepwell, who can refuse her nothing. Bellamira is also adored by the braggart ex-soldier named Dangerfield, who has offered to exchange his slave Isabella for sex with Bellamira. Isabella's white skin protects her from the harshest cruelties of slavery, but not from all of them. (In Terence, there is no indication that any of the characters belong to different races.) Thus, Bellamira must get rid of Keepwell for a few days so she can entertain Dangerfield and receive her long-lost sort-of sister, whom she wishes to release from slavery. Bellamira often misleads, but she tells the truth when she says she wants to rescue Isabella from Dangerfield's clutches: 'of all the World I love her next they dear self,'[52] she says to Keepwell. Bellamira hopes to restore Isabella to her original family and consequently establish her status as English and thus free. Within the scope of Sedley's play, then, whiteness does not preserve Isabella from enslavement, but proof of English identity would establish her right to liberty. This plot aspect echoes the drama in Terence, in which the discovery of Pamphila's Roman citizenship enables the closing marriage.

Keepwell, we recall, sends Bellamira two gifts: a eunuch and a Black female slave. The first gift creates the opportunity for the main plot in which Lionel, knowing that these gifts are destined for Bellamira's house, switches clothes with the eunuch to gain access to Isabella. The second gift does not move the plot forward, but it links Isabella's enslavement plot to the emerging English business of trafficking African bodies. Merryman, charged to deliver these gifts, finds Dangerfield at Bellamira's house and tells them both that 'this Girl here is of *Ethiopia*, of Royal Bloud there,' confiding to the audience that he is trying to 'out lye' the boastful Dangerfield.[53] The exchange reveals Dangerfield as a slave trader. Surveying the Ethiopian girl, he scoffs:

> *Dang*[*erfield*]. I bought a better for five Guineas, and gave her this Morning to my Landlady's daughter.
>
> *Smoothly* [Dangerfields's faux-servile servant]. She looks like a Warden Roasted in the Embers, or the outside of a Gammon of Bacon.[54]

52 Sedley, *Bellamira*, 1.1.176.
53 Sedley, *Bellamira*, 3.1.158.
54 Sedley, *Bellamira*, 3.1.160–164.

Dangerfield and his obsequious servant insist on the lesser value of this gift from the perspective of those accustomed to making such judgments. Bellamira judges the eunuch (actually Lionel) to be very attractive, and apparently Dangerfield finds him alluring as well: 'If I had this Eunuch alone,' he says, 'he shou'd find I were none.'[55] The dialogue calls attention to the physical appearance of both characters, the beauty and cross-gender attractiveness of the faux-eunuch, and the skin colour of the enslaved woman. It is worth briefly wondering how the physical effect of the latter was represented on stage. Was this a white actress whose skin was only darkened by description? Or was she in 'blackface'? Or a third possibility: there was an African person on stage playing this non-speaking role and one who was enslaved to one of the elites who patronised the theatre. Either way, *Bellamira* sets up a shadowy relationship between three of the women characters: Bellamira, who was raised in Jamaica; Isabella, who was kidnapped into slavery and enslaved in Jamaica, sold to Dangerfield and now gifted to Bellamira; and this nameless enslaved African woman with visibly dark skin. The enslaved 'eunuch,' however, also becomes an object to be traded. While I have suggested that Lionel recalls James II in the ravishment of the author's daughter, in *this* brief moment of sexual presentation he recalls the very handsome Edward Kynaston look-alike author of the play. Kynaston specialised in playing female roles during the early years of the Restoration. In this feminised, eunuch-like role, Lionel becomes an object worthy of Dangerfield's sexual aggression. In his momentary impersonation of the enslaved condition, Lionel becomes vulnerable to rape by Dangerfield who, as we will later see, also resembles James.

Like the original comedy by Terence, *Bellamira* is a disturbing play. Wycherley's fake eunuch Horner seduces a series of enthusiastic married ladies, with no serious negative consequences at the end. The sex is consensual, and the play gratifies the audience by humiliating the overly controlling husband *and* the tricky (fake) eunuch himself, as Horner must pretend to be castrated to avoid a violent end. His plot, then, does not entirely succeed. In *Bellamira,* however, Lionel's plan works all too well. Admitted to private spaces, Lionel watches Isabella bathe, then rapes her in a flood of arousal by her naked body. As a slave, Isabella is constantly vulnerable to rape. She had managed to avoid this fate with Dangerfield by threatening to kill herself – by starvation if necessary. However, she does not recognise the danger from her eunuch attendant in the house of Bellamira, the semi-sister who aims to protect her. Alarmed by his own aggression, Lionel flees the scene after the rape. He insists that he is in love with Isabella, but his family has already engaged

55 Sedley, *Bellamira*, 3.1.173–174.

him to marry an heiress. Sedley provides a resolution that technically qualifies as comic: another character steals the heart of Lionel's wealthy fiancé, leaving Lionel able to marry Isabella. She accepts: 'My heart was your's, when we first met in *Spain*. You seiz'd the rest somewhat too rudely here: But I am your Wife, and now am all obedience.'[56] This resolution readmits Keepwell into the good graces of Bellamira, who has since found Isabella's family. Identifying the English family from whom she was kidnapped frees Isabella and renders her an acceptable wife for Lionel. It remains, however, a dark ending, even for a Restoration play. As Bridget Orr notes, 'Isabella's slavery does not so much exemplify as amplify masculine brutality.'[57] She also reads Isabella's enslavement as a disavowal of English participation in the slave trade, 'given that slavery was an institution utterly at odds with one of the most fundamental tenets of British ideology, a belief in the unique degree of liberty enjoyed by all English subjects.'[58] Certainly, *Bellamira* does not confront the unacknowledged clash of values between the English ideology of liberty and the profits wrung from the bodies of enslaved Africans. Only women and castrated men are enslaved in this play. Yet, at the same time, *Bellamira* depends for its impact on audience knowledge of England's human trafficking. Sedley raises disturbing questions, in part through an attack on the Stuarts encoded through slavery and the slave trade.

A quick review of the plot in light of this context demonstrates this: In *Bellamira* as in Terence's play, there are two wealthy brothers. The older one is foolishly smitten by a beautiful and exotic courtesan for whom he will do anything and for whom he overlooks other obligations. Keepwell's friends tease him about how much money he spends on his mistress, an objection frequently raised about the gifts that Charles lavished on his lovers. Like one of Charles's most prominent mistresses, Barbara Palmer, Bellamira is not faithful to her keeper. The younger brother in this play rapes an innocent young girl who is friends with the exotic courtesan. Seen in this light, Keepwell and Lionel emerge as satiric versions of Charles II and his younger brother (and ravisher of the playwright's daughter). Of course, Catherine Sedley was not an enslaved woman from Jamaica but the daughter of a court wit from an elite, though troubled, family. But Sedley, as much as any member of the court's inner circle, would have known that James was the governor of the Royal African Company during his brother's reign and continued in this position as king. Slave trading in this play appears to be common but nefarious. Dangerfield, we recall, boasts of buying and selling an African slave more

56 Sedley, *Bellamira*, 5.1.552–525.
57 Orr, *Empire on the English Stage*, p. 231.
58 Orr, *Empire on the English Stage*, p. 232.

beautiful than the one standing in front of the audience, the second gift that the older brother sends his courtesan along with the eunuch.

So, while the enslaved black woman appears at first gratuitous in this play, her significance gradually emerges. In the play's encoded world, more difficult to decipher from a distance but fairly clear when contextualised, James/Lionel is condemned as a rapist/seducer of the playwright's daughter, and as a rapacious enslaver as well. The enslaved black woman on stage and the enslaved Jamaican girl raped, and then permanently possessed by Lionel, become displacements for each other. Charles Sedley thus parallels James's abuse of Catherine Sedley to James's slave-driving, suggesting the gratuitous cruelty of both. I hasten to add here that Catherine Sedley does not seem to have seen herself as abused, although her fortunes indeed fell with those of her royal lover. From the perspective of Charles Sedley, however, and as is apparent in I think this otherwise enigmatic comedy, Catherine was exploited by James, which constituted an offense against her father in a patriarchal society.[59]

The depiction of the two figures in this play suggestive of James II – Lionel and Dangerfield – as enslavers or exploiters of the enslaved refers not just to the African trade, but to the constantly-repeated anxieties that James II would 'enslave' the nation. Charles II raised these fears as well. In *The Secret History of the Reigns of Charles II and James II*, for example, the author argues that Charles was leading England into 'slavery':

> He had sufficiently learnt in his banishment that undoubted Maxim of Tyranny, that the only way to alter the settl'd Government of a Nation, and to introduce Slavery and Popery, the support of Thraldom, was to weaken and make soft the Military Temper of the People by Debauchery and Effeminacy, which generally go hand in hand together.[60]

The treaty of Dover was 'fram'd and enter'd into on purpose, for the Subjugation of these three Nations to Popery and Slavery.'[61] Metaphorical and literal meanings of slavery converged in the wake of the Monmouth rebellion in the reign of James:

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59 Sedley gave the profits from the production of *Bellamira* to his good friend Thomas Shadwell, a fellow Whig and author of the notorious play, *The Libertine*, which, like *Bellamira*, stretches Stuart court recklessness to extremes, representing libertinism as an expression of cruelty rather than sexual desire (Shadwell, Dedication to *The Tenth Satyr of Juvenal English and Latin*, sig. A2^{r}).

60 J. Phillips [attributed to], *The Secret History of the Reigns of K. Charles II, and K. James II*, London, 1690, p. 26.

61 Phillips, *The Secret History*, p. 52.

> And Young and Old were hang'd in Clusters, as if the C. Justice had design'd to raise the Price of Halters; besides the great Number of those that upon bare Suspicion were transported beyond Sea, and there sold for Slaves.[62]

Finally, *The Secret History* author celebrates that by deposing James II, William and Mary saved England 'from the devouring Jaws of that double-headed Monster, *Popery* and *Slavery*.'[63]

The two primary enslavers in *Bellamira*, Dangerfield and Lionel, square off against each other. Dangerfield purchases Isabella in Jamaica and transports her to Spain and then to England. Dangerfield would have raped Isabella, but she threatens to kill herself, reflecting an understanding of the grim singular power that enslaved people could exercise over their lives.[64] With her death, Dangerfield would have lost her exchange value, which he instead uses as an opportunity for sexual access to Bellamira. In other words, by denying sexual access to her own body, Isabella unwillingly provides Dangerfield access to Bellamira's body (although only in theory, as it turns out).

The character of Dangerfield is drawn from a boastful soldier named Thraso in Terence's *Eunuch*. The name 'Dangerfield' emphasises the ironic distance between this character's self-proclaimed courage and his actual cowardice, comically on display when confronted by Bellamira and her accomplice disguised as bullies. But it is also possible that Sedley intended to invoke the well-known criminal and would-be slave trader, Thomas Dangerfield, who gave false evidence during the Popish Plot and was murdered in 1685. In his autobiography, Dangerfield claimed to have teamed up with two other rogues and purchased a ship to turn privateer. Their goal was 'no less than the intended destruction of the whole Guinney trade.'[65] Dangerfield and his companions thus plotted to set up a rivalry with the Royal African Company and attack all of their vessels. (The plan failed when their ship ran aground in Ireland.) Sedley, then, may have named this character, the main competitor with Lionel for the enslaved Isabella, after an outlaw who attempted to set up a slave-trading company for rival the company run by James II. Sedley might also have been thinking about the Popish Plot when he named this character. Thomas Dangerfield had posed as a Catholic while in prison and was thus freed by the midwife, printer, and Catholic supporter

62 Phillips, *The Secret History*, p. 190.

63 Phillips, *The Secret History*, p. 213.

64 See T. L. Snyder, *The Power to Die: Slavery and Suicide in British North America*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2015.

65 T. Dangerfield, *Don Tomazo, or the Juveline Rambles of Thomas Dangerfield*, London, printed for W. Rumbald, 1680, p. 91. On Thomas Dangerfield, see also T. Dangerfield, *Mr. Tho. Dangerfeild's Second Narrative, Wherein is Contained A Faithful Charge Against the Lady Powis, Mr. Stamford and Mrs. Cellier*, London, printed for T. Cockerill, 1680.

Elizabeth Cellier, who took on this task at the behest of elite Catholics. Dangerfield, however, later betrayed Cellier when he served as a witness against her in the meal tub plot. He also served as a witness against the Catholic Roger Castlemaine, the husband of Barbara Palmer, who was accused in the Popish plot. Dangerfield's testimony in this case was challenged because of the unsavoury nature of his character.[66] While his motivation for the naming of Dangerfield remains unclear, it is likely that Sedley splits the figure of James II between two characters: most obviously Lionel, the ravisher, but in more subtle ways Dangerfield, the would-be slave-trading rogue who also attempts to rape Isabella.

But unlike Dangerfield, Lionel does not fail in his attempt to rape Isabella. He takes Isabella by surprise, disguised as a fellow slave and trusted eunuch. While in the next century, Samuel Richardson's Clarissa would exert her agency by refusing to marry her rapist, Isabella, whose status at the time of the rape is unclear as her family has not yet been identified, agrees to the marriage. Though couched in the language of affection, it is difficult to see this as anything other than the continuity of some form of slavery and/or a response grounded in trauma. The play remains silent on the fate of the enslaved Black woman. However, in contrast to the white Isabella, she would have had no hope of recovering a faux-sister or a real English family that would change her status.

I offer *Bellamira* here as one example of how Restoration theatre confronted the slave trade in ways contemporaries would have recognised – or at least the elite in the know, a group that would have included many who attended the expensive performances. As noted earlier, slavery was not so much disavowed as it was merged with contemporary issues of liberty, sovereignty, and rights in one's body. But it was also associated with particular individuals, including James II, after he became the mortal enemy of Charles Sedley, having ravished his daughter and led the nation into slavery.

While Restoration comedy, then, has been thoroughly appreciated for its edgy, even scandalous, confrontation with the changing dynamics of class, gender, and sexuality, an awareness of England's expanding relationship with the transatlantic slave trade, and its implications for the meanings of

66 For more details, see F. E. Dolan, '"The Wretched Subject the Whole Town Talks of": Representing Elizabeth Cellier (London, 1680)', in A. F. Marotti (ed.), *Early Modern Literature in History*, Basingstoke and New York, St. Martin's Press, 1999, pp. 218–258; E. Cellier, *Malice Defeated: Or a Brief Relation of the Accusation and Deliverance of Elizabeth Cellier*, London, printed for E. Cellier, 1680; E. Cellier, *The Triall of Elizabeth Cellier, at the Kings Bench Barr*, London, printed for R. Taylor, 1680; T. Dangerfield, *Tho. Dangerfield's Answer to a Certain Scandalous Lying Pamphlet, Entitled Malice Defeated*, London, printed for the author, 1680. On Dangerfield and the Popish Plot, see also T. Dangerfield, *Mr. Thomas Dangerfield's Particular Narrative of the Late Popish Design, Written by Himself*, London, printed for H. Hills, 1679; and T. Dangerfield, *The Case of Tho. Dangerfield*, London, printed for the author, 1680.

liberty and absolutism, can be detected therein as well. The voices of the enslaved themselves have proven difficult to recover until later centuries. Theatrical performance, however, sometimes embodied the contradictions they posed. In the wake of a series of civil wars over freedom and sovereignty, theatre audiences in the late 17th century were highly alert to political encoding and particularly alert to the fragility of claims to superiority by birth. It should come as no surprise that slavery would be an important part of that conversation and that expressions of resistance to one form of absolutism would raise questions about another. For Charles Sedley, it was personal, and James II's practices as both a ravisher and an enslaver meant that it was time for a revolution. For the 'Ethiopean princess' and those she depicts, change was, and continues to be, a work in progress.

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GENDER ISSUES AND LEXICOSEMANTIC CUES IN FLETCHER'S AND POWELL'S *BONDUCA(S)*

FABIO CIAMBELLA

FLETCHER'S *BONDUCA* AND HER RESTORATION AFTERLIFE

Referring to Arthur C. Sprague's study about the fortunes of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher during the late 1600s and early 1700s,[1] John H. Wilson reported that during the Restoration period,[2] sixteen plays by these two Renaissance playwrights were altered and adapted to meet the tastes of the post-Cromwellian British audience.[3] Acknowledging that 'the comedy of the Restoration can have had little from Shakespeare,'[4] Wilson admits that Restoration comedy owes its main sources, genres, and themes to Beaumont and Fletcher's canon,[5] a view still shared by many contemporary scholars.[6] Moreover, Wilson analyses a series of fourteen comedies and tragicomedies by Beaumont and Fletcher that were repeatedly adapted from 1660 to 1700.[7] By contrast, only two tragedies by Fletcher – actually labelled as Roman plays today – were adapted by the end of the 17th century, i.e. *Valentinian* (by John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester in 1684) and *Bonduca* (by George Powell in 1696), both performed at Drury Lane. With the characteristic attitude of some

1 A. C. Sprague, *Beaumont and Fletcher on the Restoration Stage*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1926.

2 With the label Restoration, Wilson indicates the period 'beginning with the return of King Charles II and the re-opening of the theatres in 1660, and ending arbitrarily in 1700' (*The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher on Restoration Comedy*, Columbus, The Ohio State University, 1928, p. v).

3 Wilson, *The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher*, p. 44.

4 Wilson, *The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher*, p. 24.

5 Beaumont and Fletcher's canon, fixed for the first time in 1647 and 1679 with the publication of the First and Second Folios, was revised by Fredson Bowers and his collaborators/successors from 1966 to 1996 when the ten volumes of *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon* were published by the Cambridge University Press.

6 See, among others, C.A. Morley, 'John Fletcher', in A. Hiscock and L. Hopkins (eds.), *Teaching Shakespeare and Early Modern Dramatists*, Houndmills and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 171–186; A. Rousseau, 'Offstage Laughter: Restoration Comedies and the Female Audience', *XVII-XVIII: Revue de la Société d'études anglo-américaines des XVII^e^ et XVIII^e^ siècles*, vol. 70, 2013, pp. 209–222.

7 Nevertheless, the scholar considers also some influences of Beaumont and Fletcher's works on the plays by George Farquhar and John Vanbrugh, who were still active in the first decade of the 1700s (Farquhar died in 1707, while Vanbrugh stopped writing plays around 1705–1706).

early 20th-century critics, Wilson comments on these two adaptations with personal views and opinions:

1. *Bonduca* altered to an opera by Powell, in 1696, does not seem to have appeared on the Restoration stage before that date. Originally a highly wrought, bombastic tragedy, it was made more sentimental and moral, considerably cut, and generally mutilated to make it appropriate to the witless type of opera so popular with the Restoration.
2. *Valentinian* was altered by Rochester in 1684. The adapter seems to have had two main purposes in mind: to give the play unity of action, and to bring it more into the vein of heroic tragedy. In both he is successful, and his numerous minor changes seem to depend chiefly upon his main purposes. The result was a play, which, it must be admitted, is better than the original, a statement which can be made about very few Restoration adaptations of older dramas.[8]

As highlighted by the comments above, while Rochester's *Valentinian* was very much appreciated by Wilson – so much so that he confesses he liked it more than the original Fletcherian play – *Bonduca* attracted the scholar's stinging criticism, whose apex is reached by the definition of Powell's adaptation as a mutilation of its source text. Modern critics, albeit with different tones, seem to agree with Wilson's positions. Nina B. McQuown, among others, examines the views of some scholars who did not appreciate Powell's tragedy[9] and she concludes that 'critics have remained universally unimpressed by the adaptation.'[10] As Martha Vandrei affirms, 'Powell's *Bonduca* was by no means a fully fleshed-out character in his play. She was no longer the shrill fury drawn by Fletcher, but a more aloof queen whose primary role was to attend at a Druidic ceremony and, eventually, to preside over the deaths of her daughters before killing herself.'[11] Nevertheless, continues the scholar, 'Powell's *Bonduca* was to remain in performance well into the eighteenth century, surpassing Fletcher's original in popularity.'[12] The London Stage Database, which documents theatrical performances in London from 1660 to 1800, reports eighteen stagings of Powell's *Bonduca* between 1695 and 1731, although

8 Wilson, *The Influence of Beaumont and Fletcher*, p. 45.

9 For example, J. Milhous, *Thomas Betterton and the Management of Lincoln's Inn Fields, 1695–1708*, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1979, p. 94; C. Price, *Henry Purcell and the London Stage*, Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 117; and D. Hughes, *English Drama: 1660–1700*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 429.

10 N. B. McQuown, '"Britain-gulf": Bonduca and the English Earth', *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660–1700*, vol. 40, no. 2, 2016, p. 23.

11 M. Vandrei, *Queen Boudica and Historical Culture in Britain: An Image of Truth*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2018, p. 70.

12 Vandrei, *Queen Boudica*, p. 70.

Wendy C. Nielsen affirms that 'it remains standard at Drury Lane until 1778, when [George] Colman adapts it further.'[13]

Performed during the 1695–1696 season and printed for the first time for Richard Bantley in 1696, Powell's *Bonduca* is a tragic opera, whose frontispiece reads 'Bonduca: Or, The British Heroine, a Tragedy . . . With a New Entertainment of Music, Vocal and Instrumental.'[14] The music is by Henry Purcell at his finest,[15] which is probably the reason why the opera was so successful in the following decades. Nothing is known about its real author; in fact, although Powell is certainly the author of the paratextual matter, in the letter to the reader he affirms that the Fletcherian play was adapted and revised in a fortnight by 'a Friend of mine, a much abler Hand than my own . . . , a Person of . . . Modesty,'[16] who did not want to be celebrated, but generously gave Powell the manuscript to have it published. Whether true or not, for the purposes of this article we will consider the Restoration *Bonduca* as an opera by Powell, to distinguish it from Fletcher's play.

Powell's *Bonduca* is immediately presented as an adaptation of Fletcher's play, in order to give it new glory.[17] In the dedicatory epistle to Lord Jeffreys, Baron of Wem, the author declares that *Bonduca* is 'a Frabrick of Antiquity; a Foundation of that Celebrated Poetical Architect, the Famous *Fletcher*: But with several Alterations, besides the two First Acts New Writ.'[18] Moreover, in the letter to the reader, Powell affirms that

> the Value of the Original is not unknown to those who have read it in *Fletcher*: A Value that has often times been prized so high, that the whole Brotherhood of the Quill have for many Years been blamed for letting so Ingenious a Relic of the Last Age, as *Bonduca*, lie dormant, when so inconsiderable an Additional Touch of the Pen was wanting, to make it fit for an Honourable Reception in This.[19]

In the Prologue spoken by Powell himself, one can read:

> Well, Gallants of the Pit, first to be just
> To the great Dead, the sleeping *Fletcher's* Dust,
> His proud *Bonduca*, in this fighting Age,

13 W. C. Nielsen, 'Boadicea Onstage before 1800, a Theatrical and Colonial History', *Studies in English Literature, 1500–1900*, vol. 49, no. 3, 2009, p. 601.

14 G. Powell, *Bonduca: or, the British Heroine*, London, printed for Richard Bentley, 1696.

15 C. Price, *Henry Purcell and the London Stage*, Cambridge and New York, Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 117.

16 Powell, *Bonduca*, sig. A3^{v} (italics reversed).

17 As Vandrei points out, 'Powell voiced disbelief that Fletcher's works had faded into relative obscurity' (*Queen Bonduca*, pp. 68–69).

18 Powell, *Bonduca*, sig. A2^{v}.

19 Powell, *Bonduca*, sig. A3^{v} (italics reversed).

> That *English Heroine* wakes to tread our Stage,
> That *Bard* – But let him sleep i' th' Laurel Bed,
> We've bus'ness with the Living, not the Dead.[20]

The above-mentioned references to Fletcher's *Bonduca* pave the way for political considerations. By referring to 'this fighting Age,' Powell hints at both the war between the Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn theatres, and William of Orange's victory against France at Namur in 1695, during the Nine Years' War (1688–1697). Most critics have stressed the connection between the depiction of 'national continuity' in Powell's *Bonduca* and the Dutch Duke's reign, thus considering this adaptation as a 'patriotic opera' which does not represent 'the end of the British historical narrative line, as does Fletcher.'[21] As to the war of theatres, in the following lines of the Prologue, Powell states:

> Between us and the other Theatre
> There is proclaim'd, and still maintain'd a War,
> And all, but knocking out of Brains, is fair.
> We're blam'd for raising in one Night, what they
> In thirty tedious days can scarce display[.][22]

When the leading actors Thomas Betterton, Elizabeth Barry, and Anne Bracegirdle, among others, left the United Company of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane in 1695 because of Christopher Rich's autocratic management, they moved to the Lincoln's Inn Fields playhouse and opened their season on April 30 with the great success of a performance of William Congreve's *Love for Love*. Two years later, those famous actors staged Charles Hopkins's *Boadicea, Queen of Britain* at the Lincoln's Inn Field theatre, a play about Bonduca that critics appreciated much more than Powell's.[23] With a star like Elizabeth Barry out of the picture, Powell must have had no little difficulty in finding an actress who could perform Bonduca's role. He chose the younger Mrs Knight, probably Frances Maria Knight,[24] who would play Barry's roles even after the latter had retired from the scenes in the early 1700s.[25] Despite not being a senior actress like Barry, Frances Knight had accrued eleven years of

20 Powell, *Bonduca*, sig. A4^{r} (ll. 1–6; italics reversed).
21 McQuown, '"Britain-gulf": Bonduca and the English Earth', p. 33.
22 Powell, *Bonduca*, sig. A4^{r} (ll. 7–11; italics reversed).
23 Nielsen, 'Boadicea Onstage before 1800', pp. 601–602.
24 Nielsen proposes the name of Mary Knight, who was however sixty-four when *Bonduca* was performed at the Drury Lane (Nielsen, 'Boadicea Onstage before 1800', p. 600).
25 See S. M. Martin, *Actresses on the London Stage, 1670–1755*, Ph.D. diss., Philadelphia, Pennsylvania State University, 2008.

experience at Drury Lane in the United Company, was an excellent dancer, but rarely sang and had a dubious reputation. Therefore, this might be the reason why Bonduca's role is small in Powell. Ironically, the eponymous character is definitely not the protagonist of the play. If in Fletcher much more attention is devoted to the Briton general Caratach – so much so that Bonduca dies in Act Four, while Act Five is totally focused on Caratach's surrender and the hospitality that the Romans demonstrate towards him – in Powell the situation is even more striking. The title of Powell's opera is not simply *The Tragedy of Bonduca*, as Beaumont and Fletcher's 1647 First Folio reads, but *Bonduca: or, the British Heroine: A Tragedy*. This stresses the centrality of the female protagonist and her being a national heroine, an importance she is given from the very beginning, which is, however, indiscernible within the plot.

The actually novel female role in Powell's opera is Bonduca's eldest daughter. While in Fletcher's play she does not have a name, Powell calls her Claudia and he invents a subplot which revolves around her and talks about her reciprocated love for Venutius and Comus's desperate attempt to rape her. The role of Claudia was performed by the brilliant and very young Mrs Rogers (Jane Rogers), who had made her debut in 1692. Despite being probably more appreciated than Mrs (Frances) Knight, Jane Rogers was younger than her colleague and played the role of the eldest daughter, while Miss Letitia Cross, who had made her debut only the year before the staging of *Bonduca*, played the youngest daughter, Bonvica. No other female characters are listed in Powell's dramatis personae, although the role of Hengo, nephew to Bonduca and Caratach, is played by Miss Betty Allison, who had already played a boy's role three years before – i.e. Jano, a page boy in Thomas Southerne's *The Maid's Last Prayer*.

MALE SELF-KILLING: SHAPING LEXIS AND SEMANTICS IN CARATACH'S SUICIDE SCENE

One of the main differences between Fletcher's and Powell's *Bonducas* concerns the way in which the two playwrights deal with suicide. First, in Powell, the Queen and the two princesses commit suicide in the last act, unlike Fletcher's Bonduca and her daughters, who die in Act Four. Secondly, while in the Jacobean Roman play Caratach survives the British defeat and is welcomed as a friend by the Roman general Suetonius and his soldiers, in the Restoration tragedy he commits suicide by slaying and throwing himself over the dead body of his nephew Hengo.

According to Nielsen, 'when Fletcher and his successors consign Boadicea's only act of violence to suicide, they deny her an active role on the

battlefield and in the dramatic action.'[26] Moreover, some scholars believe that Bonduca's suicide in Powell's opera makes the queen's role even more passive. In fact, as Vandrei puts it, 'Powell made no effort to explore the anger or despair that might have ultimately led to her suicide. As a consequence, her death, and the moving speech lifted from Fletcher, sits uncomfortably in Powell's play.'[27] Indeed, it is as if by altering and cutting Bonduca's lines so much in the first acts of the tragedy, Powell also removes completely the building up of the queen's anger towards the usurper Romans and the feeling of impotence that led her to commit what has been often defined as a stoic suicide in Fletcher's play.[28] In fact, I believe that Powell drew on certain semantic fields and lexical items, in order to make Bonduca's suicide more justifiable to the Restoration audience. Moreover, I would also argue that Caratach's last speech draws on the same lexicosemantic cues of Bonduca's final lines. The extreme masculine act of self-killing might be read as a derivation and mere repetition of the female suicide that the audience has just seen onstage, which makes Bonduca's act even more significant.

Before the arrival of Suetonius's army in front of the walls of Bonduca's camp, Powell inserts a kind of motivational speech uttered by the queen, aimed to convince Claudia and Bonvica to die with honour:

> *Bonduca.* Now *Claudia*, now *Bonvica*, O my Children!
> Is the time come to shew your constant Valours?
> Think not, my Girls, we will be Slaves to *Rome*;
> No, we will shew these Lords o'th' World, these *Romans*,
> How they shou'd die with Honour: Hark!
> come, since we must fall, fall bravely.[29]

These lines are not borrowed from Fletcher. Instead, they are inserted by Powell to connect the previous scenes with the siege of the British camp and to preannounce the moment of the royal women's suicide. However, it is Claudia

26 Nielsen, 'Boadicea Onstage before 1800', p. 606.

27 Vandrei, *Queen Bonduca*, p. 70.

28 For this reason, Nielsen classifies Bonduca as a tragicomedy, instead of a proper Restoration tragedy. Moreover, the scholar adds: 'because the relationship between Claudia and her lover Venutius forms the center of the action, *Bonduca; or, the British Heroine* shares more in common with comedy than tragedy. By transforming the legend of Boadicea into a romance, Powell's friend not only rehabilitates the wayward daughters of the original, but also alters the gender politics of the play. Fletcher's Bonduca enters the stage with loud boasts, but in this later version, she appears apologetic for bragging that a woman beat the Romans and concedes "'tis a Woman's Frailty" to boast. So this Bonduca is held to a feminine standard of conduct, and her daughter Claudia even leaves the fighting and bragging to her lover Venutius' (Nielsen, 'Boadicea Onstage before 1800', p. 600).

29 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 45.

that hints at female suicide for the first time in the play, thus introducing this theme – something that Fletcher had not considered. The Pict Comus tries to rape her, but he is stopped and killed by Venutius, who dies from his wounds in his beloved Claudia's arms. At this moment, the eldest princess decides, 'I'll mend the work of Heav'n: But can Tears mend it? / Tears, the *April*-shower of Girls! No, I'll weep Blood!'[30] Then, when asked by the British soldier Nennius what she is going to do, Claudia answers: 'Death, *Nennius*; Death! Look here, then talk of Life; / Lead on, I'll show the way; and in my fall, / Be great as any *Roman* of 'em all.'[31] In contrast, Bonvica is scared by her mother and sister's courage:

> Oh whetched [sic] Mother!
> Unhappy Sister! More unhappy I!
> Their Courage makes th' app[r]oach of Death
> Seem pleasing: But I have the true fearful
> Soul of Woman; and wou'd not quit the World.[32]

Such hesitation leads Bonduca to call her daughter a 'whore.' Nevertheless, while Bonduca and Claudia find reasons to kill themselves, Bonvica does not. In both Fletcher and Powell's plays, the queen of the Iceni prefers to die instead of surrendering herself and being taken to Rome in triumph. Claudia, in contrast, decides to kill herself due to Comus's attempted rape and because her beloved Venutius died defending her. In fact, she promises to her sister that in Heaven there will not be 'Lustful Slaves to Ravish us.'[33] The deictic pronoun 'us,' which indicates both the eldest and the youngest daughter in Fletcher, acquires a universalistic connotation here (almost an inclusive-we-like statement, including all women), since neither Claudia nor Bonvica are raped in Powell's adaptation, hence 'us' cannot indicate either of them. For this reason, the Fletcherian reference to Lucrece's rape by Tarquin is eliminated in Powell's opera, perhaps also because Shakespeare's, Middleton's, or Heywood's[34] early-modern accounts of the rape of Collatine's wife were probably distant from the Restoration audience:

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30 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 43.
31 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 43.
32 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 44.
33 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 47.
34 See D. Guardamgna, 'Visions of Lucrece: Shakespeare, Middleton and Renaissance Art', in D. Guardamagna (ed.), *Roman Shakespeare. Intersecting Times, Spaces, Languages*, Oxford and Bern, Peter Lang, 2018, pp. 155–192 for a comparison between Shakespeare's poem *The Rape of Lucrece* (1594) and Thomas Middleton's poem *The Ghost of Lucrece* (1600). For details about Thomas Heywood's tragedy *The Rape of Lucrece* (1606–1608), see P. Kewes, 'Roman History and Early Stuart Drama: Thomas Heywood's *The Rape of Lucrece*', *English Literary Renaissance*, vol. 32, no. 2, 2002, pp. 239–267.

1. Daughter. The next is mine.
Shew me a Romane Lady in all your stories,
Dare do this for her honour: they are cowards,
Eat coals like compell'd Cats: your great Saint *Lucrece*
Di'd not for honour; *Tarquin* topt her well,
And mad she could not hold him, bled.[35]
Claudia. The next is mine.
Show me a *Roman* Lady in all your Stories
Dare do this for her Honour?[36]

Nonetheless, some scholars assert that by eliminating the theme of rape, Powell impoverishes the character of Bonduca, whose sufferings and despair are in part provoked by the dishonour of having two daughters who have been raped. As Vandrei asserts, 'in reorienting the action in this way, Powell alighted on what was to become the most emotive aspect of Boudica's story in later depictions: the suffering of her children.'[37]

Actually, the topics of rape and suicide were not such taboos on the Restoration stage as in previous theatrical periods. Suicide in Restoration tragedies, perhaps thanks to the influence of Corneille's and Racine's French models, is 'often considered archetypally feminine.'[38] As highlighted by Jean I. Marsden, 'suicide is the most active response allowed [women]. . . . Their behaviour echoes that prescribed by contemporary conduct books, which told women that their proper refuge from any threat lay in a passive defence.'[39] Further, Elizabeth Howe stresses the voyeuristic focus on rape scenes during the Restoration, arguing that 'the sense of the actress's body being offered to the audience [is] a piece of erotic entertainment.'[40] Let us think, for instance, about the rape scene in Nahum Tate's *King Lear* (1680), which is not present in the Shakespearean source text. Similarly, Marsden affirms that

> scenes of rape, carefully staged and lovingly detailed, became a new and erotically potent element of Restoration drama, appearing with particular frequency in the serious

35 J. Fletcher, *Bonduca*, in F. Bowers (ed.), *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. 4, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 4.4.114–119.
36 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 48.
37 Vandrei, *Queen Bonduca*, p. 69.
38 P. Pearson, 'Blacker Than Hell Creates: Pix Rewrites *Othello*', in K. M. Quinsey (ed.), *Broken Boundaries: Women & Feminism in Restoration Drama*, Lexington, The University Press of Kentucky, 1996, p. 28.
39 J. I. Marsden, 'Rape, Voyeurism, and the Restoration Stage', in K. M. Quinsey (ed.), *Broken Boundaries: Women & Feminism in Restoration Drama*, Lexington, The University Press of Kentucky, 1996, p. 190.
40 E. Howe, *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama 1660–1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992, p. 46.

> drama of the period. Attempted rapes are absent in Shakespeare – the rape of Lavinia in *Titus Andronicus* occurs offstage,[41] so that the spectator sees only the gory aftermath – and relatively rare in Renaissance drama as a whole. When rape occurs, as in *Titus Andronicus* or Fletcher's *Valentinian*, playwrights emphasize the need for revenge but do not represent rape as a titillating sexual exhibition. In contrast, such scenes were routine in the drama of the last decades of the seventeenth century, and their function was decidedly erotic or even pornographic.[42]

Indeed, as stated by Hughes, 'from 1696 onwards there is an explosion of rape scenes onstage.'[43]

CARATACH'S SUICIDE: AN ANALYSIS OF SEMANTIC FIELDS AND LEXICAL ITEMS

Bonduca's final lines in Powell are taken almost verbatim from Fletcher's Act Four, Scene Four. In contrast, Caratach's suicide is added by Powell himself to his adaptation, probably to give his tragedy a definite tragic ending and 'purify' Fletcher's finale, thus depriving Caratach of his original happy ending.[44] What is interesting to notice about the British general's final speech in Powell's opera is its evident echoes of Bonduca's farewell to the scenes. The table below compares Fletcher's and Powell's treatment of the character at the ends of their respective plays:

Caratach. I do beleeve: Ye have had me a brave foe; Make me a noble friend, and from your goodnesse, Give this Boy honourable earth to lie in. . . .	*Caratach*. No *Roman*! No! I wear a *British* soul: A Soul too great for Slav'ry. – O my Boy! My dear lov'd *Hengo*! From thy look down! Behold the last of thy great Race is coming!

41 In Fletcher's *Bonduca*, the rape of the eldest and youngest daughter happens before the events narrated in the play take place.

42 Marsden, 'Rape, Voyeurism, and the Restoration Stage', p. 185.

43 D. Hughes, *English Drama: 1660–1700*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 232.

44 For an overview of the Aristotelian conception of tragedy and attempts to 'purify' impure early-modern drama during the Restoration see, among others, E. Rothstein, 'English Tragic Theory in the Late Seventeenth Century', *ELH*, vol. 29, no. 3, 1962, pp. 306–323.

Swetonius. Thus I embrace thee.
And let it be no flattery
that I tell thee,
Thou art the onely Souldier.
Caratach. How to thank ye
I must hereafter finde upon
your usage.
I am for *Rome*?
Swetonius. Ye must.
. . .
Ye shew a friends soul.
March on, and through the
Camp in every tongue,
The Vertues of great
Caratach be sung.[45]

Suetonius, view this little Casket here,
By *Roman* Rapine Robb'd of all his Wealth.
A fair rich Soyl; that Precious Royal Gem,
By Fate's too Barbarous Hand, untimely snatcht!
These Tears. I sacrifice to thee, my Boy!
But to my Queen, and my unhappy Country,
This richer Purple Stream, my Blood I give.
. . .
Rome, Sir. ah, no! She bids a Price too small,
To Bribe me into Life: my bleeding Country
Calls me to Nobler. Wreaths; and in her Fall,
To mount a Star in *Albion's* long, long Night:
And when her *Caratach* dies in such a Cause,
A *British* Tomb, outshines a *Roman* Triumph.
. . .
Out-live my Country's Liberty!
Shall *Caratach* dare but to think that Thought!
Now *Britain* is all yours; but as my Blood,
From this small Fountain flows, grant me one
Favour:
Lay this Young *British* Rose, Cropt in the Bud,
Close by my side; and since the World's your own,
Spare us but Earth enough to cover o'er
These small Remains, and I shall ask no more.[46]

The semantic fields that associate Caratach's last monologue with Bonduca and her daughters' final lines include: 1) Slavery, 2) Britishness vs Romanness, and 3) Femininity and feminine fertility. Utterances and lexical items belonging to the semantic field of slavery mainly concern the Britons' refusal to be taken to Rome in triumph, thus even establishing a parallel – at least with respect to the Fletcherian character – with Shakespeare's Cleopatra, who confesses to Proculeuis that she prefers to die instead of being taken to Rome by Caesar,[47] as scholars have noticed.[48] Bonduca's expressive 'Think not,

45 Fletcher, *Bonduca*, 5.3.184–203.
46 Powell, *Bonduca*, pp. 52–53.
47 W. Shakespeare, *Anthony and Cleopatra*, ed. John Wilders, London, Arden Shakespeare, 1995, 5.2.48–61.
48 See B. Leonhardt, 'Bonduca', *Englische Studien*, vol. 13, 1889, p. 63; P. D. Green, 'Theme and Structure in Fletcher's *Bonduca*', *SEL*, vol. 22, 1982, p. 311; P. Drábek, *Fletcherian Dramatic Achievement: A Study in the Mature Plays of John Fletcher (1579–1625)*, Brno, Masarykova univerzita, 2013, pp. 87–88.

my Girls, we will be Slaves to *Rome*'[49] (this is one of the very few lines Powell adds to the Queen's final speech in Fletcher's play) echoes Caratach's assertive 'A Soul too great for Slav'ry.' Both Bonduca and Caratach reject the idea of becoming Roman slaves. Another lexeme that belongs to this semantic field is 'Triumph,' which acquires a negative connotation in both Bonduca's and Caratach's speeches that lead to their suicides. If on the one hand the British queen (the first daughter in Fletcher) denigrates the Romans, proudly asserting, 'we were not born for Triumphs / To follow your gay sports,'[50] on the other hand, her general affirms that when he dies 'a *British* Tomb outshines a *Roman* Triumph.'

This theme is conveyed through a semantic field that includes lexical items related to the opposition between Britishness and Romanness. The noun phrase 'a *British* Soul' is present in both the British characters' lines. Queen Bonduca, while dying, suggests that Suetonius and his soldiers place a British soul into their Roman flesh, the very same British soul that Caratach affirms to 'wear' as soon as Suetonius asks him to surrender and join the Roman army. Besides, an interesting chiasm concerning the adjectives British and Roman can be found between Bonduca's final line, 'place in your *Romans* Flesh, a *British* Soul,'[51] and Caratach's above-mentioned affirmation that 'a *British* Tomb, outshines a *Roman* Triumph.' In this case, the binomials 'Flesh-Triumph' and 'Soul-Tomb' clearly underline the opposition between Roman materiality, on the one hand, and British spirituality, on the other.[52] The same semantic opposition between Rome and Britain is conveyed through the antithesis between the sterile Roman land and the fertile British one. Before drinking from the poisoned cup in front of her, Bonduca curses the vicious earth of Rome that Caratach compares some lines later with the 'fair rich Soyl' of Britain.

Finally, Caratach's speech is imbued with words concerning femininity and fertility. As McQuown states, 'the revision adds more than a dozen references to fertility,'[53] which are particularly evident in the general's final verses. The imagery of fertility is conveyed through similes and metaphors that establish a connection between Hengo and the seeds planted in the rich British soil, whose manuring happens thanks to Caratach's tears and blood. The image of tears and blood is evoked also by Claudia in the same act. Nevertheless, while the princess refuses to cry over the dead body of her

49 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 45.
50 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 46.
51 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 48.
52 The association between Romanness and materiality, on the one hand, and Britishness and spirituality, on the other, has already been noticed by Green, 'Theme and Structure in Fletcher's *Bonduca*'.
53 McQuown, '"Britain-gulf": Bonduca and the English Earth', p. 29.

beloved Venutius, because tears are 'the *April*-shower of Girls' and she herself prefers 'weep[ing] Blood,' Caratach cries for Hengo and bleeds for his queen and country. Women in the play do not cry because they consider it a girlish act, as Bonduca does not shed a tear before dying. By contrast, Caratach, the emblem of British masculinity, weeps over a dead body, which feminises his character. Therefore, not only does Caratach's final speech derive from Bonduca's, in terms of themes and lexicosemantic features, but his tears and the imagery of fertility he uses actually feminise him.

CONCLUSION

Unlike many critics who 'have remained universally unimpressed by Powell's adaptation'[54] of Fletcher's *Bonduca*, and who considered some scenes so grotesque and/or romantic that they classified the Restoration adaptation as a tragicomedy,[55] I have tried, here, to demonstrate that Powell's opera offers interesting food for thought regarding gender-related issues. I disagree with Nielsen and others, who see Powell's Bonduca as a tame version of Fletcher's heroine – a judgement supported by the aforementioned assertion that

> Fletcher's Bonduca enters the stage with loud boasts, but in this later version, she appears apologetic for bragging that a woman beat the Romans and concedes ''tis a Woman's Frailty' to boast. So this Bonduca is held to a feminine standard of conduct.[56]

In fact, ''tis a Woman's Frailty' is quite an ironic comment that Bonduca makes in response to Caratach rebuking her for defining the Romans as 'Boys,' instead of 'Heroes' as he does. So much so that she concludes her utterance restating: 'I pronounce 'em Boys.'[57] This is just one example of the heroine's lack of adhering to any feminine standard of conduct, to paraphrase Nielsen.

On the contrary, Powell's heroine seems less submissive than her Jacobean prototype from the very beginning of the play. First of all, in the Restoration version, she is introduced by the Captain and Nennius as: 'Our mighty Queen! the War-like *Bonduca*, / That greatly Towers above the humble Sex, / Aspires to more than Man, and Soars to Hero.'[58] Moreover, Powell's heroine never addresses Caratach as 'my cousin' or 'my valiant cousin,' as Fletcher's Bonduca

54 McQuown, '"Britain-gulf": Bonduca and the English Earth', p. 23.
55 As Nielsen puts it, 'because the relationship between Claudia and her lover Venutius forms the center of the action, *Bonduca; or, the British Heroine* shares more in common with comedy than tragedy' ('Boadicea Onstage before 1800', p. 600).
56 Nielsen, 'Boadicea Onstage before 1800', p. 600.
57 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 3.
58 Powell, *Bonduca*, p. 1.

does; on the contrary, she prefers to call him her soldier, although Caratach is the supreme commander of her army.

Lastly, as I have tried to demonstrate, in Powell's play, Caratach's final speech is inspired by the queen's and her daughters' lines in Act Five, Scene One, at least as far as the semantic fields and lexical choices are concerned. This intratextual relation, I argue, helps to 'feminise' Caratach's lines in the very moment he commits suicide, thus producing a monologue by a male character which recalls lines and utterances by female protagonists.

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SHAKESPEARE GOING POP
SHAKESPEARE AND SMALL THEATRE FORMS IN THE EARLY 18TH CENTURY

FILIP KRAJNÍK

The first third of the 18th century witnessed a marked shift in English theatre culture, comparable to the theatrical boom in Shakespeare's time or the revival of the theatre business in the wake of the restoration of the English monarchy in 1660. Indeed, it could be argued that this was the period when English commercial theatre as we understand it nowadays began to appear.[1] A number of factors contributed to this development, the most obvious one being the growth of the commercial rivalry among London theatre houses and the necessity on the part of their managers to adapt to the new competitive environment. After almost a decade of an effective monopoly of the Drury Lane Theatre regarding dramatic presentations, several new playhouses opened in the town with the aim to attract Drury Lane's patrons. Among these was the new theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields (opened in December 1714), whose manager, John Rich, experimented with the repertory to maximise his profit, changing the convention of a single play offer into a multiple programme with a range of entertainments supplementing the mainpiece. These became immensely favoured by the spectators, so the Drury Lane Theatre soon began to offer multiple programmes as well to keep up with its biggest competitor. Particularly popular items on the bills were short afterpieces, which included musical interludes, farces, pantomimic entertainments, short ballad operas (after the enormous success of John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera* in 1728), and other forms of elaborate spectacles that followed the main 'straight' piece (usually a five-act play). Although some of these entertainments had been known to audiences even in the previous decades, after the 1714–1715 season, they became a regular part of the programmes of both main London theatres.[2]

Whereas the marriage of serious and entertaining (or 'high' and 'low') dramaturgies was primarily meant to satisfy diverse kinds of theatregoers within one night, their combination on the same stage quickly became the subject of censure on the part of authors and critics who felt that the growth

1 In his study of pantomimes and English 18th-century culture, John O'Brien likewise argues that 'the modern conception of entertainment as a form of diversion directed to a mass culture began in the first half of the eighteenth century in Britain' (J. O'Brian, *Harlequin Britain: Pantomime and Entertainment, 1690–1760*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004, p. xiii).

2 See E. L. Avery (ed.), *The London Stage 1660–1800, Part 2: 1700–1729*, vol. 1, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1960, pp. cxvi–cxx.

and popularity of lesser genres corrupted theatre and its cultural status, as well as the spectators themselves. Even before the opening of John Rich's Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, the playwright Charles Johnson complained that '*we see no Audience now can bear the Fatigue of two Hours good Sense tho*' Shakspear *or* Oatway *endeavour to keep 'em awake, without the promis'd Relief of the* Stage-Coach, *or some such solid Afterlude*.' As a solution, Johnson suggested that '*those Gentlemen who have the Management of the Theatres shou'd agree to banish every thing that cou'd be thought the least below the Dignity of the Stage*,' which, however, could hardly happen since London playhouses competed for audiences and '*the General Taste now is, that which does not outmonster the other must starve*.'[3] Interestingly enough, 'those Gentlemen' whom Johnson mentioned did not disagree with him – at least outwardly. The Drury Lane manager, playwright and Poet Laureate, Colley Cibber, in his memoir condemned 'all the Abuses of the Stage, all the low, loose, or immoral Supplements, to wit' as 'Theatrical Popery,' while admitting that 'Vice, and Farcical Folly, are the most profitable Commodities.'[4] Similarly – just with less expressive vocabulary – John Rich apologetically defended his theatre's frequent stagings of pantomimes, as he was 'extremely indebted to the Favour with which the Town is pleas'd to receive my Attempts to entertain them in this Kind.' To this, he hastened to add that 'whenever the Publick Taste shall be disposed to return to the Works of the *Drama*, no one shall rejoice more sincerely than my self.'[5] It appears that satisfying the tastes of audiences and the prospect of financial gain became key realities of the theatre business that often clashed with the idea of what was and was not a desirable (or even acceptable) form of art.

Johnson's mention of Otway and Shakespeare as opposed to 'solid Afterludes' is especially pertinent here. When criticism of 'low' theatre entertainment grew stronger, the names of classics with a perceived 'high' status were often evoked to provide a paragon to which early 18th-century theatre should aspire. Anna Hrdinová maintains that, at the same time as popular theatre forms rose to prominence on London stages, the notion of the English national dramatic canon began to form. It included Restoration playwrights, such as Thomas Otway, John Dryden, Nicholas Rowe, and William Congreve, alongside Renaissance classics, such as Ben Jonson and William Shakespeare. Hrdinová even suggests that it was paradoxically the much-criticised cheap spectacles that helped to establish the canon, claiming that 'the changing

3 C. Johnson, *The Force of Friendship . . . To which is added, A Farce call'd Love in a Chest*, London, printed for Egbert Sanger, 1710, Preface (pages not given).

4 C. Cibber, *An Apology for the Life of Mr. Colley Cibber, Comedian, and Late Patentee of the Theatre-Royal. With an Historical View of the Stage during His Own Time*, London, printed for John Watts and for the Author, 1740, p. 50.

5 J. Rich, 'Dedication', in L. Theobald, *The Rape of Proserpine*, London, printed by T. Wood, 1727, p. vi.

hierarchy of dramatic genres on the English stage . . . changed the hierarchy of English dramatic canonical authors.'[6] Logically, the concept of low, immoral, and commercial could not exist without a defined image of high, virtuous, and artistic.

This perceived contrast between productions of canonical authors and popular entertainments was often stressed and repeated by contemporaneous critics. Richard Steele, for instance, in 1709 complained that 'he [Christopher Rich, father of John Rich and manager of the Drury Lane Theatre until 1707], having no understanding in this polite way, brought in upon us, to get in his money, ladder dancers, rope dancers, jugglers, and mountebanks, to strut in the place of *Shakespear*'s heroes and *Johnson*'s humourists.'[7] Similarly, the anonymous author of *A Proposal for the Better Regulation of the Stage* (1732) lamented that theatre managers 'make Business the Standard of their Judgment,' which was the reason why 'Farce, and Pantomimes have taken Place of *Shakespear*, and *Otway*.'[8] When, on September 15, 1747, the then new co-manager of the Drury Lane Theatre and self-proclaimed worshipper of Shakespeare, David Garrick, opened the 1747–1748 theatrical season with a prologue for the public (written by the critic, essayist, and, later, editor of Shakespeare's works Samuel Johnson), he maintained that, following the Restoration, 'The wits of Charles' had no wish 'for JOHNSON's [i.e. Ben Jonson's] art, or SHAKESPEAR's flame,' upon which 'the pow'r of tragedy declin'd' and audiences started preferring 'Exulting Folly' in the form of 'pantomime and song' to the great classics.[9] These sentiments also frequently appeared in satirical prints of the time, one of which, done by the English engraver Gerard van der Gucht, shows the god of poetry Apollo being unceremoniously kicked from a stage by Harlequin and Punch (two comical characters who frequently appeared in popular afterpieces), with the verse below reading, 'Shakespear, Rowe, Johnson, now are quite undone / These are thy Tryumphs, thy Exploits O Lun!' (Lun being harlequin John Rich's stage name).[10] In the minds of these critics of the state of London theatres, the two orders of entertainment

6 A. Hrdinová, '"Our National Taste": English Early Eighteenth-Century Stage as a Part of English National Identity', *Actes des JDJC*, no. 3: *Écrire la nation (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles) / Writing the Nation (17th & 18th Centuries)*, 2021, p. 31, https://carnet1718.hypotheses.org/files/2023/09/Actes_des_JDJC_N°3_Ecrirelanation-2021.pdf (accessed 2 July 2024).

7 R. Steele and J. Addison, *The Tatler; or, Lucubrations of Isaac Bickerstaff, Esq*, vol. 1, London, printed for Jacob and Richard Tonson, 1759, p. 112.

8 *A Proposal for the Better Regulation of the Stage. With Some Remarks on the State of the Theatre Among the Ancient Greeks and Romans*, London, printed for J. Peele, 1732, pp. 23–24.

9 S. Johnson, 'Prologue Spoken by Mr. Garrick, At the Opening of the Theatre in DRURY-LANE 1747', in R. Dodsley (ed.), *A Collection of Poems in Six Volumes, by Several Hands*, vol. 1, London, printed by J. Hughs for R. and J. Dodsley, 1758, p. 201.

10 K. Straub, M. G. Anderson, and D. O'Qinn (eds.), *The Routledge Anthology of Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Drama*, London and New York, Routledge, 2017, p. 486.

represented two separate cultural worlds that did not – or, rather, *should* not – overlap. This notion, however, appears to have been only an ideal that was not consistent with the theatre realities of the time.

This chapter will focus on several instances of Shakespearean material being employed by, or transformed into, early 18th-century popular entertainments. It has been pointed out that it was Shakespeare's contemporary Christopher Marlowe who helped to solidify the genre of pantomime on English stages in the 1720s, his tragedy *Doctor Faustus* having held an elevated status in the first decades of the Restoration period but later on being transformed into various popular spectacles, including pantomimes.[11] Marlowe, however, did not enjoy canonical status at the time and, apart from farcical or pantomimic adaptations of *Doctor Faustus*, his plays were not staged by London theatres in the 18th century.[12] Especially in the wake of his 're-discovery' during the Exclusion Crisis (1678–1682),[13] Shakespeare's cultural prominence was significantly higher, although he did not achieve at the time the position of the national poet that he obtained in the second half of the 18th century.[14] As Emma Depledge has demonstrated, by the end of the 17th century, Shakespeare had become a staple of both print and theatre markets, his popularity being highest after the 1642 closure of the theatres.[15] In 1712, John Dennis published a slim volume titled *An Essay on the Genius and Writings of Shakespear*, effectively laying the foundations for Shakespearean criticism; in 1709, Nicholas Rowe's first 'modern' edition of Shakespeare's collected works appeared, with a biographical sketch of the playwright, paving the way for similar ventures by Alexander Pope (1723–1725), Lewis Theobald (1733), and others later on in the century.

Shakespeare's position in the 'national canon' steadily grew,[16] safely surpassing not only his contemporary Ben Jonson in terms of reputation and

11 See F. Krajník and A. Hrdinová, '"The form of Faustus' fortunes, good or bad": Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* and the Multi-Genre Theatre of the Lond English Restoration', in M. Crhová and M. Weiss (eds.), *Silesian Studies in English 2021: Proceedings of the 6th International Conference of English and American Studies, 9th–10th September 2021*, Opava, Silesian University in Opava, 2023, pp. 407–424.

12 Indeed, especially the Drury Lane Theatre in the 1720s repeatedly offered their pantomime *Harlequin Doctor Faustus* as an afterpiece following Shakespeare's tragedies and histories, Jonson's *The Alchemist* (Jonson's tragedies were not staged in the 18th century) and Otway's *Venice Preserved*, suggesting that Marlovian adaptations (which were probably no longer associated with Marlowe's name anyway) were seen in opposition to the classics.

13 See L. Biagiotti, 'From Shakespeare to Titus Oates: Exclusion Crisis and Canonisation', in C. D. Baschiera and J. Everson (eds.), *Scenes of Change: Studies in Cultural Transition*, Pisa, Edizioni ETS, 1996, pp. 253–265.

14 See M. Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet: Shakespeare, Adaptation and Authorship, 1660–1769*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1992.

15 See E. Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence: Politics, Print and Alteration, 1642–1700*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2018, pp. 150–170.

16 In Depledge's words, following the Exclusion Crisis, Shakespeare was seen not just as a popular

popularity, but also most of Shakespeare's more recent followers. On the one hand, it could thus be expected that this status would prevent 18th-century authors from turning Shakespeare's works into low entertainments. After all, as Depledge observes, while altering (sometimes quite radically) Shakespeare's plays was a common practice up until the early 1680s, in the last two decades of the 17th century, Shakespeare was 'seldom altered'[17] and, according to Jean I. Marsden, in the first four decades of the 18th century, 'new alterations of Shakespeare appeared only sporadically and rarely achieved any lasting success.'[18] Both Depledge and Marsden refer to the mainpieces – the serious works that provided for the main portion of the theatre bill. However, as there were two registers of theatre entertainment on the same stage, Shakespeare's work also appears to have existed simultaneously in two modes: a serious one, reflected in straight drama, and a popular one, involving lesser genres that burgeoned at the beginning of the 18th century. This duality is also reflected in Michael Dobson's observation that, in the case of Shakespeare, 'adaptation and canonization, so far from being contradictory processes, were often mutually reinforcing ones.'[19] With his works being more accessible than ever in new printed editions and with his growing popularity among spectators, Shakespeare provided ideal source material for early 18th-century playwrights and theatre managers, who strove to keep up with the new demand for popular supplementary entertainments.

'BLESSE THEE *BOTTOME*, BLESSE THEE, THOU ART TRANSLATED.'

A Midsummer Night's Dream is a grand example of a Shakespeare work that fluctuated during its stage-life between various dramatic genres and registers. What was, at the end of the 16th century, probably conceived as an aristocratic wedding play,[20] was during the Interregnum reduced to a droll, short, semi-legal form of entertainment that (as we are led to believe by the title page of the bookseller and printer Francis Kirkman's 1673 collection of drolls and farces *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport*) during the closure of the theatres frequented both London and provincial fairs, various halls, and taverns,

playwright, but also gained the reputation of 'a defender of the monarchy' (Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence*, p. 151).

17 Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence*, p. 170.

18 J. I. Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text: Shakespeare, Adaptation, & Eighteenth-Century Literary Theory*, Lexington, The University Press of Kentucky, 1995, p. 75.

19 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 5.

20 See W. Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. S. Chaudhuri, London, Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2017, pp. 283–286.

as well as 'several MOUNTEBANCKS STAGES, At *Charing Cross*, *Lincolns-Inn-Fields*, and other places.'[21] Of thirty-seven such entertainments published by Kirkman (initially in collaboration with his colleague Henry Marsh, who died in 1665) in two volumes (Part 1 in 1662, reprinted 1672; Part 2 in 1673), three were lifted from Shakespeare's plays: *The Bouncing Knight, or, The Robers Rob'd*, based on an episode involving John Falstaff (or 'Jack' in the droll) from the first part of *Henry IV*; *The Grave-makers*, based on the funeral scene from *Hamlet*; and *The Merry Conceited Humours of Bottom the Weaver*, following the entire underplot with the mechanicals from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, including their final staging of the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe on the occasion of the ducal wedding.

Of these three, *The Merry Conceited Humours of Bottom the Weaver* is the only piece that could claim the title of a full-fledged (albeit simple and short) dramatic work, with a plot and a trajectory for its development. The supernatural characters and settings, the musical accompaniment (as testified at one point by the stage direction '*Musick Tongs Rural Musick*'),[22] the songs, and the dancing numbers could all theoretically resonate even with post-Interregnum audiences. After all, 'some good dancing and some handsome women' (presumably referring to the actresses playing the fairies) were the only things that appealed to Samuel Pepys during the single documented Restoration production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the King's Theatre on September 29, 1662; save for that, he found Shakespeare's piece 'the most insipid ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life.'[23] Given that Kirkman's droll collections were (re-)published more than a decade after the revival of the London theatre business,[24] with clear encouragement from their editor for the texts to be employed for performances by '*young Players, Fidlers, &c.*,'[25] Depledge argues that they could partly have been a response to 'the elitism established with the restored theatres' and that it is entirely possible that some of the pieces 'were still being performed in the 1670s' outside the duopoly system of the King's and the Duke's patent companies, thus essentially retaining their legally and culturally ambiguous status from the Interregnum.[26]

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21 F. Kirkman (ed.), *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport. Being a Curious Collection of Several Drols and Farces*, London, printed for Fran. Kirkman, 1673, title page. For more on Kirkman's drolls and their relation to Shakespeare, see K. Škrobánková, 'Enter the Clowns: Adapting Shakespeare after 1642', *Linguaculture*, vol. 8, no. 2, 2017, pp. 43–57.

22 Kirkman (ed.), *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport*, sig. E3^{r}.

23 S. Pepys, *The Diary of Samuel Pepys*, ed. H. B. Wheatley, vol. 2, London, G. Bell and Sons, 1923, p. 326.

24 *The Merry Conceited Humours* had also previously appeared as a stand-alone quarto in 1661.

25 Kirkman (ed.), *The Wits, or, Sport upon Sport*, sig. A3^{v}.

26 Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence*, p. 32. A reference to the droll in Charles Gildon's *The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatick Poets* (1699), reading that the piece 'is printed . . . and acted by small Parties at *Bartholomew Fair*, and other Places,' might suggest that

The certain popularity of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* among Restoration audiences – whether inspired by theatre productions of any kind or by the printed editions of the play[27] – would be explained by Henry Purcell's last 'dramatick opera,' *The Fairy-Queen*, which opened at the Dorset Garden Theatre (by then employed by the United Company mostly for spectacular productions) on May 2, 1692, to be staged through February 1693.[28] If *The Merry Conceited Humours* occupied the lowest tiers of the imagined cultural hierarchy of its time, *The Fairy-Queen* occupied the highest. In contrast with all-sung Continental operas, and in the vein of late 17th-century English operatic tradition, Purcell's piece combined spoken dialogue with interpolated musical episodes. The main contours of Shakespeare's original comedy are preserved, with a streamlined plot focusing on the two young couples who each need to fall in love with the correct person for the story to conclude in a double wedding (the character of Hippolyta is absent from the opera, therefore, the ducal wedding does not take place here). Meanwhile, all references to Athens are removed to make the settings of the story more universal and, possibly, to bring it closer to London audiences, and the popular underplot with the mechanicals and Pyramus and Thisbe is preserved – however, with the production of their interlude moved from the piece's finale to Act Three to make room for a different kind of spectacle at the end.

It is emblematic of *The Fairy-Queen* that, unlike the mechanicals from Shakespeare's play, their operatic counterparts do not rehearse their interlude 'in action, as we will do it before the Duke' (*A Midsummer Night's Dream* 3.1.5),[29] but rather 'as we will do it before the whole Court.'[30] This little change in the text might be read as a metatheatrical hint at the purpose and cultural status of Purcell's piece as a whole. Indeed, the lavish production of the opera – which cost between two and three thousand pounds[31] (an equivalent of

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The Merry Conceited Humours was still performed at the end of the 17th century, although Gildon may have simply taken the information from Kirkman (C. Gildon, *The Lives and Characters of the English Dramatick Poets*, London, printed for Nich. Cox and William Turner, 1699, p. 128).

27 Save for the aforementioned production by the King's Company mentioned by Pepys, there is no record of a performance of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* during the Restoration period; apart from the editions of Kirkman's droll from the 1660s and 1670s, the only then-recent printed editions of the play would have been included in Shakespeare's Third (1663–1664) and Fourth (1685) Folios.

28 If not stated otherwise, the dates and other details of the productions are drawn from relevant volumes of *The London Stage 1660–1800* (see the list of bibliography).

29 If not stated otherwise, the quotations from Shakespeare's original plays are drawn from W. Shakespeare, *Complete Works*, revised ed., ed. R. Proudfoot, A. Thompson, and D. S. Kastan, London, Arden Shakespeare, 2011. For the sake of convenience, Shakespeare's works are quoted by act, scene, and line numbers that are indicated in parentheses in the main text.

30 H. Purcell, *The Fairy-Queen: An Opera*, 2nd ed., London, printed for Jacob Tonson, 1693, p. 21.

31 See A. R. Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera, 1661–1706*, Abingdon and New York, Routledge, 2019, p. 263.

approximately 370 to 560 thousand pounds in 2025's currency) – included spectacular stage effects, elaborate stage machinery, movable scenery, perspective effects, water elements, various plants, and, possibly, even living animals. The musical aspect of the opera was concentrated in five original masque-like sequences at the end of every act, each being more spectacular that the previous ones (for instance, the dawn at the end of Act Four is symbolised by the following action: '*A Machine appears, the Clouds break from before it, and* Phoebus *appears in a Chariot drawn by four Horses; and Sings.*').[32] As Frans and Julie Muller have demonstrated, the symbolism in the final grand masque at the end of Act Five was meant to celebrate the fifteenth anniversary of William III and Mary II's wedding – an attempt on the part of Thomas Betterton's company to win royal favour as 'times had changed after the death of Charles II, and royal support for the theatre was not to be taken for granted under the new monarchs.'[33] On a more general level, Andrew R. Walkling sees the piece as an 'entertainment designed to showcase English theatrical and political resplendence in a new revolutionary age' and 'a harbinger of the coming eighteenth-century British ethos of civic oligarchy and capitalism from which both the "liberal" state and the imperial project would ultimately emerge.'[34] While clearly an example of elite entertainment that glorified the monarchs and the monarchy, *The Fairy-Queen* aimed to please both courtly and general audiences, apparently with success. According to John Downes, a prompter at the United Company when *The Fairy-Queen* was staged, both 'the Court and Town were wonderfully satisfy'd with it,' although 'the Expences in setting it out being so great, the Company got very little by it.'[35]

Michael Burden argues that *The Fairy-Queen* gained an 'almost mythical status' and was, in subsequent decades, 'frequently mentioned as being the greatest product of "our musical Shakespeare".'[36] Although, by the end of the 1710s, the dramatick opera on London stages had yielded to Continental operatic forms, Purcell's work influenced another musical adaptation of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, namely Richard Leveridge's *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, which opened as an afterpiece at John Rich's Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre on April 11, 1716. Besides the general change in the

32 Purcell, *The Fairy-Queen*, p. 40.

33 F. Muller and J. Muller, 'Completing the Picture: The Importance of Reconstructing Early Opera', *Early Music*, vol. 33, no. 4, 2005, p. 670. A production of *The Fairy-Queen* was attended by Princess Anne on June 13, 1692, and another one by Queen Mary II and her maids of honour on February 16 of the following year (see Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera, 1661–1706*, p. 265).

34 Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera, 1661–1706*, p. 273.

35 J. Downes, *Roscius Anglicanus*, ed. M. Summers, London, The Fortune Press, 1928, p. 43.

36 M. Burden, 'Shakespeare and Opera', in F. Ritchie and P. Sabor (eds.), *Shakespeare in the Eighteenth Century*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2012, p. 211.

London theatrical landscape in the early 18th century as outlined above, Leveridge's work was a direct response to the domination of through-composed, all-sung Italian operas on London stages, which was a subject of heated debate within the then English theatrical sphere. Hrdinová points out that, apart from common complaints about 'the foreign language which the audiences could not understand, as well as the novelty of recitative and the scandalous exoticism of castrato singers,'[37] people like John Dennis – himself the author of the 1698 dramatick opera *Rinaldo and Armida*, which 'proved a runaway hit' upon its opening[38] – criticised the foreignness and effeminacy of Italian operas as being not only harmful to the English cultural identity, but also detrimental to the national spirit during the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714). Similarly to Dennis, Leveridge had a personal stake in the controversy. His singing career started in the mid-1690s and he soon established himself as a professional singer and composer, as well as a performer for the theatre (in 1702, he wrote new music for Drury Lane's production of *Macbeth*); in the first decade of the 18th century, he sang in several English operas at the Queen's Theatre in the Haymarket, an opera house built in 1705 by John Vanbrugh. His career as a serious opera singer, however, declined with the growing number of Italian singers in London offering operas in Italian and, when the new theatre at Lincoln's Inn Fields opened, he left the opera troupe to join John Rich's company.[39]

Although Leveridge never held a prominent position in the London opera troupe and 'it is doubtful that he actually had pretentions to a career in serious operas,'[40] *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe* was clearly written with the aim to lampoon Italian opera and defend the idea of the domestic English operatic form. In the Preface to the printed playbook, Leveridge maintains that theatregoers '*have for some late Years been chiefly regaled with high* Recitative *and* Buskin *Airs*,' while his own piece is meant to offer '*the quite Reverse of those* exalted Performances.'[41] He explains his intention as follows:

> *If the first* Founders, *the* Italians, *in the Grandest of their* Performances, *have introduced* Lions, Bears, Monkies, Dragons, *&c. as their* Doughty Fables *require: I know no Reason why I may not turn* Moonshine *into a* Minstrel; *the* Lion *and* Stone Wall *into* Songsters;

37 Hrdinová, '"Our National Taste"', p. 27.

38 Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera, 1661–1706*, p. 295.

39 See 'Leveridge, Richard', in P. H. Highfill, Jr., K. A. Burnim, and E. A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, vol. 9, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1984, pp. 262–268.

40 'Leveridge, Richard', p. 265.

41 R. Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, London, printed for W. Mears, 1716, sig. A2^{r}.

and make them as Diverting as a Dance of Chairs *and* Butterflies *have been in one of our most Celebrated* British *Entertainments.*[42]

The 'British entertainment' that Leveridge mentions was Purcell's first dramatick opera, *Dioclesian* (1690),[43] which itself was an adaptation of John Fletcher and Philip Massinger's Jacobean play *The Prophetess* (1622). Picking Shakespeare for his burlesque of Italian opera was, therefore, another nod to Purcell – a classic author of the 'British' genre with which Leveridge had previously been associated. Employing Shakespeare as source material, however, had another dimension for Leveridge's patriotic endeavour. While the playbook of *The Fairy-Queen* (1692, updated edition 1693) does not mention Shakespeare's name anywhere in the prologue, epilogue, or the preface, Leveridge not only mentions 'the great *Shakespear*' as his source in the preface, but also establishes a kind of continuum with the work of the then respected national classic:

> This Tragical Tale the great *Shakespear* thought fit to turn into a most Comical Interlude, in a Play of his call'd *The Midsummer Nights Dream*, as Perform'd by a Company of Rusticks, set out in the lowest Air, and Style of downright Farce and Doggrel.
>
> From that Immortal Author's Original, I have made bold to Dress out the same in Recitative, and Airs, after the present *Italian* Mode, hoping I have given it the same Comical Face, though in a Musical Dress.[44]

The phrase 'Immortal Author' here seems to be more than the same epithet that sporadically appeared in connection with Shakespeare already in the Restoration period from authors such as Aphra Behn or Thomas Otway; by linking Shakespeare and his 'immortality' with national entertainment and, implicitly, the national spirit, Leveridge's words in a way prefigured the religion of bardolatry which would be developed several decades later by David Garrick and which would ultimately install Shakespeare as the national poet. After all, Samuel Johnson's aforementioned prologue which Garrick delivered in 1747 makes a distinction between the singular 'immortal SHAKESPEAR' that miraculously 'rose,' and Ben Jonson, 'A mortal born,' who (unlike his predecessor) 'met the general doom.'[45]

Somewhat similarly to *The Merry Conceited Humours*, the text of *The Comick Masque* revolves around the rehearsal of the play of Pyramus and Thisbe by the mechanicals. Like *The Fairy-Queen*, Leveridge's piece eliminates all

42 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, sig. A2^{r-v}.
43 See Walkling, *English Dramatick Opera, 1661–1706*, pp. 234–250.
44 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, sig. A4^{r}.
45 Johnson, 'Prologue Spoken by Mr. Garrick', p. 200.

references to Athens and, instead of Duke Theseus and his court, the performance is observed (and commented on) by Mr Semibreve, an impresario and the composer of the piece, and his two colleagues, Mr Crotchet and Mr Gamut. This alteration signals the piece's shift from the courtly culture of Purcell's opera to a more down-to-earth entertainment that shared a common societal and cultural space with ordinary theatregoers. The *dramatis personae* in the playbook is divided into actors, playing the roles of the mechanicals in the short scene that serves as an induction to the masque proper (lifted from Act One, Scene Two of Shakespeare's play), and the 'personaggi,' the characters of Ovid's story, performed by professional singers (Leveridge sang the role of Pyramus) and distributed among seven numbered scenes, a prologue, and an epilogue. The piece thus juxtaposes spoken drama with an all-sung performance, creating, as it were, three layers of theatrical reality: 1) the 'audience' consisting of Semibreve, Crotchet, and Gamut (spoken); 2) the induction with Shakespearean mechanicals discussing the play and their roles (spoken); and 3) the full rehearsal of the masque of Pyramus and Thisbe (sung). The recitative of the third layer stressed its distance from the world of the real spectators and its (the recitative's) unnatural quality.

Indeed, the combination of Shakespeare's 'Farce and Doggrel' with the elevated style of Continental operas provided a similar source of amusement as inapt amateur actors trying to perform Ovid's story in Shakespeare's original play. Even the Prologue (sung by Leveridge himself) announces to the audiences of the rehearsal that, in contrast to what one might expect from straight operas, '*Here's no* Daphne's, *and* Apollo's, / *Grave and serious, . . . But a Whim that's odd and various, / Sung by Jolly Fellows*.'[46] This, however, does not prevent Mr Semibreve from correcting 'Mr. *Prologue*' and showing him that the closing line of his speech should be sung 'With a falling Cadence as thus –'; upon the Prologue's exit, Mr Gamut expertly remarks that the actor 'knows neither Stop nor Cadence,' which might refer to the ineptness of the performance, though, more obviously, is an exposition of the snobbishness of Continental musical taste.[47] Indeed, a sense that something inherently alien is being brought to English stages is reinforced by Mr Semibreve, who comments on the performance and pompously maintains that '*This is nothing to what we have abroad*, and by degrees I am in hopes to bring our dull *English* to this polite Taste.'[48]

The absurdity of Italian operatic conventions becomes obvious when Snug the Joiner is about to enter the stage and the surprised Mr Crotchet, obviously not accustomed to Continental operas, asks, 'I wonder whether the *Lion* be to

46 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 6.
47 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 6.
48 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 7.

sing?', after which Mr Semibreve briskly explains, 'Never wonder at that, for we that have Study'd the *Italian Opera* may do any thing in this kind.'[49] While the music score for Leveridge's piece has not survived, it is easy to imagine Snug's performance, who in the mask of the lion ridiculously sings, 'Lady don't fright you, – O! / I will delight you – O! / With gentle Roar,' which is followed by Thisbe's double exclamation 'Ah! ah!'[50] The similarly artificial horror of Pyramus at the sight of Thisbe's bloody mantle is approvingly commented upon by Mr Semibreve, 'If this won't fetch a Subscription, I'll never pretend to Compose *Opera*, or *Mask* again, while I live,'[51] referring to the fact that, unlike other genres, Italian opera in London was supported by subscriptions to be sustainable. In a similar vein, Mr Crotchet remarks upon Pyramus's death that 'the Man died well, like a Hero in an *Italian Opera*, to very good Time and Tune.'[52] When the time comes for the epilogue, to be delivered by Pyramus and Thisbe (possibly an allusion to *The Fairy-Queen*, where the epilogue was spoken by Oberon and Titania), the puzzled Mr Gamut objects that 'they are both dead.' Mr Semibreve, however, once again evokes the operatic tradition, maintaining, 'Pho, pho, d'ye think the Audience suppose them to be Dead? that's a Jest indeed. – I think it is better to make 'em rise and sing the Epilogue, and go off by themselves, than to have Three or Four dirty Property Fellows come and carry 'em off.'[53] Bottom and Flute, in the roles of Pyramus and Thisbe, seem equally surprised by being risen from the dead and admit that ''tis a New thing, / To make the Dead get up and sing';[54] however, ultimately they beg the audience members 'To like this little Amusement'[55] and perform a love duet song.

Although Leveridge's *The Comick Masque* enjoyed just ten performances between its opening in April 1716 and its closing night in March 1717, it represented a critical attitude to Continental opera which remained widespread in the following decades. When, on January 29, 1728, John Rich's theatre opened John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, another lampoon of the Italian operatic style, Jonathan Swift cheered the play and maintained that it

> exposeth with great Justice that unnatural Taste for *Italian* Musick among us, which is wholly unsuitable to our Northern *Climate*, and the *Genius* of the People, whereby we are over-run with *Italian-Effeminacy*, and *Italian* Nonsense.[56]

49 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 9.
50 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 11.
51 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 12.
52 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 12.
53 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 14.
54 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 14.
55 Leveridge, *The Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, p. 15.
56 J. Swift and T. Sheridan, *The Intelligencer*, London, reprinted and sold by A. Moor, 1729, p. 25.

With this sentiment, *The Comick Masque* enjoyed a major revival by John Rich's theatre (which had moved to a new house in Covent Garden in 1732) on January 25, 1745, under the title *Pyramus and Thisbe: A Mock-Opera*, with a new musical setting by John Frederick Lampe. The text somewhat reduces Leveridge's *The Comick Masque* (the spoken induction with the mechanicals is jettisoned) and makes some smaller cuts, while adding a few more airs interspersed through the dialogues. The impresario, 'Mr *Semibrief*,' invites two unnamed gentlemen to the production, one of whom 'having made the *Tour* of *Italy*, has but little Taste for our homespun, *English*, Entertainments.' By presenting his guest the masque, he hopes that he 'shall bring him over to our Opinion; and let him see, the *English* Tongue is as fit for Musick, as any foreign Language of 'em all.'[57] Furthermore, it is Mr Semibrief's general aspiration that 'we may, in time, be enabled to give the Publick, Musical Entertainments, without sending our Money to foreign Parts, to purchase Performers at exorbitant Prices,'[58] again obviously referring to the state of London's musical entertainment at the time.

Such an agenda was consistent with the previous efforts of Lampe, who was involved in the early 1730s in a short-lived scheme 'to present "English Operas" at the Haymarket Theatre'[59] and who, in 1737, composed another burlesque of Continental operas, *The Dragon of Wantley*, whose initial run even exceeded the first run of *The Beggar's Opera*.[60] While the purpose and ethos of Lampe's 'mock-opera' were similar to those of Leveridge's *The Comick Masque*, it is interesting to observe Shakespeare's ostentatious presence in the later piece. While Leveridge did mention Shakespeare in the preface to the 1716 playbook, he did not include Shakespeare (or himself, for that matter) on the title page; the 1745 printed edition of Lampe's *Pyramus and Thisbe*, however, boasts Shakespeare's name as the author of the piece (which, from today's perspective, would be a dubious claim in the least). In this context, what is even more interesting is to consider the mainpieces to which *Pyramus and Thisbe* was appended as an afterpiece. Of thirty-seven recorded performances between January 25, 1745 and May 2, 1754, it followed a full play by Shakespeare nine times – more often than works by any other single playwright.[61] Regarding the open attribution of the afterpiece to Shakespeare, it

57 W. Shakespeare and J. F. Lampe, *Pyramus and Thisbe: A Mock-Opera*, London, printed by H. Woodfall, jun., 1745, pp. 2–3.

58 Shakespeare and Lampe, *Pyramus and Thisbe: A Mock-Opera*, p. 3.

59 'Lampe, John Frederick', in P. H. Highfill, Jr., K. A. Burnim, and E. A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, vol. 9, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1984, p. 137.

60 'Lampe, John Frederick', p. 138.

61 On January 29, 1745, it followed a production of *As You Like It*; on February 2, 1745, *Julius Caesar*; on February 8, 1745, the second part of *Henry IV*; on March 2, 1745, *Othello*; on March 5 and April 16, 1745, *Henry VIII*; on April 25, 1745, *Henry V*; on November 28, 1745, *Richard III*; and on January 14,

appears that the two registers of early 18th-century Shakespearean dramaturgy mentioned in the introduction to this chapter started coming together more systematically – and with less controversy – than in previous decades. By the mid-18th century, the status of popular entertainments based on Shakespeare's works was apparently rising together with Shakespeare himself. It is, therefore, not so surprising that on February 3, 1755, less than a year after the final production of *Pyramus and Thisbe* at the Covent Garden Theatre, another radically altered operatic form of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, titled *The Fairies*, opened at Drury Lane. Although the authorship of the latter piece is uncertain, it was produced under the auspices of David Garrick – who just some seven years before had publicly railed against popular musical entertainments replacing the 'immortal SHAKESPEAR.'[62]

'I AM DEVILISHLY AFRAID I AM BUT A PRETENDER.'[63]

Just like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, mid to late 17th-century London audiences could encounter elements from Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew* in multiple forms. In a droll-like manner, an abbreviated dialogue from Shakespeare's play (the first exchange between Petruchio and Katherina from Act Two, Scene One) was reprinted in the 1656 miscellany *Cupids Master-Piece, or, The Free-School of Witty and Delightful Complements* as 'A merry cross woing, betweeen [sic] Tom the Tailor, and Kate of the Kitchin.'[64] Although Shakespeare is not mentioned as the author, nor is there any encouragement for the dialogue to be acted out (unlike in Kirkman's post-Interregnum collections), Depledge maintains that the passage is 'a very witty and spirited exchange that could easily have been delivered by two performers' during the ban on theatrical productions.[65] With the re-opening of theatres in 1660, the rights to

1746, *Macbeth*. The only two instances of Leveridge's *The Comick Masque* following a Shakespearean mainpiece was on November 22, 1716, and March 23, 1717, when it was appended to Thomas Shadwell's adaptation of Shakespeare's *Timon of Athens*. Most often, *The Comick Masque* was preceded by Peter Anthony Motteux's operatic version of John Fletcher's *The Island Princess* (four times).

62 See V. Cunningham, *Shakespeare and Garrick*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 77–78.

63 This section is partly based on F. Krajník and A. Hrdinová, '(Not) Beyond the Shoe: Shakespeare and Theatre Rivalries in the Augustan Period', *Ostrava Journal of English Philology*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2023, pp. 31–47. I would like to thank Ms Hrdinová for allowing me to incorporate our research into this chapter.

64 *Cupids Master-Piece, or, The Free-School of Witty and Delightful Complements*, London, printed for John Andrews, 1656, sigs A6^{r}–A7^{r}.

65 Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence*, p. 29. It is perhaps pertinent to note that, while the more 'literary' pieces in the collection, such as songs and poems, are printed in roman

The Taming of the Shrew were obtained by the newly established King's Company, which inherited the majority of Shakespeare's dramatic repertory. There is no record, however, of the play being revived in its original form (although this possibility cannot be ruled out); Pepys attended 'The Tameing of a Shrew' on April 9, 1667, writing that the play 'hath some very good pieces in it, but generally is but a mean play.'[66] What he saw, however, was an adaptation by the Restoration playwright and comic actor John Lacy, also known under the title *Sauny the Scot*. Lacy's version follows Shakespeare's story quite faithfully, chiefly expanding on the role of Petruchio's servant Grumio, who becomes a stereotypical Scottish low comic character named Sauny, played by Lacy himself. During the Restoration, *Sauny the Scot* became the standard version of Shakespeare's comedy and was staged well into the 18th century, when it was replaced by Garrick's successful three-act farcical afterpiece *Catharine and Petruchio*, which opened on March 18, 1754, and became a staple of London stages for more than a century.[67] Finally, Depledge draws attention to the anonymous ballad *The Frolicksome Duke: Or, The Tinker's Good Fortune*, which was printed at some point in the 1680s or 1690s and, unlike Lacy or Garrick's pieces that both exclude the framing story with Christopher Sly, is exclusively based on the induction scenes from Shakespeare's original play.[68] Although nothing can be said about the contemporaneous reception of this particular ballad, as will be demonstrated, the induction plot from *The Taming of the Shrew* became in the 1710s a kind of detachable unit – similar to the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* – that could easily be produced independently of the original play as a free-standing afterpiece, while retaining the connection with Shakespeare as its original author.

On January 24 and February 3, 1716, respectively, the Lincoln's Inn Fields and Drury Lane theatres each staged their own version of the Christopher Sly story under the same title: *The Cobler of Preston*. This concurrence was not by any means accidental and, in fact, caused a minor scandal in the London theatre business at the time. Apparently, in January 1716, the Drury Lane Theatre started rehearsing Charles Johnson's afterpiece *The Cobler of Preston* for a February premiere. According to a rather sensational version of the story,

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letter, witty dialogues, such as the one between Tom/Petruchio and Kate, are printed in black letter that was still more comfortable for ordinary readers.

66 Pepys, *The Diary*, vol. 6, p. 249. Pepys went to see 'The Taming of a Shrew' for the second time on November 1 of the same year, calling it 'a silly play and an old one' (Pepys, *The Diary*, vol. 7, p. 172).

67 For a detailed analysis of Lacy's and Garrick's adaptations, see Martina Andrisová's chapter in this volume (pp. 40–64).

68 See Depledge, *Shakespeare's Rise to Cultural Prominence*, pp. 33–34. The full text of the ballad is reprinted in C. Artese (ed.), *Shakespeare and the Folktale: An Anthology of Stories*, Princeton and Oxford, Princeton University Press, 2019, pp. 27–30.

James Spiller, a comedian at Lincoln's Inn Fields at the time and a friend of Drury Lane's William Pinkethman, who was to play the main part in Johnson's afterpiece,

> meditated the Dishonour of the Man he convers'd with, and taking the Advantage which he had waited for, of Mr. *Pinkethman's* being overtaken with Liquor, without any Regard to the Laws of Society, Honesty and Justice, stole the Part of the *Cobler* out of his Pocket, and discharging, (as he was always exceeding Generous, when he had, as he used to call it, *The Cole upon him*,) the Reckoning, took his Leave of the Tavern, left his Brother *Pinkethman* drunk and asleep, and went immediately with his Prize to his Friend and Patron, Mr. *Christopher Bullock*; who being a Person of an admirable quick Turn of Thought, and one who always knew what would make for his Interest, embraced Mr. *Spiller* and his invaluable *Piece of Theft*, with all the Transports that naturally arise in a truly Poetical Bosom of such an Occasion: He instantly fell to work, and by the Hints given him by *Pinkethman's* Part on the *Cobler*, was able to bring upon the Stage a Farce of the same Title as Mr. *Johnson's*, a Fortnight before the *other House* could present theirs[.][69]

Even from the tone of the account, it is apparent that it is exaggerated, although it does indeed seem that Bullock's quick response to Johnson's farce crossed the boundaries of ethical conduct, even by the standards of early 18th-century cutthroat commercial competition. Indeed, the theatres' mutual accusations of foul play apparently became notorious. The prologue to John Philips's 1716 farce *The Pretender's Flight* (of whose stage production there is no record) opens with a reference to the rival staging of the two *Coblers*:

> *I hear Alarms, and bloody Wars begin,*
> *'Twixt haughty* Drury-Lane, *and* Lincoln's-Inn,
> *Advertisements against Advertisements are toss'd,*
> *Bills fight with Bills, and clash on ev'ry Post;*[70]
> Coblers *of* Preston *like two* Socia*'s Rise,*
> *So like – they might deceive their Author's Eyes*[.][71]

69 G. Akerby, *Spiller's Jests: or the Life and Pleasant Adventures of the Late Celebrated Comedian Mr. James Spiller; Containing His Merry Jests, Diverting Songs, and Entertaining Tales*, London, printed for H. Cook and S. Hester, 1730, pp. 22–23.

70 As a response to the unexpected early premiere of Lincoln's Inn Fields' *Cobler*, Drury Lane made an announcement in their bills 'that a new Farce, call'd *The Cobler of Preston*, was then in Rehearsal at that Theatre, and wou'd be play'd in few Days' (C. Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, London, printed for R. Palmer, 1716, p. v).

71 J. Philips, *The Pretender's Flight, or, A Mock Coronation. With the Humours of the Facetious Harry Saint John*, London, printed for E. Curll, 1716, Prologue (page not given).

If we are to believe Bullock's own account of the controversy (which he felt the need to include in the printed playbook of his farce), at some point he

> *did hear, there was a* Farce *in Rehearsal at* Drury-lane Theatre, *call'd the* Cobler *of* Preston, *and that it was taken from the forementionʼd Play of* Shakespear*'s; I thought it might be of as good Service to our* Stage, *as the* other; *so I set to work on* Friday *Morning the 20th of* January, *finished it on the* Saturday *following, and it was acted on the* Tuesday *after; which Expedition, I hope, will be an Excuse for the many Faults that are in it.*[72]

While it can be assumed that Bullock gave his readers a rather noble version of his involvement, the text of his *Cobler* indicates that it is perhaps closer to the truth than Akerby's later testimony. Bullock's farce is, indeed, very hastily written, significantly shorter and less complex than Johnson's, and except for the title, has very little to do with Drury Lane's piece. Both the farces, however, offer an interesting insight into the atmosphere in which they were written, as both playhouses were involved not only in fierce commercial competition, but also in political rivalry that at the time influenced life in the whole country.

Following the Hanoverian accession to the British throne in 1714, the Whigs established themselves as the dominant political force in the country for almost half a century, while the Tories, especially after the unsuccessful 1715 Jacobite rising, were discredited and perceived as a treasonous party. Basil Williams has called this era 'an age of stability in politics, in religion, in literature, and in social observances';[73] for English theatre culture, however, the so-called Whig Supremacy was a turbulent period, ultimately leading to a major re-definition of the theatre business in the country with the 1737 Licensing Act.[74]

With their new partner, the playwright and distinguished Whig politician Richard Steele, the actor-managers of the Drury Lane Theatre did their best to demonstrate their allegiance to the new regime. John Rich's Lincoln's Inn Fields, on the other hand, was frequently accused of Tory sympathies – not entirely without reason.[75] The repertory of London stages became, once again, exceedingly political, with the theatres responding to one another's

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72 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, pp. ix–x.

73 B. Williams, *The Whig Supremacy, 1714–1760*, 2nd ed., Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1962, p. 1.

74 The Licensing Act of 1737 effectively closed all non-patent theatre houses in London, leaving only Drury Lane and Covent Garden (John Rich's theatre after 1732) in operation. It further enforced the rule that all play-texts had to be reviewed and licensed before performance by the Lord Chamberlain's office, which enabled the government to censor the content of all plays in London. For more information on the effect of the Licensing Act on English drama, see M. J. Kinservik, *Disciplining Satire: The Censorship of Satiric Comedy on the Eighteenth-Century London Stage*, Lewisburg, Bucknell University Press, 2002.

75 See J. Loftis, *The Politics of Drama in Augustan England*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1963, pp. 63–69.

taunting by means of special prologues and epilogues, sometimes even entire productions. In December 1717, for instance, Drury Lane premiered Colley Cibber's satirical comedy *The Non-Juror*, based on Molière's *Tartuffe*, which harshly criticised the Jacobites and their Tory allies (the piece was a response to the aforementioned events of 1715). The play was extremely successful and earned its author a royal patronage for the piece, as well as a reward of 200 pounds from the King.[76] The following year, Lincoln's Inn Fields staged Christopher Bullock's farce *The Perjuror*, which, although not dealing overtly with contemporaneous politics,

> satirically condemns the sin of perjury, and it implies that those who take oaths freely, without scruple of conscience (the audience would have thought of the oaths to the new King) may be more reprehensible than those who are prevented by conscience from taking them.[77]

Similarly, a cluster of plays appeared in the early 1720s about young lovers whose happiness is marred by their parents' party rivalry. While Drury Lane's Susanna Centlivre, in her comedy *The Artifice* (1722), embraced the main protagonists' Whiggism, Benjamin Griffin's *Whig and Tory* (1720) and John Sturmy's *The Compromise* (1722), both staged at Lincoln's Inn Fields, protested against political antagonism, arguing that '*Betwixt Extreams lies Vertue in the Middle*.'[78]

It is significant that, in this agitated period, a series of heavily politicised adaptations of Shakespeare appeared within a short space of time, comparable to those of the Exclusion Crisis:[79] John Denis's *The Invader of His Country* (based on *Coriolanus*, 1719), Lewis Theobald's *Richard II* (1719), Aaron Hill's *Henry V* (1723), Ambrose Phillips's *Humfrey Duke of Gloucester* (based on the second part of *Henry VI*, 1723), Theophilus Cibber's *Henry VI* (1723), and John Sheffield's *Julius Caesar* and *Marcus Brutus* (printed 1722 but never staged).[80] As George C. Branam points out, all these adaptations are 'so extensively

76 Loftis, *The Politics of Drama in Augustan England*, p. 72.

77 Loftis, *The Politics of Drama in Augustan England*, p. 71.

78 J. Sturmy, *The Compromise: or, Faults on Both Sides*, London, printed for W. Chetwood and Tho. Edlin, 1723, Prologue (page not given). For more on these three plays and their context, see F. Krajník, 'Romeo and Juliet in the Midst of Early 18th-Century English Party Politics', *Hradec Králové Journal of Anglophone Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2019, pp. 80–90.

79 For more about Shakespearean adaptations during the Exclusion Crisis, see B. A. Murray, *Restoration Shakespeare: Viewing the Voice*, Madison, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 2001.

80 None of these plays had any significant success on the stage: *The Invader of His Country* closed in January 1720; *Richard II* in October 1721, with a single revival in the 1738-1739 season; *Henry V* was only staged in December of 1723, to be briefly revived by the Goodman's Fields Theatre in the 1735–1736 season; *Humfrey Duke of Gloucester* was only staged in February 1723; *Henry VI* was staged just once, on July 5, 1723. Except for Theobald's *Richard II*, all the adaptations were associated with the Drury Lane Theatre.

changed as to be new plays.'[81] What is even more important, however, is that each of the pieces 'deals with faction and uprising'[82] – being, once again, the 18th-century authors' response to the threat of Jacobitism or a foreign invasion. In his epistle dedicatory prefaced to *The Invader of His Country*, John Dennis describes the political relevance of the production of his play which took place in November 1719: 'The acting of it then had been most seasonable, when the Nation was in the uneasy Expectation of a Double Invasion from *Sweden* on the *North*, and from *Spain* on the *West* of *England*.'[83] Still in the wake of the Jacobite rising, Dennis's version of the story furthermore links the titular Caius Marcius with the nation's recent past, '*when* Britain's *Rebel Sons of late / Combin'd with Foreign Foes t'invade the State*.'[84] Similar to the Exclusion Crisis, Shakespeare gained new topicality in a politically sensitive period, providing 18th-century dramatists with a suitable mode of expressing their anxieties and concerns for the wellbeing of the nation.

Drury Lane's farcical afterpiece *The Cobler of Preston* by Charles Johnson (the same Charles Johnson who in 1710 wanted to '*banish every thing that cou'd be thought the least below the Dignity of the Stage*,' see above) to an extent prefigured the aforementioned Shakespearean adaptations of the 1720s. While the prologue vaguely indicates that the farce is based on an older play by the remark '*Our Author has a Comick Rebel stole / To make you Mirth; a drinking, noisy Fool*' (Shakespeare's name is not directly mentioned by Johnson), it also announces that the main motivation for the farce derives not from a drama of the past, but from the most recent real-life events: '*If he* [the author] *wants Plot, consider, Sirs, he draws / These Scenes, from the worst* Plot *that ever was*.' Set in Preston, Lancashire, where the Jacobite rising was defeated in November 1715, the story revolves around '*a plotting* Cobler,' who is '*a quiet Protestant when sober*,' but becomes 'most Popish' once he starts drinking. Unlike the serious mode of the adaptations of Shakespearean tragedies of the time, the final lines of the prologue to Johnson's *Cobler* invite the audience to enjoy the entertainment and simply ridicule the schemes of the oppositional party: '– *But – may this Plot, and every Plot hereafter, / Produce but little Bloodshed, and much Laughter*.'[85]

The opening of Johnson's farce proper coincides with Shakespeare's induction: the hostess, here named Cicely Gundy, throws Sly out of her alehouse because he is drunk and not willing to pay for the damage he has done. While

81 G. C. Branam, *Eighteenth-Century Adaptations of Shakespearean Tragedy*, Berkeley and Los Angeles, University of California Press, 1956, p. 7.

82 Branam, *Eighteenth-Century Adaptations of Shakespearean Tragedy*, p. 62.

83 J. Dennis, *The Invader of His Country: or, The Fatal Resentment*, London, printed for J. Pemberton and J. Watts, 1720, sig. A3r.

84 Dennis, *The Invader of His Country*, Prologue (page not given).

85 C. Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, London, printed by W. Wilkins, 1716, Prologue (pages not given).

in Shakespeare's play, Sly is merely a stereotypical clown, Johnson lets him begin his speech with the drunken cheer 'Huzza, Huzza,' only to continue by praising William Mackintosh, claiming that 'there is something now so couragious, as it were, in the very Sound of his Name.'[86] Just like the Scottish Jacobite leader whom he so admires, Sly too would like to revolt ('I must be a Rebel, and I will be a Rebel')[87] and, envisioning himself as a great general, he already plans the new societal order after the revolution:

> I will live upon Free-Quarter, *Cicely*, I am free of all the Eale and Beef in *England*, you Housewife – I will have no Reckonings paid at all – 'Tis downright Abomination, Heresy – Your sober Small-Beer Whey-beards, shall pay all the Scot. – And I will Tax them at my Will and Pleasure, Huzza – He that cannot Leap a Five Bar Gate, knows nothing of Generalship –[88]

As in Shakespeare's version, Sly ultimately tumbles down to fall asleep on the road, only to be found by a passing lord, who decides to bring the sleeping man into his mansion and persuade him that he (Sly) is, in fact, a nobleman who merely dreamed that he was a poor cobbler (or tinker in Shakespeare). Unlike Shakespeare's Lord, who just decides to 'practise on this drunken man' (*The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction 1.35), Johnson's parallel (with the patriotic name Sir Charles Briton) recognises in Sly a notorious rascal, whose 'Head is perpetually confounded with the Fumes of Ale and Faction' to such an extent that 'he has laid aside cobling of Shoes, to mend our Constitution.'[89] Rather than playing a practical joke on Sly, Sir Charles decides to 'take this Opportunity to punish him a little'[90] for his Jacobitism and stages an alternative world around him to cure him of his political persuasion.

Except for a short scene with Cicely and the Constable, which provides the audience with yet another opportunity to learn how 'so untowardly about Steate Matters' Sly is,[91] the first act of the farce more or less follows the structure of Shakespeare's Induction: Sly is brought to Sir Charles's house, where

86 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 1.
87 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 1.
88 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 2. There is an obvious parallel here between Sly and Jack Cade, another Shakespearean rebel against the government from the lower ranks of society who aspires to greatness: 'Be brave, then, for your captain is brave, and vows reformation. There shall be in England seven half-penny loaves sold for a penny; the three-hooped pot shall have ten hoops, and I will make it felony to drink small beer. All the realm shall be in common, and in Cheapside shall my palfrey go to grass. And when I am king, as king I will be . . . There shall be no money, all shall eat and drink on my score, and I will apparel them all in one livery, that they may agree like brothers and worship me their lord' (*King Henry VI, Part Two* 4.2.60–71).
89 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 3.
90 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 4.
91 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 7.

he is attended by servants dressed as Spaniards and is convinced that he himself is a Spanish grandee, who 'These fifteen Years' has been in a dream, 'Or when [he] waked, so waked, as if [he] slept.'[92] Instead of Shakespeare's actors, who arrive to stage for Sly a play about the taming of a shrew, Johnson's Sly is entertained by a group of neighbours, who perform for him a ballad in the form of a dialogue between a cobbler and his wife, which accurately reflects the misguided Sly and might be understood as a reversed taming story, in which it is the wife who attempts to tame her husband:

You riot and roar
For Babylon*'s Whore,*
And give up your Bible and Psalter:
I prithee, dear Kit,
Have a little more Wit,
And keep thy Neck out of the Halter.[93]

No reformation, however, takes place in the song. Instead, the cobbler does not give up his political ambitions and he refuses to return to his former profession: '*I'll new-vamp the State; / The Church I'll translate: / Old Shoes are no more worth the mending*.'[94] Sly is amused, recognising his former self in the story, and orders a large jug of strong beer. His wife, Joan, appears, scolding Sir Charles and his attendants that they 'may be ashamed . . . to keep a Woman's Husband here Ranting and Scanting, when he shou'd be a pains-taking with his poor Wife at Home,'[95] but she is forced out. Sly continues drinking and, having once more expressed his Jacobite stance ('Dub – Rub, Dub a Dub! Rumps and Round-Heads, Rumps and Round-Heads! I'll be a Rebel, down with the Rump'),[96] falls asleep. At the end of the first act, Sir Charles orders that Sly be returned to his house, while he and the remainder of his pro-Hanoverian household will have 'the Surloin of Beef I order'd to be ready by Three . . . with a Flask of spritely *Burgundy*, to drink his Majesty's Health, and all the Royal Family.'[97]

The second act of Johnson's *Cobler* is largely original. Sly wakes up in his bed, and his wife and their neighbour convince him that his lordly memories

92 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 14. These are some of the few lines in the farce taken verbatim from Shakespeare (*The Taming of the Shrew*, Induction 2.83–84), even set in original blank verse in the otherwise predominantly prose text.
93 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 18. It is interesting to observe here a link between (late-)Restoration Shakespeare and the ballad culture that Depledge suggests (see above).
94 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 19.
95 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 21.
96 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 23.
97 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 24.

were just a dream. Disappointed, he sits down to work, but Sir Charles's attendants come to his house, lamenting that their lord's (that is, Sly's) 'old Distraction' has returned;[98] bringing him his nobleman's clothes, they offer to take Sly back to his palace. Sly is again confused, and when getting dressed, he makes an aside remark to the audience, '*I am devilishly afraid I am but a Pretender*'[99] – a reference to James Francis Edward Stuart, nicknamed by the Whigs the Old Pretender (and King James III by the Jacobites), whose claim to the English throne is compared here to the ignorant cobbler's claim to lordship.

The 'taming' of Sly takes place in Sir Charles's mansion – similarly to Petruccio's taming of Katherina in his house. Sir Charles and his companions stage a storming of the house by dragoons, convincing Sly that he has been charged with treason and is to be executed. With a halter around his neck, Sly confesses that he was 'drawn away, as they sayn, to Drink your Jacobite Papish Healths,' which he initially did 'for the Love of the Beer only,' and then that he and his companions used to 'beat and knock down all People who were soberly disposed' and also 'most abominably disuse both the King and the Parliament.'[100] After making him promise that he will amend his ways, one of Sir Charles's companions, posing as the captain of the dragoons, releases Sly, saying, 'Then get thee Home, honest *Kit*; learn to Cobble thy Shoes, and let the Commonwealth alone.'[101] The reconciliation is underscored by a masque, commissioned for Sly by Sir Charles (sadly, it is not described in the printed edition of the farce). In the final verses of the piece, the reformed Sly promises to

> *never Rail against the Crown,*
> *Nor swallow Traytors Healths, in Bumpers down;*
> *Nor sham Pretences of Religion forge,*
> *But with true Protestants cry, Live King GEORGE.*[102]

The political message of the afterpiece, which could be called 'the taming of a Tory,' is supported by the motto printed on the frontispiece of the playbook: *Ne Sutor ultra Crepidam*, meaning 'Shoemaker, not beyond the shoe.' In the context of the moral of the piece, the Latin saying is not just a maxim dissuading amateurs from meddling in politics. As Katherine West Scheil points out, the motto had been connected in satirical works with John Hewson,

98 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 35.
99 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 36.
100 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 44.
101 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 45.
102 Johnson, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 47.

a one-eyed cobbler who joined Cromwell's army in the mid-17th century and was made lord and governor of Ireland. Scheil argues that Hewson was in all probability the real-life model for the otherwise generic misled Jacobite, creating a link between Civil War and anti-Jacobite literary traditions.[103] Still, despite its clearly political and didactic message, Johnson's *Cobler* remains an amusing, competently written afterpiece – one of the first of its kind to deploy a Shakespearean story. After its initial run of thirteen performances in February 1716 at Drury Lane, and two more each in April and October of that year, it was staged in Dublin, where it was even adapted into a ballad opera (this version, apparently staged in New Booth in Dame Street during its only season in 1730–1731, was printed in 1732).

It is, however, possible that the piece's topicality was one of the reasons why it did not return to London stages in the 18th century. In 1735, Drury Lane instead produced their own adaptation of Lacy's *Sauny the Scot*, the afterpiece ballad opera *A Cure for a Scold* by James Worsdale (Lacy's play itself remained in Lincoln's Inn Fields' repertory), and, as mentioned above, in 1754, Garrick's *Catharine and Petruchio*, which was performed until 1887 – more than forty years after the revival of Shakespeare's original in 1844.[104] When Johnson's farce was revived by Drury Lane in the 1817–1818 season, with the celebrated singer and comic actor Joseph Shepherd Munden as Kit Sly, a contemporary review in the *Morning Herald* praised the performance given by Munden, who 'raised a loud and continued roar of laughter'; the reviewer, however, also pointed out some 'glaring' faults of the farce, namely that 'there is something antiquated and repulsive, indeed, in its allusions to Whigs and Tories; and the object of the trick which is played upon the cobbler, – namely, to change his political sentiments, – does not easily come within the present rules of the stage.'[105] There is a question, of course, of to what extent these objections would be relevant for the 18th-century stage, especially in the early decades of the century, but the truth remains that, while Johnson's *Cobler* was reprinted multiple times in the course of the century in Dublin, it does not seem to have enjoyed a London edition after 1716.

Despite its brevity and relative simplicity, Christopher Bullock's afterpiece of the same title proved to be a successful competitor to Johnson's farce. Even from the opening of Bullock's piece, the diametrically opposed approach of the author to his task is clearly discernible. In the vein of Lincoln's Inn Fields' appeals for political non-involvement, the prologue promises that – although

103 See K. W. Scheil, *The Taste of the Town: Shakespearian Comedy and the Early Eighteenth-Century Theater*, Lewisburg, Bucknell University Press, 2003, pp. 163–168.

104 Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text*, p. 1.

105 Quoted in T. S. Munden, *Memoirs of Joseph Shepherd Munden, Comedian*, London, Richard Bentley, 1844, p. 260.

the piece's title might invite '*Some Heads, brim-full of Politicks*' to expect a controversy – it does not wish to '*run Headlong on a Party-snare*' but rather to do what '*Old* Shakespear *made – to ridicule a Sot*.'[106] The explicit mention of Shakespeare, whose name is completely absent from Johnson's piece or the printed playbook, is definitely noteworthy here. Even if it is possible that Johnson suppressed Shakespeare's contribution to a low-brow farce 'in the interests of Shakespeare's authorial honour,' as Dobson maintains,[107] and that Bullock, in contrast, evoked Shakespeare's textual authority to 'convince the eighteenth-century theatergoing audience that he did not steal from his rival, Charles Johnson,' as Charles Conaway suggests,[108] there might be another explanation for this difference. Just as the authors of the earlier (and later, for that matter) political adaptations employed Shakespeare's name to attribute their own agendas to him, Bullock's words '*we've no Plot / But what Old* Shakespear *made*'[109] could be understood as an assurance that the Lincoln's Inn Fields play will stay true to the old classic and remain *free* of contemporary references. As will become apparent from the summary of the plot, although Bullock does deviate from Shakespeare's original, he does it (unlike Johnson) merely for the sake of expanding on Shakespeare's story, not due to a desire to imbue it with contemporaneous topicality.

What is also interesting to observe is how the two rival farces display the rising notion of the textual integrity of a work in its printed form. While in the theatre, general audiences can hardly judge what portion of the language comes from the source and what is the adapter's invention, in a published playbook, a comparison with an edition of the source is possible. In contrast with Johnson, Bullock not only openly admits his indebtedness to Shakespeare's older play in his preface, but he also clearly distinguishes his own words from those of his model in the text of the farce itself:

> *I have the Story as it was wrote by* Shakespear *in the* Taming of the Shrew*; and part of his Language I have made use of, with a little Alteration (which for the Satisfaction of my Readers, I have distinguish'd by this Mark " before each Line)*[.][110]

This was, of course, at least partly motivated by a desire to ridicule Johnson and present Bullock as a more honest and diligent author. But Bullock's gesture towards Shakespeare's language also foreshadows its treatment in the

106 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, Prologue (page not given).
107 Dobson, *The Making of the National Poet*, p. 112.
108 C. Conaway, 'Shakespeare, Molly House Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Stage', *Comparative Drama* vol. 38, no. 4, 2004, p. 402.
109 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, Prologue (page not given).
110 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. vi.

decades to follow, when Shakespeare's genius became more and more associated with his words as they were originally written.[111]

The plot of Bullock's farce is simple: the titular cobbler, here named Toby Guzzle, has an argument with his wife about his drinking and profanity, prefiguring the central conflict of the piece. Dame Hacket, an alewife, demands that Guzzle pay his reckoning; when he refuses and even offends Hacket ('You are a Baggage, and you lye . . . you must spoil [an honest fellow's] Sport with your damn'd ill-contriv'd Jade's tricks'),[112] she leaves to fetch the headborough, while Guzzle falls asleep on the ground. Sir Jasper Manly[113] and his attendants are passing by, returning from a hunt, and spot the sleeping cobbler. Sir Jasper immediately devises a trick on Guzzle, suggesting that he be brought to his home, dressed as a lord, and have 'a Banquet ready, Musick and Wine to entertain him.'[114] After this episode, Bullock adds an original scene, central to the piece's main theme, just like the aforementioned scene with Cicely and the Constable in Johnson's piece. For Johnson, the main interest was the cobbler's Jacobitism and his political conversion, which was reflected in the additional scene; for Bullock, by contrast, it is the theatricality of male-female and female-female relationships that the parallel scene clearly foreshadows. The scene in Bullock's *Cobler* thus includes a fierce fight between Toby's wife, Dorcas, and Dame Hacket, whom Dorcas accuses of stealing her husband. Both women insult one another, calling the other one a 'Hussy' or a 'Whore,'[115] and argue which one is entitled to treat Guzzle violently for his trespasses. While Dame Hackett maintains that 'if he comes to my House again, I'll comb his Head with a three-footed Stool,' Dorcas objects, asserting, 'I am his wife, and may correct him by Authority my self, yet no body else shall.'[116] Ultimately, they decide to take their case to Sir Jasper, at which point the audience can assume a surprise encounter of the two women with the inebriated Guzzle, dressed as a lord.

What is significant for the physical humour of the scene is the fact that, unlike in Johnson's farce, where both female characters are present (played by Mary Willis and Katherine Baker) but are not at the centre of attention, Bullock expanded their roles with two celebrated male comedians in mind: John Hall and Benjamin Griffin. Hall was one of the leading comic actors of Lincoln's Inn Fields from the theatre's very first season. Contemporary testimonies describe him as 'Fat' or 'something too corpulent' (among his roles

111 For more on this issue, see Marsden, *The Re-Imagined Text*.
112 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 4.
113 'Mr. Manly' is also the name of the Petruccio character in Worsdale's *A Cure for a Scold* mentioned above.
114 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 5.
115 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 7.
116 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, pp. 6–7.

was Falstaff in Shakespeare's *Henry IV*); furthermore, he also had 'a thickness of Speech that might be mimick'd with Ease.'[117] Both these features surely contributed to his desirability as a comedian and made him ideal for roles in farces, where the physicality of the actor's body significantly contributed to dramatic situations.[118] Hall's acting partner, on the other hand, was 'short and slight of build' and established himself in Lincoln's Inn Fields as 'a low comedian, specialising in testy old men and skirts parts.'[119] Similarly to Hall, as a stutterer, Griffin had a distinct way of speaking.[120] The pairing of Hall and Griffin, a fat and a slim actor with speech impediments, as two quarrelsome women, must have been a highlight of the performance and surely contributed to the farce's popularity.

Indeed, the bodies of the actors play a significant role in the second half of Bullock's *Cobler*, when Dorcas and Dame Hacket come before Guzzle, who, as a justice of the peace, is supposed to arbitrate their quarrel. At first, neither of the woman recognises the cobbler, but when the confused Guzzle starts rebuking them and asserting his superiority ('How! sure I know better than you, you Baggage; wou'd you give the Lye to *Authority*! throw the Lye in the very Face of *Authority* – I tell you I am *Authority*, and were I to say the *Moon* is made of a *Mustard-pot*, you must believe it'),[121] they recognise Dorcas's lost husband and begin swearing at him, calling him 'Dog' and 'Carrion Cur.'[122] To get rid of the two, Guzzle resorts to physical violence to 'tame' them: 'They

117 Quoted in 'Hall, John', in P. H. Highfill, Jr., K. A. Burnim, and E. A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, vol. 7, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1982, p. 27.

118 According to Leo Hughes, the actor was something that might have made a difference between a successful and an unsuccessful farce: 'As we range through the texts of farces printed in the period under survey we are vaguely conscious of missing something. Where there is so much repetition of the same device, so little variation from a conventionalized pattern of intrigue, it is sometimes hard to see how one farce caught on while a half dozen others, not strikingly different in the reading, failed. What was the secret ingredient which enabled the one to outdistance and outlast the others? Most often the answer is, I believe, the action or the actor. What is dead and repetitious on the printed page may well have been very much alive in the capable hands of a trained farceur' (L. Hughes, *A Century of English Farce*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1956, p. 153).

119 'Griffin, Benjamin', in P. H. Highfill, Jr., K. A. Burnim, and E. A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, vol. 6, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1978, p. 365.

120 T. Howe, 'Abject, Delude, Create: The Aesthetic Self-Consciousness of Early Eighteenth-Century Farce', *Restoration and Eighteenth-Century Theatre Research*, vol. 25, no. 1, 2011, p. 31.

121 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 14. Cf. Petruccio's insistence that, at midday, it is the moon that shines so brightly: 'Now by my mother's son, and that's myself, / It shall be moon, or star, or what I list' (*The Taming of the Shrew* 4.5.6–7).

122 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 15. Here, we can observe the reversal of Shakespeare's text: Toby Guzzle fails miserably where his Italianate model previously succeeded (cf. Katherina's 'be it moon, or sun, or what you please. / And if you please to call it a rush-candle, / Henceforth I vow it shall be so for me' – *The Taming of the Shrew* 4.5.13–15).

are scolding Queans, and let 'em be *whipt*, or carry 'em to the *Ribble* and duck 'em – I'll try if I can tame you.'[123] The protesting women are taken away, only to appear again in the following scene '*Wet and Dirty*,' as the stage direction describes them.[124]

The presence of two male actors on the stage in wet women's clothes must have induced laughter – presumably more laughter than two actresses in the same situation would have caused. We can also assume that for an 18th-century audience it would have been hardly imaginable to see two actresses being beaten by a male actor in the final scene of the farce (as the stage direction reads, when Dorcas and Dame Hacket beat Guzzle with a stick, he '*Takes his Strap from his Shoulders, and beats both of 'em*').[125] It could be argued that, while Johnson's farce is more complex and more elaborate, and has a clearer didactic message that surpasses the genre of low comedy, Bullock was ingenious in toying with the theatrical conventions of his time and made use of the potential of his acting company in order to produce a simpler, yet more theatrically effective dramatic piece.

While Bullock is ostentatiously apolitical in his work – even waspishly remarking in the preface that '*that* Writer*'s Wit must sure be at a low Ebb, which can only be supported by one* Party *for railing at another; and how beneath the Dignity of a* Theatre *such sort of writing is, I leave to the Determination of the* Unbyas'd'[126] – the ending of his *Cobler* seems to be very much rooted in the political reality of the moment. When Guzzle starts beating his wife and the hostess, they both start shouting, 'Hold, hold, a Truce, a Truce,' upon which both the cobbler and the women lay down their weapons and Guzzle suggests that they all 'shake Hands, laugh at all that has happen'd, and drown Animosities in a dozen of Ale.'[127] Focusing on the gender dynamic of the piece, Conaway argues that, by means of this ending, Bullock 'ridicules the idea that men can rule their wives.'[128] Guzzle's call for peace and friendship, however, resembles much more the political appeals of the Lincoln's Inn Fields plays of the period – be it the aforementioned '*Vertue in the Middle*' in Stormy's *The Compromise*, or Heartfree's observation at the end of Griffin's comedy *Whig and Tory* that 'Unity, Peace and friendly Offices to each other, are what we only want to make us happy.'[129] Although not mentioning Jacobites, Whigs, or Tories, the final call for settlement when both parties symbolically lay down their weapons would have certainly been recognised by the audience

123 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 15.
124 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 18.
125 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 20.
126 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, pp. vii–viii.
127 Bullock, *The Cobler of Preston*, p. 20.
128 Conaway, 'Shakespeare, Molly House Culture, and the Eighteenth-Century Stage', p. 406.
129 B. Griffin, *Whig and Tory*, London, printed for N. Mist, 1720, p. 87.

as a topical comment, especially in a farce responding to Johnson's politically controversial work.

As has been mentioned, Johnson's *Cobbler* disappeared rather quickly from the London stage, having enjoyed just seventeen productions between February and October of 1716. Bullock's competing farce, on the other hand, was performed regularly between 1716 and 1720, to be revived several times in the 1720s, 30s, 40s, and 50s. Writing just over a decade after the premiere of both pieces, Akerby insisted that it was Bullock's unscrupulous practices that 'robb'd the above-mention'd ingenious Mr. *Charles Johnson* of great Part of the large Profits which he expected from the Run of a *Farce*.'[130] It is, however, more tempting to conclude that Bullock, who unlike Johnson was an actor himself, better understood the demands of the new genre than his opponent and was better able to put them into practice, even if his piece was hastily written and rehearsed.

It is difficult to judge to what extent the appeal to Shakespeare's authority was a strategy on Bullock's part, or whether he simply picked a suitable plot that best served his intentions. As Scheil points out, Johnson and Bullock's *Coblers* 'had a lasting impact on later shrew-taming and cobbler texts' that kept appearing throughout the 18th century, such as Charles Coffey's farcical opera *The Merry Cobler* (1735), James Worsdale's aforementioned ballad opera *A Cure for a Scold* (1735), or the 1749 burletta *The Jovial Cobler*.[131] However, it seems that through both pieces (and the scandal that surrounded them), Shakespeare primarily contributed to the establishment of comedic/farcical afterpieces as a form that gained popularity in the mid-1710s and soon became an indispensable part of the London theatres' double or triple bills.

'A BOON VOYAGE, AND A MERRY GALE TO THEM, SAY I'

Of all the early 18th-century (pseudo-)Shakespearean entertainments addressed here, Susanna Centlivre's farce *A Bickerstaff's Burying; or, Work for the Upholders* is in many ways unique and differs from the rest of the group. It was first staged as a curtain-raiser at the Drury Lane Theatre on March 27, 1710, and, rather than an adaptation of Shakespeare as such (even in the broadest sense of the word), it combines several sources and inspirations while employing elements from Shakespeare's *The Tempest* to furnish the frame of the plot and some of its characters, and, perhaps, also to pay homage to Shakespeare himself. Shakespeare thus becomes here a recognisable, but not an obviously dominant source of a popular theatrical entertainment.

130 Akerby, *Spiller's Jests*, p. 24.
131 Scheil, *The Taste of the Town*, pp. 179–180.

At the beginning of the four-scene piece, an English ship is caught by a storm and runs ashore on the fictitious Isle of Cosgar. While the crew is repairing the ship and looking for provisions to continue their journey, the ship's Captain encounters his old acquaintance from London, Mrs Take-it, also formerly known as 'the Rose in *Covent Garden*' (suggesting that she is a former actress, or perhaps a woman of ill repute frequenting the Covent Garden Theatre),[132] and her Cosgar-born niece with English heritage named Isabinda. Mrs Take-it, now Lady Mezro, explains to the Captain that she sailed to the Indies to find a husband but her ship ran aground on the island and she became stuck there. Mrs Take-it ultimately did marry – a rich Cosgarian emir – but, as Isabinda explains, according to a 'barbarous Custom of our Country; first ordain'd from frequent Poysoning here . . . whichsoever of the married Pair died first, the Survivor is buried with alive, drest, and adorn'd, for a second Nuptial.'[133] As it turns out, the old Emir (a descendant of old husbands from Restoration comedies who married young wives) fakes illness to get attention from his wife, since – in his own words – 'this is the only Way I could ever find to keep her in Subjection,' adding that 'If all *English* Wives are such Gadders, Heaven help their Husbands, I say.'[134]

The Captain, who has fallen in love with Isabinda, devises a plan for both women to escape. Mrs Take-it pretends her own death, upon which the desperate Emir's true state is revealed. First, he starts praying to Allah to 'give me back her Life, and let her cuckold me with every thing she meets; let her be the veriest Wife that ever *England* bred, I never will be jealous more';[135] then, seeing that prayers will not help, he runs away to avoid his fate. In the meantime, Mrs Take-it and Isabinda pack their jewels and valuables and board the repaired ship with the Captain. In the final scene, the Emir is dragged back to be buried with his wife, but when her coffin is opened, it transpires that it is empty. A servant arrives informing the Emir that 'the Ship that was cast here, yesterday, is gone off, and with it your Lady, Niece and Maid, with all your Jewels.'[136] The Emir rejoices, wishes the ship and its passengers 'a boon Voyage, and a merry Gale to them' and, asking for music and dances, swears never to marry again.[137]

The title, as well as the overall premise of the piece, refers to the conceit presented in Joseph Addison and Richard Steele's journal *The Tatler* (published between 1709 and 1711 under the name of the fictitious author 'Isaac

132 S. Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying; or, Work for the Upholders*, London, printed for Bernard Lintott, 1710, p. 3.
133 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 7.
134 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 13.
135 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 17.
136 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 23.
137 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 23.

Bickerstaff, Esq.'), according to which 'whoever resides in the world without having any business in it, and passes away an age without ever thinking on the errand for which he was sent hither, is . . . a dead man to all intents and purposes,' while 'the living are only those that are some way or other laudably employed in the improvement of their own minds, or for the advantage of others.'[138] In one of the subsequent issues, Steele's Bickerstaff returned to this idea and, claiming that he had tried and failed 'to bring those who are dead in idleness, folly, and pleasure, into life, by applying themselves to learning, wisdom, and industry,' he announced his plan to 'give my good friends, the company of upholders, full power to bury all such Dead as they meet with, who are within my former descriptions of deceased persons.'[139] In her preface to *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, Centlivre dedicates her farce to the *'Magnificent Company of* Upholders'[140] – a satirical reference to the Worshipful Company of Upholders, which in the previous years had contributed to funerals being turned into lavish spectacles, not unlike theatre productions of a kind.[141] Elaborating on the words of Steele's Bickerstaff, Centlivre maintains that

> *in this crouded Town, there are a Prodigious Number of Mr.* Bickerstaff*'s Dead Men, that swarm about Streets; therefore, for the Sakes of the most ingenious Part of Mankind, you* [the upholders] *ought to take Care to interr them out of the Way, since he that does no Good in his Generation, should not be reckon'd among the Living.*[142]

In the context of the connection between Steele's Bickerstaff and Centlivre's farce, it was surely not a mere coincidence that the role of the Captain was played by a John Bickerstaff (or Biggerstaff), chiefly a comedian at Drury Lane, 'a useful secondary actor and an earnest worker.'[143] On one occasion,

138 Steele and Addison, *The Tatler*, vol. 2, p. 361.

139 Steele and Addison, *The Tatler*, vol. 2, p. 382.

140 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, Dedication (page not given).

141 Centlivre comments on the spectacular character of funerals of the time when mentioning the upholders' '*solemn Train*' which '*keeps up the pompous State of Beauty, beyond the Limits of a Gasp of Breath, and draws the gazing World to admire, even after Death*' (Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, Dedication (page not given)). For more on the development of the funeral business in the late 17th and early 18th century and the role of upholders in it, see R. A. Aubin, 'Behind Steele's Satire on Undertakers', *PMLA*, vol. 64, no. 5, 1949, pp. 1008–1026. Tonya Howe addresses Centlivre's piece within the framework of the corporeality of early 18th-century farces, maintaining that these works are 'replete with characters whose bodies fully inhabit the space of farce, with actors whose bodies and roles give dimension to that space. The chest, the trunk, the sack, coffin, cellar, and well: these are all spaces where the bodies that inhabit them are disarticulated, beaten, and humiliated, then exposed as bodies without which, living would not be possible' (Howe, 'Abject, Delude, Create', pp. 41–42).

142 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, Dedication (page not given).

143 'Bickerstaff, John', in P. H. Highfill, Jr., K. A. Burnim, and E. A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, vol. 2, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1973, p. 110.

'Isaac Bickerstaff' even referred to John Bickerstaff (who, besides his surname, had no relation to Steele or Addison) in *The Tatler* as 'my near kinsman,' further strengthening the alleged link between the fictitious journal editor, Centlivre, and the Drury Lane Theatre.[144]

To present the 'lucubrations' from *The Tatler* on the stage, Centlivre found her main inspiration in the famous collection of oriental tales now known as *One Thousand and One Nights*, which was compiled and translated into French by Antoine Galland (as *Les Mille et une nuits*, published in twelve volumes between 1704 and 1717) and, even before the complete set by Garland appeared, translated from the French by an anonymous author as *Arabian Nights Entertainments* (the final volume appearing in about 1721; by then, however, the previous volumes had enjoyed multiple reeditions). The impact of the collection as a source of inspiration for 18th-century English writers can hardly be overestimated, with authors such as Jonathan Swift, Joseph Addison, and Alexander Pope being among its first readers.[145] As Robert L. Mack maintains, 'the inclusion of at least one oriental tale in an author's output seems by mid-century to have become almost *de rigueur*.'[146] However, at the beginning of the century, when Centlivre's farce was written and staged, critical opinion on *Arabian Nights Entertainments* was rather cool: in 1711, the Earl of Shaftesbury lamented that 'monsters and monsterland were never more in request,' arguing that 'we may often see a philosopher, or wit, run a tale-gathering in these idle deserts as familiarly as the silliest woman or merest boy.'[147] Similarly, Bishop Atterbury in 1720 derided the collection as 'the product of some Womans Imagination.'[148] The tone of these assessments is remarkably similar to the contemporaneous criticism of popular theatre entertainment mentioned above. A certain affinity between what was perceived as 'low' literary and 'low' theatrical genres thus appears to be only logical. By deploying *Arabian Nights Entertainments* in her dramatic piece, Centlivre even seems to have been ahead of most authors of prose fiction of the time, as Addison's pioneering pseudo-Oriental tale, 'The Vision of Mirza,' appeared in *The Spectator* as late as 1711.[149] One might ironically attribute Centlivre's quick ability to recognise – and creatively employ – the potential of the stories to her 'Womans Imagination' that she supposedly shared with them.

144 Steele and Addison, *The Tatler*, vol. 1, p. 30.

145 P. L. Caracciolo, Introduction to P. L. Caracciolo (ed.), *The Arabian Nights in English Literature: Studies in the Reception of The Thousand and One Nights into British Culture*, Houndmills and London, Macmillan Press, 1988, p. 2.

146 R. L. Mack, Introduction to R. L. Mack (ed.), *Arabian Nights' Entertainments*, Oxford and New York, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. xvii.

147 Quoted in Caracciolo, Introduction to *The Arabian Nights in English Literature*, p. 3.

148 Quoted in Caracciolo, Introduction to *The Arabian Nights in English Literature*, p. 3.

149 Caracciolo, Introduction to *The Arabian Nights in English Literature*, p. 2.

The specific premise for the plot of the farce was lifted from 'The Fourth Voyage of Sindbad the Sailor,' which stretches across Nights 77 to 82 of the collection. In the self-contained narrative, Sindbad is shipwrecked because of 'a sudden Gust of Wind' in which 'the Sails were tore in a thousand pieces, and the Ship was stranded' and 'a great many of the Merchants and Seamen were drown'd and the Cargo lost,'[150] upon which (after a dramatic encounter with cannibals) he finds himself on an exotic island where he wins the favour of the local king and, at the king's request, marries 'a Noble, Beautiful, Chaste, and Rich Lady' of the court.[151] Only after the wedding does Sindbad learn about the 'Barbarous Custom' of the island, according to which '*the living Husband is interr'd with the dead Wife, and the living Wife with the dead Husband.*'[152] Within several days, Sinbad's wife falls ill and dies; Sinbad is buried with her corpse in a hollow mountain, but ultimately manages to find a way out of the dungeon and escape the island on a merchant ship with all the riches placed in his wife's coffin.

The details of the relationship between Emir Mezro and Mrs Take-it in Centlivre's piece (mirroring the marriage of Sindbad and the unnamed court lady, just with the gender reversal) are based on the common (post-) Restoration trope of an old man marrying a much younger woman, which had previously been effectively deployed by playwrights such as William Wycherley, Aphra Behn, John Vanbrugh, Mary Pix, and many others. After all, '*young Wives who had sold themselves for Money, and been inter'd with Misery, from the first Day of their Marriage*' and '*Old Men . . . who, despising Women of their own Years, marry Girls of fifteen, by which they keep open House for all the young Fellows in Town,*' are explicitly scorned by Centlivre in her Dedication.[153] The plot-line involving the escape from the island, however, shows the clear influence of Shakespeare's *The Tempest* – or, rather, Thomas Shadwell's 1674 operatic version of John Dryden and William Davenant's adaptation of Shakespeare, which was in the first decade of the 18th century regularly staged. Mrs Take-it and Isabinda remind the audience of Prospero and Miranda (to whom Dryden and Davenant even gave a sister named Dorinda), not only by being outsiders to the island who eventually return on a ship to their homeland (Isabinda, although Cosgar-born, boasts having 'a *British* Soul' thanks to Mrs Take-it's education),[154] but also, for instance, by observing and commenting on the shipwreck at the beginning of the farce, effectively taking on Prospero and Miranda's roles in Act One, Scene Two of *The Tempest* (both

150 *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, 2nd ed., vol. 3, London, printed for Andrew Bell, 1712, p. 38.
151 *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, p. 43.
152 *Arabian Nights Entertainments*, pp. 43–44.
153 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, Dedication (page not given).
154 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 8.

Shakespeare's and Shadwell's). Centlivre's Captain, by falling in love with Isabinda and bringing her home as his wife, echoes Shakespeare's Ferdinand and his love for Miranda. Even the opening of the farce seems to be a response to Shadwell's revision. Let us consider a passage from the opening masque of his version of *The Tempest*:

> *Behind this is the Scene, which represents a thick Cloudy Sky, a very Rocky Coast, and a Tempestuous Sea in perpetual Agitation. This Tempest (suppos'd to be rais'd by Magick) has many dreadful Objects in it, as several Spirits in horrid shapes flying down amongst the Sailers, then rising and crossing in the Air. And when the Ship is sinking, the whole House is darken'd, and a shower of Fire falls upon 'em. This is accompanied with Lightning, and several Claps of Thunder, to be the end of the Storm.*[155]

Now, let us compare this display with Centlivre's shorter, but evocative opening: '*A working Sea seen at a Distance, with the Appearance of a Head of a Ship bulging against a Rock: Mermaids rise and sing: Thunder and Lightning: Then the Scene shuts.*'[156] Considering that Shadwell's *The Tempest* had a major revival at Drury Lane in 1710 (enjoying six productions between January and May of that year) and that *A Bickerstaff's Burying* was produced on the same stage between March and May, it is easily conceivable that both plays shared the same stage effects, painted sceneries and props. Howe maintains that Restoration and early 18th-century farces were 'typically mined from other plays'[157] and, as I have discussed elsewhere, such 'mining' could (and usually did) go beyond the textual level and include physical objects on the stage, even the body of the actor.[158] In this case, moreover, sharing stage and story elements between two plays that were produced concurrently in the same theatre probably invoked a 'ghosting' effect that Marvin Carlson describes as a 'process of using the memory of previous encounters to understand and interpret encounters

155 J. Driden [Dryden], W. Davenant, and T. Shadwell, *The Tempest, or the Enchanted Island*, London, printed by T. N. for Henry Herringman, 1674, p. 1.

156 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 1.

157 Howe, 'Abject, Delude, Create', p. 26.

158 See F. Krajník, 'Haunted Purgatory: Boccaccio's *Decameron* 3.8 as an Eighteenth-Century Afterpiece', *Theory and Practice in English Studies*, vol. 10, no. 1, 2021, pp. 49–62. Although the cast lists from Drury Lane's 1700s and 1710s revivals of Shadwell's *The Tempest* are incomplete, it is not without interest that John Bickerstaff appears in them in the roles of Mustacho (in 1708) and Stephano (in 1714, 1717, and 1718). It is possible that the part of the Captain in Centlivre's piece had him 'promoted' in the subsequent productions of *The Tempest* from the 'Mate' of the Master of the Ship to the 'Master of the Ship' (as the roles are described in the printed playbook) himself, making the ghosting effect even stronger (Shadwell, *The Tempest*, sig. A4^{v}). Sadly, the cast lists from the 1710 productions only give the actors playing Prospero and Dorinda, and, for the 12 May production, the actors of the small roles of Trincalo and Ventoso (with the latter only advertised as 'a Gentleman'). It is very tempting to think that Bickerstaff played both the Captain in *A Bickerstaff's Burying* and the Master of the Ship in *The Tempest* even that season.

with new and somewhat different but apparently similar phenomena.'[159] Through such recycling, a theatre company could thus keep reminding the audience of another (arguably more important) production of theirs, as well as enjoy the financial saving of using expensive spectacular elements twice. It is, therefore, entirely possible that Shakespeare's (or Dryden's, Davenant's, or Shadwell's) source play entered Centlivre's farce not only on the level of plot elements, character delineations, and individual motifs, but also on the visual and acoustic levels, where the immediate effect on the audience was conceivably even more obvious and powerful.

More subtle echoes of, and allusions to, *The Tempest* are further scattered across the entire farce. Here are several examples: 1) When the Captain in *A Bickerstaff's Burying* hears Mrs Take-it speak for the first time, he surprisingly exclaims, 'Ha! *English!* Nay, then I am not so far out of Knowledge as I imagin'd';[160] when Fernando in *The Tempest* is addressed by Miranda, he is similarly surprised, shouting, 'My language too! O Heavens! I am the best of them who speak this speech when I'm in my own Countrey';[161] 2) The constant reminder of the 'riches' of Cosgar is reminiscent of the riches of the Shakespearean island, mentioned, besides other places, in Ariel's song 'Full fathom five,' which vividly describes riches growing out of dead bodies buried underwater. In this context, it is interesting to note one of Centlivre's sailors claiming that for wealth 'I'd dive to the Bottom of the Sea, and venture being swallow'd by a Shark';[162] 3) When the English ship is about to set off, a sailor hopes for a safe journey in a rhymed tercet, 'Blow gently, *Boreas*, *Neptune's* Rage confound, / And set us safely upon *British* Ground, / Where we will drink and sing till the whole World goes round,'[163] which sounds like a burlesque of a masque-like song from Shadwell's *The Tempest* performed by classical deities raised by Prospero before the ship leaves the island:

Amph[itrite]. *My Lord: Great* Neptune, *for my sake,*
Of these bright Beauties pity take:
And to the rest allow
Your mercy too.
Let this inraged Element be still,
Let Æolus *obey my will:*
Let him his boystrous Prisoners safely keep
In their dark Caverns, and no more

159 M. Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as a Memory Machine*, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 2001, p. 6.
160 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 3.
161 Driden [Dryden], Davenant, and Shadwell, *The Tempest*, p. 43.
162 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 10.
163 Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, p. 21.

Let 'em disturb the bosome of the Deep,
Till these arrive upon their wish'd-for Shore.[164]

While Shakespeare did not provide the main textual source for *A Bickerstaff's Burying*, and Centlivre utilised multiple models for her piece, it is clear that she consciously worked with Shakespearean material and that Shakespeare permeates both the overall structure of her piece and its individual motifs, speeches, and situations. Of all the apparent sources that Centlivre utilised, her work with Shakespeare is by far the most nuanced and systematic – despite the fact that, on the textual level, Shakespeare is virtually absent from Centlivre's work. *A Bickerstaff's Burying* remains a valuable document of how playwrights could employ Shakespearean material for the new needs of the theatre business and in what forms Shakespeare could be present in various strata of early 18th-century English theatre culture. Given the simultaneous staging of Centlivre's piece and Shadwell's operatic version of *The Tempest* at Drury Lane, Centlivre's farce might also give us some clues concerning the production practices of London theatres at the time. While the piece was staged only four times at Drury Lane during the 1709–1710 theatrical season and was once revived in 1711 as a benefit performance for John Bickerstaff, the title page of its 1724 Dublin reprint states that the play 'is ACTED at the *THEATRES*, with Applause,'[165] indicating that it might have enjoyed some revival either in smaller London theatres or in the provinces, perhaps inspired by Centlivre's death in December 1723 and the subsequent hunger for her works.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

The first decades of the 18th century were a turbulent period for England, for English theatre culture, and for Shakespeare. Competition between the theatres forced the theatre managers to come up with new kinds of material that would satisfy London theatregoers. Commercial gain became the key motivation for theatre business and theatre development, and new commercial genres began to dominate London stages. Shakespeare, whose status had begun to rise in the last couple of decades of the 17th century, became a rich source for the new, popular dramaturgy. In the period under study, Shakespeare thus started to exist simultaneously within two orders of theatre entertainment: as a straight author of five-act plays (that were also printed in lavish book collections) and as a model for light-hearted and cheap but popu-

164 Driden [Dryden], Davenant, and Shadwell, *The Tempest*, p. 78.
165 S. Centlivre, *A Bickerstaff's Burying; or, Work for the Upholders*, Dublin, printed by S. Powell for George Risk, 1724, title page (italics original).

lar pieces. As we have seen, despite contemporaneous criticism of commercial entertainments (which sometimes even came from their very authors) and the critics' tendency to draw a sharp line between what they perceived as high culture (often represented by Shakespeare) and its low counterpart, Shakespeare's role in the latter was undeniable. Moreover, we have seen that Shakespeare in both cultural forms often met on the same stage, as if becoming an active mediator between the two domains of entertainment.

The specific ways in which Shakespeare was employed by early 18th-century playwrights could differ, from lifting entire passages almost verbatim (as we have seen in the adaptations of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*) to a more general inspiration or a borrowing of motifs or characters traits (as we have seen in both versions of *The Cobler of Preston* or in *A Bickerstaff's Burying*). One Shakespearean story or element could travel across genres and cultural strata, testifying not only to Shakespeare's versatility, but also – and perhaps more importantly – to the fluidity and vibrant character of contemporaneous theatre culture.

Given the 'non-literary' character of early 18th-century popular entertainments, any probe into them is necessarily incomplete. As we have seen, a specific stage, prop, or actor could play a significant role in the final shape of the production – a shape that nowadays we are not able fully to reconstruct. Moreover, a number of productions from the period that would allow us to create a fuller picture of Shakespeare's influence on commercial genres do not survive simply because they were not deemed worthy of a printed edition. Between October 1723 and December 1724, for instance, the performer Anthony Aston (alias 'Mat Medley') composed and performed his medley of scenes from popular plays at several London taverns, accompanied by his own music and dancing.[166] From the records, we know that the bill included scenes from the aforementioned *Sauny the Scot* and George Granville's *The Jew of Venice* (a 1701 adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*), as well as 'The Gravediggers' routine from *Hamlet*. We can only speculate how these sketches represented Shakespeare's material, how they were staged, and whether they were somehow based on previous short adaptations (for instance, Kirkman's *The Grave-makers*). On February 21, 1728, a 'Dramatick Entertainment of Dancing in Grotesque Characters' titled *The Rivals; or, The Happy Despair* premiered at the Haymarket Theatre. Most probably it was a pantomimic adaptation of Davenant's *The Rivals*, which was derived from Shakespeare and Fletcher's *The Two Noble Kinsmen*. The text (or, rather, the description of the scenic action) does not survive, but even from the list of

166 See 'Aston, Anthony', in P. H. Highfill, Jr., K. A. Burnim, and E. A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, vol. 1, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1973, p. 155.

roles (which included, among others, Harlequin, Pantaloon, Columbine, Pierrot, and the Devils) we can assume that the adaptation capitalised on the popularity of the Harlequin Faustus pantomimes that appeared several years earlier at Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields. The piece was apparently popular and was staged thirteen times through May 1728. On June 3, 1734, a 'Farce of one Act' titled *The Humours of Sir John Falstaff, Justice Shallow, and Ancient Pistol* opened as an afterpiece at the Haymarket Theatre – again an instance of the possible continuum with an Interregnum droll. The afterpiece was staged only three times and was never published. On October 9 of the same year, the Covent Garden Theatre opened an afterpiece titled *See If You Like It; or, 'Tis All a Mistake*. As in the previous cases, the text does not survive (the piece enjoyed three reprises), but from contemporaneous testimonies we know that it combined Shakespeare's *The Comedy of Errors* with material from Plautus (who himself was the main source of Shakespeare's play) and that it was considered 'probably the worst' alteration of Shakespeare.[167] Sadly, more of these entertainments are lost to us than those that luckily survived.

Even with the limited knowledge of, and access to, the original sources, however, it is clear that in the first decades of the 18th century Shakespeare played an important role in establishing popular English theatre dramaturgy and that his influence certainly surpassed the domain of 'serious' theatre, with which some of the critics of the time wished to associate him exclusively.

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167 J. Doran, 'Love for, and the Lovers of, Shakspere', in S. Urban (ed.), *The Gentleman's Magazine*, vol. 45 (New Series), London, John Bowyer Nichols and Sons, 1856, p. 124.

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SOUND INSTEAD OF SENSE?
TWO 1730 BALLAD OPERAS AND THEIR ROLE IN THE THEATRICAL PUBLIC SPHERE OF EARLY 18TH-CENTURY LONDON

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When scholars analyse English ballad operas of the late 1720s and 1730s, they tend to concentrate on their three defining features. The first of these is the parody of Italian operas, embodied in the employment of popular contemporary tunes. The second one concerns political satire, so often exemplified by the mockery of Sir Robert Walpole in *The Beggar's Opera* (1728). The third commonly discussed feature is the inherent social criticism that these works almost invariably contained.[1] While all these issues are valid and help draw an informed picture of the form, there is yet another factor which contributed to the immense popularity of the dozens of English ballad operas in the early 18th century, and that is their engagement with the public discourse of the time. Drawing on Balme's book *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, the present chapter will first define the theatrical public sphere in early 18th-century London, then revisit two popular ballad operas, James Ralph's *The Fashionable Lady; or Harlequin's Opera* (1730) and Henry Fielding's *The Author's Farce; and the Pleasures of the Town* (1730), which competed with one another. The chapter will show that English ballad operas had the capacity to participate in the broader discussion of public affairs of the period that reached far beyond the space of London playhouses. Moreover, the comparison of Ralph's and Fielding's ballad operas will demonstrate that the authors' different techniques and levels of engagement in the theatrical public sphere of their period influenced the degree to which their operas were successful on stage.

1 For encyclopaedic summaries of ballad operas, see J. Girdham, 'Ballad Opera', in G. Newman (ed.), *Britain in the Hanoverian Age, 1714–1837: An Encyclopedia*, New York, Garland Publishing, 1997, pp. 40–41; and M. R. Griffel, 'A Brief History of Operas in English', in M. R. Griffel (ed.), *Operas in English: A Dictionary*, Plymouth, Scarecrow Press, 2013, pp. xiii–xxvi. For a more detailed discussion about the genre, see the second volume of Allardyce Nicoll's *History of English Drama 1660–1900*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1952. The two most recent studies devoted specifically to ballad operas, which both stress the prominence of social criticism, are Madeline Smith Atkins's *The Beggar's Children: How John Gay Changed the Course of England's Musical Theatre*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006; and Douglas Franklin O'Keefe's dissertation *Ballad Opera, Imitation, and the Formation of Genre*, Ph.D. diss., Evanston, Northwestern University, 2007.

THE LONDON THEATRICAL PUBLIC SPHERE IN THE 1730S[2]

Scholarship exploring the social development of 17th-century England indicates that, by the time of the premiere of Ralph's and Fielding's ballad operas in 1730, the notion of an existing and vibrant public was firmly rooted in the consciousness of the English people, a fact especially visible in the two chief public media of their time: newspapers and theatres. Journalists presented themselves as 'publick Writers,'[3] the theatre newspaper *The Prompter* was concerned about the 'Publick Taste,' and even threatened theatre managers with raising 'the Contempt of the Publick' if they do not clean their houses.[4] Theatre managers also made use of various newspapers, such as *The Daily Post*, *Daily Journal*, and *Daily Courant*, for the advertisement of the programmes that were to be performed in their 'publick Theatres.' Occasionally, they might even have felt the need to deploy the press publicly to step in when actors misused it for their own ends.[5] Aided by the growing industry of early journalism in maintaining contact with their audiences, theatres were established as one of the key public spaces of their time.

Theatres and their audiences also grew. To account for the position of ballad operas in repertories, it is useful to note that the 1720s and 1730s were boom years for the London theatre business. Whereas at the end of the 17th century, Londoners could choose among three theatres, by the time *The Beggar's Opera* premiered in 1728, four dominant playhouses had been competing on the market and two more were opened soon after, on account of ballad operas enjoying substantial commercial success.[6] The expansion of theatres

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2 The part of this section defining the concept of the theatrical public sphere has been published in my paper entitled '"Our National Taste": English Early Eighteenth-Century Stage as a Part of English National Identity', *Actes des JDJC*, no. 3: *Écrire la nation (XVIIe-XVIIIe siècles) / Writing the Nation (17th & 18th Centuries)*, 2021, pp. 24–33.

3 C. Molloy (ed.), 'Saturday Dec. 14, 1728', in *Select Letters Taken from Fog's Weekly Journal*, vol. 1, London, printed for the Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1732, p. 7.

4 *The Prompter*, 13 December 1734 (no. 10); 15 November 1734 (no. 2).

5 As was the case on February 28 in 1728, when the *Daily Journal* published that 'whereas Mrs Barbier has advertized that the Beggar's Opera is to be performed, for her Benefit, on the 16th March next; This is to inform the *Publick*, that such Advertisement was published without Consent of Mr Rich, and that the same will not be allow'd of' (quoted in E. L. Avery (ed.), *The London Stage 1660–1800, Part 2: 1700–1729*, vol. 2, Carbondale, Southern University Press, 1960, p. 961 (my emphasis)).

6 Drury Lane Theatre continued its activity and was soon joined by the Queen's (later King's) Theatre in the Haymarket, the new Lincoln's Inn Fields, and the Little Theatre in the Haymarket. The King's specialised in Italian opera and, thus, was not the main rival because it received funding from the King, but the remaining three competed fiercely (Avery (ed.), *The London Stage, Part 2: 1700–1729*, vol. 1, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1960, p. xxii). Moreover, after John Rich had made fortune on putting on Gay's *Beggar's Opera* at his Lincoln's Inn Fields Theatre, the subsequent boom in ballad operas led to the opening of the Goodman's Field Theatre in 1729, and Rich could afford to build another playhouse, the Theatre Royal in Covent Garden, to which he

led to profound experimentation with, and diversification of, the repertoire. By 1720, the usual five-act plays were frequently interlaced not only with singing, dancing, and acrobatics between the acts, but also followed by an afterpiece.[7]

It was mostly in the afterpiece position that ballad operas in the 1730s thrived. At the same time, however, the majority of ballad operas did not last long in the repertory. As Robert D. Hume points out, 'virtually all [ballad operas staged as] mainpieces failed outright, and only a few favourite afterpieces entered repertory.'[8] Nevertheless, *The Beggar's Opera* and the two operas analysed here survived as mainpieces at least for the whole first season. It will be later shown that one possible reason why *The Fashionable Lady* (13 recorded performances in its first season from its premiere on April 2, 1730, at Goodman's Fields) and *The Author's Farce* (41 recorded performances in its first season from its premiere on March 30, 1730, at the Little Theatre in Haymarket)[9] were successful was their direct engagement with the theatrical public sphere of the time.[10]

As the term theatrical public sphere suggests, Christopher Balme draws directly on Jürgen Habermas's theory of the public sphere, which has been very influential in the study of English early-modern politics, public opinion, and culture for the last three decades.[11] In short, Habermas's theory is based on the idea that a more or less unified bourgeois public sphere appeared in England at the turn of the 18th century, consisting of private individuals, such as merchants, bankers, and entrepreneurs, who formed a new public opposition to state authority and the growing bureaucratic apparatus. The

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and his company moved in 1732 (A. H. Scouten (ed.), *The London Stage 1660–1800, Part 3: 1729–1747*, vol. 1, Carbondale, Southern Illinois University Press, 1961, pp. xxi–xxvii).

7 Avery (ed.), *The London Stage, Part 2: 1700–1729*, vol. 1, p. cxvi.

8 R. D. Hume, 'Drama and Theatre in the Mid and Later Eighteenth Century', in J. Richetti (ed.), *The Cambridge History of English Literature, 1660–1780*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2005, p. 330.

9 The numbers derive from production accounts in Scouten (ed.), *The London Stage, Part 3: 1729–1747*, vol. 1.

10 Fielding's and Ralph's operas were selected for the analysis because they are both satires in the form of a rehearsal and competed against each other at the same time. There was another ballad opera written in a similar vein in the same season, Gabriel Odingsells's *Bayes's Opera*, which premiered at Drury Lane on the same day as *The Author's Farce* (March 30, 1730). *Bayes's Opera*, however, was not successful, as it disappeared after three nights to reemerge only for two afterpiece performances in July 1731.

11 See, for instance, A. Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: Pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997; D. Zaret, *Origins of Democratic Culture: Printing, Petitions, and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2000; B. Cowan, *The Social Life of Coffee: The Emergence of the British Coffeehouse*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 2005; P. Lake and S. Pincus, *The Politics of the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, Manchester and New York, Manchester University Press, 2007; or A. Vanhaelen and J. P. Ward's *Making Space Public in Early Modern Europe: Performance, Geography, Privacy*, New York and London, Routledge, 2013.

press played a crucial role in the exchange of ideas and prepared a forum for 'critical reasoning,' where public political affairs could be discussed and public opinion was developed.[12] Habermas basically imagines the turn of the 18th century in England as the key starting point of a modern European democratic society.

Since the 1990s, however, Habermas's theory has been widely reconsidered.[13] One of the chief objections aimed at Habermas's overemphasis on economic forces, which led to his neglect of culturally influential domains such as religion and science.[14] Others have challenged Habermas's choice of the period after the Glorious Revolution as the public sphere's emergence. As Lake and Pincus (2006) make clear, the narrative of the public sphere can also be applied with a good degree of justification to the entire period from the English Reformation up until the 18th century.[15] The chief objection, however, pertains to the idealised unity of the public sphere, which was originally presented by Habermas as a proto-democratic foundation of 18th-century bourgeois liberal society. In 1999, Habermas himself admitted that 'it is wrong to speak of one single public.'[16] It is useful, therefore, to think along the lines of what Paula McDowell calls 'separate though overlapping "publics",'[17] which, beside other things, enables us to view the theatre of the beginning of the 18th century as a distinct autonomous domain, partly separated from other social public spheres such as religion or politics.

It took some time before attention turned from the influence of political and religious issues on society to the theatre. John O'Brien (2004) was among the first who effectively employed the theory of the public sphere in a discussion of English pantomime.[18] Likewise, Rachel Willie (2013) has supported the view that 'drama played an active and tangible part in the formation of

12 J. Habermas, *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*, trans. T. Burger and F. Lawrence, Cambridge, Polity Press, 1992, pp. 24–29.

13 Habermas published his study *Die Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit* (*The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*) in German in 1962. Although his theory was introduced to non-German audiences by the English translation of Habermas's article 'The Public Sphere: An Encyclopaedia Article (1964)' (*New German Critique*, no. 3, 1974, pp. 49–55), his theory became influential on an international scale mostly after the publication of Habermas's study in English in 1989.

14 D. Zaret, 'Religion, Science, and Printing in the Public Spheres in Seventeenth-Century England', in C. Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere,* Cambridge, MA, and London, The MIT Press, 1999, pp. 223–228.

15 P. Lake and S. Pincus, 'Rethinking the Public Sphere in Early Modern England', *Journal of British Studies*, vol. 45, no. 2, 2006, p. 270.

16 J. Habermas, 'Further Reflections on the Public Sphere', in C. Calhoun (ed.), *Habermas and the Public Sphere*, Cambridge, MA, and London, The MIT Press, 1999, p. 424.

17 P. McDowell, *The Women of Grub Street: Press, Politics, and Gender in the London Literary Marketplace 1678–1730*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1998, p. 8.

18 J. O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain: Pantomime and Entertainment, 1690–1760*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004.

the publics.'[19] One of the most recent contributions to scholarship on the theatre's role in the public discourse, examining both pre-industrial as well as contemporary theatrical contexts, is Balme's *The Theatrical Public Sphere* (2014), which still, however, points out that 'compared to other disciplines, there has been relatively little discussion of the public sphere in theatre and the art studies.'[20] Balme's ideas about the public sphere of theatre will form the basis for the following discussion of early 18th-century London theatre and the role ballad operas played in it.

What exactly is the theatrical public sphere, and how did it manifest itself in London in the early 18th century? Even though Balme discusses at length the public sphere in various theatrical contexts, he never provides a clear general definition. Nevertheless, three key preconditions seem to be necessary: 1) the definition of theatre as a public institution; 2) the existence of censorship; and 3) the more or less universal access of private individuals to the theatrical medium.[21]

The idea of the English theatre's publicness started to take shape with the famous Vagabonds Act of 1572, which mandated all actors to find a noble patron,[22] which was replaced in 1660 by Charles II's royal patents granted to the theatre managers Thomas Killigrew and Sir William Davenant. Although not all playhouses of the 1730s could boast the possession of a royal patent, their general status as a public institution had been well established by that time.

The precondition of censorship helped legitimise the theatre's public role too. By imposing censorship, state authorities acknowledged theatre's power to participate in public affairs even to an undesirable degree. The value of censorship becomes more apparent when we look at today's theatres, which, by embracing artistic freedom of expression, have lost the dangerous edge associated with being a closely-watched medium. In Balme's words, the modern abolition of censorship has 'transformed the theatre from a rowdy,

19 R. Willie, 'Viewing the Paper Stage: Civil War, Print, Theatre and the Public Sphere', in A. Vanhaelen and J. P. Ward (eds.), *Making Space Public in Early Modern Europe: Performance, Geography, Privacy*, New York, Routledge, 2013, p. 57.

20 C. B. Balme, *Theatrical Public Sphere*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2014, p. 10.

21 Balme touches upon all three in his Introduction, but theatre's public dimension and the relationship between the private and the public is also discussed in Chapter 1, censorship mostly in Chapters 3 and 5. The decision to employ these three as the basic preconditions for the theatrical public sphere of the early 18th century is my own extension and application of Balme's arguments.

22 That was, however, still to a great extent connected to the medieval idea of the noble patron's public representation. Habermas calls the public image of nobility the 'publicness of representation' and views it as a precursor of the later bourgeois publicness based not on the status of princes but on the consensus of private individuals (Habermas, *The Structural Transformation*, p. 7). The Vagabond Act stands on the border of that conceptual shift.

potentially explosive gathering into a place of concentrated aesthetic absorption,' with freedom of expression having been 'obtained at the cost of theatre's . . . publicness.'[23] Although the 1730s in London were characterised by a rather ineffective implementation of censorship, with the office of the Master of the Revels having lost much of its former importance,[24] plays were still subject to state regulation, and playhouses, with their emerging popular culture of low entertainments, were definitely places of 'rowdy' and 'explosive gatherings.'[25] The fact that ballad operas were the most censored pieces of the period speaks volumes about their public engagement.[26]

Lastly, universal access, which for Habermas meant that the public sphere was potentially open to all who wanted to participate in a rational discussion, was in the theatrical realm of the early 18th century manifested by the growing number and diversity of audiences,[27] and by a certain democratisation of the playwrights' community. Gone were the days of the Restoration courtiers-playwrights. The number of active London stages and the hunger for new entertainments enabled plenty of inexperienced playwrights and hack writers to try their luck. Interestingly, many of them started with the genre of ballad opera (for example, George Lillo, Charles Coffey, Thomas Walker, and James Ralph).[28] Such a development was also fuelled by the growing number and commercialisation of London theatres, as mentioned above.

In a broad sense, any public account associated with, or related to, theatrical affairs of a certain period can be understood as a voice in the theatrical public sphere. In the case of the theatrical public sphere which existed three hundred years ago, we are, unfortunately, forced to depend almost exclusively on printed material. The stage and play texts, various accounts in letters and diaries, playbills, ads, reviews, and essays in newspapers, pamphlets, sermons, literary works such as Alexander Pope's *Dunciad*, Parliament acts, or even the King's interventions – all of these testify to the theatre's role in the public sphere of its time and allow for a contextualised discussion of complex theatrical events. For instance, according to Balme, the first major event originating in 'a genuine theatrical public sphere, understood as an arena of debate conducted in countless pamphlets and tracts, on the stage and off'

23 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, p. 3.

24 M. J. Kinservik, 'Theatrical Regulations during the Restoration Period', in S. J. Owen (ed.), *A Companion to Restoration Drama*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 2001, p. 38.

25 The term 'low' is here used in the sense of the period's distinction between the more traditional five-act drama and the new irregular entertainments such as ballad operas, pantomimes, and farces. A closer analysis shows that 'playwrights and composers were not working in clearly defined genres, so . . . generic borderlines do not really exist' (Hume, 'Drama and Theatre in the Mid and Later Eighteenth Century', p. 329).

26 O'Keefe, *Ballad Opera, Imitation, and the Formation of Genre*, p. 3.

27 Avery (ed.), *The London Stage, Part 2: 1700–1729*, vol. 1, p. clx.

28 O'Keefe, *Ballad Opera, Imitation, and the Formation of Genre*, p. 20.

was the closure of London theatres in 1642, which reminds us that even anti-theatrical sentiments can become dominant in the theatrical public sphere.[29] Similarly influential was the anti-theatrical Jeremy Collier controversy in the 1690s.[30] A related issue that resonated in the early 18th-century theatrical public sphere, touching also upon ballad operas, was the widespread critique of new commercial entertainments and the perceived artistic decline of the English stage.[31]

However, the variety of voices of the theatrical public sphere that reach us through the barrier of several centuries should be carefully interpreted. For example, not all appeals that called for the regulation of theatre were necessarily anti-theatrical. Writers such as John Dennis or Aaron Hill with his *Prompter* journal were part of what Kinservik calls the 'philo-theatrical' tradition of criticism, which was in favour of state regulation for the sake of the theatre's improvement.[32] It is, nevertheless, safe to say that the concept of the theatrical public sphere can be productively used for a discussion of all these events, as it invites today's critics to look at the bigger picture and reminds them that the theatrical public sphere was located outside, as well as inside, the auditorium.[33]

Admittedly, the domain of the theatrical public sphere described above overlaps to a great extent with the Habermasian public sphere, and one could perhaps object to the usefulness of studying the former independently of the latter. However, when we turn to the inside of the auditorium and the performances themselves, it becomes clearer why it is necessary to talk about a theatrical public sphere independently. In contrast to Habermas, who anchors his public sphere in a rational debate ruled by dispassionate reason, the theatrical public sphere frequently employs more modes of public engagement than the Habermasian rational-critical one. It was not a coincidence that to print a subversive play was easier than to stage one. As Collier disconcertedly pointed out in his *Defence of the Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage* (1699), 'Reading is but Hearing at the second Hand. . . . The

29 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, p. 75.

30 For more on the Collier's controversy of the 1690s, see R. D. Hume, 'Jeremy Collier and the Future of the London Theatre in 1698', *Studies in Philology*, vol. 96, no. 4, 1999, pp. 480–511; and L. A. Freeman, 'Jeremy Collier and the Politics of Theatrical Representation', in M. Cordner and P. Holland (eds.), *Players, Playwrights, Playhouses: Investigating Performance, 1660–1800*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, pp. 135–151.

31 Ample examples of the critique of the low entertainments in London playhouses are to be found in newspapers and pamphlets of the period. For the most recent study of the transformation and significance of London entertainments, see D. P. Domingo, *The Rhetoric of Diversion in English Literature and Culture, 1690–1760*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2016.

32 M. J. Kinservik, 'Reconsidering Theatrical Regulation in the Long Eighteenth Century', in M. Cordner and P. Holland (eds.), *Players, Playwrights, Playhouses: Investigating Performance, 1660–1800*, London, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 153.

33 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, p. 22.

Eye is much more affecting, and strikes deeper into the Memory than the Ear.'[34] Indeed, the spoken word in action personally witnessed by spectators is more powerful than a pamphlet, as it has the power to elicit an immediate emotional reaction on the part of the audience – and as censors of all times have known, an emotional response is never far from an action. This is the reason why Balme attaches two other modes to the public sphere of theatre to complement the Habermasian rational-critical one: the *agonistic* and *ludic* ones.

In Balme's theory, a play's engagement with the current theatrical public sphere can be better understood when we analyse the interaction of the rational-critical, agonistic, and ludic modes.[35] The Habermasian *rational-critical* mode was 'switched on' when the stage addressed topics that resonated at the time. An instance of the applied rational-critical mode on stage is the scene in *The Beggar's Opera* when the beggar and the player express their opinions on widely discussed dramatic clichés, the tastes of their audiences, and the hypocrisy of London's society. The *agonistic* mode is related to the Greek concept of ἀγών (agōn), i.e. a struggle or a conflict, and provides the 'missing link between the rationalistic, consensus-oriented understanding of the public sphere where only certain kinds of speech acts are functional, and a concept where affective modes of expression are equally permissible.'[36] This definition basically says that emotions raised on stage, and potentially in the audience, are part of the theatre's publicness. Balme views the agonistic mode as the 'overreaching principle linking theatrical performance and public life,'[37] because emotions are the driving forces that create a community from the onlooking crowd, which is something that print alone cannot achieve.[38] The agonistic mode could in its extreme lead to violence,[39] but in practice, it often accounts for the political or persuasive dimension of the theatrical event reflected in the play-text. An example of a play with a prominent agonistic mode is George Lillo's *The London Merchant* (1731), whose aim was to improve the morals of the viewing apprentices.

Finally, the third mode of the public sphere of theatre is the *ludic* one, which fosters humour, most often via satire and parody.[40] The interaction of these three modes in Ralph's and Fielding's operas will be the interest of the

34 J. Collier, *A Defence of the Short View of the Profaneness and Immorality of the English Stage*, London, printed for S. Keble, R. Sare, and H. Hindmarsh, 1699, pp. 25–26.
35 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, p. 12.
36 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, p. 32.
37 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, p. 31.
38 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, p. 37.
39 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, p. 181.
40 Balme, *The Theatrical Public Sphere*, pp. 12 and 29–32.

following section. As will be shown, all three modes are often simultaneously at play but not necessarily in balance.

ANALYSIS: *THE FASHIONABLE LADY* (1730) AND *THE AUTHOR'S FARCE* (1730)

As a genre based on parody and satire, ballad operas were fundamentally ludic in their nature. At the same time, they were very suitable for engaging the rational-critical mode, because a considerable number of them employed a metatheatrical frame which provided a perfect discursive space for reflecting on current public affairs. The idea of staging a play's rehearsal was made popular by George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham's *The Rehearsal* in 1671, a play still regularly staged in the 1720s and 1730s. The several ballad operas written 'in the Manner of a Rehearsal,' of which Ralph's *The Fashionably Lady* is an example, were, nevertheless, indebted to John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, which became the model for this rehearsal musical form.[41] It thus comes as no surprise that Ralph as well as Fielding employ a rehearsal frame. Their strategies, however, differ. Whereas Fielding in *The Author's Farce* uses the rehearsal frame only in Act Three, in which he stages his 'operatical puppet shew' entitled *The Pleasures of the Town*,[42] Ralph employs it extensively throughout his play. Nevertheless, in both cases, the operas allowed their authors to discuss several issues which were resonating in the theatrical public sphere outside the playhouses' auditoriums.

In accordance with Gay's model, a prominent theme was naturally the critique of Italian opera. Fielding famously based the plot of the puppet show at the end of his piece on the notion that the Goddess of Nonsense falls in love with the ghost of Signior Opera. His satire, however, was aimed at other genres too. Much more interesting is the way in which Ralph's statements about Italian opera reflect the theatrical public debate of the time. Ralph's *Fashionable Lady* begins with a dialogue about a rehearsed play. In Act One, Scene One, Mr Ballad, who intends to stage a ballad opera on the occasion of his son's wedding, quarrels with Mr Modely and Mr Meanwell, who oppose it and offer an Italian opera instead. The character of Mr Ballad then voices three objections against the Italian genre, in which he complains about the 'squeaking Recitative, paltry Eunuchs, and a Trill of insignificant out-landish Vowels.'[43]

41 Other examples of ballad operas in the manner of a rehearsal are Thomas Walker's *Quaker's Opera* (1728), John Gay's *Polly* (1729), Gabriel Odingsells's *Bayes's Opera* (1730), Henry Fielding's *Welsh Opera* (1731), and Robert Baker's *The Madhouse* (1737).

42 *The Daily Post*, 23 March 1730.

43 J. Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady; or Harlequin's Opera*, London, printed for J. Watts, 1730, p. 2.

Such complaints about the use of recitative, the employment of castrato singers, and the unintelligibility of the Italian language were nothing new in the public discourse of the period. In particular, the idea of the effeminate quality of the Italian singing art was commonplace. As early as 1706, in his pamphlet against Italian-like English operas, John Dennis gloomily pondered 'what Influence the soft and effeminate Measures of the *Italian Opera* has upon the Manners and Minds of Men.'[44] Twenty-five years later, Ralph's Mr Ballad likewise mockingly calls Senesino, the most famous Italian castrato singer of that time, an 'effeminate Warbler.'[45] The fact that Colley Cibber chose similar phrasing a year earlier when he asked in the prologue to his ballad opera *Love in a Riddle* (1729), 'why after learned Warblers must we pant,'[46] suggests that certain images and phrases tended to have been reiterated in the discursive public sphere of theatre over longer periods of time.

Another widely discussed matter was the cheap and spectacular afterpieces and entertainments that were flooding London theatres, which became a thorn in the flesh of theatre reformers. For instance, as late as 1736, *The Prompter* still complained about 'the Barrenness of *Invention*' of those 'little *Farces*, *Ballad Operas* [and] *Dumb* NOTHINGS.'[47] Other critics, too, largely considered them 'Trash and Filth of Buffoonry and Licentiousness'[48] to use a somewhat hypocritical statement from Colley Cibber, who himself put on plenty of those spectacles during his career as the manager of Drury Lane. Ralph's and Fielding's operas are most notable for their commentary on those criticised genres, in Ralph's case predominantly pantomime and ballad opera.[49]

As the subtitle of Ralph's piece, *Harlequin's Opera*, suggests, pantomime was given considerable space in the work. The storyline of Ralph's rehearsed opera about a fashionable lady, Mrs Foible, who is 'always in Love with a new Fashion,'[50] is frequently interrupted with a sketch by Harlequin and other stock characters from the *commedia dell'arte* tradition. In the middle of the

44 J. Dennis, Preface to *An Essay on the Opera's After the Manner, which are about to be Established on the English Stage*, London, printed for John Nutt, 1706, sig. A4^{r} (italics reversed).

45 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 2 (italics reversed).

46 C. Cibber, *Love in a Riddle: A Pastoral*, London, printed for J. Watts, 1729, sig. A4^{r}.

47 *The Prompter*, 20 January 1736 (no. 125).

48 C. Cibber, *An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber Written by Himself*, vol. 1, London, John C. Limmo, 1889, p. 288.

49 At the time of writing his opera, Ralph had a good knowledge of current London entertainments. In 1728, he published an evaluative essay under the pseudonym A. Primcock entitled *The Touchstone: or Historical, Critical, Political, Moral, Philosophical and Theological Essays Upon the Reigning Diversions of the Town* (London, printed and sold by the Booksellers of London and Westminster, 1728). It has been suggested that Ralph's *Touchstone* influenced Fielding's approach to burlesque in his *Author's Farce* and later *Tom Thumb* (see H. S. Hughes, 'Fielding's Indebtedness to James Ralph', *Modern Philology*, vol. 20, no. 1, 1922, pp. 19–34).

50 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 6.

play, Harlequin is seized 'as an Enemy to the Muses'[51] to be tried by the Inquisition of poets presided over by Sir Peevish Terrible the Critick. While singing to the tune 'Over the Hills and Far Away,' which had been made famous two years earlier as Polly and MacHeath's love song in *The Beggar's Opera*, they explain their intention to banish the unruly Italian culprit from England and symbolically break his magic wand. However, other characters, who love their 'poor Signior *Harlequino*,'[52] plead for him and bribe the poets, who are as corrupt as everybody else, with a promised share in the profits from Harlequin's entertainments. Thus, Harlequin and his rule over the English stage prevails as a result of people's corruption and their wish to be entertained.

A similar attempt made by a greater authority than Ralph took place thirty years later at Drury Lane under the management of David Garrick. His resolution to banish Harlequin forever was finally achieved in Garrick's play *Harlequin's Invasion* (1759), in which a statue of Shakespeare symbolically rises on the stage and drives Harlequin away.[53] Although separated by more than a generation, such performative continuations demonstrate that the theatrical public sphere can work synchronically, as well as diachronically.

The chief purpose of Ralph's play, however, was to ridicule the genre of English ballad operas, those 'double-form'd Trifles,' which were 'a kind of National Phrenzy' of his time.[54] To do so, he expanded the discursive space of his play when he decided to combine 37 scenes of his farcical plot with no fewer than 19 scenes of metatheatrical commentary, in which Mr Ballad, Mr Modely, Mr Meanwell, and Mr Drama talk about the rehearsed play. Most of the attention is then taken by the rude and foolish Mr Ballad, who praises Gay's opera as 'the Master-piece of Art,' which makes him 'as valiant as Captain *Macheath*.'[55] Before singing a song ending with the verses ''Tis Whim that we follow, 'tis Fashion we chuse, / To crown with new Honours the Opera Muse,'[56] he boasts about his wish to write operas himself and to 'become the *Hurlothrumbo* of the Age.'[57] This is a reference to a nonsensical, yet extremely popular heroic play by Samuel Johnson of Cheshire (1691–1773), which took the fancy of the town in the previous year to such an extent that Hurlothrumbo societies were founded and that the brother of Sir Robert Walpole subscribed for thirty copies of the play.[58]

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51 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 58.
52 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 59.
53 O'Brien, *Harlequin Britain*, p. 227. O'Brien shows that Garrick was eventually successful in his attempts to weaken the popular and inherently subversive pantomime when he gradually relegated it to the domain of harmless entertainment (*Harlequin Britain*, pp. 228–231).
54 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 30.
55 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 2.
56 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 5 (italics reversed).
57 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 4.
58 Z. Lesser (ed.), *The Book in Britain: A Historical Introduction*, Hoboken, John Wiley and Sons, 2019,

As if to make the genre of ballad opera even more absurd, the ill-mannered Mr Ballad envisions his own ballad opera cast with characters from canonical tragedies, stating: '*Othello* should be a Serjeant in the Guards, and keep an Ale-house at *Charing-Cross*; *Desdemona* should be a Bar-keeper; and *Cato* make him a Cuckold.'[59] While making multiple references to other existing plays, Ralph's opera combines all the popular qualities of ballad operas and pantomime, while, at the same time, becoming a parody of itself. Ralph thus skilfully used the ludic mode, in this case self-reflexive satire, against the genre of ballad opera, personified by the ridiculous Mr Ballad. As Hume points out, although the plot must have been sometimes slowed down by as many as 68 interlaced songs, Ralph's piece was, in its first season, a successful 'mixed-genre spoof' and an 'effective and enjoyable travesty.'[60] Indeed, the *London Evening Post* praised the premiere of his opera as being acted 'for the first Time, with very great Success.'[61]

Nevertheless, instead of ending on a light-hearted note, in accordance with the ludic mode of the ballad opera, the last words of Ralph's piece belong to Mr Drama, the unhappy author of the whole opera commissioned by Mr Ballad, who delivers the following couplets:

> But now the Muses fav'rite Sons arise,
> Politely learn'd, and elegantly wise,
> Arise Majestick to reform the Stage,
> And, with a nobler Scene, delight th'admiring Age.[62]

After a wild display of multiple spectacles and an enjoyable satire of ballad opera, Ralph's play in the end engages a strong agonistic mode when it calls, in the vein of the philo-theatrical tradition, for the reformation of the English stage and the disavowal of the low entertainments which held the multitudes of audiences under a powerful spell. This might have contributed to the fact that after its initial huge success, Ralph's ballad opera survived only one season and that its June performances had to be made more entertaining by additional music, dancing, and an epilogue famously presented by the actor William Penkethman (d. 1740) 'riding on an Ass.'[63] Apparently, not every mode of engagement with the public theatrical sphere worked in favour of a ballad opera's long-lasting success.

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p. 199. Horatio Walpole's subscription led to speculations about the political use of nonsensical plays to divert people's attention from their politicians' actions.

59 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 61.

60 Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre, 1728–1737*, Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1988, p.67.

61 *London Evening Post*, 4 April 1730.

62 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, p. 94.

63 Scouten (ed.), *The London Stage, Part 3: 1729–1747*, vol. 1, p. 67.

A year earlier, Colley Cibber had made a similar mistake with his opera *Love in a Riddle*, to which he says in his autobiography:

> The Year following [the premiere of *The Beggar's Opera*] I was so stupid as to attempt something of the same Kind, upon a quite different Foundation, that of recommending Virtue and Innocence; which I ignorantly thought might not have a less Pretence to Favour than setting Greatness and Authority in a contemptible, and the most vulgar Vice and Wickedness, in an amiable Light! But behold how fondly I was mistaken. *Love in a Riddle* was . . . vilely damn'd and hooted at.[64]

Douglas Franklin O'Keefe suggests that Cibber's failure can be explained by his attempt to go against Gay's model and turn his opera into a light-hearted pastoral instead of showing the popular double standard of the then society.[65] However, another mistake was the moralising undertone. It seems that one of the rules for a ballad opera to succeed in the theatrical public sphere of that time was not only to give the public their favourite spectacle, but also to endow it with the right balance of public modes. Ralph succeeded in giving them the former but failed to oblige them with the latter.

In contrast, Fielding was able to calibrate the modes of his opera's public engagement in a manner much more suitable to the genre of successful ballad operas. Naturally, traces of the rational-critical mode can be found in the story of an unsuccessful playwright named Luckless who decides to write a crazy, allegorical puppet show out of spite after his tragedy has been rejected – especially in the underlying criticism of audiences' corrupt tastes and theatre managers' greediness. Most importantly, however, Fielding mocks almost every genre that affected the then current sphere of literature and drama but wisely refrains from the urge to moralise agonistically. His hilarious allegory of the underworld where all genres go after they have served their years on stages in the upperworld has been much commented on by scholars.[66] In short, Don Tragedio, Sir Farcical Comick, Dr Orator, Signior Opera, and Mounsieur Pantomime all compete for the hand of the Goddess of Nonsense, but when she chooses Signior Opera, Mrs Novel intervenes and claims to be his wife. Signior Opera decides to remain true to her, which they confirm by singing a ridiculous love song together on the already mentioned

64 C. Cibber, *An Apology for the Life of Colley Cibber Written by Himself*, vol. 1, pp. 243–244.

65 O'Keefe, *Ballad Opera, Imitation, and the Formation of Genre*, p. 92.

66 For example, see C. B. Woods's Appendix B in C. B. Woods (ed.), *The Author's Farce (Original Version)*, London, William Clowes and Sons, 1967, pp. 101–108; V. C. Rudolph, 'People and Puppets: Fielding's Burlesque of the "Recognition Scene" in *The Author's Farce*', *Papers on Language and Literature*, vol. 11, no. 1, 1975, pp. 31–38; Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre*, pp. 63–64; and J. Uglow, *Henry Fielding*, Plymouth, Northcote House Publishers, 1995, pp. 12–13.

tune 'Over the Hills and Far Away.' A short comparison of lyrics from *The Beggar's Opera* and *The Author's Farce* aptly characterises Fielding's humour:

Polly. Were I sold on Indian soil,
Soon as the burning day was closed,
I could mock the sultry toil,
When on my charmer's breast reposed.[67]

Novel. Were we cast on *Ireland*'s soil,
There confin'd in Bogs to dwell,
For thee Potatoes I wou'd boil,
No *Irish* Spouse shou'd feast so well.[68]

Furthermore, when considered together with Ralph's satirical use of the same song for the banishment of Harlequin, it becomes apparent that the musical layer of ballad operas was also an important part of the ludic mode, in which the humour was dependent on the audiences' familiarity with the songs and their use in other plays, i.e. on their familiarity with the current theatrical public sphere.[69]

The chief significance of Fielding's opera lies in the fact that his allegory was famously based on real events and figures from the London theatrical and literary public spheres. The realistic part of the story, based on the unsuccessful attempts of playwright Luckless to have his play staged, reflects the unwillingness of the then rather opportunistic managers to accept new plays and the resulting bitterness of aspiring dramatists. Thus, the Drury Lane managers Robert Wilks and Colley Cibber are represented in Fielding's piece as the greedy managers Sparkish and Marplay, respectively. The story of Fielding's dislike for Colley Cibber further manifests in the puppet show's character Sir Farcical, whose identity is recognised when he explains his arrival in the Underworld with the words 'an Entertainment sent me out of the World. – My Life went out in a Hiss.'[70] The entertainment hissed at was, of course, Cibber's already discussed *Love in a Riddle*.

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67 J. Gay, *The Beggar's Opera*, in J. Douglas Canfield (ed.), *The Broadview Anthology of Restoration and Early Eighteenth-Drama*, Ontario, Broadview Press, 2004, p. 818 (1.13.38–41).

68 H. Fielding, *The Author's Farce and the Pleasures of the Town*, 2nd ed., London, printed for J. Watts, 1730, p. 44 (italics reversed).

69 Unfortunately, the scholarship of ballad operas has been rather text-based and few studies have been written with a focus on the genre's music. The musically oriented book *The Beggar's Children: How John Gay Changed the Course of England's Musical Theatre* (2006) by Madeline Smith Atkins is a unique exception. Moreover, an interesting analysis of the multi-layered meaning of songs in ballad operas is to be found in Stacey Jocoy's article 'Captain Macheath's Execution Lament in *The Beggar's Opera*' (*Theatralia*, vol. 24, no. 1, 2021, pp. 78–91), in which she examines Macheath's final lament and explores its sociopolitical message conveyed by the music.

70 Fielding, *The Author's Farce* (1730), p. 34.

The audiences of *The Author's Farce* would further connect Signior Opera with the castrato singer Senesino, Mounsieur Pantomime with the famous Harlequin John Rich, Don Tragedio with Theophilus Cibber Junior, and Mrs Novel with the writer of sentimental novels Eliza Heywood. A peculiar reference is Dr Orator, whom the audience would connect with John Henley, an eccentric London orator famous for the ridiculous advertisements of his lectures. The orator Henley was not the only ridiculed figure from the non-theatrical world. The character of Mr Curry the Bookseller, who has 'serv'd [the Goddess of Nonsense] faithfully these thirty years,'[71] is a direct reference to the notorious publisher Edmund Curll, who was in his time associated with forgeries and acts of plagiarism.[72]

In short, Fielding succeeded in writing an unusual energetic satire on the times which all spectators enjoyed. Roughly two weeks after its premiere, on April 16, 1730, *The Whitehall Evening Post* wrote that *The Author's Farce* 'hath already given great Satisfaction to the best Judges.'[73] From April 24, 1730, onwards, its success was helped by Fielding's new burlesque afterpiece *Tom Thumb*. On that day, Viscount John Percival (the future Earl of Egmont) visited the ballad opera and praised it in his diary as 'exceedingly full of humour, with some wit.'[74] Moreover, the Prince of Wales saw the opera on April 25 and then again on May 24, which always attracted the attention of the press.[75] *The Author's Farce* continued to be staged also in the following season 1730–1731; in October 1730, *The Daily Post* advertised the farce as 'that celebrated Performance.'[76]

Even though Ralph, in his *Fashionable Lady*, makes numerous intertextual references to existing plays (for instance, when his Mr Modely mentions Händel's opera *Radamistus* or Mr Ballad praises the popular farce *The Humours of Rustigo*),[77] he cannot surpass Fielding in his ludic *tour de force.* By making use of both abstract and real agents of his theatrical world, Fielding's 1730 ballad opera *The Author's Farce* can be seen as the early 1730s London theatrical public sphere distilled.

Although the genre of ballad opera is not represented by any allegorical figure, this widely used convention was not spared Fielding's biting wit either. 'If you must write, write Nonsense, write [Ballad] Opera's, write

71 Fielding, *The Author's Farce* (1730), p. 35.
72 For a detailed explanation of all the satirised personalities in Fielding's play, see Woods, 'Appendix B', pp. 101–108.
73 *The Whitehall Evening Post*, 16 April 1730.
74 R. A. Roberts (ed.), *Diary of Viscount Percival Afterwards First Early of Egmont*, Vol 1: *1730–1733*, London, published by his Majesty's Stationary Office, 1920, p. 97.
75 *Daily Post Boy*, 27 April 1730; and *Evening Post*, 16 May 1730.
76 *The Daily Post*, 17 October 1730.
77 Ralph, *The Fashionable Lady*, pp. 2 and 16.

Entertainments, write *Hurlo-thrumbo's* – Set up an *Oratory*, preach Nonsense; and you may meet with Encouragement enough,'[78] says Witmore to his friend Luckless when he discourages him from writing serious drama for audiences without taste. Fielding, however, does not make the mistake of engaging the agonistic mode in trying to reform the drama of his period. His opera light-heartedly claims that every type of entertainment currently in vogue, together with theatre managers, playwrights, booksellers, and their audiences, equally court the Goddess of Nonsense. His satire is severe, but its chief aim is to entertain. Unlike Ralph, Fielding understood the golden rule of the London theatrical public sphere of the early 1730s articulated by John Genest a hundred years later, that 'sound and show . . . obtained a victory over sense and reason.'[79]

Interestingly, Fielding attempted to repeat his strategy of engaging with the current theatrical public sphere once again in 1734 with a later revision of the opera staged at Drury Lane under a similar title: *The Author's Farce with A Puppet-Show, Call'd the Pleasures of the Town*. The new revision reflected several events that had occurred since *The Author's Farce*'s premiered in March 1730. Because the manager Wilks had died, the character of Sparkish was omitted and Marplay Senior (Colley Cibber) was, instead, accompanied by Marplay Junior (Theophilus Cibber). The latter pronounces lines such as 'wou'd you guess that I had alter'd Shakepear?',[80] alluding to the notorious practice of the father and son unscrupulously altering new plays and recycling old ones. However, possibly due to the audience's overfamiliarity with his satirical techniques from the previous farce, the hastiness with which it was written, and the less elegant topicality (for example, the Cibbers never, in fact, co-managed Drury Lane), the revision was not a stage success.[81]

CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that the London theatrical public sphere of the early 1730s, defined by its institutional public status, validated by censorship, and characterised by a more universal access to the theatre world, can be studied separately from other public domains, and that an analysis of the interaction of three modes of public engagement can contribute to the contextual study of the drama of a specific period. Moreover, it can be expected that every dra-

78 Fielding, *The Author's Farce* (1730), p. 8.
79 J. Genest, *Some Account of the English Stage from the Restoration in 1660 to 1830*, vol. 3, Bath, H. E. Carrington, 1832, p. 155.
80 H. Fielding, *The Author's Farce with A Puppet-Show, Call'd the Pleasures of the Town*, 3rd ed., London, printed for J. Watts, 1750, p. 16.
81 Hume, *Henry Fielding and the London Theatre,* p. 171.

matic genre participated in the theatrical public sphere of its time differently, with a different combination of rational-critical, agonistic, and ludic modes. The chapter suggests that, in order for the ballad opera to have been successful in the 1730s, the rational-critical mode and especially the ludic mode had to be emphasised, while the agonistic mode had to be carefully applied.

Admittedly, not all ballad operas were so engaged in the theatrical public sphere of their time as Ralph's and Fielding's plays. Most ballad operas were, indeed, ephemeral occurrences that lived the short life of popular afterpieces. The analysis of *The Fashionable Lady* and *The Author's Farce*, however, demonstrates that less successful pieces might have perhaps gained more prominence had the modes of the theatrical public sphere been more skilfully engaged. Ralph's and Fielding's operas were so popular because they did so. They employed the rational-critical mode in their reflection of current public affairs and social vices, the agonistic mode in their nostalgia for old, traditional drama, and the ludic mode, which lay at the core of the genre's all-encompassing satire. Nevertheless, a successful ballad opera was not supposed to engage in the agonistic mode as much as Ralph's did in its attempt to promote an ideological message. Fielding, on the other hand, whose opera was staged much more often and for longer than Ralph's, understood that people wanted to be entertained and put the ludic mode of his biting satire to the forefront. Furthermore, reading the two operas through the lens of their engagement with the then theatrical public sphere shows that 'low culture' products could partake in the discussion of the cultural values that were essential for the (self-)definition of art, and theatre in particular. The highest aesthetic achievements are perhaps found in the sentimental comedies and tragedies of the era, but when we desire to put our finger on the pulse of the theatrical age, the most successful pieces of low-brow genres such as ballad operas are the best place to start.

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REIMAGINING RESTORATION STAGES
RESTORATION THEATRE IN THREE CONTEMPORARY PLAYS

TOMÁŠ KAČER

Restoration theatre has never left British stages since the 17th century. There are numerous popular dramas that have been produced since their creation, such as *The Provoked Wife* by John Vanbrugh (1697), *The Recruiting Officer* by George Farquhar (1706), and *The Busybody* by Susanna Centlivre (1709), while others returned to British theatres to reclaim their once-lost popularity after a century or two, such as William Wycherley's *The Country Wife* (1675).[1] It was especially in the 1990s that 'Restoration-esque pieces were in vogue,'[2] although resurgence may have started earlier, such as with the 1988 Restoration season at the Royal Shakespeare's Company's Swan Theatre, with revivals of the plays *The Constant Couple* by George Farquhar, *The Plain Dealer* by Wycherley, and *The Man of Mode* by George Etherege.[3] This paradigm remains in place to this day.

Some of these productions are designed as – full or partial – remakes of period productions, following various conventions of the original time of their making. These productions then make deliberate choices related to work with stage space, costumes, and props, as well as supposed acting style(s). Effectively, producers engage in creating a theatrical time machine. The last-mentioned feature (acting style) is quite problematic and rather mirrors our own conceptions of early acting styles (often mistakenly imagined as a variation of melodramatic techniques).[4] Most of the other features are well preserved in historical documents that can be used in production planning today and/or have survived more or less unchanged in design, kept objects, and structures.

Other productions have introduced modern-day interpretations and topical stagings of these historical plays, thus providing them with an appeal for contemporary audiences, proving their timelessness, and securing their longevity into the future. For example, the 1988 'Restoration season at the

1 As for *The Country Wife*, it was not staged for nearly two hundred years only partly due to its provocative content; David Garrick's 1766 popular remake *The Country Girl* took over as a substitute for the original play.

2 V. Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, London, Warner/Chappell Plays, 1999, Foreword (page not given).

3 C. Chambers, *Inside the Royal Shakespeare Company: Creativity and the Institution*, London and New York, Routledge, 2004, p. 212.

4 See the interview with the author for more ideas about this in J. Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, London, Nick Hern Books, 2015, p. 7.

Swan, which comprised three late seventeenth-century plays and, as a counterpoint, [Edward] Bond's *Restoration*'[5] by the Royal Shakespeare Company consisted of groundbreaking achievements in the modern staging of Restoration plays.

However, there are also other methods of staging Restoration drama besides contemporary productions of the Restoration originals. Period plays, which include scenes from Restoration dramas in the form of theatre-within-theatre are written today, such as the historical biographies *The Libertine* by Stephen Jeffreys (1994) and *Nell Gwynn* by Jessica Swale (2016). In such cases, excerpts from several Restoration plays appear as quotes within these works. When these are produced, these quotes are staged usually as a showcase of period stagecraft. These scenes may, for instance, serve the purpose of highlighting various contrasts, such as: 1) between the stage and backstage (for Restoration actresses are characters in these plays quite frequently; the purpose is therefore *biographical*); 2) between perspectives, that of the context and that of the stage (for the world of 17th century theatre as an institution is perhaps even more fascinating than that of the intricate period plots; the purpose is therefore *sociological*); and 3) between speech and delivery in the backstage plot and onstage drama (for some plays consciously contrast contemporary and period styles; the purpose is therefore *aesthetic*).

For these reasons and many more, Restoration theatre fascinates today's playwrights and theatregoers. This chapter will focus on several contemporary plays and their productions that may serve as case studies of the points just discussed. These plays involve scenes from Restoration plays or they recreate Restoration theatre with its stage and backstage buzz. While considering these plays from the theoretical standpoint of a theatre production as reenactment (an anthropological approach viewing the theatre as an archive), this chapter will show how they serve as practical studies in the following areas: staged biography, sociological sketch, and aesthetic experiment in Restoration theatre.

PERFORMANCE AS THEATRE ARCHAEOLOGY AND REENACTMENT

Contemporary plays set in the Restoration fall into numerous categories. They are, among others, historical plays (i.e. treating a historical topic with an 'imaginative sympathy and insight'),[6] pastiches (i.e. combining genres –

5 Chambers, *Inside the Royal Shakespeare Company*, p. 130.

6 E. DeMarrais, 'Introduction: The Archaeology of Performance', *World Archaeology*, vol. 46, no. 2, 2014, p. 156.

and their travesties – of today with Restoration ones), and biographies (i.e. presenting the lives of actual historical figures). All the above dramatic types require serious research activity on the part of the playwright and/or authorial collective, spanning archival research hunting for facts, a study of period theatrical dramatic and theatre conventions, and the reinvention of period craftmanship. These are then reproduced and, in order to create a work of art in its own right, creatively reinvented. In general terms, the playwright builds his or her story on facts and incorporates Restoration writing techniques into his or her repertoire to arrive at a form of creative coexistence. The creative team in the theatre produce a contemporary artifact, which capitalises on a creative interplay between current and historical devices, techniques, and technology. Last but not least, each performance is also a dialectical exchange between the stage and the audience, and theatregoers engage in this exchange by means of responses acknowledging a contemporary view of the historical material presented to them. In other words, the production of a historical play performs an act of theatre archaeology in which a complex historical artefact, such as a Restoration theatre performance, is processed, interpreted, and placed on display within a contemporary context.

One of the most typical features of contemporary plays set in the Restoration is the use of 17th-century English. Characteristically, two methods of incorporation are used. The first is to quote from period materials, such as plays and poems. For example, *The Libertine* quotes from Thomas Otway's *Alcibiades*, and *Nell Gwynn* includes scenes from John Dryden's *Maiden Queene*, among others. Another is to write an original script in an antiquated language, most typically (mock) Restoration English. I use the term 'mock' here – as opposed to, for example, 'historicised' or 'stylised' – because contemporary playwrights seem to indulge specifically in language that emphasises differences between the two temporal variants, typically with sexual overtones and meanings shifted towards various perverse implications. The use of *double entendres* abounds. For example, in *Nell Gwynn*, when Nell is about to be intimate with Charles II for the first time, she asks, referring to her role: 'Haven't you seen my Florimel?' to which Charles II replies with a hint at her genitals: 'I've been waiting to see your Florimel for weeks. Come here.'[7] Later, when the King and his mistress are an established couple, they joke while playing croquet. During a game, Charles II says: 'There's nothing suspect about by balls,' referring to his croquet balls. To which Nell replies: 'I'm rather fond of your old balls.'[8] It is clear from the context that she means his testicles. There are various other occasions of such *double entendres* in the other plays, too. What may seem like juvenile humour at first is an illustrative

7 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 75.
8 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 114.

example of a general notion of all Restoration communication being charged with sexual meanings.

Theatrical space is the dominant context in *The Libertine* and *Nell Gwynn*, where many scenes are devised as theatre-within-theatre, actor-public interactions during performance, and backstage business. Both plays reconstruct the lives and environments of real-life historical personalities. Therefore, the space also reflects this, serving as physical evidence of the past presence of the characters on stage. When she comes for the first time to meet her daughter at the playhouse, Ma Gwynn admires a pillar there – which is 'the' pillar known to be a part of the construction of Drury Lane theatre: 'Would you look at that! (*About the room.*) It's as pretty as a petticoat. I have never seen such a very big pillar in all my life.'[9] The sexual undertone of her claim is based on the fact that she was a brothel keeper, which by extension also means that the building must be truly magnificent.

Theatre thus entails a specific kind of archaeological endeavour in its practice of reviving, re-envisioning, and recreating Restoration theatre practices. It is one of the most fitting human activities in the context of attempting to rediscover (and re-fashion) itself. As Marvin Carlson writes in relation to theatre, its buildings are 'among the most haunted of human cultural structures.'[10] In many senses of the word, theatre revives its own ghosts. Previous performances leave their traces in the buildings (or travel with companies), and the remnants of previous achievements may span centuries. Some of them never leave a house. As such, contemporary Restoration pieces are spiritual séances, albeit built upon serious research work and artistic considerations. The language of contemporary Restoration plays represents a ghost haunting today's audience with its ancient quality; the same may be said of all components of a production. Some of them are trickier than others. While the material ones such as costumes, props, and scenery, but also the textual element, may, once discovered, be copied and enhanced (made contemporary), the immaterial ones only reappear as a ghostly presence, such as in acting style, gesture, facial expression, and the timbre of voice along with the most immaterial of all such elements, which are the plot with its complications and the overall impression of the play.

Thus, the archaeological research of spaces and objects is of utmost importance if a play and its production is to succeed as a contemporary mock-Restoration piece (which is to say that it meets the expectations of what an audience imagines as a Restoration piece in the first place, which may be its projection resulting from a convincing performance rather than an objective,

9 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 83.

10 M. Carlson, *The Haunted Stage: The Theatre as Memory Machine*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press, 2001, p. 2.

fact-checked presentation). Plays abound with these re-used lines and props, references to context and historical facts, as well as plot twists based on contemporary distance from the period itself. Examples will be given below. For now, this chapter will briefly focus on explaining that a grasp of the materiality is crucial because it provides us with an understanding of the immaterial.

As Elizabeth DeMarrais writes, an archaeology of a performance must 'focus on the materiality of performances. Particularly relevant is an understanding of a ritual space, or theatre, and the way that its layout affects the relationships between performers and an audience.'[11] The relevance of the space is a specific kind of social communication that takes place in the theatrical space. This was different in Restoration times compared to today. It is a task for the practitioner to recreate that sense of Restoration political context, the time-specific nature of actor-audience interactions, and their impact on the public sphere. These exchanges are, quite literally, built into the theatrical structures themselves. Therefore, the archaeologist must study 'the ways that architecture reflects efforts to coordinate the movements of audiences during an event, restricting access to some areas while facilitating the visitor's experience of viewing and hearing in other locations.'[12] The archaeologist becomes the author, trainer, and performer of the recreation of this experience in the process of playmaking.

A theatrical space observant to the principles of an archaeological performance focuses on producing emotions besides a historical recreation. Among various emotions, DeMarrais stresses 'solidarity generated in the shared experience.'[13] This solidarity, created between the audience and the performers, helps the archaeological creation come alive. In order to achieve this aim, approaches to performance focus on the relational aspect. Besides a presentation of objective historical facts, an archaeological performance includes 'face-to-face interaction on a smaller scale, the ordinary encounters of daily life.'[14] This helps to establish an atmosphere of the time with its specifics. Especially effective are various ways of '"showing" and "looking" . . . including all of the intimate encounters of ordinary life,'[15] where a variety of reflections upon the period theatrical conventions and especially sexually charged interactions are typically accentuated in the case of contemporary Restoration plays. Capitalising on generally known historical facts such as the introduction of female actors to English stages and a stress on lascivious, sexually-charged language and stage action in theatres with Charles

11 DeMarrais, 'Introduction', p. 156.
12 DeMarrais, 'Introduction', p. 156.
13 DeMarrais, 'Introduction', p. 157.
14 DeMarrais, 'Introduction', p. 157.
15 DeMarrais, 'Introduction', p. 158.

II's incentive, contemporary Restoration plays combine these potentially provocative aspects with establishing a sense of solidarity with the ordinary life and buzz in the backstage and outside the house. Such a presentation is in line with the definition of 'performance as the citation of iterable, regulatory norms,'[16] which are thus introduced to the audience through observable stage action within the framework of a shared experience.

Similarly to DeMarrais's archaeological conception, Bruce McConachie also speaks about 'reenacting events.'[17] An archaeological performance seems to be a result of an imaginative reenactment of an historical fact. Such an approach to history was promoted by R. G. Collingwood's *Idea of History*, yet McConachie questions the validity of such an approach. He proposes that, rather, 'instead of beginning with "the facts", historians should begin with questions about past events involving human thought and allow their historical questions to prompt a search for the kinds of evidence that could reveal the relevant actions.'[18] A theatre practitioner during the process of preparing a play becomes such a historian and it seems fit to apply this requirement to the theatrical context. Or, even more so, it seems that theatre practitioners are well equipped to perform such a job given the nature of their trade, which is grounded in the workings of the human mind and its interactions with others.

This view is in line with McConachie's further stress on achieving the audience's and performers' empathy with the event of such a performance as the ultimate goal (where empathy is understood as 'interpretative understanding').[19] Rather than simply describing and explaining, an archaeological performance should, in McConachie's view, opt for a questions-and-answers approach: 'Understanding Molière's life in the theatre, for example, must take his spectators into account.'[20] This example illustrates the empathic, solidarity-inducing experience of the performance. Thus, any revival of a Restoration play, for example (or a Molière production, since the Restoration and Molière's life overlap, and McConachie's example is thus very pertinent to this chapter), must, in his view, be based on an archaeological study of the audience, which involves period customs, conventions, language, and all kinds of aspects in general. In this way, it can establish a period

16 DeMarrais, 'Introduction', p. 158 (the reference is in the context of discussing Judith Butler's approach to performativity).

17 B. McConachie, 'Reenacting Events to Narrate Theatre History', in C. M. Canning and T. Postlewait (eds.), *Representing the Past: Essays in Performance Historiography*, Iowa City, University of Iowa Press, 2000, p. 378.

18 McConachie, 'Reenacting Events to Narrate Theatre History', p. 387.

19 McConachie, 'Reenacting Events to Narrate Theatre History', p. 378 (McConachie borrows this term from Max Weber).

20 McConachie, 'Reenacting Events to Narrate Theatre History', p. 392.

stage reality on levels which will be discussed below, mainly the biographical, sociological, and aesthetic levels (these may be realised, for example, in terms of quotations from Restoration plays, mock-Restoration language, history-based plots, as well as period spatial and scenic relations, costuming, and acting style).

BIOGRAPHY, SOCIOLOGY, AND AESTHETICS

The three plays in the selection, *The Libertine*, *Nell Gwynn*, and *Poor Mrs Pepys*, focus on historical figures and, as such, may be viewed as biographical plays. The plays as archaeological endeavours solicit the 'sympathy'[21] and 'solidarity'[22] of the audience by presenting biographies against the backdrop of historical context and our sociological knowledge thereof in a ritualised space of theatrical events, which they share with the audience, thus reconstructing the aesthetics of Restoration theatre.

The Libertine by Stephen Jeffreys was first performed in 1994. While the play celebrated a successful run at the Royal Court Theatre in Great Britain and the Steppenwolf Theater in the US in 1996 (where, interestingly, John Malkovich played the Earl of Rochester while he was Charles II in the film version), it peaked in popularity with its 2004 film adaptation (directed by Laurence Dunmore). The following paragraphs focus on the play version. The play centres on several years in the mid-1660s in the life of John Wilmot, 2nd Earl of Rochester, a poet and socialite, a freethinker (libertine), and the King's close friend. Rochester's wit and cynicism earn him notoriety, but his personal life turns upside down when he meets Elizabeth Barry, the star actress of Restoration theatre, and falls in love with her. Other historical figures included in the play besides Rochester, Charles II, and Barry, are the playwright George Etherege and the actor and manager Harry Harris.

All these personalities led interesting lives that have been documented by historians and biographers. Rochester, who is the main character, begins the play with a direct address to the audience: 'Allow me to be frank at the commencement: you will not like me.'[23] He goes on to depict himself as a morally corrupt, sexually adventurous, and generally despicable character that does 'not want' to be liked.[24] This opening suggests that the play will develop beyond known facts to a well-developed psychology of the historical figure. This

21 DeMarrais, 'Introduction', p. 156.
22 DeMarrais, 'Introduction', p. 157.
23 S. Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, London, Nick Hern Books, 1995, p. 3.
24 Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, p. 3.

promise is fulfilled as Rochester's career as a writer and socialite develops, deepening his personal involvement with Charles II and Barry.

The Libertine consciously builds empathy with Rochester, who remains true to himself and acts against the moral standards of his time (or even our time, for that matter). He routinely breaches the trust of his friends and engages in sexual adventures with various ladies as well as whores (this is how prostitutes are signified in the playscript). He engages in unfair fights after he provokes conflicts. His actions are purposefully immoral in order to test the limits of his peers, uncover hypocrisy, and to meet the desires of Rochester's complicated personality. Aware of his complicatedness, he admits at one point: 'I said you would not like me, and yet you would not have it. You thought I would make a turn for the better but you were mistaken.'[25] In contrast to Rochester's spoiled life, Barry's career grows and she gains self-confidence as an actress. When it seems that Rochester will lose her, he makes a move and proposes to her. But Barry refuses: 'It is not being a mistress I am tired of, John. I am tired of you. I do not wish to be your wife.'[26] She gains independence as a working woman who is no longer dependent on the favour of powerful and rich men. She even points out that she is 'no Nell Gwynn,'[27] and unlike Gwynn she will not give up her career in exchange for being a man's mistress – or wife.

It is Barry who has the last-but-one speech in the play, a quotation from the Third Prologue to *Valentinian* (Rochester's play from 1683; the prologue reflected the Wilmot family's later 'promotion of Rochester's saintly legend')[28] when Rochester is dying, disfigured by progressing syphilis. The final image is rather flattering, and in contrast with Rochester's repulsive physical appearance: 'He charmed the tenderest virgins to delight / And with his style did fiercest blockheads fright . . . Oh fatal loss! That mighty spirit's gone!'[29] The contrast encompasses the conflicting depiction of Rochester in the play about to conclude, which follows a horrible person who gains the audience's empathy in spite of his actions. Rochester's (and the play's) last line before blackout reads: 'Do you like me now?'[30] Whereas historical facts are reconstrued in the play as it proceeds as Rochester's biography, among others, the final attachment is psychological and on the level of empathy.

Nell Gwynn by Jessica Swale is at once a biography of the famous first star actress, presenting the eponymous heroine's fictionalised rise from an

25 Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, p. 63.
26 Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, p. 77.
27 Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, p. 77.
28 J. W. Johnson, *A Profane Wit: The Life of John Wilmot, Earl of Rochester*, Rochester, University of Rochester Press, 2004, p. 255.
29 Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, p. 84.
30 Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, p. 84.

orange-fruit hawker in theatre pits to a celebrity actress and King Charles II's mistress, and a celebration of the Restoration theatre culture, offering a peep into the backstage of one of the two theatre companies of the time – the King's Company of the Drury Lane. The play abounds with references to period theatre craft as it follows Nell's trajectory as an apprentice and pioneer of the new profession of female acting that the historical Nell Gwynn was a proponent of. Following a period between her first introduction to acting and the King's death, the play introduces the viewer to an array of personalities from the theatrical environment, including the writer John Dryden, the manager and author Thomas Killigrew, and the star actor Charles Hart, and a wider society, such as Nell's family members and the courtiers, including Charles II's other popular mistresses such as Lady Castlemaine and the notorious 'Catholic whore' Louise de Kérouaille.

There are no historical sources about Nell Gwynn's life before her theatrical career.[31] There are, however, documents about her skills and personality features that the play builds on. The very first scene of the play portrays Nell as a witty orange hawker in the theatre pit who smoothly crosses the boundary between spectating and performing when she defends a weak actor, Ned, delivering his prologue. She scolds the critical hecklers with witty remarks. When a heckler calls her wit 'quick,' she replies: 'Not as quick as you, sir. So your good wife says.'[32] Against all convention, she later 'walks onto the stage'[33] to collect a dropped orange. Her behaviour intrigues Charles Hart, the star actor of the company, who decides to train her in acting. In Scene Two, they undergo together a training session, where Nell proves to be a natural talent. Not only does she pick up on projection and various *attitudes* – conventionalised postures and facial expressions associated with emotional states – but she is so convincing that her performance baffles Hart himself who believes he made her cry with his harsh criticism. However, Nell is 'just acting.'[34] She baffles him even more with her pretense of the emotion of love, which makes him believe Nell is a natural talent who 'has something unusual.'[35] This scene is captivating because it makes the audience a part of the action. A member of the audience, Nell, first joins the actors and then offers a view of the craft of acting with its period specificities, such as the use of *attitudes*. This is the moment when the star is born, though not yet acknowledged by the public.

31 See, for example, P. H. Highfill, Jr., K. A. Burnim, and E. A. Langhans, *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers, Managers & Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660–1800*, vol. 6, Carbondale and Edwardsville, Southern Illinois University Press, 1978, pp. 455–472.

32 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 17.

33 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 17.

34 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 22.

35 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 30.

For the play's audience, however, she has revealed her potential and now the story will show how she manages to fulfil it.

The aspiring actress's first opportunity arrives in the following scene, which builds upon the audience's historical knowledge about the situation in theatre before the Restoration and reminds them that during Charles II's reign women actors ('actor-esses') appeared on English stages for the first time. Kynaston, who takes female roles in the company, laments: 'They've disgraced our trade. Ruined our art. . . . They've put a woman at the stage.'[36] This is a reminder of the historical context of the play. The ensuing comicality of the scene is built upon the contrast of the proponents' anxiety about the future of theatre and the audience's present-day knowledge of its development. The company members' fears sound comical and absurd to today's audience: 'It'll be the death of theatre,' claims Kynaston.[37] Nancy, the female backstage hand in the company predicts: 'Can you imagine? We'll be writing plays next.'[38] It is in this atmosphere that Hart introduces Nell to the company. She is met with hostility, especially from Kynaston, but also hope because the others see the inevitable future with actresses on stage. She and Kynaston compete in their ability to use a fan to express feelings and flirt. The contrast is evident: Kynaston's technique may be perfect, but he cannot cross the gender boundary and Nell's performance is incomparably more convincing. Once again, she is recognised as a natural talent. Even though these scenes cannot be historical reconstructions of Nell Gwynn's career for the lack of records, they go well together with the few known details from her life that are later dramatised in the play.

The story moves to the King's palace and alternates between theatrical and royal venues. Nell develops her career and gains popularity. She becomes a star and a phenomenon among comical actresses to a point when the King arrives in the theatre to watch her. After she makes an impression on Charles, she becomes one of his mistresses. Her popularity and the fact that she has a low-class origin makes her the public's favourite. Scene Four of Act Two presents a historically evidenced biographical fact. Nell sings and dances in the theatre, meanwhile offending Charles II's other mistress, the French Catholic Louise. After Louise leaves, Nell says, commenting on a previous incident where the public confused the two during a carriage ride in London streets: 'Oh! You didn't think she was me? That she was me and I was she? No ladies, gentles, Your Majesty – I am the *Protestant* whore!'[39] This historical quote, slightly adapted for dramatic purposes (change of location and

36 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 27.
37 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 27.
38 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 28.
39 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 99.

probably the exact wording), becomes a biographical event in the play. It characterises the protagonist in the historical context and shows the society of the time and its attitude to the actress. It creates a sympathetic image of the first star actress combining features known about the role of women in the theatre at the time, her status as the King's mistress and also several of her specific features, all within the frame of the transformations and inventions of Restoration theatre.

Poor Mrs Pepys by Vanessa Brooks was written on commission for the Red Shift Theatre Company in 1999. Following the notoriety of Samuel Pepys's diaries, it tells the story of his wife Elizabeth and presents a subversive, even feminist point of view of the events of her husband's social, political, and sexual life in the 1660s. The play describes the life of a closeted Catholic and neglected wife longing for a 'babe' with a husband whose primary occupation is to climb the social ladder and the 'coin.' Elizabeth suffers on the personal level as well as more generally as she witnesses the cruelty of the times, this leading to death and suffering, including a complete loss of dignity due to disease as well as poverty. There is filth, sickness, and fire raging in London, where it seems that the unscrupulous have the upper hand – until they do not. Elizabeth dies prematurely and childless, but in an act of fictional subversion, she has the last word as an author of a diary which, presumably, shows her perspective on Samuel Pepys's infamous secret diary and, as such, sets the record straight with respect to Samuel, the philanderer and hypocrite.

Because the play may be seen as a mirror piece to Samuel Pepys's diary, it presents a domestic perspective on the notorious socialite's escapades. The play leads the audience to private rooms of the Restoration, to a marriage in crisis that reflects various aspects of the social context and institutions of the time. The author, Vanessa Brooks, explains: 'I wrote the play from Elizabeth Pepys' point of view as so much has already been written about Samuel and I felt the voice of a woman from that period would be refreshing.'[40] This comment reveals that the play does not follow exact historical evidence but rather builds on what can be reasonably assumed about Elizabeth Pepys's life. In this way, the play is also a biographical piece, but even more fictional than the previous two examples, where the author 'decided to ditch historical integrity and resort to an outrageous manipulation of fact, chronology and character.'[41] What the play manages, even more so than the other plays discussed in this chapter, is its presentation of the period. The play is as much a sociological insight into the period as it is about the fictional Elizabeth.

Some of the play's motifs are intimate and personal, such as the issue of the Pepys' childlessness. While it is contextualised against the background of

40 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, Foreword (page not given).
41 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, Foreword (page not given).

period prejudice and healthcare limitations, other aspects of the Pepys' lives present the period context in a relatable way. These mainly include various diseases that Samuel suffers from and their treatment such as bloodletting, the ever-present death and filth in the streets, but also events with a broader social significance. Dealing with the life of a socialite's wife, the play makes constant allusions to Samuel's climbing up and falling down the social ladder. Samuel's sister Paulina summarises the lifestyle in a jealous exchange when she meets Elizabeth in London for the first time: 'In London – parties – dances – fine meals – rides in carriages – I'd like that. To live here. . . . Samuel and yourself dine out frequently, do you not?'[42] Elizabeth, however, is not the outgoing type and she finds it difficult to explain to Paulina that she does not wish or happen to enjoy the pleasures of high society, and on the contrary, she suffers from them. Members of the nobility are constantly trying to bring them down: 'Lady Montagu is the teeth of society and I fear I am to be served up on a platter,' writes Elizabeth into her secret diary,[43] which is the fictional mirror piece of her personal response to the actual historical diary that Samuel Pepys kept.

The play also develops the motif of religion and religious persecution in Restoration Britain. Elizabeth falls sick, and, afraid of death, she arranges for a secret meeting with a Catholic priest in a crypt. Believing she is meeting another Catholic, she confesses:

> *Priest*. How long have you practiced this faith?
> *Elizabeth*. Since my sixteenth year. . . .
> *Priest*. And what say you to King Charles?
> *Elizabeth*. I say he is an evil man to see not the cruelty of this kingdom. . . . A true king appointed by God would raze the fine houses to the ground as Christ fell upon the moneylenders. There is no grace in the Monarch.[44]

Unfortunately for Elizabeth, it turns out that the priest is Lord Sandwich in disguise. Sandwich whips her and her 'religious flaw'[45] is thus revealed, giving Samuel another reason to leave her and spend more time socialising. This sub-plot illustrates the atmosphere of persecution and universal suspicion that penetrated the society at that time.

Poor Mrs Pepys presents sexuality in a very theatrical way, mainly through the intricate use of costuming. The queer subculture of 1660s London is present in the figure of Balthasar, Elizabeth's impoverished brother, who

42 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, pp. 27–28.
43 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, p. 31.
44 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, p. 47.
45 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, p. 59.

resorts to prostitution 'dressed in feminized attire and heavily made-up.'[46] His clothing reminds the audiences of a female theatre costume. As Elizabeth comments: 'Balty, your fashion – You look a crooked countess.'[47] The scene is a reminder of the practice of stage cross-dressing, which was coming to an end at this particular period of British theatre history. There are several scenes that involve sex talk and seduction, such as Samuel's reunion with his former mistress, Lady Sandwich. After the audience witness their perverse sexual practices in Act One, Scene Twelve, in which Samuel wears a 'collar and leash . . . around his neck, the end of which Lady Sandwich holds' with his head under her skirt giving her oral pleasure,[48] in Scene Three of the second act Lady Sandwich appears in a less desirable state. Not only does she enter the scene urinating into a pot, but, as a plague survivor, she also has a 'heavily pox-marked face' that she eventually reveals to Samuel. He loses interest in her despite her assurances that 'The pustules are all bursted. There is no danger.'[49] The costuming and make-up require heavy period layers of cloth and powder.

Such assertive theatricality making (from today's perspective) rather excessive use of costumes, make-up, and props is present in the other two plays, too. This is the true 'archaeological' achievement of all these plays as discussed above. They organically include period costuming and make-up into their stories, thus elevating them into plot-driving devices, while also presenting period theatre features to the audience in scenes of actual reenactment. Both *The Libertine* and *Nell Gwynn* include instances of this archaeology based on historical material. The former includes many scenes where Restoration plays are rehearsed and acted, such as *Alcibiades* by Otway. But it is a rehearsal of *Sodom, or the Quintessence of Debauchery* by Rochester that offers the grandest spectacle. In Scene Eight, Rochester is leading a rehearsal of his piece with only a few hours left before he will present his 'Major Work of Literature to the King.'[50] Allegorical character names include Signior Dildo and Little Clytoris. The scene is extremely sexual in tone, gestures, and requirements for costuming and props. At one point, 'all the rest [are] pulling out their Dildoes and frigg in point of honour.'[51] A perverse spectacle follows, presenting a visual form of the modern audience's expectations of Restoration theatre as a place of perversity and a sexually overcharged space – which is correct in the case of Rochester and his work.

46 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, p. 40.
47 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, p. 41.
48 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, p. 43.
49 Brooks, *Poor Mrs Pepys*, p. 53.
50 Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, p. 49 (capitalisation original).
51 Jeffreys, *The Libertine*, p. 49.

Nell Gwynn also includes scenes of lasciviousness and abounds with *double entendres*, but it is a less sexually charged one that presents theatrical excess, presenting the Restoration sense of theatre norms to the present-day audience. In Act Two, Scene Three, the King's French lover Louise in the Royal Box during a performance '*removes her cloak to reveal an embellished hat the size of a cartwheel.*'[52] The crowd loves her accessory. In a symbolic battle between the lovers, Nell appears on the stage '*and Ned, Nancy and any extras carry on a home-made replica of Louise's hat, only five times the size.*'[53] Nell wins the audience's hearts with this bold move and the crowd cheers for her. Both examples with the Restoration props of the dildoes and the hats are cases of stage archaeology where objects, as documented in historical materials, have been reinvented for the purpose of re-staging the Restoration originals.

The most convincing re-staging happens, however, as play-within-the-play. It was mentioned above that the plays discussed here include scenes from Restoration plays. Rochester trains Barry on lines from Otway's *Alcibiades* in *The Libertine*. Gwynn develops her technique on excerpts from *The Maiden Queen* by Dryden in *Nell Gwynn*. These, as well as others, are included in the modern-time plays, being directly quoted – thus, Restoration plays enter verbatim the modern-time drama. While *The Libertine* follows the life and work of Rochester, who is the main character, and therefore the audience have direct contact with his creation process, *Nell Gwynn* includes theatre practitioners and playwrights as secondary characters to Nell. Dryden is most prominently present in *Nell Gwynn*, and the play's plot parallels Dryden's transformation as a playwright. In the beginning, Dryden realises a new era of playwriting has arrived where female roles will be acted by women actors. Rehearsing an early draft of *The Maiden Queen*, Nell complains that female roles are plain, not at all 'knotty and tangly' as male ones. She therefore instructs Dryden: 'You can write for a real woman now. No one has done that before. Write from here (*Indicating her guts.*) and write me a character!'[54] In the following exchange, she makes Dryden come up with more realistic lines for female characters.

In Act Two, Scene Two, Nell complains that there are not many plays with a strong female lead. Dryden tries to come up with a plot. He makes a reference to *Hamlet* when he suggests: 'We're in Denmark. There's a Princess.'[55] After a few more unsuccessful suggestions like this one, he settles on Lady Godiva, but Nell rejects the idea because nobody can remember what

52 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 97.
53 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 50.
54 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 46.
55 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 88.

she is famous for except for one thing: 'She's famous for getting her tits out.'[56] This remark reminds the audience of a quarrel from the beginning, when the company discusses Moll Davies's first appearance on stage, in which she allegedly showed her breasts. Such exposure is another feature of Restoration drama that is generally known among present-day audiences who can therefore enjoy the joke fully.

Besides these potentially comical and sexually explicit scenes, the plays also include many lines of Restoration drama of pure aesthetic beauty. Not only does present-day theatre thus mock the preceding era or indulge in its perversities, but it also serves as a forum of appreciation for its three-and-a-half-century old poetry. All three plays are, all in all, primarily a tribute to the era they deal with. They do not idealise it and they may accentuate some of the features that a present-day audience may find strange (such as the ever-present filth and disease in *Poor Mrs Pepys*, the eccentric sexual perversity of *The Libertine*, and the abundance of playful meta-theatrical referencing in *Nell Gwynn*), but all three plays first and foremost restore the Restoration play on the contemporary stage in an appealing and critically successful way. They do so by presenting the lives of Restoration personalities connected to theatre in a biographical-like fashion and by letting the audience both delve into the social context of the late 17th century and also witness the marvels of the world of theatre from that period: from the dramatists' creative processes, to rehearsals and actual performances of Restoration plays remade as play-within-the-play. Modern-day aesthetics capitalises on the aesthetics of the Restoration period and transforms it into reliable stories, thus effectively recreating the Restoration play within the frame of contemporary drama. And, last but not least, these stories are all wonderful spectacles worth watching.

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56 Swale, *Nell Gwynn*, p. 91.

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